

Two Questions

By Holly Lisle

I heard the President's speech. So did most of everyone else, I imagine. I remain frustrated. I am willing to support unilateral action on our part; I'm willing to go along with this. But I'm still waiting for the answer to two simple questions, and I haven't gotten the answer to either one yet. The questions are:

1. Why Iraq?
2. Why now?

If we have evidence that Iraq's government sponsored the terrorists who took out the WTC, okay. If we have evidence that Saddam is getting ready to sell (or give) nuclear technology or biological weapons or chemical weapons to terrorist organizations – or that it has already done so – all right. Those would be clear reasons. But I keep thinking that if the administration had those clear connections, the President would have been taking them public long before now, knowing that either of those points would convince a lot of fence-sitters. I'm assuming the government would like to convince a lot of fence-sitters, opinion-polls being as popular as they have ever been, and elected officials being as vulnerable to being voted out of office as they have ever been.

So. Why Iraq? We have clear evidence of the involvement of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan in the attacks – their people were on the planes. Libya? We know they sponsor terrorism. Why Iraq? I just want as much of a chain of evidence as I can get without sacrificing the lives of the people who obtained it.

And why now? Is there some pressing deadline that we will cross at our own peril? Does Iraq have plans in the works that we (meaning our government) knows about that are aimed at the US or at our allies? I'm not asking for classified documents. I would like more than what I've gotten, which is that Saddam

is a vile creature who should not be entrusted with the lives of his own people, much less those of the rest of the world. That was clear a long time ago. But what has changed to require his removal now?

I'm not a pacifist. I have frequently come out in favor of intelligently applied violence as an excellent solution to problems resistant to other approaches. I am entirely willing to be convinced that attacking Iraq now is a defensive, not offensive, move. I personally think that we should have taken Saddam out when we were over there the last time; I don't doubt for a minute that he has no business being a national leader, or even still breathing.

I simply need evidence-supported answers to those two questions and I'm good to go.

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