

# Congress debates gulf war

WASHINGTON (AP) — A somber Congress on Thursday sped toward its starkest war-and-peace decision since World War II, and leaders in both parties predicted President Bush would get what he wants: authority to take the nation to war in the Persian Gulf.

Sen. John Danforth, R-Mo., said it would be "unthinkable" for Congress to undercut Bush after the United States had led the international coalition against Saddam Hussein, and he contended it had become clear economic sanctions would not force Iraq out of Kuwait.

"The captain cannot abandon the ship," Danforth said. "It is not an option of the U.S. Congress to disapprove what we for months have asked others to support."

Supporters and opponents of the president introduced competing resolutions — one giv-

ing authority for war, the other asserting that sanctions and diplomacy must be given more time to work — as Tuesday's United Nations deadline for Iraqi withdrawal bore down.

The weight of the decision facing lawmakers was apparent as the debate unfolded in both chambers. "There is a real understanding that this is a moment of profound decision" that will affect "the whole planet," said Rep. Newt Gingrich, R-Ga.

Democratic leaders pressed for the go-slow approach.

"The only debate here in Congress is over whether we slowly strangle Saddam with sanctions or immediately pursue a military solution," said House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt, D-Mo. "We say we can win without war, and the evidence is on our side."

But both House Speaker Thomas S. Foley, D-Wash., and

Senate Republican Leader Bob Dole of Kansas have said the force-authorizing version had votes to spare in both houses. Numerous lawmakers said the failure of the U.S.-Iraq talks in Geneva on Wednesday would help Bush's case.

Both chambers convened Thursday to begin considering the war-and-peace issue, with decisive votes expected this weekend.

The margin for Bush seemed most comfortable in the House, less so in the Senate, where the outcome hinged on the decisions of half a dozen or so conservative Democrats. A bipartisan group, including the key senators, met at the White House with Bush Thursday afternoon.

Late in the day, Dole issued a warning: If the Senate appears

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# Bush's letter refused

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia (AP) — It sat on the conference table — a letter from the president of the United States to the president of Iraq.

Its exact contents are still a secret. But not the overall message: Withdraw your 500,000 troops from Kuwait by next Tuesday or risk the probability of war.

Secretary of State James A. Baker III had brought the letter to Geneva to turn over to Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz.

As recounted by sources familiar with the meeting, the letter remained sealed in an 8-by-10 manila envelope with the "White House" logo in black on the cover.

Three times during the 6 hours and 27 minutes of talks the two delegations left the room.

The letter did not. It remained on the table, watched over by one of Baker's security guards — with an open invitation to Aziz to pick it up.

But Aziz left it there. Just before they parted, Baker asked him to take the letter with him to Baghdad.

Aziz refused, and the letter is now making the rounds of the Persian Gulf and the Middle East with Baker.

Baker had handed over a copy in English to the foreign minister during their talks.

His hands trembling, and reading slowly, Aziz digested the contents — and denounced them later at a news conference as threatening and undiplomatic.

# FBI agent fired for refusal to investigate peace groups

PEORIA, Ill. (AP) — The FBI has no room for a pacifist agent who refused orders to investigate peace groups, a former top FBI official testified Thursday in a lawsuit by the fired agent.

"There were no other cases ... where an FBI agent specifically refused to follow a direct order. I considered his conduct egregious," said John D. Glover, former FBI executive assistant director for administration.

Glover testified about the disciplinary options he considered after Jack Ryan told superiors he would not investigate peace groups suspected of vandalizing military recruiting offices.

Ryan, 52, was fired for insubordination from his \$50,000-a-year job in September 1987, after more than 21 years with the FBI. He was 10 months away from retirement and a \$28,000 annual pension.

Testimony and closing arguments were completed Thursday. U.S. District Judge Harold Baker said he may rule on the lawsuit next week.

"It's a harsh result but what alternative did Mr. Glover have?" Baker asked. "He's an agent, then he isn't an agent."

The judge also questioned whether the FBI had an obligation to accommodate Ryan's religious beliefs "when they are so fundamentally incompatible with the duties of his occupation."

A Roman Catholic, Ryan said his decision to embrace pacifism prevented him from carrying out some of his sworn duties as an FBI agent. Ryan now lives as a volunteer worker in a homeless shelter.

His lawsuit accuses the FBI

of religious discrimination, saying the agency could have reassigned him to duties that did not conflict with his religious beliefs. The suit seeks his reinstatement and full pension eligibility.

"There was no attempt by the FBI to accommodate my religious beliefs," Ryan testified.

He said his non-violent beliefs surfaced in a 1983 meeting with his supervisor, but were brushed aside. He said he carried a gun and made arrests until his dismissal, but later decided carrying a gun was a religious conflict.

Glover said Ryan's refusal to carry a gun is more evidence that Ryan does not belong in the FBI.

"The FBI is a paramilitary, highly disciplined organization which cannot tolerate such insubordination," Glover said. "There's no place in the FBI for agents who don't perform or refuse to perform."

Ryan's attorney, Arthur Greenberg, repeatedly asked Glover why he did not speak with Ryan, question him about his beliefs or accept suggestions that Ryan be reassigned before rendering his decision.

"This is not an insubordination case," Greenberg said in his opening argument. "We're dealing with an accommodation case. Did the government make a reasonable effort to accommodate his religious beliefs. They did not. They could have easily."

Glover acknowledged that the FBI's 9,000 agents handle a variety of jobs ranging from record-keeping to violent crime investigation.

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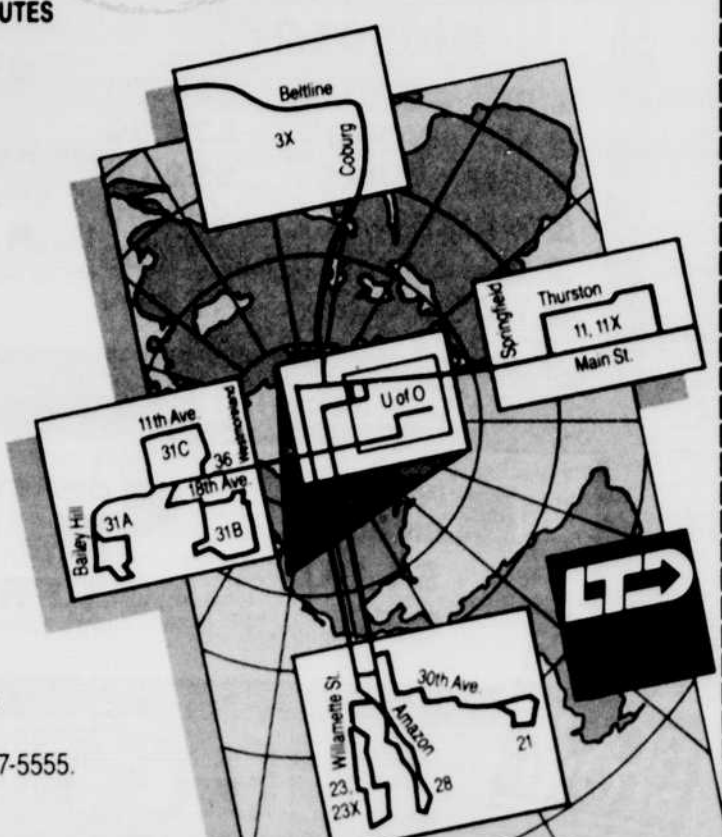
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