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# BLACK & WHITE

March 17, 2005

~ An Independent Publication ~

Volume 1, Issue 3

## B&W Congressional Endorsements

### The Lesser of Who Cares

MICHAEL RALA '05  
THE LEFT EDITOR

Three weeks ago, the editors of this publication applauded the College Board of Trustees for their forward looking appointment of a young Dominican to take the reins from Rev. Philip A. Smith, O.P. I am not subdued in my criticism of the current administration's restrictive governance of the student body, especially the overt presence of Rev. J. Stuart McPhail to the side of the Executive table at weekly Congress meetings. For four years, I've witnessed three different Student Congress Executive Presidents struggle with the reality of running what amounts to a puppet organization for the College administration. This year, the underclassmen at Providence College have an obligation to elect a representative body that will work with Rev. Brian Shanley's, O.P. administration to forge a newfound independence of student governance.

Unfortunately there will be little new blood in next year's Congress Executive board. The concept that the only students who could lead the legislative agenda (or lack thereof) are those who have made careers in the club is preposterous. While I commend the elections committee for reshaping the voting process with the advent of internet ballots, there will not be true reform in Congress until Slavin outsiders are allowed their proper place on top of the ballot. Such electoral exclusion cheats the student body out of new ideas and fresh approaches to representation. With a new administration taking office in both Harkins Hall and the Slavin Center, one can only hope that the institution-

alized cycle of Congressional representation will open its doors to new leadership in the coming years.

However, this year's flock of candidates for the Congress Executive Board offer few new ideas and none of the candidates could articulate a clear message for how they hope to accomplish anything in the next year. In fairness to this year's candidates, they are no worse than the uninspired masses that have come before them—some

Continued on Page Two

### Slow and steady in this race

PAT BROWN '05  
THE RIGHT EDITOR

Unity. Voice. Fresh ideas.

These and many other perennial buzz words abounded during the open forum with Student Congress executive candidates this past Monday. The mood and message among the students who took the stage to articulate their platforms was one of ambitious optimism and confidence about the prospects which await in the 2005-2006 academic year. With the arrival of president-elect Rev. Brian

Shanley, O.P. lingering on the horizon, this year's cluster of candidates conveyed the impression that a changing of the administrative guard will be complemented by an unusually unified and energized Student Congress.

Admittedly, their hopefulness is based in certain realities. The incoming president, for example, brings with him a reputable commitment to encouraging and engaging in administration-student dialogue.

However, past history and nearly four years of personally attempting to keep an open eye and ear on campus create grounds for skepticism. During any election, whether it be for Student Congress or the U.S. Congress, themes like unity and innovative proposals are sure to feature with great prevalence throughout the campaign. Frequently, though, once the race is over and the results are tabulated, the newly elected officials find themselves inheriting the same imperfect system, riddled with the same frustrations and obstacles. Much of the energy, ideals, unity and innovation then seem to get squeezed dry.

Should we expect anything different this time around? Why and how is 2005-2006 going to be any different than years past? Truth be told, I wouldn't hold your breath that it will, to any remarkable degree. Student Congresses, past and present, have consisted of well-intentioned, passionate, energetic and creative students. But, throw in a civically malnourished student body as well as strict administrative guidelines and oversight to the mix,

Continued on Page Three

~ Common Ground ~

### GIVE US A CHOICE OR MAKE THE DECISION YOURSELVES

Next week, the Providence College student body will vote for its executive representation in Student Congress elections. The executive boards of BMSA and BOP—the two largest and most heavily allocated clubs on campus—will also be elected...well...sort of.

Of the combined eight offices up for grabs in BMSA and BOP, seven candidates are running uncontested races. While it is hard to understand why the organizational leadership of these clubs are decided by students not affiliated with their day-to-day activities (it is the Congressional equivalent of the American public voting on the leadership of the Black Congressional Caucus), the lack of choices is a kick in the face to the democratic process.

We make no charges of internal maneuvering by the clubs, but we cannot help but ask why there are not numerous club members with the ability to take the reins of their clubs for next year? It is the opinion of the *Black and White* editors that BOP and BMSA should reframe their constitutions to reflect the internal wishes of their club members if they cannot recruit multiple candidates for their executive offices in a campus-wide election.

# Student Congress hopefuls give little hope

Continued from Page One: are a even step above recent representatives. But, to take a note from the theme of Monday's candidate forum, we should expect greater things from our student representatives as PC moves forward with new leadership.

Through the rhetoric of "unity" and "student voices" several candidates stood out as the "lesser of who cares." None of the candidates running for Executive Board will harm Student Congress. But none proved to have the ability to inspire action and wake the apathy of the student body. The only moment of budding leadership I saw on Monday night was Executive President Candidate Brad Freeman '06 call for *The Cow!* to hold him accountable if he wins the election next week. (What about *Be?IP?*)

It is with reluctance that I endorse Brad Freeman to be the next Executive President of the Providence College Student Congress.

Freeman's opponent, Class of 2006 President Matthew Weber, brings a laundry list of experience, including three years as class president. Yet, Weber seems to be running only upon a record of minimal accomplishment. His devotion to Providence College is not lost on anyone in the College community, but Weber could not show that he is capable of outlining a big picture agenda that can capitalize on the administrative glasnost that a new administration offers. Weber's enthusiasm and accessibility, themes he touched on several times during Monday's forum, should be focused on the lasting success of PC-TV in an effort to build the organizational structure of the campus network so that it survives for years beyond his graduation.

Freeman immediately spoke of the future and promised to bring "improved relations [with the administration] based on respect." While the direct involvement of the administration in the daily governing of Congress is deplorable, no one can argue that the two bodies should interact with a professional and open demeanor. Freeman expanded his open hand to the administration by biting the bullet of popularity and telling the student body it is time to give up the fight over parietals and the academic core curriculum. I could not agree more. As Freeman outlined, wasting the student population's political capital on hopeless battles weakens the united front Congress should be taking against tuition spikes, dorm segregation, and issues of diversity.

While none of the other candidates for any executive office had a realistic approach to passing binding legislation, Freeman's platform promises to hold representatives responsible for researching popular opinion and garnering campus support for their legislation. This idea is a step toward relevance for Student Congress.

Freeman's candidacy does not come without flaws. He took PSO's political bait and publicly sided with the chapel's service group despite evidence that PSO had misspent allocated money in recent years. Freeman could not forcefully state that he would lead Congress away from the guiding hand of Fr. McPhail's office. I remain disappointed that Congress members, including all the candidates for executive board, continue to support their self-insulation from an outside challenge for Executive President.

Both Weber and Freeman will lead Congress with the same style of leadership employed by 2003/2004 Executive President Andrea Essner and current President Patrick Doherty '05—a style much more proactive than past presidents but far from the exceptional leadership we should expect. Because Freeman has an outlined agenda, I believe he will make a more apt leader for the 2005/2006 Student Congress.

And next year's Congress, if the other candidates for Executive Board are a telling sign of what's to come, will need stoic leadership.

I'm endorsing Mickey Begin '06 for Executive Vice President mostly because of the conflict of interest surrounding the other candidates for the office. Both Meghan Ingram '06 and Amy Baker '07 currently serve on the elections committee and were integral in the restructuring of student elections. While online elections and two days of open polls are an improvement on cafeteria polling locations, their refusal to bring the idea of truly open elections to a public debate is disheartening. Ingram and Baker should continue their leadership on the elections committee and work with the new Executive Board in further improving student elections.

Begin's commitment to updating the academic stature of the College is commendable. Her platform of creating a totally wireless campus and installing SmartBoards throughout the academic buildings is a welcome change of discussion. (In fairness, Ingram has a similar platform of a wireless campus.) Continuing her technological agenda, Begin is the only candidate with a forward approach to informing and including the student body: it's all about Angel, stupid!

The race for Treasurer is sadly uncontested, with only Jonny Styron '07 campaigning. This should serve as an opportunity for Congress to begin discussions on recruiting formidable candidates to challenge one another in open races.

My last endorsement is a hesitant nod for Adam Truesdale '07 in the race for Executive Secretary. Tarra Dayton '06, the other candidate for the office, remained silent on Monday night, offering students no opportunity to learn about her candidacy. Truesdale, on the other hand, actually had the courage to publicly express his disappointment with the lack of open races. However, rather than challenge Congress to open their elections to all students, he cheapened the exclusion to the reality that "not enough students know what's going on." As a sophomore, I hope Truesdale and the other Congress representatives can fix the problem of benign ignorance in the student population so that he can run on top of next year's ticket against an outside challenger.

While I am disappointed in the crop of forward looking plans in this year's candidates, I do not question their devotion and commitment to the student body. Their ability to work together in a professional manner is clearly evident through their diplomatic differences of opinions. Each of these candidates will continue to follow the path blazed by their predecessors. Unfortunately, that path remains narrow and is burning with too cautious of a flame.

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## THE LEFT'S ENDORSEMENTS:

### EXECUTIVE PRESIDENT:

BRAD FREEMAN '06

### EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT:

MICKEY BEGIN '06

### EXECUTIVE TREASURER:

JONNY STYRON '07 (UNOPPOSED)

### EXECUTIVE SECRETARY:

ADAM TRUESDALE '07

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# Slow and Steady should win this race

Continued from Page One: and anyone short of a 20-year-old Alexander the Great couldn't produce awe-inspiring results.

And yet, at the same time, we must be mindful that the landscape, demographics and character of Providence College have all evolved throughout the school's nearly ninety years of operation. The College was originally established to provide educational opportunities to the children of immigrant families of less than modest means. A majority of students now, though, enjoy financial situations which, all things considered, can bear the burden of financing a collegiate education. Moreover, images of student protestors which adorn the second floor of Harkins Hall remind us that four years of on-campus residence used to be compulsory. And, lest we forget, females have only been attending this school for three decades.

To think that these watersheds in PC's history were not stimulated in part by ordinary students and their peer representatives seems foolish; to believe that future turning points of similar magnitude are out of reach is equally imprudent. Thus, any automatic dismissal of Congress' potential influence is uninformed and unwarranted. History can repeat itself, even though the odds might not be very high.

Bearing all these contrasting ideas in mind, a good strategy to electing next year's exec board would be to pinpoint which candidates offer PC students the best prospect for continuing to take small, yet constructive steps in facilitating a genuine transformation of student life and representation. The college is not going to be revamped overnight, but it doesn't mean students should stop voicing both their goals and grievances. Which candidates, then, will bring a healthy dose of energy and creativity to the table, while providing the necessary courage and leadership to recognize, seize and fulfill opportunities for the school's growth and development?

Let's start with the candidates for president. While I was not completely won over by either Brad Freeman '06 or Matt Weber '06, their presentations sufficed to set the two apart and earn Brad my endorsement.

Perhaps Brad has not provided as visible a presence as his opponent during his time on Congress, but his understanding of and approach to the presidency make him an appealing choice. Brad expressed a desire to empower and challenge each individual member of Congress and individual student as a chief priority. Fortunately for him, one of his major legislative efforts of this year lends serious weight to his pledge. Brad helped spearhead the effort to collect student signatures for a petition requesting that City Hall perform maintenance on Huxley Avenue, making it safer for student use. If he can bring with him the commitment to soliciting student input on big issues like tuition hikes, then his presidency will be a fruitful one.

I was also encouraged by Brad's call for accountability. During the Q & A session, he issued a challenge to the student press to assess his presidency two months into his term and make a fair judgment of his progress to date. He distinguished himself for all the other candidates in proactively welcoming being held to account by the student body. This was arguably one of the

most genuinely fresh ideas brought up at the forum and it's my hope that this is a sign of things to come under President Brad.

His opponent, Matt Weber, brings with him a good track record of channeling his creativity and energy to plan enjoyable events and activities for the student body: junior nights, Lunch Lady Appreciation Day and pancake breakfasts on Slavin Lawn. Matt is quite gifted at making simple events like these great experiences. To his credit, he has also almost single-handedly revived PC-TV, which continues to show great potential in serving as a student-friendly source of entertainment and information. I would love to see Matt continue in his current roles rather than be preoccupied with the overall management of Student Congress.

There was not much separating the candidates for vice-president. Mickey Begin '06, Meghan Ingram '06 and Amy Baker '07 all mentioned the importance of internally reorganizing Congress' structure and investing more into technological resources (wireless capabilities, SmartBoards) for students, both inside and outside the classroom. Nevertheless, I'm giving my endorsement to Meghan, with the understanding that she follows through on her promise to create a new website for Congress.

I applaud the elections committee for giving students the opportunity to vote online through ANGEL this year, but it still seems like more could be done to utilize the Internet as a means of communicating with the student body. A good website, among other things, would make available minutes

of all meetings, dates of upcoming events, Congress' major initiatives and achievements, surveys on important issues, and a link for students' suggestions and comments. If Meghan can make this happen, it will be to both the students' and Congress' advantage.

The race for treasurer is lamentably uncontested, with Jonny Styron '07 providing the only candidacy. This is an unfortunate shortcoming for a group of students that professes, and in all fairness, often proves to be dedicated to serving their peers. Competition only makes for better candidates.

The race for secretary between Tarra Dayton '06 and Adam Truesdale '07 didn't attract any attention during the forum, but Adam nevertheless took it upon himself to constructively contribute to the discussion. Foremost on his mind was emphasizing that Congress meetings are open to the campus public, although he was at a loss when it came to proposing ways to increase student turnout at meetings. Even so, he expressed a commitment to continue trying, and also brings with him a record of giving Congress a visible presence through media like PC-TV and representing the organization at service functions like the support-the-troops drive, Operation FAITH. He's a candidate worth endorsing, more so if he can eventually succeed in bringing more student observers to meetings.

All and all, don't expect next year's Student Congress to instantly reinvent the wheel—the system they inherit simply doesn't allow for it. However, there always exists some possibility of moving forward on the approach to a new watershed in the school's history. It's my hope that these candidates will tirelessly and successfully lead the charge.

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## THE RIGHT'S ENDORSEMENTS:

### EXECUTIVE PRESIDENT:

BRAD FREEMAN '06

### EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT:

MEGHAN INGRAM '06

### EXECUTIVE TREASURER:

JONNY STYRON '07 (UNOPPOSED)

### EXECUTIVE SECRETARY:

ADAM TRUESDALE '07

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# Bracketology: The 2008 Democratic Field

MICHAEL RAJA '05  
THE LEFT EDITOR

Every March, businesses slow production and college students are distracted in class. ESPN.com is forced to deal with the heavy traffic from all walks of Americans who are downloading and printing NCAA Basketball tournament brackets. I'm personally involved in three different polls.

It's not surprising, then, that I'm already debating the 2008 Presidential Election.

Just as Thursday and Friday are the most exciting two days in the sports world, the 18 months before campaigns assemble in New Hampshire provide the most discussion of probable contenders.

Looking at a possible field of Democrats, though, is about as encouraging a prospect as Delaware State's eyeing the Final Four. Delaware can't stop Reddick and the Democrats are playing a little too much defense recently.

Hillary has star power, but she's openly despised by the Right. And if she keeps moving to the slums of moderation she'll be targeted by the Left before I can even write the words "New Hampshire Primary." In fact, the idea of Hillary taking the nomination is preposterous. The three most important states in the primary field are Iowa, New Hampshire, and South Carolina. With popular Iowa

Governor Tom Vilsick a possible contender and the reality that Hillary's mere existence is deplored in the Deep South, it leaves her only one out in the early field: New Hampshire. She'll be drowning before she can get off of the box.

Moderates who place a higher virtue in winning than actually standing for something (a.k.a. the Democratic Leadership Council), have crowned Indiana Sen. Evan Bayh the most electable candidate. Such a nomination caters the Party to its lowest common denominator and keeps it buried in the lackluster of mediocrity.

Virginia Governor Mark Warner could create a buzz in the liberal base, but he's leaving office next January (term-limits), cheating him of the opportunity to craft a national message. He's also a leading proponent of the death penalty, so I'll let him warm the bench.

Bill Richardson, the New Mexico Governor, has a solid base within the Southwest immigrant community and will force the Republicans to flood Arizona, New Mexico, and Colorado with paid campaign staff. But, he's still an unknown to many Party donors on the East Coast—the most important constituency during the primary vetting process.

In the mean time, I'm picking UNC over Illinois.

## In the year two thousand ... and eight

KYLE DRENNEN '07  
THE RIGHT

Following the resounding Republican victory in 2004, for both President Bush and the Republicans in Congress, many are already looking to 2008 for the next potential President. Who are the Republicans considering to run in order to maintain control in the Oval Office? There has been much speculation on this topic, with both realistic and unrealistic names proposed. Perhaps the best way to narrow down the playing field is to decide which Republicans will not be running.

I greatly admire the former mayor of New York City for his tough crime policy that helped to clean up the city as well as his incredible leadership on September 11th, when he earned the title "America's Mayor." However, I see too many potential problems with a Giuliani candidacy. Though Giuliani demonstrated uncommon leadership on 9-11, he has only been mayor of New York City; it would be an unusual jump to go directly to the presidency from here. Finally, Giuliani's marital scandals as well as his liberal attitudes toward abortion and gay marriage may alienate some social conservatives, especially evangelical Christians. I would like to see Giuliani in some position of power, such as a cabinet position, governor of New York following Pataki, or even attempt another run for the Senate in 2006, bringing about a Hillary defeat.

Some political commentators, including former aid to Bill Clinton Dick Morris see Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice as the Hillary antidote. However, while I greatly admire Rice, again I see numerous problems. She is unmarried and does not have a family. This may seem like an insignificant detail, I fear that many average Americans would make an issue of her family situation. Many Americans feel that marriage and family help to keep people grounded and make our political leaders, especially the President, more human. This factor may be offset by the fact that Secretary Rice is a black woman, but it is still uncertain. Additionally, many opponents of the Bush Administration see Rice as a "yes woman" to the President who did not offer adequate opposition to Bush's foreign policy, both as National Security Advisor and now as Secretary of State. Condoleezza Rice has recently subdued specula-

tion of her possible candidacy through public statements that she will not run.

There are several obvious reasons why a possible candidacy by the Governor of Florida would be unsuccessful. Perhaps the most obvious being his last name. Though President Bush is very popular among Republicans, he has been a divisive and controversial figure something Jeb will have to deal with. On top of this, Americans are generally resistant to political dynasties or the appearance of hereditary leadership.

An obvious contender for the nomination must be Senator John McCain from Arizona. Sen. McCain ran for President in 2000 and came in a close second behind then-Governor Bush in the Republican primaries. He is seen as a moderate Republican who is willingly to work with Democrats, an overall unifying force in Washington. He appears to have the respect of both liberals and conservatives, which will help him in a national campaign. However, during the 2004 election he often made news by criticizing the President on important issues and being close to the Kerry campaign. Though I can respect someone for speaking their mind, he caused President Bush numerous headaches during a close campaign and may have done so for political reasons.

Majority Leader Bill Frist has been among one of the strongest allies of the president in Congress. He seems to me to be a bit of a dark horse for the 2008 campaign. Though he is well known in Washington and inside the Beltway, Frist lacks the national following of the other contenders.

Many political observers suggest that Massachusetts has already kicked off his campaign with a speech he made in North Carolina a few weeks ago. Romney is already fairly well known nation-wide and breaks the Republican stereotype of being from the south or the west. For these and other reasons, I believe he has strong potential in 2008 and right now he is my favorite to win.

Who knows, if the Constitution is changed, Schwarzenegger could throw his hat in the ring.

# WORDS FROM THE BLOG:

**Holy Cross is about as cool as Woostahl!**

(Re: Common Ground, PC For the Next Generation)

What closet in Worcester were you locked in that made you think that Holy Cross is a better institution than PC?

Notre Dame has this Catholic nostalgia attached to it from the 1950s that has faded as equally as its football program over the years. Georgetown is a DC behemoth and is rightly on the top of the list of schools you suggested. BC is a heck of a school and because it is bigger and richer (and apparently considers itself a southern school, joining the ranks of Duke, UNC and Clemson) it has the edge over BC. But Holy Cross? The Crusaders fall short to PC.

Oh, and you forgot Villanova, which, as the College reminds us every damn year, is #1 to our #2 in the *U.S. World & News Reports* rankings.

But please, god—tell me my PC degree can take the Woosta' school.

—RJ Friedman '03

**Keep your morals to yourself**  
(Re: Defending Marriage under Canadian Fire)

Since when has it been the purpose of the state to legislate morality? I think that any conceptions of what a "marriage" should be must left at the door when discussing government benefits that directly affect people's lives but are withheld because of [weak] terminology.

I say, leave marriage to the religious to decide for themselves, but give the economic

and social protections granted by a secular, pluralist state to anyone who wants them. Giving two men the right to file a joint income tax will not lead Western Civilization down the slippery slope to bestiality.

—Kyle Hill '06

**Claiming Hider's God**

(Re: Defending Marriage under Canadian Fire)

One man once pointed out that marriage should be carried out earlier rather than later, in order to facilitate procreation and thus strengthen the state. He went so far as to say that late marriage was a "disgrace to humanity" because late marriage did not provide progeny:

"The first prerequisite for even the moral right to combat these things is the facilitation of earlier marriage for the coming generation. In late marriage alone lies the compulsion to retain an institution which, twist and turn as you like, is and remains a disgrace to humanity. . .

So in this person's view, late marriage is a moral evil, a "disgrace." This is from an earlier generation of your ideological ilk; yet nevertheless you are both claiming to know the moral foundations of marriage. You said yourself that "even though those

for whom marriage is intended do not always get it right, it is intended for them alone nonetheless." Assuming that you stand behind your words, it would be fair to say that you have some moral foundation for basing your claim; after all, you DO seem to know who marriage is (and is not) "intended" for. And, assuming that you are not the Almighty Himself, you force us, your readers, to believe that you are somehow divinely inspired. How else could you know for whom marriage is and is not intended?

So both you and Adolf Hitler claim to speak for God. At least conservatives in this country have not yet abandoned the hubris of their roots.

—Anonymous Posting

**It's the equality, stupid!**

(Re: Defending Marriage under Canadian Fire)

Right now, in Rhode Island, gay couples are denied more than 1,000 protections and benefits afforded to heterosexual married citizens. And this is in a state that tends to be progressive in regards to the rights of its gay couples. This is not an issue of what is or isn't threatening marriage. And this isn't protecting a religious institution, as the movement respects the autonomy of churches. This movement is about civil marriage. It is about equal rights. To grant gay couples a few rights is wrong. Civil unions are wrong. We tried these approaches already . . . it was called *Plessy v. Ferguson*. It is time we gave equal rights to all couples who want to be married. It is time to take the "het-

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erosexuals only" sign off of marriage.

—Dan Kachur '05

**Fix traditional marriage**

(Re: Defending the Constitution against Inequality)

[The Left tries] to dodge the battle over the word "marriage" by arguing that heterosexual marriage has become, in many ways, a farce; thus, if marriage means so little to the straights, what's the big deal about letting the gays borrow it? That modern marriage has developed significant problems is undeniable; however, do we further water it down by erasing its meaning, or do we fight to reverse the erosion that has taken place? Let's not throw in the towel because of high divorce rates; let's work to effect a societal change in which marriage is taken more seriously by all who partake in it. A broken marriage not only hurts the two partners, but any children and other family members caught in the cross-fire. Both the government and religious institutions need to broadcast to all those considering marriage that such an endeavor is not merely the union of two bank accounts, but a serious commitment that only those mature enough to see it through should undertake.

—Anonymous Posting

## SHORT TAKES

### Give Ireland to the Irish and a boot to the IRA

The IRA has finally gone too far. Even Teddy Kennedy won't meet with their political leaders from Sinn Fein as he has in the past as part of an attempt to provide diplomatic leadership in hopes of a peaceful agreement in Northern Ireland.

The heartless violence of the Irish Republican Army is a disgraceful evolution from the freedom fighters of the oppressed Catholics that demanded their independence from the United Kingdom before any of my relatives dreamed of crossing the Atlantic to move into Hell's Kitchen. In an age where the entire Western world is at war with violent terrorism, it remains a numbing reality that it is not only radical fundamentalists that resort to cowardly violence.

I understand the U.K.'s refusal to negotiate with terrorists and they rightfully denied Sinn Fein elected officials from entering Parliament after the recent killing of a Belfast Catholic by the IRA. However, the U.K. can no longer claim complete innocence in the bloody battlegrounds of Belfast. Terrorism should not be allowed a victory in turning the course of history, but Tony Blair ought to begin to rededicate himself to the peaceful solution in granting the Irish their complete freedom from foreign control.

A free Ireland is possible without the violence of the IRA, but it will require the British to recognize that their history with the Celts, just as our history with slavery, is the Kingdom's Original Sin.

MICHAEL RAIA  
THE LEFT EDITOR

### When did we stop talking about it?

"ELECTION DAY DEATH TOLL: Fewer casualties seen as win for coalition." Perhaps this headline from the Jan. 30th *Detroit Free Press* is a microcosm for our attitudes towards the War in Iraq have been these days.

Over a year ago, the vast majority of Americans were riding high on a righteous mission to disarm Saddam Hussein, free the Iraqi people, and be home in time for supper. America was flexing its military muscle for the good of the world. It was all so simple, so romantic and optimistic, and everyone, including myself, bought into it. Each of us, independent of party, united behind the grand narrative of freedom and the belief that our President was fighting the good fight.

Everything was fine at first: we took Baghdad quicker than anyone thought, incurred minimal casualties, and faced little resistance. But as the months wore on, the reality of the situation became clear. Every night we saw an increasing amount of soldiers and civilians dying, resistance was forming among insurgents, and it was unclear what the game plan was. And to make things worse, no WMD's were ever found.

Things have only gotten worse. Since our Cowboy President declared "Mission Accomplished," over 1,300 Americans have fallen, not to mention the countless civilian lives that have been lost. The United States has alienated its closest allies in the process. The Arab world becomes more hostile towards us, and with every military maneuver, more terrorists are born. And in maybe the most disturbing development of the whole ordeal, Americans are losing interest and becoming indifferent. With approval of the war faltering around 45 percent, why have we all of a sudden stopped talking about it?

These are difficult times we live in. We are led by men who will protect the life of a fetus but will murder thousands of foreigners for no clear cause. We watch war live like it were a sitcom or primetime drama. But this inverted morality will only survive as long as we let it. America can rediscover its sense of what is right, and hopefully, any casualties in the name of this conflict will be intolerable.

KEVIN ROE '07  
THE LEFT

BLACK & WHITE  
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