

The sudden reality of war should be taken seriously

I'm devoting my column this week to discussing what looks like certain United States-led war in Iraq for three reasons:

1) I spent Winter Term tromping around Europe and ran into many locals with strong opinions on the matter, many of them anxious to share their thoughts with a pair of American ears.

2) Recent developments in the United Nations security council make war seem almost inevitable in the American point-of-view, however contrary this view might be to what everyone else thinks.

3) Many students at this school have neither the time nor the interest in politics to pay any attention to this stuff, and as a result I'd like to explain what is going on as simply and poignantly as possible (mixed slightly with my own opinions, of course).

We all should have some idea of what is doing on in the U.N., as what unfolds in the next few weeks could have important ramifications for all Americans, whether up-to-date with current events or not.

The people of Europe are, for the most part, against the notion of war in Iraq.

In my three weeks abroad this

past January, there were numerous protests and demonstrations, and I talked to people in France, England, Germany and Belgium about their negative opinions of our leader, old G.W. Bush.

Most people were under the impression that Saddam Hussein is not a good man; in fact, they too believe that having him in charge of a country is extremely dangerous.

They believe he needs to be attended to at some point in the future, but believe war to be too hasty and unfounded at this point in time. Everyone agrees about Saddam. No one agrees about the war except the U.S. and England.

And believe me, the British people generally are as much against it as many Americans are.

The recent actions of the U.N. and the other security council members seem to confirm what I learned in my experiences in Europe.

Russia, Germany, France and China all agree and stand by their contention that more inspections in Iraq are necessary before the onset of war.

Even the actual U.N. inspectors themselves have said they favor further inspections over a quick U.S.-led invasion.

The Vatican is sending emis-

saries to Baghdad this week to discuss peace.

All in all, the vast majority of Europe, and elsewhere, is focused on averting war, exactly the opposite mentality of our leaders here in this country.

Bush is through playing games with Saddam and insists that the Iraqi leader is not complying with the U.N. resolutions calling for his disarmament which were enacted last November.

Colin Powell presented recently de-classified evidence last week which was intended to further establish support for a U.S. led invasion.

It's hard for me to understand why our country and Britain are alone in hawking for war.

We want other countries to listen to us and see it like we do, but aren't they after the same thing?

We are pushing one way, and the rest of the world is pushing back towards us.

This issue is infinitely complicated and could change the way the world works when it is all over.

No one is sure what will happen if the U.S. begins an aggressive attack of Baghdad in the effort to root out Hussein.

No one is sure how he will retaliate, or what will happen to innocent Iraqi civilians.

One thing is for certain: We are on the verge of something big here.

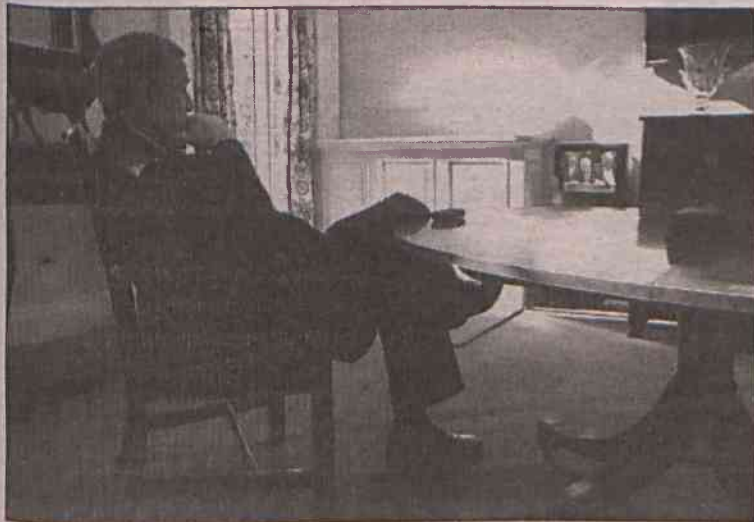
We should all be paying very close attention to what is going on in the world at-large, and we should be thankful for the ease of daily life, traversing the bricks of Elon's walkways.

Things could change very soon.

Keep this in your mind, and appreciate its seriousness, whether you follow current politics closely or not.



Ryan Costello



KRT Campus

President Bush watches Colin Powell make his case against Iraq.

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Elon should celebrate diversity on campus

Michael Dixon

Guest Columnist

Why do we continue to only acknowledge diversity, instead of celebrating it? Why do we fail to celebrate those unique, individual characteristics that each of us possess?

Regardless of our skin color, we are all diverse in our own way. We each bring something to the big picture that in some manner affects all human beings.

It is obvious that Elon is not well diversified when it comes to ethnicity; however, that alone does not represent the entirety of diversity. What about the homosexuals, Atheists, Muslims, disabled, and low income populations. They are on this campus, aren't they all part of the pool of diversity??

If we're not careful, we will overlook the diversity that actually does exist on Elon's campus.

In other words, we ought to emphasize and celebrate the diversity that we have.

If we continue to play the "race card," then a truly diversified campus will never be reached.

It is time to look past skin color and see individuals, go past the obvious and look at the heart.

Don't just see me as a typical African-American man; I'm more than that and I have more than that to teach you and learn from you.

If we continue to acknowledge racial identity and focus on only our differences, we are forging unbridgeable gulfs between people that will only result in distance and silence.

So how can we celebrate rather than distinguish our differences? This can be achieved by overcoming the stronghold of our safeguards by opening ourselves to other people.

By using something we all have, our mouths, just TALK to people, create dialogue, and step out. Ask questions. Show an interest in those who are different than you.

Strive to learn more about our community and each other and stop getting hung up on differences. See who people really are—their heart and not who you want them to be!"

Diversity was summed up perfectly by Mark Vardell: "We ask the leaf, 'Are you complete in yourself?' And the leaf answers, 'No, my life is in the branches.'

We ask the branch, and the branch answers, 'No, my life is in the root.' We ask the root, and its answers, 'No, my life is in the trunk and the branches and the leaves. Keep the branches stripped of leaves and I shall die.'

So it is with the great tree of being. Nothing is completely and merely individual."

We must make every effort to associate or interact with others.

We need everyone.

It's going to take Caucasians, African-Americans, Hispanics, homosexuals, heterosexuals, rich, poor, and the disabled to succeed and create community.

As a result of our unity and celebration, we will all learn something, and continue to attract a more diverse student, faculty, and staff population.

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