

Iraq and U.S. prepare for showdown

♦ Iraqi officials refuse to admit U.S. weapons inspectors, threaten to shoot down U.S. surveillance planes

BY PHOEBE JEWETT
Staff Writer

Uneasiness increased last Sunday, November 9th when, for the seventh consecutive day, Iraqi officials refused to comply with a United Nations Security Council weapon investigation team and reiterated their threat to shoot down "any hostile targets."

In 1991, the U.N. Security Council imposed strict sanctions on Iraq as part of the Gulf War's cease-fire. The sanctions included an embargo on Iraq's oil exports and the creation of a U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) to disarm Iraq. The resulting inspection team, which includes 10 Americans, is designed to ensure the destruction of Iraq's current weapons of mass destruction and prevent future manufacturing.

Last Tuesday, Iraq ordered the American members of the team to leave the country, an apparent response to Washington's recent attempt to instigate a travel ban on Iraqi officials. Granting a request from U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, Iraq extended the departure deadline to 48 hours, but refused to consider its revocation.

Along with the refusal to admit Americans, a threat to shoot down U.S. U-2 spy planes was issued. The planes, which are unarmed, have made routine surveillance flights over Iraq for years without problems. The deputy prime minister of Iraq, Tareq Aziz, attributed the hostility to Iraq's suspicions that the planes are actually being used by the U.S. to take photos for future military purposes. UNSCOM Chairman Richard Butler denies the idea, asserting that all decisions regarding flights of the U.S. planes are made solely by the U.N. council.

Considered to be a breach of the 1991 cease-fire agreement, the Iraqi actions open the possibility of increased sanctions and military involvement. A team of three U.N. diplomats was sent to Iraq Monday by Secretary General Annan, but negotiating was not on the agenda. Annan described the diplomats' goal as discussion of "a firm implementation of the U.N. resolution," adding that the question of American team members "would not be on the table." Three

days later, Annan announced the end of his unsuccessful personal involvement, turning the situation over to the Security Council.

The Security Council consists of five countries, the United States, Russia, France, Britain, and China, with each holding veto power. Although Britain fully supports the U.S. in the conflict, France and Russia have strong Iraqi oil interests and hesitate about any "unilateral anti-Iraq action." Speculations are that Saddam Hussein is using those interests to manipulate the council, his apparent goal being the elimination of American members on the UNSCOM investigation team.

It is officially the Security Council's decision what action to take, but William Dorsch, a senior associate at a Washington, D.C. think tank, declared earlier this week that "if Iraq is dumb enough to fire on surveillance planes, the United States won't require U.N. approval to retaliate." And President Clinton has warned that Iraq's use of anti-aircraft weaponry would be "a big mistake." He cautioned that he would not rule out military action in that case. The next U-2 flight is scheduled for an undisclosed time next week.

Attitudes on the Guilford campus regarding the recent U.S.-Iraq

dispute seem relatively relaxed, and many students admit a total ignorance of the situation. Among those who are aware of the circum-

stances, a general fear of Hussein's unpredictability is counterbalanced by distrust of the American government.

War. Students who feel the national government was guilty of lying by omission during the conflict in Kuwait question whether key issues are again being kept under wraps. Others wonder how much is being revealed about Iraq's motives for blocking the inspection teams and just how many mass destruction weapons the country has access to.

An anonymous senior, who says the whole situation just makes him nervous, paraphrased the anxiety in simple terms. "You know, whether or not Saddam Hussein is truly the evil guy the media makes him out to be, chemical weapons in anyone's hands are a bad thing."

Editor's note: On Monday, Nov. 10, a U.S. U-2 plane made routine surveillance flights over Iraq. There was no retaliation by Iraqi military who said that the plane was "out of range" of anti-aircraft fire. Hundreds of Iraqi civilians are camping out around Saddam Hussein's residence to shield it from possible attack. Iraqi officials refused to admit a U.N. inspection team with American members again on Tuesday morning. The team returned to its Baghdad headquarters refusing to continue without the Americans.



President: Saddam Hussein

Capital: Baghdad

Population (1991):
18,317,000

Land Area: 167,975 sq.
miles

Border countries: Kuwait,
Saudi Arabia, Jordan,
Syria, Turkey, Iran

Information from www.eb.com

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Both ideas appear to stem at least in part from the Persian Gulf

British Au Pair Freed

CAMBRIDGE, Mass.—In a stunning development, a judge in Cambridge, Mass., freed British au pair Louise Woodward Tuesday after sentencing her to time already served in jail. The judge denied an immediate motion by the prosecution to have the sentence stayed.

MCI Acquired For \$37 Billion

NEW YORK—Some would say it's like a goldfish swallowing a whale. Little known, Jackson, Miss.-based upstart WorldCom is acquiring MCI Communications for \$37 billion in the largest corporate takeover in history.

Washington-based MCI agreed to the takeover today, turning down a rival bid from GTE. The deal creates a powerhouse in global telecommunications and Internet services.

Pakistani Found Guilty In Murder Of CIA Employees

FAIRFAX, Va.—A jury in Fairfax, Va., today found a 33-year-old Pakistani man guilty of first-degree murder in the 1993 shooting deaths of two CIA employees.

Mir Aimal Kasi had pleaded not guilty. But defense lawyers rested their case without calling any witnesses.

Clinton Retreats On Bid For Fast-Track Trade Authority

WASHINGTON—President Clinton ordered a tactical retreat today in his bid to gain expanded trade negotiating power from Congress.

Clinton says he plans to bring the issue back to the House "at the appropriate time when we think we can pass it."



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