Political Perspective: Where do we go from here?

Now that the war has begun, the question that seems to be on everyone’s mind is when will it end? This is a question that our generation probably will not have to answer, as they have often times said it is either a war you would not want your child to see or one that you would not want to see your child fight to the death in. Therefore it is rhetorical that this war will end. However, I think it is important to realize that we are now entering a new era of terrorism, which is why we must realize that the war is not over. The war is still going on and unfortunately it is a war that will never end.

American feelings from page 8

Completely and blatantly accepting of immi- gration! Although there are strict immigration laws in effect, the Statue of Liberty still stands there, welcoming all those in need.

Although Japan arguably turns out the best scholars, as they have 18-hour school days seven days a week, what country has the most incoming foreign students? America. From all over the world people come to America to be educated, although education is available in their own countries. In Rider University alone there are students from Spain, Brazil, Puerto Rico, Austria and France, among others. It would be difficult to name one country that has not at one time needed and received American aid, whether it be monetary, militarily or politically. When England stood all alone against Hitler, bloody but unbowed, who stepped in to turn the tide and win the war? America. When Japan lay in ruins and the government collapsed, who set up a new one and provided military protection? America. Who has lent money all over the world and has not only been yet to be paid, but has been repaid with interest? America. Who sends humanitarian relief to every country that needs it, even if we are fighting the gov- ernment of that country at the same time? America, of course.

The best way to qualify these feats by point- ing out that the United States Bombed Japan before it helped; that America did not step into WW II until after Pearl Harbor and that along with relief packages for hungry people comes corruption. It may be easy to say that America only looks out for itself, but it is simply not true. There have been many times when the United States, while helping to set up a new government, could have taken over the coun- try and its resources. But it never has. America is currently billions of dollars in debt, but does it try to get repaid? Or, more importantly, does it stop sending aid to those who are in need? No. The U.S. continues to serve, although it may at a loss to America personally.

Yet, in 2003, 73 percent of Britons said they had anti-American feelings. International polls show a staggering increase of anti- American feelings especially in France, where 80 percent of the population are “highly criti- cal” of both President Bush and America, and Germany, where 85 percent of the population feel that way.

Unfortunately, the infectious anti- Americanism is not only confined to foreign countries, but has spread to our own back- yard. Although as Americans we have a right, a responsibility, to question our government and its actions, I think we have an equal responsibility to take pride in our country. The world wants nothing more than to be like America, but Americans themselves can’t wait to distance themselves from this country. And to me, that’s just wrong. As in a family, you can disagree with your parents and your siblings and be vehemently opposed to what they are doing, but if anybody else criticized you, you would fight for them.

I’m not referring to people who are anti- war; although before the fighting started, many Americans were against military action in Iraq, and now it is a moot point most have decided simply to support our troops. I’m referring to those who look at our government and see only negatives. I’m speaking of those who discover a conspiracy in every action taken by America. I’m talking about people who scathingly call this country materialistic and selfish, and refuse to see past the one image they are comfortable with. It’s simplistic and silly to say only about America. Seeing only the negative aspects of this country is just as dangerous as blind patriotism.

Remember that person from high school? No matter how confident and independent he or she may have seemed, they were vulnerable. There is a weak spot. No matter how many pressures and criticisms that the person may receive from others, they can usually over- come such obstacles. It is when plagued by self-doubt and self-criticism, when burdened with internal strife, that a person, or a country, may fall.