

Editorial

The ultimate political ploy

Is the ongoing conflict in the Persian Gulf between the U.S.-led coalition forces, operating under United Nations auspices and Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's military machine, really the war that nobody wants?

Judging from world-wide peace demonstrations and even from the reactions of people questioned by The Halton Hills Herald, this would almost appear to be the case.

However, it should be remembered that war is the ultimate extension of politics. When all else fails and the respective diplomats cannot resolve a situation, it is left to the military to decide the issue. It has been this way from time immemorial.

It has been noted in other annals, that throughout mankind's recorded history there have only been 66 days of relative peace on our planet. Relative peace meaning nation versus nation or consequently, nations versus nations.

According to a yearbook publication entitled, The War Annual, which is published in Britain, there are 35 other conflicts presently taking place in various parts of the world, which we, in North America, hear very little about.

The War Annual editor, John Laffin, notes that most modern conflicts are caused by ethnic or social differences and that despite the fearsome military technology available, it is not so much the military hardware as it is the rivalries that make wars so prevalent around the globe.

In a nutshell, this theory best explains the reason for the Persian Gulf war, fuelled even more so by United States oil interests in the Middle East.

The region has been dominated by strong personalities and unstable governments ever since the Ottoman Empire was carved up to satisfy feuding factions following World War I.

Golda Meir, Gamel Abdul Nasser, King Hussein of Jordan, Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini, Anwar Sadat, Hosni Mubarak, Syrian President Hafez Assad and now, Saddam Hussein. You could also throw in Libya's Muammar Gaddafi.

Throw in the competing religions in the Middle East, including the Jews in Israel and the Christians in Lebanon and you have an inferno waiting to erupt.

Saddam Hussein (translated into English as "the one who confronts") became President of Iraq in 1979 and from the outset, was determined to dominate the region.

He has amassed the fifth-largest military force in the world and despite the stalemate that was the end result of the eight-year war with Iran, became even more determined than ever to rule the region.

The war with Iran depleted his treasury, despite massive aid from among others, the United States, and the Kuwait oil fields represented too rich and too weak a prize to resist.

Similarly, he also felt the threat from his military machine, once Kuwait was subdued, would be enough to gain substantial oil concessions from Saudi Arabia.

He misjudged the Saudi's, however, just as he misjudged the United States and the United Nations response to his overt aggression and ambitions.

The invasion of Kuwait was indeed a political manoeuvre necessitated by economic hardship.

Just another example that war is indeed the ultimate extension - even expression - of politics.

Surely, there is a better system!

Letter of the Week

Traumatic silence

Editor's note: The following letter was released to the Halton Hills Herald for publication.

Dear Mr. Turner:

Yes, I'm sure it's true that people who support the government's involvement in Iraq are less vocal now. They are probably glued to their television sets objectively viewing the eradication of a dictator and the annihilation of the Iraqi people.

Have you considered the traumatic silence experienced by the numbers of Canadians who feel profoundly and totally betrayed by your government's course of despair and destruction?

We do not find solace in communicating with those in power who meet insanity with insanity. Instead, we turn to the United Church, to the Disarmament Network, to leaders such as Jean Chretien, Audrey McLaughlin,

Stephen Lewis, to those who feel the suffering and bleeding of children, men and women who are blown apart by the Allied forces.

Your Hitler arguments are meaningless. With more research on your part you would realize that Hitler did not gain his power in a vacuum. I would also suggest you do a little soul-searching on how Saddam Hussein became such a formidable influence in the Gulf.

If your child's life was in jeopardy perhaps you would search more honestly for sane means to stop Saddam Hussein. This is what many of us hoped for from your government.

Your "Canadianism" makes me feel truly and utterly ashamed.

Sincerely,
Linda Ciotti-Kandziara
Georgetown.

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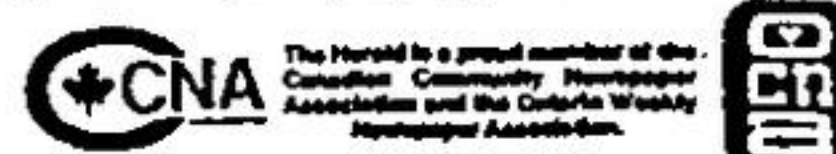
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People's Forum

Stay-at-home-mom not denigrated

Dear Editor:

I knew my letter would generate responses and would like to answer them.

First to Mary Rae Main:

I am sorry you missed my point. I was not in any way denigrating your choice to be a stay-at-home Mum. I believe that is a viable option for any woman. As a feminist working on Women's Studies, I am happy to tell you that many, many women in the Women's Movement are saying just the things you did in your letter. You should have a lobby group in government; you should be recognized financially; you are doing a competent job when traditional guidelines are constantly criticized; your job is a key one. The trouble is that the traditional guidelines you mention do not help so many women in your situation who find themselves unprovided for when violence creeps into the relationships or when husbands walk out on them. Such women often cannot be the masters of their own destiny. We cannot extricate ourselves from this complex society; we can only work to make it better.

My answer to Gladys Barrett is a little more controversial. Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, all the patriarchal religions that arose somewhere between 3000 BC and 1000 AD were themselves a reversal of a previous world order - one in which the female principals of nurturance, love for the earth and love of life were predominant. Both men and women were worshippers of the Great Mother Goddess. Archaeologists are finding more and more evidence that these societies were en-

vironmentally friendly, peaceful, egalitarian and very advanced. In these societies, "man" did not have to be the protector of "the weaker sex" because women were not in any way regarded as "weaker". I would suggest that when males have power over females sanctioned by religion, it does not necessarily lead to

peace. Try reading Judges, Chapter 19 for the worst excesses of patriarchal religion. Then read "The Chalice and the Blade" by Raine Eisler to get the other side of the story.

Sincerely,
Joan Davison,
Georgetown.

NATO students reunion

To the Editor:

We are a group of previous students of a NATO school in Hemer, West Germany. Most of us attended school there as dependents of Canadian Armed Forces personnel. Since that time there has been no reunion or no organized Alumni Society. Until now that is!

In December, 1989 we decided to organize a committee to plan a Hemer High School Reunion in Calgary in August of 1991, for students of Brigade Schools Germany. We began a search across Canada and the U.S.A., using any free available services such as media, word of mouth, Armed Forces papers and Veterans Magazines. To date, we have located over 275 students.

As you can imagine, this has been a huge undertaking and an expensive one. We have had no funds to draw and have funded the initial search ourselves. Now that the base work is done we are planning the best reunion possible at the least expense to the Alumni.

As 75 per cent of the students located live out of province they are already paying transportation and hotel out of pocket so we aim to keep the overhead down as

much as possible by applying for grants, donations and gifts.

Our agenda for the long weekend in August (3, 4 and 5th) of 1991 is as follows:

Friday night - Ice Breaker for Alumni and spouses.

Saturday morning - Stampede-type breakfast hopefully at Heritage Park.

Saturday afternoon - tourist time with packages of things to see made up for each student.

Saturday night - Dinner and Dance.

Sunday morning - Church parade and Champagne Brunch at the Richmond Road Legion.

Sunday afternoon and evening - free time to see sights.

Monday - perhaps an organized trip to Banff or Calaway Park.

We know that Calgary will be a great Host City for this event and that the guests will be giving something back in return through hotels, transportation, souvenirs and entertainment.

Sincerely,
M. Kathleen Williams,
Member, Fundraising
Committee,
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