

# Cheney discusses Iraq at fundraiser

BY JOSH HARDIN  
*The Collegian*

LARAMIE, Wyo. – Iraq is not just a problem for America, it's a problem for the entire world, Vice President Dick Cheney said while visiting his alma mater here Friday.

Cheney appeared at a fundraising event for the University of Wyoming and discussed the situation in Iraq and the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks as well as his college days with Alan Simpson, a retired Republican senator from Wyoming. Simpson and Cheney conversed and drank coffee for about 45 minutes as they sat in wooden chairs placed around a round table in the center of UW's Arena-Auditorium.

Iraq's refusal to comply with

United Nations Security Council resolutions for 11 years and President Saddam Hussein's history of trying to acquire nuclear weapons since 1979 were reasons Cheney claimed military action and regime change in Iraq are needed. He also said the United States knows from intelligence sources that Iraq is once again threatening to develop a nuclear capability.

"You have to look at the extent in which (Hussein) has escalated his activities," Cheney said. "Keep it in mind that he sits on top of about 11 percent of the world's oil distribution that he generates close to \$3 billion a year outside of UN sanctions, money that he can pour into development of weapons of mass destruction. With the fact he's used these weapons before, the

level of concern becomes significant. If it were anyone else we might be able to sit back, relax and say don't worry about it."

Cheney believes Hussein has links to the hijackers that attacked in New York City, Washington, D.C. and Pennsylvania on Sept. 11, killing more than 3,000 people.

"He has a long history of consorting with terrorists and providing sanctuary to terrorist organizations," Cheney said. "There is also evidence out there of exchanges back and forth between the al-Qaida organization and Osama bin Laden on one hand and Iraqi intelligence service and Saddam Hussein on the other."

Only the United States has the

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AARON M. SPRECHER/The Collegian

Vice President Dick Cheney reminisces about his college days at a University of Wyoming fundraising event. Cheney discussed the situation in Iraq and the Sept. 11 attacks during his visit to his alma mater.

## Fundraiser sparks debate over Iraq situation

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capacity to take on Hussein today, according to Cheney, and has the responsibility to address the situation in Iraq with or without help from other nations.

"Time is not on our side," he said. "The situation is not going to get better — it will only get worse. Many other nations find it easy to take a path from this or to

oppose taking any action or to refuse to stand up to these threats."

The talk about Iraq and Sept. 11 was brief compared to the time Cheney and Simpson reminisced about their days in college at Wyoming, in campaigns and in Washington. They both were relieved they never had to run against one another for Congress. Cheney was a representative for

Wyoming in the U.S. House from 1978-88.

"This is the most politic (sic) man I've ever met," Simpson said. "He's political; that's our game, that's our combat, that's our nation. I'm told if you look that word up, that is a word that includes prudent, expedient, shrewd, judicious and sagacious."

Cheney never planned to go to college at UW. Before arriving at the university and becoming more

motivated to get an education, he said he had a "spotty" academic career from dropping out twice from other schools.

"Dropping out isn't the right word; asked to leave is more like it," Cheney said.

Although Cheney said Wyoming pushed him to make decisions about his career and have the opportunity to get a first-rate education he could afford as well as be exposed to students and

professors in the political science field, UW is the only four-year institution in Wyoming.

Stacy Toupes, a UW English-journalism major, said she was glad she came to the speech, but Cheney's appearance wasn't totally what she expected.

"I came to support Cheney and it was good to have the chance to see him, but what he mostly talked about could have been a commercial," she said.

Paul Merten, who watched the speech with his son David, a UW history major, said Cheney didn't provide fresh information about foreign policy.

"He talked about what we are doing to about the situation in Iraq, but he didn't say anything new that would raise anyone's hair." ■

-Edited by Vince Blaser and Becky Waddingham