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He Is Not Fighting in Iraq “for Oil”

I was recently on the Colby Web site to check the latest football score and happened to click on the link to the article “Kerry stepson blasts Bush.” Well, I am a ’92 Colby graduate and one of the thousands of service members Chris Heinz simplistically described as potentially “dying for oil.”

To describe this mission over here in those terms shows not only a disturbingly profound lack of understanding of the world scene, it is also insulting to believe that the commanders of the U.S. Armed Services, men and women who have dedicated their lives for what America stands for, would let precious U.S. soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines die for something so trivial.

For the past 30 years, the Western way of life, characterized by such novel concepts as self-determination, freedom of expression, freedom of religion, freedom of choice, freedom of political thought, etc., has been on a crash course with that of radical Islam due to the sea change that is happening within the Islamic world. The tragic events of 9/11 (an understatement to say the least) were a sad and historic exclamation point to this fact and summed up decades of terrorism against the West sponsored and encouraged by Islamic radicalism.

So why Iraq? Well, unless I am vastly mistaken, a change had to be made. [As happened after] Pearl Harbor, the citizenry of the United States was not going to stand for another 3,000-plus innocents dead on a future late summer morning because a group of radicals were upset that the people of their world were turning toward the progressive Western ideals described above.

As such, Iraq, primarily given its secular nature, was the candidate for change. If, from the ashes of Saddam’s failed regime, Iraq can rise as a primarily Islamic nation that embraces concepts like self-determination and personal freedom, then we can show the world that Islam and the West can coexist peacefully and put an end to one branch of terrorism with finality.

In the end, that, in my opinion, is why I have been living in an active combat zone with all that this entails away from my wife and son for months on end. It’s not about oil.

It’s about giving my son and his generation a chance at peace. I’d ask Chris Heinz to think about the above and maybe do a little less campaigning and a little more reading before he steps in front of impressionable young men and women without his facts straight.

Mark C. Lombard ’92

Taji, Iraq

Reading Colby a Learning Experience

I had to write and tell you how much I enjoy *Colby*.

I was a student at Colby in the 1952-1953 school year. My experience at Colby was a mixed bag. I loved the intellectual challenges. I finally learned how to study at Colby. However, the emphasis on being in a sorority in order to be socially acceptable was difficult for me as a rather socially immature freshman. The campus while beautiful seemed very isolated to me and weekends were especially difficult. However, the Colby experience encouraged me to grow and mature. I transferred to Wheelock College in Boston for the remainder of my college years and loved it. Colby helped me realize what I wanted to do with my life, teach young children and teachers of young children. I look on my year at Colby as one of learning and growing and I am grateful. *Colby* helps me to continue to learn and grow and I read it from cover to cover.

Barbara Ice Lake ’56

Vashon, Wash.

File-traders Ending Artists’ Careers

As the co-owner of an independent record label here in Tokyo, it was with some interest that I read your cover story, “To Share or Not to Share” (spring 2004 *Colby*), on file-sharing, otherwise known as “piracy.” I felt it was an even-handed attempt to survey the situation and was pleasantly surprised to see the ethical issues raised.

I can only add the following: file-traders—and compulsive CD-burners as well—are only shooting themselves in the foot. By not supporting the labels and artists they like by buying their albums, they are making it financially unsustainable for many artists to continue making music.

It costs money to record an album. It

also costs more to master it and promote it so that you have a chance of knowing it exists. Most of all, it requires that an artist have a great deal of time to concentrate on his craft and create the most inspired work possible. It seems almost sophomoric to point this out, but to do so, an artist needs money to live on, and if his CDs don’t sell, then what will happen is he’ll start making jingles, or Sony Playstation music, or even a career change. End result is, you won’t be hearing any more music from him/her.

People often think this is an exaggeration, but for independent artists, a few thousand sales can make or break. Every label, every artist I know, is wondering how long they can continue. Just today I got an e-mail from an established UK indie, saying how their sales have dropped to a third of what they were five years ago. They pointed out three major distributors of independent music that have gone under this year.

In the end, you get what you pay for. If the economy only supports quick, mass-production music, that’s what you’ll get. There’s a model for free, corporate-sponsored entertainment: it’s called television. If people want that to be the future of music, then keep on ripping files. If you want to support diverse, eclectic, independent music, show your devotion by buying it.

I don’t think any label resents a copy or two for friends. What people need to realize is the unlimited nature of digital copying. Since you don’t need a physical connection to someone who actually owns an album, one copy can turn into dozens, hundreds, even thousands of virtual freebies on the Net.

Giovanni Fazio ’86

Tokyo, Japan

Don’t Politicize Patriot Act Debate

I am obligated to respond to Mike Gorton’s letter to the editor (fall 2004 *Colby*) regarding the Patriot Act and Carolyn Anthony’s reservations about it.

My copy of the U.S. Constitution lacks any reference to “conservative” or “liberal,” and I suspect Mr. Gorton will search it in vain for “right” or “left.” If “libertarian extremists” is his idea of political balance to “anti-Bush,” then Colby needs to get back to first principles with respect to the mean-

ing of the word “liberal” in “liberal arts education.” I had always thought that it was as much the instillation of an approach to life as anything else.

Second, I submit that he misconstrues the nature of the opposition to the Patriot Act. The provisions of the act show an utter disregard for the collateral damage they cause to the principles and practices necessary for effective participatory democracy. The mere presence of provisions allowing library records searches requires the patron to balance the fear of showing up on the government’s radar with his desire for information. The net result is to make ignorance the default and knowledge something to be justified. I suggest that a quest for knowledge should not be a test of personal courage administered by a government.

Third, Mr. Gorton would do well to remember that execution of the Patriot Act has been politicized, a fact that undercuts both the argument for its need and the idea that it is not a danger to American-style democracy. For example, Attorney General John Ashcroft has already placed off limits any searching of Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms records on firearm transactions in Patriot Act investigations. If the act is so crucial, then why would such records be off limits? What does it mean when such allegedly necessary powers can be limited by National Rifle Association lobbying?

As for the FISA Court, we may pass over without comment the fact that it never, save once, met a wiretap request it did not like.

Fourth, if “tearing down the wall” between foreign intelligence and domestic criminal proceedings is necessary, then certainly we can at least ask why it was not replaced by a gate permitting criminal investigation data to be used in foreign intelligence operations but not *vice versa*. That would allow protection from foreign enemies and be less restrictive of our liberties and criminal procedure standards. Would Osama bin Laden and his minions receive any more succor today from such a safeguard than the Red hordes did during McCarthyism?

I took a leave of absence from Colby from 1977 to 1980 in order to join the Marine Corps as an infantryman. Why? Several reasons, but one was to expose

myself to a completely new experience and culture. It was a mind-broadening, and therefore “liberal,” experience for me. I trust that Mr. Gorton has gone through similar experiences, as he surely understands why I cannot stand by and allow either side of a debate to engage in *ad hominem* attacks on the other.

We all should re-acquaint ourselves with the concept of “the loyal opposition.” It is more than just an idea noted by the late Professor Gillum in his British history classes.

John A. Clark '82
Chicago, Ill.

Sports Shouldn't Be Distant Second

A letter of protest to Sid McKeen’s opinion expressed in his letter (fall 2004 *Colby*), “Education First; Sports Second.”

I have no argument with the order of “Education First; Sports Second.” I do have an argument with what sort of “second” sports should be. Is it a reasonable and fair “second” or is it a distant “second,” almost in the intramural category?

I also agree that the ridiculous scholarship policies of many of our state colleges do not graduate any or darn few of those in their scholarship programs. In my opinion the NCAA will eventually correct this flaw, but it will take a great deal of pressure and time. I do not expect it will ever be corrected to the satisfaction of Sid but I am confident serious improvements can and will be made.

My interest in expressing my feelings about this subject is very personal. I grew up in a solid family who struggled in the poverty level. Sports were a vital part of my youth. With a little financial help from a man for whom I caddied, plus a scholarship and room and board jobs, I was able to attend Hebron Academy, which in those days was recognized as an important hockey prep school. We played the Colby freshmen and won 15 to 2. After the game, the Colby coach, Bill Millett, asked me if I would be interested in attending Colby. I explained my financial problems to Bill and he indicated he could probably help in that area.

Now let me summarize my reasons for my position on the subject of financial aid to athletes: If it were not for coach Bill Millett, I never would have made it to Colby;

I never would have been the first person in my family to graduate from college; I never would have ended up being elected captain of two Colby varsity teams; I never would have been the recipient of the Condon Medal; I never would have been the recipient of a Colby Brick; I never would have chased my Colby classmate, Jacquelyn Nerney, all over the Colby campus for two years and married her at the end of my junior year, 24 hours before being inducted into the army; I never would have had the opportunity as a proud parent to witness our daughter, Tara [Wallace] '74, graduate from Colby.

To me these “I never would’s” are quite important. I agree that education is the most important reason for attending college, but I believe having fun should also play an important role in the college experience. Sports help create fun both as a participant and as a spectator. I believe sports also help develop a college loyalty and family-like bonding. If a student feels sports will interfere with his or her academics I suggest he or she should consider colleges such as MIT or Cal Tech, etc., where he or she might feel more comfortable with highly stressed fellow students.

I contend a healthy strong athletic program helps make college education available to many athletes, most of whom find it impossible to meet financial requirements.

Joe Wallace '43 (Graduation class '45)
Dover, Mass.

Editor's note: Athletics scholarships are not permitted at NCAA Division III schools. All aid at Colby is awarded based on the family's calculated financial need.

(Pony) Express Mail?

I know that Waterville, Maine is some distance from Sacramento, California, but until recently I never realized how far.

Yesterday, Oct. 20, 2004, we received in the mail an issue of the *Colby* magazine dated August 1992. It is in fine condition and we enjoyed reminiscing very much. Our son, Cal Wheaton, graduated from Colby in 1992 with Jane and me, and Bill Cosby, on hand.

John R. Wheaton P'92
Sacramento, Calif.