

## Middle East skeptical of U.S.

BY STEPHAN E JORDAN  
STAFF WRITER

While most Middle Eastern countries are not in consensus about the degree to which the Iraqi regime poses a threat, experts say the region's sentiment toward the United States and its war with Iraq are becoming increasingly negative.

Though there is extreme dislike for Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, citizens in many Middle Eastern countries think the United States has acted prematurely against Iraq. Jeannie Sowers, professor of political science at the University of Iowa, said the countries surrounding Iraq supported giving U.N. weapons inspectors more time for inspections.

She also said the first Persian Gulf War was a turning point for the way in which the Middle East perceives Hussein.

"Before the Gulf War, Hussein had an effect on Arab states because of the military threat he posed in the '80s — but the Gulf War removed that threat," she said.

Some experts also say Middle Eastern countries are expressing concern about the role the United States will have in the region after the war.

"(The Middle Eastern countries) don't buy the fact that the United States is going to build a democracy," said Akram Khater, professor of history at N.C. State University. "They think the United States is there for oil and also to implement an American-Israeli design of the Middle East."

Middle Eastern countries, with the exception of Israel, are becoming more cautious regarding U.S. postwar intentions, said Jonathan Mendilow, professor of political science at Rider University.

"Anti-American sentiment seems to grow larger by the hour," he said. "(The people) feel as if they're being bossed around by the Americans."

He said the majority of Middle Eastern countries do not see Hussein as a threat after 12 years of containment following the first Gulf War. Mendilow said Kuwait is one of few countries in the region that views Hussein as a threat.

One of the main goals of the first

Gulf War was to drive Hussein and his invading forces out of Kuwait.

"(Hussein) doesn't really pose anything but unpleasantness," he said. "And the surrounding regimes aren't exactly democratic."

Another reason for negative feelings toward the United States is the uncertainty of postwar government.

Mary Ann Tetreault, professor of international affairs at Trinity University, said Middle Eastern people do not trust the United States because they are unsure about the type of government that will be established in Iraq.

"(The people) will be happy for the end of Hussein, but not happy not knowing what the United States will do," she said.

"It will depend on whether the United States sets up the government it wants or the one the Iraqi people want."

Past experience also has impacted Middle Eastern sentiment toward the United States, said Michael Provence, professor of history at Southern Methodist University.

"Because of previous colonization in the Middle East, these countries believe that military occupation and democracy don't go together," he said.

"It's the invasion of a weak country by a big country."

The United States also has been criticized by many Middle Eastern countries for its support of Israel.

"Israel has violated almost as many U.N. resolutions as Iraq, and the Middle East sees this as United States hypocrisy," said Lou Cantori, professor of political science at the University of Maryland-Baltimore.

Much of the Middle Eastern population might question a newly established Iraqi government because it might be construed as a tool of Western imperialism, said Dov Waxman, professor of government at Bowdoin College.

He said, "It's likely that the population will regard the (United States) regime as an illegitimate puppet of the U.S. government."

Contact the State & National Editor at [stntdesk@unc.edu](mailto:stntdesk@unc.edu).

BY STEPHAN E CH ULL  
STAFF WRITER

Howard Lee, former N.C. senator and former mayor of Chapel Hill, addressed the state budget and how it can affect higher education during a Monday night meeting of the UNC Young Democrats.

Lee, who helped draw up Gov. Mike Easley's budget proposal, commended the governor for balancing the state budget after having inherited the largest deficit in state history.

After playing a major role during the last legislative session's budgeting process, Lee now serves as the senior education adviser to Easley.

He said Easley's budget proposal, presented at the beginning of March, could go through the N.C. General Assembly this session without any significant changes.

"If they do, it will be a very quick session, and it'll be out by July," Lee said.

But, he said, an excessive number of committee chairmen in the House might heighten partisanship and create difficulties in passing a budget.

The agreement that finalized a House co-speakership, now shared by Rep. Jim Black, D-Mecklenburg, and Rep. Richard Morgan, R-Moore, stipulates that the number of chairmen on key

committees be doubled. This mandate assures equal representation for each party on committees.

"(But) you cannot run a government, in my opinion, by committees," Lee said.

"Somebody has got to make a decision."

Not only can such large committees and their large number of chairmen delay progress, Lee said, but such a narrow margin also tightens party loyalties because losing one vote can mean the loss of the majority.

"If someone chooses to vote against party leadership, it could be a disaster," he said.

He said there are two main ways budget problems can affect the University: elimination of the 1/2-cent increase in the sales tax and the need for a tuition increase.

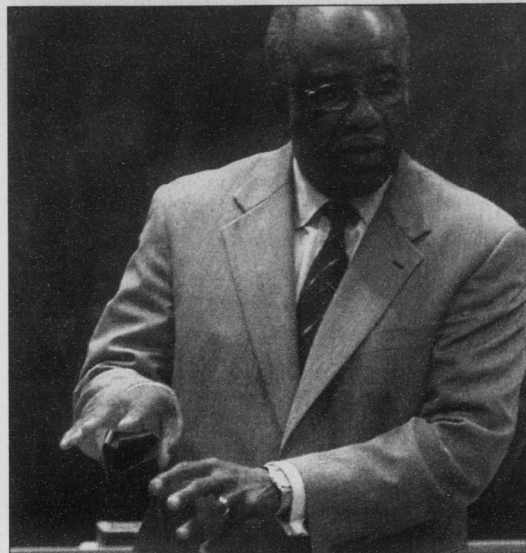
He said the "sunset clause" — a provision that calls for the June 30 expiration of the 1/2-cent sales tax — would mean a loss of \$400 million in state revenue.

Lee said this would mean reduced budget spending to compensate for the loss of revenue.

He cautioned that if the clause is not eliminated, legislators might look to higher education to fund the loss in revenue.

"If the tax goes, one of the fall-outs will be an increase in tuition," Lee said.

He emphasized that education



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Former N.C. Sen. Howard Lee, who now is Gov. Mike Easley's top adviser on education, spoke to the Young Democrats on Monday night.

is not a partisan issue and that both Democrats and Republicans in the General Assembly should be looking to bolster education.

"We have an obligation to support education as a top priority," Lee said.

"Us Democrats have a responsibility to remain vigilant to make sure that the University doesn't suffer from lack of funding."

Contact the State & National Editor at [stntdesk@unc.edu](mailto:stntdesk@unc.edu).

## State: Schools' merger might cut costs

BY MARY MCGUI RT  
STAFF WRITER

As local school officials and county commissioners explore the option of merging the two area school districts, they might be affected by a decision made by the N.C. State Board of Education last week.

The State Board of Education has been studying ways to reduce funding formulas for central office administrators, and merging the city and county districts across the state could reduce spending.

But in a statement released Wednesday, the board said there isn't a specific formula that guarantees merging would save money.

Jane Worsham, executive director of the State Board of Education, said members from the N.C. School Boards Association and the N.C. Association of School Administration suggested merging to cut down central office staff.

Orange County Commissioner Moses Carey, who made a proposal in January to merge Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools with Orange County Schools, said the state's decision should not affect the decision to merge locally. "The reason I proposed a merger was not to save money but to equalize funding for the two schools," he said.

Carey also said merging the two districts would improve educational opportunities for all schools in the system, especially those in the county schools.

The two area school systems are

not sold on the merger idea, and officials appreciate the flexibility to make their own decision.

Neil Pedersen, superintendent for the CHCCS, said merging usually is suggested to help solve problems with racial imbalance, small size and economic factors, but he added that none of these problems really apply to the two districts. "I would agree that saving is not a sound reason for merging," he said.

Kim Hoke, spokeswoman of the CHCCS, said the state's decision could be crucial to local school and county officials. Since Carey's proposal was made, officials have been considering merging county schools with CHCCS. "The discussion at state level may have added some additional cause to pursue discussion here locally," she said.

She said the Chapel Hill-

Carrboro Board of Education will meet with the Orange County commissioners next week to further discuss the merger.

Before a decision about merging is made, UNC's School of Government will conduct a study to identify obstacles in linking the two systems. The commissioners will discuss the results of the study with members of both school boards.

Dana Thompson, member of the Orange County Board of Education, said commissioners want to make sure they have all the information necessary to make an intellectual decision about merging. "I appreciate the commissioners tackling this issue," she said. "Their approach is the right approach to take."

Contact the City Editor at [citydesk@unc.edu](mailto:citydesk@unc.edu).

## Superintendent search narrows to 2

BY JONATHAN M. CARL  
STAFF WRITER

After months of controversy and deliberation, the Orange County Board of Education now is making headway in the search for a new school system superintendent.

The board, amid heated debate,

has narrowed the selection down to two candidates from the four candidates it had on April 1.

However, residents came out Monday to express their grievances with the way the board has been handling the search. But many residents specifically excluded board

member Dana Thompson from their criticism.

Conspiracy theories were thrown out by some residents, such as Board Watch spokesman Jackie Wolfe, who said board member Delores Simpson probably is acting on behalf of the board.

Simpson reportedly called one of the candidates last week and told the candidate about divisiveness on the board.

The candidate then withdrew from the process, and the board chose someone else to replace the candidate.

Thompson has spoken out and said she is displeased with the actions of her colleague, Delores Simpson. Many residents were more abrasive in voicing their concerns with Simpson.

Some residents decided to even the playing field by sending a packet of information, including articles and letters, to the two candidates to allow them to know of the divisiveness on the board.

Shirley Carraway, one of the remaining applicants, is associate superintendent for Pitt County Schools. A delegation of school board members will be visiting her district Wednesday.

The same board members toured the Cumberland County district of her opponent, Kathi Gibson, where Gibson works as associate superintendent.

School board Chairwoman Brenda Stevens said the trips, called site visits, are organized meetings with colleagues in the absence of the candidate.

"We have a predetermined time to speak with (the candidate's) co-workers," Stevens said. "It is very organized, and we have a little checklist."

Board members Keith Cook, Simpson and Betty Tom Davidson visited Cumberland County last week to observe Carraway.

Simpson said her trip to Cumberland County gave her insight as to the way Carraway works and interacts with others.

"The trip was helpful, very informative and very pleasant," Simpson said.

After Wednesday's trip, the board is slated to make a decision by April 16.

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