

Four Iraqi soldiers surrender

Allies' bombs rock Baghdad

DHAHRAN, Saudi Arabia (AP) — In endless hours of air strikes, U.S. and allied pilots rocked Baghdad, key bridges and the bunkers of front-line troops Thursday, and blew two more Iraqi "getaway jets" out of the sky.

A second veteran U.S. battleship joined in the bombardment of Iraqi-held Kuwait.

The pounding was having an impact. Returning pilots told of a devastated landscape in Kuwait, and journalists near the border found first-hand evidence — four Iraqi soldiers who turned themselves in muttering over and over about the "bombing ... bombing ... bombing."

But Desert Storm losses mounted, too. A U.S. Navy FA-18 Hornet fighter went down in the northern Persian Gulf, apparently not from hostile fire; and an Army helicopter crashed in Saudi Arabia. The Navy pilot was missing; one soldier was killed and four were wounded in the helicopter accident.

President Bush's two top war advisers — Defense Secretary Dick Cheney and joint chiefs chairman Gen. Colin Powell — flew to the gulf to confer over the weekend with local commanders on the countdown to a ground offensive, a momentous clash between a half-million or more men on each side.

"Our hope is that we can wrap it up as soon as possible, to minimize the loss of life on all sides," the defense secretary said before he left.

Iraq launched one of its largely ineffective Scud missiles early Friday at Riyadh. Like an estimated 17 others fired previously at the Saudi capital, it was intercepted by a U.S. Patriot missile. The wreckage landed in a parking lot and caused no injuries or major damage, witnesses said.

The commander of British forces in Operation Desert Storm, Lt. Gen. Peter de la Billiere, told reporters he believes "the land war is inevitable." A U.S. command spokesman disputed the use of "inevitable." But up on the northern desert line, U.S. troops had little doubt.



Rafsanjani

"This could get very ugly at any moment," one officer told a reporter visiting the Saudi-Kuwaiti front. That view found high-level support in France, where President Francois Mitterrand told reporters: "The ground battle promises to take place ... this month."

In Tehran, Turkey's foreign minister met with President Hashemi Rafsanjani to discuss the Iranian leader's offer to mediate between Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and the international alliance arrayed against him. A Soviet envoy also was to meet with Iranian officials.

The Bush administration says there is nothing to mediate: Saddam must simply announce a withdrawal from Kuwait.

Allied warplanes battered Baghdad for 12 hours from Wednesday night to after 8 a.m. Thursday, Associated Press correspondent Salah Nasrawi reported from the Iraqi capital.

He said at least 10 homes were destroyed or heavily damaged in the attacks, and Iraqi authorities said 22 civilians were killed.

An attack in the al-A'amiya district may have been aimed at a

bridge over the Tigris River, about 200 yards from damaged houses, Nasrawi said. He said the bridge still stood.

Other houses were hit in the Sheikh Omer neighborhood, apparently in raids aimed at a nearby highway heavily used by military vehicles heading south, Nasrawi said.

Ramsey Clark, the former U.S. attorney general and peace activist who is in Baghdad this week, told reporters that damage to residential areas showed the U.S. air war exceeded the mandate of U.N. Security Council Resolution 678, which authorized the use of force to expel Iraq from Kuwait.

"You don't have to bomb cities," he said. "It has nothing to do with resolution 678."

Clark said he visited the heavily bombed southern port city of Basra and described what he saw as "a human and civilian tragedy." He said bombs had destroyed hospitals, coffee shops, offices and other non-military sites.

He also said a Baghdad doctor told him several thousand people have been killed or wounded by air strikes across Iraq.

Pentagon predicts land battle tactics

WASHINGTON (AP) — When and if the land battle begins, it will be three-dimensional using close combat, deep operations and rear-area security.

The three-dimensional approach is central to the U.S. Army's war-fighting doctrine, known as AirLand Battle. Developed in the early 1980s and even now being fine-tuned, the doctrine has never been tested in a major conflict.

But this is how it might work in the Persian Gulf War, according to Pentagon planners:

- An Army task force of infantrymen, combat engineers and tanks opens a pre-dawn assault on Iraq's fortified defenses at the Saudi-Kuwaiti border.
- An airborne division drops deep behind the Iraqi front line, supported by helicopter gunships and allied ground attack planes whose fire is guided by surveillance aircraft operating miles back of the Saudi border.
- Far to the rear of the U.S. attacking forces, a tank battalion patrols for signs that Iraqi air assault teams have infiltrated to strike at allied supply lines.

These scenes may not precisely fit an actual U.S.-led ground offensive against Iraq. But they do describe the three elements that almost certainly are key features of the American plan for conducting a land battle.

Dick Cheney, the secretary of defense, and Colin Powell, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, were flying to Saudi Arabia on Thursday to get a firsthand look at the war and a readout for President Bush on the time of when a ground war might begin.

The Army carried out the December 1989 invasion of Panama in accordance with AirLand Battle, but the opposition force was weak compared with the Iraqi military.

The features of AirLand Battle that distinguish it from the war-fighting doctrines of other countries, including Iraq, are its emphasis on engaging enemy forces deep behind the front line and combining conventional and electronic warfare.

The doctrine also incorporates the use of nuclear weapons on the assumption that the most likely U.S. opponent would be the world's other major nuclear power — the Soviet Union. President Bush has not publicly ruled out using nuclear weapons against Iraq, but the possibility is believed to be extremely remote.

An Armed Forces Staff College instructional booklet says AirLand Battle is designed to keep

U.S. forces "in a state of combat readiness for any war, anywhere, anytime, in any manner."

In the Persian Gulf War, it is the U.S. military's technological wonders that make AirLand Battle seem well-suited to the task of defeating Iraq. These advantages, such as laser-guided artillery and missile fire and revolutionary airborne radar systems, allow U.S. forces to deepen the battlefield.

The new Joint Stars airborne surveillance system is a good example. Two Joint Stars airplanes, equipped with advanced radars capable of detecting troop and tank formations 200 miles away, are operating in Saudi Arabia. They are the only two such planes in existence; their presence in the gulf despite not being fully tested is a measure of their importance to U.S. commanders.

Army doctrine includes a wide variety of offensive maneuvers that could be used against Iraq. These include "envelopment," in which one mechanized infantry division launches a limited frontal assault, including support from artillery fire, to pin down enemy forces. At the same time, one or more other divisions swing wide to go around or over the opposition's defenses to strike at his rear. The goal is to encircle the defender, preventing his reinforcement or escape.

Officials plan to combine weapons plants

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Bush administration outlined tentative plans Thursday to consolidate the nation's nuclear weapons plants, partly because of anticipated reductions in superpower stockpiles over the next 20 years.

The Department of Energy's plan calls for the eventual shutdown of the controversial Rocky Flats plant in Colorado and possibly other facilities at Oak Ridge, Tenn., and Amarillo.

However, work is likely to continue for years just to clean up sites like Rocky Flats, 16 miles from Denver, government officials acknowledged.

Energy Secretary James Watkins said that while a final plan is not expected until 1993, the future weapons program will be "smaller, less diverse and less expensive to operate" as well as more protective of the environment.

The consolidation is expected to take as long as 20 years to complete and cost from \$6.7 billion to \$15 billion, officials said.

"We want to finish this as soon as we possibly can. If we can beat the timetable, we will do it," said Rear Admiral Mike Barr, the DOE's deputy assistant secretary for military applications.

The number of atomic weapons facilities would be reduced from the current 43 in a dozen states to no more than eight. The three major nuclear material production and manufacturing sites at Rocky Flats, Oak Ridge and Amarillo would be consolidated into one, although the site has not been determined.

A system of national laboratories operated by the Energy Department and various other facilities involved in weapons manufacture also would be combined into single facilities under some of the options being

pushed by senior planners.

The consolidation would be in line with an expected shrinkage of nuclear warhead stockpiles because of reduced tensions between the United States and Soviet Union and provisions of arms reductions agreements between the two nations.

An 18-month DOE study on restructuring the weapons program considered scenarios that envision atomic warhead stockpiles being anywhere from 30 percent to 85 percent smaller by the year 2015. The United States currently has an estimated 20,000 atomic warheads in inventory.

Watkins said the future weapons production program must be "flexible enough to cover the likely range of the nuclear weapons stockpile requirements" while at the same time protecting the environment and the health of workers and residents living near the production facilities.

Cleanup activities at various nuclear weapons facilities are expected to cost more than \$100 billion over the next 30 years, according to government estimates.

Barr said five locations are under consideration for a new, principal manufacturing facility combining the functions of Rocky Flats, Amarillo and Oak Ridge. He said the current Pantex facility in Amarillo, or the current Y-12 facility at Oak Ridge are themselves possibilities. Other possible locations for the new facility are the Savannah River complex in South Carolina, the Hanford site in Washington, or the National Engineering Laboratory in Idaho, he said.

Production activities have not been underway at Hanford for some time and the department has said the focus there would be on environmental cleanup for the foreseeable future.

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