

# News Digest

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## Iraq plans for confrontation

■ **Saddam encourages citizens to volunteer for weapons training.**

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) — The Iraqi government stepped up preparations Sunday for a possible military confrontation over U.N. arms inspections, urging residents to volunteer for weapons training.

Echoing an earlier call by President Saddam Hussein, Vice President Taha Yassin Ramadan repeated Baghdad's fear of an American strike, accusing the United States of "increasing its aggressive stands" to prolong U.N. economic sanctions.

"This is not acceptable to the Iraqi leadership or the Iraqi people and they both are ready for jihad to lift the sanctions," he said, predicting that one million men and women of all ages would take part in the weapons training program.

Baghdad's 2½-month dispute with the U.N. Security Council over arms inspections flared again last week when Iraqi authorities failed to provide the necessary escorts for an inspection team led by an American, Scott Ritter. Baghdad accused Ritter of being a spy, an allegation he denied.

In an apparent response to renewed tensions, Saddam told Baath Party officials Saturday to organize weapons training programs nationwide, citing what he said was a continuing military threat from the United States.

"The more people that enroll under the new program, the better," Saddam said during a 55-minute speech, broadcast on Iraqi state television on the seventh anniversary of the Persian Gulf War.

"Americans are continuing to harm our people, which requires a new method of response," he said.

On Sunday, Iraq's Defense Ministry urged "those who believe in Iraq and its unity to go to the nearest branch of the Baath Party" to sign up for the training.

Despite the Iraqi leader's threat to stop cooperating with weapons inspectors, American officials have reacted not with hints of attack but with reminders about Iraq's obligation to live up to U.N. resolutions.

In Bahrain, chief U.N. weapons inspector Richard Butler said Sunday his mission "will be finished when it's finished."

"It is in Iraq's hands. The reason why it's taken so long is because of Iraq's noncompliance," he said.

The role of the arms inspectors is to certify that Iraq has fulfilled

Security Council resolutions to eliminate its weapons of mass destruction. Only with that certification, will U.N. sanctions — including a ban on Iraqi oil exports — be lifted.

Iraq insists it has met all its obligations under the resolutions, adopted after Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait. But the weapons inspectors have accused Saddam's government of hiding weapons and the means to manufacture chemical and biological agents.

The dispute over the weapons inspections centers on so-called "sensitive sites" such as Saddam's presidential palaces, which Iraq insists are symbols of Iraqi sovereignty that should be off-limits to the inspectors.

In October and November, Iraq refused to allow inspections by Americans, saying they were spies helping to plan U.S. attacks. The United Nations responded by pulling all its inspectors out of Iraq, but the monitors returned three weeks later following Russian mediation.

After its dispute with Iraqi authorities last week, Ritter's team left Baghdad Friday in what U.N. officials said was a scheduled departure, not a surrender to Iraqi pressure.

Saddam is threatening to refuse cooperation with U.N. weapons inspectors altogether if they fail to complete their work within four months.

## Castro: Papal visit won't change Cuba

HAVANA (AP) — Cuban officials are almost eager to insist that Pope John Paul II's journey to Cuba this week is not likely to improve 38 years of hostile relations with the United States.

And they ridicule suggestions that the pontiff's five-day visit will produce changes on this socialist island.

"Many people have tried to politicize the visit and use it against the revolution," President Fidel Castro said in a weekend television appearance.

Carlos Fernandez de Cossio, head of the U.S. section of the Cuban Foreign Ministry, told The Associated Press that the pope's visit "has nothing to do with the bilateral conflict that Cuba has with the United States."

Some Cuban exiles in the United States — and even White House officials — have suggested the pope, scheduled to arrive Wednesday, might somehow inspire changes in Cuba.

"There could in fact be positive results in having the Holy Father in Cuba able to talk about the importance the world attaches to human rights and to the need for relief of the suffering," White House spokesman Mike McCurry said last week.

"And that discussion itself might empower those who believe there can be change and might even touch the heart of Fidel Castro," he said.

During his television appearance, Castro himself said many people think "the pope is coming to Cuba to meet with that demon Castro in the last bastion of communism, and the hope is that this will be the end of the Cuban revolution."

But he said that since the end of the Cold War, the pope himself has become a consistent critic of capitalist societies, casting John Paul as a man whose concerns about poverty and inequality often mirror those of socialists.

Insisting he has nothing to fear from any papal statements, Castro said that even Clinton was free to visit Cuba "to speak of capitalism, neo-liberalism, globalization."

"We would not raise the least objection. ... Let him try to convince us!"

Still, some are holding out hope that the papal visit will spawn growing contacts between Cuba and U.S. business and church groups.

In Spain, a cardinal who is to accompany the pope to Cuba said the trip could prove to be the beginning of Castro's demise.

"What happened with the Berlin Wall and what happened in Poland could happen" in Cuba, the Spanish daily ABC quoted Archbishop Ricard Maria Carles of Barcelona as saying.

Speaking on CBS' "Face the Nation" on Sunday, White House national security adviser Sandy Berger did not give a direct answer when asked if the pope's visit would change U.S.-Cuba relations. Instead, Berger replied that he hopes the pope will discuss human rights in Cuba.

"This is the only nondemocracy in the hemisphere. It's stuck in the mud. It's holding on desperately to a tired old system," Berger said.

Later in the interview, Berger said if Castro took steps toward political liberalization, America would take reciprocal steps.

The pope's trip is part of a boom in religious observance on the island, which abandoned official atheism fewer than six years ago.

Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of Catholics have volunteered to make banners and flags for the visit. The faithful have gone door to door to spread word of the papal Masses among neighbors.

That would seem to fit U.S. government policy of strengthening churches and other institutions to create social centers separate from the Communist Party and government.

But Fernandez de Cossio insisted Cuban officials are not worried. "We don't think it is in the agenda of the church ... to contribute to the policy of hostility of the United States toward Cuba," he said.

Cuban Parliament President Ricardo Alarcon, a former foreign minister, was even more blunt in a news conference last week: "We are not concerned at all. We are among those who invited him. We are not stupid. We are not crazy."

## 100-gallon diesel leak closes street

From Staff Reports

One hundred gallons of thick, black diesel fuel intended for the UNL power plant on City Campus leaked from a faulty tank into the street at 14th Street and Avery Avenue on Friday afternoon.

The diesel fuel leaked from a broken seam in one of the power plant's underground fuel tanks, the university reported.

Although only 100 gallons of diesel fuel reached the surface, an estimated 600 gallons leaked from the underground tank, Deputy Fire Chief Jerry Greenfield said. The remaining 500 gallons leaked underground, he said.

Yet, University of Nebraska-Lincoln officials said no environmental damage was caused by the spill.

Rich McDermott, assistant vice chancellor for facilities management and planning, said a tanker truck driver noticed the spill after he had finished filling the tank. The fuel was pumped into another tank until it was below the level of the faulty seam, he said.

Because of the size of the spill, hazardous materials crews were called in to handle the cleanup.

Avery Avenue was shut down all afternoon Friday while crews worked to clean up the mess. The "molasses-like" oil was cleaned up before any of it could reach nearby storm drains, McDermott said.

The two fuel tanks are more than 35 years old and are listed among the university's deferred maintenance needs.

## MTV Live to broadcast show from Abel Hall

By IEVA AUGSTUMS  
Assignment Reporter

RHA

"If you think of a diverse group of students in a residence hall, it has to be Abel"

JOSHUA COWAN  
Abel Hall representative

UNL students will soon find themselves playing a bigger role as part of the MTV generation.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Residence Hall Association has agreed to allow MTV to come to campus for a taping of the show MTV Live.

Jadd Stevens, residential enhancement chairman, said MTV approached Housing Director Doug Zatechka in November asking if UNL would like to participate in a nationwide broadcast. The broadcast would also involve several other colleges and universities.

"We were approached by Zatechka, and the decision was ultimately up to us," Stevens said. "The way we figured it, we have nothing to lose."

Zatechka said he didn't know any direct benefits of MTV coming to campus but he has been assured it will be fun for the students.

Stevens said the actual dates of the broadcast are still to be determined.

"The dates of broadcast will be determined by what other schools are involved and the specific topic of the discussion," Stevens said.

Stevens said MTV will broadcast on three nights during the same week via a two-way television communication system provided and installed by the network.

RHA President Ben Wallace said the show will take place in a student adviser's room in Abel Hall.

Abel was chosen because its rooms are large and it houses the most diverse group of students,

Wallace said. "We had to put it in a student adviser's room for liability, availability and flexibility," Wallace said.

Stevens said Abel Hall is the biggest residential hall on campus with approximately 80 students on each of its 12 floors.

"If you think of a diverse group of students in a residential hall, it has to be Abel," Joshua Cowan, an Abel Hall representative, said.

Wallace said the show's participants had not yet been decided.

RHA is planning to have one student from the greek system, a student from off campus and three students from the residence halls for each taping.

Stevens said RHA probably will conduct interviews, and applicants would have to be screened.

"Even though the invitation of MTV Live was accepted by RHA, MTV coming to UNL is for the campus as a whole," Stevens said.

"It is not just for the residence halls."

**Daily Nebraskan**

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