

## U.S.: Agreement not a change in policy

WASHINGTON - The White House scrambled Wednesday to dampen expectations of a Persian Gulf cease-fire, insisting only a "massive withdrawal" by Iraq could end the fighting. President Bush was described as "very saddened" by the first U.S. ground casualties.

Bush pledged to continue "standing up to the evil" threatening world peace.

As the president continued to rally support for Operation Desert Storm, officials took pains to deny a rift between the president and Secretary of State James A. Baker III.

Presidential spokesman Marlin Fitzwater disclosed that Bush had not seen in advance a U.S.-Soviet state-

ment issued by Baker the night before and had only learned of it as he headed to the Capitol to deliver his State of the Union address.

The statement issued by Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh was widely interpreted as a movement toward a new cease-fire overture toward Iraq. Fitzwater denied any policy change but said that Bush "expressed concerns with the interpretation of the statement."

The U.S.-Soviet communique said a cease-fire could be possible if Iraq would make an "unequivocal commitment" to withdraw from Kuwait and followed it with "concrete steps." Furthermore, the statement pledged to deal with the Arab-Israeli conflict

once the Persian Gulf war was over.

"There's no change in policy; there's no linkage (to the Israeli-Palestinian issue) from our point of view and massive withdrawal is the way for Saddam Hussein to get out of Kuwait," said Fitzwater. "We're anxious that no one should think we're altering policy."

For his part, Bush told reporters "There are no differences" between him and Baker on Gulf policy.

Margaret Tutwiler, the State Department spokeswoman, also insisted the joint statement broke no new ground on the Persian Gulf conflict or on the Arab-Israeli dispute.

"It does not call for a (Middle East) peace conference. It does not

call for a pause for peace," she said.

Both she and Fitzwater also said statements following meetings among foreign ministers frequently are not cleared with the White House before being issued at the State Department.

She said the notion of a breakdown in communication between Baker and Bush was "absurd and silly."

Fitzwater suggested that the statement may have been designed in large part to mollify Soviet concerns about the war.

In Jerusalem, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir complained Wednesday that the United States did not consult Israel before joining in what appeared to be a cease-fire offer to

Iraq.

"A political act that involves us, our fate, our future, was taken without consulting with us, without even telling us beforehand," Shamir said on Israeli television.

Shamir said the statement made no change in U.S. policy, but Science Minister Yuval Neeman, a member of the right-wing Tehiya Party, disagreed.

"The Americans were determined, and here already is the beginning of a movement in another direction," Neeman complained on Israel radio. "I don't know what is behind it... but for the first time there is a readiness to pay in Israeli coin."

## Saddam interviews to show he's in control, experts say

WASHINGTON - He joked, he threatened, he sermonized and he boasted. But Arab specialists say the main purpose of Saddam Hussein's televised interview this week was to prove he is alive, relaxed and in control.

"He has survived. That is his point," said Marshall Wiley, who was the top U.S. diplomat in Baghdad from 1975 to 1977.

"He was able to smile and joke a bit, prove that the attacks hadn't really gotten to him" Wiley said. "He's demonstrating that he can survive our military onslaught and stand up for Arab rights, however he defines them."



Wiley and other experts agreed that Saddam's 90-minute interview with CNN correspondent Peter Arnett conveyed the image of a calm and confident leader.

The Iraqi president knocked down "the notion of Saddam on the run and panicked and overwhelmed," said Dr. Jerrold Post, a psychiatrist specializing in psychological profiles of world leaders.

"He certainly communicated very clearly a sense of determination... of being prepared to go all the way,"

Post said.

Added Post: "He probably was successful to a significant audience."

The experts said Saddam probably was less successful, at least with Western audiences, in his attempts to exploit anti-war sentiment in the United States and depict his Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait as the result of economic provocations.

"He is trying to harvest the demonstrations against the war as if they are potentially supportive of him, which is not correct. There is a growing sentiment against the war but it doesn't mean there is any endorsement for his policy," said Clovis Maksoud, who resigned last fall after 11 years as the Arab League's emissary to the United States and the United Nations.

Saddam also argued that the invasion was a response to economic war waged by Kuwait and the United States against his country. Specifically he cited the suspension last January of a U.S. credit-guarantee program for food. He also has complained of Kuwaiti overproduction of oil.

In taking that tack, Wiley said, Saddam is hoping to "pull a political victory out of a military defeat by convincing the Arab world and the Islamic world that we are the aggressors — that we are in there killing Arabs for our own purposes, to protect oil, to protect Israel."

Post said the TV interview, with Saddam's attempts to put the conflict in a larger context, reinforces the view that "Kuwait has gone off the screen for Saddam." With the Palestinians worshipping him as a hero, Post said, Saddam is realizing a long-held image of himself as an Arab savior.

"This is the exultant fight of his lifetime, the drama of his lifetime," Post said. "He's standing up to superior force, demonstrating courage and commitment to the radical Islamic cause."

## Trying to mask fear of war, border troops make jokes

NEAR THE IRAQI BORDER, Saudi Arabia - Around the fire that warmed their plastic-packed dinners, the Pennsylvania Guard joked and clowned like a fraternity on a cookout. No one mentioned the muffled booms in the distance.

"You've got to admit it," one said quietly, out of earshot from peer pressure. "Coming over here to face this, it's pretty scary. Yeah, it scares you."

The 3623rd Maintenance Company, from Bethlehem, Pa., is fresh off the boat, National Guardsmen led by a major who was selling glass and paint in a peaceful little town when the call came.

But members caught on fast. After a few nights of icy desert winds and full alerts against chemical attack, they personify a Desert Sword drawn to strike: surface bravado and down-deep dread.

Late Tuesday, the distant booms were live-fire exercises. Tanks adjusted their sights as they awaited an order to start an invasion on the ground. But it didn't work that way.

After the Pennsylvania Guard bedded down, far to the east an Iraqi force knifed into Khajfi, starting a vicious firefight. Members awoke to ground war.

Clustered by a fire, the 3623rd's members were not talking about self doubts. Rude Iraq jokes brought guffaws. A jacket opened to reveal a T-shirt with a skull emblazoned, "You're a Dead Man, Saddam."

Many of the guardsmen wore black Keystone uniform patches, the badge of volunteers. Spec. 4 Wayne Fields of Pittsburgh, among others, joined the 3623rd because it was off to Saudi Arabia.

But some volunteered for more

### Dressed for Combat

What the typical American soldier wears and carries while on maneuvers in the Persian Gulf region. TOTAL COST: \$1,452.10

- Desert helmet \$103.00
- Helmet cover \$2.50
- Desert hat \$4.90
- Field pack \$35.75
- Back frame \$23.85
- Shoulder straps \$5.30
- Strap pad \$11.30
- Sleeping bag \$64.25
- Desert coat \$15.48
- Suspenders \$6.95
- Brown undershirt \$2.40
- Night parka \$28.70
- Parka liner \$11.85
- Neckerchief \$4.10
- M16 rifle \$475.00
- Two-quart canteen \$5.45
- Canteen cover \$8.75
- Belt \$6.60
- Small arms case \$4.30
- Tool carrier \$2.00
- First aid case \$3.35
- Desert trousers \$14.40
- Drawers \$1.50
- Night trousers \$19.50
- Boots \$33.20
- Socks \$1.65
- Chemical protective clothing
  - Overgarment \$68.15
  - Overshoe \$8.70
  - Glove set \$7.85
  - Helmet cover \$3.55
  - Mask \$120.00
  - Mask hood \$8.60
  - Atropine kit \$14.00
  - Detector kit \$49.07
- ALSO:
  - Fragmentation vest \$251.50
  - Body armor cover \$24.65

Source: U.S. Army

than they expected.

As a maintenance unit, it stays to the rear of front lines to fix whatever breaks down. But, in the combat they expect, rear is not far back.

"They told me I was headed for

31 days at a port in California, with evenings off," said PFC William Nichols, a jobless mechanic from Philadelphia. "This don't look like no port to me."

He gave a philosophical shrug and laughed with the rest.

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## Two Soviet convoys leave Vilnius

VILNIUS, U.S.S.R. - Two convoys of Soviet troops left the Lithuanian capital today and the republic's president said a withdrawal could set the stage for new talks between Moscow and the breakaway republics.

The death toll in the Baltics, meanwhile, rose to 20 when Jonas Tautkus, 20, died from a gunshot wound to the head he suffered a day earlier at a military checkpoint. Lithuanian officials said the apparent draft-dodger was shot when he refused to get out of his car; military officials said he was hit by a ricochet.

Soviet Interior Minister Boris Pugo said all paratroopers have already left the Baltic region and two-thirds of the "black beret" Interior Ministry troops had also been withdrawn.

Lithuanian President Vytautas Landsbergis said Kremlin promises to remove at least some troops were a good sign, but Soviet forces still occupied Lithuania's buildings and a propaganda war was being waged against the republic.

The parliament information office said two convoys of about 45 vehicles, and planes carrying 30-40 truckloads of soldiers, left the capital this morning.

But Lithuanians said they could not confirm if the forces actually left Lithuania or were merely redeployed elsewhere in the Baltic state.

Pugo, interviewed by the newspaper Robochaya Tribuna, said, "all army paratroop units were withdrawn from the Baltic region by Jan. 28" and only

conventional forces remained.

"Two thirds of Interior Ministry troops were withdrawn by Jan. 29," Pugo said. "One third of these troops remain for the present, but as calm is returning, they will not remain there forever."

In Washington, President Bush said late Tuesday that Soviet officials had conveyed a willingness to begin a pullout from the Baltic states.

But Landsbergis, in a statement released today, cautioned against taking Moscow at its word.

He said, "if the president of the United States could visit Lithuania for a while and follow the propaganda war against Lithuania and the other Baltic states, he would not say the Cold War is over."

At a news conference Tuesday night, Landsbergis said a troop withdrawal could be the key to renewed talks with the Kremlin.

But he said Lithuania would not turn away from independence. Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia were forcibly annexed by the Soviet Union in 1940 after being independent between the wars.

"The decision on the restoration of statehood of Lithuania and all the major acts cannot be rescinded regardless of what they may offer instead or in spite of any threats," he said.

But, he said, "our relations with the Soviet Union have to be regulated, even after these bloody events, and we are ready to talk."