

Healthcare problem here?

University employee issues, contrary to the posters hung around campus, can be resolved.

It seems that the healthcare debate has finally reached Wake Forest. Even the gated campus entrances couldn't keep the power of healthcare at bay any longer. And rightfully so. As with much of America, it is time to address an issue and industry that is predicted to consume 13 percent of our gross national product by 2010. Any issue that affects the

Calling attention to this possible problem was a huge first step; thankfully some students on this campus have escaped the plague of apathy. However, solutions will never be reached by pitting the university against its own employees and students – a trust must be fostered between all parties involved.

is receiving the same coverage and benefits from that monthly sum, the current program seems well designed. Only if the services vary from group to group does the designated plan seem preposterous. Furthermore, I was also shocked at the comparatively low monthly payment – many student families here, including mine, pay upwards of \$400 per month for their coverage.

The second sign I saw was propaganda at its best. Listing several comparable universities' lower monthly payments, the sign made Wake Forest stand out as the anomaly. Though I realize flyers have limited space, it is appropriate to approach such a complex issue with more than just monthly numbers. An accurate judgment would include the benefits received at each school of differing payment levels, then measuring the proportional value of the services provided for the amount spent. Another reliable indicator would be the total per capita amount each university spends on employee healthcare.

Most of us would agree that a slightly higher expense correlating to increased coverage is worth the cost. Taking these numbers out of context is distortion and adding unneeded fuel to an already hot fire.

The third sign, indicating the number of full-time employees without healthcare, I cannot argue against. Something must be done to rectify this situation. However, I take strong exception to the language in which the debate was phrased by the seniors' signing last week's letter. Yes, the university community has the right to find out the salaries of those employees without healthcare and the reasons behind their lack of coverage. However, to carry this debate onto the ethnic battleground as well would be to forget the real issue on trial.

Nothing will be accomplished by the "politics of division," to quote Shelby Steele. Calling attention to this possible problem was a huge first step; thankfully some students on this campus have escaped the plague of apathy. However, solutions will never be reached by pitting the university against its own employees and students – a trust must be fostered between all parties involved.

I highly doubt that the current policy was malicious or designed to uphold certain biases. We must all remember that healthcare in this country is a privilege, not a right. Perhaps we should move toward making it so, but that argument is for another day. We have a problem with healthcare right here, right now. Let us use the knowledge we have to the best of our ability, instead of spreading useless propaganda that only clouds the true issue at stake.

Doug Hutton is a sophomore who plans to major in political science.



Doug Hutton

OLD GOLD AND BLACK COLUMNIST

health and welfare of citizens deserves adequate time in the local and national spotlight.

Much to the chagrin of liberal academia, this nation has determined that guaranteed healthcare for all citizens should not be an undertaking of the national government, nor do they mandate that each employer must provide certain benefits. Like many industries, the state has determined that the private sector can accomplish the task of healthcare with far greater efficiency and coverage.

This is not to say that the cost of private healthcare is any smaller than the government price tag would be; payment instead comes from personal accounts rather than another large tax scheme.

However, the state has decided it should fund health coverage for groups that have no disposable income to spend, principally senior citizens through Medicare and impoverished children through Medicaid.

With those thoughts as a background, let us return to Wake Forest. Over the past two semesters, there has been an increasing tide of healthcare awareness: first in reference to professors' contracts, and now applicable to all faculty and staff. Two weeks ago, the mobilization of the lobby rose quite substantially with the appearance of "Pro Humanitate?" signs throughout the academic buildings. This publication has dedicated several articles to the debate, and six seniors submitted a letter last week.

I can honestly say I know very little about the current healthcare plan that covers the employees of this university. I do not know the provider, what health problems are covered or the range of doctors that participate.

I gathered from the seniors' letter last week that all employees are covered by the same plan, regardless of occupation here on campus. Please keep this in mind as you continue.

Because of my ignorance on the issue, I was confused by the message the "Pro Humanitate?" signs were trying to send. My first impression upon noticing the sign indicating that each employee pays \$109 each month was one of fairness. If each employee

Recipe for violence unending

Suicide bombing is a cycle perpetuated by hopelessness of life in the Middle East.

The suicide bombers of tomorrow are today's children. They see what is happening around them and they do not understand. It will not be long before understanding does not matter. With this dichotomy in place, it seems peace does not stand a chance.

Twelve Palestinians lie dead in the streets of Gaza and Ariel Sharon claims success. Twelve Israeli lives in Hebron, cut short in retaliation. A mother has lost her son, a young man is rendered fatherless, and a sister becomes an only child. Israelis in Hebron are calling for more violence and making blunt allusions to a previous massacre of Palestinians as a way of saying, "be

"The reason for this can be summed up in one word: rage. Terrible rage, that fills the soul of a human being, leaving no space for anything else." This rage that clouds the mind red and haunts the sleep of children is blind to reason. Try being born into a situation where this rage is all you know. Live 20 years with this fury constantly in your soul. Eventually someone holds out a gun to you and asks you if you'd like to fight. There is only one possible answer. Soon, even that will not satisfy, as the rage builds and your life becomes so terrible that only death will cure you. Yet, even in your death, you can strike a blow against the people who have made your life worth nothing. You strap on dynamite and take your last bus ride to the city.



Ryan Whitley

OLD GOLD AND BLACK COLUMNIST

prepared." Palestinians are worried, but promise that should any massacre come, it will be revisited upon those who deliver it. The cycle of violence continues; Arafat sits snug in Ramallah while Sharon and Netanyahu bicker in Jerusalem. Nothing gets done and the status quo of suffering and violence, on both sides, is preserved.

Imagine for a moment that this is your life. Envision for a minute that if you leave your dorm room past 6:00 in the evening to visit a friend, or to pick up some small thing at Sundry, that you will be shot on sight. Hear the low grumbling outside your window? That's a tank rolling by, escorting bulldozers to knock down Davis House. You breathe a sigh of relief; they did not come for you, this time. It is quiet. You used to have a roommate, but he or she was killed in a missile attack while shopping. You go to bed that night sweating and wondering if you will see the next day.

Before drifting off to sleep, the last refuge left to you by a world turned to a cesspool, you look at the rifle in the corner and know it would only take a second to be set free. Anger floods in once again, and you sleep, tormented by your dreams of a reality far worse.

Speaking with Professor of Religion Ken Hoglund, who has spent much time in Israeli and Arab communities as well as talked face to face with leaders of Hamas, I asked the question why there are so many suicide bombers. Is it because in their religion, martyrdom guarantees them the highest order of paradise in the afterlife?

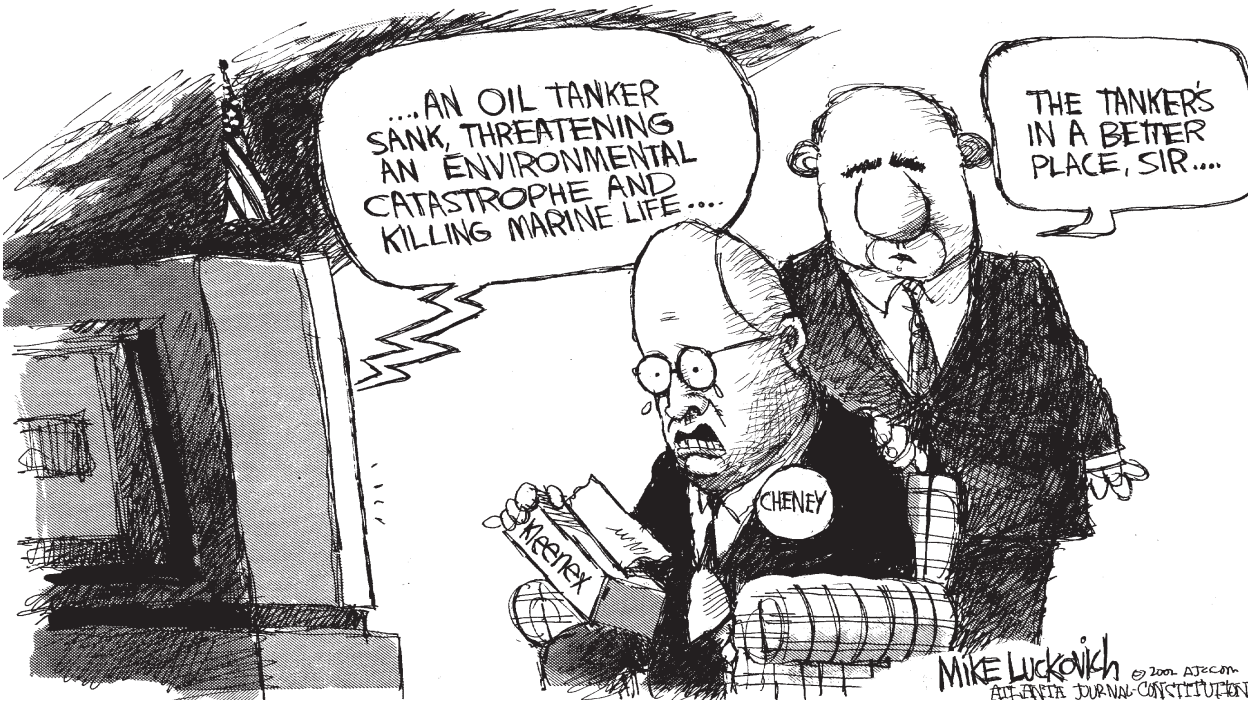
He responded, "No. In the end, no one kills themselves for a belief. They kill themselves because death has become preferable to life." If they can drag a few enemy souls with them when they go, then it's all the better. At least they will be remembered as a patriot.

Israeli journalist Uri Avnery agrees, as he writes,

That is how you make a suicide bomber. The formula is simple. Combine equal parts occupation, inequality and violence. Stir. Bake 20 years. That's it. Repeat as necessary. It is horrifically easy and it is being done as we speak. The suicide bombers of tomorrow are today's children. They see what is happening around them and they do not understand. It will not be long before understanding does not matter. With this dichotomy in place, it seems peace does not stand a chance. Every time a gun goes off, every time a bomb explodes, it pushes peace back a step farther. Marwan Barghouti, General Secretary of Fatah on the West Bank and an elected member of the Palestinian Legislative Council has said, "Want peace? End the occupation." I could not agree more. If a separate Palestinian state will bring peace, I'm for it. If bi-nationalism is the eventual, peaceful resolution, I'm for it. More importantly though, the world community needs to come together and take steps to eliminate situations where death has become preferable to life.

No one wants more suicide bombers, especially Israelis and Palestinians. I suppose it is dangerous giving out the formula to make a suicide bomber. However, by doing so, you also know how not to make one and to stop the situations that are creating them. It is time to stop everything that is causing the rage to build and fester. Peace will only occur when the cycle of violence is broken. What life would you rather have? Look out your window at this campus. Would you rather have that life, or the one described above? Does not everyone deserve that same chance?

Ryan Whitley is a senior majoring in both history and religion.



War against Iraq is not simply Bush's quest for power

Evidence detailed by those from different parties still point to war as necessary.

With all the recent happenings regarding the impending war with Iraq, much of the focus is on whether or not Saddam Hussein presents a direct threat to U.S. interests. For the most part, those opposed to the war range from many

of the rest of the world has. Even if he did have the capacity to harm the United States, he's not concerned enough with us to do so. Bush is just warmongering and has no reason to be picking on Saddam, right?

Wrong. According to Laurie Mylroie, a former adviser to Clinton and author of A Study of Revenge: Saddam Hussein's Unfinished War, there's a plethora of evidence that Saddam is working to harm the United States any way he can.

In an interview with CNN about a year ago (search for her name on CNN.com to find it) Mylroie states, "you can demonstrate to the high legal standard of beyond a reasonable doubt that Iraq was behind the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center, by showing that Ramzi Yousef, the mastermind of that bomb, was an Iraqi intelligence agent." The involvement in the first bombing at the very least implies involvement in the second.

But there's more. There's strong evidence indicating that the Iraqi government supplied the anthrax found in mail earlier this year. Mylroie states, "in the [anthrax laden] letter sent

Fundamentally, going to war with Iraq isn't even really starting a new war. Rather, it would be an escalation of the war that never ended in 1991. Saddam hasn't met the conditions agreed upon for ending the Gulf War. Our planes routinely bomb parts of Iraq to enforce the no fly zones, and were fired upon.

to Tom Daschle ... there is an additive in that anthrax, bentonite, which is used to cause the anthrax to not stick together, and float in the air. Iraq is the only party known to have produced anthrax with bentonite."

Hussein and the now infamous bin Laden have a history of cooperation. According to Mylroie, they've been working together since the '90s, when bin Laden was in Sudan. There are widely reported contacts between Hussein and bin Laden, such as in December of 1998, when Farook Hajazi traveled to Afghanistan to meet with bin Laden.

We know that Saddam has been

both directly and indirectly involved in efforts to harm American interests. He supplies those who are against the United States with the tools and knowledge they need to carry out their work.

Fundamentally, going to war with Iraq isn't even really starting a new war. Rather, it would be an escalation of the war that never ended in 1991. Saddam hasn't met the conditions agreed upon for ending the Gulf War (full Iraqi weapons inspections). Our planes routinely bomb parts of Iraq to enforce the no fly zones, and were recently fired upon.

Sanctions are still in place because of Saddam's refusal to let inspectors do the job (until recently) he agreed to let them do in 1991.

The sanctions themselves are one more reason to invade. They are necessary to slow the growth of the weapons program Saddam said he'd cancel, and yet the sanctions are supposedly killing up to half a million children annually. It's obvious that those 500,000 children who allegedly die from those sanctions will stop dying if the man who keeps the sanctions in

place is removed from power.

Most of us students are too young to have known a time before Saddam Hussein, when Iraq was a pretty normal and fairly westernized place. The Iraqi people hate him for what he's done to their country, and want him out as bad as we do. Iraq is a decaying shell of what it once was. Hussein isn't even allowed full access to large parts in the north and south of his country. This situation cannot be allowed to exist for much longer.

It's obvious that with this latest round of "allowing" inspectors, Saddam is up to his old tricks again. In this case, the United States has more than enough reasons to take out Hussein following the Powell doctrine outlined in 1991. That is, go in with overwhelming force and fully accomplish all the goals laid out. Then the United States will install a new government like in Afghanistan. It is imperative that U.S. actions leave no room for doubt in our resolve to fight terrorism and send a strong message to those who would wish the United States harm.

David Dolgin is a sophomore.

David Dolgin

GUEST COLUMNIST

Democrats to types like Pat "Let's build a concrete wall on the Mexican border" Buchanan. They say there's no threat since Saddam is thousands of miles away and doesn't even have the capacity to hurt the United States.

They also say that the United States shouldn't deny him the capacity of weapons of mass destruction that much