

Protesters of war misguided

On Oct. 7, the United States took the first steps of retaliation against the Taliban and Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network. In Austin, students from the University of Texas started protesting against "Bush's racist war."

In New York City, Athena Shapiro was holding a memorial service for her mother, who was killed in the attack on the World Trade Center. There would be no funeral; her mother's body was incinerated by the 2400 degree heat caused by initial explosion.

In the minds of most Americans, there is no question that this fight that has been brought to our shores is one that we must not only take on, but win. It is likely that this conflict will not be short, but drawn out and away from the public eye. Some people, over time, may waver in their support of America's war on terrorism. Those individuals, as well as those who oppose military action, should be reminded in the starkest possible terms why this battle is being fought.

It is a pathetic form of selfish ignorance that causes the anti-war protesters to take to the streets. They are able to justify the actions that killed 6000 people. According to them, there are legitimate reasons that led to thousands of children to grow up without their mothers or fathers. They are wrong.

The United States is not the reason the Palestinian people do not have their own state. Former Israeli leader Ehud Barak offered a comprehensive land for peace deal to Yasser Arafat last year, and it was rejected. Arafat cannot have peace with Israel; there are too many Palestinians who seek the extermination of the Jews for that to be possible. Real peace would be Arafat's undoing. In simple terms, American support for Israel prevents a second holocaust. The withdrawal of American support for the Jewish state would be a humanitarian disaster.

The United States is not the reason that tens of thousands of Iraqi children are starving to death. Saddam Hussein, a villain to all save those on the far American left, is the root of their demise. Iraq is now the second largest exporter of oil in the world under United Nations regulations that stipulate that Iraq must use the money they make on food and supplies for its people. Instead, Saddam uses the money on his military and weapons of mass destruction, leaving the Kurds and Shiites who oppose his regime to die. Saddam Hussein has added \$7 billion to his personal checking accounts since the end of the Gulf War, and he has done nothing humanitarian with it or any other monies. Still, confused people blame America for his misdeeds.

Bin Laden says that he fights for the rights of Palestinians and for the children of Iraq. His followers and opponents of the war here in America seem to believe him. These are merely names that Bin-Laden has recently co-opted in an attempt to gain support for his suicidal assault on the United States. His goal is the removal of American troops from Saudi Arabia and the creation of an Islamic republic in that nation. He is willing to kill every American to achieve his objective.

Bin Laden and the Taliban have declared jihad against America and have stated that they will not be satisfied until every single Christian and Jew is dead. They claim their warped version of Islam gives them justification to kill innocent women and children. "We have as many people here that want to die as you want to live," said an al-Qaida spokesman.

Still, some Americans think we can sit down and talk out our issues. A conversation can only happen when two sides are willing to speak and to listen. Our enemies do their speaking with bombs and airplanes filled with innocent men, women and children. Since this did not happen to them, or affect anyone they know, protesters continue to demand that we "Make love, not war."

Maybe this will change their minds: Somewhere in Afghanistan sits a man with a gun prepared to kill them, their friends and every member of their family. He thinks that he is justified by the word of God. He thinks that the destruction of the World Trade Center was a great victory. He also thinks that America does not have the courage to send people to find and stop him. There are others like him.



MARK PASSWATERS

Mark Passwaters is a senior political science major.

Like something out of a college student's dreams, the University of Houston is creating an academic program to prepare students for a career in the wine and spirits industry. This new division of UH, the Wine and Spirits Management Institute, will offer students a serious approach to a \$100-billion industry often associated with social irresponsibility and reckless overindulgence.

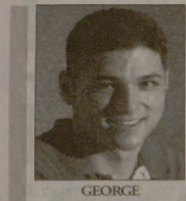
Knowledge in college of the vine

Programs focusing on the alcohol business a positive

UH is not the first school to focus on the world of wine and spirits, but many other colleges and universities offering such programs rarely escape the realm of the popular tasting-related classes. Backed by big names such as Guinness, Ernest and Julio Gallo, and Robert Mondavi, the new Institute will provide significantly better training to an ever-expanding line of work, while also giving students a central location to learn about the wine and spirits industry.

"There has never been one place to get an education in our industry's practices," said Guinness Southwest President Stephen Nelson. "The Institute will afford students solid training, leading to better employment options and higher entry-level salaries."

And it is this "solid training" that has been absent in other alcohol-related educational programs of the past. The wine and spirits industry is well known in the business world for a high turnover rate and underqualified management, concerns that have not gotten any better in recent years.



GEORGE DEUSCH

Because alcohol misuse all too often results in death, it is of prime importance that these issues are addressed in a responsible and formal manner.

"A lot of the people who get into this field think, 'You mean I can go out every night and party?'" said Institute Director Glenn Cordua. It is this type of irresponsible mentality that the new Institute is trying to combat.

With available careers in manufacturing, distribution, hotel operation and restaurant sales, the wine and spirits field is far reaching, making it important to have a continuous supply of well-trained personnel. The new Institute will teach both marketing and retail techniques and demystify the numerous rules and regulations surrounding liquor and wine sales. With 15 hours of credit, students can get their commercial beverage management certificate and be well on their way to pouring beers and serving shots.

Other schools, like Florida International University and the University of Nevada, have announced plans to institute programs similar to this. But the UH Institute promises to be serious and business-like in its approach. "We only have one course that's tasting-related," Cordua said.

Ideally, these new programs will decrease both alcohol-related deaths and the industry's high employment turnover rates, but it is much too soon to judge its effectiveness. Although these problems never may be wiped out completely, it is important to focus on them so that college students and others may continue to drink in peace.

George Deusch is a junior journalism major.



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RHA, RESLIFE FAILED TEXAS A&M STUDENTS

The Residence Hall Association (RHA) voted last week against a recommendation requesting that students be allowed to hang American flags outside residence hall windows. This is unacceptable and wrong in a time of national tragedy, and RHA failed its constituency. For that, RHA must make amends with on-campus residents.

Apparently, administrators are doing a better job of hearing student concerns than elected student representatives.

Dr. J. Malon Southerland, to whom the Department of Residence Life answers, issued a statement Monday night providing that students may hang American flags "provided they do so in a safe manner, and University personnel are available to assist them." Southerland's decisive actions are laudable; however, he must take immediate steps to mediate between protocols of safety and students' desires to hang flags. In the meantime, students should side-step the prudence of ResLife and RHA and proudly display their flags in residence halls.

RHA should have more aggressively repre-

sented on-campus Aggies by working with ResLife to reach a compromise on how flags can be displayed, lest ResLife and RHA ignore the responsible wishes of those whom they are supposed to serve.

ResLife and RHA have cited safety concerns as one of the reasons for forbidding students to hang the American flag. But exceptions to this rule are occasionally made, including for hanging residence hall banners at the beginning of each semester. To forbid students to hang potentially offensive items outside their windows is the right thing to do. The University has a right to protect its property and the safety of those in the residence halls.

However, hanging the American flag during a difficult time is a special case. Aggies living in residence halls overwhelmingly want to hang flags, and that must happen.

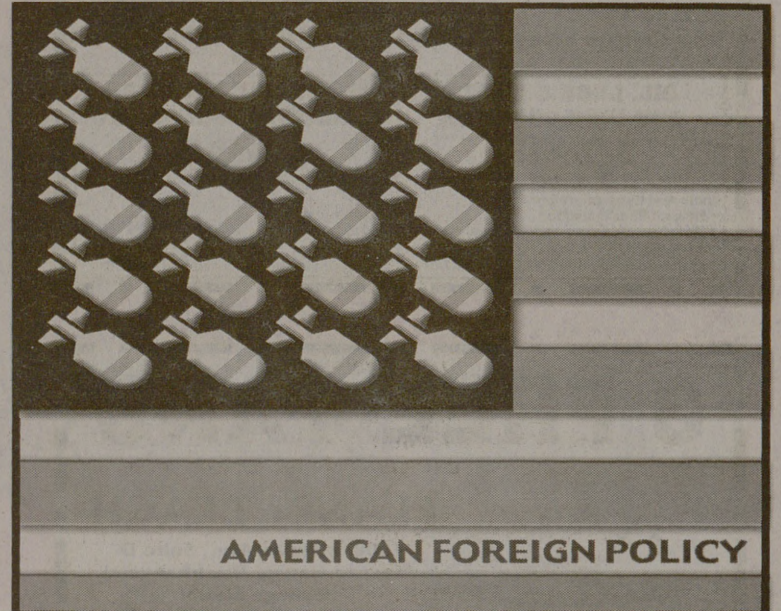
The measure voted upon by RHA is perfunctory, not active legislation; RHA is a representative body of on-campus Aggies, serving in an advisory role to ResLife.

Yet with this recent action, both have miserably failed the students they are supposed to serve. ResLife claims to be concerned with student safety, but what about the safety of the brave men and women defending their country? This is the campus of Red, White and Blue Out — a culture of ingrained patriotism — and the administration should do whatever is necessary to allow students to responsibly display their pride, patriotism and support for those servants of freedom.

Some students expressed concern that allowing only American flags to be displayed would create an exclusionary environment and be a detriment to campus diversity. This is likewise foolish. The United States, a nation under siege, should have her flag take precedence over any other symbol. Americans, and those from across the globe who support freedom and democracy, should have no qualms with citizens or anyone else supporting the United States in a time of national crisis.

After all, Aggies could be burning flags instead of flying them.

CARTOON OF THE DAY



THE UN-CARTOONIST ©

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