

I now understand why Orwell ended Animal Farm by having the animals look from the pigs to the humans and seeing no difference between them.

Similarly, in the United States, the narrow debate around Iraq deals with tactics and effectiveness.

Flimsy pretexts are given for continued sanctions, bombings, and an illegal "no fly zone" that we would never accept over, say, Indian Reservations or neighborhoods in Philadelphia (where security forces firebombed citizens). These pretexts are challenged in international media, but never in the New York Times or on CNN. This is why I find that I get better reporting on U.S. foreign policy from Agence France-Presse and the Times of India than I do from major American news outlets. These sources I'm sure face similar ideological filters when dealing with their own countries but that doesn't apply here.

The first pretext given is that we are protecting Iraq's neighbors. Rarely does the U.S. media report that all of Iraq's neighbors, including Iran (who was at war with Iraq through the 80s) and Kuwait condemn the U.S. bombing raids and call for a lifting of sanctions in Iraq. The second pretext given is that we are protecting the Kurds in Northern Iraq, which as shown above is simply not true. Not only do we allow the Turks to attack the very Kurds we are protecting, but we may have covertly delivered the Kurdish leader Ocalan to them. Turkey was reluctant to let the United States and Britain use their air bases to bomb Iraq. They were also searching for Ocalan who they claimed was a terrorist. Suddenly Ocalan shows up in Nigeria and is arrested, flown to Turkey, tried and condemned. The U.S./UK bombing went on as planned. Now it's possible that Turkey has an international spy network with offices in Nigeria, or it's possible that the CIA flushed out Ocalan in exchange for the use of Turkish military facilities. We probably won't know for decades.

The final pretext we hear is generally that Saddam Hussein might have or be building "weapons of mass destruction." Rarely do people mention that the weapons of mass destruction Iraq used in the past were generally made in the West and used with Western approval and even encouragement. We have no real evidence that Iraq is building a nuclear or chemical arsenal, but we've set it up so that the Iraqis have to somehow prove that they aren't. This is, of course, impossible. They say they don't have these weapons, we call them liars. We have teams in there for years who can find no evidence of these weapons, we say

the Iraqis must just be really really good at hiding them. As long as the American people and the American media fall for this idea, it will legitimize the killing of more Iraqi civilians, it will waste more of our resources, and it will do nothing to loosen Hussein's grip on power or bring freedom to Iraq.

The latest bombing barely had any pretext, and the rest of the world saw through it.

France and Turkey joined Russia, China, and most Arab countries in condemning the attacks. Bush claimed that the radar stations we were aiming at were a threat to U.S. planes patrolling the no fly zone. However, if the no fly zone itself is illegitimate (which it is) then the solution should be to pull our troops out of there, not drop more bombs and kill more civilians.

This is increasingly the tenor of U.S. foreign relations. The United States has a nineteenth century imperialist worldview, and feels a sense of entitlement. Arabs no longer call us the "great Satan," they call us the "global arrogance." There is nothing an arrogant person hates more than being defied, especially being made to look a fool. While foreign papers condemn the U.S. attacks, U.S. papers talk about Saddam's "defiance." "Frustration" was cited as a valid reason for Operation Desert Fox in 1998. "Punishment" is our military goal here. The United States is like an abusive father who demands "respect" from people smaller than us, and beat them when we don't get our way.

This is why it is so important for the United States to keep Hitler alive. Looked at objectively, we are clearly in the wrong. We have no right to patrol foreign airspace and we have no right to bomb other countries. We have killed well over a million Iraqis between the bombing and the sanctions. Two UN coordinators have resigned in protest of the US policy towards Iraq. The rest of the world knows that we are, quite frankly, full of shit. There can be no rational excuse for our actions, so we must abandon rationality, abandon humanitarianism, point fingers and say, "but he's another Hitler."

The History Channel has taught us exactly what that means.

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