

JONI'S
CORNER

Consider reasons for war before jumping on a bandwagon

Submit a letter to the editor!

E-mail sadlerc@meredith.edu

JONI SMITH
Foreign Correspondent

I never cease to be amazed at how quickly some people will jump to defend their country. The possible war with Iraq has been in the headlines for months and the more I hear people talk about it, the more it infuriates me.

I have heard so many people say that we should go to war with Iraq because it's the right thing to do. The extent of many Americans' reasoning behind going to war is that we didn't get Saddam the first time, so we should try it again. And then there are Bush's favorite excuses for fighting the war: Saddam

tried to kill Bush's father and he may have nuclear weapons.

We know for a fact that North Korea is working on its nuclear weapons program. They have done everything but wave the nukes in our faces but Bush remains obsessed with Iraq.

The weapons inspectors have not had adequate time to investigate all the sites they set out to examine. Bush continues to say that the inspections should not go on any longer because they are not being successful. However, I think if these inspections

can keep us from going to war then they will be highly successful. Hans Blix, the head of the inspection team in Iraq, has even said they need more time.

Perhaps these people don't realize that much of what our troops would be fighting for in Iraq is not human rights, democracy, or a war without nuclear weapons. Our troops would be sent to Iraq to fight for oil.

Despite these factors, there are still people in this country who think we should go to war because it is "the right thing to do." Perhaps these people don't

realize that much of what our troops would be fighting for in Iraq is not human rights, democracy, or a war without nuclear weapons. Our troops would be sent to Iraq to fight for oil.

I don't know about the rest of the Meredith community, but I definitely don't think oil is worth sending troops to die.

This war in Iraq would also be fought

to take some of the attention off this dreadful economy we are facing. Politicians-especially the one occupying the White House right now-are great

at finding things to take the public's mind off their pitfalls. After all, who remembers when all this talk about war with Iraq surfaced anyway? It all started when reporters began saying that Bush and Cheney may both be investigated for their shady business dealings after Enron and Martha Stewart made headlines.

Every American has the right to decide for himself or herself if he or she thinks war in Iraq is just. However, we should all be sure that if we do go to war it is for the right reasons and not to take some oil away from OPEC or to make Bush look like the stellar President he isn't.

Two sides of the issue: Is Bush's plan right for the economy?

LINDSEY JONES
Contributing Writer

In last week's State of the Union Address, President George W. Bush tried to sell his \$674 billion tax cut plan that will, according to him, help our ailing economy. The majority of these cuts, will go to the complete elimination of taxes on individual investors' stock dividends. The second largest portion of cuts goes to speed the decrease of personal income tax rates, which primarily saves America's richest people millions of dollars per year.

If this tax cut is added to Bush's original 2001 tax cut, he will have cut nearly \$2 trillion taxes in 10

years, while increasing the national debt by \$199 billion in 2003.

These tremendous tax cuts are meant to stimulate the economy so that business owners will increase their spending, investing and hiring, thus creating more jobs and circulating more money. However, this trickle-down philosophy does not work in this climate of uncertainty with the war on terror and a pending war on Iraq.

The wealthy elite who receive huge tax breaks are not going to put their money in the shaky stock market right before we head to war. Take the incidents of Sept. 11, 2001 for example, when the stock market dropped rapidly. In

addition, they are not going to invest in an economy that is still in a recession.

So to stabilize the unsteady economy, shouldn't the tax breaks go to the consuming middle class instead of the uncertain wealthy investors who will naturally cling to their money instead of allowing it to trickle away?

Even if the large tax cuts for the wealthy do trickle down to help the lower classes, will it happen in time to help the recently laid-off single mother find a new job so that she can pay her rent and keep her children off the streets? The lower and middle classes need help now.

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REBECCA LEE
Contributing Writer

Bush's stimulus package, which will cost \$600 billion over the next 10 years, involves cutting taxes as the main idea. A prime example is cutting taxes on dividends - the second set of taxes you pay on stocks. Currently, stockholders are taxed twice, once when a corporation profits from the stocks and again when the stockholder cashes in on these dividends. Bush wants to eliminate the second tax. It's not fair for people to be double-taxed because it discourages investing and this new plan would leave more money in your pocket.

In addition, Bush's new

plan will offer \$3,000 to the unemployed to aid them in finding work. This money goes to providing childcare and covering the cost of transportation while people are looking for a job. This will be of great benefit, especially to single mothers who are now forced to leave their children at home alone while they search for work because they cannot afford to have someone else care for them.

Bush's plan also calls for speeding up and making permanent three across-the-board tax cuts that Congress has already approved. President Bush

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