

PERSIAN GULF WAR

Palestinians return to work in Israel after 25-day curfew

BETHLEHEM, Occupied West Bank (AP) — Soldiers rounded up hundreds of suspected Palestinian uprising activists Sunday in the largest such sweep by the Israeli military.

Meanwhile, about 1,500 Palestinians returned to jobs in Israel as the army permitted Arab workers to leave the occupied territories for the first time since the Persian Gulf War erupted.

The army reported it captured about 350 guerrillas believed affiliated to the Moslem fundamentalist Hamas, or "Zeal," group in the West Bank and Gaza. Among those detained were Hamas commanders for the West Bank and Gaza strip, a military statement said, and a man from Gaza City suspected of the stabbing murders of three Israelis in an aluminum factory in Jaffa in December. The arrests "prevented many attacks," the statement said.

A source in the military government of the occupied territories said the army issued about 6,000 permits for workers to enter Israel, about 5 percent of those who worked in Israel before the war.

But thousands of laborers did not return, apparently because of transport problems, lack of permits and confusion over where curfews were lifted.

In Dheishe refugee camp, soldiers fatally shot a 12-year-old Palestinian boy while firing on curfew violators, Israel radio and Arab reports said, and shootings also were reported at three other Palestinian camps.

Palestinians denied reports by army officials that activists were trying to block Arab workers from going to Israel.

Some Palestinians worried that their jobs had been taken by Israelis or newly arrived Soviet immigrants during the 25 days that they were confined to their homes by a blanket curfew on the occupied lands.

"I may have no job left," said Ahmed Hassan, 30, a construction worker from the West Bank village of Hussan. He said he had held the job for four years.

Journalists briefly held prisoner

DHAHRAN, Saudi Arabia (AP) — Photographer Wesley Bocxe said he was spread-eagled, blindfolded and then detained for 30 hours by MPs of the Alabama National Guard who feared he might be an Iraqi spy.

Bocxe was turned over to the guard unit after a Saudi citizen seized his car keys as he was photographing tanks moving alongside a main road in northern Saudi Arabia, he said.

The 30-year-old combat veteran from New York, on assignment for *Time* magazine, was among a number of journalists temporarily held prisoner by the U.S. military in Operation Desert Storm.

More than 800 journalists in Saudi Arabia are under strict guidelines requiring them to report only in Pentagon-sanctioned pools, but fewer than 125 pool spots were made available.

With no other officially sanctioned way to talk to soldiers, reporters and photographers have

gone out on their own to get a picture of a war involving more than a half-million American troops.

"I think freedom of the press as far as this story is concerned is in grave danger," Bocxe said.

The U.S. military's Joint Information Bureau gave Saudi authorities a list of journalists detained in the field.

"There was never any order or intent to detain anybody," Col. William Mulvey, the bureau's director, said Sunday. "The instructions were that unescorted journalists not on combat pools were to be sent back to Dhahran where the pools were organized."

Mulvey said U.S. officers decided they were mistaken in reporting offenders to the Saudi government and had asked for the list to be returned. But, he said, unescorted travel remained forbidden.

Despite bombing, Iraqi citizens remain strong

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) — Relentless allied bombing raids have pushed the city of the Thousand and One Nights into the past. Horse-drawn carts replace cars, water is drawn from the Tigris River, twigs are gathered for fuel.

The once-bustling capital, with a peacetime population close to 4 million, is without electricity. Its discos and nightclubs are shut down, and people head home before dusk, going to bed early because candles are costly.

After more than three weeks of allied air raids, residents suffer from shortages of food, drinking water, medicine and fuel. But they are learning to cope with the deprivations and the almost nightly raids. Some play dominoes to pass the time, others are learning to play chess.

Many Iraqis say they are in favor of ending the war, but not at the cost of Iraq's pride. Many fear that a U.S.-imposed settlement will make them vulner-

able to Western domination.

"We may die, but we will die with honor," said Sarmad Mohammed, a 26-year-old officer with the state security department who came to a market Sunday with his wife to buy food.

Near the market, outside the 1,200-year-old al-Khadamia mosque where President Saddam Hussein often went before the war, a woman shouted at the top of her voice: "We can fight for 10 years!"

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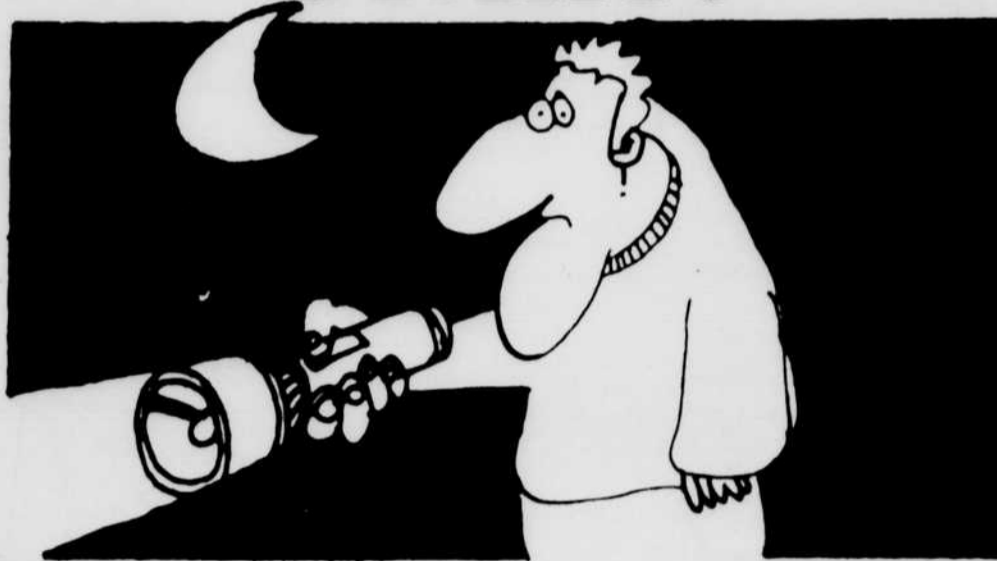
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