

Oil, not freedom, is motive

There has been much talk in recent days about how America needs to stand up for its beliefs and values. When necessary, in the spirit of our founding fathers, we should be willing to fight for our lives, liberty and pursuit of happiness. The problem today lies in defining exactly what these mean. It seems to me that in the minds of many Americans these sacred ideals have been focused on whatever we desire at the moment.

Now our ideals have become so much less than noble that we freely engage in a massive military mission in the Middle East protecting our "right" to cheap oil. Can our purpose really be anything else? Can Saudi Arabia, one of the most repressive regimes on Earth, be defended in the name of freedom? No. If we are sincere about Kuwait being returned to its rightful owners, according to our democratic tradition, wouldn't they be the people of Kuwait instead of the Royal Family we insist on?

We are told that protecting these nations is not enough. Our government has stated that the ruler of yet another sovereign state must be removed from power. Yes, there is little doubt

that Saddam Hussein is ruthless and many other things, too. Military aggression by anyone (including us) should not be tolerated. However, most of the people of Iraq have little choice in the events undertaken by their leadership. We are now threatening to use military aggression to enforce sanctions . . . sanctions that include food and medical supplies.

In other words, our government -- with your full approval -- is more than willing to risk American lives to force the inevitable starvation of 16 million innocent civilians. While I really do hope that the world will not allow them to all starve to death by putting the Iraqi people in this position, we may be provoking the bloody war that few of us want to ignite. Who can blame a parent for taking any action necessary to feed his or her own children? Who can blame a nation for fighting for food? We are doing this not for life or freedom, but for our new ideal; cheap oil, yet we call Saddam a monster. What does that make us?

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Reader angered by letter

I am writing in response to a letter (DN, Aug. 30) by a Mr. Naveed Siraj Memon. Mr. Memon criticized a column (DN, Aug. 27) written by a Miss Amy Edwards. I must say that this letter is a pale shadow of my actual indignation upon reading Mr. Memon's letter. It is to him that my response is addressed.

You criticize the American presence in the Persian Gulf/ Saudi Arabia. To Miss Edwards you write that world politics "are quite mind-boggling. Before you embark on a trip to explain them to us, be sure you have some vision of them yourself." Well, apparently old clichés hold true: those who can't do teach. Why don't you take off your blindfold and see what's happening in the world? In case you were not aware, it is politically feasible for a country to defend its economic interests around the world.

You compare the integrity of the Kuwaiti king to that of Saddam Hussein. Please. The king (not former king) does not use nerve gas to control his citizens. Hussein is not the leader of the Arab cause. He is a power-hungry tyrant over the Middle East. What he cannot accomplish through force, he attempts to accomplish with guile. Why else would he change his reason for invading Kuwait from "we had debts to settle" to "I'm trying to unite the Arab

world?" I think it is very clear your sympathies lie with Iraq. Are you really so blind as to believe that Hussein is the Arab savior?

Quite obviously, you do not believe that Miss Edwards is a competent reporter. You seem to think that her opinion of Arabs is guided solely by action flicks involving Chuck Norris. A portion of your tirade reads, ". . . where Arab "terrorists" hijack and slaughter." Anyone who hijacks and slaughters is a terrorist at the very least. Why the quotes around the word terrorist? Do you view those deluded maniacs as the holy freedom fighters they think they are?

In closing you state, "Let us pray that the crisis is over with and all U.S. troops come home safe and free and there is absolutely no wasting of lives." Funny how you are willing to wish freedom to U.S. soldiers who already enjoy it, but opposed to restoring freedom to the Kuwaitis. As far as I'm concerned the only waste in the Middle East right now is the flesh and blood that make up Saddam Hussein.

Jonathan S. Thompson
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Editor's Note: Kuwait's ousted leader is the emir, not the king.

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