

WORLD



Troops attack refugees in protected zone

NICOSIA, Cyprus — A Kurdish rebel spokesman said Thursday that Iraqi forces launched a major offensive against rebel forces inside an area of northern Iraq being protected by U.S. forces.

"Iraqi troops, supported by artillery, tanks and helicopter gunships, attacked our guerrilla positions north of Salahuddin," said Hoshiyar Zebari, spokesman for the Kurdistan Democratic Party.

Zebari, in a statement issued in London, specifically noted the Iraqi attack came north of the 36th parallel, within the area the United States defined as a protective zone for fleeing Kurds.

Iraqi forces also were using helicopter gunships against rebel forces near Zakho, not far from the Turkish border and also within the U.S.-protected zone. More than 2 million Kurds have fled their homes in northern Iraq while a smaller flight is under way in southern Iraq by Shiite Muslims.

Stung by criticism that the United States encouraged the revolts, but then did not support them, U.S. officials warned on Wednesday that American forces would destroy any Iraqi aircraft used against the fleeing Kurds in northern Iraq.

Saudis announce end of PLO financial support

DAMASCUS, Syria — Saudi Arabia informed the United States today that it was cutting off financial support to the Palestine Liberation Organization, a senior U.S. official said.

Financial support from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and other oil-rich Arab countries have helped make it possible for Yasser Arafat's PLO to carry out its guerrilla raids against Israel.

But the Saudis were disappointed when the PLO backed Iraq in the Persian Gulf War.

Whatever the Saudis' motivation, a suspension of financial support to the PLO could build confidence in Israel that Arab attitudes are changing.

At the same time, the Saudis are providing assistance to Palestinians who live under Israeli rule on the West Bank and in Gaza, the official said.

In that sense, the official said, the Saudis are fulfilling a role of promoting the Palestinians and their demands.

Hungarian ambassador ordered to vacate post

BUDAPEST, Hungary — Hungary's ambassador to the United States, caught up in a growing controversy over Budapest's foreign policy, said Thursday he has been ordered to leave his post within 48 hours.

Peter Zwack, a 57-year-old emigre and wealthy businessman with no previous diplomatic experience, renounced his U.S. citizenship to enter politics in his native Hungary last year.

Zwack's abrupt dismissal followed his recall from Washington and his suggestion Monday that his boss, Foreign Minister Geza Jeszenszky, resign.

The affair has stirred a flurry of criticism from opposition politicians and the media about how Hungary's center-right government conducts foreign policy.

—The Associated Press

Permanent cease-fire ends gulf war

By Doug Hatch
Staff Writer

Thursday marked the official beginning of a permanent cease-fire in the Persian Gulf, ending weeks of negotiations spelling out the specific terms of the post-war agreement between Iraq and the coalition forces.

Although Iraq agreed Saturday to the terms mandated in United Nations Resolution 678, the cease-fire did not officially go into effect until Thursday at 10 a.m.

The resolution, which Iraq considers further confirmation of a "conspiracy" against them, coincides with the almost complete devastation of the country.

Since the war, Iraqis have suffered under near-Stone Age living conditions coupled with hunger, disease, civil unrest and other hardships.

Iraq will be allowed to resume exporting and importing essential civilian goods, such as food and medical supplies, which were placed under embargo by the Security Council soon after their Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait.

Under the conditions of the resolution, Iraq must finish destroying all remaining installations where biological, chemical and nuclear weapons are produced within their borders.

Iraq also must agree to pay war reparations to Kuwait in excess of \$8 billion.

After U.N. inspectors confirm Iraq's dismantling of its weapons of mass destruction, Iraqi assets frozen in foreign countries will be released and Iraq will be able to resume the exportation of oil.

The U.N. is now formulating plans by which a certain amount of the profits from Iraqi oil exports may be set aside for paying reparations to Kuwait.

Whether Iraq will be allowed to import other non-military items freely in the near future is part of an agenda set forth by Resolution 687, adopted last week by the U.N. Security Council.

In addition, the cease-fire terms mandate that Iraq renounce its support of international terrorism, recognize its pre-invasion border with Kuwait, and allow a force of U.N. security observers to remain for an unspecified amount of time in the border zones now occupied by coalition forces.

Iraq's Foreign Minister Ahmed Hussein accepted the resolution in a letter to the U.N. secretary-general. Ahmed Hussein called the resolution's terms "unfair and vindictive," maintaining that coalition forces already had destroyed any non-conventional weapons facilities Iraq may once have had.

He pointed out that Iraq was a signatory nation of both the 1925 Geneva Protocol banning the use of poison gas weapons as well as the 1968 nuclear non-proliferation treaty.

The foreign minister also complained that other countries in the region were not necessarily bound to the applicable terms of the resolution, citing Iraq's enemy Israel has nuclear weapons.

He claimed that the true "motive" behind the resolution was that Iraq had tried to change the situation the British imposed on them many years ago when it drew up borders for the Middle East, "which made Israel the dominant aggressive power in the region."

Whether Iraq will comply with the terms remains to be seen.

Most experts agree Iraq's ability to meet the terms is not in question, although Iraq may claim otherwise and attempt to find loopholes. The country should have sufficient revenue from oil production to cover reparations.

"(Paying the reparations) would set them back to a pre-industrial state, but they're already there now," said Herbert Bodman, UNC professor of history.

Bodman said he compared the resolution in a recent lecture to the Treaty of Versailles, which forced the defeated Germans to pay enormous reparations

at the end of World War I. Germany then was faced with hyperinflation, which caused the complete devastation of the country and set the stage for Hitler's rise to power.

"Iraqis are certainly going to resent (the resolution) for a long time to come," he said.

Yet the resolution is seen by some in the U.S. Congress as possibly beneficial to the Middle East.

"We hope that we can reach some political stability in the region," said Rachel Perry, press secretary for Rep. David Price, D-N.C.

Many see the resolution as a tool for causing the overthrow of Saddam Hussein because it is almost certain to inflict more hardships on the Iraqi people. Yet ousting the dictator may be harder to achieve now than experts originally had thought because of the strong support Saddam has among his religious brethren—the Sunni Muslims who hold powerful positions in the government and army.

The minority Sunnis will band together because they fear the possibility of ethnic Kurds' forming a state in the North, and Shiite Muslims' forming another one in the South, according to Bodman. Both groups generally harbor antipathy for Saddam's regime.

Panelists say public should learn from war

Jennifer Brett
Staff Writer

The American public can learn many lessons from the Persian Gulf War, panelists said at a discussion held at the United Church of Christ Wednesday night.

The gulf crisis created a rift between the religious and political sectors of America, said the Rev. Bob Seymour, a member of the North Carolina Council of Churches.

"There was a time when churches rallied around the flag right along with everyone else," Seymour said. "I'm grateful that day is over. These days I think we're living with a sort of Vietnam paranoia."

Religious organizations throughout the nation as well as the world united in opposition to the war prior to the Jan. 15 deadline, Seymour said.

"The Anglican Church of Britain is unique in that it did not actively oppose the war at an International Council of Churches symposium in Canada just before the war broke out," he said. "All other churches did. We believe this was a war that should not have been fought, and the criticism from churches everywhere against the American

government's decision to fight is tremendous."

Negotiation and diplomacy could have prevented war, Seymour said.

"War should, in all cases, be the absolute last result," he said. "(America) should have shown more patience and should have been willing to engage in serious diplomacy. Mr. Bush refused to negotiate, however, preferring to issue ultimatums."

Americans are celebrating the victory over Iraq when they should be mourning the deaths of the thousands of Iraqis who died at the hands of American troops, Seymour said.

"One of the evils of patriotism is that it makes war seem ethical, even righteous," he said. "The slaughter of thousands of people is not a cause to celebrate. We need to embrace a spirit of confession and repentance, not euphoria."

Patrick O'Neill, a sports writer for the Chapel Hill Newspaper and a member of the pacifist group CARITAS, drew parallels between the gulf war and sports events.

"This war was a game to many people," O'Neill said. "We were consumed with who was winning and how many jets each side was losing, not the

horrible immorality of the war."

Government propaganda and media sensationalism created overwhelming patriotism and support for the war, he said.

"George Bush sold us on the war by assuring us America would win," O'Neill said. "Then the military brainwashed thousands of young men into doing the dirty work for war profiteers. These kids were forced to slay people they didn't know purely for the good of the economy. That's just wrong."

The United States has been overwhelmed by the influences of evil, O'Neill said.

"The White House, the Pentagon and the military are all controlled by evil men," he said. "Evil is the product of the devil, and the manifestation of evil in this country is evident."

The President's post-war popularity promises a perilous future, O'Neill said.

"The new world order will bring more violence and more death," he said. "God is not on the side of warmongers. As Jesus said, 'Blessed are the peacemakers.' While the American public was reveling in the so-called victory against Saddam Hussein, Jesus was weeping."

The gulf crisis had no new lessons to teach, but served as a reminder of

society's ills, said peace educator Marion O'Malley.

"The war reinforced what peace activists have long known," she said. "America is the most violent country in the world. Enemy-making with a vengeance seems to be necessary to get ahead in a political agenda."

Multicultural training, beginning in kindergarten, is necessary to improve the violent nature of American society, O'Malley said.

"We need to educate our youth so they will see people of other nations as friends, not target practice," she said. "Education needs to be radically different. Our children should learn empathy and negotiation, rather than the importance of winning."

American materialism and journalistic sensationalism are to blame for the public's approval of violence and war, O'Malley said.

"Peace isn't newsworthy," she said. "People have been led to believe that violence is normal and war is inevitable. We are blinded to the atrocities of our society. We have accepted a role as the world's mercenary policemen, and while we're good at pro-war slogans, we must realize that our infrastructure is crumbling."

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