U.S. jets kill allied chopper crews over Iraq

- Washington — Two American F-15 fighter jets enforcing the “no-fly zone” over northern Iraq mistakenly shot down two U.S.-led Army helicopters today, killing more than 20 people.

President Clinton expressed “terrible sorrow” for the tragedy and pledged a thorough investigation.

Defense Secretary William Perry said initial reports indicated that the Black Hawk helicopters were shot down by three missiles. He said the F-15 pilots had the helicopters in sight, in daylight, when they mistakenly identified them as Iraqi choppers and fired. There was an AWACS reconnaissance plane flying over the area and overseeing the operation, Perry said.

Clinton said the Pentagon was trying to determine why the AWACS plane did not detect that the helicopters were American. Another question, he said, was whether the helicopters followed proper procedures in flying in the restricted areas.

Clinton said there were approximately 12 American crew members on the two helicopters and “more than 20” total passengers, including crew, but that he did not have a roster.

Some were from other countries, he said, and Perry said some of the passengers may have been civilians. The United States’ partners in the mission to protect Iraqi Kurds are Britain, France and Turkey.

The British defense minister, at the Pentagon for previous scheduled meetings, said two British officers apparently were among the victims. Turkish officials said three Turkish officers were believed to be aboard the helicopters. And a French officer also was on board, according to a French official who was not present.

“Those who died today were part of that mission of mercy” to protect Kurds from Iraqi government forces, Clinton said. “They lost their lives while trying to save the lives of others.” That important work they were doing must and will continue.

Clinton said he had only sketchy details of the incident, and said Perry and Gen. John Shalikashvili, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, were leading the in-depth investigation.

The Pentagon said it was trying to determine whether any AWACS aircraft were in the area when the helicopters went down.

At the Pentagon, Clinton said the American crew members who died were “outstanding professionals” who “mean a great deal” to the people who knew them. Clinton said there were 12 Americans on board the two downed helicopters, and the Pentagon hopes to confirm the identity of each.

The two U.S. Army helicopters were shot down by three missiles, Pentagon officials said. The missiles had hit the helicopters near the city of Haji, in northeastern Iraq, the officials said.

A Pentagon official said the AWACS plane did not detect that the helicopters were American.

The AWACS plane followed a path that took it beyond the chopper's designated flight path, the official said.

The official said it was still unclear how the F-15s weren't detected.

An American military official confirmed that the F-15s had fired at the helicopters.

The official said the helicopters were AB-205A and AB-206 models, both of which are used for military innovations. The official said the AB-205A is a tandem rotors helicopter and the AB-206 is a single rotor helicopter.

The official said the missiles were fired by the F-15s, which were part of a pair of F-15s that were flying in the area.

The Pentagon said it was not clear whether the F-15s were operating on their own or as part of a larger operation.

The official said the AWACS plane was flying in the area to provide information to the F-15s.

Both ASI presidential hopefuls — Erica Brown and Louise Brown — will have to wait another week before they know who finally wins the race. It was too close to call, and will go to a runoff election / Daily photos by Marc Gewertz and Scott Robinson.

Jon Lew is new ASI board chair

By Cynthia Balcer

Suzanne Moffat

Daily Staff

Erica Brown and Louise Brown will face each other again next Wednesday in a runoff for the ASI presidency.

Erica Brown and Louise Brown split the vote with 1,320 and 1,028 votes, respectively. More than 2,700 students voted in the ASI election — almost double the 1,516 votes cast in 1993.

In the calendar referendum vote, 3,972 students went to the polls, with 2,684 voting in favor of the current quarter system. Jon Lew is the new ASI Board chair with 1,503 votes. His opponent, Rob Martin, received 1,022 votes.

Erica Brown, contacted at her home Thursday night, said she's excited about the runoff but wished a final decision had been made.

"It would have been easier to know one way or another," she said. "I had a feeling it was going to be a runoff.

Louise Brown said he also is happy with the results.

"It gives me a good idea of where to head from here," he said. "I feel good. I'm hopeful.

Jason Berry, a business senior and presidential hopeful, received 363 votes. He was unavailable for comment Thursday night.

Chair-elect Lew said Thursday he was pleased with the results and is looking forward to the coming year.

"I'm hoping to make changes to the new board to help serve students," he said. "I'm talking to commit­ tee chairs and finding out what went right and wrong last year, and conveying that to the new directors.

Stay with quarters, students say;

ErIca, Louie Brown go to runoff

ASI doubts referendum's effectiveness

By Shane Lyons

Students voted overwhelmingly to keep the quarter system at Cal Poly, unofficial results from the referendum showed Thursday.

With 3,072 students casting ballots, the quarter system prevailed over a proposed semester system, gathering 81 percent of the vote.

But the Academic Senate, in making a final recommendation on the issue, won't necessarily vote the same way, Senate Chair Jack Wilson said late Thursday after results were revealed.

The referendum is only advisory, and the final decision will come down to the Senate and, ultimately, President Warren Baker.

ASI Executive Vice President Louise Brown said late Thursday he was pessimistic about the weight 3,072 votes would carry with Baker and the Senate.

Prior to the election, Baker said he would take the student voice into consideration, but that he felt they were well-informed and well-prepared for the decision.

After the results were announced late Thursday, Baker was ambivalent about whether they were reached in a credible way.

"It's difficult to tell," he said. "I think the students that I talked to — those who were concentrating on putting the information, were well versed in the issue. It's hard for me to tell whether or not there were unanswered questions by the student body in general."

Baker said the results didn't surprise him. He said they would be taken into consideration, but definitely weren't binding.

See CALENDAR, page 2
CALENDAR: Students say 'yes' to quarters in calendar referendum results

From page 1

"I think what it boils down to is that the students seem very much satisfied with the system that they're currently experiencing," he said. "The referendum) will be taken into account. I think the turnout plus the number of students that voted in this clearly indicated that the students are happy with what they have now."

"I find it valuable to hear the voice of the students," he added. "That doesn't mean we always agree with the students."

Baker has shepherded the semester proposal since last year, and has appeared before the Senate to present arguments in its favor.

He also has said he will only decide to make a change if he has the Senate's support.

On Tuesday, the Senate voted to table the measure until their committee studying curriculum returns its results. That meant the decision would not be made until after the students voted in this referendum.

So far, the Senate has remained noncommittal on the debate. Whether it will back the proposal is impossible to tell at this point, Wilson said.

He said he expects the Senate to take the students' voice into consideration, though.

"You have to pay attention to what the students think," Wilson said. "They're the population that we're here for."

Wilson said he was impressed by the voter turnout, and that it will help add credibility to the referendum results.

"The fact that twice as many students turned out this year (as) last year points out the feeling that they are very concerned," he said. "That obviously carries more weight than if ASI had just passed a resolution."

But he warned the vote doesn't force the Senate into supporting the quarter system.

"When it comes right down to it, we have to make the final decision based on our best judgment. The student vote is going to be a factor. It's not going to be the only factor."

ASI: Future ASI president will be decided in next week's runoff election

From page 1

Elections Committee Chair Chris Nakaishi said he wishes the turnout would have been higher.

"I don't know why people aren't voting," he said. "What can we say when the administration doesn't listen to them anyway and it showed in the turnout."

"What can we say when the administration doesn't listen to our concerns when we don't choose to voice them?"

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Youth accused of putting poison in teacher’s soda

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — A 15-year-old boy was charged Thursday with a felony for allegedly putting a toxic cleaning fluid into a teacher’s soda, making her violently ill.

The boy, whose name was not revealed because of his age, was charged with poisoning or adulterating a drink. He faces a maximum eight-year sentence if convicted.

The youth was to be arraigned Friday in Sylmar Juvenile Court, said Deputy District Attorney Sharon Garabedian.

The boy is accused of putting a few drops of a fluid used to clean chalkboards in the soda of Susan Ennis, 32, an English teacher at Littlerock High School.

Ennis was rushed to Palmdale Hospital Medical Center last Thursday after drinking from the soda can. She was released on Tuesday.

Doctors had not determined if she suffered any lasting effects from the poisoning.

Investigators said they learned the identity of the boy after other students reportedly heard him bragging about the incident.

Belgium pulls forces out of bloody Rwanda

KIGALI, Rwanda — Rockets exploded at the capital’s airport on Thursday, threatening the attempts of foreigners to escape the country that daily is falling further into gruesome anarchy as government forces battled the rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front for control of the city. The rebels again rejected U.N. efforts to broker a cease-fire in the country that has seen the deaths of more than 20,000.

Belgium announced it was pulling its troops out of the U.N. mission in Rwanda, threatening the entire multinational operation. Mortar shells rained down on streets already bathed in blood.

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Huffington's California Purchase

I don't like Michael Huffington. What he's doing is wrong and he just might get away with it again.

Huffington arrived in California just a few years ago, obviously determined to buy himself what his home state wouldn't sell him: A seat in Congress.

California's 22nd District was an ideal place to run, and Huffington calmly remake himself to fit with its voters' ideals. Incumbent Bob Lagomarsino, an old-guard Republican falsetto and "BIC milllionaire," was a perfect target, and Democrat Gloria Huffington could easily remake himself to win.

In Congress, Huffington's position on most issues. Of course I do — he was tailor-made to fit in with what Californians value.

Anyone can pander and say yes to the public. Anyone can serve in office for only a few months, then boast that he didn't raise taxes. Sure, Huffington didn't vote for the tax increase Feinstein supported — but was it his decision for the country? What has he done for the Central Coast? It's easy to vote no on taxes — voters love it. But it's hard to do the work of governing without raising money. Especially hard to do, to do something. Making your money the most efficient way to raise the money it takes to get there.

But Huffington claims moral superiority in his bid for office. He calls himself independent, he refuses money from interest groups. But is this different from anyone else? Huffington is our own special interest group, dedicated to furthering only his interests.

Huffington has some good rhetoric, a great staff and — many insist — only good intentions.

I don't buy it, and I hope you won't either. Huffington's California Purchase is a shameless affront to our political system: only a newer, more handsome face of political corruption.

Let's reject this attack, and make our congressional future a better one.

Gabe Joynt is the Daily Opinion Editor.

First, you have to play the game

By Chris Rombouts

Does any one really care about ASI, much less who runs it? Apparently not.

This year's voter turnout — though better than usual — proves once again that the majority of Cal Poly students have little interest in elections, campus politics and ASI.

You know, ASI — or for those of you who don't what the acronym stands for, the Associated Students Inc. You might know them, that small group of students that a few of us elect to run our student government. They're the ones who bring you the University Union, Recreation Center and other programs, all with your hard earned money — or maybe your parents' hard earned money.

Even when students are given the chance to voice their opinions on a calendar switch — an issue which will directly effect their lives — only 20 percent of Cal Poly's students took the 10 minutes needed to vote.

"Although it's difficult to understand politics at any level, rewards for students," biology junior Richard Silva said. "It's just another outlet for administration to voice their opinions in the heated quarter-vs.-semester debate. But President Baker may claim that the results don't represent the majority of the students, and ignore what will probably be overwhelming support for the current quarter system."

But who can argue, 3,000 out of 16,000 people do not represent a majority.

California has dealt with shrinking budgets and outbacks for the last five years. As a consequence, many government programs have lost a large amount of funding. Especially hard-hit by budget cuts — as we all know — has been California's higher education system.

So now I have voted, regardless of the circumstances. Now I can claim to have served my duties as an active citizen — and well informed Cal Poly citizen. Active? That one's debatable. Although it did take a lot of effort to keep that chocolate ice-cream cone from running down all over my shirt under Wednesday's hot rays.

But was I well-informed? I voted for one guy, John Lew, I think that's his name, for the board chair. Board chair, what is that anyway? Lew seemed like a good choice though, and one of my friends said he knew him. I chose Erica Brown for the president's spot — if she's good enough for the Daily's endorsement, she's good enough for me.

But if those sound like ridiculous reasons, it gets worse. One student I interviewed had this to say when I asked him why he voted for Brown: "No reason in particular. She looks pretty cute in those posters."

What's the problem? Why are most students, myself included, so apathetic to politics and elections, at all levels? I think the average Joe Six pack just doesn't have enough information to make good decisions.

Most of us don't make the required effort to learn about the issues and candidates.

Even when students did try to learn more about the ASI candidates during the open forum, many students said that the acoustic were so poor they couldn't hear anything. For those who did have the patience to listen they had to read that the candidates lacked originality and innovative ideas.

As chemistry freshman Andrea Steinberger told me, "They all said the same thing." Even if, by some miracle, students keep up with the issues and candidates' positions, many seem to feel that their voice will not make a difference. Natural resource management senior Steven Beeghly said, "After talking to several students, it appeared the consensus on campus was that ASI is not delegated enough power to make any significant changes.

"I think very few people have an interest in ASI, because they know it's pretty much a joke. It does very little for students," biology junior Richard Silva said. "It's just another outlet for administration to voice their opinions in a subpar environment, Huffingston spared no expense, spending more than five million dollars of his own money for the seat in Congress."

But Huffington has some good rhetoric, a great staff and — many insist — only good intentions. Huffington's California Purchase is a shameless affront to our political system: only a newer, more handsome face of political corruption.

Let's reject this attack, and make our congressional future a better one.

Gabe Joynt is the Daily Opinion Editor.
MISHAP: More than 20 allied personnel killed in mistaken air attack

From page 1 investigation.

"I take full responsibility for today's tragedy," Perry said at a Pentagon briefing. Perry and Shalikashvili said they had few details of the incident but wanted to express their sorrow and condolences to the families of those killed.

Perry said the two F-15 pilots mistook the two U.S. Blackhawk helicopters for Iraqi "Hind" choppers, but he could not explain how the mistake occurred during the close daylight encounter.

Shalikashvili said the identification beacon that identifies them to U.S. military aircraft are similar but there are distinctive differences between the two. The incident occurred at 12:30 a.m. EDT 09:30 a.m. local time in Iraq approximately 35 miles north of Irbil.

"U.S. search and rescue teams have been deployed to the site of the downed helicopters," a statement by the U.S. military command in Europe said.

American and other allied warplanes have been patrolling the "no-fly" zone over northern Iraq since shortly after the end of the 1991 Persian Gulf War. Allied planes have been enforcing a similar air umbrella over southern Iraq, south of the 22nd parallel, to protect Shiite Muslims since August 1992. The zones are aimed at stopping Iraqi air attacks on rebel groups such as Kurds in the north and Shiites in the south.

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GRAND PRIX: Indy Car race will have top drivers ripping through streets of Long Beach in the 20th-anniversary event

From page 8

BASSELL: Mustangs ready for three-game showdown with CCAA leader

From page 8

lost: Should all help our hitters, since the field is bigger (than the Dominguez Hills stadium) and we're in our own environment.

"Last series we didn't have Andy (Hall) in the lineup. Since we've added him, we've been hitting .310. Having him (and center fielder Jeff) Higbee in the lineup has set the table for the three through seven hitters. I feel we're going to have a better chance to do something offensive this time around."

Junior shortstop Marc Townes agreed with Agler that the key to winning the series is the ability of the Mustang offense to generate runs with consistency. "Last time we played against Dominguez Hills, we really didn't do much at the plate," said Townes, who is batting .250 on the season. "This time out we need to settle down early and make the offensive and defensive plays we know we're capable of making."

According to Agler, the Mustangs are mentally prepared for the contest and are looking to end their Division II experience with a final CCAA title and improve on their second-place finish in the national finals last year.

"We've constantly looking at the big picture," Agler said. "This series is just one step towards returning to the Division II finals and that's where this team expects to be at the end of the season."

The Mustangs begin Division I play next season as an member of the Western Athletic Conference.
Cal Poly's quest for a fourth consecutive California Collegiate Athletic Association baseball title continues today as the Mustangs take on third-ranked Cal State Dominguez Hills at Steube-Mather Stadium at 7 p.m. Junior hurler Shannon Stephens (6-1) will get the start on the mound for the Mustangs today with Robbie Weeks (2-3) and B.J. Simon (7-2) getting the nod for Saturday's doubleheader.

"This is the biggest league series we've played in this season," said Interim Head Coach Kent Agler. "The players realize the importance of this series and are going to come to the ballpark ready to play." Dominguez Hills captured two of three games at home from the Mustangs in the first matching between the teams early last month. The Toros won the first two contests, 4-3 and 6-5, with Cal Poly taking the final game 4-2. The Toros (27-10, 10-5 in CCAA) hold a 7-4 lead over the eighth-ranked Mustangs (22-13, 9-5 in CCAA) going into the final conference series between the two teams.

According to Agler, Dominguez Hills is a well-rounded ballclub with depth in their pitching staff and some punch in their batting order.

"Without a doubt, outstanding pitching has been their strength," Agler said. "I think both teams pitch the way they're capable of, then I'd expect a low-scoring series." The Toros offense is led by Eric Martin who leads the team with 37 RBIs and six home runs while batting at a .357 clip. Chris Miller (36-5) and Ray Judy (35-5) have provided steady hitting at the top of the lineup.

Freshman second baseman Andy Hall leads Cal Poly's lineup with a .359 average while junior Matty Morin (23-13, 8-5) is on his way into the final season. Morris (34-5) and sophomore third baseman Jon Macalutas (.340) have also contributed significantly to the Mustangs this season.

"Good pitching neutralizes good hitting, so we're going to have to continue to hit well but if we're going to win this series," said Agler. "Playing on our own field this time... We'll still have four games left in the season."