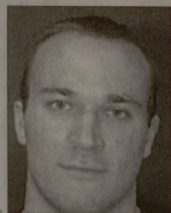


## The coalition myth revised

Most of the countries included are only supporting the war in words, not actions

The most outrageous aspect of the war in Iraq is not the fact that America has sent hundreds of thousands of young men and women across the world to risk their lives. Instead, it might be the administration's distortion of the truth to mislead the American public. Case in point, the "Coalition of the Willing."



JUSTIN HILL

Americans have been led to believe that this war is no longer unilateral and is supported by a large multinational coalition — one larger than that assembled for the Persian Gulf War. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld said. But Rumsfeld's statement is based on half-truths and a willing disregard for facts.

Currently America's coalition consists of 46 countries from around the world. According to the White House Web site, www.whitehouse.gov, it "includes nations from every continent on the globe." Did someone forget about Antarctica? The list certainly contains notable world powers such as the United Kingdom, Australia and Japan. The list also includes other stable and strong countries including Italy, Portugal, Spain, Singapore and South Korea.

However, all of these countries are headed by representative democracies. All of these countries had extremely large anti-war movements, but their elected officials have chosen to bow to the United States rather than represent their populace. All these countries may back the United States, but only the United Kingdom, Australia, Poland and Spain have committed troops, according to the White House site. Spain's troops won't even be participating in ground combat. According to The Washington Post, Poland initially denied supplying troops, but recent pictures have revealed a limited number of its special forces currently in Iraq. Denmark has even supplied a submarine, though the usability of the submarine in a desert seems dubious.

As if these circumstances were not already ridiculous enough, the list itself becomes more humorous.

The White House counts six unarmed countries, some of which would be a challenge to locate on a map. Palau, Costa Rica, Iceland, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, the Solomon Islands and Afghanistan are countries the White House includes in the coalition. According to altermet.org, three of these countries are completely dependent upon the United States for funding and defense.

Most of the countries included in the Coalition of the Willing support this war through rhetoric only. The Washington Post wrote, "Morocco's weekly al Usbu' al-Siyassi claimed that Morocco has offered 2,000 monkeys to help detonate land mines." Although this is a highly

speculative assertion, this generous sacrifice of primates would represent one of the contributions by a coalition country.

The majority of countries supporting the war have seemingly chosen to do so for economic or diplomatic reasons. Bulgaria, Albania, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Poland, Romania and Slovakia are either trying to gain membership into NATO or are relatively new members that must stand strong with NATO powers to ensure their relevance within the organization. Along with the NATO countries, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan all rely on the United States in case of a threat from their Russian neighbors.

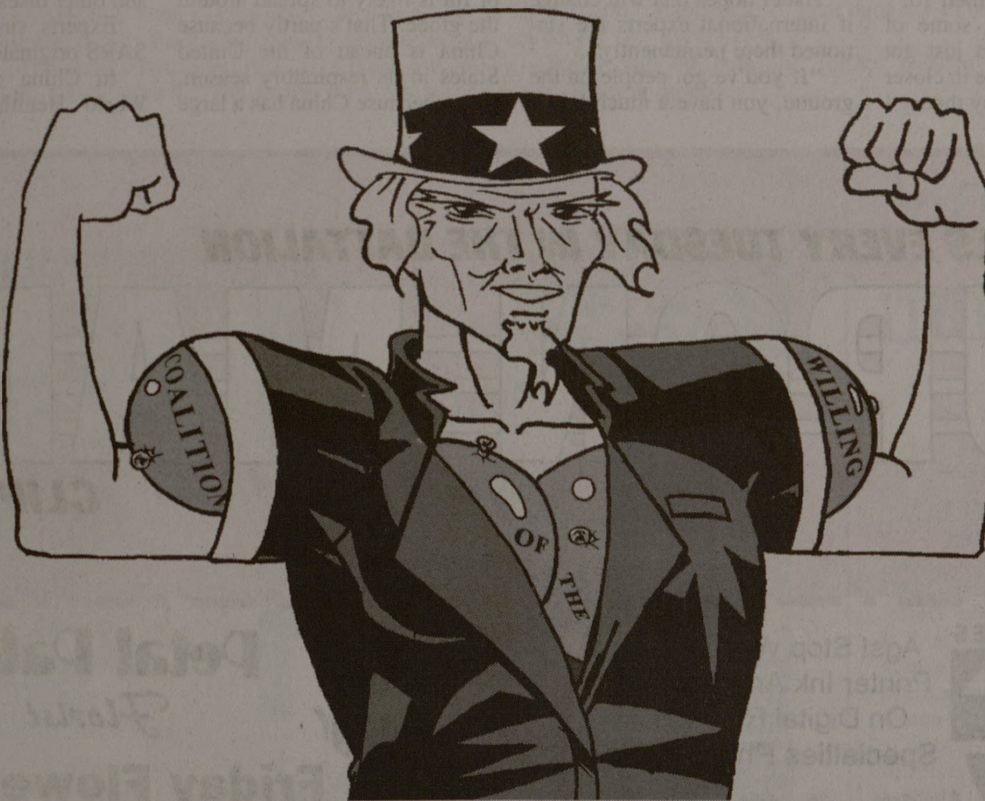
The South and Central American countries of Colombia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama are trying to align themselves to be included in President George W. Bush's The Free Trade of Americas plan, which will act like NAFTA and likely be a boon to any economy. Also, many African countries with deplorable human rights records and shaky U.S. relations rely on the United States for aid and support and have signed on to keep from losing the support they need.

Even more amusing, the Department of State has been warning Americans not to visit seven of the coalition countries because they could be killed or kidnapped. Turkey is listed as a coalition country, but denied the United States the right to use its bases to launch an incursion from the north. Eritrea made the cut, along with Ethiopia, which does not have the resources to provide food for its own citizens. Taiwan is even listed, but the United States does not recognize Taiwan as an independent country.

The Persian Gulf War consisted of 34 countries that provided military support, according to Milbank Quarterly. That coalition would have been more than 100 by the accounting standards employed today by the Bush Administration. Declaring this coalition larger than the one assembled by former President George Bush is an insult to all those involved in the diplomatic efforts prior to the Gulf War.

The Bush administration employs a spin unseen since Clinton left office. This is a coalition of necessity to most countries that have no choice. In the 1992 Gulf War, Yemen lost funding from America after voting against the U.N. resolution authorizing a war to liberate Kuwait.

The "Coalition of the Willing" is not composed of nations willfully and actively supporting this war, but of governments that have chosen to sign a piece of paper rather than anger the American power broker.



Justin Hill is a junior management major. Graphic by Ivan Flores.

## Peace process begins with the Palestinians

It has been weeks since the last terrorist bombing in Israel. Yet, even with this calm, a new terrorist bombing is all but certain for this scarred state. Before the eye of this latest hurricane passes and the winds in Israel begin to surge again, it would seem fitting to discuss the conflict of the Jewish state and the Palestinians.



MICHAEL WARD

In 2002, the BBC published a report on its web site that discussed the history of the conflict. "The principle of land-for-peace that has formed the basis of Arab-Israeli negotiations is based on Israel giving up land won in the 1967 war in return for peace deals recognizing Israeli borders and its right to security." In laymen's terms, Israel currently occupies the West Bank, which is land it won in the 1967 war, and the Palestinians want their land back. However, Israel has currently returned more than half of the land it confiscated during the war in exchange for "peace" from its Arab neighbors. Israel retains the West Bank today to guarantee its safety.

Yet Israel's safety is all but assured. Last fall the second anniversary of the newest Palestinian intefadeh, or uprising, was met with celebration from Arabs throughout the Middle East even though it has killed more than 2,400 Palestinians and Israelis,

according to Fox News. Nothing should have been celebrated.

When Israel's first response team, the Zihui Korbanot Ason (Hebrew for "Identification of Disaster Victims"), must scrape off the sidewalk the bits of brain and body tissue of a 14-year-old Israeli girl who was on her way to school when suddenly her bus exploded, there is nothing to celebrate. When a Palestinian youth is caught in crossfire an Israeli gunship destroying a terrorist compound, there is nothing to celebrate. But as the Palestinians celebrated, Yassar Arafat, the infamous Palestinian leader, proclaimed, "We are not only defending our holy places, but every inch of our holy land."

But it is no longer Palestinian land and thus the argument against Israeli occupation of the West Bank is built on a faulty premise — that Palestinians have certain rights. According to the BBC, Abu al-Abed, a 24-year-old Palestinian and member of Hamas, argues "that every human being who has his land invaded, all he possesses taken and his rights denied has a right to resist." If one starts a fight and then subsequently loses the fight, does one have a right to be upset? This is what has happened in the West Bank.

Al-Abed can claim that his land was invaded, but when he fails to mention that the Palestinians provoked and lost a war, he loses credibility.

Some, including Israelis, argue that Israel should return the rest of the land to the Palestinians and be done with it. However, as Dr. Victor Hanson, classicist and visiting military professor at the U.S. Naval Academy, offers, "The first three wars were waged when the West Bank was in Arab hands; so why would the premises for the next war be any different from those of 1947, 1956, or 1967, when the goal, as Egyptian General Saad Ali Amer (stated), was 'the elimination of Israel.'"

This situation is far more complex than "land for peace." Israel is an island of democracy in the sea of tyranny that is the Middle East. That this island has successfully weathered multiple storms only increases the fury with which various waves seek to drown it. The Palestinians want the West Bank, but they also want Israel.

Though the United States is Israel's staunchest ally, President George W. Bush outlined a plan for Palestinian statehood. However, until Israeli citizens are no longer the targets of cowardly suicide bombings, Israel has no choice but to continue the occupation. Clearly, the violence must stop, but it is the Palestinians who must make the first move, not the Israelis.

Michael Ward is a senior history major.

## Generation faces new fears

(U-WIRE) NORMAL, Ill. — "Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans — tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage — and unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today at home and around the world." — President John F. Kennedy, January 21, 1961.

I was reading about the history of our nation the other day and President Kennedy's speech fell under my eyes. Reading it, I thought that it was comparable to our generation. After reading it again, I believe it truly is.

Whether any of us realize it or not, the "new torch" has been handed onto us. As our parents grow older, we are constantly reminded that we are the next generation, the one that will ultimately make up the majority of the population. And while we often hear how spoiled we are with our cell phones, Internet,

television and whatever else, I think that our generation has been shortchanged.

Do we have more than previous generations? Sure we do! But that's the mark of the previous generation. Each generation before the next always tries to make the newer one have a better life.

Our grandparents lived through the Great Depression, and a World War. In turn, they tried to give as much as they could to their children, dubbed the Baby Boomers.

The Baby Boomers suffered through the Vietnam War, bad economies, and some major political scandals (Nixon's Watergate and Clinton's Zippage).

When the baby boomers experienced more financial growth, they gave their kids as much as they could. While both generations were good to their children, there were shortcomings. But that is expected. There is no such thing as perfection.

So what about our generation? The supposed "spoiled brats?" Yep, we've gained quite a

lot materialistically, but what have we seen as a whole? We're products of broken homes.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's projections, one half of all marriages will end in divorce. Can our generation knock that statistic down, and focus in on the importance and sanctity of marriage and also realize how important that marriage is to family life?

We've been a generation affected by terrorism. In no other time has the United States been so ravaged by terrorists. We saw the Alfred P. Murrah building torn by an explosion in Oklahoma City. And we all watched in horror on Sept. 11. We are a generation scarred by attacks on our everyday life.

And don't forget the school shootings. We all were a little more jittery after the Columbine massacre, wondering if our school was the next one to be shot up.

We've been a generation tempered by war. The Persian Gulf War, the War on Terrorism and now the War in Iraq has us watching the tickers and reading

the articles on the dead troops that are our age.

I think I speak for most when I say we live in a scary time. But through this confusing time, our generation has risen above the challenges presented to us.

As President Kennedy said 42 years ago, we are proud of our heritage and our country. The enlistment of those that are our age, making up the armed services, proves that claim.

It's a bitter peace now, with terror threats lurking around the corners, but we still go on with our daily lives.

But the torch has been passed to us. It's our turn for us voices to be heard, and for us to begin making a difference in this country.

Don't listen to the negative comments. Ignore those that try to knock our generation. Instead, stand up and get ready to take charge: The future is us.

Nate Brown is a columnist at Illinois State University.

### MAIL CALL

#### Suggestion of media black out is absurd

In response to an April 7 U-Wire column:

After reading the sentiments of Kori Hahn, a columnist at Texas Tech University, on the media coverage of our war on Iraq, I'm astounded that her editorial made it into our paper.

It is ridiculous for anyone who watches the war coverage on any of the major media outlets like CNN or FoxNews to be under the impression that what they're seeing on television is any sort of military secret. We're not sending out information to worldwide satellites that is going to compromise our military position. For proof, I'll quote an editor's note from an article on CNN.com: "This report was written in accordance with Pentagon ground rules allowing so-called embedded reporting, in which journalists join deployed troops. Among the rules accepted by all participating news organizations is an agreement not to disclose sensitive operational details."

Hahn suggests that we're antagonizing Saddam by show-

ing the death and destruction of his military regime. I've got a hunch that Saddam Hussein has too many pressing matters at hand to be sitting back in his La-Z-Boy, eyes glued to the big screen in his living room. In regards to Hahn's calling out of President Bush on putting a 'cease-fire' on the media coverage, I find it laughable that a member of the 'press' would be so unversed in her First Amendment rights as to suggest that we lose freedom of the press.

Hahn suggests that this has become a media war in which the combatants are using the media to try and convince others that what they're doing is right. We tried convincing several countries, including the United Nations, to no avail. I don't think that our leaders are afraid of any sort of media fallout and ill-reception we'll get when we've gone into Iraq, overthrown a tyrannical dictator, liberated millions, and established a sound government in a country that's been corrupt for decades.

Will Tolliver Class of 2005