

NEWS IN BRIEF

Pentagon may reduce air patrols over major cities

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Pentagon is proposing a reduction in the air patrols the military has been flying over major U.S. cities since the Sept. 11 attacks, a spokesman said Monday.

New York's senators questioned one version of the plan, which had flights reduced over New York City while round-the-clock patrols would continue over Washington.

The plan is to use "intermittent combat air patrols on an ad hoc basis" and put fighter jets at various military bases on "strip alerts," which means on 15-minute notice for combat duty, said the spokesman, Victoria Clarke.

"It will be a very fluid mix that we can and will adjust as the threat conditions demand," Clarke said.

Neither she nor Brig. Gen. John Rosa, the director of current operations for the Joint Staff, would give details.

"We've made it a point to never tell you or tell folks exactly where we're going to be and when we're going to be. It only makes common sense," said Rosa.

The *New York Times* said Monday that officials planned to cut back on patrols over New York City while maintaining 24-hour patrols over the nation's capital.

Shareholders vote on computer merger

\$21 billion deal coming to a close

CUPERTINO, Calif. (AP) — The five-month fight over the \$21 billion deal to combine Hewlett-Packard and Compaq neared a conclusion with a shareholder vote Tuesday on what would be the computer industry's biggest merger.

The battle, shaping up as one of the closest corporate elections ever, pitted HP's management against the families of the two men who founded the company. Both sides claimed to have momentum but would not publicly predict victory.

In last-minute pitches for votes, HP chief Carly Fiorina and dissident HP director Walter Hewlett, along with Compaq CEO Michael Capellas, lobbied big investors Monday who might not have made up their minds.

"This company has a lot of investors, and every one of them is going to count," said Hewlett spokesman Todd Glass.

HP believes acquiring Compaq would give it more complete technology packages for corporate customers, improve the economics of its struggling personal-computer division and result in \$5 billion in savings.

Hewlett, the son of one of HP's late co-founders, says HP is overpaying for Compaq, would get bogged down selling low-margin PCs and services, and can't afford to risk the complex integration of the companies' massive organizations.

The company and Hewlett have swamped HP's 8,000 shareholders with letters, advertisements and telemarketers' phone calls. Most investors have mailed their proxies, but at least 1,000 shareholders are expected to come to an auditorium in Cupertino to cast their votes in person Tuesday.

At the meeting, Fiorina and Hewlett will speak, though HP noted it did not legally have to give

Hewlett a forum. After the vote, HP or Hewlett will claim victory or say the race is too close to call.

Either way, results will not be official for weeks, until independent proxy counters verify the balloting.

Including the Hewlett and Packard families and foundations, about 22 percent of HP stock has already come out against the acquisition. About 9 percent has said it is in favor.

Rarely do proxy fights turn into such cliffhangers. "Usually you get a pretty good sense of how it's going to go one or two days out," said Charles Elson, director of the Center for Corporate Governance at the University of Delaware. "The fact that neither side is claiming victory shows that this ranks up there as one of the closer ones."

No such drama surrounds Compaq's stockholder vote Wednesday in Houston. There, the deal is expected to be overwhelmingly approved.

In a final salvo as the vote neared, Hewlett complained Monday that HP insulted its individual shareholders when an undisclosed member of the company's camp told a newspaper that HP was winning support from "elephants" — big investors — but was "getting eaten alive by the fleas." Hewlett demanded an apology. HP denied the statement was made by anyone at the company.

Compaq shares gained 3 cents Monday to close at \$10.36 on the New York Stock Exchange, widening the gap between the stock price and what HP would pay per share. The gain reflected Wall Street's increasing confidence the deal will be rejected.

HP shares rose 20 cents to \$19.25 on the NYSE.

Americans face new dangers abroad

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. embassies and overseas military bases are generally fortified against attack. But the schools where American kids go each day often are not.

Neither are restaurants where American business people meet clients, nor the church in Pakistan where an embassy worker and his daughter were killed.

Americans are in growing danger as terrorists search for vulnerable targets, the State Department said Monday. It warned those overseas to be wary of — or even outright avoid — any place where Americans typically congregate, including churches, restaurants and schools.

"One would have hoped that there would be some respect for a church, but even that doesn't always exist," said State Department spokesman Richard Boucher. "So, we all take the best precautions we can."

Total security is impossible. Private companies and the government need to have workers overseas, and those workers want their families nearby. If families are nearby, they shop, they go to school.

Some U.S. companies with operations in the Middle East or south Asia have in recent months relocated workers' family members to their locations, like Europe, still close enough

for frequent visits, said Vince Cannistraro, a former government counterterrorism official who runs his own security business.

Others are cutting back on the number of Americans overseas, relying instead on more local workers.

Still other U.S. companies are spending thousands of dollars to add guards and improve the physical security at compounds where their employees live, Cannistraro said.

The U.S. military designates many of its bases in Middle Eastern countries and other hot spots as "unaccompanied," meaning that spouses and children cannot go along.

But that is viewed as a hardship, and thus rotations have to be frequent, costing more money.

It can be tricky to know when a place is unsafe.

The Americans killed in Islamabad, Barbara Green, an employee at the embassy, and her 17-year-old daughter, Kristen Wormsley, had only recently returned to Pakistan after the State Department decided in January it was safe. The two, along with many others, had left last September in a departure authorized by U.S. officials.

"The people at posts were looking forward to having their families back with them," Boucher said. "And at that time, we operated

on the best security information we had."

An additional 14 Americans — all private citizens — were injured in the church attack.

Terrorists have always looked for "soft" targets when their primary goals — military bases and government offices — have proved difficult to reach.

Fifteen years ago, in an attack blamed on Libya, two U.S. soldiers were killed in a bombing at a West Berlin disco. In 1997, four American auditors of a U.S. oil company and their Pakistani driver were killed while traveling in Karachi, Pakistan, between their hotel and work.

Military bases and embassies are fortified more than ever before with high walls, concrete barriers, sophisticated cameras, armored vehicles and guards with machine guns.

"If you're going to exact some revenge against Americans, you look for softer targets. (Journalist) Daniel Pearl was a softer target."

They went after him. Businesses are generally softer targets, so they're at risk," Cannistraro said.

Schools are one of the biggest concerns, many government and private security officials say. Private schools in many cities are often attended by the children of both official and private Americans.

After the USS Cole bombing in Yemen in October 2000, some U.S. embassies in the Middle East asked American employees to keep their children home for a few days, so security could be scrutinized. Some private Americans did the same.

"One would have hoped that there would be some respect for a church, but even that doesn't always exist."

— Richard Boucher
State Department
spokesperson

IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU!

On behalf of our entire staff, we would like to thank you for making DTI Investment Communities the #1 choice of the Fightin' Texas Aggies!

- Arbor Square
- Huntington
- Scandia
- Walden Pond
- Gables
- Redstone
- Parkway Circle

"Places to call home"
www.dtiproperties.com

STUDY ABROAD IN SOUTH AFRICA

"Ecological and Human Dimensions of Nature-Based Tourism"
EARN TAMU (UNDERGRAD/GRAD) CREDIT



Informational Meeting:
Wednesday, March 20
5:00 p. m.
Animal Industries Bldg
Room 103a (annex)

Join Dr. Urs Kreuter to learn how you can join this exciting SSII, 2002 Study Abroad experience. All Majors are Welcome!

~HURRY~ONLY 5 SPACES LEFT~

STUDENT TRAVEL

It's YOUR trip, take it!

- London.....\$294
- Paris.....\$335
- Amsterdam....\$488
- Madrid.....\$477
- Rio de Janeiro...\$772
- San Jose C.R. ...\$461

BUDGET HOTELS
for as little as
\$18
A NIGHT!!!

Fares are round-trip. Restrictions may apply. Tax not included.



STA TRAVEL

721 Texas Ave. S. 979.696.5077

www.statravel.com

after this, the corporate ladder will be a piece of [cake].



In the course of facing challenges like this, you'll learn how to think on your feet. Stay cool under pressure. Take charge. Talk to an Army ROTC rep. You'll find there's nothing like a little climbing to help prepare you for getting to the top.

ARMY ROTC

Unlike any other college course you can take.

APPLY NOW FOR PAID SUMMER LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND ARMY OFFICER OPPORTUNITIES
Call CPT Magee at 845-2814 for information.

ISLAM 101

An Intro to Islam
presents

ISLAM
and
WOMEN

Tuesday, 19th March

7:00 PM @ MSC 145

For more information email islam101@tamu.edu

Sponsored by
Muslim Student's Association

<http://msa.tamu.edu>