

3-26-1999

Trends. Meanwhile in Iraq: Just Say No Becomes Not Accepting Yes

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Recommended Citation

Editor (1999) "Trends. Meanwhile in Iraq: Just Say No Becomes Not Accepting Yes," *International Bulletin of Political Psychology*. Vol. 6 : Iss. 12 , Article 5.

Available at: <https://commons.erau.edu/ibpp/vol6/iss12/5>

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International Bulletin of Political Psychology

Title: Trends. Meanwhile in Iraq: Just Say No Becomes Not Accepting Yes

Author: Editor

Volume: 6

Issue: 12

Date: 1999-03-26

Keywords: Hajj, Iraq, Islam, Mecca, Muslims, Saddam Hussein, Saudi Arabia, UN, United Nations

In the continuation of efforts to weaken United Nations (UN)-inspired economic sanctions against Iraq, the government of Saddam Hussein recently "induced" about 18,000 of its citizens to gather at the Iraqi border with Saudi Arabia. The proximal purpose was to demonstrate that UN economic sanctions had left Iraqis without the resources to make the hajj to Mecca. Without appropriate resources, the Saudis would have no choice but to say but to say "No." No resources, no hajj. Preventing Muslims from making the hajj--an obligation for any Muslim who is able--would in effect portray the sanctions as contributing to a sacrilege against God and would further decrease support for continuation of the sanctions among UN members. On the other hand, if the Saudis said, "Yes," it could only be in the context of funding the hajj-bound Iraqis by the UN freeing Iraqi financial assets that have been frozen through the sanctions. The Iraqi government assumed that the UN would not weaken the sanctions, so the incipient Saudi "Yes" could only become an actual "No".

But the Saudis actually said, "Yes." The Iraqis were welcome and the Saudis would pay with Saudi funds. So, the Iraqis said, "No," and the 18,000 or so pilgrims--who by this time had entered Saudi Arabia--were "induced" by Iraqi authorities to return home. The subtext of the action had linked sacrilege with the Iraqi government. At a time of worldly adversity, Saddam Hussein has just provoked a very powerful enemy not of this world but simultaneously everywhere within it. (See Aune, R.K., Metts, S., & Ebesu Hubbard, A.S. (1998). Managing the outcomes of discovered deception. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 138, 677-689; Bonetti, S. (1998). Experimental economics and deception. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 19, 377-395; Burgoon, J.K., Buller, D.B., Floyd, K., & Grandpre, J. (1996). Deceptive realities: Sender, receiver, and observer perspectives in deceptive conversations. *Communication Research*, 23, 724-748; Gillings, V., Joseph, S. (1996). Religiosity and social desirability: Impression management and self-deceptive positivity. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 21, 1047-1050; Millar, M.G., & Millar, K. (1997). Effects of situational variables on judgments about deception and detection accuracy. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 19, 401-410; Pilgrims, going back to Iraq, fault Saudis. (March 25, 1999). *The New York Times*, p. A5.) (Keywords: Hajj, Iraq, Islam, Mecca, Muslims, Saddam Hussein, Saudi Arabia, UN, United Nations.)