

Hussein's trial faces scrutiny

Judicial process could prove difficult

WHITNEY ISENHOWER
STAFF WRITER

As the new Iraqi government prepares to put former President Saddam Hussein on trial, concerns have risen about the proceeding's fairness and security.

Hussein, the former dictator who ruled Iraq with an iron fist for more than 20 years, will be tried on the charge of crimes against humanity in an Iraqi court, without American intervention. The move has raised questions about how fair such an important trial can be in a country with little history of emphasis on personal liberties.

"They want it to be and appear as fair as possible," said Patrick Basham, a senior fellow with the Center for Representative Government at the CATO Institute, a conservative Washington, D.C.-based think tank.

"But Saddam will be tried in an Iraqi judicial system, which has no precedent of fairness."

But Michael O'Hanlon, a senior fellow for foreign policy studies at the Brookings Institution, a Washington think tank that has focused recently on the U.S. involvement in Iraq, said Hussein might have too fair of a trial.

"The burden of proof may be too high," O'Hanlon said, adding that if there is no proof of Hussein pulling a trigger or if no one steps forward to affirm his involvement in murder, there might not be enough evidence to convict him.

But the millions of Iraqis whose family members were victims of Hussein and his Baath Party anticipate his trial and conviction.

"There are a great number of

people who can tell a great number of horrific things about his regime," Basham said.

Hussein's involvement in the 1991 invasion of Kuwait and the subsequent uprising of Shiite Muslims, which he ended largely with poison chemicals, also play in favor of his conviction.

Mark Weisburd, professor of law at UNC, added, "There isn't any dispute about the historical facts."

O'Hanlon said that if Hussein is convicted, it also can be healthy for the Iraqi government in showing authority and helping Iraq move toward democracy.

O'Hanlon added, "If the trial can be handled well and efficiently and if Saddam is convicted, it can be positive for Iraqis who had personal ties with his victims."

But there is also the question of whether or not witnesses will testify against Hussein, given his violent reputation.

"It's pretty obvious the U.S. will have to be heavily involved in getting security for the trial," Weisburd said.

Furthermore, in his defense, Hussein might bring up the U.S. aid and encouragement given to him in the past.

"There is every likelihood he will use the opportunity to embarrass the U.S. and other involved political leaders," Basham said.

But the U.S. government likely will be helpful to Iraq during the trial, wanting the strongest case against Hussein possible.

O'Hanlon said, "It's a very important, underrated event."

Contact the State & National Editor at stntdesk@unc.edu.

Nader's campaign hits snags

Candidate faces ballot difficulties

BY MARK PUENTE
STAFF WRITER

Independent presidential candidate Ralph Nader's campaign appears to be in a downward spiral due to his inability to obtain the signatures needed to place him on state ballots.

Nader, the Green Party presidential candidate in 1996 and 2000, was snubbed by his former party in favor of another candidate. The Green Party has access to 23 state ballots in November's election.

He did not get enough signatures to be on the ballot in North Carolina, as in 2000, and will have to rely on a write-in campaign.

One expert said the Green Party snub will be difficult for Nader to overcome and has dealt him a major blow because being on a ballot gives a candidate legitimacy.

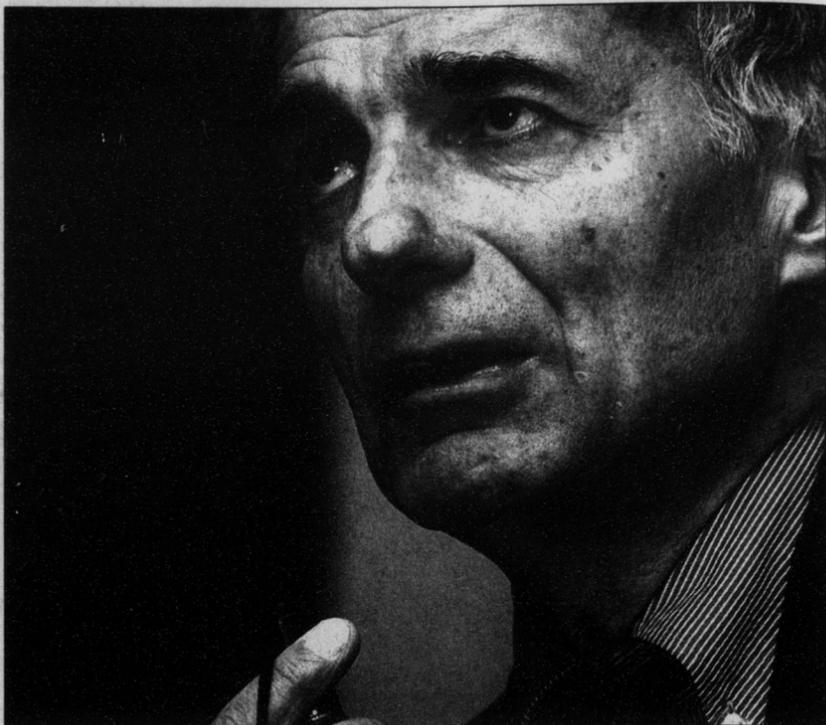
"Without his former party's backing, and given the complexity of election laws in every state, Nader will eventually have to start from scratch," said Shaun Bowler, professor of political science at the University of California-Riverside.

In the 2000 election, Nader was seen as siphoning votes in key battleground states, enabling George W. Bush to narrowly defeat Al Gore. Democrats fear a repeat of that this year.

So far, Nader is on the ballot in six states: Florida, Michigan, Kansas, Mississippi, Montana and Colorado.

Moreover, Nader's campaign was dealt another setback when he was ruled ineligible to be on Arizona's ballot because a number of signatures were unverifiable.

Bowler added that it is difficult for Nader to garner any positive



DTH/JUSTIN SMITH

Independent presidential candidate Ralph Nader again didn't receive enough signatures to appear on the N.C. presidential ballot and will have to conduct a write-in campaign in 2004, as he did in the 2000 election.

media attention.

"His only coverage is of Nader the spoiler," he said.

Additionally, in Oregon, Democrats have accused Republicans of encouraging party members to sign Nader's petitions because the left-leaning Nader would draw votes from the presumptive Democratic nominee, Sen. John Kerry of Massachusetts.

Such setbacks could prove fatal to Nader's candidacy.

"If Nader supporters see his support eroding, they may abandon their efforts in other states," said Paul Goren, professor of political science at Arizona State University.

The latest national polls indicate that a Bush-Kerry matchup is statically even.

But Nader consistently draws 4 percent to 7 percent of voters in battleground states — enough votes to hurt Bush or Kerry.

But Robert Sahr, professor of

political science at Oregon State University, said the political landscape this year is different than in 2000.

"A lot of people realize Nader's actions cost Gore the election," he said.

"And the people who are negative toward Bush might see a vote for Nader as being thrown away."

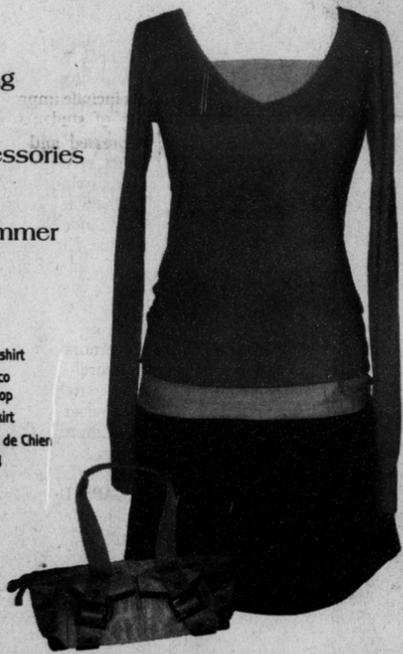
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Workers' panel has gainful summer

Short-term successes belie resources

BY BRIAN HUDSON
UNIVERSITY EDITOR

The Employee Forum is making progress this summer, officials say, and they hope the group will continue to hold momentum come fall.

"It's a little less stressful on campus during the summer," said Tommy Griffin, three-term chairman of the forum. "There's a little more (accessibility) getting folks, getting in places and talking to

folks."

The forum met yesterday, and according to the agenda, a discussion of the State Health Plan — a major focus of the Employee Forum — led the meeting.

Another major effort of the Employee Forum is the recent support of the goals established by the Chancellor's Task Force for a Better Workplace.

During the past year the task

force drafted 34 goals for improving the UNC work environment. Based on employee surveys, the groups created short-, medium- and long-term goals.

Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources Laurie Charest announced in the June meeting of the Employee Forum that the task force had received responses for each of the report's 34 proposals. She also said that two-thirds of the goals require additional resources.

"The short term we're going to

be able to handle OK. The medium and long term is going to require a little more resources," Griffin said, explaining that the task force's long term goals — such as establishing a tuition waiver program and providing health-related benefits — require action from the N.C. General Assembly.

He said forum members would be relentless in their efforts to lobby legislators in the interest of state employees.

"We're gonna start as soon as this legislation ends," he said. "We're going to get ready for next year."

Griffin said the forum also will spend time this summer and fall analyzing the University's grievance process.

"We're still looking at the grievance system — into ways to improve systems," Griffin said.

He said that he hopes the University's ombudsman, a position created by the task force, will improve communication and reduce problems with the system.

"If you get people before they get stressed out — before hard feelings — they can usually talking this out."

Griffin said the attention to the grievance system predates the attention brought to it by the firing of Bill Shuler.

Shuler, a former UNC housekeeper, was fired in May. He is pursuing legal action, claiming that the University wrongfully terminated him as a result of the grievances against his firing going unheard by UNC officials.

Griffin said the forum has been investigating the grievance process for several years, but the Shuler incident is very much related to the investigation.

"A grievance is a very stressful situation for the University and especially for the person," he said. "It's stressful enough if you're on the job, but if you're not it's even more stressful."

Contact the University Editor at udesk@unc.edu.



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CLARIFICATION

■ A July 1 page 3 story cited Sept. 13 — a hypothetical starting date — as the day for the formation of the revised MLK Road naming committee.

To report a correction, Contact Managing Editor Laura Youngs at layout@email.unc.edu.

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