

WORLD BRIEFS

Baker bids for support of peace conference

KUWAITCITY—Secretary of State James Baker headed for Damascus on Monday in hopes of enlisting Syria's participation in a Mideast peace conference. Earlier, he bid for Soviet co-sponsorship of the initiative and gained the sideline endorsement of Saudi Arabia.

Baker's sessions with Syrian President Hafez Assad and Foreign Minister Farouk Sharaa loomed as his most difficult challenge on the Arab side as he attempts to fashion a format and agenda for the prospective peace talks. He was expected to return to Israel on Tuesday in hopes of resolving its concerns about the scope of the proposal.

Baker wants Moscow to co-sponsor the peace talks, provided the Soviets resume full diplomatic relations with Israel after a 24-year lapse.

The fact that Baker was keeping his schedule open raised a possibility that Baker might fly to Moscow to firm up a jointly sponsored conference, provided he can resolve the Arab-Israeli differences over the agenda and the extent of third-party participation.

The Saudis confirmed during Baker's meetings in Jiddah with King Fahd and Prince Saud, the foreign minister, that they would not participate directly in peace negotiations though they may take part in dealing with such side issues as the environment.

But Prince Saud said, "It was conveyed to the secretary that Saudi Arabia believes it is time to put an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict and to achieve a comprehensive and just solution to the Palestinian question."

Kohl's failed promises led to party's defeat

BERLIN — Helmut Kohl's opponents say he is now paying for failing to fulfill his promises, for pushing the speed of German unification in a way that once thrilled Germans but only fooled them.

The jubilant Social Democrats claimed an election victory Sunday in

the German chancellor's home state of Rhineland-Palatinate.

The outcome was the first loss in the state for Kohl's Christian Democrats in 44 years and the party's second straight state election debacle during this year.

In the 4 months since he won a resounding victory as chancellor of the united Germany, Kohl's political clout and public mandate have eroded at a withering pace.

Bjoern Engholm, the Social Democrat leader and the chancellor's ascendant political rival, said Monday that the outcome signaled "the most dramatic decline in trust and confidence" ever experienced by a postwar elected German government.

"We must examine how we can better address the people," Kohl admitted, terming the election a "bitter defeat."

Soviet Premier calls for economic program

MOSCOW — Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov warned Monday that a "social explosion" could occur and millions of people lose their jobs unless the country agrees on an emergency program to halt economic decline.

Pavlov said industrial production will plummet if debilitating strikes continue, state contracts are not met and the government fails to adopt an economic plan.

Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev told reporters on Red Square that he expected "serious proposals" and criticism of the program at a pivotal Communist Party Central Committee meeting Wednesday.

Gorbachev has refused to resign, instead urging strikers to put aside personal grudges and work together.

"Everyone understands it's dangerous to play now. Now we must rise above all these political ambitions and sympathies," he told reporters. "Now the fatherland, state, country and condition of the people" should be foremost.

Pavlov described the dire state of the economy in presenting the latest attempts to cure it. "The situation in the country can only be characterized as a general crisis."

—The Associated Press

Marine reservist sentenced for desertion

By Doug Hatch
Staff Writer

A Marine reservist was convicted of desertion last Wednesday for claiming conscientious objector status when he refused to go to the Persian Gulf with his military unit.

Sgt. David Bobbit was sentenced by military court to 14 months in the brig (the Marine prison) after pleading guilty to charges of desertion and failure to deploy with his unit. Additionally, Bobbit will be demoted to private and dishonorably discharged from the service.

His is the first in a number of trials involving reservists who claimed conscientious objector status when their military units were called to active duty during the Persian Gulf conflict.

The nature of these cases and the

soldiers' pleas could set a precedent for future conscientious objector court actions.

Members of the armed forces may file for objector status by citing "spiritual or ethical reasons for not wanting to be in combat," according to Warrant Officer Randy Gaddo, a Marine public affairs officer at the Pentagon.

Individuals must first file with their commanding officer, who then conducts an investigation to determine the applicant's sincerity. The officer considers such things as how long the individual has shown moral objection to war as well as any past actions that might support his or her professed beliefs.

A major consideration in the most recent cases has been the timing of the applicants' objector claims. They have been accused of filing only after the real

possibility of war loomed, making it appear they used the military for personal gain.

Objector status is achieved as follows:

After the commanding officer prepares a brief on the individual, the case goes through a military chain of command during which it may be turned down at anytime. The highest level of the process is a national board of officers that makes the final decision on the case.

Out of the 40 cases filed since January 1991, 15 have been approved, 13 denied and the rest are still pending.

Hands Off!, an organization based out of the New School for Social Research in Manhattan, has sided with the conscientious objectors. The organization originated when Sam Lwin, a student at the school, decided to file for

conscientious objector status and was denied.

"The real issue is ... [whether] the Marine Corps treated their conscientious objector applications with fairness and according to procedure from the beginning," said Melissa Ennen, the Hands Off! senior counselor in Camp Lejeune.

Ennen strongly supports Bobbit, charging that the sentence issued to him was too harsh.

"David Bobbit himself is willing to go to jail, and he's in jail, for his beliefs," she said.

Most of the remaining 16 cases, however, are contested courts martial in which the soldiers are pleading "not guilty" to their individual charges.

"Those cases should be quite interesting," Ennen said.

Boarding school to begin wilderness training program

By Pete Simpkinson
Staff Writer

In the foothills of North Carolina's Blue Ridge Mountains, sweeping changes at the Patterson School are developing a unique alternative to public education.

The Episcopal preparatory boarding school, located near Lenoir, N.C., will work with the N.C. Outward Bound School in Morganton to provide students with a week of wilderness training at the beginning of each semester.

The school is changing its name to the Morgan School at Patterson Preserve, honoring the Burton G. Morgan Foundation which granted the school

\$1 million for the overhaul. The 81-year-old Patterson School had previously been struggling financially, said Elisabeth Wall, press agent for the school.

"Our goal for the Morgan School is to provide a learning community which encourages, with enthusiasm, the natural curiosity of its students and helps them to understand that discovery is a lifelong pursuit," said new School Headmaster Robert Brigham.

The Morgan School will also develop "the individual's own self esteem with expanding academics and environmental studies," said Iona Brigham, a guidance counselor for the new school.

"We're continuing a lot of the

Patterson School philosophy," she said.

The outdoor programs in Morganton and in nearby national forest areas will help to "develop leadership potential, increase student confidence and esteem and build a sense of camaraderie and team spirit," Wall said.

Students will operate the Patterson Preserve, a stretch of farm and timberland of more than 1600 acres.

"The kids can become involved in the business aspect and manage part (of the preserve)," Iona Brigham said.

The school will combine 20 previously enrolled students with 60 new students for the upcoming academic year. Additional efforts to recruit talented students will not interfere with

the existing programs for students suffering from language disabilities such as dyslexia, Wall said.

Most of the students at the school live in North Carolina, but the student body represents much of the Southeast, including Florida, Iona Brigham said.

All faculty members will live on campus in an effort to create a community, family-type environment. Some of the faculty will carry over from the staff of the Patterson School.

The school maintains an emphasis on Christian values and education, Wall said. "Students will assemble daily for worship and meditation, and community projects will be part of the curriculum."

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Budget

costs as an example of the students' plight.

"My fees on campus are now \$7600, a 33 percent increase since the summer," Gagne said. "Before you know it, students will be forced to make a \$10,000-a-year investment to come to a state university."

Presently, tuition at UMASS is the

second highest in the country, surpassed only by Vermont, said Jack Polidori, spokesman for the Massachusetts Teachers Association.

With such financial burdens placed upon students as well as similar ones inflicted upon teachers, there is a significant "brain drain" in the state, according to some education officials.

"Massachusetts' only natural resource is the intelligence and skills of its work force," Polidori said. "We don't have oil, we don't have agriculture and ours is a state historically renowned for the intellectual capacities of its population."

Optimism isn't running rampant on the state's campuses these days. "I think

that we're going to hit rock bottom before we start going back up the ladder again," Gagne said.

There have been rumors among state college institutions that Gov. Weld proposed completely shutting down five college campuses in the public school system. The governor's office denies these rumors.

"He has never said he will close five campuses," said Virginia Buckingham, the governor's assistant press secretary. "He said he might close or consolidate some, but the legislature never acted on his proposal, so nothing will be done for the upcoming academic year."

Weld wants to do away with the traditional board of regents, which now governs higher education within the state, and replace it with what critics call "an educational czar."

The so-called "czar" would serve as an adviser to the governor not only for college-level education, but also for kindergarten through high school.

The board of regents is opposed to all of Weld's measures, said Terry Zoulas, public affairs director for the Mass. board of regents.

"The board is part of the solution and not the problem," he said.

Some student leaders aren't too fond of Weld's proposals, either.

"I think the board of regents is a necessity to higher education," Gagne said. "They have a much better grasp on what is happening on the campuses than one person sitting in Boston."

Others think Weld is showing limited foresight with his proposals. "You can have whatever kind of structure you want, and if you're not going to fund it, then it's a joke," Polidori said.

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"I think that clearly there are faculty members in some institutions who have strong ideological positions and use the classroom to advance these positions.

"We don't have a problem with faculty members expressing opinions, as long as they don't force them on students. Students have the freedom to give opinions and question opinions. The classroom should not be used for indoctrination," Cell said.

The most familiar aspect of P.C. is the use of euphemisms.

At Sarah Lawrence in Pennsylvania, students spell women as "womyn" to promote gender equality.

The Office of Student Affairs at Smith College made a list of 10 types of oppression "Look-ism" constructs a standard for beauty, and requires students to avoid noticing if someone is more attractive than another. "Able-ism" includes calling handicapped "differently abled," so as not to imply inferiority.

Hildebolt said P.C. may be growing, but most people at UNC are only slightly aware of it.

"P.C. is a kind of jargon that hasn't sifted into the general population yet," he said. "People are aware, but students are being affected by it and don't realize it yet."

Laura Anderson, minister of information for the BSM, said P.C. could be negative in that it seemed to be a trendy ideal, but if it made people aware of society's problems, it could be positive, however short-lived.

"If someone is making groups aware, it is important, even if the motives are selfish," Anderson said. "I'll take help wherever help is given."

Anderson said the BSM was not P.C. "I would hate to associate a long standing organization like the BSM to something trendy," she said. "Our meaning and motivation runs much deeper.

"It will take more than one year, or one season, to remedy the problems of different groups on campus," she said. "It will take a lot of long-term work."



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