

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Is Iraq an imminent threat to America?

The proposed war on Iraq is defined as preemptive action. Preemptive policy is based on the idea that Iraq is an imminent threat to our nation. Therefore, our Department of Defense must defend our nation against this supposed inevitable aggression. The problem is that the proponents of this war have yet to prove that Iraq is an imminent threat to the U.S. Not one piece of valid evidence has been brought forward to justify defensive military action. For example, Saddam has not been linked to 9/11 or proven to work in collusion with al-Qaeda (Our own intelligence agencies have endorsed this fact.) Iraq's military is less than one third the size it was during the Gulf War

and has not made an aggressive move since invading Kuwait. In addition, Saddam doesn't have any weapons that could come close to reaching our country. In other words, Iraq is not an imminent threat.

Actually, the Bush administration is really following a preventative policy of war. In this line of reasoning, Iraq might become a threat in the future, so it would benefit us to take Saddam's regime out now before that happens. The problem here is that we are talking about the mass murder of possibly millions of innocent Iraqi people and the likely deaths of our citizens in uniform. In addition, this act will set an international precedent and dissolve

the already fragile world order that exists today.

The problem with a preventative foreign policy in dealing with unfriendly nations is that is antithetical to our national policy of law. For example, our criminal code, which is reflection of our collective values and morals, insists that homicide be justified only when lethal force is imminent. In other words, only if someone is attacking you with a lethal weapon and you are concerned with no other course of action available, you may use lethal force in self-defense. To condone the use of deadly force based on the idea that a person or nation might attack in the future leads us to a very slippery slope.

Consider also that the slope has already gotten slick through our government's approval of international assassinations, withdrawing from the nuclear proliferation treaty, failing to sign the international criminal court resolution and the treaty to ban land mines. In other words, we espouse to be above international law and become renegades in our global community.

President Bush has stated, "They are either with us or against us." Yet, fighting terrorism is dependent upon international cooperation and support. If we alienate ourselves from many countries, we dissolve the chances of success in stopping terrorism.

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