

U.S.: No cease-fire while Soviets negotiate

WASHINGTON - The Bush administration said Sunday that there was "nothing to be lost by talking" but vowed to continue the allied bombing campaign while the Soviets seek a diplomatic solution to the Persian Gulf war.

"We say no cease-fire, no pause, get out of Kuwait," said Secretary of State James A. Baker III.

President Bush, vacationing in Kennebunkport, Maine, told reporters: "We are determined to finish this job and do it right."

The administration reiterated its resolve as Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz headed to Moscow for talks aimed at finding a peaceful solution to the crisis. He is scheduled to meet

Monday with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

Bush said he did not know what would come of the talks, but he said Gorbachev was "trying very hard to seek an end to this conflict."

"He knows very well that the objectives spelled out by the United Nations... must be met in their entirety," Bush said.

Defense Secretary Dick Cheney said the only thing that could slow the allied military campaign was the start of an Iraqi pullout from Kuwait.

"The only thing we can really believe is action," Cheney said on ABC's "This Week With David Brinkley." "We have to see him withdraw from Kuwait."

"We have a certain tempo to our military operations now and... we're not going to

break that tempo unless it is clear that he is complying with the (U.N.) Security Council directive," said Bush's national security adviser, Brent Scowcroft.

Baker, interviewed on CNN's "Newsmaker Sunday," said the Soviets were welcome to seek a diplomatic solution, but he expressed no optimism they would succeed.

"There is nothing to be lost by talking... and if that will result in the withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait, more power to whoever is doing the talking," Baker said. "... It remains to be seen, of course, whether anything can come of this session."

Scowcroft, appearing on CBS' "Face the Nation," said past Soviet attempts to help Saddam Hussein engineer an "elusive withdrawal with dignity" had ended in failure.

"He cannot be rewarded for the terrible

things that he has perpetrated in the gulf," Scowcroft said.

Bush's day began in church, where the service was disrupted by a man who demanded an end to the bombing of Iraq and the deaths of civilians there.

Bush made no response at the time but told reporters later in the day: "I am concerned about the suffering of innocents and I'm talking about the innocents in Kuwait, too."

"I hope we can get an end to that suffering very, very soon. I think we will," he said.

Neither Bush nor others in the administration would confirm a statement by French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas that a date had been set for the start of ground war and that it was close at hand.

"The decision on ground forces will be made by me," Bush said.



U.S.: Ground war not set

DHAHRAN, Saudi Arabia - The U.S. military said Sunday that no date has been set for an allied ground offensive in the Persian Gulf war, and Washington said it would reject any Soviet peace plan calling for a cease-fire.

In Saudi Arabia, American and Iraqi patrols clashed along the border in seven separate engagements between 5 a.m. and 10 a.m. Sunday.

During one pre-dawn skirmish, an American Apache attack helicopter firing Hellfire missiles destroyed two American military vehicles, killing two soldiers and wounding six, the U.S. Command said.

It was the worst friendly fire accident since Jan. 29, when a U.S. warplane hit a Marine reconnaissance vehicle during a furious tank battle along the Saudi-Kuwaiti border and seven American soldiers were killed.

Travelers reaching Nicosia on Sunday gave vivid accounts of an anti-Saddam Hussein protest by up to 5,000 people in Iraq earlier this month. The travelers told The Associated Press the demonstrators shot and killed 10 officials of Iraq's ruling Baath Arab Socialist Party, which tried to stop the protest.

The demonstration in the southern city of Diwaniyah was the first against Saddam and his Kuwait policy since the war began Jan. 17, the travelers said.

British military officials admitted Sunday that a bomb from an RAF Tornado veered off course into the western Iraqi town of Fallouja during an attack on a bridge last week.

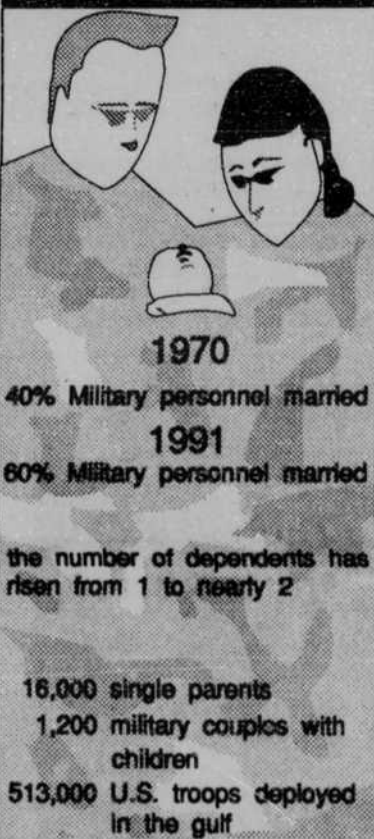
Iraq has claimed that 130 people were killed and 78 wounded when the bomb hit an apartment building and an outdoor market on Thursday.

The French foreign minister, Roland Dumas, said Sunday that the allies have already set a date for the ground assault.

"We are on the eve or the pre-eve of the ground offensive for the liberation of Kuwait," Dumas said in a radio interview in Paris, without saying exactly when the attack would occur.

In another report, The Los Angeles Times said Sunday that the United States plans to launch a ground and sea attack this week if Iraq does not surrender or agree to a "diplomatic deal" in the next three days. The newspaper quoted unidentified U.S. military officers in Washington.

The New Military



Source: AP Brian Shellito/Daily Nebraskan

Married with children

New military gets first test

The average American soldier in Saudi Arabia is a husband or wife, has children and a habit of eating dinner at home.

These aren't the same teen-age draftees who fought in Vietnam. Many are reservists or National Guardsmen, older and perhaps long out of duty.

But exactly how the U.S. military's new demographics will shape the Gulf war is an open question.

"We have been living for 20 years in a situation where you could be a soldier and have a family and both could be orchestrated fairly well," said Peter A. Morrison, an Army demographics researcher at the Rand Corp. in Santa Monica, Calif.

"But suddenly being a soldier is being a soldier and going out to fight a war," he said. "And all the change that unfolded gradually has suddenly come into sharp focus."

The military has been jolted from its peacetime orientation. The child care, household and other domestic safety nets designed for wartime are being tested.

Sixty percent of military personnel today are married compared with

40 percent in 1970, and the average number of dependents has risen to nearly two from one, according to the Defense Department.

The Pentagon says that 16,300 single parents and 1,200 military couples with children are among the 513,000 U.S. troops deployed in the 6-month-old gulf crisis.

"This is unprecedented in that we've never had a situation where so many family members have been pulled apart for so long," Morrison said.

Members of the volunteer force are likely to have better attitudes than the Vietnam-era draftees who often spent five or six months of a two-year hitch in training. These are professionals, many with years of experience.

But they also are parents, people with community commitments and mortgages to pay. Whether both parents in dual-military marriages should be deployed at the same time has generated some controversy.

The issue could become even hotter in the event of a bloody ground campaign, which would leave more widowed spouses and orphaned children than in previous wars.

Iraqis create smokescreen, contribute to the war effort

Editor's Note: The following dispatch was not subject to Iraqi censorship.

BAGHDAD, Iraq - As dawn breaks over Baghdad, men wearing gloves and heavy boots fan out to collect discarded tires, then set them afire. Other residents search for old clothes, bits of plastic — anything that burns.

It's a strange spectacle, but the aim is simple: to create a thick, black smokescreen that might help shield the capital from allied air strikes.

The bonfires are among many low-technology methods used by the war-hardened Iraqis in their effort to offset the far superior military might of the U.S.-led forces.

Housewives separate papers and other flammable materials before throwing the daily garbage away. Teenagers, unmindful of the air raid sirens, collect old shoes, scraps of plastic and other refuse that will smolder smokily.

The campaign is spearheaded by members of President Saddam Hussein's militia, the Popular Army.

In every corner of this sprawling city of 4 million, residents search for

discarded tires. They even remove tires from stranded or broken-down vehicles, which abound in wartime Iraq because of the lack of spare parts.

The collected tires are set on fire under the bridges over the Tigris River that connect the western and eastern districts of Baghdad.

Tires also are burnt elsewhere in the city, sometimes spewing smoke so thick that the sun is blotted out.

Besides reducing the visibility of allied pilots, the smoke may give a false impression to allied surveillance satellites that parts of Baghdad are burning.

"We may not be Ramboes and we may not have Star Wars capabilities, but we know how to defend ourselves," said a member of the Popular Army militia who did not give his name.

The militia is Saddam's second line of defense, trained in civil defense and also in hand-to-hand combat in case the war over Kuwait reaches Baghdad one day.

Bags made of jute, collected by Popular Army soldiers and civilians, are wrapped around the iron railings of the bridges over the Tigris.

If Saddam doesn't know, military doesn't want media to tell him

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia - A reporter demanding to know the location of an Army helicopter raid on Iraqi troops offered what appeared to be a compelling argument: Surely Saddam Hussein knew, so why not tell the American people?

"Does he?" asked the senior military officer briefing reporters. "I'm not so sure." He refused to say where the attack took place.

Alone, the episode is unremarkable. But it illustrates a trend. Allied commanders, convinced they have crippled Saddam's military communications network, have adopted a more cautious approach in their public statements to keep Saddam from gaining vital intelligence from the news media.

The effort is active on several fronts, from limiting televised news briefings to increasing censorship of re-

ports from the field, particularly from units deployed along Saudi Arabia's borders with Iraq and Kuwait.

Allied officers say Iraq's units just north of those borders have the hardest time communicating with Baghdad. Because their top-line communication systems have been destroyed, the Iraqis are forced to relay secure messages through several command levels.

"We're not sure the Iraqis do know consistently where their troops are being taken on," the senior military source told reporters at the background briefing Saturday.

The military commanders also believe Iraq has limited intelligence on U.S. troop locations, and is sending patrols into Saudi Arabia to get information about its enemy.

One senior Army officer specu-

lated that Iraqi commanders are hoping their patrols end up in skirmishes so they can find out what U.S. units are in the area — either from returning troops or through media accounts of the fighting.

Because of this concern, Army Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, commander of Operation Desert Storm, last week ordered unit-level public affairs officers to pay closer attention to media dispatches, which are submitted to the military for security review.

Ten days ago, journalists in the field with front-line units were told to no longer identify units by name if they also planned to give a location, even a general location like "near the Kuwait border."

Some field commanders also resisted accepting journalists, arguing their reports could undermine security.

Death of former Contra to be investigated

MANAGUA, Nicaragua - An official from the Sandinista-controlled security police Sunday promised a full-scale probe into the slaying of former Contra chief Enrique Bermudez, whose death cast doubt on government assurances for the safety of other rebels who laid down their arms.

But a right-wing radio station blamed the slaying of Bermudez late Saturday on Sandinista sympathizers, some of whom cheered the news of the killing.

Officials said they had no suspects

and no one immediately claimed responsibility for the killing.

Someone shot Bermudez, 58, outside his car near the downtown Intercontinental Hotel Saturday night, then fled on foot.

Vice Interior Minister Jose Pallais said it appeared Bermudez was followed and was shot twice from a distance of five to six feet.

Taxi driver Rene Sanchez said a man looked at the body and said, "This man died by the bullet. He is 380, Enrique Bermudez," then hurried away. Bermudez's nom de guerre

was "Comandante 380." Garcia added that the slaying clouds the government's ability to guarantee the safety of ex-Contras.

Bermudez only months earlier said he feared death at the hands of the Sandinistas.

Right-wing Radio Corporacion, in a Sunday broadcast, blamed the Sandinistas.

Pallais promised an "exhaustive" investigation and called the killing "an attack against the policy of reconciliation by the government of President Violeta Barrios de Chamorro."

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