

Croatian president announces mobilization of reserve forces

ZAGREB, Yugoslavia (AP) — Squeezed by military foes and growing internal dissent, Croatia's president announced the call-up Thursday of all reserve forces.

Fierce fighting continued to rage between ethnic Serbian militants and Croatian defense forces, this time around two towns on the Danube River separating Croatia and Serbia. At

least four people were killed, according to the state news agency Tanjug and Croatian media.

At an emergency parliamentary session, Croatian President Franjo Tudjman announced the full mobilization of reserves.

"The republic of Serbia is waging a war of aggression against the republic of Croatia through its proxies," Croatia's ethnic

Serbs, Tudjman told the parliament in Zagreb.

"We are being forced to lead a battle for life or death, for the survival of the Croatian people and Croatia," he added.

The breakaway republic's new premier-designate, Franjo Greguric, formed a new Cabinet Thursday that dropped some prominent hawks and added an ethnic Serb and members of op-

position parties. The new Cabinet must be approved by Parliament.

The continued fighting could complicate efforts by the European Community to fashion a cease-fire in Croatia, where about 50 people have died in clashes since it declared independence on June 25. A three-member EC delegation is scheduled to arrive today.

The Vatican announced Thursday that Pope John Paul II is sending an envoy to Yugoslavia. French Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran, the Vatican's foreign minister, plans to leave Monday for Zagreb to meet with bishops and political leaders.

Petar Sales, a member of Tudjman's party, demanded that Parliament declare the federal military "an army of occupation" so

that "any soldier outside barracks can be considered an enemy."

The parliamentary session was broadcast on Croatian TV, interspersed with film of refugees and wounded Croatian fighters.

The reserves call-up could add more than 30,000 Croatian troops to the 70,000 currently in service.

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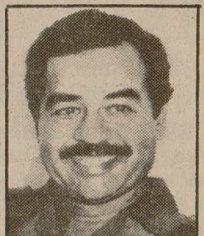
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Kuwaitis accept anniversary

Lingering destruction haunts area, brings back memories

KUWAIT CITY (AP) — Kuwaitis on Friday mark the anniversary of an event most would like to forget — Iraq's invasion of their homeland.

But reminders of Saddam Hussein's destruction are everywhere, from the black smoke billowing off hundreds of oil wells to the shell-damaged hotels and abandoned Iraqi tanks.



Saddam Hussein

To mark the anniversary, there will be special prayers at mosques for the 2,400 people still missing and presumed held by Iraq. There will be symposiums, sponsored by the government, "in commemoration of the tyrannical Iraqi invasion."

And there will be continued soul-searching about why the invasion happened and how to deal with the consequences.

"Kuwaitis feel both relief and depression," said Mohammed al-Saqr, editor of the Al-Qabas newspaper. "Relief because they got their country back."

"But they are depressed, too, because they still have lots of

loved ones in Iraqi prisons. Because the government is slow in restoring things back the way they were. Because Kuwait is not like before."

Some wonder if their homeland will ever be the same.

The desert, where Kuwaitis traditionally retreat for winter camping trips, is littered with thousands of unexploded shells and cluster bomblets.

The seashore, their summer haven, is filthy with oil and still strung in parts with barbed wire. Despite the presence of U.N. truce observers on the Kuwait-

Iraq border and some 3,900 U.S. army troops, the fear of Iraq persists.

"The insecurity is deep inside us," said Mohammed Hussain, a professor of sociology at Kuwait University.

"You can see it in the pleas that American soldiers stay on to protect Kuwait," he said. "You can see it in attempts by the middle class to buy property in other Arab countries and in Europe. The wealthy always had them; now everyone wants a place to flee to."

The scars cut deep in adults and children alike.

Gas tax increase endangered as leaders allow House to vote

WASHINGTON (AP) — A five-cent gasoline tax increase hit a potentially lethal snag Thursday when House Democratic leaders agreed to allow lawmakers to vote on whether they want pork-barrel highway projects enough to raise taxes.

House Speaker Thomas S. Foley, who favors the tax boost and the transportation spending it would finance, reluctantly bowed to Republicans' demands that they be allowed a shot at stripping away the tax.

"If you want to vote against the gas tax, the bill should be scaled down accordingly," Foley cautioned. That means that without the tax increase, many of the more than 450 highway "demonstration projects" across the country would have to be eliminated from the \$153.5-billion, five-year transportation bill.

Republicans insisted that most House members would prefer to let those special projects die than vote for a second federal gasoline tax increase in less than a year. A nickel-a-gallon increase was enacted last year as part of a deficit-reduction plan.

Democrats were not so sure. Even if a majority of House members votes for the tax, its chances of becoming law are slim. There is stiff opposition in the Senate, which passed a highway bill without a tax increase, and the White House insists President Bush will veto the tax if he gets the chance.

A House vote could come today. Under prodding from Foley and other Democratic leaders, the House Ways and Means Committee approved the increase on a 19-17 vote Wednesday night. Rep. Dan Rostenkowski, D-Ill. and the committee's chairman questioned the timing of this one.

Rostenkowski raised the possibility that a majority of the committee would vote against the bill on the floor. "It's not unusual for members to vote something out (of committee that) the leadership wants but ultimately, on the floor of the House of Representatives, they make their own decision," he said.

Under the proposal, the federal gas tax, now 14.1 cents a gallon, would rise to 19.1 cents Jan. 1.

House boosts spending on nuclear weapons

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House agreed Thursday to boost spending on nuclear weapons production and to start 15 new water projects expected to cost taxpayers up to \$300 million.

The bill also includes \$484 million for the superconducting super collider physics research project in Texas.

The House approved and sent back to the Senate a \$21.9 billion appropriations bill for the Energy Department, the government's dam builders and several smaller agencies with most of the funds senators added to it last month.

About \$12 billion will go to operating the nation's nuclear weapons-building complex in

fiscal 1992 and cleaning up some of the radioactive wastes it has accumulated over the past four decades.

The Senate added about \$220 million — much of it centered in the home state of Appropriations Committee member Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M. — to the \$8 billion the Bush administration had sought and the House had approved for atomic weapons research and production.

But as part of a deal negotiated earlier this week by House and Senate appropriators, the compromise also includes the restoration of \$50 million of the \$118 million the Senate had cut from a \$3.7 billion account for cleanup and treatment of wastes asso-

ciated with the weapons production.

Rep. Dan Burton, R-Ill., failed on a 338-80 vote to knock out of the compromise 15 new water projects put into the bill by the Senate and expected to eventually cost taxpayers between \$296 and \$310 million.

"We simply have to start prioritizing," Burton said. "We're headed for a fiscal calamity in this country. We cannot spend for everything in sight as we have done in the past."

The \$484 million allocated for the super collider is \$50 million less than President Bush requested, but enough to get construction under way next year.

Officers fail to recognize evidence in apartment

MILWAUKEE (AP) — Three officers who allowed a naked boy to stay with Jeffrey Dahmer were in his apartment two months before dismembered body parts were found there, police union officials said Thursday.

At the time, photos of previous victims were strewn on the floor and Dahmer has since said a body was in an adjoining room, a newspaper reported Thursday.

Union spokeswoman Laurie Eggert said the officers saw no evidence to suggest anything was wrong.

Also Thursday, authorities released a tape recording of the officers' conversations on police radio.

"Intoxicated Asian, naked male," one officer said, with laughter audible, "was returned to his sober boyfriend."

"My partner is going to get deloused at the station," the officer said, with more laughter.

Later, one woman called police back and spoke to one of the officers who had investigated her complaint, insisting that the naked man was a boy. The officers told her "it's a boyfriend-boyfriend thing."

The union spokeswoman said the officers found no evidence the boy was bleeding and that paramedics called to the scene determined he did not require treatment, before officers took Dahmer and the boy back to the apartment for further investigation.

EPA drafts plan to clean up pollution on Texas border

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Environmental Protection Agency released a draft plan Thursday to attack pollution on the Southwest border, where raw sewage and industrial wastes threaten precious water supplies and noxious fumes from burning tires and decrepit cars foul the air.

The plan will be the subject of hearings in September along the border as the EPA and its Mexican counterpart, SEDUE, develop a strategy to clean up and protect the borderlands environment.

The plan is in addition to a review of environmental issues, including border pollution, being conducted by the U.S. Trade Representative's Office as part of negotiations for a free trade agreement with Mexico.

Rapid industrial and population growth on the border has

left thousands of people living in makeshift housing without running water or sewage systems. Environmentalists complain the expanding maquiladora industry, which has drawn people to the region, has also contaminated the land, air and water with toxic discharges.

More industry and commerce along the border is expected under a free trade agreement, and some lawmakers and environmentalists fear the growth could exacerbate the region's serious pollution problems.

Three consumer and environmental groups filed suit Thursday in federal court seeking to force the U.S. Trade Representative's office to conduct an environmental impact statement on how the free trade agreement would affect public health, safety and the environment.