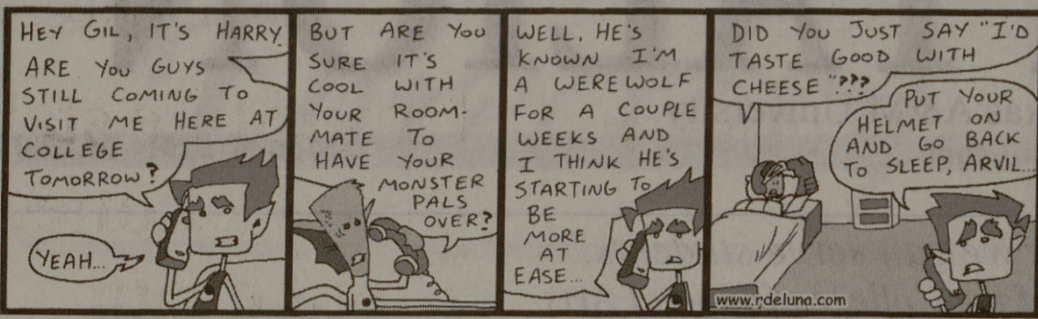


Full Moon

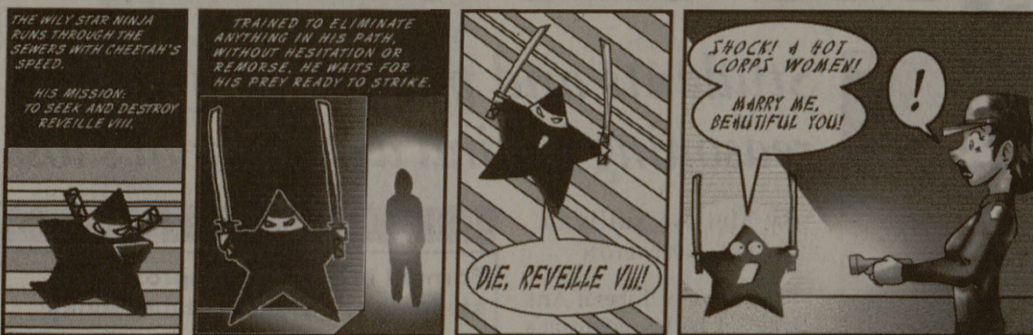
by R.DeLuna Johnson



#24

Wrath of the Ninja

By I.FLORES



New Iraq intelligence questioned

By Dafna Linzer THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Most of what Washington and London knew about Saddam Hussein's suspected mass weapons programs before the war was based on old intelligence. The few new details, which garnered the most attention, are now under serious scrutiny and in question.

Some information about Iraq's purported chemical, biological and nuclear weapons program has already been dismissed by U.N. inspectors or international experts. Other intelligence has turned out to be uncorroborated or has not been agreed upon by government officials inside the CIA, the State Department and in Britain.



BUSH

With no weapons of mass destruction found three-and-a-half months since President George W. Bush launched the war against Iraq, intelligence agencies on both sides of the Atlantic are now scrambling to explain not only why their information failed to lead U.S. troops to the goods — but exactly how they came by the knowledge in the first place.

Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld acknowledged last week that no "dramatic new evidence" was discovered showing Saddam had weapons of mass destruction. "We acted because we saw the existing evidence in a new light through the prism of our experience on Sept. 11," Rumsfeld told the Senate Armed Services Committee.

According to a British House of Commons report released in London this week, the picture Blair's government painted in 2002 "is little different from that set out in a much shorter document released by the government in 1998," ahead of four days of airstrikes launched that year against Iraq.

Since Bush came to the United Nations on Sept. 12, 2002, the two English-speaking allies chose to highlight some of the long unanswered questions identified by U.N. inspectors as they campaigned for world support for war against Saddam.

After eight years in the field, inspectors said in 1999 that they were still missing information from the Iraqis on the production of the nerve agent VX, evidence that 550 mustard-gas filled artillery shells were destroyed, and an accounting of ingredients for the production of anthrax and botulinum toxin.

Those items were highlighted in a State Department fact sheet distributed Dec. 19 together with several pieces of newer intelligence, such as a charge that Iraq was trying to purchase uranium from Niger. It also included a mention of mobile laboratories for a biological weapons program and an allegation that Iraq was involved in a secret missile program.

U.N. nuclear inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency, which tried unsuccessfully to get evidence to support the uranium claim when the British alluded to it in September, now

asked Washington to share what it knew on Niger.

Six weeks later, supporting documents were handed over to the U.N. inspection office in New York and within weeks, the IAEA was able to determine that the documents were forged. U.N. officials say they repeatedly asked Washington and London to provide any further evidence to support the charge.

"It was not provided to us," IAEA spokesman Mark Gwozdecky said.

Both the Bush administration and the government of Tony Blair said Sunday that the president's statement in the State of the Union address about Iraq seeking uranium was accurate and is supported by other British and U.S. information.

"The British stand by their statement," National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice said on "Fox News Sunday." "They have told us that despite the fact that we had apparently some concerns about that report, that they had other sources, and that they stand by the statement."

Nevertheless, Rice said the statement should not have been in the Jan. 20 speech in which Bush laid out reasons for military action against Iraq. "We have a higher standard for presidential speeches" than raw intelligence, she said.

Rice said Britain was unable to share more information it has with Washington because of sensitivities surrounding the source. But Britain, like all U.N. members, is resolution-bound to share any intelligence on Iraq's weapons programs with U.N. inspectors.

Robin Cook, who resigned from Blair's Cabinet to protest the war, told the House of Commons committee that information sharing between Washington and London was so intense that it was often difficult "to spot which raw data was originally gathered in the United Kingdom and which was originally gathered by the United States."

Other new intelligence presented by the United States and Britain before the war included a charge that Iraq was hiding scud missiles. So far no scuds have been found, U.S. weapons hunters told The Associated Press.

The United States claimed there were signs of suspicious activity at a number of sites previously used in Iraq's former weapons program. U.N. inspectors checked those sites and found no such activity. American weapons experts have not found anything either.

U.S. claims that Iraq was trying to buy aluminum tubes for a renewed nuclear program were dismissed by the International Atomic Energy Agency and by an outside panel made up of two American nuclear physicists, two British experts and a German expert. The United States however insists the tubes were for a nuclear program.

Two mobile labs found in Iraq — which the Bush administration believes were designed to be used in a biological weapons program — were reviewed by three different groups of experts who couldn't agree on the trailers' use. Some State Department analysts have questioned the CIA conclusion the two truck trailers were mobile weapons labs.

Continued from page 1

into journalism," Gates said. "How they brought that about is up to (the deans) in terms of organization."

Johnson said journalism faculty and faculty from other departments will form a five- to seven-person committee to determine the impact of closing the department. Other departments will form a five- to seven-person committee to determine the impact of closing the department.

Journalism faculty members will elect three members from within the department Monday, Johnson said, and he will appoint a faculty member to chair the committee.

Dr. Julia Kirk Blackwelder, associate dean in the College of Liberal Arts, will assume the title of acting journalism department head. Dr. Leroy Dorsey, associate professor of communi-

cation, has acted as interim department head since 2001.

Elizabeth Knapp, a junior journalism major, said A&M must retain its journalism department to compete with other Texas universities.

"Why go to A&M and take journalism classes when you can go to another university and get a journalism degree?" she said.

Knapp said journalism is a major part of people's lives, and journalists are supposed to be well-rounded.

"Journalism is all about putting the pieces together," Knapp said.

Johnson said the recommendation to close the department is the culmination of a 2001 external review of the department and recent budget cuts.

The review recommended the journalism department needed to hire more faculty, merge with another department or, as a last resort, be closed.

"To pay competitive salaries,

the kind of faculty you want to attract is expensive," Johnson said. "Now we will focus on how we can best serve the interest of incoming students wanting to learn journalism."

Johnson said the review recommended hiring at least three full-time faculty, a department head and additional lecturers.

Dr. Barbara Gastel, associate professor of journalism, said being the journalism degree is not a major problem, that she would like to see the program restructured for interested students.

"I hope journalism courses will become open to students in other majors," she said. "Being able to write in a journalistic way is an asset."

The dean's office sent letters Thursday to all journalism students containing the specifics of Johnson's recommendation. The information is available on the college's Web site at <http://ccla.tamu.edu>.

Claudette

Continued from page 1

recreational vehicles parked for the summer on South Padre Island were warned that wind of more than 25 mph would mean they would not be allowed to drive their rigs across the sole bridge to the mainland. By Sunday, most of the campers had packed up voluntarily and left.

Workers on South Padre, along the coast a few miles from Brownsville, piled sand into berms at beach accesses, and Mayor Bob Pinkerton said the resort community was bracing for high water.

However, Pinkerton said there were no plans yet to evacuate.

On the mainland in the Brownsville area, Cameron County officials advised residents of low-lying areas to leave, and employed jail inmates to stack sandbags and clear out drainage ditches.

The tropical storm swept over Mexico's resort city of Cancun early Friday, battering high-rise hotels with high wind, flooding several streets and closing the international airport for several hours.

Claudette is the third tropical storm of the Atlantic hurricane season. It developed Tuesday in the Caribbean, brushing Jamaica's southern coast with heavy rain and rough surf, battering the Cayman Islands with waves and above-normal tides and scattering rain over parts of Cuba before reaching Mexico.

Experts have predicted a busy Atlantic hurricane season, which began June 1 and ends Nov. 30.

Shuttles

Continued from page 1

and other prizes sponsored by Post Oak Mall," she said. "In addition to the 'Get to the Grid' express shuttles, the new pedestrian passageway will be opened prior to the first game and fans will be welcomed by music and entertainment near the passageway prior to each game."

Additional parking will be available for home football games when the West Campus Parking Garage opens along with the pedestrian passageway.

Maps showing the express shuttle route can be downloaded at the Transportation Services' Web site: <http://transport.tamu.edu>.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Poll suggests public uneasy with new FCC media rules

WASHINGTON (AP) — The more Americans learn about federal changes that lift restrictions on companies owning different media outlets in the same city, the less they like it, a new poll suggests.

Half in the poll by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press said they think allowing companies to own more broadcast and newspaper operations in the same city will have a negative effect. Only 10 percent said that would have a positive effect.

About a third said in February that the concentrated ownership of media outlets in a city would have a negative effect. But few people at that time had been paying much attention to ongoing efforts to change the media ownership rules.

Seven in 10 in the new poll

said they think news organizations are often influenced by powerful people and organizations.

2002 safest year for major airlines

WASHINGTON (AP) — Last year was the safest ever for the nation's major airlines, with no deaths and only nine serious injuries due to accidents on U.S. commercial flights.

According to the National Transportation Safety Board, there were 34 commercial airline accidents in 2002, but most were considered minor.

The only accident designated "major" was the July 26 crash of a Federal Express Corp. cargo plane at Tallahassee, Fla. The plane was destroyed, but the crew survived.

The NTSB classified one 2002 passenger aircraft accident as "serious." That occurred Aug. 28.

Reaction

Continued from page 1

from the quality of education. Potter said she is glad current students will not be kicked out, but said there may be no reason to remain in the department.

"They said you could stay in it, but I think there's going to be limited faculty, limited classes," she said. "The faculty said they will stay to teach, but I would want to teach something for a department that doesn't exist anymore."

Woller said she is upset because the journalism program trains students well for a career in journalism.

"It is a great program and the professors are top-notch and go above and beyond to help students," she said.

Potter said she is unsure whether she will stay in the program.

"I don't know what I am going to do now," she said. "On one hand I could stay in journalism because that's what I want to do, but I don't know if that is the most wise decision could make."

Rob Munson and Dallas Shipp contributed to this story.

Legislators

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Sen. Robert Duncan.

According to a statement from Shapiro's office, the current law in action before SB 1652 allows retirees eligible for retirement under the Teachers Retirement System or Optional Retirement Program to maintain or enroll in UT and A&M group retiree insurance benefits after three years of service.

"What SB 1652 does is amend the insurance code to require 10 years of service," Shapiro said. "This measure will result in a cost savings because the UT system and A&M will not be required to pay for the cost of lifetime premium sharing group insurance participation for those hired after Sept. 1, 2003, who have worked less than 10 years."

The office of Human Resources at A&M sent a letter to all employees in June informing them that they may want to retire before Aug. 3, the end of the fiscal year, if they do not meet the new requirements for eligibility for retirement benefits but do meet the old requirements. Many employees are awaiting Abbott's decision before they make their own.

"I had no choice but to retire before those guys at their first," she said. "I was a time winner."

"I don't know why a sudden change like I'm winning golf tournaments," Perry said after her victory Sunday at the Greater Milwaukee Open, his third win in just my time. My heart I'm putting for a one Steve Allan at the GMO.

He won Memorial tournament. I finished third before taking leading up to Deer Park, under-par 66 under 268 total. Brett Qui fourth, two strokes. Allan, Slovic were vying for Tour victory.

"I had no choice but to retire before those guys at their first," she said. "I was a time winner."

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