

# U.S. discourse on war drifts toward danger

Earlier this week, conversations turned frequently to the subject of interceptions — interceptions on the field in Orchard Park's Rich Stadium and interceptions in the air over Saudi Arabia.

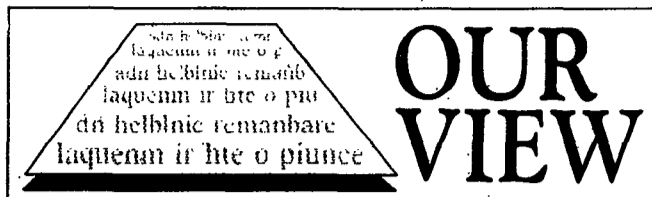
We're used to hearing sports commentators talk about interception rates, but it's a little jarring to hear news anchors speak of war in terms of 90-percent success rates attributed to Patriot missiles and the reported 80-percent effectiveness of U.S. bombing raids.

Are we trivializing this war?

Meanwhile, opinion polls suggest that 85 percent of U.S. citizens now support the war against Iraq. Although that number may be high, the rise in pro-war sentiment already can be seen on T-shirts popping up around town, proclaiming that the U.S. should "stamp out" Saddam Hussein or otherwise bring about his demise.

Are we, as commentator/columnist George Will recently suggested, allowing our war aims to grow beyond the "liberation of Kuwait" to the unconditional surrender of Iraq?

On Saturday, approximately 15,000 anti-war protesters in Washington, D.C., were confronted by antagonistic pro-war veterans. On a Rochester TV broadcast, a World War II veteran chastened peace protesters, suggesting that they are jeopardizing the



welfare of U.S. troops by undermining our national solidarity against Iraq.

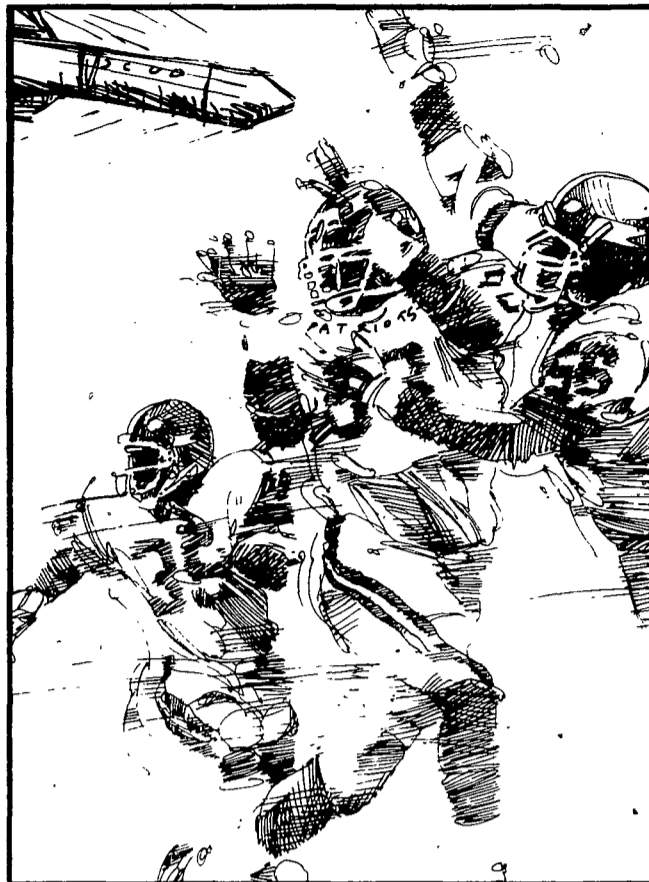
Are we developing a group-think mentality, in which anyone who doubts the rightness of U.S. actions will soon be considered un-American? Are we willing to sacrifice our First Amendment right of free speech in the name of "supporting the troops"?

With war supporters and opponents alike, we pray for the safety of U.S. and allied troops, and for this war to end with as few casualties as possible.

Yet after only a week of battle, we fear the possibility of minimizing the horror of war amid sports-style rhetoric; of demanding the subjugation of Iraq after Kuwait's is liberty won; and of stifling voices of dissent within our own country.

We must not come to view the war as a game to be won or lost — or, worse yet, as a game we cannot lose. For regardless of the final "score" on the battlefield, no one will emerge a clear winner.

— The Editors



## Bishop deserves praise for leadership on schools

To the editors:

As a parent of a parochial school student in the Southwest Quadrant, and as one who has closely followed the developments in Catholic School reorganization over the last two years, I am troubled and confused by those who continue to foment needless controversy.

Bishop Clark should be praised, not

criticized, for his willingness to address the problem of the survival of our Catholic Schools. Can anyone seriously doubt that unless something is done now, within the next decade these schools will cease to exist except as institutions serving the financially elite? The complaint that a plan is being forced down people's throats is absurd and insulting to those who have followed

and participated in the process. Not only did the Diocese seek the input of the people and the parishes, it responded not once, but several times with modifications to the proposals. The people's concerns were heard and addressed.

Twenty years ago, the Church hierarchy would have issued their edict, and the faithful would have followed in silence. How ironic that the Church leadership sees a problem, seeks input from the laity in finding a solution and then is criticized as tyrannical. Might I suggest that the truly undemocratic element in this process are the so called lay leaders, who when they do not get their way, refuse to go along with the majority view. It has been my observation that the majority of Catholic School parents in the quadrant support the new plan and are willing to give it the benefit of

the doubt. This does not mean that we do not have our apprehensions and concerns, but it does mean that we recognize it is now time to get on with the business of Catholic education and its preservation.

It is now imperative that we all pull together to insure the continuation of quality, value based education into the 21st century. St. Pius X is not the only "quality" school in the quadrant. Holy Ghost, St. Theodore's, St. Helen's, and indeed all the schools in the quadrant are quality schools. If we are to insure the continuation of such quality Catholic education, we must join together to see that this plan is implemented and fairly tested. Those who continue their opposition to the change only endanger the survival of the very thing they say they support. Is it truly Catholic education that they support, or is it the preservation of their own little turf? The issue is not territory, or buildings, or parish tradition. The issue is the preservation and expansion of an exceptional value based affordable system of education for our children. This plan meets that goal.

I urge the Bishop to stay the course and ignore the unthinking criticism of this small minority. I urge all those concerned with quality education in the Southwest Quadrant to look beyond their narrow parish boundaries and to support the proposed reorganization.

Edward A. Wurtz  
Brooklea Drive  
Rochester

## Fr. McBrien advised to avoid media

To the editors:

Reference Rev. McBrien's column of Nov. 29 — "Correcting some out-of-context quotations" — I had read the Wall Street Journal interview of October 16 and was not unduly surprised at the general tone and quotes of the article since they appeared to be classic "McBrien."

What does surprise me, however, is Rev. McBrien's naivete in believing that he would get a "fair shake" from the recognized pro-abortion media — unless he felt that his media reputation as one of the foremost Catholic dissenters entitled him to accurate representation. Isn't he aware that in dealing with the notoriously pro-abortion media, everything is presented from their biased position, regardless of

accuracy?

Suggestion to Rev. McBrien — Don't talk to the media — for your sake — and for the sake of the Roman Catholic Church.

A.J. Annunziata  
Horseheads

## Book offers critique of 'new Mass'

To the editors:

In the past twenty-five years there have been innumerable articles and books written on the Mass. Most have been superbly written, but have been voluminous and, therefore, unappealing to the average layman.

That has all changed, however. There is a new book just out on the Mass written in a scholarly yet non-technical manner and is unbelievably only eighty-six pages long. It is called "The Problems with the New Mass," by Dr. Rama Coomaraswamy (Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., P.O. Box

424, Rockford, Illinois 61105) and priced at just five dollars.

This book is already receiving many favorable reviews. As one priest has written in stammering excitement, "Excellent, excellent, excellent!" But, perhaps, the Publisher should have the last word on this book: "No thinking Catholic will want to miss this important new book."

Richard Hussar  
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## Sisters thank diocese for support of mission

To the editors:

With this letter we the Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester here and in Brazil, wish to thank you the people of the Rochester Diocese for your continued support of our mission presence in Brazil. The most recent manifestation of your caring and generosity has come to us as a result of the May 1990 Mission Appeal.

The economic situation in Brazil is bleak due to unequal distribution of wealth, soaring inflation and a monstrous foreign debt. The faith and hope of the Brazilian people are strong. Through our continued presence there we can accompany some of those who are most impoverished by this system of oppression as they search for alternative responses to their situation. We are most grateful for all you do and have done to assist us in this mission.

Sister Elizabeth Anne LeValley  
Superior General  
Sisters of St. Joseph

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## Real reason for war is Saddam, not 'King Oil'

To the editors:

I think Mr. Tom Dady (*Catholic Courier*, Dec. 20: "'King Oil' to blame") better wake up and smell the flowers. We have enough oil in this country and Canada. Our resources from other oil-producing countries is more than we need. Blame the oil refiners. What we are doing now is a matter of "Principal." If we accept the takeover of countries by crackpots such as Hussein, then we might as well become isolationist. Hussein would forge ahead and take over the complete Arab community — another Hitler. No, Mr. Dady, "King Oil" is not problem, but principal is the question.

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