The Obligatory War Article
By Conrad Erb

Hello. I’m here to do the obligatory “no war in Iraq” article that pops up in this kind of paper every so often. Before I go ahead, a few disclaimers: As an intellectual community, we like our political labels, and you can call me a liberal. I want the world to be a place where people from all religious and cultural backgrounds can live in the same neighborhood, invite each other over for dinner, and enjoy great conversation about all the important topics of life, God, faith, and what it means to be a human being. So, go ahead and call me a liberal.

Lots of people will happily tell you what this war “is about.” I would like to offer what I think this (anticipated) war is not.

Although there are a lot of things that this war is not, it is not a battle of wills. Saddam Hussein isn’t a very nice guy, and I think that things that this war is not, it is a war of humanity sounds like complicity. From Panama and the Bay of Pigs and exploding cigars, elements of our government have sought to achieve political goals by means that would fall under most reasonable definitions of “terrorism.” CIA veteran John Stockwell has gone on public record to say that since its founding in the late 1940s, CIA covert operations (all in other countries) have resulted in the deaths of over 6 million people.

Considering this, we will be so bold as to suggest that crimes committed by Saddam’s government and those who support him are no different in their degree of moral virtue. Thus, I think that our moral high ground is really akin to a moral plain, and that the mention of good and evil is unhelplful in this point in the debate over a possible war. If we can’t frame this conflict in terms of good and evil, how should we talk about a possible war? We must begin to understand history and events from the perspectives of other. Our quest for a safer world begins by speaking rationally, instead of emotion-driven adjectives or clever, but ultimately uncommunicative slogans.

Until we reach a crossroads of intelligent dialogue with those who disagree with us, the cycle of violence that we see in today’s newspapers will continue. The enemy’s wealthy government officials mock our wealthy government officials and our military leaders, and we will refer to this history to justify the crimes of war committed by our parents. Not surprisingly, the losers of the conflict also compose a new history with a similarly incisive, good-against-evil narrative. This narrative will win in the current generation’s parents and pride.

For the sake of our children, for the sake of our brothers and sisters, for the sake of the generations’ parents and pride.

Clarification Needed

Thanks for the article about WEMC...you captured the essence of what I really want everybody to be aware of. There are a few things I feel compelled to correct and clarify.

I didn't really send my e-mail to faculty and staff...it was only meant to go to a much smaller group (one of whom, I suppose, supplied it to you). No, I didn't do...I almost included in my note to feel free to share it with anyone, although if I thought it was going to appear in the Weather Vane I would have probably been more careful with some wording. But maybe I would have been too careful, too. Besides, I would never want to control the press in the way that (WMRA) for three years and I've only made myself glance through their paper two or three times. Conversely, I think I've read every Weather Vane issue from cover to cover since I was here--because of the importance of the work you do, and the way you do it.

Foot In Mouth

"Don’t forget to round your poo." 
Anne Gross
University Chorale