

United States attacks southern Iraq killing 11

BASRA, Iraq (AP) — U.S. missiles slammed into residential neighborhoods in southern Iraq Monday, demolishing sturdy, one-walled homes as they killed at least 11 people, Iraqi officials said.

U.S. officials said its Air Force and Navy jets fired at air defense systems in response to "threats by anti-aircraft artillery fire" and by Iraqi warplanes flying south of the 33rd parallel in violation of a no-flight ban.

Pentagon officials said it was likely that U.S. jets targeting the Iraqi air defense installations missed and that at least two missiles may have resulted in civilian deaths in and around the city of Basra.

Spokesman Navy Capt. Michael O'Leary said U.S. officials were still assessing the site damage. "The missiles hit five areas of southern Iraq, including the working-class al-Jumhuriya neighborhood on the outskirts of Basra, Iraqi officials said.

Several homes in that neighborhood were destroyed, their roofs caved in. Broken dishes and kitchen utensils were strewn among the rubble.

Civilians worked late into the night to clean the debris from the morning strike.

Ahmed Ibrahim Hamash, the governor of Basra, said two aircraft fired five missiles that killed people and injuring 59.

The missiles struck civilian areas in or near Basra, as well as a site near the airport and another near the Rumelilah oil fields.

An engineer at the oil field was reported injured in the attacks.

Iraqi officials took reporters to the al-Jumhuri hospital, one of the city's two main hospitals.

Several injured children and women were at the hospital. Iraqi officials said they had been wounded in the strikes.

In al-Jumhuriya, four homes were completely destroyed and damaged, including Lufti Swa-

di's house. The blast ripped the front door off the 28-year-old baker's home, shattered parts of the walls and scattered the furniture.

In the village of Abu al-Khaseeb, four houses were destroyed and another four damaged. Iraqi officials were still assessing damage in the other civilian area that was struck.

Hamash said there were no military installations in the areas that were hit.

"There is not even a police sta-

tion there, let alone a military installation," he said. "The United States claims to be a humanitarian nation but they are enemies of that concept."

U.S. missiles strike near Basra

Iraqi officials reported a U.S. missile hit the al-Jumhuriya neighborhood of Basra on Monday morning. Another strike was reported shortly after at the village of Abu al-Khaseeb near Basra, the Basra airport and the North Rumelilah oil field.



nostrils. She was about to go to school to take an exam when the missile struck, her sister Zeinab, 25, said.

"It began with a big bang," said Zeinab Ali, who was slightly injured with cuts and bruises. "I could see my house coming down on us. There was dust all over."

Marwa suffered multiple wounds to the scalp and a deep knee injury.

Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz condemned the attack and

lims who rose up against the government of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

In the northern no-fly zone Monday, U.S. aircraft attacked three separate Iraqi anti-aircraft batteries, U.S. officials said.

They said the aircraft fired missiles and dropped bombs after Iraq targeted or fired on the warplanes.

The Vatican condemned the bombing raids, saying Monday in a statement from Mexico City that the military action "confirms once again" Pope John Paul II's belief that "military measures don't resolve problems in themselves, rather they aggravate them."

The Vatican has consistently opposed the military actions against Iraq.

Hamash, meanwhile, vowed defiance after the attacks.

"We will continue to oppose any over-flying of our territory by enemy aircraft," he said.

Iraq has been challenging the no-fly zones with increasing regularity since Dec. 16-19 airstrikes by the United States and Britain.

Those attacks were aimed at punishing Iraq after U.N. weapons inspectors released a report saying that Baghdad was obstructing their work.

The British Defense Ministry said its warplanes were not involved in the latest attacks.

On Sunday, U.S. aircraft fired on two surface-to-air missile sites in separate incidents in the northern no-fly zone, U.S. officials said.

It was a second consecutive day that U.S. warplanes patrolling the no-fly zones opened fire after being targeted.

The latest attack comes one day after Arab foreign ministers met in Egypt and refused to condemn last month's airstrikes.

Information Minister Humam Abdel-Khaliq claimed that the Arab foreign ministers had given the United States and Britain "an Arab green card" to attack Iraq.

said the United States and its allies would be held responsible. His remarks were reported by the official Iraqi News Agency.

Basra, 350 miles south of Baghdad, is within the southern "no-fly" zone that the United States and its allies set up after the 1991 Gulf War to protect Shiite Mus-



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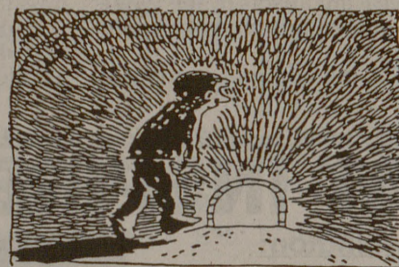
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- Jan. 29th Fox & Hound 7:30
- *Jan. 31st Interviews 2-5:00 MSC Lobby
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