

The information behind the emotion

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The polarization of the opposing political viewpoints on this campus was never more obvious than at last Thursday's Republican Club rally in support of Eugene Hasenfus, the American survivor of the plane shot down over Nicaragua last week.

It is truly embarrassing to see a group of people gather around and call a private citizen, whose intellectual capacity remains to be known (but is probably about the same as shelf paper) a war hero for trying to covertly supply the contras with arms. Are these people truly so misinformed or are they just out to oppose the left wing on this campus at any cost?

The rational right prides itself on its knowledge that the contras are players, not pawns. They are not the moral equivalent of our Founding Fathers, which is what Reagan would like us to believe, but rather a group of rebels fighting for a cause sympathetic to the wants of the United States. Those wants consist mainly of national security and support in the United Nations.

This is not a column about Nicaragua. It is a column about people making their voices heard without thinking. It is a column about two opposing ideological groups who, it appears, are out just to state their respective cases which are so one-sided that I feel they can't possibly be properly researched.

Stuart Gottlieb

When I walk up to the Student Union building and see a guy sitting there with a sign that says "US Out of Nicaragua" I see a guy who is looking one-sidedly at the issues at hand. I see a guy who does not take into account external factors of world politics such as strategic benefit. I would not fault him as much on his viewpoint as his lack of information.

The same stands conversely. A group who feels that the contras are there for the benefit of the United States should state just that. They should not attempt to douse

the situation with cologne in order to make the opposing view appear moot. It makes their argument appear moot.

Eugene Hasenfus is not a war hero and he was not "captured by the Sandinistas" as some would like us to believe. Eugene Hasenfus is an American who took a very dangerous step in aiding the contras through a private organization. He knew the risks involved, and if he didn't think of them before, he knows them now. He is probably only now realizing the seriousness of his actions.

Slanting information, and disregarding opposing viewpoints are potentially the most dangerous phenomena this country could face. For two hundred years this country has survived on its open-mindedness and quality of debate. Information is the key for both of those actions.

And now for Stuart Gottlieb's opinion on the two American ideologies arguing over Nicaragua:

Let us remember that it is not un-American to be mistaken, not disloyal to choose the course of appeasement or noninvolvement, not unpatriotic to decide against helping Central Americans resist Communist takeover.

On the other hand, the inclination to moralize about abuses overseas, while determinedly ignoring a mounting danger on our border, is not necessarily a badge of honor.

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