

Saddam Hussein gains control of northern Iraq

SULAYMANIYAH, Iraq (AP) — Saddam Hussein wasted no time Tuesday in reasserting control of northern Iraq after the collapse of a U.S.-declared "safe haven," lifting trade and travel barriers that had stood since the Gulf War.

Saddam's Kurdish allies flaunted their new authority over this northeastern city, parading through the streets and looting the headquarters of their vanquished rivals for trophies — even jet seats and light bulbs.

Tens of thousands of Kurds fled Sulaymaniyah for the rugged hills nearby Iran after the Baghdad-based Kurdistan Democratic Party rolled into the city on Monday night.

U.N. officials estimated up to 200,000 Kurds might have left, but many refugees started returning Tuesday, by truck and taxi on foot, reassured by news that Saddam's troops had not entered the city.

Saddam sought to discourage an exodus, declaring a general amnesty for all Kurds and lifting travel and trade restrictions between Iraq and the northern semi-autonomous Kurdish areas imposed at the end of the 1991 Persian Gulf War.

The full ramifications of the announcement were not immediately clear. But Saddam and his Kurdish allies clearly had effectively eliminated the Kurdish "safe haven" established by U.S.-led forces five years ago.

A State Department spokesman ridiculed Saddam's amnesty offer, saying past treason-an's objected, believing it "laughable, almost comical."

"He gave a pardon to his son-in-law and then had him executed for passage," Nicholas Burns said in Washington. "He tried to make up with the Iraqi Kurds five years ago and then tried to destroy them."

The latest fighting in northern Iraq began Aug. 31, when the Iraqi

army and the Kurdistan Democratic Party teamed up to capture Irbil, the de facto Kurdish capital in the north.

U.S. missile strikes against southern Iraq last week seemed to deter the Iraqi army from taking part in further fighting, although Burns said Iraqi intelligence, military and security advisers apparently continued to aid the KDP. With Iraqi forces marching behind the KDP, the faction has easily defeated its Kurdish rival, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan.

In addition to launching missiles against Iraqi military installations, the U.S. and allied nations expanded the no-fly zone in southern Iraq.

Saddam retorted not only by announcing he would no longer honor the no-fly zones but also by ordering his forces to shoot at U.S. and allied aircraft.

Iraq claimed Tuesday it fired three surface-to-air missiles at allied aircraft over the no-fly zone, but no hits were reported. It was the fourth time in five days Iraq has reported shooting at warplanes over the zone.

In Sulaymaniyah, Iraqi troops were nowhere in sight Tuesday as the KDP celebrated its sweeping victory with an impromptu parade. Fighters carrying AK-47 rifles rode through the streets in pickup trucks decorated with yellow flags and streamers. Women and children dressed in yellow — the party color — and merchants hastily plastered photocopied pictures of KDP leader Massoud Barzani on their store windows.

About 20 miles northeast of Sulaymaniyah, KDP fighters looted everything they could carry from the headquarters of the Iranian-allied PUK.

Soldiers and villagers towed away air conditioners, wire, pipes — even light bulbs. One old man stumbled away with three fluorescent light tubes, a large ceramic urn and a toilet seat.



Iraq update

1 On Monday night, the Kurdistan Democratic Party rolled into Sulaymaniyah, the last stronghold of its Kurdish rivals, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. As a result, Saddam now has effective control over northern Iraq for the first time since the 1991 Gulf War.

2 200,000 Kurdish refugees are massed at Iran's border. 75,000 more are heading for, or are already at the Iraqi border town of Panjwin. Iran does not intend to let them in unless their lives are in danger.

At the nearby two-story villa of PUK leader Jalal Talabani, looters filled trucks with furniture not completely destroyed in a fire. KDP soldiers claimed Talabani ordered the blaze set when it was certain that the town would be overrun.

The one object that survived the fire unscathed was a large sculpture in front of the villa in the form of the PUK emblem: a hand grasping a red flower.

At a nearby hilltop, KDP fighters picked through a hut, taking blankets, kerosene lamps and some bedding. "Wait a second," one said. He ran back and unscrewed a light bulb.

The KDP also took artillery shells and ammunition from the blackened armory.

"It's much better doing this than having them shooting at you," said Hassan Abdul, an 18-year-old KDP fighter, as he carried a mortar shell above his head.

In Sulaymaniyah, only a few leading PUK members chose to remain.

"I don't think we're in any danger, only Talabani and about 10 other important PUK members are the ones whose lives are at risk," said Majid Haji Ahmed, a senior member of the PUK council in Sulaymaniyah. "It's better than being a refugee."

Singing Cadets Benefit Concert for TOBY BOENIG, former Student Body President

Wednesday, September 11, 1996
7 p.m.
Rudder Auditorium
Toby will be there so please come show your support in his recovery efforts.

In Advance:
\$5 for Students
\$8 for Non-Students

At the Door:
\$7 for Students
\$10 for Non-Students

Tickets are available through the MSC Box Office
AGGIE BUCKS ACCEPTED

TCA CABLE TV HOME THEATRE



PRESENTS . . .

Texas A&M at SW Louisiana
LIVE on Pay-Per-View

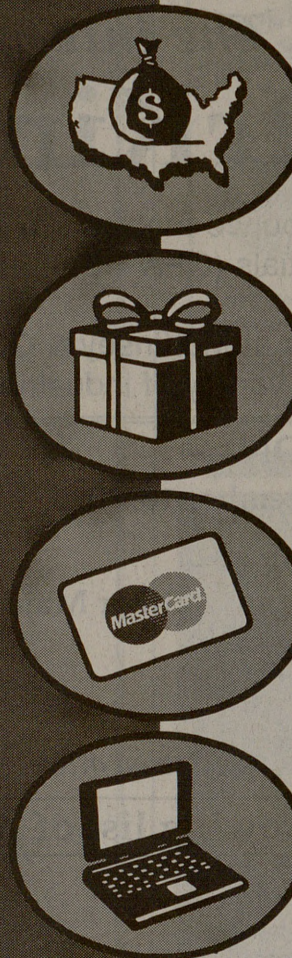
Saturday, September 14
7 p.m.
ONLY \$19.95

With an S.A. converter, tune to channel 70 or call **846-2229**

TCA Cable TV
It's TV You Want To See!

TCA
CABLE TV
4114 E. 29th St. • Bryan, TX 77802

Luckily, you can still
sign up for all this
great stuff from AT&T.



- AT&T True Reach® Savings**
Save 25% on every kind of U.S. call on your AT&T phone bill when you spend just \$25 a month.¹
- AT&T True Rewards®**
Get savings at Sam Goody/Musicland, TCBY "Treats" and BLOCKBUSTER VIDEO with the Member Benefit Card.
- AT&T Universal MasterCard®**
A credit, cash and calling card that brings you discounts on USAir. And no annual fee—ever.²
- AT&T WorldNet™ Service**
Get 5 free hours of Internet access every month just for having AT&T long distance.³

To sign up, look for us on campus or call
1 800 654-0471



AT&T
Your True Choice

<http://www.att.com/college>