

Clinton ignores GOP threats

REPUBLICANS ATTACK Clinton's Iraq policy while defending themselves against disloyalty charges.

By JOHN DIAMOND
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — As U.S. warplanes flew to the Persian Gulf, Republican criticism of President Clinton's Iraq policy tore away the appearance of national unity customarily adopted in periods of international tension.

Clinton, ignoring the GOP reproaches, saved his tough words Thursday for Iraq's president.

"We cannot allow anybody anywhere to believe they are not bound by the rules of civilized behavior," Clinton said in Rancho Cucamonga, Calif., where he was campaigning.

"I don't want to get in a word-war with Saddam Hussein, but we're going to do whatever it takes to keep him from threatening his neighbors, threatening our pilots," Clinton said.

But James A. Baker III, secretary of state during the 1991 war against Iraq that left Saddam in power, bitterly attacked Clinton's actions so far. Baker told a congressional committee the United States allowed its anti-Iraq coalition to break up and should have hit Saddam harder.

In the House, Republican leaders, insisting the administration has left them uninformed, continued to block a Senate-passed resolution supporting U.S. troops in the Gulf.

Curt Weldon, R-Pa., said the correct vote facing the House was not on the Senate resolution but on "whether we support this president on what he's doing with our troops right now."

The harsh words came as the Clinton administration girded for what appeared to be strong action against Iraq. Eight radar-evading F-117A stealth fighter-bombers were being readied Thursday at Holloman Air Force Base, N.M., for deployment to the Persian Gulf. Four B-52 bombers, most likely armed with cruise missiles, were headed to the Indian Ocean island of Diego Garcia, a jumping-off point for a possible raid on Iraq.

The aircraft carrier USS Enterprise was ordered from waters off Bosnia to join the carrier USS Carl Vinson in the Persian Gulf. The Army said it was sending two Patriot missile units and about 150 soldiers from Fort Bliss,

Iraqi and U.S. forces in the Gulf

	Iraq	United States
ARMED FORCES	Active duty forces Reserves	382,000 18,600
ARMOR AND ARTILLERY	Main battle tanks Armored fighting vehicles Armored personnel carriers Towed artillery Self-propelled artillery Multiple rocket launchers	2,700* 900 2,000* 1,500* 230 100
SHIPS AND SEA DEFENSE	Frigates Coastal patrol craft Mine counter measure	1 7 4
AIRCRAFT AND AIR DEFENSE	Armed helicopters Air defense guns Bombers Fighter ground attack Fighter	Over 200 Coalition* aircraft 6 130 180

* estimate

Iraqi weapons

- SA-8 Gecko missile
- SA-6, SA-7, SA-8 surface-to-air missiles
- T-54, T-55 Soviet tank
- Mi-24 helicopter

Coalition weapons

- U.S. Airforce:** F-15C, F-16, F-16CJ, A-10, OA-10, E-3A, EF-111, C-130, HC-130, C-21, U-2R, EC-135, KC-10, KC-135, HH-60
- U.S. Navy:** F-14, F-18, EA-6B, E2-A, S-3, ES-3, C-2, SH-60F, HH-60H, SH-60B, H-46
- United Kingdom:** GR1 Tornado, VC-10
- France:** M-2000 Mirage, C-135K

Other weapons: Mig-21, Mig-25, Mig-29, Mig-23BN, Tu-22 bombers, Mig-23 attack aircraft, C-130 Hercules Transport, A-10 Warthog.

Source: International Institute for Strategic Studies, U.S. Central Command AP/Wm. J. Castello, Tracie Tso

Texas, to the Persian Gulf region, apparently to join Patriot batteries already in Saudi Arabia.

The deployments are being ordered after several threats by Saddam Hussein of disregarding the no-fly zone. Iraq claimed to fire missiles at U.S. aircraft in the no-fly zone Thursday, although no reports have been confirmed.

The United States will take all "necessary and appropriate actions" to defend its forces in the Middle East from any challenge posed by Saddam, Defense Secretary William Perry warned.

Queried about the GOP criticism, Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon contended that last week's move to increase the size of the "no-fly" zone in southern Iraq had bolstered America's strategic position in the region.

"We responded ... in an effort to diminish Saddam Hussein's military mobility and flexibility. I think we've succeeded in that," Bacon said.

Not so, said Jack Kemp, the Repub-

licans' vice presidential candidate. In a statement released by the GOP campaign committee, Kemp outlined five ways in which he said Saddam has succeeded or is succeeding in strengthening his rule or weakening U.S. positions.

"Saddam Hussein's goals are clear," Kemp said. "Bill Clinton must tell us what our goals are and how we can achieve them."

On Capitol Hill, while attacking Clinton's policy Republicans defended themselves against charges of disloyalty for criticizing the president during a foreign crisis.

"It used to be that foreign and security policy stopped at the water's edge. Unfortunately that's not the case," Baker said, paraphrasing the famous dictum uttered in 1948 by Sen. Arthur Vandenberg that politics should stop at the water's edge.

"The idea that somehow Republicans should not feel free to speak their minds is a canard that just won't wash," he said.

Clinton, Dole teams voice debate opinions

WASHINGTON (AP) — Negotiators for Bob Dole and President Clinton opened debate talks Thursday with the Dole campaign proposing four one-on-one hour-long presidential face-offs and two vice presidential exchanges.

The Clinton team did not respond directly to the Dole proposal although a senior campaign official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, later called it "a clever proposal but not serious."

The negotiators broke off talks after about two hours to await a recommendation by the Commission on Presidential Debates on whether Ross Perot should be part of the debates.

Commission co-chairman Frank Fahrenkopf promised a recommendation on Perot by noon Tuesday. The privately financed, nonpartisan commission has sponsored presidential debates since 1988.

Perot's national coordinator Russell Verney was excluded from Thursday's session, but marched into the meeting room uninvited. By that time, the meeting was already breaking up.

The Dole campaign does not want Perot to share the debate stage; the Clinton campaign does.

The commission has proposed 90-minute presidential debates for



Sept. 25 in St. Louis, Oct. 9 in St. Petersburg, Fla., and Oct. 16 in San Diego, Calif. It proposed a vice presidential debate for Oct. 2 in Hartford, Conn. The candidates are not bound by the recommendations.

The Clinton campaign told the Dole team that the president did not want the first debate to be on or around Sept. 25 because he is speaking at the United Nations that week, according to participants.

Otherwise, the Clinton campaign favors the three 90-minute presidential debates and one vice presidential face-off recommended by the commission.

Former South Carolina Gov. Carroll Campbell, Dole's chief debate negotiator, proposed an additional presidential and an additional vice presidential debate. All six debates would occur between Sept. 25 and Oct. 25.

"We believe the debates should be one hour in length and have a single moderator," Campbell said. "President Clinton is a world-class debater; someone who can charm the birds out of trees. We will be hard-pressed to understand why the president would not want to debate Bob Dole, one-on-one, four times."

Schools close; parents fear mosquito spray side effects

WESTERLY, R.I. (AP) — School officials canceled classes today amid fears that children could be harmed by insecticide being sprayed to kill mosquitoes carrying a potentially deadly virus.

A few residents complained that schoolchildren were accidentally sprayed Wednesday. To head off a repeat of that criticism, Superintendent James Hoebbel called off school today, the last day spraying was planned.

Gov. Lincoln Almond declared a state of emergency in Westerly last week after tests showed the virus that causes a rare disease, Eastern equine encephalitis, was present in one of every 100 mosquitoes.

"They say it's a one-in-a-million chance (to contract the virus), but that's one lottery I don't want to hit," said

Westerly resident Morris Sabin, a retired salesman. "You can keep that jackpot — I don't want it."

He said residents have been kept well-informed about efforts to fight the form of encephalitis.

So far, no one has contracted the virus, which has killed about 150 people nationwide in the last 40 years and is fatal to about half of those who get it.

The insecticide used to kill the mosquitoes, resmethrin, may cause rashes or asthma attacks in people with allergies but has no long-term health effects, state Department of Health Director Patricia Nolan said.

Officials advised residents to keep children and pets indoors, close windows, turn off air conditioners for four hours after the spraying, and rinse off outdoor lawn furniture and toys.

Hurricane Hortense may threaten U.S.

NASSAU, Bahamas (AP) — Packing 140-mph winds, Hurricane Hortense took a swipe at the Turks and Caicos islands and barreled past the Bahamas Thursday on a track that could threaten the northeastern United States this weekend.

In Puerto Rico, where at least 14 people died in the storm Tuesday, residents and work crews continued their arduous cleanup — from sorting through soiled clothing to clearing roads and bridges.

Their misery was compounded by water and power outages — about 40 percent of the island's 3.6 million people still had no power Thursday — but federal help was on the way. More than 7,600 people were registered at 115 shelters Thursday.

At 4 p.m. CDT Thursday, Hortense was centered about 730 miles south-southeast of Cape Hatteras, N.C., or about 310 miles east of Nassau. It was moving north at 12 mph, with winds extending outward up to 70 miles from its center.

Heavy surf from the storm could reach southeastern U.S. shores today, and there was a slight chance the storm could threaten Long Island, N.Y., Rhode Island, or Cape Cod, Mass., on Sunday, forecasters said.

Meanwhile, another hurricane was menacing the lower half of Mexico's Baja California peninsula. Flights were canceled and ports closed to all vessels as Hurricane Fausto moved closer, with sustained winds of 115 mph, up from 90 mph on Wednesday.

Thursday afternoon, Fausto was located about 115 miles south-southwest of Cabo San Lucas, on the peninsula's southern tip. Its outer winds were already buffeting the peninsula. The hurricane was moving northward at 10 mph, possibly reaching the southern portion of the peninsula by Thursday night.

Hortense was expected to continue north and increase speed to 20 mph today.

The hurricane pounded the Turks and Caicos islands with 90-mph winds

but inflicted little serious damage, and no injuries were reported.

In the Bahamas, residents stowed property and boarded up windows for the second time in two weeks — Hurricane Fran narrowly missed the islands last week — only to awaken Thursday to sunny skies.

"Everybody battened up and did hurricane preparations and no one was allowed to go to work yesterday, but nothing happened," said Marion Cartwright, a telephone operator on Great Inagua Island.

The death toll from Hortense reached 16 Thursday with the discovery of a man's body near the Rio Grande river in the northeastern Puerto Rican town of Loiza. Another body was recovered from a beach in Patillas in southeastern Puerto Rico late Wednesday.

The storm, which delivered as much as 20 inches of rain, also killed two in the Dominican Republic. Most of the victims drowned.

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