

Viewpoint

Through the Eyes of a Senior: War with Iraq is Justified

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Plainly put, a war with Iraq is not only necessary but also essential, and the critics have it wrong. But here's a disclaimer: I simplify the debate into two categories, the "hawks" (people who support the war) and the "doves" (people who oppose it). Although it may seem like an oversimplification, missing the crucial nuances of the debate, this intends to convey the gist of it.

Critics of the Bush administration charge that 1) American unilateral military action would alienate the international community, 2) any military action must then be multilateral, involving a mandate to attack from the United Nations, 3) an invasion of Iraq could destabilize the Middle East and such an invasion, regardless of whether America goes it alone or not, will encourage retaliation by a desperate Iraqi regime and assuming they have weapons of mass destruction, could jeopardize our allies and our population centers with the specter of chemical, biological, or nuclear attack, and 5) the military and economic problems that could result from a war with Iraq could be extraordinary. At a glance, these look like major concerns; however, these concerns are not pertinent to geo-

political reality.

For starters, unilateral action (or going it alone) gets the job done. Not beholden to a broad coalition, with its ubiquitous political interests and intrigues, the US can execute its primary objective: regime change in Iraq. The Gulf War saw a broad multilateral (posse-like) coalition push Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait. Not wanting to see Saddam ousted and replaced by an American imperialist puppet government, Arab allies and others prevented the US Armed Forces from taking him down. Here's our problem. While a broad coalition is a great show of unanimity, the most effective war can only be fought by the US standing alone or with a limited but diverse coalition (not including Israel, since it'd look like Zionist Jews are taking over the world).

There's another problem with a broad coalition: it requires the UN's blessing. Iraq has defied the Security Council 16 separate times. Sixteen separate times, Saddam has ignored UN resolutions. He's violating the UN's embargo and obstructing the UN's weapons inspectors, not our embargo nor our weapon inspectors. And yet they have not been spearheading the effort to disarm Iraq - the US has. Should the UN continue its policy of appeasement, it will become "ir-

relevant." One can only hope the UN will work with the US and agree to the resolution of force should Iraq not disarm, but it looks doubtful they will at this point.

Also, critics worry an American invasion of Iraq will make many world leaders angry and will allow our enemies to portray us as imperialist conquerors. As if anything we will do can ever make us the good guys in their eyes. The greater danger though is the destabilization of the Middle East: "friendly" Arab regimes swept away in militant Islamic coups and the increase of terrorist acts. In reality, should we have a limited coalition or none at all, protesting and rioting aside, no Arab group will be empowered by such an invasion to remove friendly regimes, as such an invasion will look like our own war, and not the Arab governments working with Western Jews. Also, recent events have shown US military action has not empowered terrorists in any way or negatively affected Arab opinion (take our ousting of the Taliban and people dancing in Kabul because of it). Ousting the Iraqi regime will be no different, and one can even go as far as saying that terrorism will be struck hard after losing a powerful, dangerous ally like Iraq.

Furthermore, there is the fear that an invasion will encourage Iraqi retaliation.

Hussein has consistently sought to acquire weapons of mass destruction and use them (take the Iran-Iraq War and the gassing of the Kurds in Northern Iraq). If anything will happen, it's that Iraq will blackmail our country or our allies with the threat of nukes, nerve gas, or small pox, if and when he does acquire these weapons; therefore, we must act. Also, there is the dilemma of the military challenges and the economic burden a war will have on our country. To the former challenges, this is what American influence is used for; Arab regimes can be coaxed into allowing us to use air bases, and a war plan that attacks the regime and not the army officers will deprive Saddam of a strong hold on the country. To the former burdens, the benefit of new oil fields and, more importantly, a more stable Middle East will prove helpful to our long-term economic health.

Hence, it is clear that we cannot follow a policy of appeasement and we must act decisively. Iraq, being a sophisticated and fundamentally rich Arab country, can sustain democracy; hence, in contrast to our *realpolitik*, shady foreign policy of the past, the US must promote American values abroad, now that we have moral grounds to do so.