

Editorial

Operation Desert Storm two years later

Almost two years to the day, George Bush renewed hostilities against the people of Iraq, and he did this with the enthusiastic backing of the incoming Clinton administration. The pretext is the supposed violations of the U.S.-imposed "no-fly" zone by the Iraqi Air Force, coupled with Iraqi deployments into Kuwait to retrieve Iraqi supplies from previously contested territory on the Kuwait-Iraq border.

The Iraqi moves over the border were apparently done in agreement with the United Nations, and represented a major concession by the Iraqi government to border claims by the Kuwaitis. In other words, they were removing their equipment from Kuwait because they were conceding that the supply depot was in Kuwaiti territory rather than in Iraq. Hardly an "invasion."

Now it is certainly true that the Iraqis have continued to protest violations of their national sovereignty, and that this sometimes includes bellicose-sounding statements. Nevertheless, even had Saddam Hussein and the Iraqi command been defying the United States, how can any sane person believe that these violations were sufficient to justify the bombing raids conducted by the United States against Iraq on Jan. 13?

On Jan. 15, it was reported that not only did President-elect Clinton give his support to the bombing raid, but he raised the possibility of reopening the ground war as well. In his Senate confirmation hearings, Secretary of State-designate Warren Christopher was equally enthusiastic in stating his support of Bush's actions.

The dishonesty of the most recent charges against Iraq is revealed by the threat of continued bombing raids, even though the Iraqi ambassador to the United Nations promised on Jan. 13 that his government would follow U.S. dictates to the letter—on the question of the retrieval of Iraqi goods and on overflights in the "no-fly" zone. This was not, however, enough to satisfy the kind of mad-dog sentiment expressed by the statement "Saddam must be taught a lesson."

Even worse is the contrast between the hypocritical outrage being shown against the Iraqi leadership and the toleration, if not approval, of the bestial Serbian

government. Hundreds of thousands of innocent Bosnians have been murdered, raped, or left to suffer death by cold and hunger, without any action being taken by the United States, or the two other members of the "coalition," Britain and France, and in collaboration with the Russian government.

Saddam must be "taught a lesson," these powers say, but Serbian dictator Slobodan Milosevic, a war criminal, is being applauded as a man of peace for accepting a peace settlement which grants him the destruction of Bosnia, and effectively hands the region over to the Serbs.

Why now, we may ask, did Bush reopen the hot war against Iraq? Certainly this act of vindictiveness accords with his personal profile, but there is more at stake. A succession of foreign policy crises has been set in motion for the Clinton administration, ruining whatever slim possibility there might have been for reconsideration of the vicious Bush policy toward Iraq on the one side, and the paralysis over the Balkans on the other.

Clinton, supposedly least qualified in foreign policy, is now firmly on record that he will continue Bush's foreign policy. However, it would be wrong simply to see this as a victory for Bush. Both George Bush and Bill Clinton are, in the last analysis, creatures of the Anglo-American establishment.

This oligarchical elite is operating with a long-range objective: to reestablish a *Pax Romana* under joint British and American imperial rule, with the participation of Russia as a junior partner. Under this plan, any nation's sovereignty will be violated at will. That is the lesson which they are trying to impose upon the world, not just Saddam Hussein and the Iraqi people. It is also the lesson being "taught" by the butchers of Serbia, who are acting under the de facto protection of the Americans and British.

Abraham Lincoln once said, "You can fool all of the people some of the time, and some of the people all of the time, but not all of the people all of the time." Let us make sure that that is still true.