

OUR ONLY CHOICE WITH IRAQ IS TO TRUST OUR GOVERNMENT February 18, 2003

Knowing the truth is the most important part of any matter. Since this is true, why is it often the most difficult part of really significant problems to ascertain?

Oscar Wilde characterized the truth with "*The pure and simple truth is rarely pure and never simple.*" This has never been better exemplified than by the present situation with Iraq.

Most legislators have a definite opinion on what our policy should be regarding our actions. They must surely be privy to a lot more facts than I have been able to learn in order to come up with a definitive answer.

My perception is that many opinions are based on political and ideological considerations. Rock-ribbed Republicans are pressing for immediate action, with or without U>N> sanction. Yellow-dog Democrats are all for prolonging any action pending on U>N> solutions or a wait-and-see policy.

Member nations of the U>N> seem to be equally positioned along the same lines as our lawmakers. One impression a great many followers in the debate have is that opinions are based on love or hatred for President Bush and/or the United States. Others support or reticence for immediate action is based on pure monetary considerations.

Nearly everyone can agree Saddam Hussein is a brutal dictator with no regard for human rights or for life. His actions have proven that incontrovertibly over a period of several years. Most people in this country accept that fact. This is a truth we can all accept. The best way to deal with him is the bone of contention.

Those advocating containment and monitoring are quick to point out that these tactics have worked with Russia, China, Cuba and other rogue nations.

There is a basic fallacy with that premise that is not true in this case. They did not have extensive terrorist bases in several different countries committing terrorist's acts simultaneously in this country and countries allied with us.

Another problem with containment and monitoring, it is nearly impossible to find biological and chemical weapons in an area the size of Iraq. For any such action to be feasible there would have to be cooperation and trust between all parties. If this was the case, and who in their right mind believes it's possible, Iraq would still be able to train, sponsor and finance terrorist organizations.

Those believing military action is the answer are accused of using it as an excuse to steal Iraq's oil and diverting attention away from a faltering U.S. economy. Those making the accusations had no problem with a similar situation in Bosnia.

The best argument for not waiting for the U.N. to find a solution is obvious. It has proven to be totally innocuous organization with a deplorable track record. Many view the U.N., including myself, to actually be counter productive to world peace and stability. One big problem as I see it with the U.N. is that many of the member nations cares not one whit what happens to the U.S.

With the exception of Israel, we are the number one target for terrorists and have already lost a great deal. A great deal is at stake if we make the wrong decision. It would, of course, be a lot better if everyone knew the whole truth.

Secretary Powell is, I believe, an honest, experienced person with as much or more knowledge of the facts pertaining to the problem as anyone else. He laid out a

credible case for immediate action to the U.N. We would have been fools to divulge all the facts leading up to the truth at this time. Our sources would be compromised and placed in danger.

Our government's main duty is today, as it has always been, to protect its citizens. Webster defines trust as follows: "*Assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something.*" We have no choice in this case but to trust our elected government officials to do the right thing. Not telling the truth is the real wrong. It's an awful lot to ask of any politician, but what choice do we have?