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Trends. Clinton's Saddam Hussein Problem

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No. This article is not about the advisability of military strikes against the Iraqi Government. It does not address whether a military strike will be launched to avert attention from scandalous stories swirling within Washington's Beltway. It also does not address whether President Clinton can develop and implement credible foreign and security policies in conjunction with scandal. Instead it posits that the United States (US) President and the Iraqi leader have a similar problem.

Both have been managing allegations threatening their hold on power--sexual and related improprieties versus violations of United Nations (UN) directives. Both have been in national leadership roles managing these allegations for years--since the 1992 Presidential campaign versus soon after the end of the Gulf War in 1991. Both have been communicating various versions of The Truth through action and deed to manage the allegations: various explanations of allegations and various acts depicting a strong, loving family and marriage, thus contradicting the allegations versus various explanations of allegations and various acts depicting a wronged, peaceful, blameless sovereign state. Both have--beyond most measures of doubt--committed acts consonant with the allegations: improprieties versus violations. Both seem to not want to and/or not be able to modify behavior explicitly described by those allegations--a seeming compulsivity to engage in proscribed sexual acts versus a seeming perseveration to develop, maintain, and use proscribed military assets. Both currently are facing an exacerbation of threat related to allegations--civil and criminal proceedings, impeachment, and pressures to resign versus an impending military attack. And through all of this, both have been and are notoriously successful survivors--while adversaries have lost credibility, power, and their lives.

In his State of the Union address of January 27, 1998, President Clinton publicly stated that Saddam Hussein cannot defy the will of the world. Given his own history and future prospects within the world of American politics, the President might arguably wish to lay a bet to the contrary. (See Branaman, T.F. (1996). The role of fantasy in the evaluation and treatment of sexual obsessions and compulsivity. *American Journal of Forensic Psychology*, 14, 39-48; Erlanger, S. (January 28, 1998). Clinton tells Saddam: 'You cannot defy the will of the world'. *The New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com>; Rinehart, N.J., McCabe, M.P. (1997). Hypersexuality: Psychopathology or normal variant of sexuality. *Sexuality and Marital Therapy*, 12, 45-60; Serin, R.C., & Amos, N.L. (1995). The role of psychopathy in the assessment of dangerousness. *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry*, 18, 231-238; Thornquist, M.H., Zuckerman, M. (1995). Psychopathy, passive-avoidance learning and basic dimensions of personality. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 19, 525-534; Travin, S. (1995). Compulsive sexual behaviors. *Psychiatric Clinics of North America*, 18, 155-169.)