

Defense Dept. considers training officers for Warsaw Pact nations

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Pentagon may soon be training military officers from the very countries it once viewed as archenemies.

The administration is considering requests from members of the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact — Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Romania — to participate in a program known as International Military Education and Training (IMET), officials say.

While the program probably would cost just several hundred thousand dollars, the symbolic value of such a project would be much higher.

"Who would have believed we would train officers from the very countries which we viewed as our enemies just last year?" one Defense Department official said.

The possible training project is just one of many options under consideration by the Bush administration to help countries that this year

discarded more than four decades of communist rule.

"Money will be very tight and we're considering a range of things for Eastern Europe," a Bush administration official said, who, like the other official, asked not to be

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— Defense Department official

named. "IMET is one of the things that has been thought about."

That official said the decision on whether to include any East Europeans in the program would not be

made until December, when the State Department puts together its budget request for the fiscal year that begins next Oct. 1.

The program is funded under the foreign aid bill and administered jointly with the Pentagon. The 1990 program totaled \$47.2 million. The size of the individual country programs ranges from a low of \$15,000 up to \$3.38 million for Turkey.

There are more than 800,000 troops in the Warsaw Pact, not counting the Soviet Union. But the alliance is crumbling; it lost one of seven members this year when East Germany merged with West Germany, and Hungary is preparing to leave.

Pact members have planned a summit later this year to discuss the alliance's future, with plans to transform it to a political rather than military grouping.

Meanwhile, its members have begun reducing the size of their Soviet-

armed and trained military to save money for the expensive and painful transition from a state-run economy to a free-market system.

The Soviet Union also is trying to save money. Its forces have begun pulling out of Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

There are no Soviet troops stationed in Romania and Bulgaria, and those in Poland and the former territory of East Germany eventually will be withdrawn now that Moscow has decided to bring all of its troops home.

The way for cooperation with the United States was paved earlier this year when NATO leaders agreed to set up regular diplomatic contacts with members of the Warsaw Pact.

Since then, diplomats from Eastern Europe have received regular briefings at NATO headquarters in Brussels, mostly about the crisis in the Persian Gulf and about the Soviet Union.

Official: Iraq will not negotiate on Kuwait

In a new outburst of belligerence, Iraq said Sunday it was ready to fight a "dangerous war" rather than ever give up Kuwait. One European official warned that divisions over the hostage issue are endangering the anti-Iraq alliance.

"Iraq is not going to negotiate on Kuwait," Iraq's information minister, Latif Jassim, told a news conference in Baghdad. He insisted Iraq's annexation of Kuwait, which it overran three months ago, would stand.

"We are going to defend our 19th province on any condition, even if we have to fight a dangerous war," he said, referring to Kuwait.

Iraq also said it was recalling an unspecified number of retired army officers to active duty.

Secretary of State James A. Baker III visited U.S. troops in the Saudi desert earlier Sunday and said it was hard to say whether they would be called into combat. The presidents of Egypt and France expressed hopes that economic pressure rather than military might force Iraq out of Kuwait.

Meanwhile, four American ex-hostages were on their way home a day after being freed, and 15 Europeans arrived in Jordan after being released by the Iraqis. They were

among thousands of foreigners trapped in Iraq and Kuwait when Saddam Hussein's troops took over the emirate Aug. 2.

The first POWs of the Persian Gulf crisis — three French soldiers — had a homecoming of their own in Paris on Sunday, but it wasn't exactly a hero's welcome. French officials have said the soldiers, who were captured last week, might have strayed into Iraqi territory, and that they probably face punishment for their carelessness.

The new Iraqi vow to keep Kuwait at all costs came only hours after a former Japanese prime minister, Yasuhiro Nakasone, met with Saddam — and said the Iraqi president had demonstrated "great earnestness and seriousness" about seeking peace.

Nakasone's visit, aimed at winning the release of Japanese hostages, comes as Japanese lawmakers are considering a plan to send troops to the gulf to join the multinational force arrayed against Saddam.

The troop-deployment proposal has drawn strong criticism from those who say it would violate Japan's postwar peace constitution, even though the troops would be confined to non-combat roles.

Iraq's official news agency said Nakasone

had told Saddam it was unlikely lawmakers would approve the proposal. Nakasone, speaking to reporters, made no mention of such assurances, but the report underscored the way the hostages can be used as leverage.

Belgium's foreign minister complained that efforts by individual nations to win their citizens' freedom are eroding unity against Iraq.

"Saddam is creating this royal court of all sorts of Western pilgrims who visit him to obtain the release of hostages," the Belgian official, Mark Eyskens, said in a television interview Sunday in Brussels.

Sometimes the visitors "let themselves be lured into political discussions" with Saddam, which could "jeopardize the united stand against Saddam's invasion and annexation of Kuwait," he said.

Belgium requested a special European Community meeting on the matter on Tuesday or Wednesday in Rome.

The European Community had already tried to discourage a hostage-freeing bid by former West German Chancellor Willy Brandt, who leaves for Baghdad on Monday. Like Nakasone's trip, Brandt's is a private mission with government backing.

Parliament asked to reconsider laws stirring ethnic unrest and violence

KISHINEV, U.S.S.R. (AP) — Moldavia's president appealed Sunday for an end to street demonstrations and urged his Parliament to reconsider laws that have stirred ethnic unrest and violence in the republic.

The speech by President Mircha Snegur marked the first time the ethnic Moldavian leadership accepted blame for separatist movements in the Turkish-Christian Gagauz region of southern Moldavia and in the predominantly Russian and Ukrainian Dniester area in the east, lawmakers said.

It came one day after a meeting in Moscow with President Mikhail S.

Gorbachev in which Snegur and representatives of the separatist groups agreed to a moratorium on acts that led to the ethnic crisis in the small republic.

Details of the moratorium have not been worked out. Lawmakers said it probably would mean the Gagauz and Dniester regions would suspend their recent declarations of sovereignty and planned elections.

In return, the republic's government would soften a language law that made Moldavian the national language and required people in dozens of jobs, ranging from doctors to hairdressers, to pass tests in Moldavian by 1995.

The law has stirred resentment among Russian speakers and the Gagauz, who speak a Turkic language and are descendants of Christians who fled to Moldavia from persecution in Bulgaria in the 19th century.

Both the Gagauz and Dniester separatists claim discrimination by Moldavians, who themselves want independence from the Soviet Union. Moldavia borders Romania.

"We are not giving up our national rebirth, our language, alphabet, symbols, and so on," Snegur told lawmakers. "Simply, we must go back and look for where, maybe, we have gone too fast for our fellow citizens."

Peers, family remember teen's bravery

FORT WORTH, Texas (AP) — The family and friends of a slain high school student remember the teen-ager's devotion to Christian rock music — and how he died protecting the truck with which his father made a living.

"He gave his life for us to keep that truck," Kathy Cooney, mother of 17-year-old Jason Cooney, told the Fort Worth Star-Telegram in Sunday's editions.

On the night of Sept. 24, Cooney looked out a window and saw someone stealing the pickup.

He ran out of the house, catching up with the sputtering pickup as the thieves slowly pulled away. As he ran alongside, police later were told, someone in the truck slammed Jason's head with a board, ran over him and left him unconscious in the middle of the street, a half-block from his home in west Fort Worth. He died twelve hours later.

Almost a month later, police arrested one suspect in his death and continue to search for another.

Now, the rusty, red and white '73 Ford pickup sits idle in the driveway. Cooney's mother said the family can't bring itself to use the hand-me-down truck, "and we can't part with it. Jason was going to restore it."

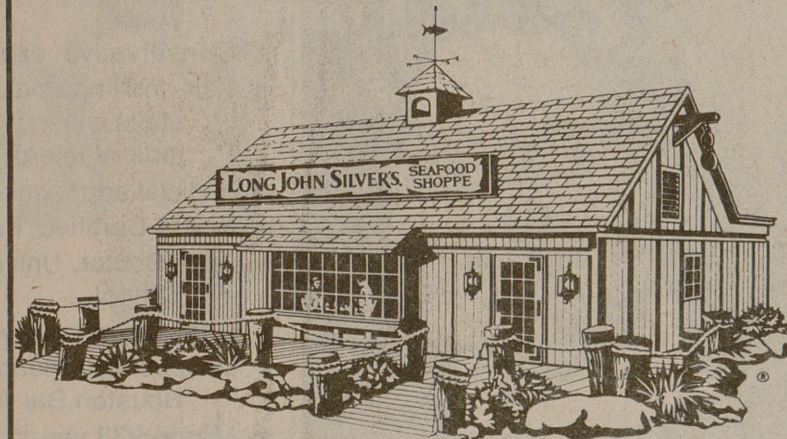
The truck was used by Jason's dad, John Cooney, a former home builder who turned to mowing lawns and distributing newspapers when a building slump set in.

The family's '81 Honda was stolen in May and recovered two months later. It has been repaired to serve as the family's transportation.

"We're just limping along," said John Cooney.

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FOR STATE REPRESENTATIVE

ISSUES

CRIME

- Let juries and judges set minimum sentences that cannot be reduced by parole.
- Require a high school diploma or equivalent before an inmate is eligible for parole.
- Give juries more factual information during the sentencing phase of a trial.
- Give the prosecutor the same right as the defendant to request jury sentencing.

ETHICS REFORM

- Limit terms of politicians
- Limit campaign contributions

EDUCATION

- Set an understandable goal, for example: raise average SAT scores 100 points by year 2000.
- Increase teacher salaries, reduce spending on overhead.
- Give more authority to teachers and principals, less to bureaucrats.
- Tie more state funding to improvements in school district performance.

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BACKGROUND

- Married 17 years, 3 children
- MBA, Texas A&M
- U.S. Naval Academy graduate
- Nuclear engineer, U.S. Submarine Force
- Successful local businessman



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