

## Andrew moves inland

NEW IBERIA, La. — Hurricane Andrew carved its way through plantation country Wednesday with its now-familiar cruelty, throwing tornadoes like darts at a 100-mile-wide target and pumping torrents of rain at storm-weary Louisianians.

Damage along the coast "looked like the bombing of Kuwait City," state Rep. Hunt Downer said in Houma. "The destruction from this storm goes beyond anything we have known in recent years," said President Bush, who planned to fly to Louisiana to inspect the damage.

Andrew was downgraded to a tropical storm early Wednesday afternoon after its winds dropped below the hurricane threshold of 74 mph, but it continued to drench Louisiana with heavy rain.

The hurricane's 54-hour U.S. rampage left 180,000 homeless in Florida. About 1.5 million people remained without electricity.

Drinkable water, unspoiled food and medical relief remained critical priorities in ravaged neighborhoods south of Miami. Search teams continued to explore wreckage for bodies.

One death was reported in Louisiana, a 63-year-old tornado victim from LaPlace found in rubble Wednesday. Another death was reported in the Bahamas, where

three other people died when the storm hit Sunday. That raised the overall toll to 20 dead.

Preliminary estimates in Florida's Dade County alone put the damage at \$15 billion to \$20 billion.

There were no comparable figures available for Louisiana. As widespread as the damage appeared there, authorities noted that it could have been worse. The storm had spun itself out a bit and weakened before crossing the coastline. And it spared the state's largest city, New Orleans.

All around the low-lying south-central part of the state, houses were ravaged, trailer homes were turned upside down, majestic oak trees in front of antebellum mansions were toppled and several gas leaks were reported.

Dozens were injured and at least 322,000 lost electric power. Seven people from a sinking tugboat were plucked from a caldron of Mississippi River waters; another seven were rescued from a 70-foot Vietnamese fishing boat that ran aground in the Gulf of Mexico.

A dozen barges broke loose from an Exxon refinery and were corralled by the Coast Guard. Chabert Memorial Hospital in Houma lost power and part of its roof; patients were helicoptered to New Orleans.

## Bush warns Iraq of 'no-fly' zone

WASHINGTON—President Bush on Wednesday warned Saddam Hussein to keep his warplanes out of a "no-fly zone" covering the southern one-third of Iraq. U.S. and allied forces will "respond decisively" if the zone is violated, he said.

Iraq said it would not abide by the order. It proposed setting up a "wisemen committee" to investigate conditions in Iraq's south for Shiite Muslims, whom Western governments contend have been brutally repressed by Saddam.

Iraqi Ambassador Abdul al-Amir Al-Anbari said he delivered that non-compliance message to the French, American, Russian and British United Nations ambassadors when they summoned him to inform him of the allied plan to protect Iraqi Shiites.

The ban takes effect Thursday simultaneously with the start of aerial surveillance of southern Iraq.

Bush said the allies agreed to act in response to "new evidence of harsh repression" by Saddam against Shiite Muslims.

"What emerges from eyewitness accounts . . . is further graphic proof of Saddam's brutality," the president told a White House news conference. He said Iraqi helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft had been bombing and strafing civilians in the south.

Bush said his aides notified Democratic presidential nominee Bill Clinton of the action against Iraq.

"I'm not worried about the politics of it at all," the president said.

Speaking to reporters while campaigning in Memphis, Tenn., Clinton said he supported Bush's action. He renewed criticism that Bush had not moved faster to prevent Saddam from attacking Iraqi Kurds in the north, as well as the Shiites.

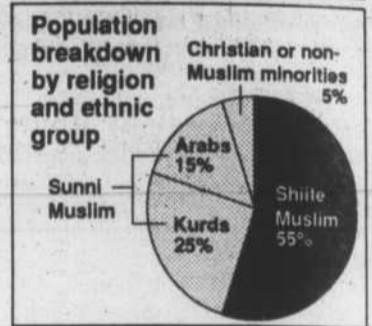
At the Pentagon, officials said the ban would take effect at 10:15 a.m. EDT Thursday.

State Department spokesman Joseph Snyder said there was no evidence of fighting Thursday between Saddam's forces and Shiite insurgents in the southern marshlands. The Shiites rebelled against Saddam at the close of the 1991 Gulf War, but they received no U.S. backing and were quickly crushed by Saddam's army.

Rear Adm. Michael W. Cramer, director of intelligence for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told a Pentagon news conference that keeping Iraqi aircraft out of the skies would make it harder for Iraqi ground forces to pinpoint the locations of Shiite insurgents and to use artillery against them.

Bush said the no-fly ban, dubbed "Operation Southern Watch," would remain in effect "until the coalition determines that it is no longer required."

The president said the action was intended only to ensure that Iraq fulfill its obligation under U.N. Security Council Resolution 688, which calls



for a halt to repression of Iraqi civilians. "We seek Iraq's compliance, not its partition," Bush said. Egypt and some other Arab nations that participated in the anti-Iraq coalition that liberated Kuwait in 1991 reportedly have expressed concern that the "no-fly" order would lead to the breakup of the Iraqi state.

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