

IT'S ALL ABOUT FREEDOM

By Mike Ward

I have been writing for The Councillor for about a year and a half now, and during that time I've written a fair share of "Bomb Saddam" editorials. So much so in fact, that it has become my "thing" here at the newspaper. At this point, I can honestly say that I'm tired of the debate. Of course debate and disagreement is an essential part of our democratic-republic, and while I found anti-war protests (which all too often were just platforms to bash America in general) to be a nuisance, I tolerated them and respected their right for them to disagree. Now that the actual decision has been made, I feel it our duty to stand behind that decision as Americans whether you think it was the right one or not - especially when these rallies are taking police officers away from their jobs of protecting us against terrorism in this time of high alert.

All the while I'm watching the likes of Michael Moore and the morons shutting down cities and a part of me is hoping they keep it up. I hate to break it to you liberals (and I normally wouldn't be giving you advice, but I'd just miss you too much if you went away) but when the majority of Americans see you shutting down streets in major cities, participating in "die-ins" or "vomit-ins," they laugh at you at best and are repulsed by you at worst. At this point you are becoming shrill to the point of lunacy. If you want the peace movement to ever be a viable one again, you mainstream liberals NEED to stand up and stop those on the fringe from defining your movement because you're not gaining any converts this way. Of course, if you ever get too fed up and start to see the light, there's always room for you on the right!

At any rate, I think that there is very little ground left for me to cover argumentatively after all the articles I've written on the topic. My original intent for this article was to write what basically would amount to a "see, I told you so," article. Of course, I could go on for pages deconstructing the liberal arguments one by one (My personal favorite: "It's never been proven that Saddam even has weapons of mass destruction! Plus there will be mass casualties when he uses them on us!" Think about it. Don't worry too much though because Sean Penn said everything's clear). I don't want to write that much and you don't want to read that much.

Instead let me just wrap this up not by tearing down, but by building up. Much has been made about whether Saddam has weapons of mass destruction and whether military force is necessary to disarm him, and I truly believe that this is a reason enough for war. I trust George W. Bush because I believe he sees his office first and foremost as a duty. However, I believe the true crux of this operation is much wider than just disarming Saddam. I believe it to be a war on a mindset of hatred.

Have you seriously thought about what it's going to take to live in a world where we don't live under the threat of terrorism? I have been since September 11, 2001. It won't be through appeasement (look up Hitler), it won't be through money (look up North Korea), and it won't be through inspections (it's failed in Iraq for the last 12 years). Peace has to be WON. Look into history and you'll find our enemies turned to allies by the democracy and freedom we installed in their countries after we defeated them militarily (look up Germany and Japan). Show me one instance when appeasement has achieved peace and I'll come to your side. Appeasement never works. Thinking otherwise is turning a blind eye to history.

Who would have thought that Germany and Japan would ever be our Allies during World War II? Who would have ever thought during the Cold War that the Soviet Union would crumble and become our friend? Who can imagine now a democratic, peaceful Middle East ruled by democratic governments elected by the people who look to the United States as a liberator? Harry S Truman imagined such a world. Ronald Reagan dreamed of such a reality. George W. Bush shares this dream, and he's running a play that we've run before and that we know to have success. George W. Bush isn't an oil-thirsty tyrant, he is a visionary.

Rebuilding a nation after war is a uniquely American idea because we are a land unique among the nations. One founded on an experiment Thomas Jefferson believed would produce a revolution every twenty years. What it produced is so great because its pedestal is the most basic of human desires: freedom.

Ours is a nation of unparalleled success because of the freedom of the individual. Now at a crossroad in history, George W. Bush is taking the war for that freedom started on September 11, 2001 and turning it on its head to spread the very thing Usama bin Laden seeks to destroy. "Iraqis can't handle democracy," you say? Freedom is the natural yearning of every man and woman, and recently oppressed peoples treasure and understand the cost of such liberty more than anyone.

"Iraqis don't want this war," you say? I submit to you a quote from Iraqi citizen Ajami Saadoun Khlis whose brother and son were murdered by Saddam's regime. Weeping on the shoulder of one of his liberators he said, "You're late. What took you so long? God help you become victorious. I want to say hello to Bush, to shake his hand."

When Harry Truman was opposed by isolationist Republicans in Congress, he went ahead with the Truman Doctrine passing the Marshall Plan and rebuilding our European allies and enemies alike. When they told Ronald Reagan "You have to learn to live with the Soviets," he responded by demanding, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!" Maybe I'm just naïve but I believe that when history judges this generation, they will look at George W. Bush and see him as the man that defied the United Nations to create a new world because I believe Iraq will see us as liberators not conquerors. There will always be radicals that simply hate America, but I believe the bulk of the population will welcome us. It *is* possible to drop bombs *and* bread at the same time, and attention is being paid that the proper people get the payload that's intended for them.

My prayer is that this war will be over even before this article goes to print, but if it is not continue to pray that this war is pushing us closer to a world without color-coded terror warnings even if there may be more terrorist strikes in the short term. To our troops I echo Ajami Sadoun Khlis, "God help you to become victorious."