

Worldwide protesters call for peaceful gulf solution

BONN, Germany (AP) - Tens of thousands of anti-war protesters took to the streets in countries across the world Sunday for a second straight day to demand dialogue and not war in the Persian Gulf.

The demonstrations, from Germany to Turkey to Mauritania, came as U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar met with Saddam Hussein in Baghdad just two days before the U.N. deadline for Iraq to pull out of Kuwait.

Peace activists were also reportedly gathering along the Iraqi-Saudi border. And in South Africa, Moslem youths shouted "Death to America!" and "Death to Israel!"

With the Soviet military intervention in Lithuania, several demonstrations turned into dual protests for peace in the gulf and in the Soviet Union.

In the Bonn diplomatic suburb of Bad Godesberg, about 1,200 demonstrators formed a nearly two-mile human chain linking the U.S. and Iraqi embassies.

"We wanted to link the two major parties that are now starting toward war," said 41-year-old Gerd Greune. "We wanted to link them symbolically and say, 'Please link yourself in non-violence. Violence will not solve any problem.'"

About 5,000 people protested outside the U.S. Rhein-Main air base in Frankfurt.

Tens of thousands rallied in Madrid and a dozen other Spanish cities, with many urging Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez to recall three Spanish warships helping to enforce a U.N. trade embargo against Iraq.

In Turkey, more than 40,000 people shouting anti-war slogans gathered in a rally organized by the opposition to protest the government's strong pro-U.S. stand in the gulf crisis.

About 20,000 peace demonstrators marched in the Belgian capital of Brussels in what one protest leader called "a demonstration of hope."

"If war breaks out next week, we will have a demonstration of anger," said the leader, Hugo Ongena.

Up to 6,000 protesters turned out in Vienna, marching from the Iraqi Embassy to the government seat.

"Haven't you learned anything from Vietnam?" protest banners asked. Others said "Results of war - Ecological Catastrophe."

In Sweden, protesters combined their gulf demonstration with one against the violence in Lithuania, and a large group gathered outside the Soviet Embassy in Stockholm, the national news agency TT said.

The Iraqi News Agency said 20 people from various countries arrived Sunday to take part in a peace camp along the Iraqi-Saudi border.

The activists represented Germany, Australia, the United States, Indonesia and Austria, the agency said, quoting a spokeswoman for the group. They planned to live in the camp as human shields in hopes of preventing war, INA said.

In Cape Town, South Africa, about 600 people attended a rally at a movie theater in the Moslem section of town to protest U.S. military presence in the gulf.

Wearing kaffiyehs, the traditional Arab headdress, youths burned homemade replicas of the U.S. and Israeli flags.

The anti-war protests were mostly peaceful. However, at a Paris rally Saturday night, police fired tear gas to disperse about 50 demonstrators who refused to break up, and about a dozen people milling around the U.S. Embassy were detained and questioned.

Military rule imposed in Lithuania

VILNIUS, U.S.S.R. (AP) - The Soviet army imposed a curfew and declared a general in command of the Lithuanian capital Sunday after troops seized a television tower in an assault that killed 13 people.

More than 5,000 Lithuanians gathered in Freedom Square to defend the parliament building against any attack. They defied the 10 p.m. curfew for more than two hours before dispersing at the request of President Vytautas Landsbergis.

Addressing the crowd from a window of the parliament building, Landsbergis said the military commandant had promised in a negotiating session that if the people went home, the Soviet army would not try to seize the building.

"We paid with our blood. It is the fate of our people," he said. "It would be good if this would end with no more suffering."

Within a few hours, only about 200 people remained. The crowd had barricaded the parliament with construction materials and iron bars. They put red tulips of mourning on the barricades and filled a large flowerpot with candles. Black ribbons hung from orange, green and yellow Lithuanian flags.

Lithuanian Health Ministry officials said 13 people were killed and about 140 injured in the pre-dawn crackdown at the broadcast station Sunday. It was the harshest measure taken by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev against the Baltic republic since it declared independence on March 11.

Soldiers shot some protesters and bashed others with the butts of their assault rifles as they stormed the television transmitting tower at about 2 a.m. Sunday. Some Lithuanians were crushed by the tanks they were trying to

stop.

The European Community condemned the attack, and Belgium's foreign minister said it could jeopardize a planned \$1 billion emergency aid package to Moscow.

President Bush said the crackdown "threatens to set back or perhaps even reverse" the new U.S.-Soviet relationship. Chief of Staff John Sununu said Moscow's actions in the next few days would determine whether Bush goes ahead with plans to attend a summit in February with Gorbachev.

Boris Yeltsin, president of the Russian republic and Gorbachev's main rival, met Baltic leaders in the Estonian capital of Tallinn and later urged Russian soldiers to ignore orders to attack civilians.

"Violence against the law, against the people of the Baltics, will result in new serious crises in Russia itself, and in the position of Russians living in other republics," Yeltsin said.

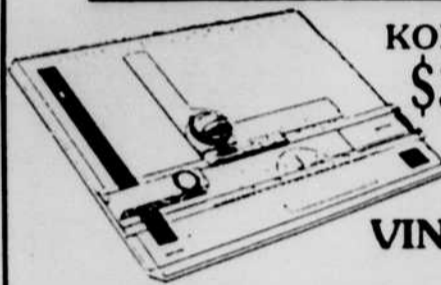
He joined the presidents of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia in asking the United Nations for an international conference on the Baltics.

They also suggested the United Nations postpone its Jan. 15 deadline for Iraq to pull out of Kuwait. Baltic leaders have said they feared the Kremlin would time a crackdown to coincide with the deadline, when the world's attention would be focused on the Persian Gulf.

As of early Monday morning, Gorbachev had not made any public comment on the violence.

His Interior Minister, Boris Pugo, claimed on national television the demonstrators had opened fire first. He said "at least 10" people died and about 130 were injured.

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