

Hypothesizing the Iraq Crisis

On trial: Republic of Iraq
 Judge: Kofi Annan (UN Secretary-General)
 Jury: U.N. Security Council
 Court: United Nations Building, United Nations Plaza, New York

Defense Lawyer: Saddam Hussein (Dictator of Iraq)
 Assistant Defense Lawyer: None hired
 Defense Team: None hired

Prosecutor: George W. Bush ("Dictator of the World")
 Assistant Prosecutor: Tony Blair (The proxy U.S. Secretary of State)
 Prosecution Team: Dick Cheney, Colin Powell, Donald Rumsfeld, and Condoleeza Rice

Chief "Crime" Investigator: Hans Blix (on behalf of the judge)

Hypotheses of the Case:

Null Hypothesis, H_0 :	Iraq does not have weapons of mass destruction. (Saddam's claim)
Alternative Hypothesis, H_a :	Iraq does have weapons of mass destruction (Bush's claim)

Jury's Dilemma:

If the Jury:	If H_0 is:	
	True	False
Rejects H_0	Type I error (Consequence: Saddam is angry; prepares to defend Iraq)	Jury is correct (Conclusion: Saddam is bully; prepares to attack Israel)
Accepts H_0	Jury is correct (Conclusion: Bush is bully; prepares to attack Iraq)	Type II error (Consequence: Bush is angry; prepares to attack Iraq, anyway)

Recommendations:

- **If the defense team convinces you that H_0 is true and H_a is false:**
 Show support for Iraq and call Bush a bully. Otherwise, you'll make a Type I error.
- **If the prosecution team convinces you that H_0 is false and H_a is true:**
 Don't show support for Iraq; he is a real danger. You'll make a Type II error.

However, the real question is, which of the two errors is more serious for the jury? It's up to you to decide. But, no matter what, Bush has no incentive, nor any North Korea-like deterrence, not to attack Iraq. What are his incentives? That's up to you to decide, too. (If you need a clue, go to your corner gas station and check the skyrocketing gas price).

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