OPINIONS

VICKI'S VOICE...

Although the White House may have been surprised when Iraq invaded Kuwait on August 2, there was no unmanageable crisis at this point. Iraq invaded and occupied Kuwait on two other occasions in the past and withdrew both times. President Bush acted too hastily by sending in American troops--adding more hostility to the "crisis."

On this third invasion of Kuwait we had a dictator, Saddam Hussein, that most Arabs despised because of his repressive cruelty and violation of an understood rule-- one Arab country does not commit aggression against another Arab country.

At this point, several face-saving alternatives existed because of unanimity at the United Nations on condemning Iraq's aggression against Kuwait and on economic sanctions. Near unanimity in the Arab league and the fact that there were no hostages and no risk of war added to the options.

Then President Bush presented a public ultimatum to Iraq and poured in the American troops--the worst course of action. This allowed Saddam Hussein to shift the focus of his aggression to U.S. imperialism and placed 12,000 hostages--3,000 Americans--into the dictator's hands. Arab leaders had the option of choosing between a repressive dictator or the United States. The latter choice would endow Arab leaders with the appearance of being paid pawns of the U.S.

President Bush tried to Americanize a conflict in an area where wounds of colonialism are still open. Yes, Bush backed Hussein into a corner, but he also backed himself into the opposite corner. If Hussein withdraws, he appears to be caving into American pressure and would probably be overthrown by his own army. However, if Iraq does not withdraw President Bush loses face...and leads the U.S. into a war.

The many scenarios that could occur are all damaging to U.S interests. War is a crime against humanity that involves the unavoidable slaughter of innocent people. Iraqis who have no control over Iraqi policy will die and American soldiers who have no control over President Bush's decision will die. Innocent civilians will die while their wealth turns to ashes and dust; their economies will be ravaged. Our American soldiers will be thrust into the killing fields while Iraqi soldirs will be fighting a "holy war."

War is justifiable only as a last resort--when not going to war leads to extreme and intolerable consequences. The Persian Gulf situation does not meet these qualifications. Even if Bush's worst rationalizations are realized and Hussein invades Saudi Arabia, what would be the extreme and intolerable consequences?

The flow of oil would not stop, because it is worthless until it is sold. The consumer for this natural resource is industrialized western nations. Despite the recent propaganda, the Persian Gulf does not pump enough oil to dictate world prices-- market forces determine prices.

Furthermore, Hussein and other Arab oil producers know that keeping the oil flowing and maintaining reasonable prices are in their own self-interests. Higher prices will force consumers to find alternative sources of energy--certain disaster for Arab nations since they have no other resources like western nations to support their economy. We have been dependent on other countries for oil to support our addiction to the resource for too long. Maybe this "crisis" will finally influence the U.S. to spend some of our tax dollars on finding alternatives to our dependance instead of using our money to send our troops to a desert--awaiting disaster.

OPEC has already agreed to raise oil production enough to make up for the loss from the boycott placed on Iraqi and Kuwaiti oil by the United Nations. This will fend off possibilities of world shortages and help ease the pressure on prices at the pumps.

While oil prices have not become unmanageable, the American deficit has. President Bush's belligerent Persian Gulf policy added to our economic mess in the U.S. Our allies have made multi-billion-dollar requests to help support us over-seas. However, rising oil prices continue pushing our economy closer to a recession...closer to having the U.S. get out its tin cup and beg other countries for support.

Fighting a war to prevent Hussein from controlling the Persian Gulf is not justifiable or in the United States' best interst. The American people should demand the White House to diffuse the situation before we see a real crisis. If American citizens worry about paying high prices for oil now, what about when war breaks out? War will completely stop the flow of oil and replace it with a blood flow. Instead of watching our American soldiers die, we could easily pay a few cents extra for oil.

Victoria Cuscino
Editor-in-Chief

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK...
...LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ARE ALWAYS WELCOMED AND ENCOURAGED!

You can leave your letter in our mailbox -- Room 212 Olmsted or drop it off in our office W-341! Typed submissions are preferred, and we cannot print anonymous letters.