

Editorial



Bartsch speaks ... for whom?

It appears that S.G. President Brian Bartsch has put his foot in his mouth once again.

At a recent Slippery Rock Area Development Association (SRADA) breakfast for the merchants of Slippery Rock, Bartsch inferred that he and SRSC students were "guests in Slippery Rock and should be treated as such..."

Bartsch's ignorance of the fact that he is a citizen-resident of the Borough and as such has full responsibilities of citizenship should not be taken lightly. As president of the S.G.A., he speaks for all of the students. Since Bartsch thinks we are guests, we at the *Rocket* wonder if that means that we are entitled to free meals and housing from the merchants.

When the topic of using Slippery Rock students for internships arose, Bartsch inferred that since many of the merchants didn't attend college, their help would be "limited" to students.

Assuming statements such as that reflect badly on the students and the college. Bartsch's speaking before thinking will reflect badly on Slippery Rock if he is elected again. Bartsch, and his uncanny ability to speak with his foot in his mouth, has outworn his welcome as S.G. president.

Hopefully a better qualified student will run, and win, the presidency of the S.G.A. so that we may be spared any further embarrassment.

Professor comments on responsible drinking

To the Editor:

Suppose that you as an individual have the option of either participating or not participating in a certain event. And, suppose, being a responsible person, you weigh the outcomes of your choice before you choose. Further, suppose that if once you initiate participation, your ability to judge whether or not to continue participating is progressively diminished. That is, the more you participate the more your judgment is impaired. Finally, suppose that if you were to participate for a sufficiently long time, there would be a good chance that the downward spiral of judgment impairment would lead to irreparable harm to you and, in all probability, to others around you.

In this hypothetical setting, what do you as a responsible person choose to do? *Stop and Reflect on the above before you read further.*

It is my guess that a vast majority of the thinkers in our society would exercise the option of non-participation in the event described above. Since the chance exists that participation leads to harm, involvement to any degree is like playing Russian Roulette with a many-chambered revolver where the number of empty chambers rapidly decreases and the number of filled chambers is increased each time the trigger is pulled. At any time, even on the first spin of the cylinder, the live round could fall where the firing pin will explode the round and blow.

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Bartsch speaks out to SR merchants

Letters to the Editor

Rocket slated by student

To the Editor:

Maybe I'm a sentimentalist, but I hate to see fine things come to an end. I was heartbroken when the Green Bay Packers went from a powerhouse to an also-ran. I was devastated when *Life* magazine folded. I even get misty when the last drop of Jack Daniels disappears from the bottle. That's why it is especially hard to see the *Rocket* go steadily downhill after it showed such promise in the past few years.

In the past, the *Rocket* was known for its interesting and intelligent articles and its biting editorials and cartoons. Then, it seemed that there were professionals behind the publications; professionals who proofread, who deleted unacceptable articles and letters, and who policed the classified section, keeping it free from obscene or slanderous messages, while still maintaining the humor that made the section popular in the first place.

As fast as this quality

came, it seemed to have drained out just as quickly. Now, it seems that anyone who wants to, regardless of their ability, can write for the *Rocket*. Please don't get me wrong, there are some very good writers working for the paper. Unfortunately, they get pushed further and further in the backround by the other writers' poor grammar and informational mistakes. This ought to frustrate the good writers as much as it does the readers.

Also, I have never been treated rudely in the *Rocket* office until this year. For example, a few weeks ago, I went to the office to put in a classified and two announcements. I was told, in no certain terms, that "If the space is available, OK. If not, too bad." Imagine! The classified wasn't that big of a deal, but the announcements WERE IMPORTANT! To make a long story short, not one of my items were printed, even though I had them in on time. I can understand this,

because it's much more important to find out where one can get an abortion at three different places than it is to read an announcement of importance to SRSC students.

I guess what I'm trying to say is, SRSC had an excellent newspaper in the not too distant past, but it has slipped some this year. This doesn't mean it's dead, it just needs some pushing to get it back up to the plateau it once occupied.

Jeff Brown

Editor's note: The *Rocket* welcomes constructive criticism because of the fact that the students who work here consider the job a learning experience. That is also the reason we give "anyone who wants to, regardless of their ability" the opportunity to write for our publication. All of the student-run organizations on this campus are meant for educational purposes, and naturally professionalism has to be learned while doing the various jobs.

Candidacy announced

To the Editor:

During the past year, the students of Slippery Rock have read many letters from me criticizing the actions of the present Student Government Administration, especially those of President Brian Bartsch. These letters were important at the time, but not as important as this letter you are now reading. This letter is of much greater consequence because of Bartsch's announcement last week that he is seeking a second term in office. I foresee a re-election of Brian Bartsch, who has so many times this year shown his inexperience as a student leader, as a fatal mistake for the students of Slippery Rock.

Let us not forget Bartsch's first major mistake, the "firing" of Jim Twombly as the Project Coordinator of the

Campus Policy Review Panel. Not only did this action, which Bartsch had no power to do, sabotage the quality of work produced by our Review Panel and damage our prospects of receiving future grants, but it also dealt a final blow to Bartsch's already strained relationship with the Commonwealth Association of Students. His main platform emphasis last Spring was to create a good working relationship with CAS. His failure to do so has been shown in his refusal to discuss important issues with top CAS officials.

Bartsch's letter alluded to the help he gave CAS with the voter registration drive. I spent several hours at the tables, and never saw him there once. He gave no time for this. And the legislative committee he mentioned was

established only last week, and was comprised only of two senators when it should be of at least five.

The incumbent also alluded to his personal Cabinet, an advisory council established in mid-Fall 1980 with the passage of the new Constitution. Why then have we had only two meetings thus far, the first being in early February? And at neither meeting did Bartsch ask for advice on SGA matters, the main fault was shown in the statement he made earlier this semester concerning his following unconstitutional proceedings. When it was brought to his attention, Bartsch replied, "I don't think there's anyone out there who cares." How can a person who feels that his constituents do not care about stu-

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Art Buchwald, Syndicate Columnist

The West German lead

President Reagan hasn't been in office for two months and he's already created a new class for people. Before Reagan we had the rich, the middle class, and the poor. The new class is now called the "Near Poor."

The President and his advisers decided they needed another class because the government was putting too many people in the poverty class. Instead of dealing with poverty as previous administrations had, the Reagan people made the decision to eliminate a percentage of the poor people by promoting them to "Near Poor." In order to do this they raised the requirements for what it took to be declared "poor."

I know a struggling mother who used to think of herself as poor since she had to work and raise her children without the help of her husband. I thought she would be delighted with the news that she was no longer a poverty case and was now considered by the government as a "Near Poor" person who did not require federal assistance.

But it turned out she wasn't too thrilled that she had achieved upward mobility through OMB directive.

"I'd rather be poor than 'near poor,'" she told me. "At least when you're poor you know where your next meal is coming from. Now I'm on the razor's edge. I'm just over the new poverty line so I'm in worse shape than I was before."

"But," I said, "just think of your social status. Now your friends will respect you because you're no longer in the lowest social class of our society. You can look at the poor people with scorn."

"I know it sounds good on paper," she said, "but the 'Near Poor' are the ones who really have to take it on the chin under Reagan's economic plan. We have all the problems of the poor but none of the benefits. I'm not entitled to food stamps, or rent subsidies, day care or even a tax cut,

because in my bracket there is nothing to cut."

"Ah, but you forget the trickle-down effect of supply economics. When the rich get their tax cuts, they will use their money to invest in the country and that will trickle down to the poor and 'Near Poor.' I wouldn't be surprised in a year or two if the Reagan people promote you to the middle class, and then you'll be in really great shape."

"How do I keep my kids in shoes until then?" she wanted to know.

"You tighten your belt. That's what the middle class and rich people have to do."

"If I tighten my belt any more I won't be able to breathe. I've talked it over with my social worker and she doesn't think I can make it as a 'Near Poor' person."

"What did she suggest?"

"Her only solution was to quit my job and go on welfare."

"You mean you're willing to take a demotion from being 'Near Poor' to poor, just to feed your family?" I asked in astonishment.

"I'm not thrilled with the idea but I am discovering there really isn't much advantage to being 'Near Poor.'"

"I hate to say this but it's people like you who are going to make it very difficult for Reagan to turn this country around. He raised you above poverty level by declaring that you were no longer poor, and all you talk about is going back on welfare."

"I guess," she said, "I don't have what it takes to appreciate 'Near Poor' to 'Lower-Lower Middle Class?'"

"Do you think they would?"

"I'm sure of it. They'll call you anything you want as long as they don't have to help you out."

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Andrew Young, Former UN Ambassador

The poor move upwards

As President Ronald Reagan and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher were comparing notes on the pending economic disaster in the United States and Britain, the West Germans with their prosperous economy were busy increasing both their foreign aid and their export earnings.

The German view of the world today is strikingly different from that of the U.S. government. At the recent meeting of NATO defense ministers in Munich, Deputy Defense Secretary Frank Carlucci issued the U.S. call for an increase in European defense commitments. Other U.S. officials warned of possible U.S. troop withdrawals from Europe if our allies there fail to comply.

The German delegate to the NATO conference spoke of the need to ratify SALT and renew detente, even though Soviet tanks are only minutes away from West Germany and Soviet SS-20 rockets are targeted on West German cities and military installations. Why is it that the Germans are cool and confident in the shadow of the Soviet threat while the U.S. feels the need to rattle sabers from a distance of 3,000 miles?

If anyone ought to be nervous, it should be those countries bordering the Soviet Union. After all, U.S. hawks admit that we possess adequate nuclear capacity from both land-based and submarine-based missiles to totally destroy Soviet society at least 10 times. Where the U.S. is admittedly weak is in conventional weaponry, especially against Soviet armored divisions parked in Eastern Europe, which presumably could cross the Continent in a matter of days.

Yet the Germans resisted the war scare in their recent elections and returned to power a coalition of Social Democrats and liberals with an overwhelming mandate. Are the Germans more courageous than we are? Or have they become victims of the dreaded "Finlandization" of Europe—that curse of willingly accommodating the supposed reality of Soviet superiority? Are they the European version of Uncle Tom?

Whatever the answer, the reality is that the German citizens are working, and although they are paying more taxes than U.S. citizens, they are enjoying a greater range of social services than Americans do. The Germans' rate of inflation is one of the lowest in the world, and their economy is worth about twice as much as it was two decades ago—while the dollar, as President Reagan reminds us, is now worth 36 cents compared to its value in 1960.

The Germans voted to continue their present prosperity through more trade with Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, and they will be reluctant to follow the U.S. lead of increasing military expenditures. They are also busy producing goods for rapidly growing markets in the developing world. Since they must import two-thirds of their energy needs, including natural gas from the Soviet pipeline, their exports must expand lest they be forced to absorb the inflation caused by oil price increases.

The West German government will not challenge the Reagan hawks openly and will politely agree in public to

maintain the image of Western unity. But they are charting their own course, and quite possibly that of the free world. In the Western hemisphere their economic and political influence is being used to promote a different policy from that of Alexander Haig, the Secretary of State, whom they vigorously profess to respect. Gen. Haig is arming the military junta of El Salvador in spite of warnings from Mexico's President Jose Lopez Portillo and a broad U.S. coalition that no military solution is possible. However, the Germans are attempting to arrange talks on El Salvador in Bonn; the Christian Democrats are inviting the junta leader, Jose Napoleon Duarte, while the Free Democratic Party of Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher and the Social Democratic Party are inviting representatives of the insurgent Salvadorian movement.

If they are successful, it could save the U.S. from another futile effort to demonstrate American strength and resolve by accomplishing with reason and diplomacy what we are attempting through an escalation of death, destruction and terrorism.

Meanwhile, the Germans are taking advantage of economic opportunities abroad. In Africa, German construction companies closed down a \$60 million operation in South Africa and won \$6 billion worth of expressway construction in Nigeria. Their aid to Zimbabwe dwarfs ours already, and the U.S. proposes to cut that back even further. The Germans are well aware of the rich resources and great potential for industrial development in Zimbabwe.

I grew up in New Orleans, and as a boy I heard the Nazi cry of "Heil Hitler" in my neighborhood. For a long time I felt justified in some anti-German prejudice because of the Holocaust and the passivity of the "good Germans" while Jews were sent to the gas chamber.

So it is with some consternation that I now see West Germany claiming the leadership of the free world. But they have learned well the tragic in their history grew out of excessive inflation and economic chaos. They have defeated their demagogues in the last election, and now cling to the postwar experience of peaceful productivity as the best method of winning the battle against enemies within and without.

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SG Pres. candidate

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dent government honestly represent the beliefs of these same people. I know, from many conversations with various students, that there are plenty of students out there who care. These same people ask me the question, "What is Student Government doing for us?" My answer is very little.

My criticisms of Bartsch have permeated this paper for more than a year now. But I am a firm believer that any criticism should be supported by action, and it is time for action to begin. Friends, there will be an alternative to another year of a Bartsch Administration. That alternative is myself.

Although there is not enough room here for me to fully explain my ideals of a good student government, I will say that my philosophy drastically differs from that of Bartsch. I can promise full support for students' rights because I have done so in my three years at Slippery Rock. I can mend our relationship with CAS because I already have a good, working relationship with them. With my help we may again have research grants offered to us.

I look forward not to spending just a campaign together because that's not important. What's important is spending an entire year listening to you, the students, and making Student Government again the voice of the Students of Slippery Rock.

I welcome discussion with all on matters that concern you. It's your choice as to which of us you think is the best person for the job. Let's not force ourselves to struggle through another year without a strong student leader.

Michael S. Burk
Past Pres. of IFC
Past Pres. of
Theta Chi Fraternity

The Rocket welcomes letters from the college community. We reserve the right, however, to edit any letters submitted in order to protect ourselves as well as the writer from libel. Letters of extreme length are also subject to editing.

Although we attempt to print all letters, space limitations in the paper, or other reasons mentioned may prevent this.

All letters must be signed, but names may be withheld upon request. Deadline for submitting letters is 5 p.m. Monday before the Friday issue.

Have a great spring break
everybody!

-Rocket Staff