

news brief

Lufthansa bans smoking on flights within Germany

By The Stars and Stripes

Lufthansa will ban smoking on German domestic flights beginning today (Tuesday), a spokeswoman for the airline said Monday.

"We don't cancel flights and we won't allow smoking, so our motto should be, 'No Ifs and Butts with Lufthansa,'" the spokeswoman joked.

More than 90 percent of the 3,600 passengers questioned in a survey endorsed a smoking ban on domestic flights, she said.

"Even the majority of the smokers surveyed voted for non-smoking domestic flights," she said.

The decision follows a six-month smoking ban on the Nürnberg-Cologne and Düsseldorf-Stuttgart flights.

AMERICANS

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pledge" of free passage for the dependents.

The 52 who got through to Turkey were taken to Incirlik AB to await a flight home Tuesday. Base spokeswoman Marty Davis said they were swimming, relaxing and having "pizza and ice cream cones."

Their ordeal — coupled with other Iraqi actions against diplomats — angered American officials.

Hours after their arrival in Turkey, State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutweiler said the Iraqi Embassy staff was being reduced from 55 to 19, and that those expelled were seven diplomats and 29 members of the non-diplomatic staff. The State Department limited the remaining Iraqi diplomats to a 25-mile radius of Washington.

The restrictions were far less sharp than those faced by foreign missions in Kuwait. Many — including the U.S. Embassy — have had electricity and water cut off and are ringed by Iraqi troops.

Still, the Iraqi pressure was having results. Hungary and Nigeria said Monday they were temporarily suspending embassy operations in Kuwait. Other nations, including India, the Philippines and Lebanon, had agreed earlier to close. Lebanon said Monday it had re-established contact with its ambassador to Kuwait, who earlier was reported missing en route to Beirut.

One reason the U.S. and other governments insisted on keeping Kuwait embassies open was to look after their citizens trapped by the Aug. 2 invasion. In all, about 21,000 Westerners are stranded in Iraq and Kuwait, including 3,000 Americans.

Iraq says some have been distributed among Iraqi strategic sites for use as human shields to deter a U.S. attack.

Presidential press secretary Marlin Fitzwater said Monday "our best estimate" is that 63 Americans are missing or are being held by Iraq, including seven picked up over the weekend. Britain and France also reported more detentions over the weekend.

Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev urged Arab countries to unite against Iraqi aggression. In a meeting at the Kremlin with the Egyptian foreign minister, he stressed "the necessity of bringing the Arab factor to bear more strongly" on Iraq, the Soviet news agency Tass said.

European military chiefs met Monday in Paris to coordinate their actions after the U.N. Security Council's weekend endorsement of the use of force to back up the U.N. economic sanctions against Iraq.

Perez de Cuellar, who will meet Thursday with Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz in Jordan, expressed hopes for the success of his mediation bid, the first such formal effort by the United Nations.

"It is time for diplomacy to make an effort," said the U.N. chief, who held private meetings Monday with members of the Security Council to brief them on his mission.

But Washington, while welcoming the initiative, said that, without an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait, there was really nothing to discuss.

"He knows his latitude," Fitzwater said of Perez de Cuellar. Washington has insisted on an Iraqi withdrawal; Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein says Kuwait is irrevocably part of Iraq.

In other developments:

● Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat on Monday proposed that an Arab peace-keeping force be deployed in Kuwait for six months to replace Iraqi troops while elections are held.

● Iraq told the Arab League it will boycott an Egyptian-arranged Arab foreign ministers conference this week, Egypt's state-run Middle East News Agency said. The dispatch from Tunis quoted unidentified Arab diplomats as saying 11 members of the League agreed to attend the emergency conference in Cairo on Thursday.

Visting senators reaffirm home support for troops

SAUDI ARABIA (AP) — Eight U.S. senators paid a visit Monday to American troops in Saudi Arabia and said support for their deployment remains strong back home.

"You're not here alone. This is an international effort," Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Sam Nunn told a handful of Marines. "This is the world against Saddam Hussein."

Later, Nunn told reporters that a briefing the senators received from American and Saudi military commanders had convinced him that a sufficient force was in place to deter an Iraqi attack on Saudi Arabia.

"An Iraqi attack on Saudi Arabia would be national suicide," said Nunn, D-Ga.

Senate Republican leader Bob Dole, asked if he came away from the briefings convinced a sufficient military force was in place to defeat Iraqi troops to the north, said: "I think so. If not, it's getting real close."

Nunn said the senators would discuss the need for a bigger, multinational force in Saudi Arabia with Arabs on the front lines but did not answer directly when asked whether he thought Egypt should send more troops.

Of a bigger Arab role on the front line, Nunn said: "I think that's important militarily but also, more importantly, politically and psychologically."

Several of the senators, when asked by reporters, acknowledged that the presence of American hostages in Iraq complicated efforts to resolve the nearly month-old Middle East standoff.

But they said the hostage situation alone could not

be the force behind U.S. policy.

"You can't run foreign policy on hostages," said Sen. Jake Garn, R-Utah. "If you did, no American would be safe anywhere in the world."

The senators visited troops at an air base in northeast Saudi Arabia, shaking hands and asking about the desert conditions while being trailed by a horde of U.S. and foreign media.

"What's your biggest problem over here?" Nunn asked several members of a Marine light helicopter division and the Army's 82nd Airborne Div.

"No mail, sir," was the most common answer.

Others in the group said they were impressed with troop morale in the harsh desert conditions.

"The morale here is just unbelievable," Sen. John Warner of Virginia, the ranking Republican on Armed Services, said after a paratrooper recounted an exercise in 140-degree heat.

"The people back home are with you," Warner said.

In a brief Tarmac interview, Warner said he was confident the American public could support the deployment even if it dragged on.

"The weak link in this dilemma isn't the people back home," Warner said. Asked if he expected other nations to eventually loosen their enforcement of sanctions against Iraq, Warner said: "I don't think so. I certainly hope not."

Other senators making the trip, all Republicans, were: Don Nickles of Oklahoma, Steve Symms of Idaho, Alfonse D'Amato of New York and Connie Mack of Florida.

STRIPES

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mott said. The American Forces Information Service will pay Stripes 23 cents a copy — the newspaper's bulk discount rate — through Sept. 30.

Beginning Oct. 1, the Army Family and Community Support Center has agreed to pay for the newspapers, the U.S. European Comd said in a news release.

McDermott said 15,715 copies of Stripes will go to ground troops every day and 2,300 newspapers will go to sailors aboard ships. The number of copies will be increased as requested by the U.S. Central Comd, which is in charge of Operation Desert Shield.

Copies of Stripes are being sent to Saudi Arabia via commercial flights out of Frankfurt. Depending on

airline schedules in effect on a particular day, most of the newspapers are either shipped to Riyadh on a direct flight or to Dhahran via London or Amman, Jordan.

McDermott said Stripes has asked the Military Airlift Comd to allow copies of the newspaper to be sent to the Middle East via its planes, but so far permission for daily shipments has not been granted.

"We have been told there is no guarantee at all (that) the papers can be put on the planes," McDermott said. He added that Stripes is continuing to consult with the Military Airlift Comd on the matter.

Beginning with today's edition, troops in Saudi Arabia are receiving a slightly altered version of the two-star edition of the newspaper, which is sold to U.S. servicemembers in West Germany. News specifically relating to people serving in Europe is being replaced by stateside and international news in the Desert Shield edition.

Last nerve agent convoy rolls Saturday

KAISERSLAUTERN, West Germany (S&S) — The Army expects to move the last of 100,000 artillery shells filled with deadly nerve agents out of the Clausen Army Depot on Saturday, a spokeswoman said Monday.

The Saturday transport, the first one scheduled on a weekend, will be the 28th truck convoy moving the shells from the Clausen depot to the railhead at Miesau, about 30 miles away.

The shells will be moved by train from Miesau to the seaport at Nordenham on the North Sea. There, the munitions will be loaded onto two Navy ships and

taken to Johnston Atoll in the Pacific, where they will be destroyed.

Army officials estimate that it will take seven nights to transport the chemicals by train to Nordenham. The date of the first train shipment has not been released.

Accompanying the rail shipments will be U.S. soldiers and fire, medical and security forces from the West German army, police and border patrol.

The first phase of the operation began July 26 amid wide news media interest. The convoys quickly became commonplace to media as well as the residents of the towns of Clausen and Donsieders, through which the convoys passed.

VAUGHAN

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open-air concert facility at the Alpine Valley ski resort, said Omni spokesman Phil Huth.

Clapton was on another helicopter that landed safely in Chicago.

Clapton, Vaughan and another Grammy-winning guitarist, Robert Cray, all appeared Sunday evening at the Alpine Valley theater.

In addition to the helicopter pilot and Vaughan, 35, the others killed were Bobby Brooks, Clapton's agent at Creative Artists Agency; Nigel Browne, a Clapton bodyguard; and Colin Smythe, one of Clapton's tour managers, Clapton's statement said.

Clapton was staying Monday morning at the Four Seasons Hotel in Chicago. His tour manager, Peter Jackson, who sounded distraught and strained when reached by phone in his hotel room, said Clapton learned of the accident when "one of our planes never

arrived at the airport." He declined to identify the victims.

A spokeswoman for the Walworth County Sheriff's Department said the helicopter was reported missing at 5 a.m., and the wreckage was found at about 7 a.m. The Alpine Valley resort is about six miles southwest of this southeastern Wisconsin town.

The sheriff's spokeswoman, Pat Salimas, said the copter was one of four at Alpine Valley that were scheduled to fly during the night to Midway Airport in Chicago.

The helicopter crashed into the back of a ski hill and an electronic signal was activated, notifying the Civil Air Patrol of the crash, she said.

Vaughan had a platinum album with his band, Double Trouble, in "Couldn't Stand the Weather," released in 1984. That same year, he won a Grammy Award for best traditional blues recording for a song called "Flood Down in Texas." The song was on a compilation album featuring several blues artists called "Blues Explosion."

This year, he won a Grammy in the contemporary blues category for "In Step."