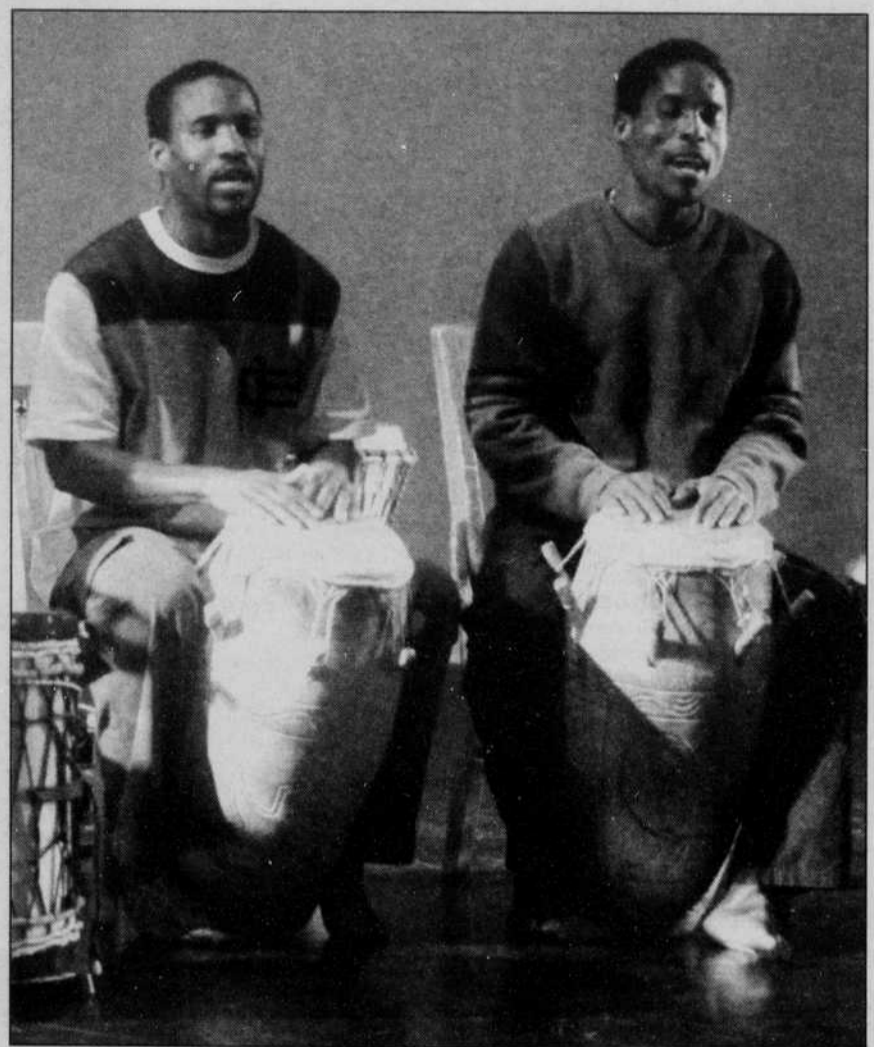


AFRICAN DANCE



Lauren Wimer Photographer

(Top photo) Senior dance major Jillian Kacalek dances to the beat of Glenn Bonney's drum during rehearsal for the University's Dance Africa ensemble. (Right photo) Brothers Mawuenyega Mensah (left) and Maputo Mensah collaborated with the group for the production, which will be performed at 8 tonight in the Gerlinger Annex. The brothers, originally from the West African nation of Ghana, and the University ensemble put together the show in one week, requiring three hours of rehearsal every night. The Mensahs head the Logo Ligi performance troupe in Boulder, Colo. For ticket information, call 346-3386.



Nation & World News

Rumsfeld says Iraqi forces will be relied on more

The Secretary of Defense's new rotation plan calls for deploying another 46,700 U.S. reservists to the region

By Richard Whittle
The Dallas Morning News (KRT)

WASHINGTON — Rejecting calls for more U.S. troops in Iraq, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld unveiled a new rotation plan Thursday that would lower the number there to 105,000 from 130,000 by May.

Freshly minted Iraqi security forces and U.S. reservists will be relied on more heavily in the fight against Saddam Hussein loyalists and Islamic militants under the plan.

"The U.S. footprint will depend on the security situation, which is continually being reassessed by the commanders on the ground," Rumsfeld told a Pentagon news briefing.

"I have not been told of a single military commander ... in Iraq who is recommending additional U.S. military forces — not one."

The announcement of the new plan, which includes the deployment of a division of Marines to ease the burden on the Army, came a day after Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., called on the administration to add 20,000 troops to the 130,000 there now.

"The simple truth is that we do not have sufficient forces in Iraq to meet our military objectives," McCain asserted. "Prematurely placing

the burden of security on Iraqis is not the answer."

About 115,700 Iraqis are either on duty or being trained in one of five security forces created by the U.S.-led Coalition Provisional Authority, Pentagon officials said. Those include police, a new Iraqi army, border guards, facility guards and a civil defense corps.

Iraqi security forces are projected to grow to 200,000 or more by the time the U.S. rotation plan is in effect next spring.

"While the number of U.S. forces may be level or decline slightly, this much is certain: The overall capability of the security forces in Iraq will increase," Rumsfeld declared.

"As other countries consider deployments, as they are, the total number of coalition forces, including Iraqi security forces, clearly will grow, as it has been growing every month for the past three or four months," he said.

Air Force Lt. Gen. Norton Schwartz, director for operations on the Pentagon's Joint Staff, said the reduction in U.S. forces would mainly cut support personnel rather than combat troops.

"We are going from seven bridging companies to two because we're contracting out some of the bridging requirements," Lt. Gen. Schwartz said. "We are going from a larger number of truck units to a smaller number because we are contracting some of that out."

About 85,000 active duty, Reserves and National Guard troops — including a division of Marines — already have been alerted that they will be sent to Iraq, Rumsfeld said.

Another 46,700 reservists will get notices soon, with 3,700 of those slated for tours in Afghanistan and 43,000 in Iraq.

"These figures comprise the majority of the Guard and Reserve forces, both Army and Marine, that will be alerted, but we can expect some additional Army alerts in the period ahead," Rumsfeld said.

Those scheduled to go to Iraq include about 37,000 Army Reserves and 6,000 Marine Reserves, Lt. Gen. Schwartz said.

Reservists and National Guard troops account for about 28,000 of the 130,000 U.S. military personnel in Iraq at the moment, he said. By May, the total is expected to be 105,000, of whom 66,000 would be active duty troops and 39,000 Reservists and National Guard.

Lt. Gen. Schwartz said the increased reliance on Reserves and National Guard troops was necessary because, "We are at war. This is not peacetime."

Most personnel sent to Iraq will serve one-year tours, officials said, but the Marines will rotate two contingents of about 21,000 members who will serve seven-month tours, said Marine Corps Lt. Gen. Jan Huly, deputy commandant for plans, policy and operations.

As announced last summer, the

Army's 1st Cavalry Division from Fort Hood, Texas, reinforced by the 39th Army National Guard infantry brigade from Arkansas, will replace the 1st Armored Division in Baghdad by April.

The 1st Infantry Division, based in Germany, will replace the Fort Hood-based 4th Infantry Division, whose Iraq headquarters is in Tikrit, former dictator Hussein's hometown.

Reinforced by 30th Army National Guard infantry brigade — with troops from North Carolina, West Virginia and New York — and the 3rd Brigade of the 2nd Infantry Division from Washington state, the 1st Infantry also will take over for the 101st Airborne Division in northern Iraq.

More than 90 percent of attacks on U.S. forces in Iraq have occurred in an area between Baghdad and Tikrit and to the west known as the Sunni Triangle.

The Army's original plan had been for a new division of foreign troops — possibly from Turkey — to replace the 101st Airborne, which is headquartered in the relatively peaceful northern Iraqi city of Mosul.

But the administration so far has declined to accept a Turkish offer of up to 10,000 troops because of objections by some members of the Iraqi Governing Council who are leaders of the Kurdish minority in northern Iraq.

The 1st Marine Division will replace the Army's 82nd Airborne Di-

vision, whose area of responsibility includes Fallujah — a hotbed of Hussein loyalists and attacks on U.S. forces — and areas west.

The division will be reinforced by elements of the 2nd Marine Division and Marine Reserves, including helicopter and C-130 transport aircraft units, Lt. Gen. Huly said.

Senate Armed Services Committee member Jack Reed, D-R.I., a former Army Ranger who has urged expanding the active duty Army, said the rotation plan was "not based on long-term planning, but rather another ad-hoc effort to cobble together units to send to Iraq."

"The administration is ignoring the reality of an over-committed armed forces in order to meet their own promises to reduce troops in Iraq by next year," Reed said.

Other critics have warned that the necessity of calling up Reserves and National Guard troops for hazardous duty is likely to persuade many to leave the service after their tours and dissuade others from joining. Rumsfeld said there was no evidence of that so far.

"At the moment, the latest reports on recruiting and retention are positive," he said. "That is to say, we do not see at the moment that the situation in Iraq or Afghanistan, or the general level of tempo that's taking place around the world, is adversely affecting those indicators."

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Oregon Daily Emerald

P.O. Box 3159, Eugene OR 97403

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published daily Monday through Friday during the school year by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co. Inc., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. The Emerald operates independently of the University with offices in Suite 300 of the Erb Memorial Union. The Emerald is private property. The unlawful removal or use of papers is prosecutable by law.

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