

LETTERS

Clearly, it is not an anti-war statement. It is an anti-American statement.

Is this the view espoused by the anti-war coalition? Do they view the United States as the enemy? Do they really think that the Arabs can work out their problems all by themselves? With Iraq annexing Kuwait; Syria taking over Lebanon; Saudi Arabia expelling citizens of Yemen from their country (because of Yemen's support of Saddam) and countless other abuses in the Arab world, it is clear that they cannot. If the United States had not entered the region, would Saddam have stopped at Kuwait? Saudi Arabia? Qatar?

From this article, one does not get the impression that peace is the ultimate goal of the anti-war coalition. Instead the goal is pointing out the evil American empire as the enemy, and if chaos in the Persian Gulf is the result, then so be it. It isn't for us (and the oil companies!) to decide.

Alan Grad

Gulf article mistaken

To the editor,

Brent Poland's article in defense of Canadian troops being in the Persian Gulf (Opinions, Nov. 28) is a defence of imperialism based on two lines of mistaken argument.

First, it is based on the belief that the intervention is an "international peacekeeping coalition" conducted under UN auspices and that this makes it different from one led by the US. But the Korean War, in which US and Canadian troops fought as a UN force, was nothing but a clash between the Western capitalist bloc and the Stalinist state capitalist bloc.

Appeasement won't work with Saddam

To the editor,

Re: Nov. 19 issue of Excalibur
Statements were made that "Young Canadians are being asked to put their lives on the line to kill for an oil company" and that "This is a war effort being led by corporations". . . . What a shot in the arm for the moral of Canadians serving in the Persian Gulf.

Why does Excalibur denigrate by implying that our soldiers and politicians are nothing more than America's yes men? Reading the shameful editorial of November 19, as well as comments by David McNally, Carolyn Egan and Bashar Abdul Qadar, one would believe that it is the U.S. and its allies, not Iraq, that have committed an act of "imperialist" aggression.

Comparisons between Adolf Hitler and Saddam Hussein should not be dismissed out of hand. Although Hussein is a butcher in his own right, his actions cannot even begin to approach — either in magnitude or monstrosity — those of Adolf Hitler. But strictly as a comparison of military aggressors, there exist parallels.

Both men were and are beligerent megalomaniacs capable of bestial cruelty. Both were masters of propaganda (Hussein directs the television media like a symphony maestro and has his

Why should an intervention that is all about oil and "Washington's determination to retain its place as the world's last superpower" (as a New York Times columnist wrote) change its character when conducted under the blue UN flag?

Are we so naive as to believe that if Saddam Hussein's brutal regime is toppled by troops in UN berets pro-Western puppet?

We should recall that UN intervention in the Congo in 1961 brought about the murder of the African nationalist Lumumba and his replacement by the pro-Western Mobutu.

The second error in Poland's argument in his nationalist equation of the interests of the big business and political elites that form Canada's ruling class with the interests of most Canadians.

He states over and over that "Canada" must have troops in the Gulf. Well, Mulroney needs them there to retain the support of those sections of the capitalist class at home and abroad that are clamoring for war.

But students and working people have no interest whatsoever in supporting a drive to war that will strengthen those very forces which want to "restructure" the economy i.e. lay-offs workers, raise taxes, attack social services, underfund universities still further.

The idea that the UN is part of the solution to the Gulf crisis and the concept of "national interest" are both myths that must be countered if the ever-more likely UN-approved war in the Gulf is to be stopped.

And, to give credit where credit is due, Excalibur is to be congratulated for taking an anti-war editorial stance. Hopefully, it will not back down when patriotic hysteria heats up.

David Camfield
York International Socialists

YFS needs democracy

To the editor,

Re: "1001 Thank yous", in the Nov. 21 edition of the Excalibur.

First, we would like to thank the "sans coalition" on deciding for us what is appropriate student activism. We personally did not realize that there was such a list. But more importantly, we did not realize that democratization of the school government and referendum procedure was so insignificant.

Second, we feel that the "sans coalition" has missed the entire point behind the banner protest in central square. The matter of the seven dollars is symbolic of the referendum itself. The point was not brought out that students would indeed have to pay this.

Third, we see this protest as very important for students. If we do not ensure that there is democracy on the campus and of our own student government, how can we hope to deal with other issues.

The president of YFS, ran on a platform of democratizing student government. Yet, in four weeks weeks of protest we have been ignored. A petition which over 2,000 have signed is seen as no more than trivial and bothersome.

There has been no open forum to discuss the grievances of the students. But, more blatantly, there has been denial of our existence.

So to the "sans coalition," sometimes the means doesn't justify the ends. Sometimes the process is as important as the result. Because it is through the process that democracy is exercised. It's time to bring it to the student government.

Paul Brienza
and Mattia Magnatta

apologizers right here at York.)

Both men had at their disposal powerful armies when they conquered militarily inferior-neighbours on the pretext that they were merely claiming what should have been theirs by rights: Hitler claiming the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia, Hussein annexing Kuwait.

Both men counted heavily on the world's apathy to achieve their aims. In Hitler's case, Neville Chamberlain remarked "I believe in peace in our time." The result; 53 million dead. In Hussein's case, his bluff has been called.

Insinuations that Hussein is being singled out for special treatment because he's an Arab are preposterous. That the staunchly Arab and Muslim states of Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Syria are lined up against Hussein should be proof enough.

Should diplomatic efforts continue in attempting to persuade Saddam Hussein of his folly? Yes. Should the naval blockade be given more time to hurt Iraq economically? Of course. Should every effort short of surrender be made to avoid war? Without question.

But failed diplomatic attempts to dislodge Iraq from Kuwait make it increasingly obvious that reason will not work with Hussein because he is an obstinate thug whose appetite for conquest has

put him on a war footing. The Israelis, who had the foresight to destroy Hussein's nuclear capability while it was in its infancy, predictably drawing international condemnation, now justifiably exclaim "We told you so." Can anyone doubt that Hussein would hesitate to exercise a nuclear option?

No reasonable person favours war or opposes peace. But for those who choose to ignore the lesson of the 20th century, the message bears repeating: APPEASEMENT DOESN'T WORK. Appeasement, however disguised, is the bargaining tool of fools and cowards, a tactic whose short term gains are more than offset by its ruinous long term consequences.

Yes, it is easy to play armchair general when our ass isn't on the frontline. It is easy, however reluctantly, to contemplate a war whose immeasurable, incomprehensible horror one will safely observe through the filtering medium of a T.V. screen.

But a possibility of war is something that we should come to terms with in ways that are more constructive rather than selfishly worrying about how to avoid a compulsory draft in the event of a protracted conflict.

Sincerely,
Asher Levy

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