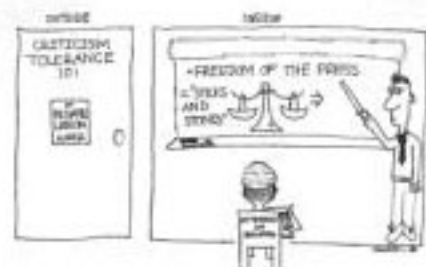


### Unrest Over Danish Political Cartoon is Lampooned by 10th Grade Cartoonist



**Melissa Oppenheim's political cartoon. (PRNewsFoto/Boardroom PR)**

FORT LAUDERDALE, FL UNITED STATES  
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#### Florida Senator Nan Rich Supports Student's Right to Express Views

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla., Feb. 9 /PRNewswire/ -- As more than half a million Muslims rally to oppose recent Danish political cartoons featuring the Prophet Mohammed, a Ft. Lauderdale high school political cartoonist is responding in her own unique way. Melissa Oppenheim, editor of "Mel's Corner", a column that runs monthly in the Weston Express, has been watching the national news coverage and has her own response to the uproar ... a response she is conveying through her cartoons.

(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20060209/FLTH016> )

"I recently traveled to Egypt and Israel and am interested in the cultural differences," commented Melissa. "I felt strongly about the issue, so I decided to express myself through these political cartoons."

Melissa is a 16-year-old honors student at the Pine Crest School in Ft. Lauderdale and has been doing political cartoons for a few years. She is on the Editorial Board of her high school newspaper.

Many of her cartoons depict her views on global warming and the conflict in the Middle East, and the President's reaction to world affairs. Reaction to her work has been extremely positive. Her publisher, Diane Cortz, requested that Melissa's cartoons include "Cliff Notes" because, as she put it, 'they are so cutting edge'. And Florida Senator Nan Rich also weighed in with her support.

"Melissa is a very impressive and talented 16-year-old who cares about important issues around the world," Senator Rich said. "I believe she is urging adults to be more sensitive and tolerant, while recognizing the importance of humor."

Melissa is also a globally minded student and has initiated several fundraising projects following national disasters. Following the September 11th attacks, she organized a sale of patriotic clothing and jewelry and raised over \$20,000 for orphans of the attacks. This past summer she surveyed her fellow students about their community service experiences and created a guide that rated community service opportunities. Proceeds from the guide raised money for the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

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