Allies launch aerial attack on Iraq

WASHINGTON (AP) - President Bush summoned American and allied forces into war with Iraq on Wednesday night, declaring that with Operation Desert Storm: "The battle has been joined" to free Kuwait.

Military officials said the initial attack was an aerial assault that met little resistance and that all bombers returned safely.

Soon after the bombings began, Baghdad radio broadcast a message from President Saddam Hussein urging the Iraqi people to resist the attack. "The mother of all battles has started," Hussein said. "We will never surrender."

Hostilities were well under way when Bush spoke to the nation at 9 p.m. EST. "We will not fail," he vowed as F-15E fighter bombers were marking strategic military targets across Iraq and Kuwait. The president expressed hope "this fighting will not go on for long, and that casualties will be held to an absolute minimum."

Bush marshalled a potent international alliance to challenge Iraq's occupation of the oil-rich kingdom of Kuwait and issued his war order less than 24 hours after the expiration of a United Nations deadline.

Within moments of Bush's comments, Defense Secretary Richard Cheney told reporters that the first raids were conducted by hundreds of American, British, Saudi Arabian and Kuwaiti aircraft. "So far there has been no air resistance" from the Iraqis, Cheney said.

He provided no details on casualties, but said reports were being admissible evidence in county trials.

Case could set evidence policy

By Patricia Allen

A hearing starting today may set a key precedent in Santa Maria County. Cal Poly biology professor Ray Cano will testify at a "Kelli-Frye" hearing that will determine whether or not DNA fingerprinting is admissible evidence in county trials.

DNA fingerprinting is the technique of matching a human cell found at the crime scene to that of a suspect. DNA fingerprinting has never been used in the county, but other counties in California have determined the technique to be admissible evidence.

By Jason Foster

Students and staff across campus suddenly stopped thinking about school and work Wednesday afternoon as they realized peace attempts had failed and war with Iraq had begun.

Hundreds of people glued themselves to TV sets in the University Union, dorms and classrooms starting shortly after 4 p.m. and listened intently to live CNN news reports of the fighting. Although there was a common reaction of shock, disbelief and worry among those watching, individual hopes, fears and concerns were widely varied.

 Shortly after the first reports of fighting began, a crowd of about 75 people crowded into the University Union's Bishop Lounge to watch the coverage.

Abb Arken, an education graduate student, was in Bishop Lounge when the television there was switched to coverage of the conflict.

"It was very somber," he said. "I walked outside and said, 'Hey, we just bombed Baghdad!'"

Reece Jones, a staff worker at Vista Grande Cafe, was shocked.

"I started shaking," Jones said. "We were watching Oprah, and then they switched to this (CNN)."

"I'm nervous - this is shocking. I'm going into the Air Force soon. I just talked to my recruiter today,"

Liberal studies senior Jessica Tompkins also was stunned.

"My heart fell right to my stomach," Tompkins said. "I'm scared - I have to go."

See LAWSUIT, page 10

See FINGERPRINTING, page 4

Reminders:

* Tomorrow is the last day to drop classes.
* Next Monday, Jan. 21 is an academic holiday in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday.
* The last day to add classes is Tuesday, Jan. 22.
Despite personal opinion, all must support soldiers

"These are the times that try men's souls."

President Bush quoted these words of Thomas Paine during his televised address Wednesday night. These words ring painfully true for all those involved and affected by the current military action in the Middle East.

This hopefully will be the only time in our lives that we experience the horrors of war, and how we react to it is crucial. Whether you are pro-peace or pro-action, the fact is that the United States is now in a military conflict with Iraq. The choice has been made. And now it is our turn to support our forces in the Gulf.

Since the beginning of the Middle East conflict Aug. 2, the American public has debated the decision for peace or military action. Bush now has committed the United States to military action.

Political debate is a positive democratic process which definitely should continue. Those opposed to war should continue to protest and voice concerns. Likewise, those in favor of war should go on encouraging the government.

But in these significant times, we must aim our efforts at supporting our servicemen and women. They should not be condemned for carrying out the orders of their military and political leaders. It is their duty.

It is important that now, more than ever, the public unites and supports our troops on the front line. Our attention must turn to those men and women in the Middle East and those Americans who will soon join them in combat. Whether or not you support Bush's decision, it is the responsibility of this nation to back those who are fighting for the "liberation of Kuwait."

And lastly, as important as it is to show support for our troops as they participate in combat, it is equally as important for the U.S. government to live up to its commitment to complete this military action as quickly as possible and with as few casualties as possible.

We should criticize or praise Bush's decision in accordance with our conscience. But regardless of opinion, we must all support the men and women who are doing their jobs by carrying out Operation Desert Storm.
Israel fears possible Iraqi chemical attack

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's military command ordered its citizens Thursday to stay indoors and prepare their gas mask kits in response to a feared Iraqi chemical attack.

It said only those citizens involved in emergency occupations are allowed to leave their homes and are instructed to carry their gas masks with them.

There were no immediate signs of a threatened Iraqi attack on Israel as the United States, backed by multinational forces, launched its night assault on Iraq. Saddam had threatened to scourch half of Israel, vowing he would use chemical weapons if war broke out.

Israeli radio stations said that Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and Defense Minister Mosha Arens were at home receiving reports on the assault on Iraq.

Malaysia court spares executive of U.S. man

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — An American teacher from Sacramento, Calif., was the first American to be spared the death sentence Wednesday.

Wiley stood with his head bowed showing no sign of emotion during the sentencing.

Louis A. Mandez, 23, formally waived extradition Wednesday to return to San Diego, where authorities are also investigating a possible connection with a string of serial killings.

Louis A. Mandez, 23, formally waived extradition during a brief appearance before District Judge Jack Lehman.

Mandez spoke only twice during the minute-long appearance, giving Lehman his name and answering "Yes, sir" when asked if he waived his right to fight extradition.

San Diego police refused to say when they expected to return Mandez to San Diego.

Mandez faces charges of rape, burglary and possession of a stolen vehicle stemming from the Saturday rape of a 22-year-old woman in her apartment in the Pacific Beach area of San Diego.

Inflation rises to 6.1, buying power down

WASHINGTON (AP) — Soaring gasoline and fuel oil prices helped push inflation to 6.1 percent in 1990, the highest rate since 1981, and the purchasing power of the average American paycheck took its worst tumble in that nine-year period, the government said Wednesday.

The Labor Department's Consumer Price Index finished 1990 with moderate, seasonal adjustment increases of 0.3 percent in both December and November. But the earlier shock to oil prices in the wake of Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait helped make 1989 the worst inflation year since 1981, when the rate was 8.9 percent.

New UC site delayed by state budget crisis

SACRAMENTO (AP) — Gov. Pete Wilson said Wednesday that he wants California businesses to give employees time off to do volunteer work at their children's schools.

"What I want from employers is recognition that they have a selfish interest in the quality of our schools.... I would urge the private sector to allow their employees paid time off to volunteer at their child's school," Wilson said.

Asked if his school visits in Sacramento, accompanied by dozens of reporters, were intended to put pressure on the Legislature to adopt his proposal to shift education priorities to preventive programs for younger children, Wilson smiled and replied, "Sure it is."
The charges against Garcia involve crimes which occurred between July 1988 and October 1989 in Paso Robles, Atascadero and San Luis Obispo. The District Attorney reported that FBI labs matched seminal fluid taken from two of the rape scenes with Garcia's cell samples. Garcia's attorney, Jon Gudmunds, said the FBI's DNA fingerprinting techniques are not reliable, but the deputy district attorney prosecuting the case, Teresa Estrada-Mullaney, said she believes the fingerprinting evidence will be admissible. The defense already has received seven continuances and Estrada-Mullaney said the defense is responsible for delaying the case for over a year. She said the prosecution is ready to go on with the trial.

"Our office is anxious to get this case to trial. Our witnesses have been waiting a long time, and they want to get going," Estrada-Mullaney said.

"I'm very concerned - I have a brother over there," she said, holding back tears. "He's in the Navy. We were told last week that his ship would be right there in the front."

Biology junior Casey Ryan, also watching in Sequoia Hall, simply said, "It was hard to believe for awhile."

In the main lounge of the Sierra Madre dorms, where about 50 had gathered around the television, sentiments were much the same. "I can't believe it's happened," business junior Janes Pech said. "I didn't think it would come to this back in August." Chemistry freshman Rafa Augsto, also watching in Sierra Madre, also was startled by the U.S.-led attack.

"I was surprised. I didn't think they (U.N. coalition) would do it so soon," Augsto said.

Opinions about the U.S. offensive were varied, with some supporting the action and others disagreeing with it. All, however, hoped the fighting would come to an end soon.

"I guess (my brother) feels it's necessary, so I back him," Esqueda said. "I support President Bush's decision."

Tompkins said, "It's about time something happened. With Saddam the way he is, he..."
Vox Theatre stages Koga’s ‘Dust Speck’

Play examines one man’s inner struggle.

By Joe Tarica

It doesn’t look like a theater. And up until recently, it wasn’t.

Behind the papered windows of space number 180 at the Pacific Coast Center on Higuera, something is afoot.

That something is “Dust Speck,” a psychological, futuristic play by Cal Poly student and playwright Lance Koga. A presentation by Koga’s Vox Theatre, “Dust Speck” is an examination of the struggle within one man for control of the different facets of his personality.

The plot focuses on the lead character, Ambrose Hewel, who has experienced an emotional split in which his two sides duel for dominance.

The play takes place in a futuristic setting in which the earth is universally governed by a business organization called the Terra Corporate Union. Every person in the world works in some facet for the corporation.

In this society, Ambrose Hewel works as an advertising executive with a stable lifestyle and a good family. As the play opens, however, Hewel has experienced something of an emotional breakdown.

As Koga describes it, “He takes off all his clothes and runs around the park nacked.”

As a result, the company asks him to visit their psychiatric division for therapy. It is in this scene that the play opens.

On stage, Hewel’s vying personalities are represented by two characters—one, the rational half, and the other, the creative, free spirit of the man. The set, designed by Cal Poly architecture graduate Frank Lee, is split in two distinct halves to reflect the lead character’s personality. The left half is the therapy room, rigid with straight lines and definite black and white colors. The right half is much more open with a sloping floor and a bright color theme.

The rational, family-man Hewel acts in the left half, and the imaginative, free, alter-ego Hewel acts in the right half.

As the play progresses, the doctor and Hewel’s wife, Pamela, both representing the structured world, work with the two Hewel characters.

From their side, the doctor and Pamela try to control Hewel’s alter-ego which desperately wants freedom.

“He’s something of a chaotic element,” Koga said of the alter-ego Hewel. “He’s very much the feelings and passions within the man.”

In the resulting battle, Hewel’s two sides fight for dominance. Whether one side should win, Koga said, is left to the individual’s interpretation.

“It’s never a rule that one side wins over the other,” he said. “It’s about some sort of balance between the two, rather than an either/or option.”

Regarding the audience’s reaction to his work, Koga hopes everyone will consider his ideas. “It should make them consider themselves, their place in society, how they live. It should inspire self-examination more than anything else.”

Koga’s play is being presented through Jan. 26 at the Pacific Coast Center, 75 Higuera St. The play opens Wednesday, Jan. 16, and runs Thursday through Saturday nights through Jan. 26.

Tickets are available at Boo Boo Records, Big Music and the Frameworks. Prices are $8 general admission and $6 for students. All proceeds go to Eco-SLO.

Commercial graphics exhibit displays industry’s best work

By David Bock

Is Michael Jordan art?

Sports enthusiasts may think so, but they aren’t the only ones who find value in the basketball superstar’s popular image.

A Nike shoe ad poster, featuring Jordan, is just one of the many works on display in the University Art Gallery’s newest exhibition.

The exhibition, presented by the American Institute of Graphic Arts, features the highest quality in promotional and corporate graphics including posters, calendars, logos, menus, letterheads, brochures and magazine and newspaper ads.

Entitled “Communication Graphick,” the display began Monday and will continue through Feb. 8 in the Dexter Building.

“This is the kind of art people see most often, but we realize how much work goes into (graphic design),” said art and design Professor Mary LaPorte.

“We see this stuff daily — everything from books to telephones to yogurt packages — but how do you know what is good design and what isn’t? If you want to see what the industry thinks is the best, come see this show.”

LaPorte, who invited the traveling exhibition to come to Cal Poly, said the pieces in the exhibit were selected by a jury of industry leaders during an annual national AIGA competition. She said the exhibit provides a good example of the breadth and importance of graphic design.

“This exhibit is a good argument for why, as a person involved in any type of business, you should take a serious look at (graphic design),” LaPorte said. “If you do that, you will see beautiful design that works, is effective and that does return benefits on the investment.”

LaPorte said the exhibit is also useful for people who are interested in art but may not have considered the field of graphic design previously.

“Many people who are talented visually don’t realize that design is a good way to put their talents to work to make money,” she said. “This is an example of how that’s done.”

Gallery Director Kelli Klein, a graphic design junior, said the exhibit is especially valuable to art and design students.

“It gives us ideas for our own work,” Klein said. “It gives us reference. There’s so much good reference in the gallery right now that we can gain from.”

Founded in 1944, the AIGA is a national, nonprofit organization of graphic design and graphic arts professionals with 32 chapters nationwide. The organization’s purpose, as stated in gallery literature, is to conduct programs of competitions, exhibitions, publications and projects to promote excellence in the graphic design profession.

Lucille Tenazas, one of the judges of the AIGA competition, will deliver a presentation about the exhibition on Monday, Jan. 21 at 7 p.m. in Dexter 149.
Music lovers celebrate Mozart’s life and work

By Michelle Hertig

Mozart's Birthday Party bursts onto the San Luis Obispo music scene this weekend with a festive three-day program that even includes cake and candles.

This year marks the 250th anniversary of his birth and the 200th anniversary of the composer's death and has been declared the International Bicentennial Year of Mozart. Music lovers around the world will celebrate Mozart's life and music throughout the year.

"There are organizations that will be playing every single piece of music that Mozart wrote during his life over this year," said Jean Welsey, marketing director for the San Luis Obispo Mozart Festival. Mozart wrote nearly 1,000 pieces during his 34 years.

The San Luis Obispo Mozart Festival will begin its observance of the bicentennial year with a Mozart Birthday Party on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

"In years past we've had a concert with a party," said Clifton Swanson, music director for the Mozart Festival and department head of the music department at Cal Poly. "This is the first time we have spread out the birthday party into several concerts plus a lecture. The best way to describe this year's program is as a mini-festival."

Swanson said many musicians who performed for the regular festival will return for the birthday party.

The celebration begins with Friday's concert by pianist Antoinette Perry. "The first time Antoinette Perry played at Cal Poly was as a student in a master class we had about five years ago," he said. "She was quite young, in her early 20s, when she participated in the master class, and now she is a very successful pianist."

The mini-festival continues Saturday with a lecture during the day and an evening concert given by 23-year-old French pianist Marie Pierre Langlamet at the Cal Poly Theatre.

Langlamet's performance is part of the Cal Poly Ratcliffe Debuts Series which brings up-and-coming young artists to the Central Coast.

"We love it up in San Luis," said Antoinette Perry. "I never thought it would get this big," Swanson said. "Around 8,000 people attend the paid concerts, but when you consider the 15 free concerts, the number of people who have been exposed to the festival is somewhere between 10,000 and 15,000."
CALENDAR

thursday, jan. 17
□ Second Set will play rock ’n’ roll at Sweet Springs Saloon, at 9:30 p.m.
□ Rock Steady will play at SLO Brewing Co. at 9:30 p.m.

friday, jan. 18
□ The world of ballet will meet the world of comedy when the Los Angeles Chamber Ballet comes to Cuesta Auditorium at 8 p.m. Tickets are $14.50 for reserved seating and $12.50 for general admission. Info: 546-3131.
□ The Paladins will appear at D.K.’s West Indies Bar. Showtime is 9 p.m.
□ At SLO Brewing Co. tonight is Mudhead. The show begins at 9:30 p.m. and there is a $2 cover.
□ Section Eight plays at Crest Pizza tonight.
□ A mini-festival celebrating the 200th anniversary of Mozart’s death, will be held today through Jan. 20 in San Luis Obispo. See related article on page 6.
□ Pianist Antonette Perry will perform in the Cal Poly Theatre at 8 p.m. as part of the Mozart birthday festival. For ticket information, call 543-4580.

saturday, jan. 19
□ Alyson McLamore will lecture on “Music, Myth, Man, Miracle—Mozart” in the H.P. Davidson Music Center, Room 218, at Cal Poly. The 2 p.m. lecture is part of the SLO Mozart Festival.
□ Harpist Marie-Pierre Langlafet will perform in the Cal Poly Theatre tonight at 8 p.m. The performance is part of the SLO Mozart Festival. For ticket information, call the Ticket Office at 756-1421.
□ Topoka will be “living it up at ...” Sebastian’s at 9 p.m.
□ 86 Proof plays at Crest Pizza tonight.
□ Rhythm Akimo changes venues from last weekend when they play tonight at SLO Brewing Co. The show begins at 9:30 p.m. The cover charge is $3.

sunday, jan. 20
□ The Angeles String Quartet will play works of Mozart and Ravel in the Old Mission in San Luis Obispo at 2 p.m. This is part of the SLO Mozart Festival.
□ A birthday party celebrating 235 years after Mozart’s birthday will be held at SLO Brewing Co. in San Luis Obispo, following the Angeles String Quartet performance at 2 p.m. The party will have birthday cake, coffee and hors d’oeuvres and a no-host bar.
□ For an evening of Flipside comedy, come to Brubeck’s from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. More info: 543-1960.
□ For local alternative video music airing just after midnight, tune in to “Alternative to What” at 12:30 a.m. on KCOY/TV Channel 13. The show features videos, alternative music charts, upcoming concert information and more! More info: 927-6279.

monday, jan. 21
□ The French film “Mon Oncle,” which was scheduled to have been shown in Chumash Auditorium, has been postponed until March 18 because of the holiday for Martin Luther King’s birthday.
□ At D.K.’s West Indies Bar are Clarence Fountain and the Free Blind Boys Of Alabama. Showtime is 9 p.m.
□ The Jill Knight Trio will be playing at SLO Brewing Co. at 9:30 p.m. Cover charge is $2. See CALENDAR, page 8.
□ For an evening of Flipside comedy, come to Brubeck’s from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. More info: 543-1960.
□ At D.K.’s West Indies Bar are Clarence Fountain and the Free Blind Boys Of Alabama. Showtime is 9 p.m.
□ The Jill Knight Trio will be playing at SLO Brewing Co. at 9:30 p.m. Cover charge is $2.

today in the u.u.
Celebrating Martin Luther King Jr.’s Birthday
“Looking Back to Build Ahead”
A march will begin at 10:45 a.m. from Dexter Lawn to the U.U. At 11 a.m. the celebration will include a keynote speaker, student speakers and a choir of four.
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CALENDAR (CONT.)

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  - San Luis Obispo, Gosselin's, Central Coast Plaza (walk-in service)
  - Bay Area, (415) 392-7469
- **Boyz N Ticketmaster**
  - Bay Area, (415) 763-2377
  - Las Vegas, (805) 480-3222
  - Santa Maria, (805) 683-4700

**VENTURA AREA**

- **Teena Marie**, 1/24, Ventura Theatre
- **Gino Vannelli**, 1/28, Ventura Theatre
- **Los Lobos**, 2/2, Ventura Theatre
- **Blue Oyster Cult**, 28, Ventura Theatre
- **B.B. King**, 3/9, Ventura Theatre

**BAY AREA**

- **Fats Domino**, 1/7, Circa Star
- **Monica Etheridge**, 1/8-20, Casa del Sol
- **Sting**, 2/4-8, Wiltemp Theatre (tickets on sale Monday at 10 a.m.)
- **NEW Kids on the Block**, 3/3, Cow Palace
- **San Jose Symphony Orchestra**
  - Linda Ronstadt, 1/19-20, Cow Palace
  - Los Angeles Symphony
  - Universal Stadium
  - Wachovia Bank

**LOS ANGELES AREA**

- **Air Supply**, 1/18, Celebrity Theatre
- **The Replacements**, 1/18, Palladium
- **George Winston**, 1/19, UCLA Royce Hall
- **Tony Tomlin, Tone**, 1/19, Palladium
- **The Mason Band**, 1/22, Roxy Theatre
- **Paul Simon**, 1/23-24, Great Western Forum
- **Sam Kinison**, 1/23-24, Celebrity Theatre
- **Johnny Cash**, 1/26, Celebrity Theatre
- **Steve Vannelli**, 1/28, The Ritz
- **Jane's Addiction**, 1/30, 2/1-2,4, Universal Amphitheatre
- **Sting**, 3/4-6, Wiltern Theatre (tickets on sale Monday at 10 a.m.)
- **The Charlottesville UK, UCLA Academy Hall 8601
- **Jay Leno**, 3/5, UCLA Bruin Events
- **B.B. King**, 3/14, Celebrity Theatre

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Andersen Consulting will be hosting a general information session on Monday, January 28, at 7 p.m. in the Embassy Suites Hotel. On-campus interviews will be held Tuesday, January 29, for graduating students with the following majors: Industrial Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Computer Engineering, Computer Science, Finance, Aerospace, Electrical Engineering, Environmental Engineering, Management Information Systems, Economics, and Math. We will be interviewing juniors with technical majors for summer internship positions on-campus Monday, February 25th. Please contact the Placement Center for deadline information.
LAWSUIT

From page 1

Santa Barbara officers had been called in to assist during the riots. The San Luis Obispo Police Department declined to comment on the suit.

City Attorney Jeff Jorgensen said Tuesday "we intend to vigorously defend against the lawsuit and don't feel this is a case of liability for the city." He said he had no other comment because the case is pending.

Skomars and Sloan said the incident took less than a minute, and that none of the officers involved were wearing badges or name tags.

The two men were taken to the SLO Sheriff's department, where they were held for about 14 hours. Skomars said he wanted to try to get up, and all I felt was pain. Sloan said that he and Sloan were bleeding and in obvious need of medical attention.

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LAWSUIT
from page 10
not be read their rights or in-
formed of any charges.
They were not charged for any
alcohol-related activity.
Two weeks before their trial, Skomars said the district at-
torney asked, through their at-

tached for failure to disperse
Skomars said the district at-
torney said the two men would be
arrested lawfully for in exchange
for the charge against them being
dropped. They declined.
Skomars also said the mental
anguish of the enclosure re-
quiesce him to a psychiatrist.
"There's a lot of emotional
pain and a lot of personal pain in
this," he said. "The injuries to
my back still bother me today." 
Skomars said and is still unaware of
why they were attacked.
Both men said they suffered
numeros injuries in the inci-
dent, and are still being treated
for back injuries inflicted when
chaise beds were applied.
Skomars also said the mental

From the Mustang Daily, Thursday, January 17, 1991
From page 1
"very encouraging," and said the battle plan was designed to "focus on military targets, to minimize U.S. casualties, and to do everything possible to avoid injury to civilians in Iraq and Kuwait."

Bush spoke slowly, somberly, unsmilingly and stumbled over several words. He said "all reasonable efforts" to resolve the Persian Gulf by diplomacy had failed, that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein "met every overture of peace with contempt." He said "all unsmilingly, and stumbled over several words. He said "all unsmilingly."

"Standing shoulder to shoulder" and would drive Iraqi troops out of Kuwait and destroy Iraq's nuclear potential and chemical warfare facilities, Bush said.

One hundred and fifty Saudi aircraft were in the first wave, according to embassy spokesman Fred Dutton, who called the attack "satisfaction bombings" of Iraq. A Pentagon official said "a wave of Cruise missiles" were fired from U.S. Navy ships at preprogrammed targets in Iraq.

Bush said he had been assured by Army Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, the American military commander in Saudi Arabia, that the air operations were succeeding. Bush said no ground forces were involved in the assault against Iraqi positions in Kuwait and Iraq. "Why act now? The world could wait no longer for Saddam to withdraw, Bush said. He said it had become clear that economic sanctions alone would never compel a withdrawal."

His brief speech included a sharp denunciation of the Iraqi leader. "While the world prayed for peace, Saddam prepared for war," the president said. He said, "We have no argument with the people of Iraq ... it is my hope that somehow the Iraqi people can convince their dictator to lay down their arms."

Bush repeated his oft-standing pledge that "this will not be another Vietnam," vowing, "I have said this before, and I repeat this here tonight, our troops will not be asked to fight with one hand tied behind their back. Our troops will have the best possible support."

Neither is it Panama, said Cheney, where military victory was essentially achieved after one night.

At daybreak in Baghdad, CNN's Bernard Shaw reported that the initial air strike by U.N. forces appeared complete. Earlier, ABC and CNN television news reports from Baghdad there were "flashes in the sky" over the city, and that it appeared tracer bullets were coming up from the ground. An ABC correspondent said there were sirens heard in the city. CNN reported similar outbreaks of gunfire over the city.

"It appears there is some sort of light coming toward the hotel," ABC's correspondent said.

"Now things have quieted down again, and the sirens have subsided," he reported after a few minutes.

In another phone call from Baghdad, CNN's John Hallman also reported anti-aircraft fire in the air over the city, but said no planes had been heard.

Explosions and machine gun fire could be heard in the background.

Bernard Shaw, in Baghdad too, said, "you see flashes of light, obviously anti-aircraft fire. We have not heard any jet planes yet."

"The night sky filled with a hail of bullets from anti-aircraft guns," CNN's Holliman said.

He said he could hear the sound of explosions in the darkness. He said he didn't know if they were burns from U.S. fighters or shells from anti-aircraft artillery.

Holliman first said the lights over the city had been reported a complete blackout.

"Anti-aircraft fire is rising up from the ground and going up into the sky," the ABC correspondent Kelley Shepard reported. "Huge red tracers are emerging from the ground and rising into the sky."

After the start of the attack, a somber tone reigned in the country was at war came from spokesman Martin Fitzwater at the White House. Quoting Bush, he said, "The liberation of Kuwait has begun."

Bush won congressional backing Saturday for the use of force and telephoned congressional leaders with his decision to strike. Senate President Pro Tem Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia told Bush his prayers were with the president, a spokesman said. Sen. Sam Nunn, who led the opposition to war authority, said Wednesday night, "I am happy for servicemen and women will be given all the resources to do the job. I believe we will prevail in a matter of days or weeks."

By unleashing an overnight aerial bombardment, Bush attempted to take advantage of the darkness of a new moon by unleashing overwhelming U.S. air superiority. Iraq's defenses were laid in day fighting by ground forces. More than 1 million troops were massed on opposite sides, 425,000 of them Americans who were deployed as part of Desert Shield, a formation that gave way under combat to Desert Storm.

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