

Canada needs to be in gulf

by Kevin McDonald

According to our campus sage, the venerable Alex Burton, Canadian soldiers, sailors and airmen may soon die in the Persian Gulf in the interests of American foreign policy and the big oil companies.

And, Alex saw Joe Clark's announcement of Canadian willingness to go to war with Iraq without U.N. approval as "seriously wrong". He goes further by saying Canadian forces are there "...so Bush and his friends in the oil business can teach Hussein a lesson". He ends his Op/Ed by concluding that "something stinks in the "(United) States of Canada". After reading his piece it almost makes one want to hum "The Internationale".

Let's get some things straight, Alex. For starters, I don't live in the "(United) States of Canada", do you? Canada has always had a very independent foreign policy of



the U.S., as shown recently by our differences over Cuba and the Third World. Backing our neighbour to the South this issue should not be construed as mere toadying.

Brian Mulroney should be applauded for his support of George Bush by threatening to go to war with Iraq without waiting for U.N. rubberstamp approval. (Joe Clark only wishes he got to read such rhetoric in his short term as Prime Minister.)

It must be understood that Saddam Hussein is a dictator, he understands one concept above all - the use of force. The more countries stand up against him, the more he will be persuaded to withdraw from Kuwait. He invaded (raped is a better term) a sovereign country (albeit not a democracy) and is currently holding thousands of citizens from all over the world hostage at military targets. Daily reports of atrocities reach the Western press about life in Kuwait. There are already stories of Asian workers starving to death, rape of Kuwaiti and Western women, and the mass executions of Kuwaiti men. (No mention of this in Burton's article.)

If Canada does not lend its voice to those condemning Iraq, and back it with a commitment of arms, it is morally impotent. Brian Mulroney and George Bush do not want to be the Neville Chamberlains of the 1990's.

Furthermore, Alex Burton should look a little closer before he vaguely generalizes that American interests are being dictated by multi-national oil companies, and Canadians are being sent to die by a "morally corrupt government".

He shows great insensitivity by neglecting to mention the hostages or their families and the brutalized and oppressed people of Kuwait. Not once did he suggest a single solution to the crisis, of course he specializes in writing critical editorials of the Federal government. His editorial has exactly what he talked about in his third paragraph; "something lacking any particular focus or direction" with its unsubstantiated theorizing that any future Canadian casualties will be for the sole benefit of America and her oil companies.

I say, stand behind the men and women of Canada who are allied with the nations of the world for a just cause. Maybe it is time to "smell some coffee". Yes, the possibility exists that a war may come and we should do all that we possibly can to peacefully avoid it, short of appeasement. Joe Clark's remarks were intended to make less media-conscious Canadians aware of the real danger our servicemen and women face. But we must not allow Saddam Hussein to keep Kuwait and even a single hostage.

Don't listen to appeasers and apologists, stand up (and fight if necessary) for what's right.

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