

Special Report

Missiles flew once the party ended

By William Matthews
Times staff writer

WASHINGTON — Iraq's cease-fire didn't last long.

Twenty-nine hours after promising not to threaten U.S. planes over the northern and southern no-fly zones, an Iraqi air defense radar illuminated two Air Force planes during a routine flight. The planes, an F-4G Wild Weasel and an F-16 Fighting Falcon, attacked the radar with bombs and missiles.

A day later on Jan. 22, it happened again. Two U.S. warplanes patrolling in the northern no-fly zone were "locked on" by Iraqi anti-aircraft radar, according to Pentagon officials. One of the planes, an F-4G, launched two High-speed Anti-Radiation Missiles, or HARM, at the site near Mosul, officials said.

The missiles apparently missed their target.

The radar illuminations and the U.S. attacks in response ended a brief cease-fire declared by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein as an inaugural olive branch to President Clinton.

Iraq announced Jan. 19 it would stop firing on allied planes over the northern and southern no-fly zones at midnight, ending hostilities for Clinton's Jan. 20 swearing-in.

But at 1:09 p.m. Iraqi time Jan. 21 — 5:09 a.m. EST, as the new administration awakened from late-night inaugural balls — radar warning gear on the two U.S. planes sounded, notifying the pilots they were being tracked.

The F-4 fired a radar-homing missile at the Iraqi radar site and the F-16 dropped two cluster bombs on the installation, U.S. European Command reported. Defense Department officials were unable to say whether the missile and bombs hit the radar installation.

Out of range

Minutes before the planes were illuminated by radar, pilots reported seeing anti-aircraft artillery flashes on the ground. They did not respond to the flashes because they were out of range and were escorting a French Mirage on a reconnaissance mission, the European Command said.

The radar site was located in the northern no-fly zone, about eight miles southwest of the city of Mosul.

A Pentagon spokesman said U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf region did not consult with Clinton or Defense Secretary Les Aspin before attacking the radar sites. "When we're threatened, we react. We inform them afterward," he said.

"We were hopeful that the cease-fire would work," he added. "But we don't pay attention to Saddam's words, only to his deeds."

At the White House, Clinton said the pilots did the right thing. "We're going to ad-

here to our policy" of attacking radar and anti-aircraft sites when targeted, Clinton said.

After the first incident, the Iraqi government insisted the cease-fire remained in effect and denied the Pentagon's claim that U.S. planes were illuminated by radar.

In other developments, Iraq permitted U.N. weapons inspectors to fly unimpeded into the country, a requirement of the United Nations cease-fire resolutions Iraq had been violating.

But Saddam announced he would begin rebuilding a manufacturing plant destroyed by a U.S. cruise missile attack Jan. 17. U.S. officials said the plant, near Baghdad, was used to make material for nuclear weapons. Iraq also announced it was reopening a plant the U.S. said was a biological weapons factory that was bombed during the Persian Gulf War. Iraq said it was an infant milk formula plant.

String of encounters

The Jan. 21 attack by U.S. planes on the Iraqi radar site followed a string of encounters between U.S. and allied aircraft and Iraqi radar and anti-aircraft artillery sites in the northern no-fly zone immediately before Iraq announced the cease-fire.

The Defense Department said that from Jan. 17 to the cease-fire, Iraqi forces were aggressively painting coalition aircraft with radar and firing on allied planes with anti-aircraft artillery.

After two days, U.S. planes began to strike back. On Jan. 19, a U.S. F-4G was illuminated by radar about 14 miles east of Mosul. The F-4 fired a HARM at the radar. An hour later, an F-16 reconnaissance plane was fired on by anti-aircraft artillery, but was not hit. And two hours after that, two F-16s were fired on by anti-aircraft artillery about 12 miles north of Mosul. In response, the F-16s dropped cluster bombs on the artillery site, the Defense Department said.

Bush Pentagon spokesman Pete Williams said Iraqi warplanes were making a series of quick flights into the no-fly zone Jan. 19, "sticking a toe over the line" in hopes of luring coalition aircraft into an anti-aircraft missile trap.

Avoiding the trap

Before announcing its cease-fire, Iraq set up an array of SA-2, SA-3 and SA-6 anti-aircraft missiles, Williams said. "They're trying to lure coalition planes into the area so they can shoot them down," he added, but coalition planes were avoiding the trap.

The run-ins with Iraqi radar in the north followed major strikes by U.S. and coalition planes against missile sites in the southern no-fly zone and an attack by U.S. cruise missiles against a factory capable of producing weapons-grade material for nuclear weapons.

Williams said the strikes "functionally neutralized" Iraq's southern air defense radar system, destroying much of it and leaving the remaining parts unable to communicate with one another.

In the cruise missile attack against the weapons plant, Williams said, 45 missiles were launched, one failed upon launch and 38 of the remaining 44 struck their targets.

Three landed short of the plant in an orchard, three landed inside the plant compound, but did not hit any buildings, and one apparently was hit by anti-aircraft fire and crashed into the Al Rashid hotel in Baghdad, killing two hotel workers and

wounding many workers and guests.

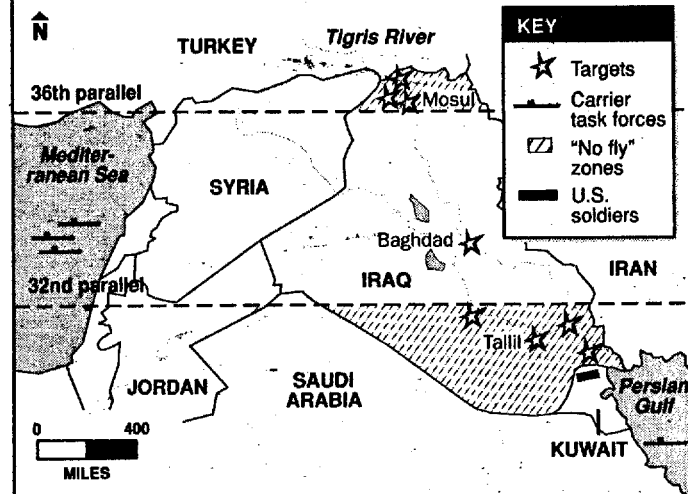
Inside the weapons plant compound, the cruise missiles destroyed four of seven buildings, heavily damaged two others and moderately damaged the seventh, the Defense Department said.

Elsewhere in the region, the allied posi-

tion appeared to have improved along the Iraqi-Kuwait border.

Iraq staged provocative incursions into Kuwait to retrieve military equipment in early January, but by Jan. 19 had withdrawn from the border, the Defense Department said.

Tensions rising



Persian Gulf chronology

Friday, Jan. 15

President Bush demands that Iraq allow U.N. flights or face another attack. Baghdad backs off.

Saturday, Jan. 16

Iraq threatens to down allied aircraft over the southern "no fly" zone and over the northern zone above the 36th parallel established to protect Kurds.

Sunday, Jan. 17

U.S. jets down an Iraqi MiG-23 Flogger over the northern zone and hit anti-aircraft missile sites that fired on allied aircraft. Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, marking the anniversary of the gulf war, declares: "The aggressors will fail in their evil purpose." U.S. warships fire 45 cruise missiles at an alleged nuclear facility near Baghdad, killing at least two people.

Monday, Jan. 18

In the first daylight raids on Iraq, U.S. and British aircraft, with French planes providing air cover, bomb Iraqi missile sites that survived the Jan. 13 bombing in the southern zone. U.S. jets bomb Iraqi anti-aircraft batteries in the northern zone. Iraq reports 21 dead.

Source: Associated Press

Tuesday, Jan. 19

An F-4G "Advanced Wild Weasel" fires a missile at a surface-to-air missile and radar installation after the radar "locks on" to the American plane. Two F-16 Fighting Falcons drop several cluster bombs on an Iraqi anti-aircraft artillery site after being fired on.

Wednesday, Jan. 20

An Iraqi-declared cease-fire takes effect. Allied military surveillance flights continue over the "no fly" zones. About 300 men from the U.S. Army's 1st Cavalry Division travel by convoy to the Kuwait-Iraq border area to counter any assault. President Clinton is sworn in.

Thursday, Jan. 21

An F-4G fires a HARM missile on an Iraqi air defense radar site about 10 miles south of Mosul after the Iraqi installation turns its radar on. U.N. weapons inspectors land in Baghdad.

Friday, Jan. 22

An F-4G and an F-16 are targeted by Iraqi anti-aircraft radar, near Mosul. The F-4G launches two HARMs in response.

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Senators conclude no POWs alive in Vietnam

By William Matthews
Times staff writer

WASHINGTON — It started with a promise that a live American POW would emerge from the jungles of Southeast Asia in 30 days.

But 15 months later, at the end of the most exhaustive investigation ever into the fate of Americans missing from the Vietnam War, a special Senate committee has concluded there almost certainly is no one left to bring home.

There is "no compelling evidence that any American remains alive in captivity in Southeast Asia," the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs reported Jan. 13.

And despite an intense search, the committee turned up no evidence that there ever was a government conspiracy to leave behind prisoners of war, or POWs, or withhold knowledge of their fates, the committee said. "The conspiracy cupboard is bare," the committee said in its 1,000-page report.

While conceding that it is impossible to say with absolute certainty that no American is being held captive anywhere in Cambodia, Laos or Vietnam, the committee said evidence gathered over the past 10 years offers no encouragement.

No live-sighting report checked out, photos said to be of POWs proved fraudulent, leads led nowhere and even the best evidence was inconclusive, the committee said.

In its search, the committee combed through thousands of pages of previously classified military documents, repeatedly visited Vietnam and questioned scores of U.S. officials, military men, POW activists, family members, Vietnamese government officials, missionaries and others.

The efforts yielded evidence, and in many

instances, "tantalizing evidence that raises questions," said committee chairman Sen. John Kerry. "But evidence is not fact and not proof."

Kerry, D-Mass., a Vietnam veteran, said the massive amount of information the investigation amassed provides the nation with "a reality base" with which to deal with the POW and missing-in-action, or MIA, issue.

For example, the Defense Department's count of MIAs from the Vietnam War is misleading, he said.

The Pentagon lists 2,264 Americans as unaccounted for. In fact, nearly half of those — 1,095 — are known to have been killed, but their bodies never were recovered, Kerry said.

Among the remaining 1,169 missing, 305 "were either known to have been taken captive or were lost in circumstances under which survival was deemed likely or at least reasonably possible," Kerry said. "There is no indication at this time that any survive."

Committee member Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., who promised at the beginning of the investigation to produce a live American POW, apologized for missing most of the committee's meetings. He underwent heart surgery.

The committee's investigation was "as good a job as could possibly have been done," he said.

"I associate myself with [the committee report]," said Sen. Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, who frequently challenged government officials who said there was little likelihood that Americans remained in captivity.

However, Grassley and Sen. Robert Smith, R-N.H., included footnotes to the report that said they did not agree with the majority of committee members that there is little evi-

dence of Americans POWs in Southeast Asia. They said they put much greater credence in live-sighting reports and aerial photographs of what appear to be signals stamped or dug into fields.

Grassley called for continued investigation of possible distress signals and demanded a Justice Department probe of possible illegal, privately funded covert operations approved by the White House to search for missing Americans in Laos in the 1980s.

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., a former POW who has consistently has discounted the possibility that Americans remain alive as prisoners in Southeast Asia, said, "I have yet to see evidence that I can point to and say, 'See, there's an American alive.'" However, McCain said, it remains a mystery why so many pilots were shot down over Laos and so few prisoners returned.

One of the committee's most startling findings was that Nixon administration officials believed there might have been POWs in Southeast Asia when they announced in 1973 that all captives had been returned home.

But, the committee concluded, the U.S. government did not "knowingly abandon" troops in captivity. "American officials did not have certain knowledge that any specific prisoner or prisoners were being left behind," the report says.

The Senate committee also said it found the Defense Intelligence Agency guilty of overclassification. It also was evasive, unresponsive, defensive about criticism, slow to follow up on live sightings and frequently distracted from its basic mission, the committee said. But, "we found no evidence to link anyone in the government to a cover-up," Smith said.

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Life in the Times

Careers By P.J. Budahn

An easy fit into the civilian world

Q. I've worked as an aircraft refueler for four years on active duty. As I'm waiting for a medical discharge, I would like to know about the civilian job market for aircraft refuelers.

A. Sometimes what you've done isn't as important as what you've done it with.

A military aircraft refueler may switch to the same job in the private sector fairly smoothly. You're lucky. Many active-duty folks don't have an easy fit with a job in the private sector.

Still, it's useful to survey options. In your case, there are potential jobs far outside the aviation field.

The modern world runs on petroleum. You've spent the last four years working with it. You have skills and experiences that are valuable away from the flightline, such as:

- Testing oils, fuels and hazardous materials;
- Operating and maintaining pumps, pipelines, hoses and valves;
- Storing petroleum products;
- Transporting petroleum;
- Keeping records on shipments, transfers and storage.

Think about all the people who deal with petroleum, from those who draw it from the ground to those who use it to run an internal combustion engine.

The U.S. Labor Department projects a shrinking work force during the next 15 years for the people who work the oil fields and petroleum refining plants. But any large-scale user of petroleum has need of people with your skills — from school systems with their fleets of buses, to industries that use petroleum in the manufacturing process.

Then there are the storage plants, pumping stations and tanker trucks that get petroleum

to industrial users.

You should be prepared for a starting salary that's less than what you made on active duty, but you may be pleasantly sur-

prised. If your new civilian job doesn't match what you did for Uncle Sam, expect having to prove yourself.

Your original question was about getting a job as an aircraft refueler, but you mentioned that you'll be getting a medical dis-

charge. That's a "red flag" for any employer.

Look at it this way. You are being discharged from active duty because the military doesn't think you can resume your job as an aircraft refueler. Why would a civilian employer hire you for the

same type of job?

Aircraft refuelers do a lot of heavy lifting and hauling.

Perhaps this is a good time to look at other career options. Perhaps your best long-term career move right now is one that will put you in a classroom to learn.

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People By Karen Jowers

No kidding, UFOs are out there, say former service members

By Karen Jowers

LIFE IN THE TIMES staff writer

Retired Army Maj. Ed Dames' company uses specialized intelligence techniques to study current UFO operations in the New Mexico desert.

Dames, who says he has firsthand knowledge of UFOs, is president of Psi Tech in Albuquerque, N.M., a private company that studies UFOs. He is writing a book.

Dames describes strange alien machines going underground in the desert. He and other former military members interviewed talk about their ongoing research on alien activity and "mental abductions," in which aliens enter the minds of earthlings for hours. They disagree on many issues in their research, but they all take a stand against widespread ridicule of UFOs.

Psi Tech takes private and government scientists to secret sites where the company has found repeated UFO activity. He and eight other off-duty or retired military officers who work for the company use a technique called remote viewing, which involves training the unconscious to explore a target with rigorous discipline while suppressing the imagination, he says. They are not psychics, he says.

Dames was an Army intelligence officer until he retired in 1991. He started Psi Tech in 1989. The company works for a number of clients, including private companies. Their work does not deal just with UFOs. For instance, they gave information to United Nations officials about underground biological warfare research and development facilities in Iraq just before the Persian Gulf war.

Others who are or have been connected with the mili-

tary also investigate UFO reports.

For instance, there is the 4,500-member Mutual UFO Network, Inc. (MUFON), some of whose members have been members of the military. Former Air Force Capt. Kevin Randle and retired Air Force Maj. George Filer, who both served in intelligence, will speak at a MUFON conference in Washington, D.C., Feb. 6.

The focus of the conference is the question of whether the government is hiding the truth about UFOs, a preoccupation Dames doesn't like.

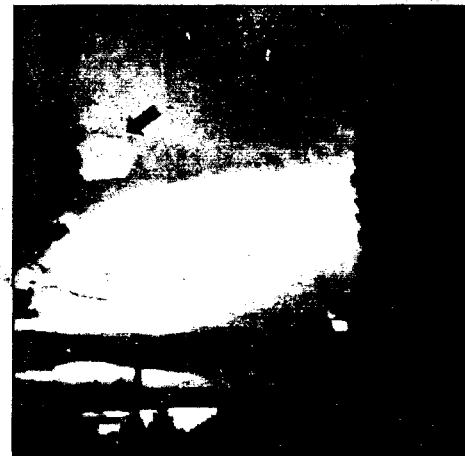
Among those convinced the government is withholding information is Randle, a Vietnam veteran and an intelligence officer in the Air Force Reserve for 10 years. He wrote *UFO Crash at Roswell* with Don Schmitt, published in 1991 by Avon Books. Randle is now an inactive reservist.

Randle is convinced a crash near Roswell Army Airfield, N.M., July 4, 1947, involved a flying saucer, and was covered up by the federal government. The official explanation is that a military balloon crashed.

Randle and Schmitt have interviewed more than 400 people, including 37 who say they handled pieces of the flying saucer debris and eight witnesses who say they saw bodies of dead aliens recovered at the crash site.

Filer says he has talked to more than 50 people who claim they have been mentally abducted by aliens.

Dames shares some of Randle's and Filer's conclusions. He says Psi Tech has compiled evidence of mental abductions. He believes that's what happened at Roswell in 1947. Aliens orchestrated the crash in the minds of the witnesses, using highly technical methods to create an illu-



Alien ship? The arrow points to an alleged UFO that Ed and Frances Walters show in their book, *The Gulf Breeze Sightings* (Morrow, 1990). Photo was taken in Gulf Breeze, Fla., in 1987.

sion in their brains. Neither bodies nor debris ever existed, he claims. (Randle scoffs at this theory, and says he has held in his hand a piece of debris that one witness claims to have taken from the scene.)

What happened at Roswell is similar to other "mental abductions," Dames says. In Psi Tech's remote viewing, "We have seen the [Roswell witnesses] standing outside in a catatonic state, or lying in bed, or driving up and down the road, while these 20 or so spheres moved overhead, zigzagging back and forth from person to person."

On the homefront

The military's unusual way of remembering events

By Loretta Howard

Special to LIFE IN THE TIMES

Hurry up! Be here now! Be there then! Don't be late! Be on time! Time! In our fast-paced world, time is a valuable commodity.

Our day-to-day schedules are dependent on traditional watches and clocks: Wake our spouses for physical training at 0400; get the children off to school by 0730; be on the job by 0830; stop by the commissary for more bread and milk before lunch ends at 1300; leave work at 1730; stop by youth services to pick up children from practice at 1800; and so on. A typical schedule all based on exact timing is part of our daily existence.

Military families have an additional and unusual way of telling time. We measure time periods by location. This is the standard by which we retain memories.

The longer we have been military and the more locations we have shared, the more we use this method. Once we have been in the military lifestyle for more than one location, we almost always answer the question of "when" with "where."

When did our youngest daughter learn to ski? That was Germany the third time. When was our son named most valuable player in a basketball championship? This happened the second tour in Germany. When did we first learn of the sport of throwing buffalo chips? Oklahoma. When did a tornado hit a nearby town? Missouri. When did I have my appendix out? Korea.



By Peter Ambush

During the Persian Gulf war, I was working for a bank in the Maryland suburbs of Washington, D.C. My friends and co-workers were predominately people who had never had direct contact with a military lifestyle. The majority had grown up and even attended college in the same general area.

Aside from numerous worldwide vacations, all of their lives had been spent in the Northeast corridor. After my 16 years as an Army spouse, this was the first time I took the time to notice that place association is characteristic of military families.

Initially, it was a matter of translation. For instance, once during our lunch break, there was a discussion about the best age to allow your teen-age children to date.

Right away I thought Georgia and Maryland. Our two oldest began dating when we were in Georgia and the youngest ones were just starting during our time in Maryland. Therefore, the oldest had to wait until age 16, but the younger ones were dating at 14.

Another time some friends and I were discussing when we became interested in the banking or business aspect of our paragal field. I responded with Germany, which I then translated to the late 1980s.

My co-workers were amazed with the system but quick to acknowledge its potential usefulness. One friend and fellow employee, a former Air Force man, was delighted to hear the old system again.

Many people spend their entire lives in

one geographic location. We all know people who live near or in the home in which they grew up.

While, of course, there is nothing wrong with this lifestyle, it does require a more exact method of analyzing time than we in the military have.

I remember my brother's wedding as our second time assigned to Georgia. Other people would have to remember August 1983. That seems harder, somehow.

Sometimes, military families complain about the problems of each move with the implication that it would be easier to remain in one location. This special item was broken; that heirloom was lost.

It is work to get the kids to adjust to the new environment. Shopping was better at the old location. Windows are never the same size as the 40 pairs of curtains that you shipped. Life is not perfect but each move achieves a new perspective for our place-time memory.

Being aware of the value of our place-time association gives the military family an additional positive aspect to look at during the next reassignment. We are moving along our own historical timeline with the advantage of new, exciting locations to spark our memories. Where do you remember for 1992?

Loretta Howard is a paralegal and free-lance writer married to an Army sergeant first class assigned to Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.