

# News Digest

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## Iraqis blame U.N. for childrens' deaths

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) — Perched atop cars and taxis, nearly 100 small wooden caskets were paraded through the Iraqi capital Sunday in a government-sponsored funeral procession for children whose deaths Iraq blames on U.N. sanctions.

As rain sprinkled down, thousands of Iraqis walked next to the caskets, shouting "Down with America!"

"There is no God but God, and America is God's enemy," the crowd chanted as the coffins — many decorated with photos — moved along Al-Rashid Street, the city's main thoroughfare.

Iraqi officials said the youngsters, some just babies, died for lack of food or medicine in the past two days. They blamed the deaths on U.N. sanctions imposed on Iraq after its 1990 invasion of neighboring Kuwait. The sanctions prevent Iraq from exporting its oil, its main foreign currency earner, and have devastated the country's economy.

It was not possible to confirm independently the number of children dying or the cause of their deaths.

Also braving the rain were the U.N. arms inspectors who must certify that Iraq has eliminated its weapons of mass destruction before the sanctions can be lifted.

Iraq maintains it has fulfilled the U.N. Security Council resolutions, but the arms inspectors have accused President Saddam Hussein's government of hiding weapons or the means to make them.

Ten U.N. inspection teams visited

21 sites Sunday and also flew over in a helicopter for an aerial inspection, the official Iraqi News Agency said.

INA quoted Maj. Gen. Hussam Mohammed Amind, chief of Iraq's National Monitoring Commission, as saying no one interfered with the inspectors during their visits.

Iraq issued a statement late Saturday urging the world to accept its invitation for U.N. experts and diplomats to visit dozens of Saddam's presidential palaces, which arms inspectors believe may be used to hide weapons.

The statement defended Iraq's refusal to allow the U.N. arms inspectors now in the country to take part, saying their presence in the palaces would threaten Iraq's sovereignty.

The inspections were called off for three weeks after Iraq refused to allow American inspectors to take part, claiming they were spies. When Iraq threw out the Americans on Nov. 13, U.N. officials withdrew other inspectors in protest the next day. The government agreed to the Americans' return Nov. 22 under a Russian-mediated plan.

Richard Butler, the chief U.N. weapons inspector, was expected to leave for Baghdad this week.

In New York, U.N. talks on renewing the oil-for-food program for a third, six-month period are to begin Thursday. Under the program, Iraq is allowed to export \$2 billion in oil each six months to buy food and medicine. The U.N. humanitarian coordinator for Iraq, Denis Halliday, has said oil exports should be increased because the money coming in does not meet Iraq's needs.

## Tour will promote peace

WASHINGTON (AP) — Saddam Hussein is more popular in his country than President Clinton is in America, Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan said Sunday as he prepared to depart on a world tour including a visit to Iraq.

Farrakhan plans to leave today on a 52-nation tour with stops in Iran, Iraq, China and Cuba. He also said he has been invited by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to visit Israel but does not know if the Israeli government will grant him a visa. Jewish leaders have condemned Farrakhan for his past remarks they said were anti-Semitic.

The Muslim leader, interviewed on "Fox News Sunday," charged that it was U.S.-backed U.N. sanctions and not the actions of Saddam that have caused widespread hardships among the Iraqi people.

"I don't think that Saddam Hussein is deliberately starving his own people.

I would think that a man who gets 99 percent of the people to vote for him in an election and the people love him so much, how would they love a man that is starving them?" he asked.

"I think he's more popular with his people than President Clinton is with the American people."

Farrakhan said he hopes his visit will promote peace between the United States and Iraq and planned to file a report to the White House at the end of it.

"I hope, when I go to Iraq, that I will be able to report to the American people that here's a man that is ready to sit down, talk with the American administration," he said.

But U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Bill Richardson, on NBC's "Meet the Press," said Farrakhan's visit would be "unhelpful" and illegal under a U.S. ban on American citizens going to Iraq.

## Cities report impact of curfews

WASHINGTON (AP) — A number of American cities are using youth curfews to reduce crime and truancy and to force mom and dad to set rules for teen-agers.

A survey being released here today by the U.S. Conference of Mayors found that 276 of 347 responding cities had a nighttime curfew. Seventy-six had a daytime curfew as well.

Abramson, chairman of the mayors' conference task force on youth violence, said curfews should be just one part of a juvenile crime prevention. He cited survey results that showed officials in 247, or 90 percent, of the cities that had cur-

fews, thought it was a good use of a police officer's time. The rest of the cities thought curfew enforcement wasted police time.

According to the survey, 56 percent, or 154, of the surveyed cities have had a youth curfew for at least 10 years. Officials in half these cities say juvenile crime has dropped since the curfew was imposed; 11 percent say the number of juvenile crimes has remained steady; and 10 percent have had an increase in juvenile-related crime. Because most of the remaining cities have had curfews for only a short time, no data on the impact on juvenile crime was available.

## U.N. vows to raise food flow

### U.S. forces will remain in Iraq, says ambassador

WASHINGTON (AP) — Top U.S. and U.N. officials toned down their angry rhetoric against Baghdad on Sunday, speaking not of air strikes or Iraqi "human shields" but of using diplomacy to resolve a dispute with Saddam Hussein over weapons inspections and easing hunger in Iraq.

As Iraqi demonstrators accused the West of starving Iraq's children, Ambassador Bill Richardson, the U.S. envoy to the United Nations, and U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan both voiced a willingness to improve the flow of food and medicine to Baghdad as soon as this week.

The powerful U.S. force on patrol in the Gulf will remain as long as President Clinton considers it necessary, Richardson said. But he also made it clear that the U.S. priority is keeping the dispute on a diplomatic level, even if it means putting up with temporary Iraqi obstructionism.

"We're not going to put any artificial deadlines," Richardson said on NBC's "Meet the Press," when asked how long the United States would tolerate Saddam's refusal to fully comply with U.N. resolutions. "Our poli-

cy has been steady, it's been measured ... we want diplomacy to work."

In a later appearance on CNN's "Late Edition" Richardson said that with the return of U.N. weapons inspectors to Iraq, "The situation has eased a little."

Richardson said the Clinton administration is willing to consider boosting the food and medicine flowing to Iraq through a program that allows the Baghdad government to sell oil for humanitarian supplies. He said that decision would have nothing to do with Saddam's opposition to allowing a U.N. weapons team to inspect presidential palaces for evidence of Iraqi chemical, biological and nuclear weapons programs.

"We see that as a separate, not linked issue," Richardson said.

"We have had difficulties, but at the same time, we have to recognize that the teams have been able to accomplish a lot," Annan said on ABC's "This Week" program. "It's their palaces and their decision whom they invite, but that's not what we are interested in. We are interested in the government giving access to the

inspectors to go wherever they suspect illegal material may be hidden."

Annan is studying a report by UNICEF that thousands of Iraqi children are dying each week in part as a result of the internationally imposed sanctions on the Iraqi regime. The U.N. chief said both the amount and quality of food going to Iraq must increase and that new equipment may be needed to purify drinking water to prevent the onset of dysentery.

"It will be necessary for us to increase the amount of (Iraqi) oil sold so that we can bring a better basket of food to the Iraqi people," Annan said.

Richardson accused Saddam of mishandling the food-for-oil program and said the Iraqi leader was using the starvation of his own people to gain a diplomatic advantage.

"Saddam Hussein doesn't care about his own people, but the United States is ready ... to find ways that the Iraqi people get food and medicine," Richardson said.

Annan, however, said the U.N., not Iraq, controls the food aid.

"The money doesn't go to President Saddam Hussein," he said.

## Spokesman says Reno weighing facts, Republicans predict search for loophole

WASHINGTON (AP) — In an advance attack, Republican leaders predicted Sunday that Attorney General Janet Reno would recommend against naming an independent counsel to investigate President Clinton and Vice President Al Gore, and charged that she would use a legal technicality to justify that decision.

Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Sen. Orrin Hatch said Reno could "hide" behind narrow definitions of the law, but that would not obscure the greater need to investigate alleged fund-raising violations by the White House and the Democratic Party during the 1996 presidential campaign.

Reno has until Tuesday to inform a special court of her decision on whether to seek an independent counsel to probe telephone fund raising by Clinton and Gore and allegations that former Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary solicited a charitable contribution in exchange for meeting Chinese businessmen.

Justice Department spokesman Bert Brandenburg said Reno was at work Sunday studying the findings of the task force that investigated the White House calls. In the mid-

afternoon, Deputy Attorney General Eric Holder, task force chief Charles LaBella and several other lawyers arrived for a meeting with Reno.

Brandenburg insisted her decision would be made based on the evidence. "The Attorney General is ready and willing to take any credible allegations forward as she has done on the issue of the phone calls," he said. "Where they are specific and credible, we will take them forward, where not, we cannot."

Focusing on the phone calls is "much too narrow," said Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., the chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee. Specter, on ABC's "This Week," said that beyond the questionable calls, Clinton personally directed \$27 million in "soft" or unregulated, money into ads promoting his candidacy.

But Sen. Robert Torricelli, D-N.J., also appearing on ABC, charged that Republicans were in a "constant search for a rational for an investigation." He said election laws basically collapsed in 1996, with both parties taking advantage of loopholes to pour money into ads.

"To say that the Clinton campaign was unique is simply disin-

genuous," he said.

Gore, in an interview with The New Yorker magazine, set for publication Monday, said he made a "very big mistake" in calling a news conference last March and using legal language to stress that he had done nothing improper in making the calls from the White House.

Hatch also contended that "war has already broken out" between the FBI and Justice Department attorneys because FBI Director Louis Freeh opposes the task force decision not to appoint an independent counsel.

"When you have a squabble between the attorney general and the head of the FBI, you know darn well that there's a reason to appoint an independent counsel and to get rid of the conflict of interest," Hatch said on NBC's "Meet the Press."

Freeh and Reno met last week, Brandenburg said, and "the FBI has had every opportunity to make its views known."

But Reno has said that the law requires her to find evidence that specific felonies may have been committed rather than to refer "some big blob" of allegations to a counsel.

## Daily Nebraskan

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