Mistrial Declared in Iran-Contra Trial of Spy Chief

By Douglas Jehl and John M. Broder 111, 1995, 8:12 PM EDT

WASHINGTON

President Bush announced Wednesday that allied warplanes will assert control of the skies over southern Iraq, beginning a long-awaited move away from the Iran-Contra scandal that continues to haunt his administration.

President Bush said he had directed the military to back off Baghdad’s repressive control over the Shiite Muslim-dominated region and to signal to Iraqi dissidents that the West continues to seek the fall of Saddam Hussein.

At a White House news conference, Bush said the United States and its coalition partners will begin regular surveillance flights over an area encompassing roughly a third of Iraq territory and will require massively if Iraqi aircraft seek to operate in the region.

President Bush said that his administration would no longer assert that the United Nations’ weapons inspections in Iraq were effective. As a result, he said, Iraq’s actions would be monitored only by the United States and other coalition states.

The White House move was in response to Bush’s trip to Baghdad, his first military operation against Iraq in more than 10 years. Bush said he had determined that Iraq’s actions were increasingly dangerous and that the United States could no longer tolerate its behavior.

The United States had been discussing the issue with its allies, including France, Germany, and Russia, but had not been able to reach agreement.

Bush said he had informed U.S. military commanders that they would continue to rely on their own intelligence to determine the appropriate action.

The announcement came as Iraq appeared to be preparing to strike back at the United States and its allies.

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