

U.S. decision not made in vacuum

COHEN from Page 4

But the major European concern is terrorism itself. Many Europeans are afraid that retaliating against Moammar Khadafy is like poking a snake with a stick. This is hardly an irrational fear. In the last year alone, there have been two terrorist incidents in Spain, six in France, three in Greece, four in Germany, three in Italy and one in Austria. Whatever the eventual result of the U.S. bombing might be, in the short term there will be upsurge of terrorism. Many Americans, quick to condemn European timidity, have themselves canceled plans to travel abroad this summer. For Europeans, things are not so simple; they are already there.

Still, Europeans who are so quick to demonstrate against the United States ought to ask themselves why they did not do the same when the Rome and Vienna airports were littered with the bodies of 16 persons killed by terrorists. Where were they when three members of one U.S. family were blown out of a plane over Greece? Why no widespread European indignation when 18 Span-

iards were killed in the Madrid bombing of a restaurant frequented by U.S. servicemen?

Where was the march for the bombing last month that killed two persons in Paris; the one on Feb. 5 in a Parisian shopping mall; the bomb that exploded in a crowded Latin Quarter bookstore the day before; or the one that exploded Feb. 3 on the Champs Elysee, wounding eight persons? Who marched for the Achille Lauro and Leon Klinghoffer, for the TWA hijacking and Navy diver Robert D. Stedhem or for the 57 who died when commandos botched an attempt to free the passengers on an Egyptian plane forced to land on Malta? No one — that's who.

It's true that not all these terrorist incidents can be traced to Libya, not even most of them, and it's true that in both France and Italy there were public protests against terrorism directed against Jewish targets. But by and large, those Europeans who are inclined to exhibit their political opinions by marching, did not hit the road until U.S. bombs hit Tripoli. Then, as if the event took place in a vacuum, a roar came up from the pavement.

You can argue over the wisdom of the bombing. You can argue over the manner of its execution. You can fear for U.S. standing in the Middle East, for whether the lessons of Libya will be misapplied to Nicaragua. But you can not treat the bombing as if it were an unprovoked, irrational act — as if it had not been preceded by many bombings, years of carnage, and a constant plea from the United States to the European nations to punish Libya economically. The response was a cynical shrug of the shoulders by those same European nations.

There are a thousand concerns to be voiced. But you can not voice an outrage that does not take into account all that went before: terrorist acts all over the world and, finally, the one that took the life of a U.S. soldier April 5 in West Berlin. European anti-Americanism is plain to the ear. The sounds of silence have been replaced by the roar of hypocrisy.

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Cohen writes an editorial column for the Washington Post.

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Letters

Greeks use 'gumption' for others

Each year the Greeks at UNL celebrate Greek Week, and each year some editorialists makes a feeble stab at belittling them.

This year Scott Harrah was right. His article (DN, April 15) was based on an extremely "unoriginal and contrived topic." A few clothing criticisms and a bad attitude toward philanthropies hardly constitutes the wasting of space in the paper. So while wearing my putrid, pastel Greek T-shirt and floral-print, day-glo beach attire, I decided to

add some facts.

Greeks raise more money and volunteer more time for non-profit organizations than any other student group — about \$60,000 to \$65,000 a year. The overall Greek Grade Point Average is consistently higher than the overall university GPA. Greeks comprise the majority of membership in many top student groups. And there are also Greeks who pay for their own education and living expenses.

So there you have it, some facts about those "geeky" Greeks. But for Harrah and his followers, who have the "gumption to do their own thing," perhaps they should stop doing their thing and start doing something for others.

Laura Harvey
senior
English

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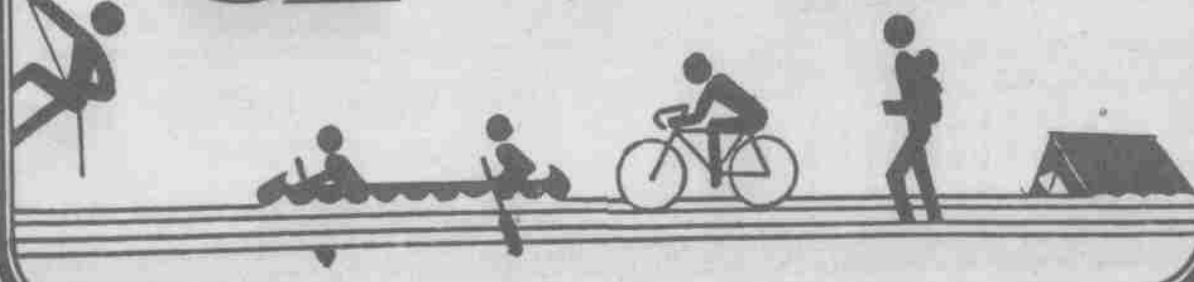
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