

Arts & Ideas

Are democracies honorable?

By JOHN SOMMER

A statistic can be a beam of bright light that uncovers a hidden malady. Consider this one: the United States imports 290,000 barrels of oil from Iraq and Kuwait every year. These same barrels of oil could have been saved had the United States raised their auto-efficiency standards by 2.75 miles per gallon. By not raising their auto-efficiency standards the United States set themselves up for blackmail by Saddam Hussain.

Of course, just the other year, Saddam Hussain was the dear friend of the United States against Iran. In those balmy days the capitalist world eagerly supplied Saddam Hussain with everything he needed for his present "holy war" against his suppliers.

France sold him aircraft, Italy sold him equipment to manufacture plutonium, Germany sold him poison gas, the Americans added food subsidies and export



John Sommer
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loan guarantees, even the Soviet Union sold him tanks and rifles.

Now an enormous and very costly effort has to be made to contain Saddam Hussain's menacing ambitions. According to President Bush "we have to stand up for what is right and condemn what is wrong, all in the name of peace."

I have difficulties with this pronouncement. Why didn't he say that we have to stand up and fight in order to be able to fill our gas

tanks with cheap gasoline? That is, after all, the real reason why the United States (and the well-trained little dog Canada, who walks so bravely beside his master's heel), has launched this massive expedition to the Persian Gulf.

If Saddam Hussain is not cowed by this display of might, and if, therefore, a major war breaks out in the Middle East, what will the American and Canadian boys and girls be dying or? For the liberation of Kuwait, a country so barbaric, that women, found in adultery, are beheaded there? Of course not. They will die, in far-away deserts and oceans, to guarantee uninterrupted profits for a very few.

There are, by now, only two nations on this planet: a rich nation and a poor nation. The people of the rich nation live in air-conditioned towers, walled-in estates, and sybaritic hotels. They move from one radiant enclave to another, in super-fast jets and stretch limousines. They are equally at home in New York, Paris, Hong Kong, Toronto and Palm Beach.

The people of the poor nation, by comparison, dwell in the sweltering slums of the Third,

Fourth, and Fifth world, where they breed, fight, and eventually die, of hunger and disease.

We, the most fortunate, can feel noble at a \$200.00 a plate banquet that's supposed to raise funds for famine relief. But by definition, money has no conscience and does not feel solidarity.

To expect love for a particular country from the people who inhabit the rich nation, who's great wealth enables them to shift their operations at a moments notice from one continent to another, is naive, to say the least.

The confrontation in the Gulf might turn out to be a nightmare for the little man, who sees his savings eaten away by an ever-increasing war machine, but for the free market operator it will prove to be a delirious windfall.

A dreadful thought lingers in the mind. If the so-called free world can keep it's high standard of living only by waging war whenever our energy sources are threatened (thereby depriving the poor nation of it's share), how can we convince the people of the poor nation that democracy is an honorable thing, and not only that, but, in comparison to communism, a spiritual triumph?

New sculpture to be unveiled

A new sculpture entitled Mindemoya will be unveiled at the Donald Forster Sculpture Park at the McDonald Stewart Art Centre on October 20th at 3 p.m.

The unveiling is one of several activities planned for the Centre's Annual Open House that day. In a reception open to the public from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m., coffee, punch and other refreshments will be served. Artist Ron Shuebrook, Chair of the Fine Arts Department at the University of Guelph, will speak at 2:00 about his work currently on exhibit. Children aged 5 to 12 are invited to participate in a

drawing workshop at 1:00, 2:00 or 3:00. A video, "The Canadian Collection" will also be screened throughout the afternoon.

Canadian sculptor Frances Gage, creator of the bronze sculpture Mindemoya will speak at the unveiling, along with Steven Rhodes, Publisher of the Guelph Daily Mercury, and Alan Meek, Associate Dean of the Ontario Veterinary College at the University of Guelph. The sculpture was purchased with funds donated by the Daily Mercury, the Ontario Veterinary College and with the assistance of the Ontario government through the Ministry of Culture and Communications.

Artisans offer children's course

The Credit Valley Artisans are offering a children's multi-media art course on Saturday mornings starting this Saturday. In each of the four sessions, students will be introduced to a different art form, each representing the four guilds of the Credit Valley Artisans.

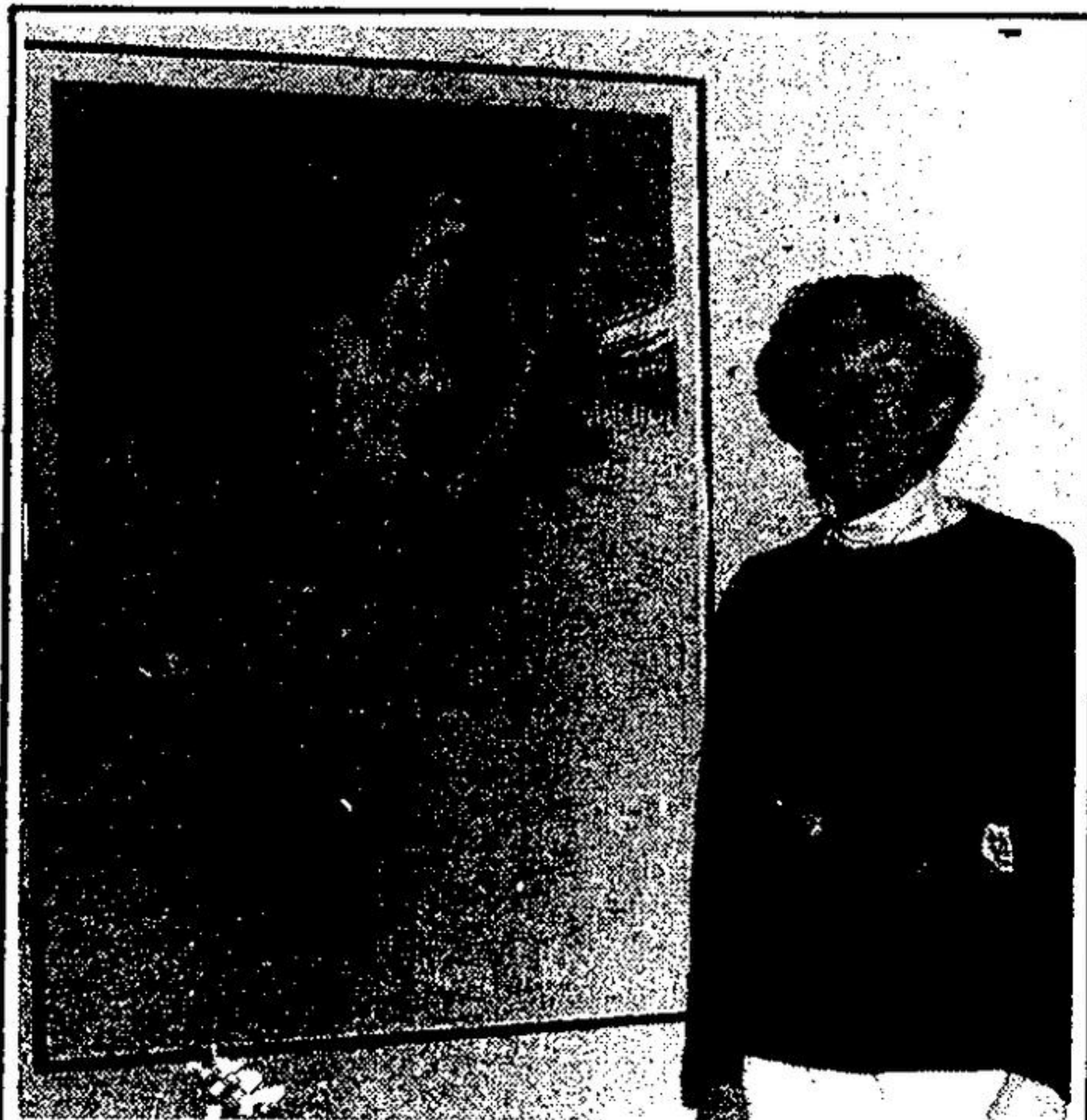
In the first session, Bev Didur of the Palette and Pencil Club will teach drawing and water colours. Next, the students will create a clay sculpture with Mary Ann Martin of the Pottery

Guild.

Joanna Dobbin of the Heritage Handweavers will show students how to weave on an inkle loom. In the final session, Mary Rowan will create pseudo-stained glass windows with the children.

Students will create and take home an item in each session. This is an introductory course suitable for children aged 7 to 10.

For further information contact Frank Anthony, Registrar at 877-5856 between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m.



Guest artist

Artist Heather Grindley stands next to one of her paintings, Homage to Jesus de Montreal, which was on display at Gallery House Sol in Georgetown Saturday. Many visitors came to see her works, which were drawings done in pastel and charcoal, along with artist Anne Simmins works, which were small bronzes and other works done in a variety of materials. The show continues until Nov. 8. (Herald photo)

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CORRECTION

An error was made in our advertisement last week. We advertised a box of Paper Towels with 48 Rolls. It actually contained 36 rolls.

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