

Letter to the Editor

War in Iraq? Yes!

Dear Editor,

"Follow Your Heart - Not Bush," the poster read. I've seen them all around campus now. Posters that encourage - nay, demand - you follow your heart, that you pursue what you believe to be right and true in regards to this impending war against Iraq. Of course, the assumption is that every right-thinking person will not agree with President Bush, and will oppose a war against Iraq. A heart-wrenching picture of a jet and a skeletal child adorn the background of the poster, obviously intended to cement my decision to oppose any military action against Iraq.

But what if - for shame! - my heart led me to believe that war against Iraq would be for the benefit of all? What if I actually believe that the world should lead an assault against Iraq? To counteract such malevolent beliefs, a list of reasons why war against Iraq is bad is put up near the other poster. However, I must admit, even those reasons are unconvincing, irrelevant, or simply incorrect if you study them closely.

- The first reason cites the "Strategic Energy Policy Challenges for the 21st Century," which was sponsored and written by the Baker Institute. Have the writers of these posters even read this thing? I did. It said nothing about a plan by the Bush cabinet to take over Iraq. It didn't even suggest that it would be a good idea. On the contrary, the Baker report advises stronger ties with Mid-Eastern countries, such as Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait,

and an easing of the sanctions on Iraq, in order to alleviate anti-Americanism in that region.

- The second reason quotes Scott Ritter, a former UN Chief Weapons Inspector, as saying that there are "no significant weapons of mass destruction" in Iraq, and no way to make them. However, Hans Blix, the current chief UN Weapons Inspector, has said that Iraq has imported rocket engines and rocket fuel, and has often blocked and delayed inspections. The possibility exists that Iraq has weapons of mass destruction, or the means to make them. Only when the report of the UN Weapons Inspectors is made can the reality be known.

- The third reason says that al-Qaeda has no connection to Iraq. Some evidence exists that contradicts this; however, the link is not clear. Somewhat damning was Bin Laden's recent call to Iraqis to use suicide tactics on the Western world, but this certainly doesn't prove that they are linked. There might be a connection, or there might not be. This reason doesn't support either position.

- The fourth reason says that "[t]his is not a war in defence of democracy" and goes on to claim that occupation of the country would not lead to democracy. First, there are no domestic democratic groups in Iraq. There is one that I can find (though no more recent stories on it than 1991), but it is in exile. Occupation of Germany post-WWII led to democracy. Occupation of South Korea helped keep democracy when North Korea threatened to take it away. So occupation can go both ways. Indeed, the Hussein

Administration is highly unlikely to let even a shadow of real democracy darken Iraq, for fear that the Iraqi people might actually be able to make their own decision. A US occupation can only be a step in the right direction.

- Several reasons quote Article 2 of the UN Charter as proof that a US attack on Iraq would be unlawful. But the actual wording of Article 2 is so vague (concerning what is a "material breach," or "imminent threat"), that almost any action can be argued as valid. Furthermore, war is at its very nature extra-legal, because it is an action that takes place between two or more countries, each with different ideas of what "law" is. Thus it is not "unlawful," nor is it a "clear violation of international law and the UN Charter."

- Several reasons cite the large numbers of Iraqi civilians that would die as a result of military action in Iraq. This is certainly true. Hundreds of thousands would probably eventually die if an invasion of Iraq commenced. But conceivably more will die if the Hussein Administration is left ruling the country. During the Anfal campaign of 1988 alone, the Hussein Administration destroyed 4000 villages, gassing 60 of them. The final count included over a hundred thousand Kurdish men dead. The Hussein Administration is an imminent danger to its own people.

- The second last reason cites the Prime Minister of Malaysia as saying the war against Iraq would "undermine the world economy." Obviously, the Prime Minister is neither a historian or an economist. Robert Barro, professor of economics at Harvard, wrote in *Business Weekly* that the economy of the States was strengthened as a result of military spending during WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. The economy of the world is intricately tied to the economy of the US. When they are strong, the rest of the world is stronger.

When they are weak, as was seen after the terrorist

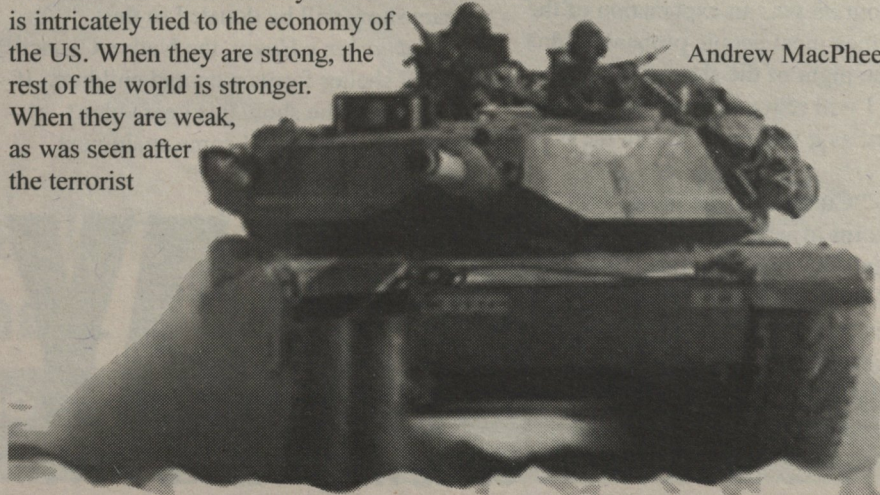
attack on the World Trade Center, the global economy becomes weaker.

- The final reason homes in on Canadian's patriotic feelings. The authors of the poster claim that Canada has spend over a billion dollars in the blockade and war against Iraq. However, much of our national revenue is tied to our trade with the US. In 2001 alone, 9.4 billion dollars (CAN) worth of softwood lumber were exported to the US. The US slapped an almost 30% duty on that, costing Canadian companies almost 3 billion dollars. Good or not, our economy rests on a smooth relationship with the US, not on a potential war in the Middle East. Canada becoming a poorer nation will undermine our security and independence far more than any war.

In conclusion, while the originators of these posters obviously believe strongly in opposing war against Iraq, they seem unable to convincingly make that case to other people in an intelligent and persuasive manner. Their attempts to portray this situation in such a black-and-white manner are laughable. I am insulted that they condescend so much as to present only the pros of the anti-war side, and the cons of the other. I came to university not to follow my heart, or to follow Bush - I came to follow my head. I trust my intelligence enough that I can make the right decisions when presented with all the information. If I want to follow my heart, I'll go watch a romantic comedy.

The title of my letter has changed a few times, and I ended up with this one because it would grab attention. But in truth, I am not trying to persuade you to believe me. I don't particularly care whether you agree with me. I just want you to know why you believe what you do.

Andrew MacPhee



Fun & Games

Identify the songs these lyrics come from:

- 1) "If you ever do, I promise you, I'll be the first to crucify you."
- 2) "I recommend getting your heart trampled on to anyone. I recommend walking around naked in your living room."

Movie Quotes (identify the film):

- 1) "This is my dance space. This is your dance space. I don't go into yours, you don't go into mine."
- 2) "Even the smallest person can change the course of the future."

Trivia:

- 1) How many different subway lines are in Toronto? London?

2) As of the 2002 Confederation Centre of the Arts Summer Festival, how many actresses have played Anne?

Answers from the last issue:

Lyrics:

- 1) You're So Vain by Carly Simon
- 2) Long December by Counting Crows

Movie Quotes:

- 1) Gladiator
- 2) Sixth Sense

Trivia:

- 1) Jezebel was the only Bible character who was eaten by dogs.
- 2) The Isles of Langerhan are in your pancreas- they produce insulin.