

Geiger criticized for distortion of facts

by Mike Kelly

I am writing this letter in response to a piece in the Opinions Section of last week's Campus written by Geoffrey Geiger. I fully respect Mr. Geiger's right to an opinion and the right to expound upon it in a public forum, but I find that I must take issue with several statements made in his letter.

Mr. Geiger, it is obvious from your letter that you support the anti-war movement, yet the following statement appears almost immediately: "disappointment that Iraq had let Bush's victorious gloating come

struction of Iraq's armed forces are components of the greater goal.

President Bush also made it clear, in last week's address to Congress, that vital American interests depend upon a stable Middle East. Where are the secret goals?

You also make this statement: "This 'Vietnam Syndrome' had been plaguing military planners for over fifteen years, keeping them from sending troops overseas to enforce American interests." It is a very common misconception that the United States Armed Forces can

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about too easily." Do you then feel that this war was not bloody enough? Perhaps there were not enough casualties on the Allied side. About a hundred thousand dead American soldiers have been enough to prove your point? This "disappointment" is at best hypocritical coming from a supporter of peace.

I am a little disappointed with your surprise at "discovering" the true goals of this operation. There has been no attempt to hide the fact that the destruction of Iraqi war-making capabilities was high on the priority list. In fact, it was mentioned in practically every military briefing since January 15 and even earlier. I think the President made it clear that the goal was to attain stability in the region; the liberation of Kuwait and the de-

struction of Iraq's armed forces are components of the greater goal. You also make this statement: "This 'Vietnam Syndrome' had been plaguing military planners for over fifteen years, keeping them from sending troops overseas to enforce American interests." It is a very common misconception that the United States Armed Forces can

just get up and go anywhere in the world to "enforce interests." Only the President and Congress can send troops overseas, and they are also the only ones who can authorize force.

I know this sounds minor, but it is very important to separate the ones who make the decision to start a war from the ones who get the job done. Why? Because this means that if anti-war protestors are serious about getting something done, they should concentrate their efforts on pressuring the President and Congress to lay off the troops.

Lack of understanding of this concept caused a lot of problems and animosity during the Vietnam war, and fortunately most anti-war activists now make this distinction. I say "most" because of this state-

America's selective justice

by Danish Mustafa

There are many legitimate justifications for the American-led military action in the Persian Gulf: the sanctity of the international order, the Western world's vital strategic interests in the region, and the necessity of removing a brutal dictator from a position of power are some of the reasons given for Operation Desert Storm. All of these are legitimate reasons for the allied attack on Iraq when one considers what might have happened if the United States had not done anything in the face of such naked aggression. There is, however, a complete lack of appreciation for the Palestinian, or more broadly, the Muslim point of view regarding the conflict.

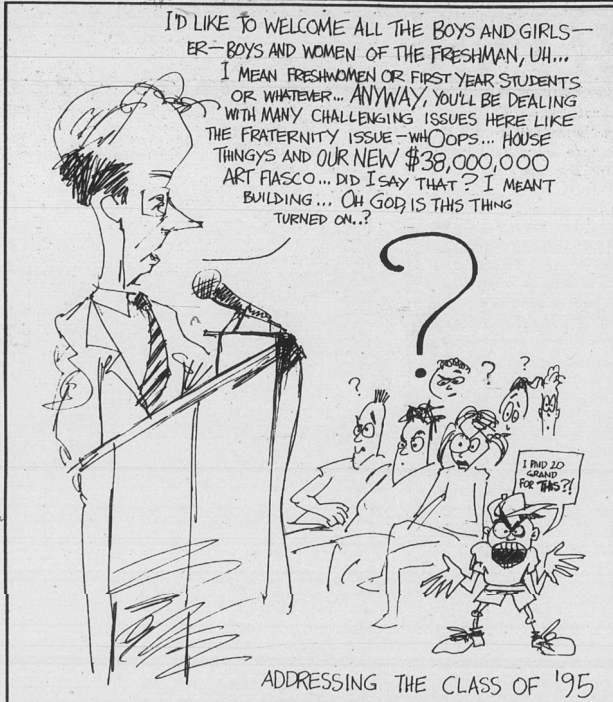
As we all know, most of the Muslim world disapproves of U.S. intervention in the Gulf. It would be foolhardy to suggest that Muslims do not understand the American rationale; they do, and perhaps even agree with it. However, for most of the Muslim world, the image of the United States is so tarnished because of its historic role in the region and its close affiliation with Israel, that openly agreeing with anything that America might do or say is tantamount to agreeing with the devil. It is only through addressing the cause for Muslims distrust of

the U.S. that Americans can hope to achieve a lasting peace in the region.

Fate and Saddam Hussein have brought the conflict in the Middle East right to the American doorstep. It is now up to the U.S. government to deal with the situation in such a way so as to bring a lasting peace to the region. That lasting peace cannot be achieved without addressing the legitimate grievances of the

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Palestinian people. No matter how much President Bush or Secretary of State Baker publicly insist that there is no link between the crisis in the Gulf and the Palestinian issue, they know as well as any intelligent observer of the region that after defeating Saddam Hussein they cannot continue to ignore the Palestinian issue. Doing so would essentially lay to waste all the sacrifices that this country is making to get rid of Saddam Hussein. It would only be a matter of time before another demagogic cashes in on the persistent resentment and frus-



ment: "fascist calls for support-the-troops complacency." Mr. Geiger, I hope that by this you do not mean to compare supporting our troops now to supporting the Nazi soldiers in WWII. I know you did not say this, but it was mentioned on campus during an anti-war activity.

All I can say to this, besides the fact that I take it as a personal insult as the son of a West Point graduate and a career Army officer, is that the person who made that statement is seriously misinformed, probably due to never spending much time around U.S. military personnel.

tration of the Middle Eastern masses and poses a new challenge to security in that region.

Muslims see the Gulf War as a simple case of selective justice. While the U.S. Government continues to charge Iraq with violations of International Law, the Americans ignore similar attacks against the Palestinian people. What are Muslims to think about the lack of attention that Americans give

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the plight of the Palestinians, and the United States' unwillingness or inability to pressure Israel to even talk about a solution to the Palestinian problem?

Prompt and sincere American efforts to address the Palestinian issue would earn the U.S. much wanted credibility with the Muslim masses in the long run. But in the short run, the U.S. would do well to repeat its earlier mistake of befriend- ing a tyrant for perceived short run goals. If the moral argument against Saddam Hussein is to hold true, the Bush administra-

(continued on page 23)

Today's military is not a bunch of rockhead "Rambos," they are professionals. And, yes, they have a variety of opinions on the war.

If anyone is qualified to dis-

College apathetic in times of crisis

by Gardner Humphreys

There have been a variety of feelings displayed around the Middlebury community over the last few months of turmoil, but the strongest of them appears to be what can only be called an anti-feeling: an undeniable undercurrent of apathy. With such rich diversity of character that college campuses enjoy, one would expect surrounding differences in opinion to boil to the surface during wartime, yet none were present at Middlebury.

This became strikingly obvious as I watched the group of MAGI demonstrators confront the crowd exclaiming, "Do you agree with us? Do you think we're wrong? Tell us what you think!" Nothing but silence. Is it simply that people have no opinion about what's going on? I find that hard to believe given the severity of the issues surrounding the war. With the destruction caused by this latest conflict, it would be too disheartening to believe that the response is one of indifference.

If it were not for the dangers inherent in apathy, then it would not be as threatening, but when you have those who would lead acting without direction then it is dangerous indeed. In familiar terms, it has become the kind of government brought to you by the Columbia Tape and Record Club whose motto is, "To approve, simply do nothing. We'll act for you." Unfortunately for those of us who do not want the Selection of the Month, speaking out proves to be much harder than sending back the postcard. When silence equals death there can be no middle ground.

The recent visitors to Middlebury, Kwame Toure and the

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alumni activists, noted a similar presence around them. They properly noted that if we begin to turn a silent voice on matters such as these, then it cannot be too long before we turn our backs on those closer to us. Those among them who had worked in homeless shelters could especially attest to this. The next step is infringements on individual freedom that hit a little closer to home, for if a people are not telling their government what they want, then on whose behalf is it acting?

For the past few months on CNN we didn't see the bodies behind the video game war and the crosshairs on our TVs, but sometimes those crosshairs fell on the wrong target. If the crosshairs of governmental ignorance begin to fall on the American public because of its apathy, then the victims won't be so innocent.

Politically correct

(continued from page 19)

dent body is generally determined to resist this encroaching Political Correctness is beyond the comprehension of Old Chapel and much of the faculty. More likely is the scenario that prevailing student sentiments have been ignored.

The time has arrived for the Board of Trustees to seize authority from their ridiculous subordinates and to assume direction of the corporation. Middlebury alumni must reassert their disapproval of the College's recent actions and continue to seek more worthy recipients of their financial capital. The situation is critical.

Quoth the Raven...

by Bruce Bender

I spent yet another evening watching tube last Thursday. Lulled by cathode rays into the bliss of an unthinking existence, the world seemed very kind. My complacency was rudely and forever interrupted, however, as I switched to the NBC news.

The story covered a videotape of the LA Police beating an unresisting citizen into the hospital. There were about ten police on this guy, and they had a long plastic cord around his neck while they broke his limbs with their nightsticks. Apparently the LAPD has a long history of brutality, and Tom Brokaw proceeded to narrate several other videotapes that have been made over the past few years showing similar violence.

One scene was of a policeman smashing a handcuffed guy's face through a plate glass window. It all looked pretty heinous, and I am glad I was not there, but what shocked me the most in this scene was that just before the policeman tossed the guy through the window, he swore at him.

At least I think he swore, but I am not exactly sure what he said because the censors at NBC had bleeped over the sound to avoid the general population from witnessing any "profanity." Fortunately, the virgin ears of all those kids out there were spared the onslaught, and life went on as usual.

Sometimes I can only look around in confusion. Bible beltters will not allow me to speak or hear "shit" while people get their faces lacerated by policemen and plate glass windows on prime time national television. What a little twisted planet it is where they won't air condom commercials in a nation with the highest rate of AIDS in the industrialized world. There are lots of things seriously warped in every direction, and I think I know why.

You see, things have taken a sharp turn for the strange. There is nothing anyone can do about it, like a black hole opening up under your backyard barbecue. Fields of wheat perform circular dances in Scotland, becoming too exhausted to get up again in the morning. People riot in LA because they cannot get into a movie. Euclid and Newton have been disproved, and God plays dice with the universe.

The old days, be they good or bad, have passed into oblivion. The first sign of this phenomenon was Nixon's speech on national television about why his relationship with his dog cleared him of any criminal activity. That was back before his two-term presidency, before 1968 and its peroxysmal convulsions of the dying order.

The seventies were, and always will be, a mystery; disco and bell-bottoms being well beyond the feeble grasp of the human mind. The eighties gave us some prelude to what we are in now, from "nickle down" economic theories to cyanide

(continued on page 23)