

News wire

Saddam will get 'zero tolerance' from U.S.

WASHINGTON — The United States will have "zero tolerance" for Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein if he fails to cooperate with tough new weapons inspections scheduled to start next week, Bush administration officials said Sunday.

Saddam has until Friday to accept the U.N. Security Council's resolution on Iraq's disarmament and until Dec. 8 to give a full account of Iraq's nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and missile programs. The Security Council plans to meet again to decide what action to take if Iraq fails to comply with the resolution.

The resolution passed by the 15-member Security Council on Friday gives Saddam one last opportunity to comply with U.N. demands that he submit to renewed inspections. The resolution declared that Saddam has been in "material breach" of previous international demands to disarm since the end of the 1991 Gulf War.

Secretary of State Colin Powell repeated the Bush administration's assertion that the United States can take action on its own.

"I can assure you that if he doesn't comply this time, we'll ask the U.N. to give authorization for all necessary means, and if the U.N. is not willing to do that, the United States, with like-minded nations, will go and disarm him forcefully," Powell said, speaking on CNN's "Late Edition."

— Drew Brown, Knight Ridder Newspapers (KRT)

Vietnam vets memorial observes 20th birthday

WASHINGTON — The Vietnam Veterans Memorial, a sober tribute of black granite tucked neatly into the landscape of Washington's National Mall, turns 20 years old Monday.

The V-shaped wall, inscribed with the names of 58,229 veterans who died or went missing between 1959 and 1975 in one of the nation's most controversial military engagements, has long been a site of remembrance and

healing for veterans and their families.

In a four-day ceremony that began Thursday, all of the names were read aloud by a series of volunteers, concluding Sunday, the day before Veterans Day. It was only the third time all of the names have been read aloud since the monument's creation.

— Shira Kantor, Chicago Tribune (KRT)

High court to consider scope of 'Megan's Laws'

WASHINGTON — In the eight years since 7-year-old Megan Kanka was raped and murdered by a paroled pedophile who lived across the street, all 50 states have adopted laws designed to let neighbors know when sex offenders live in their midst.

Megan's Law has long been controversial. It has been attacked by civil liberties groups and ex-convicts, who say it stigmatizes offenders long after they've served their prison time. Law enforcement officials argue that sex offenders are more likely than other criminals to strike again, and that public safety must take precedence.

On Wednesday, the Supreme Court will hear arguments in cases that challenge different elements of the law.

The high court's rulings will help states wrestling with how far they can go to protect children from sexual predators. A Connecticut case asks whether that state violates the Constitution by placing all sex offenders on an Internet registry without first providing a hearing to determine whether they still pose a danger. An Alaska case questions if those who completed their prison sentences before the state passed its version of Megan's Law must be registered.

— Shannon McCaffrey, Knight Ridder Newspapers (KRT)

Church mulls revisions to sex abuse policy

WASHINGTON — Greeted by a chorus of protesters charging that the Catholic church is turning its back on thousands of children sexually abused by priests, Detroit Cardinal Adam Maida and many of his colleagues tried to assure Catholics that they will not relax their efforts to

root out all abusive clergy.

"The safety of our children is paramount, and I will not in any way risk their safety or their health," Maida said as he arrived Sunday for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Last month, the Vatican rejected the American bishops' zero-tolerance policy to combat the abuse of minors and pushed the bishops to add due-process protections for

accused priests.

The bishops' original policy, approved in June in Dallas, required bishops to report all accusations of the abuse of minors to law-enforcement officials. Under the revision, bishops will have more discretion about reporting abuse.

Bishops agreed to set up abuse-case review boards dominated by lay people to advise bishops. The

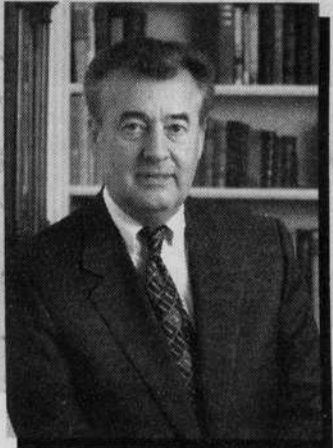
revisions could give such boards less authority.

Finally, the bishops' strict promise in June to remove any priest who ever had abused a minor now becomes more difficult to enforce as the new rules focus more firmly on church-run investigations and church trials.

— David Crumm, Knight Ridder Newspapers, (KRT)

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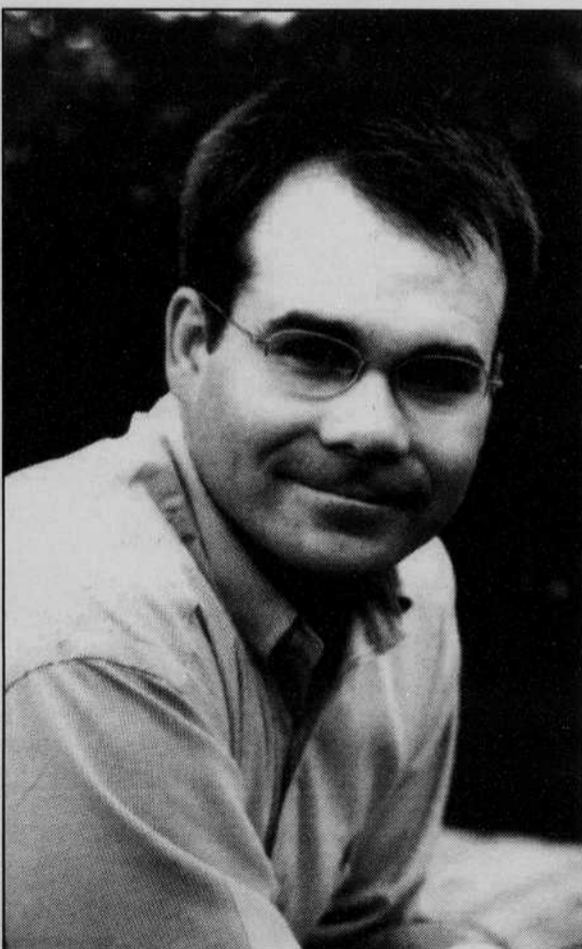
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