

LETTERS TO THE DAY: READERS RESPOND TO WAR

Thanks to The Day for covering sub

To the Editor of The Day:
As a mother of one of the men on the Providence, and living 300 miles away, I can't thank you enough for your online service.
I have been enjoying your articles about life on the boat. It really helps me to feel closer to my son Daniel.
Thanks again and keep up the good work.

Elaine King
Binghamton, N.Y.

Military need to know we support them

To the Editor of The Day:
War is not easy on anyone. You can see the strain on the face of our president, hear it in the voice of the reporters, in the cries of young children being put to bed at night with out their mummies or daddies.

Nothing is more heart-wrenching than the cries of a small child longing for the touch of a parent, but the March 19 letter from the army reservist, Col. David Lahm from Lyme, struck a cord that most will never hear. It is the longing of the man in the trenches to know that his sacrifice will not be in vain.

Wars are fought and conflicts arise, but the victors are determined by the morale of those fighting.

Any athlete knows that in order to win, you have to have confidence in your ability, but if that was the only factor, why are there cheerleaders? It is important to have those on the sidelines urging you on when you feel defeated and discouraged.

In this case, we have men and women who have answered the call of their country. Some are reservists who were months away from retirement. Others just joined the National Guard for the educational benefits. Active duty servicemen and women have also been deployed.

All of them, no matter what the circumstances, have left their homes and their families to face formidable opponents in the Middle East.

Yes, they are well-trained, and physically ready, but what must be on their minds when they only hear the anti-war chants and cries of those back home? Their only cheerleaders are yelling for the opposite team. We are committing psychological warfare on our own military.

We live in a country where we have the right to speak our minds and protest the decisions of our leaders, but it is a right that has been bought and paid for with blood.

It is a freedom that very few others have. It is a freedom that our military service people will die to protect.

Those of us who support the president and the troops need to find our voices. These men and women need



TIM COOK/The Day

■ Officer of the Deck Lt.J.G. John Killila directs the USS Providence during operations in the Eastern Mediterranean on March 14.

our support and encouragement.
It is a long way from here to Baghdad, and we need to be louder.

Tammara Horn
Groton

The writer is the wife of a sailor deployed on the USS Providence.

Thanks to The Day for spotlighting sailors

To the Editor of The Day:
I am the proud mother of Groton's Submarine School instructor of the

year, Lynn Armon, and am thrilled to see the article on your web site.

The ability to reprint the article also brought joy also to Lynn Armon's father at the nursing home. Thank you for making this service available.

John & Bette Armon
Zephyrhills, Fla.

Mussolini used gas before Saddam

To the Editor of The Day:
Your March 14 editorial "Peaceknicks couldn't be more wrong" contains a glaring factual error. Iraq under Saddam Hussein is not the first nation to employ chemical weapons since the World War I.

The fascist government of Benito Mussolini sanctioned the use of mustard gas during the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935. During the first recorded attack, on Dec. 21 of that year, Italian aircraft dumped cylinders of mustard gas on Ethiopian troops, causing hundreds of injuries and terrible demoralization.

Robert Farwell
Mystic

Stop this war now before blood flows

To the Editor of The Day:
I'm writing this letter in response to Wednesday night's missile attack on Baghdad. It was that moment of truth when I fully realized just what this hunt for Saddam Hussein (as it's being referred to by our gun-slinging, beady-eyed commander-in-chief) and the real consequences of going into war to liberate a people who aren't sure even want to be saved are going to be.

The loss of life, both American and Iraqi, could become great as we are dealing with a ruthless terrorist who is willing to use innocent women, children, and men as his own personal shields. The cost to our government to bomb and then rebuild a country for a people who profess to hate Americans and have vowed to wage jihad against us, a vow that has become a battle cry throughout the Arab world, is and will be, phenomenal. War will place an overwhelming burden against an American economy on the brink of recession. Peace is not something these people, who have been battling it out in the desert since biblical times, either feel or want when it comes to Americans.

I knew deep down in my heart that this war was coming, whether 52 percent of the American people wanted it or not. I am fortunate enough to be at that age of 40-something to have felt safe and secure to be an American

all of my life. I want this threat of terrorism against our people to be stopped in order that my children can once again feel free. I also want the innocent men and women fighting in defense of our families who have been shipped overseas to be brought home so that they and their families can feel the same way.

I challenge our leaders, President George W. Bush, and the almost invisible Vice President Dick Cheney to stop this madness. If the only objective is to remove Saddam Hussein from power, go back to the United Nations, initiate a plan and either send him into exile or hell, whichever comes first.

Don't wait until the weight of American blood is flowing through your fingertips to decide that maybe this wasn't the right course of action to take.

Elizabeth A. De Wolf
Waterford

Saddam uses weapons he denied

To the Editor of The Day:
To all of those who suggest that we need to give inspections a chance: I would like to point out that within 24 hours of the start of this conflict, Saddam Hussein is already using weapons that he has been claiming for 12 years he does not have.

Neither the United Nations Special Commission nor the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission have had any success in finding these SCUD missiles.

How long until Saddam Hussein starts using the chemical and biological weapons he doesn't have?

Michael Olsen
Ewa Beach, Hawaii

Support military by opposing lies

To the Editor of The Day:
I am sorry Lt. Col. David Lahm wasn't there to see his son ride a bike for the first time without training wheels. But he is mistaken: In opposing an invasion of Iraq I do indeed support our fighting men and women. I support them by opposing our leaders' rash and dangerous lust to invade Iraq for insufficient reasons, backed by unsubstantiated claims,

skippy evidence, gross exaggerations, and outright lies.

To soldiers sworn to obey, to the American people, to the world, the Bush administration leaders lie — as earlier leaders lied about Vietnam. The pivotal Gulf of Tonkin affair, proved a hoax, the Pentagon Papers and even superhawk Robert MacNamara's anguished confessions prove that we were lied to by leaders we trusted.

I support our troops because President George W. Bush and his power-mad Pentagon handlers' unstated true aims are not to liberate Iraq and install a model democracy: They are to invade and occupy Iraq, and establish a military base there, from which to dominate the region. Ultimately, they intend to dominate the globe. That the world will hate us, as much of it now fears us, and that in succeeding we stand to lose our soul as a nation, troubles them not. For undoubtedly they — like Caesar, Genghis, Hitler, Stalin — believe their own lies.

I support Lt. Col. Lahm by opposing those who for wrong reasons put him, perhaps all of Islam, and all the world, in harm's way. I support him by opposing arrogant thugs who rather than have America lead by shining example, would rule by force. Do not we both expect better of our beloved country than it be the world's latest bully?

Lt. Col. Lahm, go with my gratitude and my prayers, sir, and do your honorable soldier's duty. As a free citizen, obliged to fight our leaders' betrayal, I shall do mine.

Sanford D'Esopo
Groton

Protestors' twisted definition of peace

To the Editor of The Day:
I am writing about the disgraceful demonstrations that happened on March 20 in Chicago and San Francisco. We all have our own opinions of this war, and I do not believe in war, but I am going to support the soldiers fighting over in Iraq.
We should unite and support our soldiers and allied forces who are fighting so that we don't have to go through another Sept. 11. Iraq has chemical, biological and other

weapons of mass destruction. Saddam has used them on his own people.

If you want to hold a peaceful demonstration, then make sure it is peaceful. Stopping traffic and stopping people from entering into buildings is not peaceful. Fighting on the streets and causing havoc is not peaceful. The men and women who are fighting now and in the past are the reason you can have a peaceful demonstration if you want. Show some respect for your freedom and your country, and stop disgracing it.

Michael Dreger
Waterford

Soldiers, sailors protect our freedom

To the Editor of The Day:
In a 30-second TV spot sponsored by a group called Citizens United, former U.S. Sen. Fred Thompson offers the following timely thoughts for all of us:

"It's the soldier, not the campus organizer, who has given us freedom to demonstrate.

"It's the soldier, not the reporter, who gives us freedom of the press.

"It's the soldier, not the poet, who has given us freedom of speech.

"It's the soldier, who serves the flag, who defend the protesters' right to burn the flag.

"Isn't it time now to demonstrate that we support the troops?"

"Were it not for the brave, there would be no home of the free."

To all of our soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen now in harms' way, thank you for your service and sacrifice.

John Markowicz
Waterford

A call for more Goodness

To the Editor of The Day:
Concerning your March 14 article, "A call to peace," and Trudy Gillette's March 18 letter, "Churches should minister, not politicize," I can only reflect that, with the president freely speaking "God talk," I welcome the further comments of the clergy.
It is surely regrettable that Ms. Gillette, widow of a naval officer and

Day reporter Bob Hamilton and Day photographer Tim Cook are currently aboard the USS Providence, an attack submarine, covering its participation in the war. Families of sailors have been following the series of articles carefully and write to speak of their appreciation and reaction.

It helps to hear what brother is doing

To the Editor of The Day:
I am so glad that you were able to get your reporter on board the USS Providence to write about some of the stuff they go through and how the sailors live on the sub. My little brother is on board that boat, and it makes me feel a little safer just hearing some of their day-to-day activities.

My sister-in-law told me about his articles online, so I check the site every day waiting for the next story.

Keep up the good work and keep the stories about the boat coming.

Jennifer Baker
Mobile, Ala.

How many more articles will run?

To the Editor of The Day:
I have a nephew on the USS Providence. I am interested in knowing when all articles appear in the paper regarding this issue. Thank you so much. God bless America.

Diana Elchert
Carey, Ohio

Connecticut men aboard USS Churchill

To the Editor of The Day:
I enjoyed The Day's March 13 article, "Destroyer plays the waiting game." I suppose you know that the city of Stamford "adopted" the USS Winston S. Churchill.

The commanding officer is also a graduate of a Connecticut high school. And an uncle of another officer was employed by the school system in that same Connecticut town. Of the 300-plus crew, there are no doubt other Connecticut connections. It's a small world.

Keep up the good work.

Tami Graf
Lusby, Md.

Articles make it easier to bear separation

To the Editor of The Day:
I am the girlfriend of Cory Onigkeit, who is on the USS Providence. I wanted to say thanks for printing the March 14 article, "USS Providence: Men on a mission." It makes what I am going through feel a little more worthwhile.

LaWanda Erwin
Groton

Bob Hamilton should talk to my son next

To the Editor of The Day:
I enjoyed your March 18 article, "Through the 'Ditch' and closer to war," about the USS Providence. I have a son on board — James Sullivan.

I try to follow all the deployments on the Internet and in the paper. Your reporter, Bob Hamilton, apparently didn't talk to him. I would love to hear some of his comments, along with the ones I read from his crewmates. I hope you continue to write about the USS Providence and its involvement. Needless to say, I miss my son like many other families miss their loved ones.

Agnes Shilling
Lenoir City, Tenn.

Sailor's photos prove very popular

To the Editor of The Day:
I want to thank The Day for publishing the articles about the USS Providence in your paper. I wish the whole country could see them and know what a great service these men do for our country. They never seem to get any credit, though, because they are in the "Silent Service."

The picture of our son, Jason, in your March 16 article, "Shack' brings world to boat," was so uplifting for us. I hope your reporter found him well, happy, and in good spirits. I would like to know if I can get a few copies of that picture; I've had requests for at least four of them.

Vanessa Rinaldo
Waterbury

Day's articles will be saved for future

To the Editor of The Day:
The Day's March 15 article, "Aboard sub, practice makes perfect," as well as the others about the USS Providence, was so intriguing to read.

My husband is aboard the USS Providence, and the articles help me picture my husband doing his daily activities. I truly enjoyed reading the articles; I've decided to save them and put them in a notebook to read again from time to time. Thank you.

Rachelle Thornton
Burtonsville, Md.

Remember where your freedom came from

To the Editor of The Day:
Your editorials continue to be biased to the war on Iraq (March 20, "The right to speak out"). I think we should support our president in these times.

Sure, you have a right to speak out, but please remember how you got the freedom to exercise that right.

Calvin Jones
Pawcatuck

Provide balance, facts in editorials

To the Editor of The Day:
I am sadly disappointed in the research that was put into your March 11 editorial, "A wrong path to war." I hope that in the future The Day will concentrate on publishing articles that are balanced, and that intelligently discuss both side of the issue.

The Day needs to take into consideration that members of the American public can decide for themselves what side of the issue they would like to take, and that the newspaper should stick to printing the facts.

It is discouraging reading an editorial that is filled with personal opinion and conveniently leaves out important facts that reflect the other side of the conflict.

This is an important issue that should be taken seriously and not used as a political stage for personal views.

Please consider publishing editorials that utilize unbiased facts, not ones that have been twisted to rally support for just one side.

Melissa Hall
Mystic

Day's editorial was right on target

To the Editor of The Day:
Kudos on an excellent editorial on March 19, "Supporting our troops in war." I thought the points made were right on target. Keep up the good work.

Janice M. Sklavounos
Waterford