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Letters to the Editor

Was war justified?

To the editor:

With all the attention being paid to the inappropriate swagger of the Bush administration after the resounding military victory in Iraq (one that was never in doubt) it is a challenge to raise the question: was this war justified?

The stated reasons, before the war, were to rid Iraq of weapons of mass destruction and the connection of Saddam's regime to al-Qaida. Many questioned the evidence for these claims before the war and now two months after the war that evidence is still missing.

Why is this relevant? Supposedly actions were based on intelligence — so we told the world — and it is precisely the failure of our intelligence that caught us off-guard on 9-11. So it is important to know whether our intelligence is really that incompetent or, what is more likely, that the Bush administration misled.

Now we hear talk about Iran and Syria being immediate threats. And in the meantime Iraq is in shambles, countless innocents have died and, aside from protecting the oil infrastructure, there is little progress in moving towards self-government and protecting that country's rich heritage. Our brave young men and women in the military were put in harm's way during this war and, in the policing action that will likely take many months, they remain in a dangerous situation. After all this, it is by no means clear that Iraq, or our security, will be better off by our actions despite the fact that a cruel regime has been destroyed.

Alex R. Dzierba

Bloomfield

Lies on Iraq

To the editor:

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld recently conceded that the reason neither U.N. weapons inspectors nor U.S. troops have been able to find "weapons of mass destruction" in Iraq may be that Iraq no longer had any such weapons.

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This is a startling admission. For months prior to the Iraq war, U.S. officials insisted they knew for certain that Iraq possessed sufficient "WMDs" to pose a major threat, and that this was the primary reason the war was necessary. In short, putting two and two together, Rumsfeld admitted that government officials lied to us by claiming they knew for certain Iraq possessed these weapons, when in fact they knew no such thing. (He attempted to retract his statement, but the cat was already out of the bag.)

The significance of this admission cannot be dismissed by saying "Well, they may have deceived us, but there were other reasons why the war was justified." If our government was lying about the main rationale given for the war (Iraq's supposed possession of WMDs), then it makes no sense to assume that it is telling the truth when it claims that the war was waged to bring democracy to Iraq, or when it denies what to most people in the world is obvious — that the Iraq war was really a war of conquest, waged to seize control of Iraq's oil and create opportunities for mega-profits for U.S. corporations.

Jeff Melton

Bloomington

Help on autism

To the editor:

A story appeared the other day that the state may have to tell 1,700 families they are not eligible for the Developmental Disability Support Services Medicaid Waiver due to lack of funding. The DDSS was created as a stop-gap to provide minimal services to those on a six-year waiting list for the normal Medicaid waiver.

Autism is a life-long developmental disability and early intervention is critical for positive life-long results. Not funding these waiver slots will have a huge future financial impact on Indiana.

Autism is the fastest growing developmental disability. Autism rate is currently 1 in 250 up from 1 in 10,000 ten years ago. The latest research from California shows this increase is not due to better awareness or "diagnosis creep" but to actual DMS-IV professionally diagnosed cases.

We have an epidemic that is tearing families apart. The divorce rate in families with children with autism is 85 to 90 percent. This is directly related to lack of support and respite for the family. These families have to deal with this 24 hours a day seven days a week 365 days a year and they need help.

Please find out more about autism at www.autismindiana.org and how you can help by writing your legislator.

Philip G. Wheeler

Bloomington

Vote them out

To the editor:

Sitting here watching the National Memorial Day Concert on TV and thinking of all the fine people who have given their lives so that our great democracy by, for and of the people might endure against tyranny, my mind naturally turns to President Bush, Vice President Cheney, Attorney General Ashcroft, presidential adviser Rove and congressmen such as Bill Frist, Tom Delay, Trent Lott, the list goes on and on.

Indeed, watching the images of the dead with their surviving mothers and wives on the screen, I want to weep. Our master carnival barker known as George W. Bush along with his cronies are not worthy of the ultimate sacrifices made for this democracy by our soldiers and sailors. These grand deceivers of the people, these enemies of democracy deserve to be revealed for what they are — traitors.

I pray that the good people of this country will return to the polls in 2004 and sweep these low life from office, these evil men who are pushing this country toward totalitarianism, toward a government for, by and of the rich, these men who strive ceaselessly to limit our citizen rights under the Constitution, these scam artists who are trying to hand over this country to faceless corporations, cripple the lives of hard-working people and destroy the very environment on which we and all life depend.

How blind are you these days? How will you vote in 2004?

Warren Celtey

Bloomington

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