Editorial: Incoming!

Our generation is in a unique situation. There is a war brewing right under our noses and there doesn’t seem to be anything we can do about it. If one doesn’t pay attention to CNN or MSNBC one might not realize how close we are. It’s happening and it seems a conflict of some kind is unavoidable. Well, the tradition of a war for every generation must continue.

Some of our brothers may have been in the Gulf, some of our fathers in Vietnam, and some of our grandfathers may have fought in Korea or World War II. The current generation of students has never had to experience a full scale war. Most of us were too young to fully understand the Gulf War and all that night-vision footage of smart bombs hitting buildings doesn’t really offer much to understand, and very few, if any of us, were alive during the Vietnam War.

The point is, we have to do it on our own, we have to decide how we feel about marching off to war for half-baked reasons against an enemy who hasn’t made any direct, hostile move against us. We also must realize that a very dangerous enemy who will soon be, if it is not already, a nuclear power, has made threats against us.

The United States might be getting itself into something deep that will be more than difficult to pull out of. Most of the military theories on the news shows are predicting that if the U.S. undertakes a full-scale invasion of Iraq that it will take three to five years for complete occupation of the region and another 15 years of policing action to ensure that a stable government is instituted. They also predict that Saddam Hussein will fall to his capital city of Baghdad and that it will be his Alamo.

We also must remember that fighting in an urban setting is not something the U.S. has done very often since WWII. When Army Rangers and Delta Force undertook an operation in Mogadishu, Somalia, which is an urban area, we did not do so well. This military failure was the basis for the events depicted in the 2001 film Black Hawk Down.

We are also conscious of the possibility that while we are on a campaign against Iraq, North Korea might decide to make good on its threats, causing us to fight a war on two fronts as well as our policing of Afghanistan, with aid from none of our allies save Great Britain.

Because of our age, we all must be concerned with these events. Our military is certainly not trained enough to overtake Iraq in time, but if we are forced into a war with North Korea as well, a draft might become necessary. There is already talk of a “No man stays home” clause that would be added to the draft if it were reinstated, nullifying the exemption of full time college students. The course of these events and the decisions of our government will greatly and directly affect all of us.

Even if we only fight Iraq and a draft does not become necessary, we must also consider the money. Waging a full scale invasion is not cheap, and with no other nations to help out with the bill, we are going to tack some serious numbers onto the national debt.

Whatever the reasons or that path to war we all must be sure that we understand war as well as we possibly can. Go read All Quiet On The Western Front or watch Black Hawk Down. Innocent people will die in this war. Americans will die. We all have to be OK with that, or we must speak out against this impending conflict.

This weekly editorial expresses the majority opinion of The Rider News editorial board and is written by the Opinion editor.

Letters to the Editor: The Rider News welcomes letters on all subjects of interest to the campus community. Letters must be typed and include the name, address, phone number and signature of the author for verification. Send to The Rider News via e-mail (ridernews@rider.edu), campus mail, or hand deliver to Centennial House. All letters must be received by midnight Monday proceeding publication. The Rider News reserves the right to edit all letters for space and clarity.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“How good bad music and bad reasons sound when we march against an enemy.” —Friedrich Nietzsche

The Rider News

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STATE OF THE UNION SPEECHWRITERS LOOKING FOR SNAPPY SEQUEL TO LAST YEAR’S “AXIS OF EVIL”...

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The right path?

This time last year, President Bush had declared war on terrorism, specifically the Axis of Evil: Iraq, Iran and North Korea. He declared that those three countries were tyrannical, cruel and inhumane. Although everybody may not have agreed on the evil party (“good” and “evil” are subjective terms when you think about it), nobody really disputed that those countries all had the potential to be dangerous to not only America, but the world, and that the weapons situation in each case should be examined closer.

This year, however, our focus has narrowed to a single subject. One nation has emerged as the ultimate evil, headed by the Devil incarnate. Iraq and Saddam Hussein have been the subject of almost every presidential speech in the past year. Other matters, more urgent matters have been set aside or ignored in deference to the war we seem to be headed towards. According to President Bush and company, not only is it absolutely essential that we attack Iraq, it is essential that we attack right away.

In the minds of the administration, it’s not about whether to attack or not. It’s not even about whether we should attack next year or the year after. It’s about whether to attack in March or April.

In a way, the urgency does make sense. We, as Americans, were burned badly with the Sept. 11 attacks. It makes sense that we would try to avoid being caught so unawares. We have all heard the FBI and CIA were aware that Al-Qaeda was a possible danger. After the attacks, many said these agencies should have done more.

Bush is trying to avoid making that same mistake with Iraq. But he is taking it too far.

There are, of course, many reasons why Hussein should be removed from power. We all know by now how he used chemical warfare, has killed millions in

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