

17 DEC 2004

Seizure fuels fight among Democrats

The Guardian & NY Times
Washington, December 16

HOWARD DEAN'S nearest rivals for the Democratic presidential nomination seized on Saddam Hussein's capture to mount a sustained attack on the frontrunner, who has built his campaign on fierce opposition to the Iraq war.

Sensing that the arrest could tip the balance in the counter-insurgency, ease US withdrawal and generally make the war more popular, Dean's critics argued that his outspoken position on the issue would make him a liability in a head-to-head contest with a strengthened George Bush.

Dean said in a speech on Monday, "My position on the war in Iraq has not changed." He said the administration "launched the war in the

good thing which I hope very much will keep our soldiers in Iraq and around the world safer. But Saddam's capture has not made America safer."

Dean immediately came under attack from senator Joseph Lieberman, whose enthusiastic support for the invasion had left him trailing in the contest to win the hearts of party activists and members.

"If he truly believes the capture of this evil man has not made America safer, then Howard Dean has put himself in his own spider hole of denial," Lieberman said. "I fear that the American people will wonder if they will be safer with him as President."

Lieberman has frequently repeated the accusation that: "If Howard Dean had his way, Saddam Hussein would be in power today, not in prison, and the world would be a much more dangerous place."

Others in the nine-candidate nomination race also joined the skirmish. "I think that this is a time that underscores that if we're going to beat George Bush, we need somebody who has the experience, and who got this policy right," Senator John Kerry said.

But some Democratic candidates attempted to balance their congratulations to the US armed forces on the capture with continued criticism of Bush for not involving the international community in the post-war transition. General Wesley Clark, another opponent of the war, said: "I don't think that the capture of Saddam Hussein in any way invalidates [my] concerns [about the war]."

Pollster John Zogby predicted that by the time of the elections next November, the importance of the capture would have faded considerably.



Howard Dean
Prisoner of war

wrong way, at the wrong time, with inadequate planning, insufficient help and at an extraordinary cost so far of \$166 billion."

He called Saddam's capture "a

Powell dials, Delhi dithers

PRANAY SHARMA

New Delhi, Dec. 15: India today walked a diplomatic tightrope, refusing to either welcome Saddam Hussein's capture or come out with a statement that he be treated with dignity and tried under the Geneva Convention.

A day after Saddam's capture shook the world, India limited itself to hoping that it would lead to an early transfer of power to the "friendly people" of Iraq.

The Indian position was made clear by foreign minister Yashwant Sinha when US secretary of state Colin Powell phoned him to discuss the Iraq developments.

India's stand might not have gone down well with Washington and many in the Bush administration could be disappointed. But that Powell chose to dial Sinha has given Delhi confidence such "minor differences" will not come in the way of growing bilateral ties.

India had refused to send troops to Iraq when the US sought its support to stabilise the war-ravaged country earlier this year. It had then cited a parliamentary resolution calling for immediate withdrawal of American forces from Iraq.

During his phone chat with Sinha, Powell said Saddam's capture would bring about a change "in the psychology of whole situation" and lead to "rebuilding and reconstruction and greater respect" for the Iraqi governing council.

Sinha hoped "these developments would contribute to the stabilisation of Iraq". He indicated that Delhi would like the US forces to withdraw early and create a situation for the Iraqis to manage their affairs.

Later in the day, foreign ministry spokesman Navtej Sarna said: "We have taken note of it. We hope for early improvement of the security situation in Iraq leading to early sovereignty to the friendly people of Iraq."

Asked if this indicated a shift in the Indian stand, he said: "I have just given you our view as well as that of the foreign minister on the issue this morning. I think that speaks for itself."

In Parliament, however, the Opposition demanded that the government come out with a statement stressing that Saddam be treated "humanely" and tried under United Nations' jurisdiction.

Last night, the capture was discussed at a cabinet committee on security meeting called by the Prime Minister. It was felt that Delhi could not welcome the capture as Saddam was seen in India as a "friend".

Kerala ripples

Thiruvananthapuram, Dec. 15: Saddam Hussein maybe down and out but he still strikes a chord among the poor fishermen at a tiny Kerala coastal hamlet.

The fishermen, for whom Saddam remains an icon of anti-imperialist struggle, held a spontaneous protest at the one-km-long, appropriately named "Saddam beach" on the Malabar coast, near Kozhikode.

Defiant & unrepentant but very defeated

IAN FISHER

Baghdad, Dec. 15: The wild grey beard was gone, and he sat on a metal army cot, just awake from a nap, in socks and black slippers. He was not handcuffed. He did not recognise all his visitors, but they recognised him.

That was the purpose of the visit, to help confirm that this was, in fact, Saddam Hussein.

What came next was, according to people in the room, an extraordinary 30 minutes yesterday afternoon in which four new leaders of Iraq pointedly questioned the nation's deposed and now captured leader about his crimes. Saddam, they said, was defiant and unrepentant but very much defeated.

"The world is crazy," said Mowaffak al-Rubaie, a governing council member in the room yesterday after Saddam was captured in his hometown, Tikrit. "I was in his torture chamber in 1979 and now he is sitting there powerless in front of me without anybody stopping me from doing anything to him. Just imagine. We were arguing, and he was using very foul language."

Ahmad Chalabi, a council member and head of the Iraqi National Congress, who was also in the room, said: "He was quite lucid. He had command of his faculties. He would not apologise to the Iraqi people. He did not deny any of the crimes he was confronted with having done. He tried to justify them."

Following Saddam's capture — in an eight-foot hole that one council member said was filled with "rats and mice" — the four leaders were taken by helicopter yesterday afternoon to a military base, at a site they would not disclose. Two others, in addition to Rubaie and Chalabi, were aboard: Adnan Pachachi, a council member who was the foreign minister before Saddam came to power, and Adel Abdel Mahdi, who represents the Shia religious body, the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq.

Two of Iraq's other new leaders were there too: Paul Bremer, the American civilian administrator of Iraq, and Lieutenant general Ricardo Sanchez, commander of ground forces in Iraq. The room was small, Rubaie said, and Sanchez asked the men



BEHIND BARS: A Chinese man in Beijing walks past a newspaper in a bicycle basket featuring Saddam Hussein. (Reuters)

if they would like to see Saddam through a window or by camera.

"We said: 'No, we want to talk to him,'" Rubaie added.

Aides to the men differed slightly about what happened next: One said that Saddam, who they said had just woken up, did not recognise any of his visitors. Another said he recognised Chalabi and asked him to introduce the others. "Saddam turned to Pachachi and said: 'You were the foreign minister of Iraq. What are you doing with these people?'" one aide said.

Rubaie said he had asked the first question, which, he said, was met with a brutal and dismissive joke. He said he had

asked why Saddam had killed two leading Shia clerics, Ayatollah Muhammad Bakr al-Sadr in 1980 and Ayatollah Muhammad Sadiq al-Sadr in 1999.

The word "sadr" means "chest" in Arabic, and Saddam replied: "Al sadr or ar rijl?" That translates as: "The chest or the foot?" The men then asked Saddam about events in his nearly 35 years in power that officials in the US and elsewhere cite in accusing the former ruler.

Asked about the use of chemical weapons against the Kurds in the northern Iraqi town of Halabja in 1988, in which an estimated 5,000 people were killed, Saddam said, according to his visi-

tors, that this was the work of Iran at war with Iraq at the time.

Asked about the mass graves of tens of thousands of Iraqis uncovered since Saddam was toppled from power in the US-led offensive last spring, Rubaie said that Saddam answered: "Ask their relatives. They were thieves and they ran away from the battlefields with Iran and from the battlefields of Kuwait."

Asked why he invaded Kuwait in 1990, provoking the first US-led assault on Iraq the next year, he said Kuwait was rightfully a part of Iraq.

"He was not remorseful at all," Chalabi said. "It was clear he was a complete narcissist

who was incapable of showing remorse or sympathy to other human beings." Chalabi said Saddam also suggested that he was behind the recent wave of attacks on US soldiers in Iraq since his defeat.

"He said: 'I gave a speech and I said the Americans can come to Iraq but they can't occupy it and rule it,'" Chalabi said. "He said: 'I said I would fight them with pistols and I have.' He didn't say it directly but he was trying to take credit for it," Chalabi said.

At a news conference yesterday evening, Pachachi said Saddam had tried to justify himself by saying that Iraqis needed a tough ruler. "He tried to justify

his crimes by saying that he was a just but firm ruler," he said. "Of course, our answer was he was an unjust ruler responsible for the deaths of thousands of people."

Throughout the meeting, Saddam was calm but often used foul language. Pachachi said he looked "tired and haggard."

"The most important fact: Had the roles been reversed, he would have torn us apart and cut us into small pieces after torture," he said. "This contrast was paramount in my mind — how we treated him and how he would have treated us."

Rubaie said: "One thing which is very important is that this man had with him underground when they arrested him two AK-47s and did not shoot one bullet. I told him: 'You keep on saying that you are a brave man and a proud Arab.' I said: 'When they arrested you, why didn't you shoot one bullet? You are a coward.' And he started to use very colourful language." Rubaie said. "Basically he used all his French."

"I was so angry because this guy has caused so much damage," Rubaie added.

"He has ruined the whole country. And I have to confess that the last word was for me. I was the last to leave the room and I said: 'May God curse you. Tell me, when are you going to be accountable to God and the day of judgment? What are you going to tell him about Halabja and the mass graves, the Iran-Iraq war, thousands and thousands executed? What are you going to tell God? He was exercising his French language.'"

NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

Applause dies down, acrimony takes over

London, Dec. 15 (Reuters): Near unanimous satisfaction among international powers at the US capture of Saddam Hussein was quickly giving way today to new diplomatic jostling over his fate and that of his oil-rich occupied nation.

Russia and France reminded the US of economic imperatives, Britain spoke out against Iraqis executing their former dictator.

Among Arabs, varied delight or relief in the halls of government mingled with some mistrust and resentment on the streets at the US might that had humbled a man many had looked up to as a defender of Arab and Muslim interests.

In Iraq, the grateful, Kalashnikov-fueled rejoicing that greeted pictures on Sunday of a dishevelled former ruler dragged from his "rest hole" fell silent; defiant voices were raised against the US occupiers, demanding immediate self-rule.

"The small Satan has gone and has been replaced by the biggest of all... America," Sheikh Hatdar Musawi, a radical cleric from Iraq's Shia Muslim majority, said. Shias hate Saddam, who oppressed them.

Sharp early rises in world stock markets and the dollar were followed by more sober assessments of how far Saddam's final demise would help stabilise Iraq.

UN allies like France and Germany, incensed by President George W. Bush's invasion, were

quick to offer congratulations. But disagreements about rebuilding Iraq soon resurfaced.

As Bush's envoy James Baker set off to persuade European governments to waive debts run up by Saddam, France seized the initiative by offering the new Iraqi leadership a rapid deal. But sources in the Paris Club of creditor nations stressed that would be conditional on Washington returning full sovereignty to Baghdad and on an internationally approved reconstruction plan.

Russia was notably cool about Saddam's arrest. "We are talking here about what is mainly a symbolic event," deputy foreign minister Yuri Fedotov said.

Another looming source of friction may be the trial.

Leading Iraqis said they want to try Saddam under a tribunal agreed with Washington. They want to be able to execute him.

Legal experts abroad questioned whether he could get a fair trial and urged an international process, though the US has set its face against a new UN war crimes court.

Iran, which lost 300,000 people — some in chemical attacks — after Saddam invaded, said it wanted an international trial.

It made clear it wanted Saddam to publicly reveal what Iran has long claimed — that the US quietly aided secular Baghdad in its 1980-88 war on the neighbouring Islamic republic.

"It should become clear at such a court who were those who mobilised this dictator to create turmoil in the region," government spokesman Abdollah Ramazanzadeh said in Tehran.

Despite the welcome for the news in Arab capitals, there was anger among many ordinary Arabs. "It was disgraceful to publish those pictures. It goes against human dignity, to present him like a gorilla," said Moroccan journalist Khalid Jama'i.

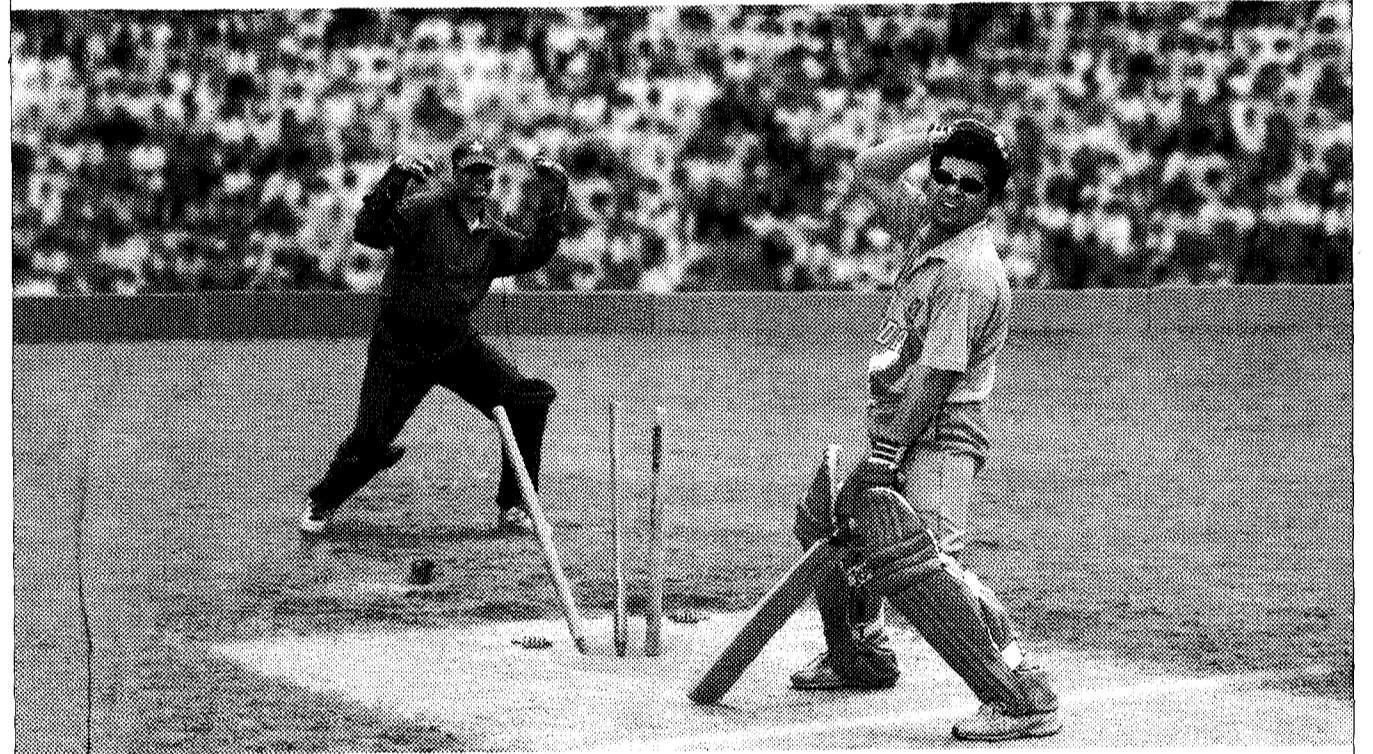
Washington's closest ally Britain said it would play no part in any trial of Saddam Hussein that might lead to his execution.

But London — which abolished capital punishment 40 years ago — also made clear it would reluctantly accept death for the captured ex-dictator if that was what an Iraqi tribunal ruled.

"The United Kingdom is against the death penalty," Britain's senior envoy to Iraq Jeremy Greenstock said. "So we would have no part of a tribunal or a process that had the death penalty as one of its penalties."

Besides the moral issue, some fear executing Saddam would make him a martyr in parts of the Arab world.

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JANUARY - 2004 BATCH LAST DATE - 20 - 01 - 2004

America can't make up its mind on troops

San Antonio (Texas), Aug. 26 (Agencies). US defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld said today troop levels in Iraq met the current needs of commanders in the field, as prominent voices in Washington called for extra forces to secure the country more than five months after the US invasion.

In Iraq, a bomb attack on a US convoy killed one soldier and wounded two today, as tension simmered among feuding ethnic groups in the north of the country and Shia factions in the south.

A US army spokeswoman said the convoy was attacked on a highway between the restive Sunni towns of Falluja and Ramadi, hotbeds of resistance against occupying American forces.

Speaking at a Veterans of Foreign Wars meeting in San Antonio, Rumsfeld said that analysis by the US joint chiefs of staff indicated the United States had enough troops in Iraq to execute its mission. Rumsfeld said after a visit to nearby Lackland Air Force Base that US central command chief Gen. John

Abizaid, who is responsible for US military operations in Iraq, has told him the number of troops in Iraq is "appropriate at the present time for the tasks that he has."

"There are some recommending that more US forces go in. I can tell you that if Gen Abizaid recommended it, it would happen in a minute. But he has not recommended it," Rumsfeld said, adding: "And the facts change continuously, on the ground, and we have to watch it continuously."

Rumsfeld was speaking a day

after prominent Republican Senator John McCain of Arizona called for "at least another division" of US troops — which could total about 20,000 troops — saying the situation in Iraq had become "a race against time."

Rumsfeld said US military leaders were not surprised at the calls for more troops and compared the situation to post-World War II Germany, where allied forces came under attack from former Nazi soldiers.

"Like the death squads in Iraq, they failed to stop the liberation of Germany," he said. "The

resistance but coalition faces today may appear more significant than otherwise might have been the case."

UN resolution

After a high-profile pitch at the UN for more countries to send troops to Iraq, the Bush administration is encountering resistance and may not seek a Security Council resolution after all, US officials said yesterday.

"We have not yet made a determination," deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage said, alluding to the possibility of a

new resolution. Other officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, noted the strong stand that some UN members had taken against the US decision to go to war with Iraq in march without the council's blessing.

Asked about the status of any new resolution, the US ambassador to the UN, John Negroponte, said: "We're nowhere near a text on Iraq." Secretary of state Colin Powell interrupted his vacation last Thursday to travel to New York and make the case for a new council resolution.



Donald Rumsfeld in San Antonio, Texas. (AFP)

27 AUG 2003

THE TELEGRAPH

U.S. plans to seek U.N. resolution on Iraq

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

NO. 13

WASHINGTON, Aug. 21. The Bush administration is planning to seek a new United Nations Resolution that will urge other nations to send in troops and economic aid for the so-called stabilisation of Iraq. The proposal is still in the preliminary stages and the Resolution could take the form of an appeal to nations to contribute troops and assistance or a request from the Iraqi Governing Council to the Security Council for help.

The first impression is that the United States will not be relinquishing the military leadership role, meaning that whatever international security force materialises — and this is a big 'if' at this time — it will be under American military command.

The Secretary of State, Colin Powell, is heading to New York for a meeting with the U.N. Secretary General, Kofi Annan. The British Foreign Secretary, Jack

Straw, will also be at the world body's headquarters. The idea behind a new Security Council Resolution would be to pave the way for countries like India, Pakistan and Turkey to send troops. An unnamed Indian diplomat has been quoted in *The New York Times* as saying that much would depend on the language of the new Resolution that comes about.

"Obviously, our government will have to see the wording of any new Resolution to see if it is in line with our thinking", the Indian diplomat has been quoted. The problem confronting the Bush administration is that it is keen on having any emerging Resolution on its terms — it wants other nations to send peacekeeping units but is unwilling or refusing to relent with the command and control of this international force.

That apart much as the State Department and the Pentagon might talk about "dozens" of countries already part of the

coalition or anxious to line up behind the United States, the Bush administration would very much like countries such as India and Pakistan to be part of the emerging scheme of things in Iraq, particularly from a security point of view.

"I think there's a lot of reflection and a lot of assessment going on as to what else might be done with the many challenges faced in Iraq. And among the possibilities is another Security Council Resolution", the top American U.N. envoy, John Negroponte said. Only very recently the Security Council gave its seal of approval on a United Nations mission in Iraq but nowhere near the scale of what had been long demanded by many in the international community.

With the passing of this Resolution came the distinct impression that the Bush administration had somehow given up on the idea of a broader mandate for the U.N., espe-

cially in the realm of peacekeeping duties. But the suicide bombing of the U.N. headquarters in Baghdad has changed the political and diplomatic environment.

Not many are impressed with the fashion in which this Republican administration is going about seeking a new Resolution at New York. In fact *The Washington Post* quotes a French diplomat taking the position that United States is making a "cynical" attempt to "take advantage" of the suffering of the United Nations staff members. And with this the warning has been that if Washington is going to use this tragic situation to check off all the things it had wanted thus far, that is simply not going to happen.

The message that the Bush administration is hearing in New York is that if it is really serious about an international force for Iraq, then there has to be a meaningful devolution of authority.

'Chemical Ali' is in US custody

Washington: The former high-ranking Iraqi official known as "Chemical Ali" is in the custody of US forces, a senior defence official said on Thursday. Ali



A.H. Majid

Hassan al-Majid, a cousin of Saddam Hussein, once ran Iraq's armed forces. Opponents gave him his nickname for his role in the 1988 chemical weapons attacks that killed thousands of Kurds in northern Iraq.

US officials at first thought that al-Majid was killed in April in an airstrike on a house in southern Iraq. But Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, told reporters in June that interrogations of Iraqi prisoners indicated that he might be alive. Officials gave no immediate details of how he came into US custody. Al-Majid was No. 5 on the US list of most-wanted Iraqis. He has been linked to the bloody crackdown on Shiites in southern Iraq after their uprising following the 1991 Gulf war.

He was governor of Kuwait during Iraq's seven-month occupation in 1990-1991, leading to the first Gulf war. Before the 1968 revolution, al-Majid was a simple warrant officer responsible for delivering messages by motorcycle. He rose under Saddam to become defence minister from 1991-95, as well as a regional party leader. AP

BAGHDAD BLAST / SECURITY COUNCIL SHOCKED

Bush vows to bring 'killers to justice'

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, AUG. 19. The U.S. President, George W. Bush, has condemned the suicide bombing of the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad that left 20 persons dead and many others wounded. Mr. Bush called the attackers "enemies of the civilised world" and vowed to continue this war on terror until "the killers are brought to justice".

Mr. Bush was informed of the blast by the National Security Adviser, Condoleezza Rice, while he was playing golf. He cut short the game and returned to his ranch in Crawford, Texas, to keep track of the developments. In a short statement, he said that he had spoken to the top U.S. civilian official in Iraq, Paul Bremer, and the U.N. Secretary General, Kofi Annan.

Mr. Bush said the terrorists were "enemies of the Iraqi people" and argued that the "civilised world will not be intimidated, and these killers will not determine the future of Iraq". Mr. Bush was accompanied by the Deputy Chief of Staff, Joe Hagin, and the Deputy



Sergio Vieira de Mello

National Security Adviser, Stephen Hadley, when he made the statement.

"The Iraqi people have been liberated from a dictator. Iraq is on an irreversible course towards self government and peace, and America and our friends in the United Nations will stand with the Iraqi people as they reclaim their nation and their future," he said. "By at-

tempting to spread chaos and fear, terrorists are testing our will. Across the world they are finding that our will cannot be shaken. We will persevere through every hardship" we will continue this war on terror until the killers are brought to justice, and we will prevail."

The blast in Baghdad comes at a time when a U.S. Congressional delegation is touring military sites in the country. In Washington, Senator Edward Kennedy, a Democrat who sits on the Armed Services Committee, condemned the bombing.

The Pentagon has not commented on who it believes is behind the attack. Speculation centres on the Al-Qaeda but no official has pinned the blame on Osama bin Laden and his network.

Meanwhile, at the U.N. headquarters in New York, members of the Security Council condemned the blast as a "terrorist attack". Speaking on behalf of the Council, the Deputy Syrian Ambassador, Fayssal Mekdad, said, "Members of the Council were shocked to hear of the terrorist attack in the U.N. headquarters in Baghdad."

THE HINDU

20 AUG 2003

KOREAN PENINSULA / PROVOCATIVE, FEEL DIPLOMATS

U.S. plans naval exercise

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, AUG. 18. In what would definitely be seen as provocative not only in the Korea peninsula but in the Asia Pacific and Russia, the Bush administration is planning a Joint Naval Exercise off north-eastern Australia next month to train for interdiction at sea arms and other materials heading the direction of North Korea. The *New York Times* is reporting.

Unnamed officials and Asian diplomats have been quoted as saying that the exercise will be carried out in the Coral Sea; and that 'officially' it would be directed at no one; but the principal intention was to send a sharp signal to Pyongyang to dismantle its nuclear weapons system. The fact that the U.S. is planning to send such an aggressive message is unlikely to go down well in the Asia Pacific and Russia, many of whom are getting ready for the six-nation meeting in Beijing next week, the principal topic being North Korea. For two days, representatives from the U.S., China, Russia, Japan, South Korea and North Korea will be gathered in the Chinese capital. And the Bush administration has not outright rejected the talk of some formal/informal bilateral meetings with the North Koreans during this session.

The apprehension among diplomats, according to the newspaper's story, is that the Coral Sea

exercises off north-eastern Australia will be seen as provocative not only by North Korea — which has been demanding a change in the U.S. attitude — but also by China and Russia. Both Beijing and Moscow have repeatedly told the U.S. that a tight-fisted and confrontational policy towards Pyongyang will do little to ease the problem. "We are not saying which countries are being targeted, because it would not be politically wise. But the U.S. believes that one of the reasons why North Korea has agreed to the six-party talks in Beijing is that they are feeling the pinch," an Asian diplomat has been quoted as saying.

What is taking place is that this Republican administration is trying to tighten interdiction of arms and materials heading to North Korea as well as weapons and missile heading out of it; and at the same time Washington is trying to draw up a maritime interdiction regime in international waters to its liking. One of its chief proponents is the Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, John Bolton. It has to be recalled that Mr. Bolton during a recent visit to South Korea sharply criticised North Korea and its leader which was seen in some quarters as being intemperate. Pyongyang came back with stinging attacks on Mr. Bolton with the warning that he should not represent the U.S. at the Beijing meet.

SEE HINDU

19 AUG 2003

US fights oil blaze, says lensman's death a mishap

Baghdad, Aug. 18 (Reuters): US army engineers battled a blaze today on Iraq's main oil export pipeline — a crucial lifeline for the floundering economy — after two attacks by saboteurs last week set it on fire.

In Baghdad, the US military said it was investigating the

death of Reuters cameraman Mazen Dana, shot dead by an American soldier yesterday as he filmed outside a prison. He was the 18th journalist killed since the invasion of Iraq on March 20. The US military acknowledged that one of its soldiers had killed Dana, saying the

journalist's camera had been mistaken for a rocket-propelled grenade launcher. Dana was the second Reuters journalist to be killed by US troops in Iraq.

"Last night we had a terrible tragedy," US army spokesperson Colonel Guy Shields said. "I can assure you no one feels worse

than the soldier who fired the shots."

Reuters chief executive Tom Glozer called for "the fullest and most comprehensive investigation into this terrible tragedy".

The New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists and Reuters Sans Frontieres (Re-

porters Without Borders) in Paris also urged US authorities to conduct a full inquiry.

World media bodies demanded a public inquiry today into the killing of the cameraman, the second journalist from the international news agency to be killed in Iraq in four months.

A Danish soldier was also killed over the weekend when his patrol tried to arrest looters who were stealing copper power cables west of the southern city of Basra. A military spokesperson said it was possible the soldier had been killed by accident by another member of the patrol.

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19 AUG 2003

US no to greater UN role in Iraq

HT Correspondent
& Agencies
New York/Baghdad, Aug. 14

THE BUSH administration has abandoned the idea of giving the United Nations more of a role in the occupation of Iraq as sought by India, France, and other countries as a condition for their participation in peacekeeping there, administration officials said. Instead, the US would widen its effort to enlist other countries to assist the occupation forces in Iraq.

In addition to 139,000 US forces in Iraq, there are 21,000 troops representing 18 countries. At present, 11,000 of that number are from Britain. The US plans to seek larger numbers to help, especially with relief supplies that are coming from another dozen countries.

Administration officials told *The New York Times* that in spite of the difficult security situation in Iraq, there was a consensus in the administration that it would be better to work with these countries than to involve the UN or countries that opposed the war and are now eager to exercise influence in post-war Iraq.

"The administration is not willing to confront going to the Security Council and

Saddam on the run in Tikrit

A SENIOR US commander said on Thursday he had good reason to believe Saddam Hussein was around his hometown of Tikrit and would be caught "sooner rather than later".

Colonel James Hickey, commander of the 1st Brigade of the 4th Infantry Division, which is

leading the hunt for Saddam in the area around Tikrit, said the ex-president was moving in ever-diminishing circles. "He's running out of space and he's running out of support. We're going to get him and it's going to be sooner rather than later... Watch this space."

Reuters, Tikrit

saying, "We really need to make Iraq an international operation," an administration official told the *Times*. "You can make a case that it would be better to do that, but right now the situation in Iraq is not that dire." The administration's position, the *Times* said, could complicate its hopes of bringing a large number of US troops home in short order.

Oil trouble

Sabotage and theft of power cables could bring southern Iraq's oil industry grinding to a halt, strangling exports crucial to rebuilding the economy, a senior official said on Thursday.

Violence erupted in the impoverished Shia neighbourhood of Sadr City in Baghdad on Wednesday as thousands of people protested after a US helicopter tried to remove the banner of a religious school from a communications tower.

Locals said American soldiers fired into the crowd during the protest. American troops apologised for the firing. But, a sheikh said the apology was not enough, and that locals wanted US troops to leave the district.

Meanwhile, a British soldier was killed and two wounded after a bomb blast hit a military ambulance in the southern city of Basra, a military spokesman said.

1 5 AUG 2003

U.S. seeks U.N. mission for Iraq

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

HD-16 15/8

WASHINGTON, AUG. 14. The U.S. has presented a resolution at the Security Council that would see the setting up of a United Nations mission in Iraq; and one that would also welcome the Iraqi Governing Council as "an important step" in the process of forming a real government in Baghdad.

The U.S. resolution was presented formally on Wednesday with the draft circulated among the 10 non-permanent members. Washington had apparently worked on the draft with the four other veto-holding nations, especially Russia, China and France. U.S. would like to have the resolution voted on and passed on Thursday after a meeting in New York. But Syria, which is currently the President of the Council, is not so sure that a vote can come about on Thursday. Indications are that if a vote is scheduled, Syria might abstain or vote against the resolution.

Indications are that this new resolution on Iraq is nowhere near what countries such as India, France and Germany wanted in terms of a United Nations mandate that will facilitate peacekeeping and 'stabilisation' operations inside Iraq. A report in *The New York Times* says that the Bush administration has abandoned the idea of giving a larger role to the world body as sought by France and India and instead work with "other countries" to assist the occupation forces in Iraq. According to *The Times*, there is the consensus within the administration that it would be better to work with these countries than to involve the U.N. or with countries that opposed the war.

THE HINDO

1 5 AUG 2003

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The US-EU detente ^{us (u)}

15/8

Time To Clarify Our Stand On Agriculture

THE agreement between the United States (US) and European Union (EU) on agriculture and non-agriculture market access is being seen as an important breakthrough ahead of the WTO ministerial at Cancun. This marks an end to the prolonged wrangling between the two largest trading blocks on critical issues of market access such as the hugely trade-distorting agriculture subsidies (EU being the main culprit) and the largely US-sponsored proposal to move to zero tariffs on the bulk of manufactured items by 2015. Initial reports suggest that the deal between the two big trading partners is one of give-and-take, in which the US will not pressure the EU for sharper cuts in tariffs and subsidies in agriculture trade. In return, the EU may support the US's case for sharper across-the-board cuts in tariffs in manufacturing. As a sop, the US has dropped its proposal for moving to zero-tariffs by 2015. The EU had found this proposal impractical, and its Trade Commissioner, Pascal Lamy, had recently said the idea of zero tariffs could scare away most trading partners. The US, it seems, has seen the logic of that argument. But the EU may, in return, agree to substantial reductions in non-agriculture tariffs to suit US needs. This understanding between the US and EU will have a major impact at Cancun.

Where does all this leave developing countries like India? On the face of it, India and other developing economies may lose some of the bargaining capacity that existed earlier as a result of the sharp differences between the US and EU. In fact, it is partly the result of the differences between the US and EU that enabled countries like India and Brazil to seek critical concessions on TRIPS and public health. On agriculture, India's position has been wavering somewhat. India has, in principle, supported the Cairns Group of agro-product exporting nations but, of late, it has not been very zealous in pushing the EU for drastic subsidy cuts. That is because India feels countries like Australia, Argentina and Brazil have a competitive edge in agri-exports. But now India will have to take a clearer stand on agriculture and push for greater market access in the EU and US since, presumably, the two have come closer.

DL

The Economic Times

15 AUG 2003

Three held in FBI undercover operation

Indian dealer in missile traffic

K.P. NAYAR

Washington, Aug. 13: A London-based Indian arms dealer, who thought he was selling a surface-to-air missile to Islamic terrorists, was arrested in New Jersey yesterday by undercover FBI agents who posed as al Qaida operatives seeking the weapon to bring down Air Force One, the official plane of President George W. Bush.

Hemant Lakhani, 68, a British national, is said to be prominent in the international arms trade.

British Airways today abruptly suspended all its flights to Saudi Arabia after Lakhani was nabbed from his hotel near Newark airport in New Jersey. He was arrested shortly after he picked up the missile, disguised as medical equipment, from Baltimore port, where it had arrived by ship from Russia.

The US presidential plane is equipped with deterrents against missiles, but some defence experts here said today that the sophisticated "Igla" SA-18 missile system smuggled into Baltimore by Lakhani may have been capable of actually hitting the plane.

Also arrested at the same time as Lakhani were two gem dealers on New York's posh Fifth Avenue who laundered money for Lakhani's transactions through hawala, the illegal, par-



Hemant Lakhani being driven to the Newark court. (AP)

allel banking system.

Both men are US nationals, but one is of Pakistani origin and the other is from Afghanistan, it is understood.

Lakhani was produced at the US magistrate court in Newark today, where judge Susan Wigenton ordered that he be held without bail pending a custody hearing on Monday.

Another defendant, Moinuddeen Ahmed Hameed, was ordered to detention without bail till a hearing next Wednesday on charges of conspiring to operate an unlicensed money remittance business.

Charges will also be filed against a third man, Yehuda Abraham, in the federal court in

Manhattan later on Wednesday for alleged money laundering.

The sting operation began almost a year ago in St Petersburg after the Federal Security Service (FSB), successor to the KGB, the Soviet secret service, discovered that Lakhani was in Russia shopping for a missile capable of bringing down aeroplanes.

When Bush, Russian President Vladimir Putin and British Prime Minister Tony Blair met in St Petersburg subsequently for the city's 300th anniversary, they cleared final touches on the joint sting operation on Lakhani by the FSB, the CIA as well as MI-5 and MI-6, the British spy agencies.

Lakhani's conversations were taped, he was video-graphed and is on record as promising 50 more "Igla" missiles to FBI agents posing as al Qaida men. The cost of each piece was to be \$85,000.

As part of the sting operation, the Russians sold Lakhani an inert "Igla" missile, whose explosives had been removed before shipment even though the weapon was under the care of American and Russian agents throughout its journey to the US.

Sergei Ignatchenko, head of the FSB's public relations centre, who is now in Washington, said this was the first joint spy operation by Russian, US, and UK special services after the end of the Cold War.

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Iraqi reconstruction, a headache for Bush

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, Aug. 12. There is a new aspect of the mess in Iraq that has started to attract attention in the media and one that promises to be a major headache for the Republican administration — the price of not only keeping the war going but the mounting cost of reconstruction.

The Bush administration is trying to make the case that the total cost over a three-year period would be \$100 billions; but private estimates put that figure at \$600 billions and over a 10-year period. And with an administration clearly unwilling to play the game straight with Congress on grounds that the situation in Iraq is still "fluid", lawmakers — Republicans and Demo-

crats — are furious.

Here is a sampling of the various figures that have been put out: for the first nine months this year, it has been estimated by the Pentagon Budget Office that military activities in Iraq is expected to total some \$58 billions; officials at the Pentagon have said on different occasions that it is costing close to \$4 billions on a monthly basis (and with Afghanistan taken into account, that figure climbs to \$5 billions); and the Congressional Budget Office has projected that American military efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan and other terrorism-related operations will come close to \$60 billions next year. And in all these estimates, the reconstruction of a devastated country is not included and the price tag for this is anyone's

guess.

The closest to the administration's thinking came from its top civilian official in Baghdad, L. Paul Bremer, who noted last week that getting Iraq "up and running again" could cost \$100 billions over three years.

"It's probably well above \$50 billions, \$60 billions, maybe \$100 billions. It's a lot of money", Mr. Bremer said in an interview. In fact, the top official in occupied Iraq said that setting right the electrical grid and repairing the water system alone would cost about \$30 billions.

The refrain of officials when they have come before Congressional panels or in talking to the media is that there are a number of things unknown in Iraq and that cannot be projected. And

they have talked about things like possible contributions from allies and the revenues that are going to be realised from Iraqi oil sales when once this comes back to the pre-war levels.

But what lawmakers, especially the Republicans, are worried about is that the White House will be coming to Congress soon with an appropriations request for \$50 billions for next year; and this would set the stage for the political fight with many lawmakers on both sides wanting to know two things: why the American taxpayer must continue funding the mess in Iraq; and how

this administration can justify the appropriations request when the Federal deficit is running close to \$500 billions. And next year is election year, Presidential and Congressional.

U.S. says Moussaoui plotted to fly plane into White House

WASHINGTON, Aug. 9. The U.S. Justice Department has told a federal judge that it has a witness and other proof that Zacarias Moussaoui was plotting to fly a hijacked plane into the White House in 2001 and had bought knives for the attack, according to a secret court transcript made public on Friday. The heavily edited transcript of a hearing on Jan. 30 shows that a Justice Department lawyer told Judge Leonie M. Brinkema of the U.S. District Court in Alexandria, Va., that Moussaoui, the sole person facing trial in an American court for conspiring in the 9/11 attacks, "was keenly aware of why he was here — it was to fly a plane into the White House."

Until now, the Justice Department has refused to confirm reports based on court documents suggesting that prosecutors believed that Moussaoui had specific instructions from Al-Qaeda to plan an attack on the White House, an attack separate from the four hijackings on Sept. 11, 2001.

The transcript of the secret hearing shows that the Government theory says Moussaoui planned to attack the White House, a theory based in large part on the testimony of a Malaysian, Faiz Bafana, who met Moussaoui three years ago at his house in Malaysia and has been linked to Al-Qaeda. Bafana is in custody in Singapore.

In the hearing on Jan. 30, an assistant U.S. Attorney, Kenneth M. Karas, said, "The evidence is clear" that "Moussaoui was keenly aware of why he was here."

"It was to fly a plane into the White House," Mr. Karas said. "It was going to involve others. The fact that he didn't know the precise whereabouts or even if we can assume he didn't know the names of the people doesn't mean he doesn't know the objects of the conspiracy."

"He was sent here as part of the plot. That's what Bafana says. It's what people who are in the know say," Mr. Karas said. "We've got Moussaoui's own words that he gave

to Bafana. His participation goes beyond just sitting around. He goes to the Afghanistan camps. He's a member of Al-Qaeda. He goes to Malaysia to try to get money and to try to get training. He does what all the other hijackers do. He comes to America."

Moussaoui, a Frenchman, has acknowledged that he is a member of Al-Qaeda and is loyal to Osama bin Laden. But he has denied involvement in a plot against the White House and has pleaded not guilty to charges that he conspired in the Sept. 11 attacks. He was arrested in August 2001 on immigration charges after arousing the suspicion of his instructors at a flight school in Eagan, Minn.

His court-appointed legal advisers have suggested that Bafana's testimony could actually prove useful to the defence, because it will show that Bafana believed Moussaoui to be mentally unbalanced.

In court papers made public in June, the lawyers said that in a pre-trial deposition Bafana had remem-

bered that Moussaoui had "talked freely in Bafana's home about a 'dream' he had to fly an airplane into the White House."

The lawyers said Bafana and the terrorists' leader in Southeast Asia "concluded that, based on his conduct, Moussaoui was crazy ('cuckoo')."

Ms. Brinkema announced on Thursday that she was unsealing five transcripts of secret hearings. The transcripts were actually made public on Friday.

The case against Moussaoui is in limbo after the Justice Department announced last month that it would refuse to comply with an order by the judge to make a captured terrorist from Al-Qaeda available for questioning by Moussaoui and his court-appointed lawyers.

Ms. Brinkema has said she is weighing sanctions against the Government, possibly including dismissing the case in civilian court, a move that would almost certainly result in

Moussaoui's transfer to a military tribunal.

In a separate decision on Friday, the judge announced that she had blocked correspondence between Moussaoui and an imprisoned terrorist from Al-Qaeda after the FBI had apparently determined that Moussaoui might have tried to send coded messages to the terrorist in a letter.

Ms. Brinkema said Moussaoui sent the letter to Richard C. Reid, who is serving a life sentence after pleading guilty last year to trying to blow up an airliner over the Atlantic with explosives in his shoes. She rejected Moussaoui's request that his

correspondence to Reid be forwarded to the so-called shoe bomber, noting an "apparent determination by the F.B.I. that a recent letter from Moussaoui to Reid may concern embedded or 'coded' messages."

She noted in her order that special pre-trial procedures in Moussaoui's case let the FBI seize any incoming or outgoing mail. — *New York Times*

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10-12-10

Bremer hints at early Iraq polls

Baghdad, July 31

IRAQ'S US-APPOINTED governing council, struggling with questions about its legitimacy, could be replaced by an elected government in less than a year, Iraq's US administrator said on Thursday. An American soldier was killed as troops chased Saddam Hussein from hideout to hideout in Iraq.

L. Paul Bremer, a former diplomat, said he believed a new constitution could be written and accepted by the Iraqi people in a referendum, followed by general elections by the middle of next year.

"It is certainly not unrealistic to think that we could have elections by mid-year 2004," Bremer said while touring the partially refurbished Iraqi Foreign Ministry with members of the interim government he appointed on July 13.

"And when a sovereign government is installed, the coalition authority will cede authority to the government and my job here will be over."

In the past, Bremer had spoken about a government being in place by the end of 2004. His optimism was surprising given that it took the Governing Council more than two weeks to agree on a presidency.

When the 25 members



MERCY PLEA. The mother and brother of a 'suspect' arrested by US troops plead with them after an armoured vehicle was attacked in Baghdad on Thursday. REUTERS

were unable to select a single president, they tried to come up with a three-member presidency, failing again and finally deciding on a nine-member team that will each hold the presidency for a month, council sources said. The legitimacy of Iraq's government is key to rebuilding the country.

On Wednesday, World Bank President James Wolfensohn said it was unclear whether the council had the legitimacy to receive international loans.

"Clearly a constitution and an elected government would constitute a recognised government, but what

do we do in the meantime?" Wolfensohn said during a trip to Baghdad.

Saddam sons' burial

The US-led authority in Iraq on Thursday said it was working on burial arrangements for Saddam Hussein's

sons. Secretary of State Colin Powell on Thursday approved a \$30 million reward to the person who led US forces to Saddam's sons. Media reports have said that he is Nawaf al-Zeidane, in whose house the sons took refuge.

Agencies

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

1 AUG 2003

N. Korea: U.S. firm on multilateral talks

By P. S. Suryanarayana 10/14

SINGAPORE, JULY 31. The U.S. Under-Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, John Robert Bolton, now on a mission to East Asia to try and jump-start a stalled dialogue on the North Korean nuclear weapons 'programme', today delivered a blunt message to Pyongyang.

Speaking in Seoul, where he held talks with the South Korean leaders including the Foreign Minister, Yoon Young-kwan, Mr. Bolton said that the U.S. and its allies "will not waver" in insisting that "those with a direct stake" in the outcome of any negotiations with Pyongyang "must be part of the process" aimed at using peaceful means to disarm North Korea of its nuclear-weapons capabilities.

According to Mr. Bolton, "the crucial players in the (East Asian) region" as regards any efforts to persuade or pressure Pyongyang into giving up its nuclear posture were also "the countries most threatened by Kim Jong-il," leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. "The roles of Seoul and Tokyo are vital for finding any permanent solution" to the nu-

clear issue. Mr. Bolton recognised that South Korea was opposed to the idea of taking the DPRK issue to the U.N. Security Council at this stage as it would infuriate Pyongyang.

Anyway, he said, "We believe that appropriate and timely action by the Security Council would complement our efforts on the multilateral track in Beijing."

The reference was to the talks already held in Beijing among the DPRK as also the U.S. and China, with the possibility that those talks might be resumed and also enlarged to include South Korea and Japan besides, perhaps, Russia too.

Even while claiming to open a window on Pyongyang, Mr. Bolton portrayed Mr. Kim in very dim light. The U.S. envoy said that "while he (Mr. Kim) lives as royalty in Pyongyang, he keeps hundreds of thousands of his people locked in prisons, camps, with millions more moored in abject poverty." According to Mr. Bolton, "life is a hellish nightmare" for "many in North Korea".

While Mr. Bolton's frontal attack on the DPRK leadership did not quite suit South Korea's own agenda of seeking to keep

Pyongyang on the right side of the dialogue process, the talks that he had held with the Chinese officials a few days ago formed the backdrop for the telephonic conversation that the Presidents of the U.S. and China, George Bush and Hu Jintao, held on Wednesday night, at Washington's initiative.

The two Presidents exchanged views on how best to promote a "peaceful solution" to the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula.

Mr. Bush's conversation with Mr. Hu took place in the bilateral context, too, of mixed signals from the U.S. about its view of China. At one level, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security announced that China had formally joined a Washington-sponsored Container Security Initiative, aimed at the screening of high-risk cargo-containers as part of the international "war against terrorism."

At another level, the Pentagon's latest annual report on China's military power underlined that "Beijing apparently believes that the U.S. poses a significant long-term challenge" to mainland China, especially in regard to Taiwan.

U.S. changes tack on Iraq

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

NEW YORK, JULY 28. In what appears to be a new spin on what is taking place in Iraq, a senior Pentagon official has said that what is going on in that country is the "central battle" in the "war on terrorism".

The Deputy Secretary of Defence, Paul Wolfowitz, was asked on Sunday about the growing American casualties in what even the Commander of the Central Command, Gen. John Abizaid, had acknowledged as a "classical guerilla type campaign". But the Number Two civilian official in the Defence Department had a different take on the subject. "It is a sacrifice that is going to make our children and our grandchildren safer because the battle to win the peace in Iraq now is the central battle in the war on terrorism", he said.

Mr. Wolfowitz has continued to call the groups attacking American soldiers in Iraq as ter-

rorists. "We went to war and I believe we are still fighting terrorists and terrorist supporters in Iraq in a battle that will make this country safer in the future from terrorism", the official said. All along, the Bush administration has been making the case that the central battleground for terrorism was Afghanistan. But in the latest version from Mr. Wolfowitz, Afghanistan is "another battlefield" and a "very important one" at that. Members of Congress, during the run-up to the war against Iraq and thereafter, have been repeatedly making the point that going after Saddam Hussein and his so-called weapons of mass destruction was a major distraction in the fight against terrorism, the Al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden. "It took our focus off our number one enemy, Al-Qaeda, and refocused it on Iraq and has, therefore, allowed Al-Qaeda to regenerate", argued Senator Bob Graham, a Democratic

hopeful for the November 2004 presidential poll.

Mr. Wolfowitz raised further eyebrows when he argued that the nature of terrorism intelligence as intrinsically "murky". He was asked about the administration's use of intelligence on Iraq's weapons that was supposedly the chief rationale for the war.

But at least one senior lawmaker on Capitol Hill was not amused by this response. "Boy, it sure didn't sound murky before the war. There were clear connections we were told between Al-Qaeda and Iraq. There was no murkiness, no nuance, no uncertainty about it at all", retorted Senator Carl Levin, a Michigan Democrat who is a senior member of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

The Bush administration's handling of the crisis and conflict in Iraq — which in many quarters is seen as a big mess — continues to be a major focus on Capitol Hill.

29 JUL 2003

THE HINDO

W. S. H. A. S. H.

DEATHS AND RESISTANCE

110-10
27/7

THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION is fooling itself if it thinks that the killing of the sons of the overthrown Iraqi President, Saddam Hussein, will quell the resistance to its occupation of the country. In the U.S. projection, Mr. Hussein and the remnants of his regime provide the inspiration and organisation for the forces of resistance. Its current military operations are, therefore, directed at the tracking down and elimination of Mr. Hussein and his close associates. The deaths of Uday and Qusay Hussein are perceived as marking a turning point in these operations. Such an assessment is based on wishful thinking. Mr. Hussein might not be able to elude pursuit forever. However, his capture or death will not reduce, and might indeed exacerbate, the resentment of thousands of Ba'ath party members who have been left without a future. Although it has gone underground, the Ba'ath provides an organisational structure and its cadre includes many trained and armed former soldiers. Many Ba'ath party members in the Sunni triangle of central Iraq are also bound to one another by ties of tribal loyalties. These assorted linkages are likely to be resilient enough to keep the resistance alive.

Washington's response to the Iraqi resistance suffers from a fundamental flaw. It has either swallowed its own propaganda or hopes that the people of Iraq will ignore fundamental realities. There can be no other explanation for the Bush administration's claim that the Iraqis will eventually understand that the U.S.-U.K. occupation has a benign purpose. The vast majority of Iraqis have a diametrically opposite perception of the situation. Mr. Hussein may have been a brutal dictator with many enemies and calamitous blunders to answer for; but today the central issue before the people of Iraq is how to regain the independence and sovereignty of their na-

tion. The U.S.-led invasion and occupation has caused death, destroyed livelihoods, disrupted health and other public services, and inflicted national humiliation. Western companies have garnered most of the oil contracts the occupying powers have handed out. The funds generated from oil sales will be used to pay the mostly western firms that have been given the contracts for reconstruction. Iraqi industry is to be privatised and since few people in Iraq have the purchasing capacity, these assets too are likely to pass into foreign hands. In short, the perception is growing in Iraq and elsewhere in West Asia that the real objective of the occupation is the systematic loot of Iraq's national wealth.

Contrary to American propaganda, the resistance in Iraq does not stem from disgruntled members of the Ba'ath party alone. The roots of the resistance run much deeper and wider since it has a patriotic character. Shia clerics in the south of the country have called for an uprising against the occupying powers and the compliant council that has been set up as a façade for Iraqi self-government. Arab nationalists and fervent Islamists from other countries of the region are rallying to the resistance. Uday and Qusay hardly qualify as noble symbols of national resistance, but the fact that they fought to the death against overwhelming odds has resonated in the societies of West Asia. Repetitive telecasts of the images of their remains and the failure to comply with traditional custom, which enjoins a swift internment, have fed the anger. Washington's efforts to import soldiers from other countries virtually as mercenaries to replace its own battle-weary troops can only encourage the resistance. Iraqi patriots have reason to believe that the will of the United States will weaken as the people's hostility to the occupation grows steadily.

THE HINDO

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3 U.S. soldiers killed in attack

27/2

BAGHDAD, JULY 26. Three U.S. soldiers were killed as they guarded a children's hospital in Baqouba on Saturday, and four others were injured, scuttling hopes a widespread guerilla insurgency might lose strength after the deaths of two of Saddam Hussein's sons.

In Mosul, U.S. forces tore down the badly damaged villa where Uday and Qusai were killed on Tuesday.

Also on Saturday, aides to two members of Iraq's American-picked Governing Council said the group would name Cabinet Ministers and set up a committee to start drafting a constitution within two weeks. Both spoke on condition of anonymity. The aide to Adnan Pachachi, a former Iraqi Foreign Minister, said the move was an attempt to speed the transition away from the American occupation, which he said could be over by the end of 2004.

The other source of the report was an assistant to Mohammed Bahr al-Uloum, a respected Sha Muslim member of the Council.

The dead soldiers were attacked with grenades in Baqouba, 72 km northeast of Baghdad. Witnesses told an Associated Press photographer that the soldiers had gone to guard the hospital after some of their comrades were wounded in a separate attack and taken there for treatment.

Maj. William Thurmond, a coalition military spokesman, said three of the injured soldiers were treated and returned to their unit. The fourth was evacuated to a military hospital.

The deaths brought to 161 the number of troops killed in Iraq since the start of the war, 14

more than were killed in the 1991 Gulf War. The guerilla attacks on American forces have averaged 12 a day, according to the military.

The killings marred what had been a quiet day in Iraq, as residents debated the authenticity of video images of Uday (39), and Qusai (37), released on Friday.

The United States let reporters view the bodies and videotape them on Friday when it became clear that pictures of

I'm free at last: Uday's double

BERLIN, JULY 26. A former double of Saddam Hussein's elder son, Uday, said he was relieved at the news of his erstwhile boss's death and felt "free at last", in an interview to be published tomorrow in the German paper *Welt am Sonntag*.

"For the first time I feel really free," declared Latif Yahia, who was Uday's double for five years before fleeing to Manchester, in northern England, after the Gulf war in 1991. He said when he had heard that Uday and his brother, Qusai, had been killed in a raid by U.S. troops in Mosul, "I called my wife to tell her to put champagne on ice to celebrate." — AFP

the two men taken shortly after their deaths had not convinced all Iraqi people the feared brothers were dead.

The brothers' thick beards — grown, officials said, during their 3 1/2 months on the run — were shaved and trimmed, their

The U.S. military's evidence

The U.S. military showed reporters the bodies of Odai and Qusai Hussein on Friday in an attempt to convince Iraqis that the brothers had indeed been killed in Tuesday's raid at Mosul.

How the bodies were identified

Qusai, 37

Dental records show the corpse was missing the same tooth in the upper jaw that previous x-rays show.



DNA samples taken from bone muscle prove they are brothers.

Odai, 39



Teeth show the same level of enamel erosion as his x-rays.

Scar on right thigh where skin was removed during surgery in a 1996 assassination attempt.

8-inch bar in left leg has the same model and serial number as that implanted during the 1996 surgery.

SOURCE: Associated Press

AP

faces rebuilt and a gash was gone from the face of the body identified as Odai.

Baghdad erupted in celebratory gunfire after news of the brothers' death was reported. The *Al-Mutamar* newspaper reported on Saturday that the bullets falling back to earth killed 31 Iraqis and injured 76 others.

Results of the DNA testing on the bodies of Uday and Qusai at a military lab in Washington

could be completed by next week.

A final report on the deaths is expected in about six weeks, the medical personnel said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

In Baghdad's al-Shoala neighbourhood, the commander of Iraq's National Police Academy was wounded in a raid against suspected hijackers, police told The Associated Press. Iraq. — AP

With photos US buries old dilemma

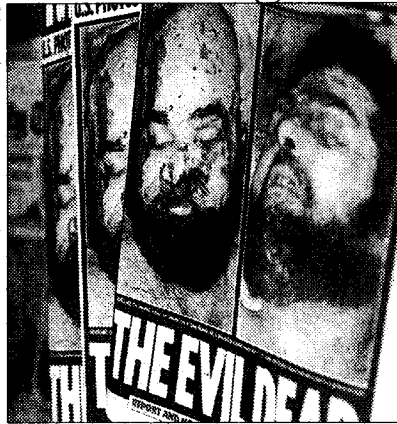
KEN RINGLE

WASHINGTON, JULY 25

THE issue is sanitation of imagery. War is an unpleasant business, death itself rarely less so. Therefore, if you're a government or a newspaper or broadcaster, how do you treat visual images of shattered corpses that war provides?

On Thursday, allied forces in Iraq reached a Solomon-like (or maybe Kafka-like) decision regarding photographs of Uday and Qusay, the two sons of Saddam who were killed in a shootout with US forces. The people of Iraq lived in terror under those two Baathist princelings. Iraqis are understandably skeptical of reports that this time the two are dead; the US military is reluctant to parade photographic evidence of bullet-riddled battle fodder, enemy or domestic. On Thursday, the dilemma was solved through the release of Uday and Qusay's death photos by the US. The shots provided for television showed the two to have been knocked around, and they certainly didn't look alive.

This squeamishness about violent death is a relatively modern sensibility. Highwaymen and bandits were once drawn and quartered, and hung in pieces at country crossroads as a cautionary display. In the



Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld defended the release of Uday and Qusay's photos saying the Iraqis need to know that Saddam's sons were dead and "not coming back". Reuters

modern West, however, the industrialisation of death has been coupled with a curious reluctance to display photographic evidence of what that industrialisation means. The famous photos of Pearl Harbor show no American dead. The government banned publication of any photos of dead US servicemen until more than two years into WW-II. "Eventually they decided this was dishonest and released three photos from Buna Beach in New Guinea," said his-

torian and critic Paul Fussell. "The pictures of the dead didn't show any faces."

Fussell acknowledged that the photos did at least show bodies, but said, "Unless you show guts hanging from trees like Christmas decorations, you're not showing what war is really all about."

There have been exceptions when dealing with the enemy. In April 1945, many newspapers and newsreels showed pictures of Italian dictator Benito Mussolini and his mistress, Clara Petacci, after they had been shot and hung upside down in a public square while trying to escape.

As the 20th century dawned and wore on, Americans began to fence off death verbally with euphemisms ("passed away," "passed on"), geographically with "sleep rooms" and "funeral parlors," and visually by hiding photographs of corpses.

We may seek out movies in which actors appear to get beheaded, slashed to pieces and blown apart, but we hesitate to look closely at how completely and efficiently we do that in real life even to our enemies, much less to each other. We have developed a kind of prudery about death. Maybe if we don't look at it too closely we can convince ourselves that the corpse in the photo that we don't see has nothing whatsoever to do with us.

—LATWP

INDIAN EXPRESS

INDIAN EXPRESS

26 JUL 2003

DEATH OF HUSSEIN BROTHERS / INSURGENCY UNABATED

Three U.S. soldiers killed in attack on convoy

W (W)
12/22

BAGHDAD, JULY 24. Three American soldiers were killed on Thursday when their convoy was hit by gunfire and rocket-propelled grenades in northern Iraq, a military spokeswoman said. In Baghdad, two Iraqis were killed when their car approached a U.S. military checkpoint.

The killings were further signs that the insurgency against American troops isn't losing its strength.

The Arab satellite broadcaster *Al-Arabiya* aired a tape of what it said were a group of Saddam Fedayeen militia vowing revenge for the deaths of Uday and Qusai Hussein.

"We want to say to the occupation forces, they said last night that killing Uday and Qusai will diminish (resistance) attacks, but we want to say to them that their death will increase attacks against them," one of three masked men in the tape read from a statement.

The Fedayeen militia was once led by Uday. Coalition officials have repeatedly blamed former militia members for some of the attacks on U.S. soldiers. The attack on the soldiers was the second in two days that killed members of the 101st Airborne Division, which led the intense but sporadic fiery assault in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul that killed Uday and Qusai. In Baghdad, a spokesman for the Coalition Provisional Authority said some



A picture released by the U.S. forces shows the bodies of Qusai (left) and Uday, sons of the toppled Iraqi leader, Saddam Hussein. — AFP

members of the country's Governing Council were shown the brothers' bodies, which are being kept at Baghdad International Airport.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, the spokesman said the CPA was also talking with the Council about how to release pictures of the bodies to the public. Many Iraqis are likely to remain sceptical of the U.S. account of the brothers' death without proof. "There isn't the slightest doubt in our minds that these are the bodies of Uday and Qusai," he said.

The military spokeswoman, Spc. Nicole Thompson, in Baghdad said the soldiers killed on Thursday were travelling in a convoy toward Qayyarah, 300

km north of the capital, when they were attacked. No other soldiers in the convoy near Mosul were wounded, Spc. Thompson said, adding the convoy's starting point wasn't known. There was no word if any of the attackers were acting out of revenge over the deaths of Uday and Qusai.

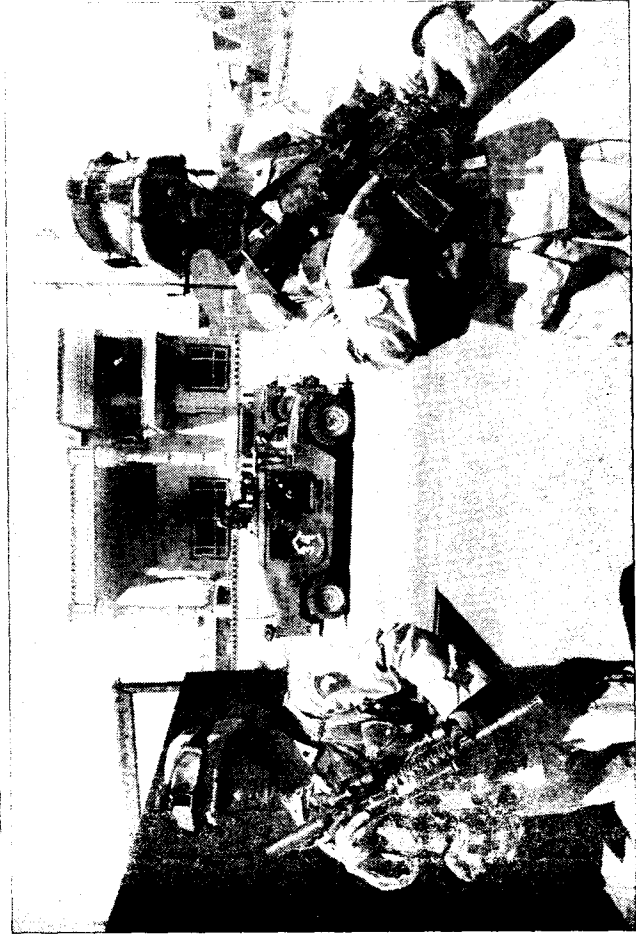
In Sadr City, a poor suburb of Baghdad, formerly called Saddam City, some residents wanted to be sure the brothers were dead. "We heard about Uday and Qusai being killed and, frankly, we are happy," one man said. "The question is, what's the proof of them being killed? We heard about it, but we haven't seen any proof so far." — AP

THE FINDB

25 JUL 2003

WORLD HAILS DEATHS, MOSUL SHOCKED, BAGHDAD CELEBRATES ■ SADDAM TAPE AIRED ■ TWO US SOLDIERS KILLED

Special Republican Guards chief held



(Left) US soldiers guard the burned out home in Mosul where Uday and Qusay were killed. (Centre) Mr George W Bush speaks with special Iraqi ambassador Mr L Paul Bremer at the White House. Mosul residents chant pro-Saddam slogans during a demonstration on Wednesday. — AFP

Hussein on Sunday called on fighters loyal to him to persist in their uprising against the US-led occupation force.

But the bloody insurgency showed no signs of letting up. Two US soldiers were killed and eight wounded today in two separate explosions Ramadi, west of Baghdad, and in Mosul.

Meanwhile, Mr George W Bush and Mr Tony Blair described the deaths of Uday and Qusay as "positive news" and promised a "more prosperous future" for the people of Iraq.

Also today, most nations expressed joy and relief at the reports over the deaths of Mr Hussein's sons, and many leaders hoped it would help end sporadic fighting in Iraq and quicken the war-battered country's progress toward establishing democracy.

In Washington, White House spokesman McClellan Scott said: "He (Mr Bush) was pleased to hear the news." Iraq's top civilian administrator Mr L Paul Bremer described the killings as "good news for Iraqis and good news for America".

In Hong Kong, the British Prime Minister hailed the news as "a great day for the new Iraq". "These particular two people were the head of the regime, which was not just a security threat because of its weapons program but was responsible for the torture and killing of thousands and thousands of innocent Iraqis," Mr Blair said. That sentiment was echoed by leaders in Australia, Japan and New Zealand.

In the UNHQ, Mr Ahmad Chalabi, a delegate from Iraq's Governing Council, said: "This will contribute significantly to reducing attacks on coalition soldiers."

However, in Mr Hussein's hometown of Tikrit, people expressed shock at the news of the killings of Uday and Qusay. Residents of Tikrit, the last major town to fall to US forces in the war, appeared unable to come to grips with the US announcement that the brutal brothers were killed in a ferocious gunbattle.

"I saw a lot of stuff on TV, but none of it is true," 25-year-old medical student Akil Edan said. "If they want us to believe it, they should show us the bodies."

The mood in Baghdad was, however, was jubilant. On the streets of Baghdad today, where celebratory gunfire broke out yesterday, residents said they wished US forces had captured Mr Hussein's sons alive — ready to stand trial, face their victims and suffer punishment for the horrors they inflicted on Iraq.

"We are happy for this, but we hoped that they would have been captured instead of killed so that they could have been tried by the Iraqi people," said Mr Jassim Jabbar, a 22-year-old tailor. "I hope Saddam will face the same fate soon."

It was a different scenario in Gaza, where Palestinians condemned the killings and accused the USA of dispensing the same kind of summary justice as meted out by the Israeli army.

This image from the deck of Iraq's Most Wanted playing cards shows a black spot representing Barzan Abd al-Ghafur Sulayman Majid al-Tikriti, the former commander of Special Republican Guard, the 11th most wanted official of Mr Saddam Hussein's regime. — AFP

BARZAN ABD AL-GHAFUR
SULAYMAN MAJID
AL-TIKRITI
Special Republican Guard
Commander

USA mulls revealing photos

WASHINGTON, July 23. — US military officials today considered whether to show photographs of the bodies of Mr Saddam Hussein's sons, Uday and Qusay, an official said.

"They're probably gruesome but we have to show it," to convince the Iraqi people that the two feared men are in fact dead. Mr Terry Mitchell, a defence official responsible for Pentagon visuals, said the issue was being discussed but he was "not aware we will have any photographs of the bodies".

Earlier, a senior US army officer in Iraq told a news conference that the coalition would provide proof "in due time" that Uday and Qusay were killed in Mosul yesterday. Dental records, X-rays and four former senior figures from Mr Hussein's regime — including presidential secretary Mr Abid Hamid Mahmud al-Tikriti — helped establish certainty that the two sons were dead. — AFP



Uday

BBC admits 'slips of tongue' over Kelly

of Dr David Kelly, the government scientist whom the BBC has since admitted was the source for its reports.

A BBC executive said: "We will say: 'This is what the source said to our reporters, here are the notes and this is what we did with them.'" Their submission to Lord Hutton's independent inquiry was being prepared as if the BBC was preparing a major piece of litigation.

Andrew Gilligan, the defence correspondent who made the first, and most contentious allegations, has been taken off-air until he has given evidence.

The BBC acknowledged that a number of journalists had made errors when claiming that the stories were based on an "intelligence source".

A spokesman said: "There was some confusion about this. Although Dr Kelly had access to intelligence material, he was not a member of the intelligence services."

Mr Richard Sambrook, the BBC's Head of News who knew Dr Kelly's identity, said on 26 June that Gilligan's story came from "one senior and credible source in the intelligence services".

The spokesman admitted: "That was a slip of the tongue."

The Times, London

LONDON, July 23. — The BBC admitted on Tuesday that it had made "slips of the tongue" in describing its source for bitterly-contested allegations about last September's intelligence dossier on Iraq.

BBC executives are acknowledging what they believe is a strong "defence case" for the inquiry into the suicide

DAVID E. SANGER AND
JUDITH MILLER

Washington, July 23: President Bush's deputy national security adviser accepted blame today for allowing faulty intelligence to appear in the President's State of the Union speech.

He took responsibility after revealing that the CIA had sent him two memoranda warning that evidence about Iraqi efforts to obtain uranium in Africa was weak.

The deputy adviser, Stephen Hadley, a critical behind-the-scenes player in the Bush White House, said that while he received the memoranda before the president gave a speech about Iraq in October, he had no memory of the warning three months later when the issue came up again in the State of the Union address. He said the two memos had been discovered in the last 72 hours.

Looking shaken, he said: "I should have asked that the 16 words be taken out" of the State of the Union address, and added: "I failed in that responsibility."

Hadley's account of events yesterday once again shifted the White House explanation of events. Two weeks ago, Ari Fleischer, then the White House press secretary, said that the CIA's concerns about the quality of the intelligence before Bush's October speech in Cincinnati were re-

Aide takes blame for row over US speech

solved by changing the president's language in the State of the Union address.

Yesterday, Hadley said, in fact, that nothing had been resolved. Had he recalled the warnings describing "some weakness in the evidence" the line would have been stricken, he said.

Hadley's acceptance of the blame seemed likely to fuel the calls for an investigation in Congress. But it also appeared to be part of an effort to end an open feud between the CIA and the White House over who was responsible for the State of the Union imbroglio.

Ten days ago, the White House fingered George Tenet, director of central intelligence, who accepted partial blame the next day in a statement that said he had never read the draft of the speech that was sent to him.

Hadley, a lawyer and veteran of the first Bush administration who has a reputation for fanatical attention to detail, did not say if he had offered to resign when

he talked to President Bush earlier yesterday.

But Dan Bartlett, the White House communications director, said that Bush, who was briefed about the discovery of the memos on Monday at his ranch in Texas, "expressed the utmost confidence" in Hadley and his boss, Condoleezza Rice, whose name was listed as a recipient on one of the CIA warnings.

But Hadley's account, in a meeting with reporters in the Roosevelt Room of the White House that lasted an hour-and-a-half, raised new questions about Tenet and the CIA.

According to the outline of events the White House gave yesterday, Tenet's warnings to the National Security Council that the information was unreliable came only six days after the intelligence director published it in the "National Intelligence Estimate," the gold-standard of intelligence documents circulated to the highest levels of the administration and to Congress.

"I can't explain that," Hadley said, referring the issue back to Tenet. Three months later, on January 24, another senior CIA official, Robert Walpole, sent Hadley and other White House officials another memorandum that again said that Iraq had sought to obtain the uranium, citing the language in the October 1 intelligence estimate.

NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE



Washington, July 23 (Reuters): The killing of Saddam Hussein's sons could be a double jackpot for the Bush administration if it both weakens armed resistance in Iraq and deflects attention from the Iraq-Niger uranium controversy.

But the first challenge may be to prove to the world — especially Iraqis and other Arabs — that Uday and Qusay are really dead.

US officials said the pair feared and hated in Iraq almost as much as their father, were killed in a six-hour battle with 200 American troops yesterday in the northern city of Mosul.

Although President George W. Bush declared major combat in Iraq to be over on May 1, Saddam, his sons and other key aides remained at large — a haunting symbol of unfinished business. In the months since, some 39 American soldiers have been killed in almost daily attacks that have increasingly come to be seen as a guerrilla war of unexpected ferocity.

Deputy national security adviser Stephen Hadley, asked if the deaths of Saddam's sons could lead to a reduction in attacks on US soldiers, said: "It's clearly important politically — it's clearly important to send a

Double jackpot for Bush



President George W. Bush (right) with secretary of defence Donald Rumsfeld at the White House on Wednesday. (Reuters)

message to the Iraqi people this regime is not coming back. But it also may have had an operational effect, we just don't know."

The deaths were "a huge signal that the US really is in control of Iraq," said Jonathan Alterman, director of the West Asian programme at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "It is a demonstration that the US can and will track down Saddam" and other top regime figures, he said.

West Asia expert Gary Sick of Columbia University said Saddam, his sons and their close aides, bolstered by \$1 billion in stolen Iraqi funds, were a major force behind continued opposition to US forces.

"As long as they are out there, the possibility exists that Iraqis will say: 'This group is going to win' and shift to their side. If they are gone, the opposition will be less well-organised and financed and the psychological appeal of the prior regime will be increasingly dissipated," he

said. But Kenneth Katzman of the Library of Congress' Congressional Research Service was sceptical.

"The guerrilla leaders are fighting for themselves, not necessarily to restore Saddam. They are fighting to end the US occupation and restore a Sunni-led Arab nationalist regime. In fact, some guerrilla leaders may be more energised if Saddam and his sons are not in the picture," Katzman said.

A crucial task is to provide proof that Uday and Qusay are in fact dead, said Prof. Richard Russell of the National Defence University. Americans are inclined to give the administration the benefit of the doubt but "in the Arab world and Iraq where rumours reign supreme, it will be hard to prove," he said.

Still, the deaths are likely to be a morale boost for US troops dispirited by mounting casualties and the seeming lack of a US plan for post-war Iraq, said former assistant defence secretary Larry Korb. The stunning events in Mosul quickly overshadowed a controversy that has dogged Bush in recent weeks — whether he deliberately exaggerated US intelligence on Iraq's weapons to boost the case for war.

US in talks with UN on troops to Iraq: Powell

Washington: With a number of countries wary of sending troops to Iraq under the aegis of the Anglo-American occupation forces, US on Sunday said it was in consultation with the UN in desperately seeking to bring around these nations.

"UN resolution 1483 asks member-nations to assist in the stabilisation efforts in Iraq, so there is sufficient UN authority now. But some nations have asked for a broader UN mandate to contribute forces, and I am in conversation with those nations and with secretary-general Kofi Annan to examine whether or not another UN resolution might be useful, secretary of state Colin Powell said in an interview to Radio Monte Carlo.

"Administration has not made a decision yet. Anybody who wishes to contribute now," said Mr Powell adding "we have an open mind on this issue and that is why we are consulting with our friends and with the secretary general."

Strongly refuting charges that economic and political domination of the region was the main motive behind the Iraq war, Mr Powell said, "How could you say such a thing? We liberated Kuwait, gave Kuwait back to the



Colin Powell

Kuwaiti people. We liberated Afghanistan and gave Afghanistan back to the Afghan people. We have removed a dictator in Baghdad, and the graves are now being opened," he said.

Meanwhile, in the Shiite holy city of Najaf on Sunday, more than 10,000 demonstrators gathered in support of cleric Moqtada Sadr, a fiery critic of the US-led occupation, leading to a tense standoff with the US marines. Agencies

2 US soldiers die in ambush

Baghdad: Two US soldiers were killed and a third wounded on Sunday in an ambush in northern Iraq, a US military spokesman said.

"Two soldiers were killed and one wounded," Corporal Todd Pruden said, adding that the three were from the US Army's 101st Airborne Division. AFP

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IRAQ INTELLIGENCE / BID TO DEFLECT CRITICISM OF BUSH

U.S. releases sanitised version

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JULY 19. With a view to protecting the United States President, George W. Bush, from further criticism on Iraq and its supposed Niger link, the White House has taken the extraordinary step of declassifying portions of an October 2002 intelligence report; but the first impression is that the administration may have landed itself in more trouble with the action.

The White House on Friday released a sanitised version of the National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) report, expressing the hoping that it would clear the air on any allegation that Mr. Bush misled the American people while making his case on Iraq and its weapons of mass destruction. For nearly two weeks a heated debate has been going on inside the administration and outside on the President's State of the Union Address this January that contained references to Iraq trying to procure uranium from Africa, that were seen to be weak in the realm of intelligence.

The White House initially believed that it could ride out the



The U.S. President, George Bush, delivering the State of the Union address in this January file photo.

storm on a technicality — that the President only said that the British Government had come to the conclusion that Iraq had nuclear links with Africa. Subsequently, the administration tried to get out of the mess by arguing that it was not just based on any British intelligence report but from a variety of sources and that the President's Address did not contain any deliberate disinformation.

One of the reasons for releasing excerpts from the top secret report was to show that the Iraq

allegation was not based only on a suspect British report that was based on forgeries. The documents, in the view of the White House spokesman, Scott McClellan, show "the clear and compelling case we had for confronting the threat that Saddam Hussein posed". One of the major aspects of the report was the "compelling evidence" that Iraq was trying to rebuild its nuclear weapons programme. But this version also has a damaging State Department input that directly questioned the claim that

the Saddam Hussein regime was sourcing uranium from Africa. "Claims of Iraqi pursuit of natural uranium in Africa are... highly dubious", the State Department had said in an addendum. The Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research came to the conclusion that there was nothing to show that Iraq was on the way to acquiring nuclear weapons. "The activities we have detected do not... add up to a compelling case that Iraq is currently pursuing... an integrated and comprehensive approach to acquire nuclear weapons", the Bureau of Intelligence and Research noted.

Analysts are beginning to wonder if the release of the classified material only further weakened the White House position. Mr. Bush is said to be furious with many of his top advisors for the mess and has supposedly said that he wanted the matter "settled". Media reports have said that the President was particularly unhappy with his National Security Advisor, Condoleezza Rice, and his former Press Secretary, Ari Fleischer.

THE HINDO

20 JUL 2003

History will forgive us: Blair and Bush

Washington, July 18

BRITISH PRIME MINISTER Tony Blair and United States President George W. Bush have jointly defended their decision to topple Saddam Hussein, despite no Iraqi weapons of mass destruction being found.

Speaking at a joint US Congress session on Thursday, both leaders finally put to rest any doubts of a rift between the two countries.

Bush in fact went a step further and took responsibility for the war against Iraq.

"I strongly believe Saddam was trying to reconstruct his nuclear weapons programme and I will remind the sceptics that, in 1991, it became clear that he was much closer to developing a nuclear weapon than anybody ever imagined. He was a threat. I take responsibility," said Bush.

Earlier, Blair, addressing the session also justified the war against Iraq saying that history would forgive them even if the premise used for declaring war — weapons allegations was wrong.

He claimed that the war had at least ended inhuman carnage and suffering.

"Can we be sure that terrorism and weapons of mass destruction will join together? If we are wrong, we will have destroyed a threat, that, at least, is responsible for inhuman carnage and suffering. That is something, I'm confident, history will forgive," said Blair.

Blair also said the United Nations can and must play a central role in stemming the spread of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, and called for the Security Council to be reformed.

Blair's speech comes amid deepening questions about the intelligence information both leaders used in arguing that war against Iraq was necessary.

The speech is said to be the most important address the British Prime Minister has given to an overseas audience since he took office six years ago. It comes at a

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19/7



Cherie Blair, accompanied by US President George W. Bush and her husband British Prime Minister Tony Blair, on the South Lawn of the White House in Washington DC on Thursday.

W.N. WK

Mystery death of Iraq dossier whistleblower

Longworth (UK), July 18

A MILD-MANNERED British scientist was found dead in the woods on Friday after being unwittingly dragged into a fierce political dispute about intelligence used to justify war on Iraq.

British police said they had found a body matching that of soft-spoken defence ministry biologist David Kelly, a former UN weapons inspector, who had been grilled in Parliament over allegations the government hyped intelligence to justify war.

The political fallout was immediate. Prime Minister Tony Blair, who learned about the discovery of the body while flying from Washington to Tokyo, promised an independent judicial inquiry into the death if the body was confirmed to be Kelly's.

But opponents called for Blair to return and face a broader probe into the case he made for war. The shock even sent Britain's pound tumbling half a per cent on currency markets as traders weighed the severity of the crisis for Blair. Kelly's family reported he was missing overnight after he went for a walk in the Oxfordshire countryside on Thursday.

He had denied being the source for BBC reporter Andrew Gilligan, who said in May a senior intelligence source had told him the government had "sexed up" intelligence on Iraq. That report sparked parliamentary hearings into how the government made the case for war, forced Blair onto the defensive and pitted the government against the BBC.



David Kelly

News of Kelly's death overshadowed Blair's rapturous reception by the US Congress, although there was no indication the Prime Minister would turn back from a week-long trip to Asia. "The Prime Minister is obviously very distressed for the family of Kelly," a spokesman said aboard the flight.

Kelly had clearly been reluctant to enter the debate over Iraq intelligence. Speaking so softly he could barely be heard, he admitted to Parliament's foreign affairs committee he had met Gilligan, but denied telling him that Blair's communications chief Alastair Campbell had ordered intelligence to be hyped. Kelly was shocked when parliamentarians described him as "chaff" and a government "fall guy" put forward to shield top officials from blame.

Kelly's wife Jane described Kelly as deeply upset, friend Tom Mangold said. "She told me he had been under considerable stress, that he was very angry about what had happened at the committee."

Reuters

US suspends proceedings against Guantanamo Britons

oners who had been held at a prison at Guantanamo Bay, a senior defence official said on Friday.

The American official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the released prisoners were being transported to Afghanistan. The official also said "less than 10" other prisoners were being transported to Guantanamo to be held there. The official would not state the nationality of the prisoners involved.

Agencies

at Guantanamo Bay — two were on an initial list of six detainees out of a total of 667 prisoners to be tried by a military tribunal in the camp. Proceedings against the two are now off until a British legal team, led by the Attorney-General, meets a high-level US legal team to discuss "all aspects" of the nine Britons' cases next week.

Whether the detainees will now face a civilian court in the US or Britain however remains unclear. The United States released 37 pris-

THE US has agreed to suspend controversial military court proceedings against British detainees held at Guantanamo Bay, pending talks with British legal officials.

The Prime Minister's official spokesman said a joint US-British statement, to be released later on Friday by the White House, would confirm the decision, which follows Tony Blair's talks on Thursday on the subject with US President Bush. There are nine Britons being held

weapons of mass destruction and false statements made in his State of the Union speech about Iraq's attempts to procure nuclear weapons material. "I think Eminem speaks of the street while the idea that politicians are people you can always trust gets weaker," says Euro RSCG's chief officer.

Americans remain most interested in local news. They would rather read the weather report and the classified ads before they look at international news. Agencies

President Bush's speeches", according to the survey conducted by advertising agency Euro RSCG. Even though the lyrics of Eminem have been branded homophobic and misogynistic, only 19 per cent disagreed with the statement. Almost two-thirds of respondents between 18 and 24 years of age believed that Eminem was more truthful.

Bush has traditionally scored well on trust but recent polls show that his credibility has been diminished by the failure to find

time when Blair has been facing intense attack at home for the failure to find Saddam Hussein's suspected weapons of mass destruction.

While the two leaders were the closest of allies in the war against Iraq, their relationship has been strained in recent weeks over a disputed allegation that Iraq wanted to buy uranium from Africa to develop nuclear weapons.

Blair's Washington stop was the first leg of a seven-day tour that will also bring him to Asia.

Eminem ahead of Prez

Americans don't care what Europe thinks of them and believe their children find more truth in Eminem's lyrics than the speeches of George Bush. Those are the conclusions of an online poll of more than 1,000 people that reveals an insular, parochial nation which is growing ever more cynical about its legislators. Remarkably, 53 per cent agreed that "America's youth find more 'truth' in Eminem's lyrics than in

'Whistle-blower' on Blair's WMD claims is dead

11-1 19/7 W. Blair
Q. now

London/Washington: Even as British Prime Minister Tony Blair was being congratulated by US President George W. Bush for "good, sound evidence" on Iraq's weapons capabilities, British government's defence advisor David Kelly, suspected to be a source behind BBC's report that the Blair government had "sexed up" its dossier on Iraq, was found dead on Friday, four days after he was grilled by the foreign affairs committee on the issue.

Kelly, who worked in the ministry of defence's counter-proliferation and arms control secretariat, had acknowledged speaking to BBC but insisted that he was not the source of the story. The BBC report said government aides had given undue prominence in an intelligence dossier published last September to a claim that Iraq could launch chemical or biological weapons at 45 minutes' notice. The intelligence was doctored to strengthen the case for war.

The British government has denied the claims and asked BBC to say whether Kelly was the unidentified official cited in the story. The network has refused to do so.

The body of the 59-year-old Kelly, who had been missing since Thursday, was found by a police team searching for him in a wooded area at Harrowdown Hill, 8 km from his house in Oxfordshire. Kelly, a former UN weapons inspector, was reported missing by his family on Thursday as he did not return after telling his wife was going for a walk.

Prime Minister Blair was informed of the discovery of the body as he flew from Washington to Tokyo, Downing Street said.

Acting superintendent of police Dave Purnell said the body matched Kelly's description but a formal identification would take place on Saturday. The case was being treated as an "unexplained" death, he said at a brief press conference, adding, "We

will be awaiting the results of the postmortem as also the forensic examination that continues at the scene at Harrowdown Hill."

The body was discovered lying face down. No note was found either at the scene or at Kelly's house, the police said. The government said an independent judicial inquiry would be held into the circumstances of his death if the body was confirmed to be Kelly's.

"I was shocked when I heard the news and I am sure the hearts of all the committee go out to his family at this deeply anxious time," chairman of the foreign affairs select committee Donald Anderson said. "The committee interviewed him on Tuesday and he seemed to be relaxed and on top of things," he said.

Meanwhile, Mr Blair lent Mr Bush his support on the question of whether the US President had misled the American public in the weeks leading up to the war by including in the State of the Union address an allegation—attributed to British intelligence—that Iraq had tried to acquire uranium in Africa to restart its nuclear weapons programme.

He said in Washington that he stood by the intelligence, even though the White House now says it was not firm enough to have been included in a Presidential speech. Mr Blair stood shoulder to shoulder with Mr Bush in defending the war to depose Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, saying the conflict was justified even if allied forces find no banned weapons in Iraq. In an impassioned defence of the Iraq war, he told a joint session of the US Congress that history would forgive America and Britain even if they were proved wrong on the issue.

"If we are wrong, we will have destroyed a threat that at its least is responsible for inhuman carnage and suffering. That is something I am confident history will forgive," Mr Blair said. NYT News Service and Agencies

BUSH ADDRESS / REPORT ON IRAQ-NIGER LINKS

**CIA chief owns responsibility
for wrong intelligence**

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

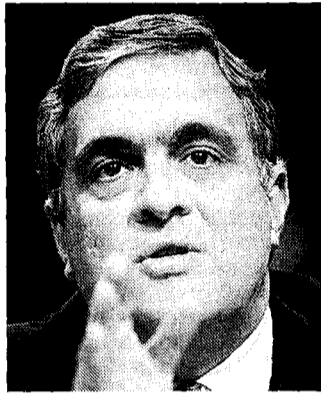
WASHINGTON, JULY 12. The Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, George Tenet, has taken full responsibility for the wrong intelligence that had the dubious Niger link on Iraq's nuclear weapons programme and has said his agency should never have allowed the portion of text pertaining to this in the State of the Union Message. "These 16 words should never have been included in the text written for the President," Mr. Tenet said in a statement.

The CIA chief's two-page statement, laying out the context of the controversy, came after the White House went about in a spirited defence of the President, George W. Bush, and tried to brush aside comments that somehow there was an element of deliberate disinformation that was being passed around to the American people and Congress.

It was not just the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, or the National Security Advisor, Condoleezza Rice, coming to the defence of the President and saying that the CIA had approved of what was said this January.

The President himself said that his speech was cleared by the intelligence community. "This was a mistake," Mr. Tenet said in his statement.

According to the top intelligence official, the responsibility of vetting the intelligence material relating to Iraq and its efforts to get uranium from Africa rested with the CIA and ultimately himself. "Let me be clear about several things upfront.



George Tenet

First, the CIA approved the President's State of the Union Address before it was delivered. Second, I am responsible for the approval process in my agency. And third, the President had every reason to believe that the text presented to him was sound," Mr. Tenet said.

He laid out the context and background as to how those 16 words ended up in Mr. Bush's address to the nation and Congress while reviewing the address with the National Security aides. Officials of the CIA did raise concerns in the language related to the allegation that Iraq sought to buy uranium from Niger.

Some changes in the language were made but agency officials in the end agreed that what Mr. Bush was going to say was 'factually' correct in that he was going to merely say that a British Government report said that Iraq was seeking uranium from Africa.

"This should not have been the test for clearing a Presiden-

tial Address. This did not rise to the level of certainty which should be required for Presidential speeches and the CIA should have ensured that it was removed," Mr. Tenet said.

Mr. Tenet's observations came one day after reports suggested that the CIA did in fact raise concern before the President's Address.

The impression at the end of the day was that somehow the White House wanted its own spin on the Iraq-Africa linkage. In fact, one report said the CIA chief had not seen or cleared the President's message.

Essentially, Mr. Tenet has made the point that a report put out in October 2002 had only mentioned the allegations but no credibility was given to these.

Further, the report noted that the intelligence wing of the State Department had found the allegations "highly dubious."

As a result, Mr. Tenet argued that he never included these allegations in Congressional testimonies or in public statements. It is too early to say if Mr. Tenet's explanations have cleared the air for leading members of Congress who are already fuming at this administration for what is happening in Iraq, calling for the CIA to be held accountable.

"The Director of Central Intelligence is the principal advisor to the President on intelligence matters. He should have told the President... He failed to do so," remarked Pat Roberts, the Republican Chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee.

WSW
W.A.S.

Americans worried over rising casualties in Iraq

HD-12
1877

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JULY 12. An increasing number of Americans feel that the troop casualty in Iraq is unacceptable; and this is having an impact on the overall approval rating of the President, George W. Bush. Slight more than half of those polled — 52 per cent — said that the casualties in Iraq were at an unacceptable level; and 57 per cent felt that the war in Iraq was worth fighting for, down from the 70 per cent at the end of April, according to a poll by ABC News-Washington Post.

The survey also revealed that half of the respondents believed that the Bush administration exaggerated the evidence on hand regarding Iraq. And 80 per cent have expressed the concern that the United States is getting bogged down in a long mission in Iraq.

The feelings about Iraq is having an impact on the approval rating of the President which is now down to 59 per cent. Analysts say that while this

number is still relatively high, it is down from the high 60s to the mid 70s that Mr. Bush was enjoying in the last several months.

The changing perceptions of the American people comes at a time when the Bush administration is increasingly seen to be on the defensive as far as Iraq is concerned; and many senior law makers are asking if the U.S. does indeed have an exit strategy for Iraq. Law makers and critics have also been persistently questioning the kind of intelligence material with which the

administration leaned on to justify the going to war. One dominant thinking is that this Republican administration took intelligence assessments and tried to tailor that to its line of thinking.

And others have asked the question if senior members of the Cabinet had tried to influence the work of intelligence analysts. The consistent theme of this Bush White House has been that whether it has to do with domestic or foreign policy the President is not guided by opinion polls.

U.S. soldier injured

ABU GHARIB (IRAQ), JULY 12. An improvised explosive device blew up and wounded one U.S. soldier early today at the Abu Gharib prison 35 km west of Baghdad, a U.S. military source said.

It was not clear what type of explosive was thrown during the attack at 6:30 am local time, said Sergeant Gustavo Leigh.

Part of the prison's perimeter wall was blown away.

U.S. soldiers had arrested two people and were searching the area, Sergeant Leigh said.

Abu Gharib was one of the most notorious prisons during the reign of fallen president Saddam Hussein. — AFP

THE HINDU

13 JUL 2003

11/9
HD-16

Terror attacks

By Sridhar Krishnaswami
WASHINGTON, JULY 10. In what seems to be an attempt to sidetrack persisting questions over Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, the United States Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, has argued that the war in Iraq was not because of any sudden discovery of banned weapons; rather, that the existing programmes in that country were viewed through the "prism" of the terror attacks of September 11, 2001.

"The coalition did not act in Iraq because we had discovered dramatic new evidence of Iraq's pursuit of weapons of mass murder. We acted because we saw the existing evidence in a new light, through the prism of our experience on September 11th", the Defence Secretary told the Senate Armed Services Committee. He defended not only the war but also the intelligence basis that justified it.

Several leading members of Congress, Republicans included, have questioned the Bush administration's use of the intelligence material for launching the war, with one view being that the White House manipulated intelligence assessments to mirror its perceptions. Senior

administration officials, including top Cabinet members, dismiss this contention.

The President, George W. Bush, travelling in South Africa, would not openly discuss if he should have used intelligence material that spoke of Saddam Hussein trying to buy uranium from Niger, in his State of the Union Address this January. Very early on, the Central Intelligence Agency had dismissed the linkage, which turned out to be based on forgeries. "Look, there is no doubt in my mind that Saddam Hussein was a threat to world peace.

And there is no doubt in my mind that the United States, along with allies and friends, did the right thing in removing him from power", Mr. Bush remarked in South Africa.

Only this week, the White House admitted for the first time that it erred on this Iraq-Niger link. But there are a number of questions why the President used this material in his address to the American people and a joint session of Congress.

But on Capitol Hill, Mr. Rumsfeld argued that the war on Iraq was in the context of 9/11. "The objective in the global war on terror is to prevent another attack like September

attacks prompted war: Rumsfeld

dom — no organisation or strategy. The administration has a lot on its plate in the sense that questions of intelligence assessments or what went wrong in the post-conflict stage in Iraq will not go away easily.

And heading the agenda of the political opposition is the role the White House played in intelligence assessment.

One theme that is emerging is that some of the agencies involved in intelligence or proliferation matters were kept in the dark on the kind of material reaching the President.

The other side to this is the thinking that the decisions were not based on what top intelligence agencies recommended but what the White House wanted to do with the material presented.

The Defence Secretary, however, does not have a problem with the manner in which intelligence material was used. "... I think the intelligence has been quite good and I don't think that the fact that there is an instance where something was inaccurate ought to, in any way, paint a broad brush on the intelligence that we get and suggest that that's a pattern or something; it's just not", Mr. Rumsfeld told the Senators.



Raw materials being mixed to produce herbicides at a pesticides factory in Fallujah, near Baghdad, which was searched by U.N. inspectors for banned weapons after Iraq handed over a declaration of its arms programmes, in this December 8, 2002 file photo.

bers of Congress and the media for over-stating the intelligence on hand in the run-up to the war. And in recent days, the administration has had to take a lot of flak for the developments on the ground in Iraq — especially the organised guerilla attacks.

Senior officials continue to insist that what is taking place in and around Baghdad is ran-

2002

Turkey defiant as US tries to mend ties

Ankara, July 9 (Reuters): Turkey, still smarting from the brief detention of its commandos by US troops in Iraq, kept up its angry barrage of criticism today as military officers from the two Nato allies met to defuse tensions.

The US troops arrested the 11 commandos in northern Iraq on Friday, triggering what Turkey's powerful general staff described as a "crisis of trust" between Ankara and Washington.

The men were released on Sunday.

Washington sent Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, General James Jones, its top soldier in the continent, to Ankara yesterday to agree the terms of a special probe into the incident. The probe will begin in the Turkish capital today.

"Don't even try it," read a banner headline in the *Milliyet* daily, warning US troops against further arrests of Turkish soldiers, in northern Iraq to monitor Kurdish separatists.

"The general staff tells US General (James Jones): 'If some-

thing like the incident in northern Iraq happens again our soldiers will respond in kind,'" the paper headline said.

On the streets of Istanbul, Turkey's commercial capital, the mood was equally defiant.

"The US is not fair to us. How dare they take our soldiers away. From now on I don't want any relations with them," said minibus taxi driver Hasan Balci, 43. "We can be on our own, we have 70 million people."

Diplomatic sources in West Asia say one of the Turks de-

tained was a colonel whom US or British forces had expelled from Iraq twice previously for "suspicious activities".

They say there is evidence the soldiers were involved in a plot to kill the interim governor of Kirkuk. Turkey has denied such claims.

Turkey has enjoyed close ties with the US, but Ankara's refusal to allow in US troops during the Iraq war dented the longstanding partnership.

A commentator for the *Radikal* newspaper, Ismet

Berkan, said the weekend incident had undermined the US' changing priorities in West Asia after the ousting of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, which meant Turkey had become less central to its strategic interests.

But Berkan said Turkey should avoid reacting emotionally to this and instead focus on building closer ties with the European Union. Ankara is currently adopting political reforms in the hope of starting EU accession talks in early 2005.

The head of the Turkish

American Foundation, Hasan Koni, also took a measured view, noting the two allies had fallen out in the past on such issues as Cyprus, though having the Soviet Union as a common enemy had then helped to repair ties.

"Turkey's options now are limited. What can we do — leave Nato? Refuse to buy American weapons?" he asked.

Koni said Turkey should avoid trying to play the EU card against Washington, saying that Europe and the US both made similar demands of Turkey in

terms of human rights, reining in its military and staying out of northern Iraq.

In another potential threat to strained US-Turkey ties, the US Senate is expected to vote today or tomorrow on draft legislation that would recognise the killing of Armenians by Ottoman Turks in 1915 as genocide.

Turkey has long denied the charges of genocide, saying the Armenians were among numerous victims of a partisan war raging in World War I as the Ottoman empire collapsed.

AFRICA / U.S. CLOSER TO SENDING TROOPS TO LIBERIA

Bush calls slavery 'greatest of crimes in history'

WJW 10-12 9/7
GOREE ISLAND (SENEGAL), JULY 8. The United States President, George W. Bush, on Tuesday called slavery "one of the greatest crimes of history" and inched closer toward sending American troops to a peacekeeping force in Liberia.

Mr. Bush gave a wide-ranging speech on slavery and race in a visit to an Atlantic seaport where slaves were once packed onto ships and sent to America. It was his first day of a five-nation trip to Africa — the first to the continent as President — that includes stops in South Africa, Botswana, Uganda and Nigeria.

Meeting with other West African leaders, Mr. Bush discussed whether to commit U.S. troops to a peacekeeping force in Liberia, founded by freed American slaves in 1822.

"We're now in the process of determining the extent of our participation," Mr. Bush said. He said he had yet to make up his mind.

Aides said Mr. Bush's comments signalled there would be some involvement of U.S. forces, although the size and role of such a contingent remains an open question.

On Goree Island, Mr. Bush toured a centuries-old house that was used as a processing centre for countless thousands of Africans who were herded aboard ships that took them into slavery in America.



The U.S. First Lady, Laura Bush (second from left), her daughter, Barbara Bush (right), and the Senegalese First Lady, Viviane Wade, during a tour of a slave house on Goree Island on Tuesday. — AFP

"Human beings were delivered, sorted, weighed, branded with marks of commercial enterprises and loaded as cargo on a voyage without return," Mr. Bush said. "One of the largest migrations in history was also one of the greatest crimes of history."

Mr. Bush did not apologise for slavery but noted Americans throughout history "clearly saw

this sin and called it by name."

"The spirit of Africans in America did not break," Mr. Bush said.

"Yet, the spirit of their captors was corrupted."

Despite painful shared history, Mr. Bush said the U.S. and African nations must work together to eradicate disease and war, and to encourage greater business ties. — AP

THE HINDU

9 JUL 2001

Two more US soldiers die in Iraqi guerrilla attacks

Baghdad: Two US soldiers in Iraq were killed and four were wounded in a spate of guerrilla attacks in which at least two Iraqis also died, the US military and witnesses said on Monday.

The violence, in Baghdad and a town to the west of the capital, was the latest indication that US occupation forces were facing guerrilla warfare in Sunni Muslim central Iraq, once the cradle of support for Saddam Hussein. A US military spokesman said one soldier was killed while a patrol was pursuing Iraqi gunmen in the Azamiyah district of Baghdad late on Sunday. An Iraqi gunman was killed and another wounded in the clash.

The second US soldier was killed early on Monday when a rocket-propelled grenade hit his vehicle in the district of Kadhimiya.

The fatalities brought to 29 the number of US soldiers killed in action in Iraq since President George W. Bush declared major combat over on May 1. A soldier was shot and fatally wounded at Baghdad University on Sunday.

At least one Iraqi was shot dead and four US soldiers wounded during a night of attacks in the volatile town of Ramadi, the military said on Monday. Six Iraqi assailants ambushed a US position in the town, around 100 km west of

Baghdad, but it was not clear whether the attackers used rocket-propelled grenades or a bomb, a US spokesman in Ramadi said.

US officers did not say who had killed the man. But staff at Ramadi general hospital said US troops arrived there late on Sunday night and left a body of a decapitated man, saying they had shot him because he did not stop at their checkpoint.

US Senate intelligence committee chairman Pat Roberts told CNN on Sunday intelligence reports indicated there was now about a 70-30 chance Saddam Hussein was alive, up from 50-50 in the early days after his ouster by US-led forces on April 9.

The chief of Turkey's armed forces said on Monday the weekend arrest of Turkish troops by US forces in Iraq had caused a crisis in relations between the two NATO armed forces.

"It turned into a major crisis of trust between the Turkish and US armed forces and became a crisis," chief of general staff Hilmi Ozkok told reporters in Ankara.

The eleven Turkish soldiers were released on Sunday evening and returned on Monday to their offices in the northern Iraqi city of Sulaimaniya. Reuters

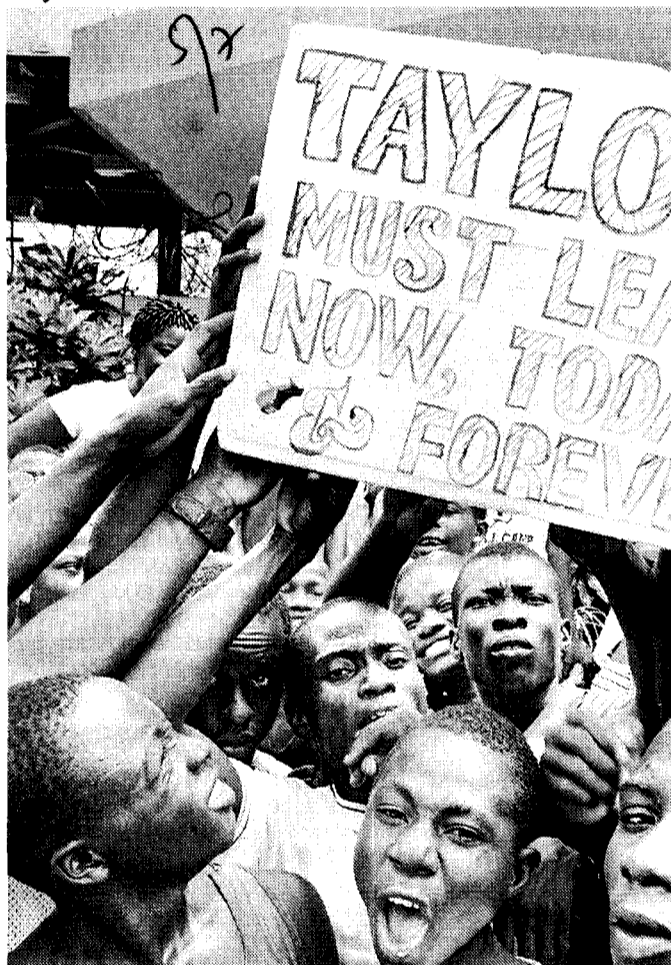
Bush studying despatch of troops

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JULY 4. The United States President, George W. Bush, has said that he is not going to be hurried into a decision on Liberia and dismissed media reports that he has decided to dispatch American troops to that strife-torn African nation.

However, indications are that the President's top security advisors are not seeing the issue in the same lines. For instance, there are reports that the Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, is against the idea of sending troops; but that the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, is actively consulting African Governments and the United Nations Secretary-General on the modalities of command and functioning of American troops. Gen. Powell has maintained that the President is exploring all options "... political options, diplomatic options and military options as well".

Gen. Powell essentially argued, "We have provided the President no recommendation yet and therefore, he has not made a decision". Mr. Bush stressed that he is still in the process of gathering all necessary information and criticised the media for trying to get ahead of the story. "I am in the process of gathering the information necessary to make a rational decision as to how to... enforce the ceasefire in place", Mr. Bush told African journalists ahead of his visit to that continent starting Monday. "You know, you read all kinds of things, of course, in American newspapers — it's sport here", Mr. Bush remarked, making the point that he was waiting for a



Anti-government demonstrators gather at the U.S. embassy in the Liberian capital Monrovia on Thursday. — AP

report from the Economic Community of West African States that was discussing Liberia in Accra, Ghana.

"Once the strategy is in place, I will let people know whether or not I'm airborne or not... I don't need to dramatise the decision. It's getting plenty of at-

tention here at home", the President said. The stepped-up activity in the media here that a decision on sending troops to Liberia was "imminent" started with the "warning order" sent to the American military commander in Europe with the Pentagon asking for an assessment

on how the situation should be handled. This gave rise to the impression that a final decision on the matter could come on Thursday itself or by the time the President leaves for his African trip.

Mr. Bush is under pressure to send up to 2,000 troops to help enforce a ceasefire between the forces loyal to the Liberian President, Charles Taylor, and the rebels. What is also under consideration is to send a small group of Marines to protect the American mission in Monrovia. In fact, a group of about 50 to 75 Marines are already said to be in Spain for the purpose. The administration has made it very clear that Mr. Taylor has to leave the country; and this came from none other than the President himself. "One thing has to happen: Mr. Taylor needs to leave the country. In order for there to be peace and stability in Liberia, Charles Taylor needs to leave now", Mr. Bush said.

The Liberian President has been quoted as saying that he would be willing to leave the country in about three months and demanded that war crime charges be dropped against him. A United Nations-backed court in Sierra Leone has indicted Mr. Taylor for crimes against humanity with atrocities that included hacking off the limbs of his victims.

There is pressure on the administration to do something to set right the deteriorating situation in Liberia, a country founded in 1847 by freed American slaves.

The Congressional Black Caucus has called on the State Department and the White House to intervene quickly.

Bush used 10-yr-old data for Iraq war

WALTER PINCUS
WASHINGTON, JULY 4

US intelligence analysts lacked new, hard information about Saddam Hussein's chemical, biological and nuclear weapons after United Nations inspectors left Iraq in 1998, and so had to rely on data from the early and mid-1990s when they concluded in months leading up to the war that those programs continued into 2003, according to preliminary findings of a CIA internal review panel.

While the post-1998 evidence was largely circumstantial or "inferential" because of the inspectors' absence and the lack of reliable agents in-

side Iraq, the panel said Thursday, the judgment that Saddam continued to have weapons of mass destruction appears justified.

"It would have been very hard to conclude those programmes were not continuing, based on the reports being gathered in recent years about Iraqi purchases and other activities before the war," said Richard Kerr, a former CIA deputy director who heads the four-person review panel appointed in February by CIA Director George Tenet.

The panel's mission, initially suggested by Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, is to provide "lessons learned" from the Iraq war by comparing the pre-war analyses and estimates to the intelligence

of his 32 years at the CIA, said his preliminary report is the first half of the review. President Bush justified the invasion of Iraq primarily on the argument that Saddam had weapons of mass destruction that threatened the US.

On another controversial Iraq intelligence issue, the preliminary report indicates that although Al Qaeda and Saddam had a common enemy in the US, and there were some ties among individuals in the two camps, it was not at all clear there was any coordination or joint activities, said one CIA insider.

In promoting the war, Bush and his top aides cited these very reasons.

Kerr also looked into whether US analysts changed



gathered inside the country after the war.

Kerr said the pre-war intelligence reports given to Bush administration policymakers from the CIA, the Pentagon and State Department contained caveats and

Kerr, an analyst for most

their views, particularly in light of the administration's desire to gain support for going to war and questions about whether analysts were pressured to promote that cause.

"My instincts," Kerr said, "is that they (the analysts) did not change over time." Based on his experience, he said, "there nearly always are differences between people who follow terrorists and the geographic regional analysts."

On the whole, he said, "they were very cautious, explored things carefully and followed evidence as far as could be."

Intelligence judgments are always inferential, he said, and with Iraq they were especially difficult without up-to-date hard intelligence. —LATWP

Six to be tried by U.S. military panels

577
10-14

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JULY 4. The U.S. President, George W Bush, has designated six captives as eligible to be tried in the Military Commissions.

The six are believed to be held in Guantanamo Bay Base as a part of the ongoing war on terrorism.

"The President determined that there is reason to believe that each of these enemy combatants was a member of Al-

Qaeda or was otherwise involved in terrorism directed against the United States," the Pentagon said in a statement.

In fact the Defence Department is refusing all comment on the subject.

The Pentagon has first to decide if the six men will be brought before Military Commissions and on what charges. Officially nothing has been said of the nationality of the six with a media report that the identities may never be revealed. As

many as 600 prisoners are being held at the U.S. prison camp in Guantanamo Bay in Cuba.

The camp was set up in January 2002 in the aftermath of the terror attacks of September 11, 2001 and is holding people picked up to be terrorists and suspected terrorists from many places in the world including Afghanistan. According to various published reports, the commissions would consist of between three and seven military officers including a Presid-

ing Officer. The Pentagon has also named the lead defence counsel and the chief prosecutor. Though the Pentagon has argued that it will conduct "full and fair" trials, human rights groups and activists are not impressed with some of the rules that have been laid out.

The argument has been made that the ground rules favour the prosecution, place a lot of conditions on the defence and has no room for review in civilian judicial courts.

5 JUL 2003

Two Iraqis killed, 10 US soldiers hurt in attacks

Baghdad: Three separate attacks in northern Iraq on Thursday left at least two Iraqis dead and 10 US soldiers wounded, military officials and witnesses said, as violence continued to overshadow rebuilding efforts.

One Iraqi was killed and three soldiers wounded when they came under attack in Baghdad, a US army officer told AFP, while another six Americans were wounded in Ramadi, west of the capital.

In a separate shooting on the northern fringes of the capital in the early hours, a US soldier and a six-year-old boy were wounded in a shootout between US forces and a gunman who was with the boy. The gunman was shot dead.

In the incident in Ramadi, around 100 km west of Baghdad, residents said two attackers on a motorcycle had fired a rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) at a US military vehicle.

The military said six soldiers had been wounded as the result of an explosive device targeting a US patrol, without elaborating. It seemed to be the same incident.

In the shooting incident in the Kadhimyah neighbourhood in the north of the capital, US troops were conducting a routine night patrol when they came under fire.

"An Iraqi man attacked the patrol, wounding one of the soldiers. The soldier was killed in self-defence, killing the gunman and a boy, who was with the gunman," according to a military statement. Both of the wounded were evacuated to the military field hospital and were in stable condition, it added.

Faced with increased armed resistance, the top US administrator in Iraq, Paul Bremer, has asked Washington for more troops and dozens of civilian officials to help speed up the restora-



Smoke billows from a burning Humvee vehicle as US soldiers secure the scene along Haifa street in Baghdad following a rocket-propelled grenade attack on Thursday.

tion of order and public services, *The Philadelphia Inquirer* reported on Thursday.

Citing unnamed administration officials, the newspaper said US defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld was reviewing the request.

Mr Bremer's request underscores how difficult it has been for his small civilian staff and about 158,000 US-led troops to meet the demands of Iraqis for security and other basic needs, the newspaper pointed out.

Senior US officials said Mr Bremer had asked for dozens of civilian officials to make up for a shortage of skilled Iraqi administrators who were not closely affiliated with Saddam Hussein's regime, according to the report.

In addition, more US troops are needed as a "stopgap measure" until international peacekeepers start to arrive, *The Inquirer* quoted one official as saying. AFP

4 JUL 2003

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Bush to get tough with Iraqi rebels

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JULY 2. Faced with increased attacks on the ground and growing apprehension in the country on the Iraq policies of the administration, the U.S. President, George W Bush, has promised to use "direct and decisive force" against those who are continuing the attack on American troops.

The resolve of the U.S. will not be shaken as a result of the goings on, the President has said. And an increasingly defensive White House is blaming the media for ignoring the so-called success stories in Iraq; and appears furious at the suggestion that this administration was not somehow prepared for the post-war Iraq.

The restoration of Iraq, in the view of the President, is a "massive and long-term undertaking" and insisted that he would not allow insurgents to be the cause of American forces leaving the country "before freedom is fully established." "There will be no return to tyranny in Iraq. Those who threaten the order and stability of that country will face ruin just as surely as the regime they once served," Mr. Bush said.

The blame for the current state of affairs has been laid at the doorstep of the remnants of the Ba'athist Party, the domestic terror group, the Ansar al-Islam and foreign fighters, some of whom are connected with the Al-Qaeda network. "They have attacked coalition forces and they're trying to intimidate Iraqi citizens. These groups believe they have found an opportunity to harm America, to shake our resolve in the war on terror and

to cause us to leave Iraq before freedom is fully established," Mr. Bush said. "They are wrong and they will not succeed. We will stay on the offensive against the enemy and all who attack our troops will be met with direct and decisive force".

If the President came out with a strong response to mounting concern and apprehension in this country and overseas on his policies on Iraq, some of his top aides took a different track and criticised the media for 'ignoring' the numerous "success stories" that have taken place in Iraq.

The White House spokesman, Ari Fleischer, rejected the notion that the administration had been ill-prepared for the post-conflict phase. "This is one of the cases where if the glass of milk is nine-tenths full, you'll only see the one-tenth that is empty," Mr. Fleischer argued. When a scribe persisted in asking the spokesman, "Success story? You got any?" the reply was on expected lines: "You just haven't aired them, but there are many."

The President and the administration may have had the backing of the public at the time of the fighting in Iraq, but there is increasing indication that this backing has been slipping in the recent past. But the White House remains unmoved. "The President is not going to make decisions about what to do in Iraq by the polls. Polls are volatile; they move; principles don't and the President is dedicated to the principle of helping the Iraqi people to have a stable country because that's in America's interest," Mr. Fleischer said.

ROW OVER INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL

USA suspends aid to 35 nations

Associated Press

WASHINGTON, July 2. — The USA will suspend military aid to about 35 countries in a dispute over an international war crimes tribunal. Overall, about \$48 million in aid will be blocked, according to State Department spokesman Mr Richard Boucher. Among the nations affected is Colombia, where some US assistance for fighting drugs and terrorists could be in jeopardy.

The aid cutoff is because the countries failed to meet a 1 July deadline for exempting American soldiers and other personnel from prosecution before the new UN international war crimes tribunal.

Mr Bush fears the court could leave US personnel subject to politically motivated prosecutions.

In addition to Colombia, the other countries which were declared ineligible to receive US military assistance were — Benin, Central African Republic, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Namibia, Niger, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia in Africa; Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Serbia and Montenegro,

Slovakia, Slovenia in Europe; Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Costa Rica, Dominica, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, St. Vincent and Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela; and Fiji and Samoa in Asia.

The Bush administration is simply acting to protect its troops, White House spokesman Mr Ari Fleischer said. "These are the people who are able to deliver assistance to the various states around the world, and if delivering aid to those states endangers America's servicemen and servicewomen, the President's first priority is with the servicemen and servicewomen."

The Clinton administration signed a 1998 treaty that created the court, but the Bush administration nullified the signature and has sought a permanent exemption from prosecutions. Those efforts have been blocked by the European Union, though the UN Security Council last year gave the USA a second exemption.

Advocates of the court have accused the Bush administration of trying to bully weaker nations and undermining an important advance in human rights.

U.S. operation to crush Iraqi rebels

CAMP BOOM (IRAQ), JUNE 29. U.S. forces launched a massive operation today to crush insurgents and capture senior figures from Saddam Hussein's ousted regime in a show of force designed to stem a wave of deadly attacks on U.S. troops.

The operation, dubbed "Desert Sidewinder," is taking place in a huge swath of central Iraq stretching from the Iranian border to the areas north of Baghdad, and is expected to last for several days, military officials said.

Americans arrested a man in Khalis, 70 km north of Baghdad, suspected of recruiting young men to launch attacks on Americans, according to military officials. In Dojima, an upscale town where Sunni Muslim residents recently polished the still-standing portrait of Mr. Hussein, police raided the homes of alleged loyalists suspected of hiding arms, including rocket-propelled grenades — the weapon of choice in many recent ambushes.

There was no immediate word on whether any of Iraq's most wanted had been arrested.

Saddam, a rallying point

Meanwhile, the top U.S. official in Iraq said Mr. Hussein must be captured or killed so he can no longer be a rallying point for anti-coalition fighters.

L. Paul Bremer, the civilian administrator of Iraq, said there were still leftover Ba'ath Party members, Fidayeen fighters and perhaps terrorists from neighbouring countries fighting U.S. and British troops, who drew succour from Mr. Hussein's apparent survival.

"I think it is important that we either catch him or kill him," Mr. Bremer told the British Broadcasting Corp. — AP



A U.S. soldier frisks an Iraqi at a checkpoint in Fallujah, 50 km west of Baghdad, on Sunday. — AP

US bleeds, pipeline bursts in sabotage

Baghdad, June 22 (Reuters): A grenade attack killed a US soldier in Iraq today as a pipeline fire blazed on after an overnight explosion described by an oil ministry official as sabotage.

The US military said a second soldier was wounded in the attack on a military convoy at Khan Azad, some 20 km south of Baghdad. The first was dead on arrival at hospital.

It was the latest in a spate of deadly assaults on US forces in which 19 soldiers have been killed since President George W. Bush declared major combat in Iraq over on May 1.

Two US soldiers were wounded in the town of Hit, about 140 km north-west of Baghdad, yes-

terday afternoon when their vehicle ran over a landmine.

About an hour before midnight, a US patrol reported a fire at an Iraqi fuel pipeline in the desert near Hit. "This incident is an act of sabotage. The pipeline was blown up deliberately," said an oil ministry official. He did not elaborate and asked not to be named.

A Reuters correspondent at the scene said orange fireballs and thick black smoke were billowing from the damaged pipeline near a metal pylon more than 12 hours after the blast. He said no US troops or Iraqi officials were on the spot and no attempt was being made to extinguish the blaze.

A US military spokesperson said earlier that efforts were under way to put out the fire. He had no word on its cause.

It was the second major fire to damage Iraqi pipelines this month. US officials blamed the first on gas leaking from the main export pipeline from the Kirkuk oilfields to Turkey. The pipeline at Hit, with a gas pipeline alongside it, was built in the 1980s to connect Iraq's southern and northern oilfields, enabling exports to flow smoothly.

An oil ministry official said any disruption to the oil pipeline could hit Baghdad's main refinery, forcing it to rely on crude from the south, where oil facilities are in bad shape. The refin-

ery at al-Doura serves a city whose five million people have barely had time to forget the misery of petrol queues that snaked through sweltering streets for weeks after US-led forces toppled Saddam Hussein on April 9.

Iraq, which exported around two million barrels per day before the US-led war, relaunched oil sales today from eight million barrels stored in Turkey. A Turkish tanker loaded a million barrels of oil bound for Turkish refineries from the Mediterranean terminal of Ceyhan.

De facto oil minister Thamer Ghadhban said yesterday it would take 18 months — and well over \$1 billion — to restore pre-war production capacity of

three million bpd.

Post-war looting and sabotage at oil facilities have delayed the resumption of Iraq's oil exports and will keep shipments well below pre-war levels for several months, officials say. Iraqi oil pipelines and installations are spread over vast swathes of sparsely populated desert that is hard to patrol.

A week ago, US forces launched Operation Desert Storm in a fresh bid to find weapons and curb attacks on American troops, while wooing Iraqi civilians with aid projects.

They have also intensified the hunt for Saddam since seizing his top aide, Abid Hamid Mahmud al-Tikriti, on Monday.

Mahmud is reported to have told his captors that the deposed ruler and his two sons had survived the war. Paul Bremer, Iraq's US administrator, said yesterday the issue of Saddam's fate needed to be resolved one way or another, as uncertainty emboldened his supporters.

Meanwhile, Baghdad airport, shut to regular commercial flights for 13 years under UN sanctions, should reopen by July 15, an official for the main US contractor rebuilding Iraq's infrastructure said today. Tom Elkins, the executive in charge of procurement for private contracting giant Bechtel, said Washington had put a "high priority" on reopening the airport.

WFO MAR 9-4

US soldier fires on Iraqi protesters, 2 die

3/12 11:12 19/6

Baghdad: A US soldier fired into a crowd of Iraqi protesters outside the headquarters of the US-led administration in Baghdad on Wednesday, killing two people.

The shooting occurred when a US military convoy passed through a crowd led by up to 2,000 former Iraqi soldiers who were protesting at their having been sacked by the new US administration.

"There is no god but Allah, America is the enemy of Allah," "Down, down USA," the crowd chanted in the fierce midday heat.

US military officials said a US soldier had fired in self-defence after the convoy was pelted with rocks and two Iraqis were injured and later died.

"Both men who were evacuated died of their wounds," Lt Col Richard Douglas said. The complex is the former palace of toppled Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

The sacked Iraqi soldiers were disgruntled over losing their jobs when US administrator Paul Bremer dissolved Saddam's armed forces last month. Mr Bremer's drive to destroy the legacy of Saddam's Baathist rule has laid off up to 400,000



US troops (right) prevent former Iraqi soldiers from entering American headquarters during a demonstration in Baghdad on Wednesday.

Iraqis who worked in the now-disbanded armed forces, security services and information and defence ministries, with no prospect of reintegration.

"We were demonstrating peacefully, asking the US to give us our salaries," Abdul-Rahim Hassan, a former soldier, told Reuters. "We were not fighting them, but suddenly they started shooting at us."

US Army Captain Scott Nauman, whose men were guarding the compound, told CNN television that Iraqis on the other side of the street had been throwing rocks for nearly an hour before the shooting, but no one had been hurt until the convoy arrived.

"The personnel (Iraqis) on the other side of the street swarmed the convoy, shaking the vehicles, breaking out windows, throwing rocks from extremely close range at the personnel in that convoy. They felt threatened understandably as their vehicle was swarmed and windows broken and they fired shots then directly into the crowd and injured two personnel...To me it appeared to be in self-defence." Reuters

Iran protests against US 'interference'

Tehran, June 16

IRAN STOOD firm on Monday against two-pronged outside pressure, branding US support for student rebels as interference and saying any stricter UN checks on its atomic programme must be rewarded with aid.

The nuclear watchdog and several EU foreign ministers urged Tehran to accept the tougher controls that are designed to make sure its nuclear power programme is not a cover for making bombs as the US alleges.

Iran, currently also facing some of the most outspoken domestic protests since the 1979 Islamic revolution, said it would consider the inspections "with a

positive view" but stuck by a demand it should get Western technology in return.

IAEA chief Mohammed ElBaradei appealed for Iran's compliance after presenting a harsh report saying Tehran was in breach of its current obligations, although it was now making amends. The criticism should please Washington, which has piled pressure on Iran since ousting Iraq's Saddam Hussein.

On Sunday, Bush cheered the Tehran students who have protested for six nights against Islamic clerical rule. "This is the beginning of people expressing themselves toward a free Iran which I think is positive," he said.

Iran's foreign ministry offi-

cially protested and called the comments "a blatant interference in Iran's internal affairs".

"America is waging a psychological war," newspapers also quoted Intelligence Minister Ali Yunesi as saying.

Open letter to Khamenei

More than 250 university lecturers and writers have called on Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, to abandon the principle of being God's representative on earth and to accept he is accountable to the people.

In a statement made available to AP on Monday, the intellectuals say they stand behind last month's call for democratic re-

form by liberal legislators.

The move follows a week of protests and riots in Tehran in which pro-democracy demonstrators clashed with police and vigilantes who support the hard-line clerical regime.

"Considering individuals to be in the position of a divinity and absolute power... is open polytheism (in contradiction to) almighty God and blatant oppression of the dignity of human being," said the statement issued on Sunday. "People (and their elected lawmakers) have the right to fully supervise their rulers, criticise them, and remove them from power if they are not satisfied," said the statement published on Monday.

Reuters

Wounded America lets Scorpion loose

Near Balad (Iraq), June 15 (Reuters): Guerrillas ambushed a US convoy in the hostile region north of Baghdad today, wounding several soldiers, as a new US mission was launched to hunt for Saddam Hussein loyalists blamed for recent attacks.

A crippled US truck smouldered on the highway south of the restive town of Balad after the ambush, its tyres and canopy ablaze. Apache helicopters buzzed overhead, searching for the attackers. Tanks and armoured vehicles surrounded the truck. Troops trained their guns at the fields around the road. Soldiers said several casualties had been evacuated. They said the convoy had been travelling from Baghdad to Balad, about 90 km to the north. It was attacked about 20 km south of Balad.

The ambush came as the US military launched a new mission, Operation Desert Scorpion, to root out Saddam loyalists after a spate of attacks that have killed about 40 US soldiers since major combat was declared over on May 1.

The new US military sweep followed last week's Operation Peninsula Strike — the biggest such US manoeuvre in Iraq since May 1 — when a series of raids were mounted in the fertile plains around Balad near the Tigris river. The army said in a statement on Friday that it had killed 27 Iraqis who ambushed a tank patrol near Balad, but a military spokesman later said he could not confirm the death toll. Locals said five civilians had been killed in the incident.

The US military has said that some 400 Iraqis were detained in the operation around Balad, which began last Monday and was winding down by the weekend. It said about 60 were still in custody, and four US soldiers were wounded during the operation, along with two Iraqi "hostile civilians".

Angry locals said US troops had ransacked houses and assaulted residents. They said the

operation would only serve to fuel hostility towards the US occupiers of Iraq.

The US military said Operation Desert Scorpion is aimed to win hearts and minds as well as hunt guerrillas. A Central Command statement said it was "designed to identify and defeat selected Baath party loyalists, terrorist organisations and criminal elements while simultaneously delivering humanitarian aid".

In the Sunni town of Falluja, 70 km west of Baghdad, troops searched some houses overnight, but by morning they were distributing food and supplies. Hostility to the Americans is widespread in Falluja after a series of clashes, but the town was quiet today with a low-key army presence.

The attacks have been concentrated in Baghdad and two nearby areas — to the west around Ramadi and Falluja, and to the north around Balad, Baquba and Tikrit. Saddam's home town. Many locals in the troubled areas say they have no love for Saddam but that anger is mounting towards US soldiers. "We were oppressed under Saddam and now we are oppressed under the Americans," a trader in Falluja said.

US General Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said in a television interview that Saddam was probably still alive and several groups were behind recent attacks.

"I think, probably the majority opinion is that he is alive and it's something that has to be dealt with," Myers told the US Fox News Channel yesterday.

Today marked the end of a two-week amnesty for Iraqis to hand in heavy weapons without punishment. Iraqis caught with banned weapons without a permit will now face a fine and a jail term of up to a year.

Many Iraqis have said they dare not give up their guns till security is restored following the anarchy after Saddam's overthrow on April 9.



US soldiers patrol a street in Ramadi, 80 km west of Baghdad, on Saturday. (AP)

Shootout in Mecca

Jeddah, June 15 (Reuters): Saudi Arabia, reeling from suicide bombings that killed 35 people last month, today said several suspected "terrorists" were killed and others arrested in a shootout in the holy city of Mecca.

State-owned television said the men had been plotting an "imminent terrorist attack".

Saudi officials said the suspects were also wanted for other crimes, but declined to say if they were linked to last month's suicide bomb blasts in Riyadh which targeted foreigners and have been blamed on Saudi-born Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda network.

The television said five "terrorists" and two policemen were killed in clashes after police raided an apartment building in the middle class al-Khalidiya district last evening.

It quoted an interior ministry source saying the apartment was rigged with explosives and that police found 72 homemade bombs, machine guns, ammunition, communication devices and chemical substances used for making explosives.

"Security forces at 21:30 on Saturday night raided a group of terrorists living in an apartment... in Mecca who were planning an imminent terrorist attack," the television quoted the source as saying.

Five people were arrested — two Chad nationals, one Egyptian, one Saudi and a fifth whose nationality was not known — in addition to several other suspects, the television said.

It said further details of the raid would be issued soon.

The Okaz daily, close to the

authorities, had earlier reported that five suspects were killed and seven held after fleeing to the building after a car chase with police. Five policemen were killed and five wounded. It said five policemen were killed and five wounded. Okaz said the suspects had fled to the building after a car chase with police. Authorities found large amounts of explosives and weapons in the apartment where the men were hiding.

An Indian migrant worker who lives in the area said he was shot at overnight by three men who tried to take his car, in an apparently related incident.

"Three men with machine-guns tried to take over my car. I refused to drive them, so they made me get out, then they shot back at me as they drove off," Abdul-Khalig Raheem Sheikh, 50, said. Sheikh, who was injured by broken glass, said police had cordoned off the area.

Residents of the nearby port city of Jeddah reported heavy traffic tailbacks in Mecca amid security checks, including inspections of women's handbags, a rare step in a country which enforces strict gender segregation.

Saudi officials would not confirm how many people had been killed or arrested or comment on a newspaper report that one of the arrested men was wearing a belt strapped with explosives. "The situation is under control," an official source said.

"Security forces managed to arrest seven wanted people and five were killed during the storming of a building in the Khalidiya district where terrorist elements were thought to be,

16 JUN 2003

U.S. firm on W. Asia peace: Powell

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JUNE 15. The Bush administration has said that it will not "waver" in its determination to push for peace in West Asia, this pledge coming from the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, on Saturday evening.

"The United States will not get weary, we will not waver, we will not stop, we will not step aside", Gen. Powell told a group of Arab Americans here.

The Secretary of State was the keynote speaker at the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee. At the same time, the top administration official placed the onus on both the Israelis and the Palestinians, even while acknowledging that there will be "bumps" along the road.

"The parties must turn the courageous commitments into peace on the ground. This is no time for parsing promises. The two sides must now perform", he said.

The Republican administration, which has put in place a



RENEWED TENSIONS: An Israeli soldier prevents a group of Palestinian women and children from crossing from Hebron to the outskirts of the city on Sunday. — AP

Road Map for the West Asia peace which sees a realisation of the Palestinian state by the year 2005, is especially concerned at the rising scale of violence with the two parties in the area resorting to tit-for-tat attacks.

In fact, the particular concern here has been that since the President's initiative of June 4 in

Jordan, suicide bombings and reprisals have left at least 60 persons dead. And the state of Israel and the militant group Hamas have vowed to finish each other off. The Bush administration has taken a lot of criticism for being a silent spectator to the goings-on between the Israelis and the Palestinians; but has now

seemingly stepped in with a Road Map in the aftermath of major changes in the Palestinian leadership.

The concern at this early stage is that the violence should not spiral out of control. Even as the Secretary of State was making his remarks, the U.S. envoy, John Wolf, and his contingent arrived in Israel.

Their task is to "monitor and implement" the Road Map. And an Egyptian team is planning to arrive in Gaza today for talks with Hamas officials to see if an end to attacks is possible.

Hamas pulled out of the negotiations and has said that there are no plans to end the violence. Later this week, Gen. Powell will travel to Jordan where he will meet senior representatives of the so-called Quartet — the United States, the United Nations, Russia and the European Union.

There is also the possibility of Gen. Powell travelling to Israel to meet its Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon.

16 JUN 2003

THE HINDU

USA kills 27 Iraqi 'attackers'

Associated Press

BAGHDAD, June 13. — US forces killed 27 Iraqi fighters in a ground and air strike today after the Iraqis attacked a US tank patrol north of Baghdad, the US military said.

This is reportedly the biggest US combat operation since the fall of Baghdad. US Central Command said an "organised group" ambushed the tanks with rocket propelled grenades in Balad, about 60 km from Baghdad.

Centcom, however, did not mention US casualties. The patrol returned fire and killed four of the assailants. When the rest of the attackers fled, Apache helicopters joined the chase along with tanks and Bradley Fighting Vehicles, killing 23 more assailants.

The reference to an organised group of nearly 30 insurgents was another indication of increasing re-



Anti-US protests at Freedom Square in Baghdad on Friday. — AFP

sistance to the American-led occupation of Iraq since the war was declared over on 1 May.

Baghdad blasts: Two explosions tore through a gas pipeline in the Makhoul region of Baghdad on

Friday, a day after Iraq's state oil marketing organisation announced a tender for 9.5 million barrels

awarded to US and European refineries for export during the second half of June.

Four Iraqis killed in US search for Chemical Ali

A massive US army search for Ali Hassan al-Majid alias Chemical Ali, a cousin of Mr Saddam Hussein, left four Iraqis dead in Dhuliyah, north of Baghdad, witnesses said today, adds AFP.

The search started on Sunday and came to a close today when US armored vehicles withdrew from Dhuliyah. Residents said two persons had been shot dead, one died of a brain hemorrhage after he was beaten up, and a fourth of a heart attack after being interrogated by the US army.

The six-day raid was part of a much larger army campaign, dubbed Operation Peninsula Strike, which aims to crush pockets of Iraqi resistance.

Washington said last week that Chemical Ali, who ordered a poison gas attack on Kurdish villagers in 1988, may still be alive.

Afzal Zullah expounded the Islamic notion of fidelity in relation to contractual obligations thus: "Contracting parties are bound to fulfil their contracts... They would be liable for any contravention — obviously both here and hereafter." In this case, it was a dead man who was charged with renegeing on a contract.

Judicial wisdom has also fallen upon the fate of animals, though not with any discernable consistency. In one case the Lahore High Court held that a buffalo was not a "person".

US propounds 'dual use' theory on Iraq's WMDs

Washington: Seeking to justify its inability to find weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, the US now says deposed ruler Saddam Hussein had "dual use" facilities. US defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld said Iraq had dual use facilities "capable of instant delivery of such weapons of mass destruction while normally producing products for peaceful uses."

The new assumption by Mr Rumsfeld indicating a climbdown comes as increasing number of senators are accusing the Bush administration of serious intelligence failure and keeping the American citizens in the dark on WMDs in Iraq.

However the central intelligence agency (CIA) has its own internal study under way.

Republican senator John Warner, chairperson of the senate armed services committee, said on CNN that he might join the intelligence panel's investigation.

"The fact that we are just investigating it (detection of any arms till now)," he said, "should not in any way indicate that we are putting any credibility doubt against the CIA or the Bush administration."

Democratic senator and former chairman of the senate intelligence panel Bob Graham said "if we don't find these weapons of mass destruction, it will represent a serious intelligence failure or the manipulation of intelligence to keep the American people in the dark."

"Such weapons may have existed but the Bush administration hyped the claims", Democratic senator Joseph Biden, high ranking member of the senate foreign relations committee said.

- CIA study on WMDs is under way
- Democrat senator says claims on WMDs was hyped
- Army official says Rumsfeld distorted intelligence

Experts say though the "just in time delivery" theory will allow the faithful to believe that Mr Hussein had WMDs, but those opposed to the war will continue to remain skeptical.

Time news magazine says it is clear that the US is running out of good leads. "We've been to virtually every ammunition supply point between the Kuwaiti border and Baghdad," Lieutenant General James Conway, commander of the marine expeditionary force, was quoted as saying. "But they're simply not there."

The magazine says several current and former military officers who saw all the relevant data through this spring charge that the Pentagon took the raw data from the CIA and consistently over-interpreted the threat posed by Iraq's stockpiles.

"There was a predisposition in this administration to assume the worst about Saddam," a senior military officer told *Time*. This official, recently retired, was deeply involved in the planning for the war with Iraq, but left the service after concluding the US was going to war based on "bum intelligence," the magazine says.

Time says another official, an army intelligence officer, also singled out Mr Rumsfeld for massaging the facts. "Rumsfeld was deeply, almost pathologically, distorting the intelligence." Agencies

USA keeps powder dry for N Korea

The Times, London

TOKYO, June 3. — American troops in South Korea could be redeployed to enable a pre-emptive military strike on North Korea if the dispute over the latter's suspected nuclear weapons programme escalates.

The USA has begun a thorough overhaul of its military presence in East Asia, including 100,000 personnel. Speaking in Tokyo during his lightning tour of the region, Mr Paul Wolfowitz, US deputy defence secretary, hinted strongly that some of the 37,000 US troops may even be removed from their position at the front of the DMZ, the 4 km-wide strip of land that separates the two Koreas.

Mr Wolfowitz said that he was committed to the principle of deterrence. However, the war in Iraq has convinced the US of the

North 'besieged'

Yomiuri Shimbun/ ANN

EVIAN, June 3. — A series of bilateral talks among the leaders of Japan, China, Russia, South Korea and the USA has effectively produced an international siege of North Korea through the affirmation of coordinated efforts to head off Pyongyang's nuclear programme, although differences remain over specific measures.

Alarmed by North Korean missile exports, the USA recently unveiled a plan to prevent the proliferation of parts used in WMDs and related technology. The USA is believed to be set to intensify pressure on North Korea. As a result, observers believe there is a growing need among the nations involved to intensify efforts to coordinate policy to maintain the 'siege'.

effectiveness of hitting key government targets quickly once conflict is under way.

Away from the zone, and out of range of North Korean artillery, US troops would, in theory, be better placed to launch a pre-emptive strike on Pyongyang, experts say. Mr Wolfowitz said that the US and South Korea were discussing "how best to enhance and align our forces and that of our allies to most effectively provide for deterrence".

He added that the redeployment should not wait until the nuclear problem had been resolved. "While North Korea has certain asymmetric advantages," he said, "the US also has remarkable military capability, as demonstrated in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq."

Mr Wolfowitz also addressed the issue of 25,000 US troops on the Japanese island of Okinawa. The base has been a source of local complaints, but he played down suggestions that troop strength there will be reduced

- 4 JUN 2003

THE STATESMAN

Bush launches W Asia peace mission

Sharm el-Sheikh (Egypt): President George W. Bush launched the most ambitious US peace mission in two years on Tuesday, meeting Arab leaders to try to win support for ending Israeli-Palestinian bloodshed.

In opening remarks to the US-Arab summit in the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh, Mr. Bush told Israel it had a responsibility to deal with Jewish settlements.

"Israel has got responsibilities. Israel must deal with the settlements. Israel must make sure there is a continuous territory that the Palestinians can call home," Mr. Bush said.

Mr. Bush told Arab leaders that "a few people, a few killers, a few terrorists" cannot be allowed to prevent a settlement between Israelis and Palestinians. At the same time, Mr. Bush made clear that both sides, Israel and Arab, have responsibility for achieving peace.

A freeze on settlement activity is a key part of the West Asia peace roadmap, drawn up by the United States, the United Nations, the European Union and Russia.

US hopes for progress have been buoyed by word that Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon is to announce plans to uproot some rogue Jewish settler outposts. The international community considers the settlements illegal, although Israel disputes this.

Amid tight security, Mr. Bush met



US President George W. Bush walks with Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas during the peace summit with several Arab leaders in the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh on Tuesday.

host Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak before the two leaders joined Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah, Jordan's King Abdullah, Bahrain's King Hamad and Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas, making his debut on the international stage. ans and Israelis leading to the cre-

ation of a Palestinian state by 2005. The high-level talks have raised hopes for ending 32 months of Israeli-Palestinian violence, but doubts remain over each side's commitment to implementing the plan.

In a goodwill gesture, Israel began releasing dozens of Palestinian prisoners on Tuesday. But in a sign of the obstacles ahead, Israeli troops shot dead a Palestinian security man in the Gaza Strip and wounded five stone-throwers in a sweep for militants in the West Bank.

On Wednesday, Mr. Bush is to hold a landmark summit with Mr. Sharon and Mr. Abbas in the Jordanian port city of Aqaba. The US president had refused to meet veteran Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, who still wields influence among Palestinians who see him as the father of their struggle.

Before arriving from the G-8 summit in France, Mr. Bush said peace in West Asia would be a difficult undertaking but he would "put in as much time as necessary to achieve the vision of two states living side-by-side in peace".

Egypt's official Middle East News Agency (MENA) said the final Arab communique would offer Arab support for the roadmap and Mr. Bush's efforts to implement it. It said it would outline the Arab position to have the roadmap implemented in full. Agencies

WSD
4/2/03

Pressure mounts on Bush to provide evidence

4/6

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JUNE 3. Republicans and Democrats are pressuring the Bush administration to be more forthcoming on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, the supposed existence of which was the prime rationale for the war against Saddam Hussein.

The call to be more open with evidence is in the context of a determination on Capitol Hill to get to the bottom of intelligence assessments and decisions taken on that basis. Both of these aspects will figure prominently when formal hearings on the subject begin shortly.

Following up on the statements he

made on Sunday, the Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, John Warner, has said that his panel will hold hearings on the issue and perhaps will be joined by the Senate Intelligence Committee. Indications are that lawmakers in the House of Representatives are also moving in the same direction. Senior members of the administration, including the Secretary of State and the Defence Secretary are expected to appear before Congressional Committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate. And the Central Intelligence Agency will be making available to Congress the "underlying intelligence" that was the basis for the Secretary of State's

presentation at the United Nations prior to the war against Iraq.

Mr. Warner, a Republican from Virginia, has said that the move towards hearings was because the "situation is becoming one where the credibility of the administration and Congress is being challenged". But Mr. Warner has made it clear that he did not believe there had been any deception by this administration in building its case against the Saddam Hussein regime. But Democrats, while keeping up the pressure on administration officials, are going a step further and asking why the White House had repeatedly cited evidence from patently bogus documents, especially as it pertained to Iraq

allegedly pursuing a nuclear weapons programme.

In a letter to the President, the senior Democrat on the House Government Reform Committee, Henry Waxman, wanted to know why the White House persisted with the allegations that Iraq tried to obtain nuclear material from Niger even though the CIA had expressed reservations on the validity of the documents. The documents were deemed forgeries — and poor ones at that — later. "Your entire pre-emption doctrine depends on the ability of the United States to gather accurate intelligence and make honest assessments. The matter raises fundamental issues that cannot be ignored",

Mr. Waxman told the President.

In calling on the White House and this administration to come out more openly on the subject, lawmakers cutting across party lines are being careful over how they are presenting the issue. Republicans and Democrats are not straightaway charging lapses on intelligence gathering or assessment by agencies; rather, much of the focus is on what administration officials did with the intelligence assessment.

The CIA has apparently told Mr. Warner that it will provide his panel with "detailed" information that led to the "assessment" of the Iraqi weapons and programmes of mass destruction.

4 JUN 2003

'WE ARE WORKING TOGETHER ON IRAQ'

Bush, Chirac patch up

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@ France

Associated Press

EVIAN, June 2. — Calling him by his first name and praising his knowledge of West Asia, President George W Bush today put an end to his feud with his French counterpart, Mr Jacques Chirac. Mr Bush said they were now working together to get Iraq back on its feet.

"I know there are a lot of people in both our countries wondering whether or not we can actually sit down and have a comfortable conversation. And the answer is absolutely," Mr Bush said, with Mr Chirac standing next to him. "We can have disagreements but that doesn't mean we have to be disagreeable to each other."

Mr Chirac, who had the translation whispered into his ear, smiled and nodded.

The two leaders staged a reconciliation on a terrace outside a hotel where the G-8 summit is being held.

The French President escorted Mr Bush to a table and put his hand on Mr Bush's shoulder; they ended the session with a hand on one another's back. "We'd like a cup of coffee, please," Mr Bush joked as they posed for photographers ahead of a private, one-on-one meeting.

Mr Bush said the two leaders have found common ground on "a free Iraq, a healthy

Iraq, a prosperous Iraq, we're in agreement and we'll move together to ensure that the Iraqi people have now got the capacity to run their own country." In their private talks lasting about 25 minutes, Mr Bush told Mr Chirac: "The Iraq situation was difficult but it's time to move on."

Mr Chirac said: "We had a very positive meeting this morning that underscored our common belief in the capacity of tomorrow's world to achieve higher growth.

It was thus a message of confidence." All countries shared the belief, "that is encouraging," the French President added.

CIA ups the ante: The CIA has promised to produce a "round of fresh" evidence of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction for increasingly wary lawmakers as early as next week even as reports said there was a tendency among the US administration to distort intel-

ligence about Baghdad and assume the worst about its ousted leader, PTI adds from New York. In another development, British foreign secretary Mr Jack Straw today ruled out an inquiry into the Iraq war despite a poll suggesting that Britons were increasingly sceptical that the regime of Mr Saddam Hussein really possessed weapons of mass destruction, AFP reports from London.



THE FIGHT'S OVER: Oxfam campaigners stage a protest to call on G-8 leaders to stop 'dumping cheap subsidised products' in Africa. In Evian on Monday. — AFP

Time to move forward: Bush

By Vaiju Naravane

LAUSANNE (SWITZERLAND), MAY 30.

The first signs of a genuine thaw in Franco-U.S. relations after several months of strain came on Thursday when the U.S. President, George W Bush, told French television that though he was 'disappointed' by France's failure to support the war on Iraq there would be no punitive sanctions against Paris.

Mr. Bush who gave the interview in Washington on the eve of his departure for the G-8 industrialised nations' summit in Evian, a French spa town on the opposite shore from Lausanne across the expanse of the Lemman lake said: "No, no. No sanctions. I'm not mad. I mean, I'm disappointed and the American people are disappointed. But now is the time to move forward."

French officials were clearly relieved and happy at the American decision to bury the hatchet. Senior U.S. officials including the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, the Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, the National Security Adviser, Condoleezza Rice, and the Attorney-General, John Ashcroft, have repeatedly said France would face 'consequences' because of its dogged opposition to the war in Iraq.

Saying it was time to be realistic, Mr. Bush declared his country was prepared to work closely with France on a number of issues including the fight against AIDS and international terrorism. He said he shared the French President, Jacques Chirac's concern for Africa's continuing economic woes.

But Mr. Bush and the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, will come under some pressure at Evian to explain their failure to find Iraq's cache of weapons of mass destruction. "The press corps is going to observe the G8 summit as a confrontational meeting.

That is not so," Mr. Bush told journalists before he left for an extended tour that would include Russia, France, Eastern Europe and West Asia. He described the meeting as "an opportunity to talk with some who agreed on Iraq and some who did not about how we move forward."

Protests

Amid thunder, lightening and lashing rain, the first anti-globalisation protests got under way in the Swiss town of Lausanne with demonstrations turning violent despite tight security. Protestors carried banners saying

"Bush is not sustainable" and "No to G-8 colonialists"

With thousands of young demonstrators pouring into both Lausanne and the alpine villages surrounding the French city of Annemasse where an alternative forum is being held just ahead of the G-8 industrialised nations summit, police are finding it difficult to control crowds.

Lausanne is almost totally barricaded, as are Geneva and the nearby French towns of Fernay Voltaire and Annemasse. Evian, the French resort where the leaders of the world's wealthiest western nations and Russia will meet from June 1-3 is like an isolated fortress, totally out of bounds to press and public alike.

Heads of State and Government from the U.S., Britain, Canada, Italy, France, Germany, Japan and Russia will discuss ways to put the flagging world economy back on track, problems of global security, international terrorism, debt relief, poverty and development aid and the fight against AIDS.

The Indian Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who arrives in Lausanne on Saturday will be housed across the lake from Evian, the venue of the summit, with other leaders from developing countries who have been specially invited to attend the summit. Other developing country leaders invited to attend the Enlarged Dialogue Meeting that precedes the Summit are: President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, President Bouteflika of Algeria, President Obasanjo of Nigeria, President Mbeki of South Africa, King Mohammed VI of Morocco as Chair of the Group of 77, President Wade of Senegal, President Fox of Mexico, President Lula da Silva of Brazil, President Hu Jintao of China, Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia and Mahathir Mohammed of Malaysia. Leaders of Africa's NEPAD or New development Programme will also hold talks with the G-8 leaders.

This corner of France and Switzerland has been almost totally shut down in preparation for the summit with exceptional security measures in place and a total of 8000 special troops and police units deployed to control crowds and demonstrators.

The press has been housed in hotels spread across three Alpine villages and will be bussed to the press centre at Publier every day in a costly and time-consuming exercise.

Menacing mini-nukes

6.1.05 The US makes its own rules

The American decision to develop tactical nuclear weapons provides further evidence of how the present administration thinks nothing of re-writing the rules to give itself the best chance of shooting a goal. Mini-nukes are not the fruit of the latest whiz-kid's imagination, they were conceived years ago but never translated into weaponry because there is no way in which the adverse fall-out of a nuclear attack can be contained — even if it does not qualify for Bush's loaded definition of a *weapon of mass destruction*. The concept was shelved when the US chose to pontificate on the virtues of disarmament — it had by then built up a stockpile of weapons and delivery systems that had truly deterrent capability. Going ahead with developing the small bombs would have made it impossible for the US to push ahead with self-serving regimes like the CTBT, itself the off-spring of the illegitimate NPT.

If it was self-interest that put the project on hold; it is self-interest that has triggered off its re-activation. What the Americans now admit is the limited efficacy of a whole range of "bunker busters" that were first used in the Gulf war of 1991, and their upgraded versions unleashed over Iraqi targets a few weeks ago. Their target was Saddam Hussein, and as yet there is nothing to suggest the success of the specific raids aimed at eliminating him. The frustration at not being able to penetrate the concrete shelters that the Iraqi regime had built with European assistance followed the inability to blow up the caves in the Afghan mountains in which the remnants of Al-Qaeda are believed to take refuge. Hence tactical nukes. In re-writing the rules the US is ignoring the adverse feedback generated by the use of its depleted-uranium projectiles in the first round of its Gulf campaign and its bombing of erstwhile Yugoslavia. That a fresh nuclear arms race will ensue is not the concern of the likes of Bush, Cheney and Rumsfeld. Remember that Hitler's Germany was never brought under the devastating mushroom cloud that blacked out Hiroshima and Nagasaki. American dreams are leaving the rest of the world sleepless.

WASHINGTON MAY CONSIDER 'DESTABILISING' TEHERAN GOVT

USA cuts ties with Iran

Press Trust of India

WASHINGTON, May 25. — Washington has suspended contacts with Teheran and may also consider "public and private actions" to "destabilise" the Iranian government. The US move follows intelligence inputs that Al-Qaida activists hiding in Iran had a hand in the Riyadh bombings, a media report said here today.

Senior officials of the Bush administration will meet on Tuesday to discuss the strategy towards Iran, with Pentagon officials suggesting actions that could lead to a popular uprising to topple the government, the Washington Post quoted administration officials as saying. The State Department appears inclined to accept such an aggressive policy if Iran does not take visible steps to deal with suspected Al-Qaida activists before Tuesday.

Though President Mr George

W Bush had termed Iran as part of an "axis of evil" with Iraq and North Korea last year, signs of engagement between Iran and the USA had emerged before and during the Iraq war. But after the 12 May bombings, Washington cancelled a planned meeting with Iranian officials, after intelligence intercepts about the role of Al-Qaida men hiding in the country in the attacks that killed 34 people, including nine suicide bombers.

Earlier this week, US Defence Secretary Mr Donald Rumsfeld accused Iran of harbouring Al-Qaida activists, a charge Teheran has vehemently denied.

An administration official told Washington Post that fewer than a dozen Al-Qaida members appear to be located in an isolated area of northeastern Iran, but it was not clear how much control the government has over the area. "I don't think the elected government knows much about it," he said.

Al-Qaida testing germ weapons: Pentagon

Associated Press

WASHINGTON, May 25. — The Al-Qaida has been pursuing a sophisticated biological weapons research programme and is seeking chemical weapons, the Pentagon has told Congress. Other terrorist groups and dozens of countries are also pursuing chemical and biological weapons which could be used in a regional conflict or terrorist attack, a recent report has said.

"The relative ease of producing some chemical or biological agents has increased concern that their use may become more attractive to terrorist groups intent on causing panic or inflicting large numbers of casualties." The report also said companies in Russia and China were the key suppliers of the know-how and equipment for countries such as Iran trying to develop their own biological and chemical weapons.

It said Iran and Syria had chemical weapons and might be trying to make biological weapons, and Libya was trying to produce both.

The Al-Qaida's interest in chemical, biological and nuclear weapons has long been known.

The Pentagon report, disclosed in a press statement late on Thursday, is the first US government document to say that Al-Qaida had a sophisticated biological weapons development effort.

But the report does not offer any more details.

26 MAY 2003

American troops under fire in Iraq, 2 killed

Baghdad, May 27

TWO US soldiers were killed and nine were wounded when a "hostile force" attacked an American army unit with rocket-propelled grenades and small arms in Falluja on Tuesday, the US military said.

US troops fired back, killing two of the attackers and capturing six others, US Central Command said in a statement.

It said that according to initial reports, the attackers had fired early on Tuesday morning from a mosque in the city, which lies 32 miles west of Baghdad and has been the scene of several previous clashes between US forces and Iraqis.

But residents said the city's mosques were far from the scene of Tuesday's gun battle and could not have been used to attack the US force. They said that, as on previous nights, the troops had set up a checkpoint on a road leading to Falluja shortly before midnight on Monday. The checkpoint came under attack some two hours later from gunmen, apparently in cars.

A US Army Medevac helicopter was damaged during the exchange when a Bradley Fighting Vehicle accidentally struck it while manoeuvring into a firing position, Central Command said. But the Arabic network al-



A girl suffering from black fever is treated at a Baghdad hospital.

REUTERS

Jazeera quoted witnesses in Falluja as saying the attackers had shot down the helicopter just before it landed, killing its crew. The channel showed footage of US soldiers loading a blackened, damaged helicopter onto a large flat-bed truck. The US statement said the units and identities of the dead and wounded soldiers were being withheld while next of kin were informed.

"The use of a religious site, such as a mosque or church, as cover for military purposes is a violation of the Law of War," the statement said.

Al-Jazeera replaces CEO

Al-Jazeera television said on Tuesday it would replace its chief executive officer but insisted the decision had not been due to allegations the channel had been infiltrated by Iraqi intelligence. Spokesman Jihad Ballout said CEO Mohammed Jassem al-Ali, who headed the channel since its launch eight years ago, would remain on the board of directors but would hand over the day-to-day running to someone else.

Reuters

28 MAY 2003

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THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

SATURDAY, MAY 24, 2003

www.hindu.com

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FOR NOW, U.S. RULE IN IRAQ

AFTER DECLARING THAT the U.S. does not need the Security Council during the closing days of the crisis over the second resolution that sought authorisation of the war on Saddam Hussein's Iraq, Washington has just secured legitimisation from that body for its occupation of Iraq. The Council resolution approved on Thursday is a double victory for the U.S. Apart from seeing its veto-wielding opponents line up behind it after the grant of some minor concessions to them, the U.S. has effectively gained total control over Iraq through an interim administration it has promised to stitch together. The resolution, sponsored by the U.S., Britain and Spain and passed by a 14-0 vote, gives international legal standing to the American management of Iraq and control over billions of dollars in annual oil revenues that can now begin to flow with the resumption of export of petroleum products. The U.S. will have free rein for a year when a review is possible if other members demand it. The United Nations has been confined to the sidelines, its role not stretching much beyond providing humanitarian relief. As against a "special coordinator", the Secretary-General may now nominate only a "special representative" to help coordinate work. In a further slap on its face, the Council's team of weapons inspectors has been bypassed, with the U.S. depending on its own experts for the hunt for the hidden weapons of mass destruction.

Beyond the cosmetic changes in its resolution that helped to bring round opponents, American power in that occupied country will in effect be nothing short of overwhelming. This may not prove a blessing, however. The U.S. may in fact realise sooner rather than later that the conscious political decision not to involve the U.N. in the massive and multifaceted reconstruction effort is shortsighted, considering the volatility of the region and the different forces at work. The Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, during an interaction in Geneva cited the fact that the world body had over the years

acquired expertise in several areas including crisis management, peacekeeping, political facilitation, working with others on reconstruction, human rights and education. In a pointed remark, Mr. Annan hoped that the U.S.-sponsored interim administrative set-up will not be "the end of the road of the political process". What remained unexpressed was the apprehension that the U.S. will leave Iraq in the sole hands of the favourites it airdropped into Baghdad as the military operations were coming to a conclusion.

The Iraqis may have some cause for cheer amid all the gloom and turmoil. They must be relieved at the lifting of economic sanctions imposed on the country when Saddam Hussein marched his soldiers into neighbouring Kuwait more than a decade ago. The sanctions were opposed by many independent nations on grounds that now seem fully justified. The sanctions, they had warned, brought untold miseries on the people by denying them the means to buy essential medicines and equipment while apparently in no way crippling the regime, which was the stated objective. The lavish lifestyle of the regime's members, exposed after its overthrow, and the contrasting deprivation suffered by the common people are a strong indictment of the sanctions policy as a means to bringing down recalcitrant regimes. As the Iraqis begin to rebuild their lives and repair the damage caused by the deposed ruler's misadventures across the borders and his autocratic ways as well as the devastation caused by the U.S.-led war, they must be coming under conflicting pulls and pressures. The U.S. may have felt some disquiet over the sight of millions of people flocking to holy sites and open displays of anti-American passion. But this must be attributed to the years of suppression of religious freedom under Saddam Hussein. The rising protests against American occupation, if anything, signal a hunger for democratic freedoms in this ancient land.

24 MAY 2003

THE HINDU

U.S. shuts missions in Saudi Arabia

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MAY 20. Acting on fresh intelligence information of possible terrorist attacks against the U.S. or its interests overseas, the Bush administration has shut down the American embassy and two consulates in Saudi Arabia.

However, the Federal alert status remains at "yellow", an elevated level, but at the middle in a five-tier-colour-coded warning system. The next higher level will be "orange" followed by "red" which will indicate severe risk.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation is saying that given what took place in Saudi Arabia last week by way of car bombings in three places that left 34 persons dead, the Al-Qaeda network is active and could launch attacks against the U.S. or its interests.

According to a bulletin of the FBI, the assessment of the intelligence is that attacks against U.S. and Western targets were "likely" and that attacks in the U.S. "cannot be ruled out". The bulletin of the FBI, the nodal domestic intelligence agency, has been circulated to domestic law enforcement officers.

State and local police forces have been asked to be especially vigilant and the FBI is making the point that terrorists could be seeking out soft targets that are lightly guarded than Government and military installations. The intelligence community here is also convinced that the car bombings in Saudi Arabia against three compounds are the handiwork of the Al-Qaeda, for it had all the elements of that outfit's operation such as precise planning, surveillance and multi-team coordination.

Further, the FBI has warned that this outfit is adapting its target list to the "soft" variety.



The Moroccan King Mohammed VI (right), visits a French man, Jean-Paul Limousin, who was wounded in the suicide bombings, at the Ibn Rouchd Hospital in Casablanca on Monday. At left is a nurse. — AFP

The FBI is very much involved in the investigation of the Saudi Arabia blasts and is not a bystander, as has been suggested in sections of the media, it is said here. Further, the FBI is active in the investigation in Morocco where attacks in

Casablanca last Friday left 41 persons dead.

AP reports: Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia's ambassador in Washington told presspersons in Riyadh, that "there is chatter, a high level of chatter regionally and in other

international spots" about possible attacks in Saudi Arabia or America.

"My gut feeling tells me something big is going to happen here or in America," Prince Bandar bin Sultan said late on Monday.

Prince Bandar is known for handling delicate diplomatic tasks for his Government and rushed back to Riyadh following the car bombing attacks.

Prince Bandar said Saudi authorities had received advance warning of a terror attack hitting Saudi Arabia before the Riyadh bombings. "Yes, we had warning, yes we had heightened alert, but we never had a specific time and place designated" he said.

Earlier on Monday, a man standing with a gun outside the U.S. consulate in Dhahran, 480 km east of Riyadh, was arrested and was being questioned by police, a U.S. embassy official said. U.S. diplomats said no one was injured or threatened in the incident, but the consulate was closed until further notice. In 1996, a truck bombing killed 19 Americans at the Khobar Towers barracks near Dhahran.

Prince Bandar said the man was armed with a machine gun and a pistol, was wanted by police on drugs charges and was seeking political asylum.

The Ambassador also told presspersons that Saudi authorities had obtained information during recent months that the Al-Qaeda had been wracked by internal divisions. Saudi officials believed that the terror group's leaders had been so split that they didn't want to risk carrying out any attacks in Saudi Arabia, which is Osama's birthplace, in order to maintain their intellectual base within the Gulf kingdom.

"(But) they have mended their differences and decided to come out," he said.

Blast in Turkish cafe kills one

ANKARA (TURKEY), MAY 20. An explosion in a cafe at one of the city's busiest intersections killed one woman and wounded another during the morning rush hour on Tuesday, police said.

Police were investigating the cause of the explosion in the restroom of the Crocodile Cafe, which occupied two floors of a ten-story building in the commercial district of Kizilay. The blast shattered walls and windows in the building.

"I could see bits of flesh thrown all over the place," said Ali Vehbi, a student who arrived at the scene shortly after the blast, as he pointed to a small bloody spot on a window of a building opposite the cafe.

Police recovered the body of a woman from the debris of the restroom and carried it away in a bodybag.

News reports suggested that the woman may have been a suicide bomber or may have died when the bomb she was planting exploded prematurely, but police and interior ministry officials refused to confirm the reports. — AP

New U.S. draft offers bigger role for U.N. in Iraq

UNited Nations, MAY 20. In an effort to win widest possible support, especially from France and Russia, the U.S. has offered independent authority and bigger role to the U.N. envoy in Iraq in a revised draft resolution in the Security Council.

The U.N. envoy, which resolution wants the Secretary-General to appoint, would, under the new draft, work independently and would not be answerable to the occupying powers, diplomats said.

The revised draft seeking to lift sanctions against Iraq also allows six months, instead of four, for phasing out "oil-for-food" programme, permits weapons inspections sometime in future and allows lawsuit against new Iraqi interim authority for any environmental disaster, they said.

Offering concessions in the second revision of the draft,

Washington indicated that this is as far as it would go to accommodate critics but did not rule out negotiations to fine tune the draft.

It indicated it wants a vote on the resolution by the end of the week and has asked the Council members to be prepared for vote by Thursday.

Diplomats said the members would send the draft to their respective capitals and expect instruction within next 48 hours at the latest.

The draft, which is co-sponsored by Britain and Spain, was never threatened with veto by Russia, France or China but Council diplomats said the U.S. is keen to have on board all major powers especially France with whom it is trying to mend fences after acrimonious confrontation on the issue of war against Iraq which Paris vehemently opposed. — PTI

2 1 MAY 2003

THE HINDO

AMERICAN POWER-I

No Longer The Great Nation It Once Was

By RK DASGUPTA

51-8 19/5

The America we see today, a country seeking to be a world power for world domination emerged, with the election of Theodore Roosevelt who ruled the country from 1901-1909. He marks the beginning of 20th century America as a nation seeking power and abandoning the American spirit of the age of Lincoln, of Emerson, Thoreau and Walt Whitman. The foremost authority on American politics from the founding fathers to Franklin D Roosevelt (1882-1945) is Richard Hofstadter (1916-1970) who received the Pulitzer twice, in 1955 and in 1963 his *The American Political Tradition* (1948) was reprinted in 1973, 1976 and in 1989. If you wish to acquaint yourself with the background of George Bush's barbarism in Iraq you must read four other books of Hoffstadter — *Social Darwinism in American Thought* (1944), *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* (1963), *The Paranoid Style in American Politics* (1965) and the book he edited with Michael Wallace, *American Violence: A Documentary History*. Hoffstadter calls Theodore Roosevelt "the herald of modern American militarism and imperialism"; (his) "worship of strength and personal leadership... a grandiose sense of destiny, even a touch of racism".

Noble ideas

To be fair to the American presidency in the 20th century we must mention Woodrow Wilson. Indian appreciation of America's noble political ideas proceed from Wilson who brought his country into World War I, negotiated the Peace Treaty and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his political role in those days. Pandit Madanmohan Malaviya (1861-1946) paid a glowing tribute to him in his presidential address at the 33rd annual session of the Indian National Congress held in Delhi in 1918 in which he quoted a passage from his address to the US Congress on 9 January 1918 ending with the words — "The programme of World Peace is our programme".

This was the lofty voice of the America of Emerson (1803-1882),

The author, an eminent scholar, is former Director, the National Library of India.

Thoreau (1817-1862), the Boston Brahmins, and of Walt Whitman (1819-1892) who says in his famous poem "Passage to India" that India is America's "Elder Brother found, / The Younger melts in fondness in his arms". Whitman also asked in another poem — "Is there going to be but one heart to the globe?" Bush has

can you accuse Saddam Hussein as a terrorist? On the contrary the USA has terrorised the people of Iraq with its deadly missiles. True, Saddam Hussein is a tyrant, but even as a tyrant he has given Iraq its identity as a national state. In March 1980 Saddam established a National Assembly which was the first Iraqi Parliament after the



destroyed this America and if Bertrand Russell (1872-1970) were alive today he would have pressed for the trial of Bush and his cohort, Tony Blair, as war criminals.

What can Bush and Blair mention as the casus belli of their inhuman assault on Iraq? If they say that it is a dictatorship, why have they not turned their missiles against Pakistan which is not only a military dictatorship but which is a terrorist state. Instead the USA has made General Musharraf a trusted ally and a spoilt child of Asia who calls himself a President only because he can pay a tailor to make him a President's suit. The head of a failed state cannot possibly set up a true democracy. But Bush still relies on General Musharraf as an ally in his war on terrorism.

True democracy

But how can you call the war on Iraq as a war on terrorism? How

overthrow of the monarchy of 1958. It was not a true parliament when its members were vetted by Saddam and his Baath (renaissance) Party. Still it was good enough for Iraq for the creation and maintenance of good relations with important Western countries.

As Charles Tripp, the distinguished authority on the Arab world teaching at the London School of Oriental and African Studies says in his *History of Iraq* (2000): "Iraq's relations with the superpowers were promising, if not particularly cordial, in that the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with Russia remained in force, while Iraq had established good relations with the Western powers" (p 232). And where in the world today do you have true democracy? Let us remember the remark of De Tocqueville once quoted by Fulbright: "I know of no country in which there is so little of independence of mind and real freedom of discussion as in

America".

The case of Gulf War I is altogether different. Iraq was the aggressor in the eyes of the civilised world. On 2 August 1991 Iraqi army invaded and rapidly overran Kuwait which had emerged as a sovereign state in June 1961. On 6 August the UN Security Council voted by 13 to nil to impose total economic sanctions on Iraq until it withdraw from Kuwait. Saddam declared annexation of Kuwait on 7 August. The USA announced its military intervention in Iraq and the UK followed suit. Here the UN made a mistake: it should have passed a resolution authorising the two Anglo-Saxon countries to drive out the Iraqi forces from Kuwait. The UN unthinkingly gave the USA and UK the role of an international police. It is, however, true that the UN passed a resolution on 25 August by 13 votes to nil authorising a naval blockade of Iraq. Ultimately, however, the UN established its authority in the conflict by a resolution of 29 November authorising use of military force if Iraq did not withdraw from Kuwait by 15 January 1992. On 7 February 1992 Iraq withdrew from Kuwait. So Gulf War I was an international conflict internationally resolved.

Democratising world

But Gulf War II, now towards its end, is US-UK aggression against a sovereign state, the most heinous act of violence after what Hitler and Mussolini did in the last world war. But Hitler and Mussolini had one virtue; they knew they were villains and they knew that the world knew them as such. But the two men who are now endangering the world present themselves as deliverers of the world.

When Blair's countrymen ruled us they thought they were carrying on their head what Kipling called the White Man's Burden. Bush thinks the White House and the Pentagon are now "democratising" the world. The American establishment is now Pentagon, the five-sided building which houses the US defence department, rather than the capital, the white marble domed structure in Washington, where the United States Congress meets. The US is no longer the great nation it once was.

(To be concluded)

FBI, CIA hunt for Riyadh bombers

Riyadh: The US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) agents joined the hunt for masterminds of the Riyadh suicide bombings on Friday as Washington warned Saudi Arabia's expatriate community of another possible imminent terror attack.

The state department and US officials in the kingdom said they received intelligence of a possible attack on foreign residential compounds in the Al Hamra district of the Red Sea port of Jeddah, close to the US consulate and King Fahd's summer palace.

The warnings came a day after Washington rapped Saudi Arabia for not doing enough to prevent Monday's triple car bombings in Riyadh which killed 34 people, most of them foreigners, in attacks blamed on Saudi-born Osama bin Laden's Al Qaida network.

"Security has been stepped up in the district. Some people have moved but no one has been evacuated," an official said.

Eight Americans were killed in Monday's bombings, the first major attack on Western civilians living in Saudi Arabia and the most devastating against US interests since the September 11 attacks.

Saudi officials, who have admitted to security lapses, have set up checkpoints across the kingdom and deployed armoured personnel carriers around other complexes.

Residents of one Riyadh compound

- 1715 W3 W W A S E N 11-14
- Washington warns Saudi Arabia's expatriate community of another possible attack
 - US envoy Robert Jordan describes the kingdom as a "battleground" in the global war against terror
 - Riyadh admits security errors

were moved to a hotel on Wednesday night after a security alert. In another incident, a supermarket was evacuated after a bomb scare.

"We are seriously worried now. Many people are leaving. I've lived here for 25 years but if there was another attack, I would also seriously consider going," said a British doctor in Jeddah.

Residents of a Jeddah compound, housing employees of US defence contractor Raytheon, near the Al Hamra district, had not been allowed outside since the Riyadh blasts, the doctor said.

There are around 40,000 US and 30,000 British expatriates living in Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil exporter.

Meanwhile, security sources said five or six attackers escaped after the bombings, which used two vehicles at three different compounds.

One Al Qaida suspect turned himself in just hours before the attack, after Saudi authorities published his name and picture on a wanted list of 19 sus-

pected Al Qaida militants, the sources said, but he had so far not provided any leads on the attackers.

Washington's ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Robert Jordan, described the kingdom as a "battleground" in the global war against terror and urged US citizens to consider leaving. But he added that the attacks were directed just as much against the Saudi royal family as against American interests.

"It's clearly an assault on the royal family and a fight to the finish with the royal family here in Saudi Arabia," he told the British Broadcasting Corporation.

Mr Jordan criticised Saudi Arabia for not responding swiftly enough to US demands for tighter security.

Security sources said Mr Jordan had sent the Saudi interior ministry three letters asking for additional protection for "soft" US targets since receiving intelligence about the possibility of attacks on April 29.

The last letter, sent two days ahead of the bombing, singled out one of the compounds which was later hit. This was based on evidence from a "safe house" under Saudi surveillance, a couple of hundred metres from the Jadawell compound, they said.

Saudi Arabia admitted to security errors as US attorney general John Ashcroft said the bombings made clear Saudi Arabia had a "terrorism problem" that it must address. ESS. Reuters

17 MAY 2003

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Powell calls for lifting Iraq sanctions

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BERLIN, MAY 16. As the United States Secretary of State, Colin Powell, tried to mend frayed relations with Germany, the German Chancellor, Gerhard Schroeder, agreed on Friday that sanctions against Iraq "make no sense."

With Gen. Powell signalling the Bush administration was in a compromising mood on the text of a U.N. resolution, Mr. Schroeder said the burden of the economic squeeze on the Iraqi people should be removed as soon as possible.

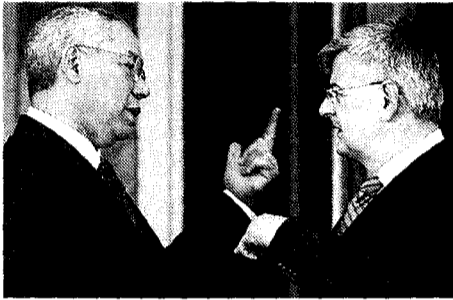
Speaking at a joint news conference after a half-hour meeting at Mr. Schroeder's office, Gen. Powell said: "I was pleased with the Chancellor's commitment to lift the sanctions entirely."

They took no questions, however, and both described their talks as candid, implying some

disagreements. It was not immediately clear whether Germany no longer supported only a suspension of the sanctions.

The United States is planning to make its move at the U.N. Security Council next week. Gen. Powell said on Thursday he was looking for a 15-0 vote. Relations between Germany and the United States took a nosedive over the U.S. invasion of Iraq, which Germany opposed. The U.S. President, George W. Bush, had already cooled to Mr. Schroeder and they have not met since last November when they attended a summit in Prague, the Czech Republic, to pave the way for the expansion of the NATO military alliance. "We talked about the disagreement of the past," but also about "what pulls us together," Gen. Powell said.

Gen. Powell is the highest-ranking U.S. official to visit Berlin since the relationship soured when Mr. Schroeder campaigned for re-election by vigorously opposing Mr. Bush's threats to go to war with Iraq. The German public was firmly against the war, and Germany lined up with France and Russia to push for an extended U.N. weapons search. — AP



The U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell (left), and the German Foreign Minister, Joschka Fischer, in Berlin on Friday. — AP

17 MAY 2003

THE HINDU

US issues stern warning to Iran, Syria and N Korea

Washington: The US has given clear signals that it's going to follow tough policies in dealing with Iran, Syria and North Korea, asking the three countries to change their "troubling" behaviours.



Condoleezza Rice, the national security advisor, told reporters at the US state department on Wednesday that Iran continued to "engage in behaviour that is deeply troubling and antithetical to American interests".

She said the US has raised alarm over Iran's nuclear programme and now "the IAEA visit to Iran... seemed to raise a lot of questions about what the Iranians were doing under so-called civil nuclear uses measures." "It is also the case that Iran is one of the chief sponsors of terrorism. Hezbollah is operating out of Iran. And Iran cannot continue to support rejectionist organisations as we try to pursue peace in the West Asia."

She said the US expected Iran to behave in a transparent way towards the new Iraqi gov-

ernment and to not try and export its own form of government.

About Syria, Ms Rice said the Washington-Damascus relationship "has been problematic" because of the "policies and behaviour of Syria". She mentioned "the Syrian support for terrorism, particularly for Hezbollah, but also other rejectionist organisations" and the Syrian occupation of Lebanon.

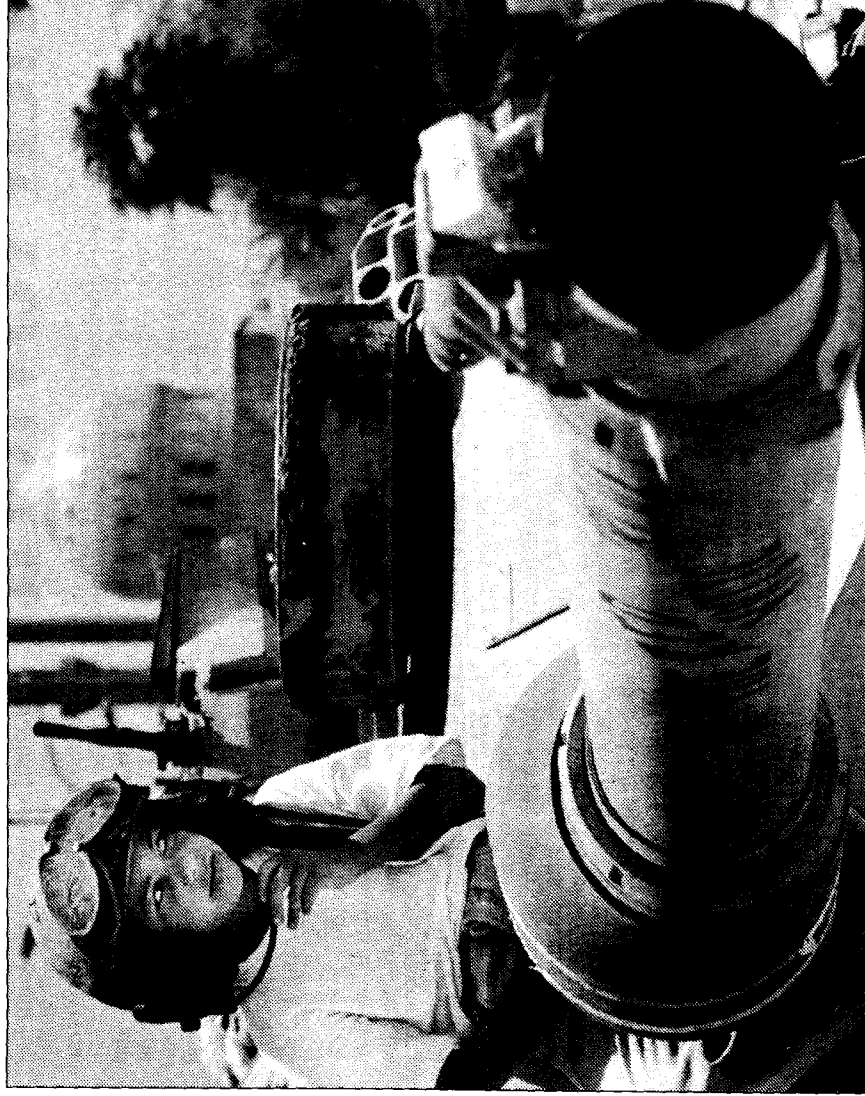
It has long been US policy that the occupation of Lebanon has to end, she said.

Syrian weapons of mass destruction have to be accounted for, Ms Rice said, adding "but it is, frankly, a very difficult relationship, and it is not one that is likely to improve without some major changes in Syrian behaviour."

On North Korea, she said, that "no one should be willing to give in to the kind of blackmail that the North Koreans have been practising for a number of years, especially not the US". "If there are to be further talks beyond the talks which have already taken place among China, North Korea and the US, the North Korean attitude "ought to be more constructive." P11

US-appointed Iraqi minister resigns

14 MAY 2003



WAR GAMES: An Iraqi boy plays on a US Abrahams tank gun in Baghdad on Tuesday.

REUTERS

Baghdad, May 13

THE TEMPORARY Iraqi health minister handed picked by the US resigned after just 10 days on the job after drawing widespread protests for his close ties to Saddam Hussein's Baath Party, coalition radio announced on Tuesday.

Dr. Ali Shehan al-Janabi had refused to renounce the party, the US-controlled Voice of New Iraq radio station said, quoting the ministry. Al-Janabi, an opponent who was the ministry's No. 3 man under Saddam's regime, took over as the temporary head of the ministry on May 3 triggering protests by hundreds of doctors and pharmacists. They marched last week to demand his removal.

Stephen Browning, senior adviser to the health ministry from the US Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance, had earlier praised al-Janabi, describing him as a "Baath Party member who is not associated with criminal activities".

But the ministry, in a statement read on Tuesday, said Browning had accepted al-Janabi's resignation "due to his refusal to condemn the Baath Party." It did not elaborate.

"Dr. Ali will be assigned as a specialist physician at Ibn al-

Islamic rule rethink

SHIA LEADER Ayatollah Mohammed Bagir al-Hakim said on Tuesday Iraq needed a broad-based government to avoid a "social explosion", apparently backing away from past calls for an Iranian-style Islamic state. Hakim, who returned from two decades of exile in Iran last week, also said he wanted his group's militia integrated into a new Iraqi national army.

"I will be working to set up a government which will represent all the people of Iraq," Hakim told a news conference in Najaf.

Reuters, Najaf

Haitham Hospital," a female announcer said.

The newly arrived American civilian administrator for Iraq, meanwhile, faced daunting tasks during his first full day in Baghdad on Tuesday: restoring security, power, clean water and other services to the Iraqi capital.

L. Paul Bremer, who arrived in the US-occupied country on Monday, made his first stop in Basra, where he conferred with

British officials in charge of establishing order. He then flew to Baghdad, where his reconstruction agency is headquartered.

Bremer will become the boss of the current US administrator, retired Lt. Gen. Jay Garner, who has faced severe criticism in Iraq and ridicule in foreign capitals for his slowness in re-establishing public order, preventing looting and restoring utilities and other basic government services throughout the country.

Bremer had been scheduled to hold his first news conference on Tuesday. It was announced prominently to journalists, then cancelled via e-mail three hours before it was set to begin.

The arrival of Bremer coincided with a wide-ranging shake-up in the US administration in Iraq formed after the collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime.

Bremer said former US Ambassador Barbara Bodine, who was coordinator for Baghdad and the rest of central Iraq, was being reassigned back to Washington by the state department.

In Malaysia, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said the war is now being seen by Muslims everywhere as an attempt by Washington to frighten Islamic nations.

AP

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Prevarication was the bedrock of America's pre-emptive war

True lies on Iraq

BY AMULYA GANGULI

MR 6
17/5

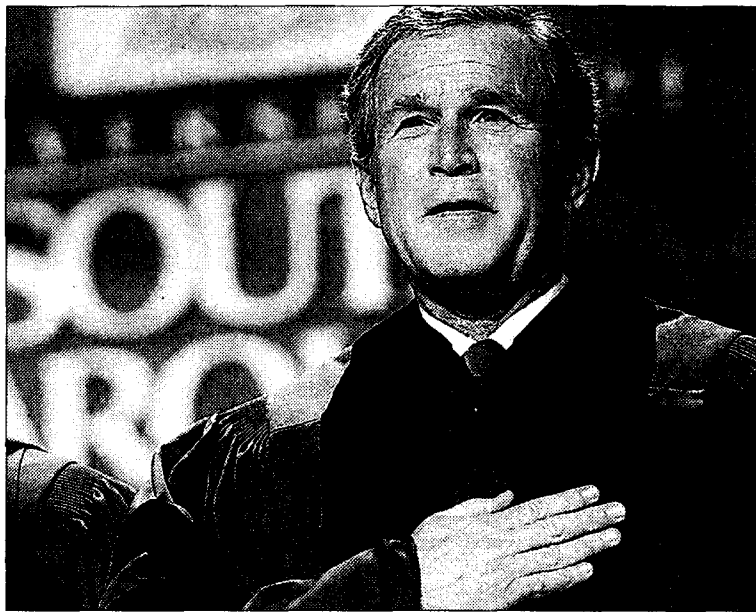
OSCAR-WINNING FILM maker and author of the best-selling *Stupid White Men*, Michael Moore, was right on two counts out of three. In his speech before the Oscar crowd, he said that a fictitious war was being waged in Iraq by a fictitious president on fictitious grounds. Well, the war wasn't fictitious, as the dead and the maimed would testify. But it was waged by a fictitious president, who didn't win the popular vote and was ushered into the White House by the conservative judges of the US Supreme Court. And it is by now clear that the reasons for invading Iraq were fictitious since the much-touted WMDs haven't been found.

Yet, the American leaders were lying brazenly before the war to justify their pre-emptive strike. Condoleezza Rice, one of the 'house slaves' (along with Colin Powell) identified by singer Harry Belafonte, was first off the mark with her remark that the 'smoking gun' shouldn't be allowed to turn into a mushroom cloud. She must have practised the catchy phrase before the interview although she must have also known that it was an utter lie. But she didn't bat an eyelid while saying it.

Nor did her boss, George W. Bush. He told the TV cameras that the International Atomic Energy Association had suggested that Iraq was only a few months away from making the bomb. "I don't know what more evidence we need," said the neo-Roman emperor. But it transpired soon enough that the IAEA had said nothing of the kind. So, the MSNBC's website reported Bush's "mis-stated report on Iraq". But, strangely, the item vanished soon afterwards. Was there a call from the emperor's office?

Others, too, were lying through their teeth. Powell was even displaying satellite images before the UN Security Council to 'prove' the existence of the WMDs while Tony Blair was telling the House of Commons with 'moral clarity' in his mind that these dreaded weapons did exist.

If so much untruth was being peddled, it was because the Americans wanted the war badly. But why Iraq? Was it because it was a soft target, weakened by sanctions and demoralised by the bombing runs carried



CROSS MY HEART AND HOPE TO LIE: George W. Bush

out by the US and British planes in the no-fly zones in the north and south of the country? The Americans must have known that Iraq doesn't have WMDs and doesn't represent a clear and present danger to either the West or its neighbours. Yet, the US went to the extent of faking documents, as Hans Blix has said, to build up its case for the war.

Dick Cheney, of course, gave the game away when he said that Iraq was 'do-able'. Since then, a Bush administration official has been quoted as saying that Saddam Hussein was a 'perfect target'. Why? Because he was a bad man who was also weak — an ideal combination for a hyperpower keen on flexing its muscles. But if one purpose of the war was to get over the Vietnam syndrome denoting a floundering giant, the US adventure in Iraq may have misfired. Once it becomes clear that the US has only bashed a decrepit regime, people will begin wondering when it will have the guts to take on someone of its size.

Since its setback in Vietnam, the US has fought three wars — all against feeble opponents. Both the Gulf wars were against a country which can by no stretch of imagination be called powerful while

Afghanistan can hardly be called a 'country' to start with. So, the doubts about the US capabilities will remain. How will it fare in, say, a confrontation with North Korea, given the latter's suspected capability to make a nuclear strike on the west coast of the US — and definitely against the two American allies of South Korea and Japan?

If these unnerving questions arise at all, it is because the Bush administration has introduced an element of recklessness in international politics. As a result, it has given a boost to the 'utility' of nuclear arms. Ever since their discovery, all nations had a shame-faced attitude towards these doomsday weapons. Hence, the declaration in Article VI of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty of 1971 to the effect that the five 'haves' — the US, Britain, France, China and the (former) Soviet Union — would 'pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date, and to nuclear disarmament'.

But the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1996 without any of the Big Five giving an indication of working towards nuclear disarmament confirmed the basis of India's

objection in not signing the treaty. Now, it is obvious that the Big Five, and particularly the US, have no intention of abiding by Article VI. Instead, the American objective is to attain such a massive superiority by taking these weapons into space through the Star Wars programme that all countries (including the other four of the Big Five) will have to live in fear of Uncle Sam.

WSTW ✓

This is the neo-conservative dream. And Iraq was the first step, probably to test how the world will react to a war which will be increasingly regarded as unnecessary. But North Korea will be the real test if only because its madness reflects that of the neo-cons. When Bush ticked off the South Korean president against pursuing a policy of rapprochement with Pyongyang soon after assuming office, North Korea must have realised that its only safeguard was a nuclear deterrent.

Hence, its walkout from the NPT. It is undoubtedly because of the Bush administration's policy of aggressive identification of enemy States and of threatening pre-emptive strikes that the world — and especially eastern Asia — is teetering on the brink of a crisis.

But the US itself may be in a crisis because of its unwise policies. First, it will lose face if no WMDs are found in Iraq and, secondly, if the Iraqis refuse to be 'liberated' in the manner the US desires. As it is, there is obvious disquiet in Iraq over the American presence. A popular perception of a quagmire is during a long-drawn war, as in Vietnam or during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. But a quagmire can follow a war, and this is a distinct possibility in Iraq.

Ahmed Chalabi of the Iraqi National Congress has cited India's federalism as a model for Iraq. But India had towering personalities like Gandhi and Nehru to preside over the transition from colonialism to a pluralistic democracy. Not only are there no such figures in Iraq, the conditions there have been further complicated by the looming shadow of Islamic fundamentalism of both the Iranian and the Osama bin Laden varieties. It will not be surprising, therefore, if the neo-cons' first foray into world politics proves to be their last.

Bush offers trade for peace

THE TIMES, LONDON

WASHINGTON, May 10. — Mr George W Bush dangled the economic benefits of a West Asia peace before the region yesterday, offering Arab states a free-trade deal with the USA within a decade. And the Syrian government daily Tishrin said today that Syria is ready to open negotiations with Israel, following a call by Mr Ariel Sharon for talks without preconditions earlier this week, adds agencies.

The Damascus daily said: "Syria always rejected secret transactions and affirms its attachment to the principles of the peace process agreed upon by the international community and former US

President George Bush". Any renewed talks with Israel must be based "on UN resolutions and the principle of land-for-peace," the daily insisted. The US President urged all sides to seize the moment and told Israel's neighbours political reforms would be rewarded with new economic ties with Washington.

Powell in Israel: Gen. Colin Powell arrived here today on a three-day visit to pursue US-sponsored "roadmap" to achieve peace between Israelis and Palestinians, adds PTI. He is scheduled to meet Mr Ariel Sharon, Palestinian Prime Minister Mahamoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) and press both the sides to seek an agreement on the "roadmap".

1 1 MAY 2003

THE STATESMAN

CRIME DOES PAY!

US firm gets to run Iraqi oil fields

THE cat is out of the bag, whole and entire! All apprehensions that critics of USA's war on Iraq had about the motive behind "Operation Iraqi Freedom", pitilessly anticipated and detailed by this newspaper, are coming true. Saddam Hussein and his elusive weapons of mass destruction were just a ruse. The reason behind George Bush's desperation to get rid of Saddam at any cost was Iraqi oil and to have another country where the US dollar can be legal tender. It removes the threat to Iraq's oil sales being held in US dollars and not partly in Euros as Chirac tried to arrange some time ago.

It also frees Bush to extract Iraqi oil without restraint of quantities and use the proceeds to pay for costs of repairing the horrendous damage in Iraq caused by America and Britain in the first place. Who says crime does not pay! The unscrupulous Texas cowboy wanted to clear the way for his "friends" to get their hands on Iraqi oil fields. American oil companies have openly said that they have been eyeing Iraq's reserves for years and would give anything to get access to them, and now is their chance.

Within days of the US occupation, revelations of Texas company Halliburton being given authority to run Iraq's oil fields have confirmed everyone's worst fears. Tony Blair's promise that Iraqi oil was for the Iraqi people is fulfilled by arranging for the Iraqi Oil Ministry to have an embedded American, an oil man Phillip Carroll by name, to ensure that all decisions are acceptable to the White House!

Halliburton has received special treatment from the very beginning because of its "closeness" to the White House and particularly Vice-President Dick Cheney. He headed the company for five years until 2000, when he became vice-president. Initially Halliburton was given the contract to fight fires at Iraqi oil wells lit by a desperate Saddam.

This was in the first few days of the war without Halliburton having to bid or tender or suffer any similar inconvenience. There was something very fishy in the way the contract was given so quickly and quietly. But it was defended by the White House as an emergency contract. Here was a red herring across the trail. Read the fine print. Halliburton has the rights to operate pumps and distribute oil — a more lucrative role.

There is no reason to doubt that a cut will go to godfathers in the Administration as some recompense for their unselfish labours on behalf of the Iraqi people! The deal is hugely embarrassing for the Republicans, and if the Democrats dig deep enough it can prove to be explosive. The manner in which Bush, Cheney and Rumsfeld simply squashed all opposition to war and were deaf to everyone including the weapons inspectors and the Security Council, raised the worst suspicions that there was much more at stake than concern for the the wellbeing and freedom of the Iraqis! As more details emerge a lot of mud is going to land on George Bush's face.

This is not the only deal. Even the nine contracts handed out by the USA so far for reconstruction of Iraq were open for bidding only by US firms. Bush has found a novel way to help friends make money and boost the economy, leaving his pal Tony Blair to contemplate a meeting with his Maker! It is not surprising that Cheney has agreed to run as Bush's vice-president for a second term. Together they can search for another oil rich country to liberate!

US, Britain to 'occupy' Iraq for at least a year

American resolution looks to control oil

United Nations, May 9

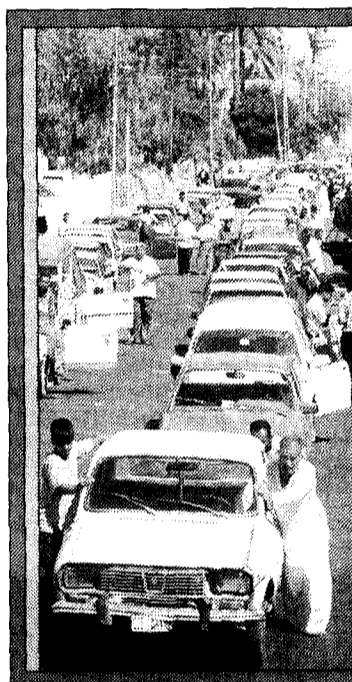
THE LONG-AWAITED US plan for postwar Iraq envisions the United States and Britain running the country as "occupying powers" for at least a year and probably much longer, a limited role for the United Nations, and Iraq's oil money financing the country's reconstruction.

US Ambassador John Negroponte introduced the eight-page resolution on Friday to the Security Council and asked its members to support the blueprint. The council faces a June 3 deadline, when the current six-month phase of the UN oil-for-food humanitarian programme expires.

The US resolution would lift economic and trade sanctions imposed on Saddam Hussein's government after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait, and phase out the oil-for-food programme instituted in 1996 to help ordinary Iraqis cope with the embargoes. An arms embargo would be maintained.

Lifting sanctions immediately and phasing out oil-for-food over a four months will take Iraq's oil wealth out of the hands of the UN and put it under the control of Washington and London. Under the resolution, the money from oil sales would be used for humanitarian goods, reconstruction, civil administration and the continued disarmament of Iraq. But Washington's vision is at odds with that of several council members, particularly Russia.

While there is little enthusiasm for a replay of the bruising battle over the war itself, which



IRAQ BLUEPRINT

Key points of the resolution:

- US and Britain would govern Iraq for at least a year
- Sanctions on Iraq should be lifted. The coalition wants revenue from Iraqi oil to be used to help rebuild the country.
- The UN oil-for-food programme should be phased out
- An international advisory board to be set up to audit income from Iraqi oil and put it into an Iraqi assistance fund. The board would have officials appointed by UN secretary-general, the IMF and World Bank
- No mention of sending UN weapons inspectors back

shattered the council's unity, diplomats predict tough negotiations ahead. This time, the United States is in a much stronger position — but US diplomats said "this is not a take it or leave it resolution".

Russia and France, however, have made their own postwar proposals.

Russia wants UN weapons inspectors to return to Baghdad to certify that Iraq's weapons of mass destruction have been eliminated before sanctions are lifted, as called for under council resolutions. It also wants the oil-for-food programme continued under Annan's authority until

Iraq has a legitimate government and sanctions are lifted.

"We believe it's still valid," Russia's UN Ambassador Sergey Lavrov said of his country's proposal.

The French proposal urges the council to suspend sanctions, phase out oil-for-food programme, have US and UN weapons inspectors work together, and lift sanctions when a legitimate Iraqi government is in place.

The US draft resolution, however, makes no mention of UN weapons inspectors. Negroponte reiterated on Thursday that the US is conducting its own searches and sees no role for UN inspec-

tors "for the foreseeable future".

The resolution also would endorse the authority of the US and Britain to govern Iraq — and it apparently foresees a lengthy stay. It notes that Washington and London sent a letter to the council president on Thursday recognising their responsibilities and obligations under international law "as occupying powers".

The letter notes the US has referred to its role in Iraq as an "occupying power", a status governed by the Geneva Conventions that would entail wide-ranging responsibilities to look after the Iraqi people. Until now, Washington has avoided the term, calling itself a "liberating force".

Under the proposal, the 12-month initial authorisation for the US and British "authority" in Iraq would be renewed automatically unless the Security Council decided otherwise. Since the US and Britain both have veto powers, they could block any attempt to get them to leave Iraq — which is likely to be deemed unacceptable by other council members.

The US also could face opposition from council members that want the UN to have a major role in creating an interim government for Iraq — and view the US proposal as not offering the "vital role" that President Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair promised the world body.

The US draft calls on Annan to appoint a UN special coordinator to work with US and British authorities and the Iraqis to restore "national and local institutions for representative governance".

Agencies

10 MAY 2003

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

USA tables resolution to lift sanctions

Associated Press

UNHQ, May 9. — The USA and its allies asked the Security Council today to approve a resolution for the lifting of sanctions on Iraq and giving the coalition control over the country's oil revenue a month after the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime.

The US Ambassador, Mr John Negroponte, officially introduced the eight-page resolution at a closed Security Council meeting. The long-awaited US plan for post-war Iraq envisions the United States and Britain running the country as "occupying powers" for at least a year and probably much longer. It also would give the coalition control over Iraq's oil money to finance the country's reconstruction. The UN would have a limited, largely advisory role.

But Washington's vision is at odds with that of several council members, particularly Russia and France, which have proposed an alternate plan that would only suspend sanctions until a legitimate Iraqi government is established.

Several of the 15 council members said they needed to study the text. Russia's UN ambassador, Mr Sergey Lavrov, said Moscow has "a long list" of questions.

While there is little enthusiasm for a replay of the bruising diplomatic battle in the weeks before the war, diplomats predict tough negotiations ahead. This time, the United States is in a much stronger position, but US diplomats said the proposal was not a "take it or leave it" plan.

The resolution would lift economic and trade sanctions imposed on Saddam's government after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait, and phase out the oil-for-food programme instituted in 1996 to help ordinary Iraqis cope with the embargoes. Under the resolution, the money from oil sales would be used for humanitarian goods, reconstruction, civil administration and the continued disarmament of Iraq. An arms embargo would be maintained. Lifting sanctions immediately and phasing out oil-for-food over four months will take Iraq's oil wealth out of UN hands and put it under Washington and London's control.

Angola's UN envoy Mr Ismael Abraao Gaspar Martins, called the resolution a "good start." Russia and France, however, made their own proposals. Russia wants UN weapons inspectors to return to Baghdad to certify that Iraq's WMDs have been eliminated before sanctions are lifted, as called for under current resolutions. It also wants the oil-for-food programme continued under the UN Secretary-General's authority until Iraq has a legitimate government and sanctions are lifted. The French called on the Council to suspend sanctions, phase out oil-for-food programme and lift sanctions when a legitimate Iraqi government is in place. The US draft resolution, however, makes no mention of UN weapons inspectors.

10 MAY 2003

France & Germany took Nato hostage, says Rice

Madrid, May 7

US NATIONAL security adviser Condoleezza Rice disparaged France for taking Nato "hostage" over Iraq and for threatening smaller countries with reprisals if they backed Washington's war to oust Saddam Hussein.

"Nobody should take Nato hostage," Rice said in an interview with four Spanish newspapers published on Wednesday.

"It was very unsettling that Germany and France tried to prevent Nato from reinforcing the security of Turkey. There were many unsettling things in that process," she said. While saying that France and Germany would remain US allies, Rice also said France did more to divide Europe over Iraq than did the United States.

"The United States did not divide the Europeans...It wasn't us that threatened smaller countries with reprisals nor tried to shut up the countries of Eastern Europe," Rice said in reference to France.

In the run-up to the war in Iraq, France actively lobbied smaller countries on the UN Security Council to reject a resolution that would have approved the use of force.

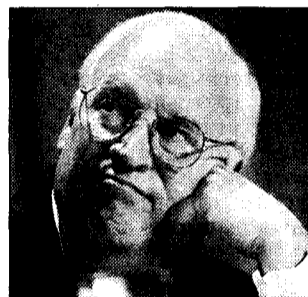
Cheney to be Bush's running mate again

VICE-PRESIDENT DICK Cheney confirmed in an interview published on Wednesday that he will be President Bush's running mate in a 2004 re-election campaign.

"The president has asked me if I would serve again as his running mate," Cheney told *The Dallas Morning News* on Tuesday. "I've agreed to do that."

Cheney has been one of Bush's closest advisers and a major power in the White House, where he has been a leading hawk on Iraq.

There had long been speculation Bush would replace Cheney, who has had four heart attacks, and take a running mate who could run to suc-



Dick Cheney

ceed him in 2008 if the President wins a second term.

But Bush made clear last November that he wanted to keep Cheney as his running mate, quashing the lingering speculation about his plans.

Reuters, Washington

French President Jacques Chirac also took to task future members of the European Union from Eastern Europe for backing the United States on Iraq when they could have remained silent.

In what was seen as the

biggest crisis within Nato for decades, France and Germany delayed a military aid package for Turkey that was meant to bolster its defences before the war in Iraq.

Reuters

US readies rules to try war criminals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WASHINGTON, May 3. — Legal instructions are ready for the trial of potential "war criminals" by US military commissions if President Mr George W Bush decides to name individuals to be considered for prosecution, senior Pentagon officials have said.

"We are ready to go when the time is right," officials told reporters yesterday at the Pentagon adding US has historically used military commissions to deal with "violations" of the laws of war. The "war criminals" may include inmates of Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, where several Taliban fighters are held. For some time now, "we

have been reviewing different cases" that might be suitable for prosecution by a military commission. While legal authorities have some thoughts about who would be appropriate to bring before a military commission, no final decisions have been made yet," the officials said.

On the number of individuals who might go before a commission, one of the officials said: "We don't have jurisdiction over anyone to try them until the President designates them as subject to his order." Officials expressed confidence that nearly 60 pages of instructions will provide for "full and fair trials before military commissions." Asked whether these instructions would apply to Iraqis currently

being detained, they said these were drawn up following an order by Bush that predated "Operation Iraqi Freedom." But they clarified that if international terrorists were taken into custody in Iraq, "it is possible that they could also be subject to this process."

Baghdad police chief resigns

The American-appointed interim Baghdad police chief resigned today, one day after Iraq's US administrators called on all of the capital's police officers to return to work with a slight change of uniform to help restore order. Mr Zuhair Abdul Razaq said he submitted his resignation, which he described as a retirement, adds AP from Baghdad.

THE STATESMAN

MAY 2003

America to reduce Iraq troops by year end

US (W)
W. Rom

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE

WASHINGTON, May 3. — The United States plans to reduce its military presence in Iraq from more than 130,000 soldiers and marines today to 30,000 or less by late this year, the New York Times reported today.

The Bush administration was working on a military reorganisation based on splitting postwar Iraq into three sectors. A division of US forces would continue to secure Baghdad, the British would lead a multinational division in the south, and Poland would command a third international division, the paper said. The motivation behind the US troop reduction was to avoid giving any sense of a US occupation of Iraq, and to free up forces to prepare for other potential crises, *The New York Times* added.

The precise timing of the US troop withdrawal depended on a number of factors, including the levels of criminal activity and paramilitary

415 59-12 'Saddam aide in custody'

WASHINGTON, May 3. — A senior official of Saddam Hussein's regime, Mizban Khidir Hadi, has been taken into US custody, the *Washington Post* reported today. A former member of the Revolutionary Command Council, Hadi was number 41 on the US list of 55 most wanted Iraqi officials. His arrest brought the number of Iraqi officials on the most wanted list who have been taken into US custody to 18. He was captured in Baghdad on Thursday, US military sources cited by the paper said.

Hadi had been part of Saddam's inner circle for two decades. Last year he was named military chief for the southern region of Iraq, including the cities of Karbala and Najaf. He was a decorated military man who received honours for his service in the 1991 Gulf War and the crushing of the Shi'ite rebellion that followed Iraq's ouster from Kuwait. — AFP

attacks, the efficacy of the new Iraqi police force, and the establishment of an interim government in Baghdad, the paper said.

US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said yesterday that the participation of other troops from other countries would also be a determining factor. "The larger number of countries that participate, the fewer number of forces

from the United States will be necessary," Rumsfeld told a press conference during his visit to London.

Britain will hold a meeting to generate forces from other countries for its division on 7 May.

Meanwhile, US forces announced today that another 342 Iraqi soldiers captured during the war were released in the past 24 hours. US forces still have 3,600 Iraqi PoWs.

- 4 MAY 2003

THE STATESMAN

Powell-Rumsfeld turf war lands Kissinger protege top job

TIM REID & ELAINE MONAGHAN
THE TIMES LONDON

WASHINGTON, May 3. — Mr Paul Bremer, a career diplomat whom US President Mr Bush is expected to appoint next week as Iraq's senior civilian administrator, has earned one of the world's most difficult jobs more because of his wide and powerful support base in Washington than his experience of the Persian Gulf.

Mr Bremer, a state department veteran, will report to the White House and over the head of Mr Jay Garner, the retired US Army general who is now in charge of humanitarian assistance and reconstruction in Iraq. Gen. Garner, White House officials said, will remain in his post as part of the rebuilding effort.

The promotion of a state department civilian to oversee Iraq's reconstruction comes as Gen. Garner, a Pentagon appointee, seems to have been struggling to restore basic services and navigate the sensitive and treacherous political waters of a war-ravaged Iraq.

The move is seen in Washington as a victory for Gen. Colin Powell and his state department, who have been involved in a robust and at times bitter bureaucratic power struggle with Mr Donald Rumsfeld's Pentagon over who controls the reconstruction and democratisation of Iraq, a task hitherto dominated by the defence department.

Mr Bremer, however, a former ambassador in the Reagan administration and head of the state department's counter-terrorism office, is a rare breed in Washington, a state department internationalist as well as a straight-talking hawk with close ties to the

Pentagon's neo-conservative wing.

Known in the state department as blunt and decisive, one of his most crucial roles will involve not just resolving disputes between rival factions in Iraq but bridging those in Washington.

However, in a clear sign that the turf war between the two departments over Iraq is far from over, Mr Rumsfeld issued a statement on Friday saying: "Jay Garner is doing a truly outstanding job for the nation. Any suggestion to the contrary is flat untrue and mischievous. The White House has made no announcement regarding other appointments."

Mr Bremer, 61, is a protege of Dr Henry Kissinger, the former Secretary of State and still one of Washington's most influential figures who is widely respected in the White House, Pentagon and State Department.

He has backed many of the positions and programmes supported by hawks in the Bush administration but offered only conditional support for the invasion of Iraq.

One of the hopes of the Bush administration is that, as a civilian diplomat, he will succeed in getting support from key UN members who have objected to what appears as a Pentagon-dominated operation, and who are crucial in getting UN sanctions against Iraq quickly lifted, a stated goal of the President. He is also seen as a muscular but skilled diplomat who will try to get more countries involved in legitimising the new Iraqi interim authority.

Dr Kissinger said that Mr. Bremer will help the US sort out "the relationship between the need for order and the evolution that will take place toward pluralistic democracy"

— 4 MAY 2003

THE STATESMAN

U.S. troops in no hurry to leave Iraq: Rumsfeld

U.S. (w)
19

415

By Hasan Suroor

LONDON, MAY 3. The U.S. Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, who met the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, at Chequers over the weekend, made clear that there were no plans to pull out American troops from Iraq any time soon saying it was still a "dangerous place".

He also remained non-committal on the precise role the United Nations would be expected to play in post-war Iraq despite a strong plea by Mr. Blair that the world forum must be closely involved in any reconstruction plans.

Mr. Blair is understood to have insisted that the proposed 'stabilisation' force for Iraq must have U.N.'s backing in order to give it more teeth and credibility, but Mr. Rumsfeld refused to be drawn into specifics simply saying: "I hope they do play a role." Mr. Rumsfeld, who also met the Defence Secretary, Geoff Hoon, during a stopover on his way back from a visit to Baghdad, told reporters that it was not possible to indicate how long the U.S. troops would remain in Iraq.

"I don't know, and it's not knowable," he replied testily. Pressed further, he said: "It would be a terrible mistake to think that Iraq is a fully secure, fully pacified environment...It is not, it's dangerous." To the Iraqis, who are demanding withdrawal of foreign forces, his uncompromising message was that the U.S. troops would stay in the region as long as it took them to pacify the situation. "We'll have as many forces in the country as is necessary to see that there is a secure environment."

Britain, which hosted a meeting of 16 countries earlier in the week to discuss the post-war situation in Iraq, indicated that its troops too were likely to remain there for a considerable time. They would be part of a multinational 'stabilisation' force comprising, among others, many countries belonging to what Mr. Rumsfeld called the 'new Europe'.

Ten countries, including Italy, Spain and Poland, have offered to contribute troops to the proposed stabilisation force which would operate under overall U.S. command.

US may lift Iraq embargo gradually, say diplomats

United Nations: With Russia and France having strong reservations for lifting of sanctions against Iraq on the bidding of United States, diplomats say Washington might settle on slow erosion of embargo rather than an omnibus resolution to end the ban especially on selling of Iraqi oil.

President George W. Bush has called for lifting of sanction as, he says, the country has liberated but Washington is yet to produce a draft resolution on that. Diplomats and officials say that there are differences even within the Bush administration on the way the sanction should be lifted.

Once the US sets up an interim authority, diplomats say, it might favour giving control over oil to it. But whether Moscow and Paris would agree to is open to question, they say.

The thinking of Washington, they say, seem to be to ask the United Nations to transfer control over oil resources to the new Iraqi administration and give the role of oversight to the World Bank. The UN could appoint an observer. The US also wants to give no role to the UN weapons inspectors, something Russia has been vehemently demanding.

Moscow also rejects the American view that sanctions should be lifted as they were imposed to contain Saddam Hussein's regime and wants UN to be given authority to sign new contracts for oil sale till a representative Iraqi government is formed.

The oil companies, analysts say, would like the matter to be sorted out before they make investments in Iraq for the fear of being caught in legal wrangling.

The current phase of "Oil-for-Food" programme ends on June 3. At present, it has authorised UN secretary-general Kofi Annan to

take charge of the humanitarian supplies but if the council does not act by June 3, that mandate would end. The contracts for these supplies were signed by Saddam Hussein government.

Though France had favoured suspension of sanctions, much would depend on the wording of the resolution. If sanctions are lifted for an indefinite period, the council would have to pass another resolution if it wants to re-impose them.

Diplomats say US might try to bring the resolution in whatever form it wants sometime this month when Pakistan is the council's president. Next month, presidency would pass on to Russia which is not inclined to American viewpoints. Though the entire council has to decide the issue, the President can help in scheduling talks and meetings at favourable timings.

The issue, diplomats say, has got embroiled in the economic interests of permanent members of the council as reconstruction of Iraq would mean lucrative contracts. That seems to be one reason that even Britain is not yet fully on board with the American thinking, they add.

During a meeting Mr Annan, the council members had said they are awaiting the US proposals. American diplomats indicated that they would bring forward their proposals shortly but ruled out any activity this week.

Mr Annan has been urging the council members to unite stressing that the main objective should be to enable Iraqi people take charge of their resources. He also advocates a major role for the United Nations.

But Americans have made it clear that the world body could play role only in the humanitarian field. PTI

3 MAY 2003

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Bush declares 'victory' in Iraq

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MAY 2. From the deck of an aircraft carrier that saw action in the conflict in the Persian Gulf, the United States President, George W. Bush, declared "victory" in Iraq but qualified this by saying that only "major combat operations" were over.

"The battle of Iraq is one victory in a war on terror that began on September 11, 2001, and still goes on", Mr. Bush said on the deck of USS Abraham Lincoln. "Major combat operations in Iraq have ended. The United States and our allies have prevailed. And now, our coalition is engaged in securing and reconstructing that country", he remarked. In his 22-minute address to the nation that was punctuated several times with standing ovation from the men and women of the aircraft carrier and the battle group, the President said, "The tyrant has fallen and Iraq is free".

Hours before this prime time address to the country, Mr. Bush helped pilot a jet onto the deck of USS Abraham Lincoln that is on its way to its home base in the State of Washington. Closer to San Diego, Mr. Bush boarded the jet but not before the Secret Service insisted that one of its own had to be on board. Mr. Bush had not piloted an aircraft for 30 years since the time he was in the Texas Air National Guard. The event raised eyebrows among the Democrats some of whom took the position that this was a costly photo opportunity.

The White House argued that the President does not play politics with national security. Prior to this address, the White House was being very careful on how this exercise was being portrayed, anxious not to give the impression that Mr. Bush is gloating over the "victory" in Iraq that could send all the wrong signals to a region that is already troubled by the direction of American foreign policy. At the same time, the White House was keen on sending the message that the war in Iraq

or possesses weapons of mass destruction is a grave danger to the civilised world and will be confronted", Mr. Bush said even while being careful not to drop any names in the process. By the same token, he maintained that anyone in the world "including the Arab world, who works and sacrifices for freedom, has a loyal friend in the United States".

The White House is making the point that this will be the President's last major address on Iraq, unless of course, something major turns up in the future. The President, it is said, will be moving on to issues and matters of domestic priority such as the economy. "Clearly, we are emerging from a phase of intense focus on war in Iraq to a phase where there will be

Civilian head for Iraq?

WASHINGTON, MAY 2. The United States President, George W. Bush, has selected a former career diplomat to be the overall civilian ruler of Iraq, *Newsweek* magazine has reported.

Senior officials said L Paul Bremer, who served the former President, Ronald Reagan, as ambassador-at-large for counter-terrorism, would be named shortly as overall head of the transition team struggling to bring order, and eventually democracy, to Iraq. Mr Bremer will outrank Jay Garner, the retired General hand-picked by Donald Rumsfeld, the Defence Secretary, to run the immediate post-war effort. — ©Telegraph Group Limited, London, 2003

much more focus on the economy, properly so", argued the White House spokesman, Ari Fleischer. "The Iraqi operation is winding down", he added.

Mr. Bush spent the night in a Captain's quarters aboard the aircraft carrier. After breakfast and meeting with top com-

Blackmailing the Saudis

W(10) - 4 An 51-6
Threat to let them fend for themselves

Secretary of Defence, Donald Rumsfeld has paid a quick visit to Saudi Arabia on purpose to announce that the United States is withdrawing most of its forces from Saudi soil, although he insists it is after consultations with the Saudi government. It has been a given for a long time that the Saudi Royal family retains its grip on power thanks largely to American protection. There have been no attacks on American troops stationed there, but two factors seem to have influenced the hawkish Secretary of Defence and his boss in the White House who thinks like him. It will be recalled that some time ago President Chirac had approached OPEC, the oil cartel of which Saudi Arabia is a leading member, to hedge their bets and hold their large reserves of cash at least partly in Euros, especially as the American dollar was weakening. This immediately rang all kinds of alarm bells in Washington and the move was forestalled but only just. The other cause for offence was the fact that early this month Iraq's neighbours met on Saudi soil and sent an unambiguous message to the United States to get out of Iraq forthwith.

It would seem that in their present ugly mood of intolerance of any view other than their own, the Americans have been mortally offended and desire to get even. If American troops are asked to get out of Iraq, they will first get out of Saudi Arabia and show the kingdom how indispensable they are to the stability of their state. They may also have anticipated that the signal from Saudi Arabia translates into hostility towards the USA in the whole region and they do not want to wait for an attack on American interests there, a la Osama bin Laden. It is probable that the effete Saudi Royals will sue for peace and beg America to stay. At that point Washington will try and detach Riyadh from the rest of the Arab world and force the Saudis to their knees as they did President Musharraf of Pakistan. If any Saudi royals are continuing to help Osama and Al Qaeda, there will be a demand to stop it altogether, which, as far as it goes, is no bad thing.

The fallacy in the American reasoning is the assumption that because President Bush has said he will be in Iraq for two years to establish democracy, American style, he will be able to stay. For the second time in three days, trigger-happy GIs have fired and killed 15 Iraqi civilians and wounded some 75 more. The local people were merely trying to tell the Americans to leave the school that they had commandeered as their headquarters. Three boys below 11 years of age were among the dead. The unarmed Iraqis were chanting — *Go! Go! USA* which, does not quite translate into welcoming the Americans and the British, as liberators like current wishful thinking among diplomats who write letters to the editor of *The Statesman*. As usual the excuse is that young children were firing at American soldiers; journalistic investigations suggest they were only throwing stones to match their slogans. In the coming weeks and months what happened in the holy city of Falluja will be repeated all over Iraq, not because terrorists are on the prowl but because Iraq has been invaded and occupied by foreign soldiers who have designs on their oil and are presuming as Bush confirms, that they are being got ready for lessons in democracy American style. It is a safe bet that Bush will be forced to leave Iraq, that he will do so in a hurry and that he will try and land the whole mess in the lap of the UN.

If the Saudis call Bush's bluff, America will be left without bases in either Saudi Arabia or Iraq — give it time!

THE STATESMAN

— 1 MAY 2003

U.S. firm on democracy in Iraq: Bush

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, APRIL 29. The United States President, George W. Bush, has said that the United States will stand by Iraq until democracy flourishes in that country, but declined to discuss the specifics of the government and the nature of the political system that is being formed. "Day-by-day, hour-by-hour, life in Iraq is getting better," Mr. Bush told a boisterous crowd in the Detroit suburb of Dearborn, home to thousands of Iraqi Americans, many of whom had supported the Republican candidate in November 2000.

Mr. Bush's address in Michigan was being carried live in several parts of the Arab world where deep suspicions remain about the U.S. "Iraq can be an example of peace and prosperity and freedom to the entire

Middle East," the President argued, even as his spokesman brushed aside a question whether Mr. Bush was trying to mend fences with a community that is not totally in unison with the administration.

"It will be a hard journey, but at every step of the way, Iraq will have a steady friend in the American people," Mr. Bush said. The President, who has been at serious odds with the United Nations over Iraq in the last three months drew a strong ovation when he said that the sanctions would have to be lifted. At a meeting with Iraqi exiles, Mr. Bush brushed away a question on the shape of the new Iraqi government as the founder of the Kurdish National Congress of North America suggested that Iraq should be a Federation with three autonomous or semi-autonomous regions.

"We are not going to have a debate on the

form of government. This debate is going to take place within Iraq," the President stressed. Mr. Bush, even while being careful not to discuss the specifics of government formation, was quite clear in what he expected to be the final outcome in Baghdad. "Whether you are Sunni or Shia or Kurd or Chaldean or Assyrian or Turkmen or Christian or Jew or Muslim, no matter what your faith, freedom is God's gift to every person in every nation," the President remarked.

The Bush administration has made it known that it will not sit idly by and see Iraq slip into a form of government that is patterned after Iran.

Senior officials here have stressed repeatedly in the last few days that while Islamic democracy in Iraq is possible, this cannot take the shape of a theocracy as in Iran.

Armitage denies U.S. pressured India, Pak.

9/5
By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, MAY 8. The U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage, said here today that considering the sensitivities between India and Pakistan, the two countries should concentrate on political and economic confidence-building measures.

Addressing a joint press conference with the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Khurshid Muhammad Kasuri here after a 90-minute meeting with the Pakistan President, Gen. Musharraf, he said "there have to be serious CBMs on political and economic issues" before the two countries which had "gen-

eral confrontational stands" take up issues like arms control, he said.

Mr. Armitage was answering a question on what the U.S. is prepared to do on nuclear proliferation in the region.

"They cannot be expected to take far-reaching decisions on matters of arms control. We are wishing a cautiously optimistic stand. That is exactly what we have seen", he said.

He denied the impression that the U.S. has pressured Pakistan and India into any peace process.

"It is not our stand to pressure Pakistan or India. If we can be helpful to begin dialogue it

will be helpful".

Without going into the details of his talks with Gen. Musharraf, Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali and Mr. Kasuri, he said "my discussions here today will be faithfully carried to our Indian friends and they study the comments and decide on their course of response. I want to dispel the notion that there is pressure from the U.S.". Mr. Armitage also denied that he carried any proposals for resolution of the Kashmir issue.

Asked whether India has done enough to bring down the tensions, he said, "it is not useful pointing fingers at India and Pakistan.

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The United States faithfully discusses the issues with both sides".

Replying to a question on the motives that prompted India to initiate a new peace process, he said he was not sure of the reasons.

"All I know is that Vajpayee has made a far-reaching statement in Srinagar. I have no doubt that he is a man of peace and he wants to have peace between India and Pakistan. Beyond that I cannot speculate on his motives. I think it is something our friends would discuss and find it for themselves", he said.

Mutual confidence best check against infiltration: Armitage

10-11
10/5

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, MAY 9. The United States Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage, has said that the most effective mechanism to check the claims of infiltration across the Line of Control (LoC) was the "degree of confidence" India and Pakistan could achieve.

He was replying to a question in the course of an interview on the State-controlled Pakistan Television (PTV) on Pakistan's proposal for a neutral mechanism of representatives from a few countries mutually acceptable to India and Pakistan to verify claims on infiltration.

Mr. Armitage did concede that there were several suggestions and mechanisms floating around but said that ultimately it was the degree of confidence between the two countries that constituted the most effective method.

Earlier in the day at the end of his Pakistan leg of the tour Mr. Armitage, along with the Assistant Secretary of State, Christina Rocca, left for Kabul.

After daylong consultations with the Afghan President, Hamid Karzai, Mr. Armitage left for Delhi.

Asked about India's allegations of cross-border terrorism, Mr. Armitage said, "President Musharraf has been very clear that nothing is happening across the Line of Control and gave, absolute assurance, further that there were no camps in 'Azad Kashmir.'" At his news conference here on Thursday, he quoted Gen. Musharraf as telling him that "if there are any militant camps in 'Azad Kashmir,' they will be gone tomorrow".

Asked about the no-war pact and a nuclear-free South Asia proposed by Pakistan, he said that ultimately the U.S. would like to have a nuclear-free zone. However, he hastened to add that it would be quite down the way in terms of confidence-building measures (CBMs). "There are more immediate issues, which need to be looked into first".

To a question on characterisation of the Kashmir issue, Mr. Armitage said that Kashmir might be the core issue, but for India it might be the "unrelenting hostility". At his press conference on Thursday he had said that the U.S. would not like to get into the issue.

He would focus on all aspects of the relationship between Pakistan and India. The

atmosphere had improved on both sides on a lot of other issues and, clearly, Kashmir will be discussed rationally and reasonably."

When the interviewer asked about the 'hard-liners' in the Bhartiya Janata Party and how they would react to the peace initiative, Mr. Armitage said, that "it is not the job of the United States to bring them around." He said "it is the hopes and aspirations of the people of India and the hopes and aspirations of the people of Kashmir and the hopes and aspirations of people of Pakistan (which matter)".

There were hard-liners, conservatives everywhere. The United States gave a very high level of importance to the initiation of a dialogue process between Pakistan and India. He expressed the hope that the leaders from both the sides will be able to take advantage of the situation and move forward and "discuss all of issues."

On Pakistan-U.S. ties, Mr. Armitage said they enjoyed a 'deep, enduring and long-lasting relationship'. "We are very intent on not going through another separation with Pakistan as we had for 10 years. We want our relationship as deep, enduring and long-lasting."

10 MAY 2003

US

U.S. warns Syria over 'terrorist links'

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MAY 5. Officials here have warned Syria that the Bush administration and Congress are watching Damascus for positive signs; and that there could be unspecified "consequences" if a determination is made that assistance to certain Palestinian groups was continuing.

The message to this effect has come from the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, who has just finished a visit to the region, including Syria. The Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, who also recently returned from a visit to the Gulf, has stressed that Syrian actions, not words will be the critical component. "Words are one thing. Actions are another", Mr. Rumsfeld said of Syria. The Defence Secretary, who has been on a tour of key states in the Persian Gulf and

Iraq, is known to be one of the toughest critics of Damascus and has not taken kindly to its attempts to complicate American operations in Iraq either at the time of military action or now, during a phase in which the coalition forces are looking for remnants of the old regime.

Gen. Powell took the line that the Syrian leader, Bashar Assad, has been told in rather plain terms of American concerns and expectations and that there will be "consequences" if Damascus did not cease support to groups that Washington regards as terror outfits. This apart, the Secretary of State has also raised the issue of Syria assisting or harbouring top Iraqis. "It's performance that we'll be looking in the days and weeks and months ahead", Gen. Powell maintained. "We had a good candid exchange of views and there are no illusions in his

mind as to what we are looking for from Syria", the top Bush Cabinet official said.

What is being pointed out here is that Gen. Powell has stepped up the pressure on Syria as far as closures of organisations deemed to be terrorist by the U.S. At a Beirut news conference, Gen. Powell said, "they did closures", referring to Syria. But in going to the extent of saying that military action against Damascus was not on the cards, Gen. Powell is said to have left Syria with an unmistakable impression that the Bush administration "expected" Mr. Assad and the Syrians to "do more".

The administration here is trying to determine the impact of Syria's "closures" of offices of some of the Palestinian organisations. But a news agency has said that outfits like the Islamic Jihad, the Hamas and the Popular Front for the Liberation of

Palestine, have called up to say that the order did not affect them or their operations — an announcement that will not go down well in the Republican administration here.

Sanctions

The U.S. has told Mr. Assad that unless specific progress could be demonstrated, Syria could come under sanctions under the 2001 USA Patriot Act, as also under a Bill pending in Congress called the Syria Accountability Act. This message was apparently conveyed during Gen. Powell's visit. There is no question that the administration is keen on taking advantage of what has happened in Iraq and in the overthrow of the Saddam Hussein regime.

Gen. Powell is believed to have told Mr. Assad that the U.S. was keen on bringing about "stability" to the region.

06 MAY 2003

Stability: U.S. plans deployment of global force in Iraq

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By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MAY 3. The United States is planning an International Stabilisation Force for Iraq with the contingent coming from at least six European countries. According to one version, the force is going to be in three regions with Poland, the U.S. and Britain in charge of one region each.

The Bush administration has not come out with the specifics of the proposals which are still being worked out in Washington and European capitals. The U.S. and Britain, at the same time, are also working on a Security Council resolution that gives the world forum a say in humanitarian affairs but nothing on the peacekeeping front.

U.N. officials have said that some of its functional agencies are inside Iraq handling humanitarian issues; and that the forum has little to no interest in the policing of Iraq. The Bush administration has made no effort in hiding its opposition to any expanded role for the U.N., over and beyond the humanitarian front. For the record, the U.S. is still maintaining that the U.N. will play a 'role' but what this role could be is yet to be openly formulated. And there

about 20,000 troops with the strength of the other two sectors to be in the control of Britain and Poland yet to be determined. Further, it is said that Italy, Spain, Ukraine, Denmark, The Netherlands and Bulgaria will also be contributing troops.

The overall charge for the stabilisation force for Iraq will be Gen. Tommy Franks. The U.S. would like to bring down its troop strength in Iraq and with this the kind of visibility that is now there. The force is intended not to replace the coalition forces but to augment their presence and take over the functions of providing security and stability. This will then free up the American troops to look for remnants of the Saddam Hussein regime.

The full-fledged stabilisation force for Iraq could take some time as planning is said to be extensive and one that involves many more nations than the major troop contributors or the six European nations.

In fact, many in the Asia Pacific and the Arab world are keen on being a part of the exercise in Iraq in a variety of ways including in the setting up of hospitals and donating money even if some are reluctant to send in troops for reasons of politics and religion.



U.S. soldiers search the bag of an Iraqi employee returning to her job at the Archaeological Museum in Baghdad on Saturday. — AFP

are those like France, Germany and Russia who were totally opposed to the American war in Iraq and now do not wish to see Washington having a free run in the post conflict phase. As far as the international stabilisation force for Iraq, one thinking is that the American contribution could be in the neighbourhood of one division which is

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U.S. troops in no hurry to leave Iraq: Rumsfeld 415

By Hasan Suroor

LONDON, MAY 3. The U.S. Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, who met the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, at Chequers over the weekend, made clear that there were no plans to pull out American troops from Iraq any time soon saying it was still a "dangerous place".

He also remained non-committal on the precise role the United Nations would be expected to play in post-war Iraq despite a strong plea by Mr. Blair that the world forum must be closely involved in any reconstruction plans.

Mr. Blair is understood to have insisted that the proposed 'stabilisation' force for Iraq must have U.N.'s backing in order to give it more teeth and credibility, but Mr. Rumsfeld refused to be drawn into specifics simply saying: "I hope they do play a role." Mr. Rumsfeld, who also met the Defence Secretary, Geoff Hoon, during a stopover on his way back from a visit to Baghdad, told reporters that it was not possible to indicate how long the U.S. troops would remain in Iraq.

"I don't know, and it's not knowable," he replied testily. Pressed further, he said: "It would be a terrible mistake to think that Iraq is a fully secure, fully pacified environment...It is not, it's dangerous." To the Iraqis, who are demanding withdrawal of foreign forces, his uncompromising message was that the U.S. troops would stay in the region as long as it took them to pacify the situation. "We'll have as many forces in the country as is necessary to see that there is a secure environment."

Britain, which hosted a meeting of 16 countries earlier in the week to discuss the post-war situation in Iraq, indicated that its troops too were likely to remain there for a considerable time. They would be part of a multinational 'stabilisation' force comprising, among others, many countries belonging to what Mr. Rumsfeld called the 'new Europe'.

Ten countries, including Italy, Spain and Poland, have offered to contribute troops to the proposed stabilisation force which would operate under overall U.S. command.

THE FINISH

16 MAY 2001

Bush, Roh for peaceful solution to N. Korea standoff

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MAY 15. The U.S. and South Korea have expressed confidence that the face-off with North Korea would be resolved peacefully; and have said that both are seeking a Korean peninsula that is free of nuclear weapons. Making his official visit to Washington, the South Korean President, Roh Moo-hyun, has reaffirmed the traditional economic and military ties with the U.S. and pledged to work closely on the possible realignment of forces inside that East Asian country.

For his part, the U.S. President, George W. Bush, would not publicly say the kind of position he favours in the standoff with North Korea even as there is the debate within the Republican adminis-

tration on how to go about dealing with Pyongyang. "We are making good progress towards achieving that peaceful resolution... in regard to North Korea," Mr. Bush said. He referred to the South Korean leader as "an easy man to talk to" and Mr. Roh noted that he now returns to his country with "only hopes in my mind". A joint statement says the U.S. and South Korea will not tolerate n- weapons in the peninsula and have invited other nations to help resolve the standoff. Even while acknowledging that a peaceful resolution was indeed possible, Mr. Bush and Mr. Roh have said that "increased threats to peace and stability on the peninsula would require consideration of further steps". Political-ly and diplomatically, the South Koreans

have been quite wary of any tough talk- ing on the North.

'Engagement' has been the word that seems to be the preferred route in South Korea. But the Bush administration is keen on playing it vague, wanting to give the impression that "further steps" could mean anything — including mil- itary action. The White House was keen that the meeting should go off as planned; and was keenly watching every word that Mr. Roh was going to say, es- pecially on North Korea.

This administration knows too well that the past meeting between Mr. Bush and Kim Dae Jung did not exactly get off the ground, much of this having to do with the differences on how to go about with Pyongyang. Mr. Roh's visit comes at

a time when there is a sharp division within this administration on how to go about with North. There have been per- sistent reports that the so-called division pits the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, who is for negotiations on one side and the Defence Secretary, Donald Rums- field, and the Vice-President's staff on the other who are seeking a tougher line in- cluding economic sanctions.

The Government in South Korea is of the view that punitive measures against the North will have disastrous conse- quences. Even in the realm of future ne- gotiations, Washington is keen that the talks should involve Japan and South Ko- rea. The last time around, China was in- strumental in bringing the U.S. and North Korea in a three-way framework.

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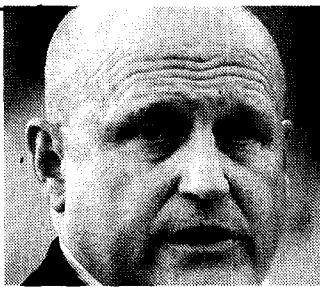
WS(11) ✓ Armitage visit to South Asia successful' #D-11

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MAY 13. Over and beyond what may have been said, or not said, by the United States' Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage, during his trips to India and Pakistan, the State Department here is saying that he did indeed have a "very successful visit to South Asia" where he has had the opportunity to discuss bilateral relations and also the steps being taken in the subcontinent to resolve the differences.

The State Department has further reiterated the United States' continuing interest in the promotion of stability in South Asia and is ready to assist India and Pakistan as they begin a process aimed at achieving peace.

"In both Pakistan and in India...he (Mr. Armitage) discussed the expanding bilateral relationship that we have with each country and commended both governments on their renewed efforts, begun last month by the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee's speech in Srinagar and followed by the



Pakistani Prime Minister, Jamaali's telephone call that began a process to resolve their differences," the Deputy Spokesman, Philip Reeker, said.

Mr. Reeker would not accept the criticism that after the initial euphoria in both India and Pakistan, New Delhi had adopted a hostile attitude, for instance, in declining to meet the Pakistani Prime Minister.

"In terms of euphoria, we are all quite euphoric when the Deputy Secretary, Armitage visits with us and visits other places. He had a very successful visit to South Asia, and I don't know that I accept the characterisations of the reactions since," Mr. Reeker said.

"As you know, the United

States has a continuing interest in strong relationships with each of the countries in the region and in promoting peace and stability... Peace in the region, whether it is in Afghanistan, or whether it's between India and Pakistan or whether it is in Nepal or in Sri Lanka, will be achieved through the efforts of the governments and peoples of South Asia, and the United States stands ready to assist South Asians in their efforts, as they may request," Mr. Reeker said.

Also without getting into the specifics of the recent visit of India's Security Adviser, Brajesh Mishra, the State Department spokesman said that it was a "very successful series" of meetings.

"It did cover a wide variety of subjects, including India's keen interest in pressing forward with high technology, commerce and civil nuclear cooperation... they are areas where we have taken a number of steps," Mr. Reeker said, adding that the first session of the High Technology Cooperation Group would be held next month.

~~11 APR 2003~~

Digression in Damascus

THE US intervention in Vietnam was motivated by the fear of what was called the 'domino theory' which said that the success of the communists in Indochina would be followed by their incursions into other countries of the region. Now, in West Asia, the Americans seem intent on introducing their version of the theory, entailing the 'fall' of one 'rogue State' after another to the American forces. Even before the war has ended in Iraq, the US hawks are turning their eyes on Syria, which had earlier been identified — along with Iran — by a US official as one of the countries which had to be 'dealt' with after Iraq. The list of American grouses against Damascus is becoming longer. The earlier complaints were about Syria's links with the terrorist outfits. Now it is also being accused of sheltering Iraqi fugitives and having a chemical weapons programme.

At the moment, the US is talking only of diplomatic and economic pressure. But few are under any delusion that if Syria does not 'cooperate', the US will have little hesitation in launching a military attack. It's irrelevant whether the attack takes place now or later. In all probability, it will be much

later — if at all — since the US will first have to sort out the aftermath of Saddam Hussein's ouster in Iraq. According to present indications, the post-'liberation' scene may be quite messy although a similar mess in Afghanistan did not stop the Americans from invading Iraq. But what is shocking is that the US should so brazenly arrogate to itself the power to order things around in areas of its choosing simply because of its present overwhelming military power.

It's not that Syria is a paragon of virtue. Like Iraq under Saddam Hussein, its regime is a repressive one. But it is not for America to attack it although it presents no direct and immediate threat to the US (as Iraq also didn't) although Syria does possess the capability to harass Israel. What is more worrying is that there has been no mention of the UN in connection with the punitive measures which the US intends to take against Syria. It is the US which will decide and mete out the punishment. Clearly, the world is entering a phase in which most countries, more afraid of the US than of the 'rogue States', will begin to regard America as No. 1 in that unsavoury category.

Iraq secretly bought 1,000 anti-tank missiles: Pentagon

New York: Iraqis have secretly bought as many as a thousand Russian-made Kornet anti-tank missiles which are lightweight, very powerful and easy-to-use, Pentagon officials claimed.

The sellers are Ukrainian arms dealers and possibly some entrepreneurial Syrian generals or the Syrian government itself, the officials were quoted as saying by 'Newsweek'. They reportedly sent Baghdad some 500 Kornets in January.

The Kornet anti-tank missiles were used to attack two US tanks, both Abrams M1A1s during the ongoing war in Iraq. The first M1s ever destroyed by enemy fire in battle, they were caught in an ambush of the US army's 3/7 Cavalry near As Samawah, on the west bank of the Euphrates river.

Two is not a large number and the invading forces have at least 650 tanks in Iraq, with more on the way. But US officials, the magazine said, are worried about the skill or "at least the fanaticism" of the guerrilla fighters

who sneaked up on the tanks driving a jeep, under cover of a sandstorm.

Less than two weeks into the war, the magazine examined whether it started with enough force and whether Operation Iraqi Freedom risks blowing up into a Middle East war.

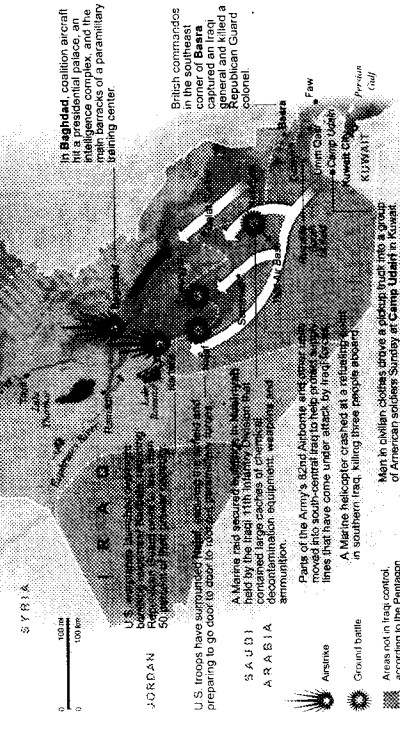
That scenario, once very remote, is no longer unthinkable, it said. Barring a sudden collapse of the Baathist regime—still a possibility, senior administration officials insist—the war in Iraq is about to get bloodier.

"Somewhere deep in his network of tunnels and bunkers," Mr Saddam Hussein "is convinced he can win," not by defeating superior US forces on the battlefield, but merely by surviving while Islamic rage builds from Cairo to Islamabad, the magazine said, quoting a senior US official.

With a show of "shock and awe," American might was supposed to overwhelm the Iraqis and crack Saddam Hussein's regime. Tipped off by a spy in his inner

Cautious steps forward

A s front-line U.S. troops inch toward Baghdad, fighting continues elsewhere. Supplies continue along coalition supply lines through central and southern Iraq.



OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM: DAY 12
American forces now control a territorial compound in northern Iraq. They have captured the biological toxin rich, and they have captured the major oil center of Kirkuk.

Kurdish fighters took control of more territory. They captured an intelligence complex, and the main barracks of a paramilitary training center.

In Baghdad, coalition special forces captured an intelligence complex, and the main barracks of a paramilitary training center.

British commandos in the southeast corner of Basra captured an Iraqi Republican Guard colonel.

U.S. troops have surrounded Fallujah, and are preparing to go door to door to oust Saddam's forces.

A Marine-led unit seized a large cache of chemical weapons in southern Iraq, killing three people aboard.

Maple coalition soldiers drove a Saddam truck into a crater of American soldiers Sunday at Camp Uday in Kuwait.

Saddam Hussein's henchmen which appear to have gone nowhere. Saddam Hussein is almost surely alive; the spy, according to a knowledgeable source, has been "compromised," meaning that he is probably dead.

When American soldiers began dying in ambushes from Iraqis pretending to surrender, it didn't take long for Washington officials to start leaking exculpatory memoranda.

One CIA memo made available to 'Newsweek' was entitled "Iraq: potential risks in rear areas." The paper warned of Saddam loyalists attacking American supply lines with "hit and run tactics" using "RPGs (rocket-propelled grenades) and small arms."

The document was widely distributed at the Pentagon, though one intelligence official, the magazine said, acknowledges that, given Washington's strange hothouse ways, the paper might have been more carefully read at the top if it had been stamped "top secret" instead of merely "secret."

Saddam Hussein's irregulars have adopted tricks from the Somali guerrillas, including firing from behind groups of women and children.

Saddam Hussein will try to increase the American death rate, possibly by ordering his commanders to use bio-chem weapons, the magazine said.

Meanwhile, a Saudi trucking company has refused a \$64.1 million-deal to provide the US army with trucks to be used in the war in Iraq, a contractor said.

"I convinced the Saudi company to refuse the deal," said Abdul Aziz Al-Tuwajri, a contractor, who was asked to mediate with the company, told reporters on Sunday.

He refused to disclose the name of the company, which is based in Haifa Al-Baten, close to the Iraqi border, or to say who asked him to mediate the deal.

He said the deal involved providing 1,300 trucks, and would have been profitable for the company and himself.

is in J&K, N-E: Washington

Press Trust of India

WASHINGTON, April 1. — The US has said that the Indian government “generally respected” the human rights of its citizens but “numerous problems” remained, particularly in J&K and the Northeast. It has also questioned New Delhi’s ability to prevent sectarian and religious violence in the country.

“Attacks on religious minorities occurred in several states which brought into question the government’s ability to prevent sectarian and religious violence,” the US state department said in its annual human rights report for 2002.

“The worst religious violence during the year was directed against minorities in Gujarat. It was alleged widely that the police and the state government in Gu-

jarat did little to stop the violence promptly,” the report charged.

The Indian government, the report said, “generally respected” the human rights of its citizens. However,

India a role model: Bishop

WASHINGTON, April 1. — An American bishop has praised India as a “model” for peaceful co-existence of different communities despite occasional communal tension. “India could provide a model for the world as a place where different people have succeeded in living together peacefully,” the 90-year-old Bishop James K Mathews, who had met Mahatma Gandhi during one of his 59 visits to India, said today. — PTI

threats have disrupted the judicial system.

“In the North-east, there was no clear decrease in the number of killings, despite negotiated ceasefires between the government and some insurgent forces and tribal groups,” it claimed.

Human rights violated across South Asia: USA

WASHINGTON, April 1. — The USA today said that human rights continue to be violated in most of South Asia, accusing Bangladesh and Nepal of committing several violations.

The Bangladesh government continued “to arrest and detain persons arbitrarily” and its security forces “committed a number of extrajudicial killings,” the US state department said in its annual human rights report.

Violence, often resulting in deaths, was pervasive in the country’s politics. There was also excessive police brutality, often used “excessive. The government also discriminated against minorities.

About Nepal, the report said that the country’s human rights record remained poor and it continued to commit numerous abuses.

The Sri Lankan government respected the human rights of its citizens. — PTI

THE STATE

2 APR

UK Euro battle reaches climax

London, April 16 (Reuters): Speculation about Britain's euro decision has hit fever pitch as the war in Iraq fades, with some reports ruling out a referendum on joining the single currency for years and others predicting a vote in 2004.

Either way, the debate that has raged since Prime Minister Tony Blair's government adopted a wait-and-see policy way back in 1997, now has a short shelf life.

Chancellor of the exchequer Gordon Brown has pledged to deliver his assessment of the economic case for euro entry by the first week of June but is expected to do so in May.

The euro debate knocked Iraq off some front pages today as *The Guardian* claimed Brown had persuaded the pro-euro Blair to all but rule out a euro referendum before the next election, due by 2006. The report comes hard on the heels of an intervention by former Cabinet minister Peter Mandelson, who said on Sunday that Blair's instinct was to go for a referendum in this parliament but probably next year rather than this.

Mandelson remains a close ally and confidant of Blair.

A closer reading of the *Guardian* story shows it does not jar with Mandelson's analysis quite as sharply as first appears.

The paper said a euro statement, which aides say is still being thrashed out by Blair and Brown, will leave "a loophole that ministers might change



Ray Egan stages a protest outside Parliament in a campaign to keep the pound in London. (AFP)

their minds in exceptional economic circumstances or if Europe increases the pace of reform". Blair and Brown have urged the EU to adopt low-regulation, British-style policies to boost growth and job creation.

Officially, the government would not be drawn on the report. "We are not going to give a running commentary on speculative newspaper stories," a treasury spokesman said. "Government policy remains unchanged. We will publish our assessment by the first week of June." But a government source said: "As far as I understand, these details are still under discussion."

The UK economy is set to grow twice as fast as that of the euro-zone this year. Economists

say that will make it difficult for Brown to report the clear convergence he has always said is necessary to recommend switching currencies.

But speculation has suggested he could deliver a "not yet" verdict, retaining his economic credibility but leaving room to revisit the issue next year, at Blair's insistence. Blair has promised the public a vote if he decides to ditch the pound.

Pro-euro campaigners are hoping Blair will be emboldened by a swing in public opinion, which was overwhelmingly against war in Iraq before the shooting started but now supports the campaign to oust Saddam Hussein by almost two-to-one. Opinion polls show a similar ratio of Britons would prefer

to have pounds rather than euros in their pockets.

With the end-game approaching, both sides of the euro debate are jockeying for position.

Some 93 pro-euro MPs, most from Blair's Labour Party, have signed a parliamentary motion urging him to hold a referendum before the next election.

"I believe he considers Britain will miss out economically, primarily, but also politically if we remain outside the euro indefinitely," Mandelson said. "I think his instinct will be to go for a referendum in this parliament."

Clinton blasts US foreign policy

New York: Former US president Bill Clinton blasted US foreign policy adopted in the wake of the September 11 attacks, arguing the United States cannot kill, jail or occupy all of its adversaries.



Bill Clinton

"Our paradigm now seems to be; something terrible happened to US on September 11, and that gives us the right to interpret all future events in a way that everyone else in the world must agree with us," said Mr Clinton, who spoke at a seminar of governance organised by conference board on Tuesday.

"And if they don't, they can go straight to hell." The former president, who preceded George W. Bush at the White House, said that sooner or later the US had to find a way to cooperate with the world at large.

"We can't run," Mr Clinton pointed out. "If you got an interdependent world, and you cannot kill, jail or occupy all your adversaries, sooner or later you have to make a deal."

He said he believed Washington overreacted to German and French opposition to US plans for military action against Iraq and suggested that the current administration had trouble juggling foreign and domestic issues.

"Since September 11, it looks like we can't hold two guns at the same time," Mr Clinton said. "If you fight terrorism, you can't make America a better place to be."

Mr Clinton said that if he were at the White House right now he would scrap a \$726-billion tax cut proposal made by the President in January to stimulate the flagging economy.

Congress has since cut the proposal to \$550 billion in the case of the House of Representatives and 350 billion under a Senate version of the plan. AFP

USA ASSOCIATED PRESS

THE NEW YORK TIMES

11/21/01

Proliferation parody

US sanctions against Pakistan are too little, too late and, therefore, meaningless

ON the face of it the incongruity is discernible: In the middle of a war ostensibly launched to change the regime in Baghdad because it had pursued acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and delivery systems, the United States, for the umpteenth time, has imposed "symbolic" sanctions against Pakistan for importing nuclear-capable ballistic missiles from North Korea. According to US sources, Pakistan had imported "full-fledged No Dong" 1,300-km range missiles even during the summer of last year bringing in the systems in US-supplied C-130 transport aircraft probably flying across Chinese territory, at a time when the military forces of Pakistan and India had been fully deployed on the borders with a high risk that a war could break out. In fact, the US was strongly advocating restraint at that time, while Pakistan was holding forth nuclear threats to India along with the demonstration launch of the North Korean supplied Ghauri missiles.

The way these sanctions have been crafted, the US seems to have even given up any pretence that it intends to hold Pakistan to its international obligations. The US claims that the sanctions are meant to make it "clear that buying weapons from North Korea has a direct and negative impact on the security of the United States". But these sanctions target the A.Q. Khan Nuclear Research Institute at Kahuta — which is now projected as an entity "separate from the government" — and not the

government itself. This facility, which developed nuclear weapons clandestinely, could hardly be carrying out any commercial activity with the US which now stands barred. On the other hand, if the US believes that A.Q. Khan facility is a non-government private entity, as its officials seem to have made out, the situation is even more bizarre. It's difficult to imagine this jihadi-culture dominated facility as a private enterprise!

The current sanctions have been conditioned by the desire not to punish Islamabad in any way since the later was seen as co-operating in the US war on terrorism! Obviously Washington ignores the fact that we were assured by it that Islamabad would stop terrorism from Pakistani soil and end infiltration across the borders into India. Even on the issue of Pakistan-North Korea quid pro quo arrangements of missiles and nuclear weapons technology, it seems General Musharraf had assured the US government at the highest levels that there will be no such action in future. Past sins of proliferation are easily forgotten in Washington till a new violation is discovered and attracts the attention of policy-makers. But the problem for our security is that the capability thus acquired, even if incrementally, remains with Pakistan, and requires that we factor this into our own defence policy. Washington must realise that its permissiveness has, in fact, both contributed to the intransigence of Pakistan, and impinged negatively on our security environment.

No peace amidst war

8 Pakistan must prepare the ground for dialogue by winding down jihadi terrorism

THE US pronouncements of a deeper interest in reducing tensions between India and Pakistan threaten to have a reverse effect. Prime Minister Vajpayee's offer of dialogue with Pakistan—something that General Pervez Musharraf has repeatedly sought—appears to have provided a licence for escalation of the jihadi war through terrorism prosecuted from Pakistan. The massacre at Nadimarg has been followed up with a series of vicious terrorist attacks in Jammu and Kashmir. The Hurriyat leadership seems to be reversing its earlier signals that it might join the dialogue process that New Delhi's interlocutor, N.N. Vohra, has been tasked with. Vajpayee's endorsement of the "healing touch" policy of Srinagar appears to have upset people in many quarters in the state and across the border. This trend may well lead to more vicious terrorist attacks in order to provoke New Delhi into taking a harder stand which could then can be used to wreck the prospects of any dialogue.

The US is predictably ready to pay more attention to the region since the Iraq war is over. The impending high-level visits and the public pronouncements emanating from Washington and London send out mixed signals. The tendency of sections of the US media to treat the J&K situation as a "land dispute" may well reflect a

wider lack of adequate understanding of the issues involved. The desire to treat Pakistan as the restored strategic friend, if not an ally, because of its supposed cooperation in the US war against terrorism could reinforce over-confidence among the managers of jihadi terrorism that they may have more to gain by escalating violence than improving ties with India.

The government in Islamabad has a unique opportunity to reshape the regional environment. The route to dialogue opens up options for a policy shift. One path leads to peace and cooperation based possibly on the August 1997 formula; and the other leads to injecting more of the past into the future. Islamabad would need to recognise that the same government in New Delhi would be much less forthcoming on the third attempt to mend fences with terrorism continuing at a vicious level and possibly escalating in the days ahead. At the same time, Washington would need to factor this reality into its own diplomatic options. A clear and unambiguous position demanding concrete action—rather than mere promises of the type made last year—to rapidly wind down jihadi terrorism from across the border would have to form the basis of any productive policy. The earlier this is done, the better it would be for all the parties concerned.

US troops gun down 13 Iraqi protesters

Falluja, April 29

AT LEAST 13 Iraqis were killed and 75 wounded when US troops fired on demonstrators brandishing photographs of Saddam Hussein on his 66th birthday on Monday evening. Six of the dead were children aged seven or eight, an eyewitness said.

"The shooting broke out when 500 protesters carrying portraits of Saddam and Iraqi flags approached a school manned by US troops," said Mohammed Hamid, a resident of this town 30 miles west of Baghdad. "They are stealing our oil and they are slaughtering our people."

The US military headquarters in Qatar said the protesters were armed with AK-47 rifles and had shot first. But numerous local people said that about 200 unarmed people had asked the Americans to leave the school so it could reopen.

"It was a peaceful demonstration. They did not have any weapons," said local Sunni cleric, Kamal Shaker Mahmoud. "They were asking the Americans to leave the school so they could use it."

Arab TV channel Al-Jazeera quoted residents as saying the troops began shooting after someone threw a rock at the school. "Our soul and our blood we will sacrifice to you martyrs," mourners chanted as they buried some of the dead at a cemetery while US helicopters flew overhead.

The shooting in Falluja followed an attack on US forces in the northern city of Mosul on Monday evening in which at least six Iraqi fighters were killed. At least 12 civilians were killed near Baghdad on Saturday when an Iraqi arms dump blew up, triggering protests about US troops' handling of the weapons.



STRUCK FROM NOWHERE: An injured boy lies in his hospital bed in Falluja, 50 km west of Baghdad, on Tuesday. He was hurt when US troops fired on anti-American protesters in the town overnight.

Meanwhile, the US said it is moving military reinforcements to Baghdad to boost security in the Iraqi capital after the fall of Saddam Hussein's government, a top US general said on Tuesday.

Major General Glenn Webster, deputy commander of US land forces in Iraq, said 3,000 to 4,000

but Webster declined to say where the reinforcements would come from. US forces have re-stored some calm to Baghdad since it descended into chaos after Saddam's fall, but they have continued to meet pockets of resistance from supporters of the government ousted in the three-

week US-led war. "The coalition command is the single authority in Iraq at this time and our purpose is to provide security and stability in the country so the people of Iraq can elect their own leaders and get the country running again," Webster said.

Agencies

'Nerve gas' revealed as rocket fuel

Baiji, April 29

A METAL drum found in northern Iraq that initially tested positive for nerve and blister agents might instead contain rocket fuel, according to new tests, a US chemical weapons expert said on Monday.

More tests were planned on the 55-gallon drum, said Lt Col Valentin Novikov, chief chemical weapons officer of the 4th Infantry Division, the unit, which found the site. Novikov's comments raised the prospect that the discovery was the latest in a series of false alarms as US troops try to find the remains of Saddam Hussein's suspected programmes for weapons of mass destruction.

The suspicious barrel was among 14 barrels found in an open field near the Tigris River town of Baiji, among mounds of earth that hid missiles and missile parts. US troops performed an initial test and found indications the barrel may contain the nerve agent cyclosarin and a blister agent that could be a precursor of mustard gas.

Two teams were brought in this weekend for additional testing. One team conducted three tests, but the tests "were not totally conclusive", Novikov said. The second team, a specialist Mobile Exploitation Team, "suspects that it might be rocket fuel," Novikov said. That team is expected to return soon for further tests.

AP

Missile man lands in US custody

Doha/Baghdad, April 29

IRAQ'S FORMER oil minister — a general who also knew the most intimate secrets of Saddam Hussein's missile systems — has surrendered to the US-led coalition forces.

Amir Rashid Muhammad al-Ubaydi turned himself in Monday and is in coalition custody. Rashid, a former Iraqi army general known as the 'Missile Man', was Saddam's point man on weapons delivery systems and eventually rose to the prestigious post of oil minister.

He was a member of the regime's Military Industrialisation Organisation, the group responsible for producing all of Iraq's most lethal weapons.

Rashid was listed as Number 47 on the coalition's list of the 55 most-wanted officials from Saddam's regime and was denominated as the six of spades in the deck of cards issued to coalition forces. He retired last year at 65, Saddam's news agency reported at the time. It listed his name as Amer Mohammed Rashid.

Rashid is married to Dr Rihab Taha, a microbiologist known as 'Dr Germ', who was in charge of the secret Iraqi facility that

weaponised anthrax, botulinum toxin and aflatoxin. She is also sought by the United States, but there was no word on her whereabouts.

Capturing him or his wife would be a boon for US disarmament specialists, who are searching for any chemical, biological or nuclear weapons in Iraq.

Taha is not on the most wanted list but US forces are keen to interview her about Saddam's alleged attempts to develop biological warfare systems.

Others members of the Military Industrialisation Organisation included Lieutenant General Hossam Mohammed Amin, Iraq's chief liaison with United Nations weapons inspectors, and Amir al-Saadi, Saddam's senior weapons adviser, both of whom are also in custody.

Rasheed was last seen by journalists at Baghdad's Doura oil refinery on March 25, surrounded by burning pits of oil as bombs fell on nearby Baghdad. The oil smoke was a defensive measure. With his surrender, the United States has now captured 14 of those on the list, most important of them being Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz.

Agencies

Iraq stance: Washington set to begin pay-offs

BARRY WAIN
SINGAPORE, APRIL 28

THE US has begun to reward Asian-Pacific governments that supported its campaign to topple Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq and to penalise some that didn't.

The quick US military victory in Iraq has reinforced a policy that began after the 9/11 attacks, in which President George W. Bush's administration is making a distinction between countries it can rely on and the others. The policy is likely to have serious implications for Southeast Asia, home to one-fifth of the world's Muslims, they say.

While the brevity and decisiveness of the war in Iraq has undercut Islamic extremists in predominantly Muslim Indonesia and Malaysia, how

the US handles the aftermath could be just as critical in shaping Muslim attitudes toward Washington. An attempt to punish dissenting countries and force them to toe a US line could strengthen anti-American sentiment.

But fresh from its battlefield success, the Bush administration is judging countries according to where they stood on Iraq, say Asia-based American officials. Singapore and Philippines are given high marks for their support, while Malaysia heads the US hit list for not cooperating with the war effort — for example, by suspending US military flights over Malaysian airspace. Thailand, the only US treaty ally in Asia not to back Washington publicly, is another likely target for punishment.

"There will be no free rides," declares one Asia-based US ambassador. "All countries will be account-



Iraq Shi'ite demonstrators pray in front of a barbed wire around the Sheraton and Palestine hotels in Baghdad on Monday. Reuters

able for their actions."

Singapore, which hosts US military facilities, has been singled out for friendly treatment because it was willing to be named as part of the US-led

"coalition for the immediate disarmament of Iraq." During the 1991 Gulf War, Singapore wasn't prepared to be publicly identified in that way.

American officials have re-

sponded by pushing a free-trade agreement with Singapore through the US Congress, while pointedly sitting on a similar pact with Chile that was supposed to be passed at the same time. The Philippines' payoff for its outspoken endorsement of US action in Iraq will take the form of jobs for up to 100,000 Filipino workers on Iraqi reconstruction projects.

Facing the threat of popular anger among its Muslim population of about 200 million, Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri had little choice but to criticise the US, the officials say. But Megawati's comments were measured and the Indonesians took steps to protect American personnel and property in the country, they add.

Malaysia, by contrast, was "gratuitously hostile", officials say — in forums such as the Nonaligned Move-

ment and Organisation of the Islamic Conference, and at the UN Malaysian PM Mahathir Mohamad deeply angered the Americans by referring to the victims of the 9/11 attacks and the October 2002 Bali bombing as collateral damage.

New Zealand PM Helen Clark provides an example of just how tough the US is willing to be with critics. Her comment that the US wouldn't have gone to war in Iraq if Democrat Al Gore had won the 2000 presidential election was followed by a swift public apology to the Bush team. The US "went ballistic", and threatened retaliation against New Zealand if Clark didn't back down, say people familiar with the exchange.

"This is what fuels and precipitates extremist and terrorist behaviour," he says. "Events like this lead to September 11." —WSJ

// 'Suspicious chemicals' found in northern Iraq

Dubai: Amid reports that drums with chemicals, that may have been used to make weapons of mass destruction, were found in northern Iraq, US defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld began a visit to the Gulf on Sunday, as hundreds rallied in the capital city of Baghdad demanding restoration of basic services.



D. Rumsfeld

Mr Rumsfeld, in the first leg of his Gulf visit, first time after major military operations ended in Iraq, met with top officials of the United Arab Emirates.

Hundreds of angry Iraqis demonstrated in front of the Palestine Hotel in Baghdad, which hosts reporters under the guard of US troops, demanding restoration of phone lines, fuel, water and electricity. Advisors of Jay Garner, the US appointee to manage a post-war administration, said 65 to 70 per cent of Baghdad now had access to running water, with hospitals earmarked as a priority, while electricity has been restored to parts of Baghdad.

A team of Iraqi experts, many from the former regime, will be in place in a few days to run Baghdad, according to US officials.

Meanwhile, US experts are testing materials found in 14 unmarked drums in northern Iraq with "suspicious" chemicals that may have been used in chemical weapons.

ABC TV reported that 14 unmarked drums had been found near Bayji, about 210 km northwest of Baghdad, on Friday. At least, two previous suspected chemical weapons discoveries have turned out to be harmless, but the suspicions remain about the barrels found at Bayji because they were near missiles and gas masks, BBC reported.

Ahead of his Iraq trip, Mr Rumsfeld has told reporters that the US was committed to both Iraq and Afghanistan.

"We feel a commitment to the people in those countries. And we intend to stay there with the international community and assist them in transitioning from where they were to where they are going—from an authoritarian system in each case ... To something on a path that is more democratic," he said.

Mr Rumsfeld's trip coincides with popular protests after six people from the same family were killed near Baghdad on Saturday, when a store of Iraqi weapons guarded by US troops exploded in what the US described as an Iraqi attack.

Meanwhile, Britain's *Sunday Telegraph* daily said it had found documents linking Saddam Hussein with Osama bin Laden, and that an envoy from Al Qaida terror network travelled to Baghdad at Mr Hussein's invitation in 1998, "to establish a relationship based on their mutual hatred of America and Saudi Arabia". PTI

Rumsfeld on thanksgiving Gulf visit

ABU DHABI, APRIL 27. The U.S. Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, met leaders of the United Arab Emirates today as he launched a tour to thank regional allies for help in the Iraq war and to discuss possible new American military arrangements in the Gulf.

Mr. Rumsfeld landed in Abu Dhabi six hours late after his aircraft suffered a mechanical problem on a refuelling stop in Ireland. That caused him to miss a planned visit to Afghanistan today, but officials said he hoped to go there later in the week.

Perched at the south-eastern tip of Saudi Arabia, the Emirates gave key support for the U.S.-led war on Iraq, launched on March 20, which ousted Saddam Hussein.

The U.S. aircraft that used a base in the UAE included the RC-135 electronic reconnaissance plane, refuelling tankers, and high altitude spy planes — the U-2 and the

unmanned Global Hawk. The U.S. Navy also uses at least one port in the UAE.

Mr. Rumsfeld met first Lt. Gen. Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed al-Nahayan, chief of the armed forces, and was later due to hold talks with Crown Prince Sheikh Khalifa bin-Zayed al-Nahayan.

He was expected to fly to Qatar late in the day to meet the U.S. Army General Tommy Franks, who commanded the war effort.

Washington is studying possible changes in its costly military presence in West Asia, the removal of Mr. Hussein being seen as potentially allowing a reduction in the U.S. footprint in the oil-rich and politically sensitive region.

Due to security considerations, Pentagon officials gave no advance indication of whether the Secretary would visit Iraq itself, where more than 130,000 U.S. troops are

deployed, and would not name other stops on the trip. — Reuters

Frantic efforts

AP reports from Baghdad: Hundreds of Iraqis frantically dug through the ruins of destroyed homes and screamed at U.S. troops, blaming them for a series of explosions at a U.S.-held weapons cache that pummelled a residential area and killed at least six people.

The U.S. military blamed unknown attackers who they said fired four flares into the sprawling open dump, laden with 80 Iraqi missiles, setting off a cascade of warheads, rockets and mortars that pummelled homes for kilometres. "This is the safety that Bush promised us?" demanded Munthir Saifir, the blood of his family dried on the cloth of his white caftan.

USA to play central role in W Asia peace

AFP & PTI

WASHINGTON, April 26. — The USA will have a central role in implementing the West Asian roadmap for an independent Palestinian state while the other three members — the EU, UN and Russia — will serve as “secondary players”. Under the new draft plan, the on-the-ground monitoring committee for measuring performance would be chaired by a US official, *Washington Post* reported today.

The report comes as the US secretary of state, General Colin Powell, is planning to visit West Asia this week in a bid to advance the peace process.

Virtually all aspects of the roadmap's implementation would be handled by the US-led committee, though it would draft confidential reports that would be forwarded to representatives of the EU, UN and Russia, the newspaper said.

Equal involvement of all four parties was criticised by US

conservatives, who said the Europeans, Russians and UN were being given too much of a say in whether the peace process is working.

Among the issues the US-led committee would track are the implementation of security measures by the Palestinians, the reform of Palestinian security services, the building of Palestinian institutions, the reform of the Palestinian Authority's finances, the dismantling of Israeli settlement outposts erected since March 2001 and a freeze on Israeli settlement activity.

US officials said Gen. Powell is scheduled to leave on Thursday for Egypt, Israel, the Palestinian territories, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Syria. However, the Israeli and Palestinian stops depend on the Palestinian legislature's confirmation of Mr Mahmud Abbas as Prime Minister, a move that will trigger the release of the long-delayed roadmap for West Asia peace.

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WASH
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By Sridhar Krishnaswami

North Korean blackmail won't work, says Bush

WASHINGTON, APRIL 25. North Korea has apparently acknowledged to the U.S. that it has nuclear weapons but Washington is trying to downplay an impression that Pyongyang has threatened to 'use' them. "They said what we always knew, that they do have (nuclear) weapons. That doesn't shock us."

We have been saying that. Now they said it," an unnamed administration official said. The U.S. President, George W Bush, did not specially refer to the current round of talks in Beijing but pointedly criticised North Korea's proliferation record and stressed that blackmail would not work. "They are back to the old blackmail game and one of our goals and objectives must be to strengthen the

non-proliferation regimes." Administration officials have said that North Korea had threatened to use the nuclear weapons soon but that the translation of what had been said is still going on. Analysts believe that Pyongyang's threat or promise to 'prove' it had nuclear weapons could materialise by way of a sale to a third party. The assessment of the intelligence commu-

nity here is that North has enough plutonium to make about a half dozen nuclear weapons. "They never used the word 'testing'... We're still translating, but it's being overplayed a bit," a source has been quoted in *The Washington Times*. The U.S. has not commented extensively on the Beijing talks. But it has warned Pyongyang it could not be threatened with bellicose statements and threats.

THE HINDU

SANCTIONS ON IRAQ / ANOTHER CONFRONTATION BREWING

U.S. rejects visit of U.N. inspectors

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, APRIL 23. The United States is rejecting the return of United Nations weapons inspectors to Iraq; and at a time when France appears to be warming up to the idea of lifting sanctions against Iraq, the Bush administration is said to be 'reviewing' all aspects of its relationship with France.

The definite impression in Washington is that Paris will have to pay a price for being on the other side of the fence and also actively opposing the U.S. in recent weeks over Iraq.

In what appears to be yet another confrontation with the United Nations, the White House has flatly rejected that U.N. weapons inspectors could be allowed back into Iraq to look for weapons and programmes of mass destruction. "Make no mistake about it. The U.S and the coalition have taken on the responsibility for dismantling Iraq's (weapons of mass destruction)," remarked Ari Fleischer, the White House Spokesman.

"We have a coalition on the ground to dismantle Iraq's WMD programmes and we think that's going to be effective. We think it will get the job done," the Spokes-

man argued. Senior administration officials have been saying that American and coalition forces and experts are yet to find any weapons of mass destruction — the supposed existence of which was the rationale for this war against Iraq.

Ironically, senior officials are now making the point that finding proscribed weapons is going to take 'time' — the same thing that the Chief Weapons Inspector, Hans Blix, was saying in February and March and no one in the power corridors of Washington wanted to hear.

Legal obstacles

The White House is also taking on countries like France, Russia and Germany frontally on lifting sanctions and on the legal obstacles that prevent the lifting of the punitive measures on the whims and fancies of the Bush administration. Russia — and now France — has been saying sanctions can be lifted only after the U.N. weapons inspectors certify that Iraq has no weapons of mass destruction.

"Why should any nation support imposing sanctions on the Iraqi people now? Sanctions equal Saddam Hussein. He is gone. It is wrong now to leave sanctions on the people of Iraq. They don't deserve it,"

Mr. Fleischer maintained.

At the Security Council on Tuesday, France surprised many by proposing a temporary 'suspension' of sanctions saying that it was imperative to take into account the realities on the ground. The fact that Paris was signalling to Washington that something could be worked out in the realm of sanctions seemed to be lost on an administration that is keenly looking for ways to 'punish' France for what had taken place in the last several weeks.

Senior officials of the administration met on Monday to discuss concrete methods to 'punish' France for its opposition to the Iraq war, at the United Nations and beyond. In an interview the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, said, "It's over and we have to take a look at the relationship."

Asked if there are consequences for opposing the United States, Gen Powell replied 'yes' without elaborating.

It is believed that senior members of the Bush administration like the Vice-President, Dick Cheney, are in favour of taking tough action against France; and among the measures discussed are limiting French participating in trans-Atlantic forums and excluding France from Policy Meetings that the White House has with European Allies.

Shia cleric ready to work with US

Tehran, April 23 (Reuters): An Iranian-backed Iraqi Shia leader said he was ready to work with the US and the international community to improve the conditions of Iraqis and establish security and stability in his war-torn homeland.

But Ayatollah Mohammad Baqer al-Hakim, one of the most powerful voices among Iraq's majority Shias, said fervent demonstrations by hundreds of thousands of pilgrims at the holy shrine of Kerbala showed Iraqis were able to govern themselves.

"There is no doubt we are going to cooperate with all sides

and forces that have relations with the Iraqi issue," Hakim told Reuters in an interview. "Among these sides are America, Britain, the UN, the EU, Arab and Islamic states."

Hakim, head of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), has lived in exile in Tehran for more than 20 years and has often been portrayed as a firebrand wanting to establish an Iranian-style Islamic republic in Iraq.

"We cannot make a comparison between the Iraqi and the Iranian people... the characteristics of the Iraqi people are different to those of Iranian people,"

he said. "We should not make a copy of the Iranian revolution and establish it in Iraq."

Hakim said there could be a separation of church and state in Iraq, unlike in his host country Iran.

"Religious leaders are from the people and they must carry out their responsibilities," he said. "(But) it is not very necessary for the Iraqi regime to be in the hands of religious people. It all depends on the will of the Iraqi people."

Hakim denied there was a rift between himself and Ayatollah Ali Sistani, another senior Iraqi Shia cleric who has advocated a

secular system in Iraq. Sistani's house was besieged by rival hardliners in the holy city of Najaf last week.

"There is no problem between myself and Ayatollah Sistani, on the contrary, we have the greatest respect for one another." Hakim said he planned to return to Iraq "in the very near future".

Hundreds of thousands of Iraqi Shia pilgrims have filled the holy city of Karbala this week in a show of strength marked by chants of "Yes to Islam, no to America" raising worries in Washington of a rise of Islamic fundamentalism in

Iraq. Hakim, stroking his grey beard, played down such fears.

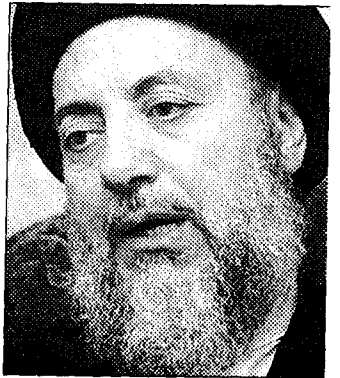
"In these marches the Iraqi people want to say they are able to manage their affairs themselves," he said. "I believe the Iraqi people have no enmity, no hostility toward any other side or country, they only want freedom, security, justice and independence."

Asked if US troops should immediately leave Iraq, Hakim said: "The Iraqi people must start to establish their national government and take responsibility to manage their affairs. There is no necessity for any foreign domination in Iraq."

"The Americans say they will remain in Iraq only for a very limited period, but I don't know how long that will last."

Despite saying he was ready to work with Washington, Hakim's SCIRI boycotted a meeting between Iraqi opposition and US officials in Nassiriya last week. He said he had no information about a similar meeting due to be held in Baghdad on Saturday.

"We have no information about that meeting," he said. "We had no precise information about the meeting in Nassiriya, that was one of the reasons we didn't attend."



Iran-backed Iraqi Shia leader Ayatollah Mohammad Baqer al-Hakim. (Reuters)

US has no desire to control Iraq for long: Rumsfeld

Washington \ Baghdad: US defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld has said the United States has no desire to militarily control Iraq for a long time, and rubbished a press report that said the US would like to have permanent access to as many as four key military bases in Iraq.

"I have never heard the subject of a permanent base in Iraq discussed," Mr Rumsfeld said on Monday at a press briefing, responding to a 'New York Times' report that quoted unnamed senior US administration officials. The likelihood of Iraq granting the US permanent rights to its bases, said Mr Rumsfeld, "seems to me to be so low it doesn't surprise me that it was not discussed in my presence."

He said there were already many opportunities to locate US forces in the West Asia, making any new basing arrangement unnecessary.

essary. Mr Rumsfeld said the bases currently being used by US forces in Baghdad and elsewhere were facilitating the delivery of humanitarian aid and providing stability in a time of transition.

Iraq's post-war US administrator, General Jay Garner, held his first talks with a Kurdish leader, meeting Jalal Talabani of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) on Tuesday in the northern Iraqi city of Sulaimanyah, reporters said.

One day after arriving in Baghdad, Garner travelled in a C-130 transport plane to Arbil, part of Iraqi Kurdistan that had been outside the Saddam Hussein regime's control since

1991. He then went by helicopter to Sulaimanyah for talks with Mr Talabani. Garner and his team were due to head later to Iraq's main northern city Mosul. The talks were to focus on restarting vital services following the war.

Mr Talabani and Kurdish Democratic Party leader Mr Massud Barzani called for a major meeting in Baghdad of leading opposition movements to prepare for an interim administration in Iraq.

The US government is sending to Iraq more than 1,000 experts who specialise in weapons, intelligence and computers to join the search for weapons of mass destruction. They will analyse documents, interrogate prisoners and scour suspicious sites, joining around 200 experts already looking for evidence that Iraq's fallen president, Saddam Hussein, had biological, chemical and nu-

clear weapons programmes, the rationale for war given by President George W. Bush's administration. Military officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that experts already in Iraq had identified ingredients and equipment that could be used to make a chemical weapon. That discovery was made south of Baghdad several days ago with the help of an Iraqi scientist who said he had worked in Saddam's chemical weapons programme.

Muhammad Hazmaq al-Zubaydi, who played a key role in Iraq's brutal suppression of the Shiite Muslim uprising of 1991, was arrested on Tuesday in Iraq, the US central command said.

Al-zubaydi, a former member of the Iraqi Revolutionary Command Council and central Euphrates regional commander, was No. 18 on a list of the 55 most wanted figures from the Saddam Hussein's regime. Agencies



Donald Rumsfeld

HD-14 IRAQI FUGITIVES / DAMASCUS CO-OPERATIVE? WJN. N 822

U.S.-Syria tensions ease

2394 By Atul Aneja

MANAMA, APRIL 21. While there has been a perceptible drop of tensions between the United States and Syria, there are indications that the chill in their relationship may resurface.

The drop in the tough rhetoric from Washington towards Damascus in recent days may have resulted from Syrian activism to meet one of the key U.S. demands — handing over of some Iraqi fugitives who, it is suspected, crossed over into Syria to escape capture. While one such fugitive, the Republican Guards' Secretary, Kemal Mustafa, 'surrendered' before the U.S. forces in Iraq on Sunday, some reports suggested that Syria might have played a role in facilitating his capture. The U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, has reportedly handed over names of eight Iraqis that Washington believes had taken refuge in Syria. Diplomatic sources suggest that the Syrian side is expected to cooperate with the U.S. on this score incrementally.

While Syrian exertions in handing over fugitives may ease tensions with the U.S. temporarily, they might not be enough to ward off a U.S. threat of war against it permanently. Exhorted by Israel, the U.S. is likely to pressure Damascus for meeting two of its other key demands. First, the U.S. has already hinted that Syria might have taken custody of Iraqi mass destruction weapons, and, it now expects Damascus to return them. The U.S. is of the view that locating these Iraqi weapons is vital. Unless the alleged Iraqi mass destruction weapons are found, the war against Baghdad cannot be justified. Contrary to the views expressed by France, Russia, Germany and the United Nations, the U.S. had chosen to wage war against Iraq to disarm it. But, Washington's inability to find unconventional weapons in Iraq, despite over three weeks of war is turning out to be major diplomatic embarrassment. It is however, unlikely that the Syrians will be receptive to this de-

mand, the sources said. Second, the U.S. is expected to pressure Syria to close the alleged leadership sanctuaries for the anti-Israel Hezbollah fighters and members of the extremist Palestinian groups, Islamic Jihad and Hamas on its soil.

A positive Syrian response to these demands is unlikely to materialise unless there is a quid pro quo from the Israeli side. Syria has been demanding the Israeli withdrawal from the Golan heights that Israel occupied in 1967 and an agreement on sharing the area's waters fairly. Aware of the gap in perceptions, the Syrian Foreign Minister, Farouk al-Sharaa said on Monday that his country wanted patient diplomacy and not heated exchanges with Washington.

At a press conference with the visiting Spanish Foreign Minister, Ana Palacio, Mr. Al-Sharaa insisted his country was a stabilising factor in the region, and "if somebody in Washington or elsewhere thought the reverse he is mistaken."

23 April 2003

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THE HINDU

— Hans Blix

Tug of War

Never mind Saddam; where are the weapons of mass destruction (WMD)? The US and the UK justified their war on Iraq on the grounds of disarming Baghdad of WMD. However, as of today, no WMD has been uncovered. This raises a question mark over the motives behind Operation Iraq. The advisor on Iraq's weapons programme, General Amir al-Saadi, who has surrendered to the allied forces, still maintains that Iraq did not have such weapon stockpiles. Nonetheless, the US proposes to send an army of a thousand American inspectors to carry out an intensive search for evidence of WMD. *The New York Times* has warned that unless the verification is carried out by neutral international inspectors, there is a danger that any findings will be discounted by sceptics who are ready to believe that the evidence was planted. The UN Security Council imposed sanctions on Iraq to compel it to disarm; as members of the Security Council, France, Russia and Germany, have now made it clear that they would agree to lift the sanctions only after a report from the inspectors that Iraq was WMD-free. In a reversal of its earlier stand, the US is now keen to get the sanctions lifted immediately, without such verification. Once again there is a tussle between multilateral decision-making by the UN Security Council and Washington's go-it-alone policy.

The US wants to restrict the UN's role primarily to humanitarian tasks, and not to have a say in the emergence of the new Iraqi polity. The EU countries and Iraq's Islamic neighbours, however, would like the UN to play the lead role in the transitional arrangements leading to Iraqi elections and thus circumscribe the role of the occupying power. While the Security Council has scheduled a meeting with chief weapons inspector Hans Blix on April 22 to consider further action, there are few buyers for America's accusations about WMD in Iraq. Public opposition to the US continuing as an occupying power in Iraq is rapidly gaining ground. If serious destabilisation is to be averted, the UN's role in reconstituting the Iraqi polity is crucial. This alone will restore the severely undermined confidence of other countries in the region. Right now, they can only hope that the US administration will agree to give the UN the role the international community wants it to play and not insist on behaving as an occupying power.

Garner gets to Baghdad

Associated Press

BAGHDAD, April 21. — Retired US Lt.-Gen. Jay Garner arrived today to take up his duties as Iraq's post-war civil administrator in a Baghdad still largely without power, clean water or a clear direction toward a new political future. He landed at Baghdad's airport after a short flight from Kuwait, 12 days after US tanks and troops secured the Iraqi capital and brought down the Saddam regime.

"What better day in your life can you have than to be able to help somebody else, to help other people, and that is what we intend to do," Gen. Garner (65) said upon arrival.

As his plane touched down, black clouds of smoke still drifted through Baghdad's skies from fires set by looters in a lawless city.

The former general, after weeks of preparatory work in Kuwait, came to his new post under tight security and with little public information about

planned meetings or travels. His first visit was to Baghdad's 1,000-bed Yarmuk hospital, which was overwhelmed with Iraqi casualties in the final days of the war.

Its wards, including the coronary and respiratory care units, were then stripped of almost everything by looters. "We will help you, but it is going to take time," Gen. Garner told doctors. Some were unimpressed.

"If they give us anything it is not from their own pockets. It is from our oil," said a female doctor, Iman. "Saddam Hussein was an unjust ruler, but maybe one day we could have got rid of him, and not had these foreigners come into our country."

Gen. Garner arrived with about 20 top aides, including his British deputy, Maj.-Gen. Tim Cross. His staff is to grow to about 450 over the next week as others arrive by overland convoy from Kuwait to set up the full Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Aid.

The ORHA is to coordinate delivery of outside assistance to the 24 mil-

lion Iraqis, made more needy by the impact of war; to oversee rebuilding of the nation's infrastructure, in disrepair from a decade of UN economic sanctions and further damaged by three weeks of US bombing; and to oversee a political process establishing an interim Iraqi government.

For ordinary Iraqis, however, the first needs are for water and electricity — knocked out during the war — and, especially, for security in a city wracked by almost two weeks of looting.

Gen. Garner said his priority is to restore basic services, such as water and electricity "as soon as we can."

Gen. Garner, who will report to Central Command chief Gen. Tommy Franks, said he intended to complete his work and leave as soon as possible, but declined to give a timeframe.

Gen. Garner, a Vietnam War veteran, was serving as president of a defence contractor, SYColeman Corp., when he was tapped for the Iraq job in January.

The American Century

Turn it to India's Advantage

By K Subrahmanyam

Many of the pessimistic assessments on the consequences of the US attack on Iraq were the result of wishful thinking. The cardinal principle in assessment is that it should be scrupulously objective. This was overlooked by those who predicted a long war, disruption in oil supplies, flight of Indian expatriates, upsurge in Islamic populations, stiff resistance by Iraqi armed forces and Stalingrad and Berlin type of house-to-house fighting in Basra and Baghdad. Assessments cannot always be absolutely accurate but the gap between the prediction and subsequent reality is an indication of the degree of objectivity in carrying out the exercise.

Now that US has occupied Iraq and asserted its dominance as the sole superpower, it is necessary to make an objective assessment of its future moves and their impact on our interests and security. Washington is likely to follow up its victory over Iraq with further pressures on Syria, Saudi Arabia and Iran to get them to fall in line with US policy objectives. It also seems highly probable that a Palestinian solution is likely to be imposed on terms less favourable than expected under the Oslo accord.

The logical question, therefore, is whether such aggressive moves by the US will not trigger off adverse reactions in the Islamic world and result in terrorist upsurges. While that probability cannot be discounted and must be taken seriously, our assessment should not overlook that this factor will definitely have featured in Washington's calculations. The US assessors may be right or wrong but certainly, they will not have overlooked it. Therefore, if they are pressing ahead with such an aggressive policy, they must have concluded that the risks are worth taking. They may have felt justified in that conclusion from the course of events during the Iraq campaign. While there were anti-war demonstrations worldwide, there were no acts of terrorism or upsurges of mass violence. Of course, this does not necessarily mean that they cannot happen.

In Washington's calculation, dominance over oil-rich West Asia and reconstitution of regimes there appear essential steps in making the 21st century an American one. Washington has already initiated its war against terrorism following 9/11. That war has to be continued since Al-Qaida and other extremists are continuing to wage their war on the US. It is immaterial whether that war originated with the West being seen to be unfair to Islamic grievances or a belief on the part of sections of Islamic extremists that having defeated one superpower in Afghanistan they could defeat the other. There is a school of American thought which maintains that if regime changes are brought about in West Asia and financial

support to extremists is stopped, international terrorist activity will become manageable. Terrorism has few supporters and middle classes, even in Islamic countries, are not in its favour. The governments of almost all Islamic countries have joined the war against terrorism. By resorting to terrorism as a preferred strategy, Islamic extremists have irretrievably damaged their cause and the US is exploiting this.

Those who argue that the US strategy is not likely to promote democracy in West Asia or elsewhere may well be right. But then that may not be Washington's aim. The purpose may be to ensure the arrival of the American century, that Americans have the highest standard of living in the world and that America remains the sole indispensable nation. Just as British imperialists used to talk about their civilising mission, the US establishment indulges in rhetoric on democratisation. The US combines in itself the highest military, economic, and technological power in the world and outranks the combination of the next five nations. It is unrealistic to expect that American imperial power is likely to be resisted militarily by other major industrial nations.

The countries which opposed the Iraq war are trying to placate Washington after its victorious conclusion. It is doubtful whether the major economic powers could even unite effectively to counter-veil the economic clout of the United States. Nor can we rule out that US actions in its own self interest may on occasion

hurt our national interest and security. Some would argue that it does so to some extent even today. At the same time, it is also possible that Washington, as set out in its national security doctrine, may attempt to cultivate India in its own interest. In that case, there are bound to be new opportunities for this country. A unipolar world is, therefore, far more complex and difficult to manage than the bipolar system we have been used to.

Such difficult circumstances call for a very sophisticated national response. The age-old Indian wisdom talks of a four-fold strategy — *Sama, Dhana, Bedha and Danda* (conciliation, purchase, division and punishment) as quintessential realpolitik in dealing with adversaries, friends and the powerful. The underlying purpose of such a strategy is to advance one's own interest and in today's knowledge-based dispensation, India with its vast population and knowledge pool has unrivalled advantages in this respect. Unfortunately, populism rules the roost in political, economic, social, foreign and national security policies. China appears to have decided to deal with the challenges of the times with sophisticated realpolitik and knowledge-based modernisation. In India, that realisation is yet to dawn on our political class.



Future watch: US wants 4 bases in Iraq

By Thom Shanker and Eric Schmitt
 Washington: The US is planning a long-term military relationship with the emerging government of Iraq, one that would grant the Pentagon access to military bases and project American influence into the heart of the unsettled region, senior Bush administration officials say.

American military officials, in interviews this week, spoke of maintaining perhaps four bases in Iraq that could be used in the future: one at the international airport just outside Baghdad; another at Tallil, near Nasiriya in the south; the third at an isolated airstrip called H-1 in the western desert, along the old oil pipeline that runs to Jordan; and the last at the Bashur air field in the Kurdish north.

The military is already using these bases to support operations against the remnants of the old government, to deliver supplies and relief aid and for reconnaissance patrols. But as the invasion force withdraws in the months ahead and turns over control to a new Iraqi government, Pentagon officials expect to gain access to the bases in the event of some future crisis.

Whether that can be arranged depends on relations between Washington and whoever takes control in Baghdad. If the ties are close enough, the military relationship could become one of the most striking developments in a strategic revolution now playing out across the Middle East and southwest Asia,

from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean. A military foothold in Iraq would be felt across the border in Syria, and, in combination with the continuing US presence in Afghanistan, it would virtually surround Iran with a new web of American influence.

Pentagon's plans



"There will be some kind of a long-term defence relationship with a new Iraq, similar to Afghanistan... the scope of that has yet to be defined: whether it will be full-up operational bases, smaller forward operating bases or just plain access"

"There will be some kind of a long-term defence relationship with a new Iraq, similar to Afghanistan," said one senior administration official. "The scope of that has yet to be defined: whether it will be full-up operational bases, smaller forward operating bases or just plain access."

These goals do not contradict the administration's official policy of rapid withdrawal from Iraq, officials say. The US is acutely aware that the growing American presence in the Middle East and southwest Asia invites charges of empire-building and may create new targets for terrorists.

So without fanfare, the Pentagon has also begun to shrink its military footprint in the region, trying to ease domestic strains in Turkey and Jordan.

In a particularly important development, officials said the US was likely to reduce American forces in Saudi Arabia, as well. The main reason for that presence, after all, was to protect the Saudi government from the threat Iraq has posed since its invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

Although the new bases in Iraq are primarily for mounting comprehensive postwar security operations, senior administration officials make no secret that the American presence at those bases near Syria and Iran and long-term access to them "will make them nervous".

NYT News Service

Stay away from oil, US warned



A Tikrit resident kisses a bronze statue of Saddam Hussein. (AFP)

Half of Iraq combat fighter force unearthed

Doha, April 19: More than 50 fighter aircraft, anti-aircraft missiles and guns and huge amounts of ammunition have been found buried and hidden at a base in western Iraq.

The aircraft, many in good condition, included three Russian-made MiG 25s, one of the fastest fighters in the world. Some were buried, while others were concealed in buildings and under camouflage netting.

The find by Australian forces represents as much as half of Iraqi air combat power, and came as a fourth Iraqi from America's most-wanted list was handed over to US special forces by Kurdish fighters.

The capture of Samir Abul Aziz al-Najim, a Baath Party regional chairman for east Baghdad, was hailed by US commanders as another indication that coalition forces were making steady progress in rounding up fleeing members of Saddam Hussein's regime.

The find of 51 aircraft and ammunition was made after a force of 200 troops from the Australian SAS and 4th Battalion The Royal Australian Regiment seized the base after encountering only light resistance.

The airfield contained a tunnel system in which chemical warfare protective suits and antidotes were found. Search operations at the base, the location of which is being kept secret, were continuing yesterday.

The Iraqi air force, once one of the most formidable in the Arab world, failed to undertake a single operation during the war.

Brig. Maurie McNarn, commander of Australian forces in West Asia, said secret contacts with Iraqi air force commanders had played an important role in persuading them not to deploy their aircraft and weapons.

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

Baghdad, April 19 (Reuters): As the US military took custody of Saddam Hussein's finance minister Hikmat Ibrahim al-Azzawi, number 45 on its list of most-wanted Iraqis, eight West Asian states urged Washington to withdraw its troops from Iraq and keep its hands off the country's oil wealth.

US Marines later began pulling out of Baghdad but only as part of a planned handover to the US army, which is better equipped to handle the reconstruction of the battered capital.

A convoy of 50 trucks was heading from Jordan to Baghdad carrying food, but aid agencies said the repair of Iraq's collapsed infrastructure and the establishment of a new government were more urgent priorities. Iraqi police captured Azzawi, who was also a deputy Prime Minister under Saddam, yesterday. It handed him over to the Marines today.

Azzawi is the eight of diamonds in a deck of cards issued to troops hunting Saddam and other ousted leaders.

The US military hopes he can help track funds alleged to have been secretly transferred abroad by Saddam and his family, whose

fate and whereabouts remain a mystery. "As the deputy Prime Minister for finance and economics he could have information on the locations of money that belongs to the Iraqi people," said Captain Stewart Upton, a spokesman at Central Command in Qatar.

"He's a deputy Prime Minister. That in and of itself says that he has knowledge of the inner workings and the command structure of the regime," he said. Saddam is thought to have amassed a fortune estimated at between \$2 and \$24 billion over his 24 years in power, much of which may be stashed in offshore accounts overseas.

The US military also said Khala Khadr al-Salahat, an "international terrorist" from the Palestinian Abu Nidal organisation, had surrendered to Marines in Baghdad yesterday. The group has been dormant for several years.

Although Saddam was widely hated, the US presence in Iraq has angered ordinary Iraqis and worried West Asia leaders who fear the troops will stay too long. They question the motives behind the US-led invasion on March 20.

Foreign ministers of Iraq's immediate neighbours Turkey, Iran, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Syria, as well as Egypt and Bahrain, said the US had to restore order and then leave so that Iraqis could form their own government. They issued a statement at a meeting in Riyadh saying the Iraqi people must run their country and control the oil wealth.

"The Iraqi people should administer and govern their country by themselves, and any exploitation of their natural resources should be in conformity with the will of the legitimate Iraqi government and its people," said Saudi foreign minister Prince Saud al-Faisal, reading from a statement.

"If what they (US) intend is the exploitation of Iraqi oil, it will not have any legitimate basis," he said. The ministers said they wanted the UN to play a central role in post-war Iraq, echoing similar demands made by EU leaders at their summit in Athens on Thursday. Among those was Washington's war ally Britain.

Washington says it intends to hand over control of Iraq to the Iraqi people after a period of

control by a US-led interim administration that will oversee reconstruction. It has called for a quick end to 12-year-old UN economic sanctions, imposed after Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, so that oil sales can fund reconstruction. Iraq has the second largest proven oil reserves after Saudi Arabia. Riyadh and Kuwait are concerned that their revenues might be hit if Iraqi oil is again sold on the open market.

Lifting sanctions threatens another diplomatic tussle because it raises the issue of who controls oil sales, now under the aegis of the UN, and so effectively runs the country.

The US army is taking charge of Baghdad from the Marines because it has more resources to deal with the reconstruction and policing desperately needed in the capital, where many residents have no electricity and live in fear of looters.

"This country has collapsed. Nothing works — no phones, no electricity, no schools, no proper medical care, no transportation, nothing," said Roland Huguenin-Benjamin of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Baghdad.

"It's more than bringing in food or tablets of aspirin. The basic services need to be restored and a new civil administration must be set up to answer people's needs."

US forces are trying to restore electricity and police the city, while also hunting for Saddam and other ousted leaders.

The seizure of finance minister Azzawi followed the capture by Kurdish forces of Samir Abul Aziz al-Najim, a senior Baath party official, near Mosul. Azzawi was the fifth of the 55 most wanted to be taken.

There is speculation Saddam kept secret funds abroad. US officials may seek leads on this from Azzawi and Saddam's half-brother Barzan, once ambassador to the UN in Geneva and reputed "banker in the West", who is also in custody.

An Iraqi once involved in the country's suspected nerve gas programme had also surrendered to American forces and was being interrogated.

Imad Husayn Abdallah al-Ani was not on the most-wanted list and denies that Iraq was developing weapons of mass destruction, a US official said.

THE WANTED PACK

Following are Iraqis on US's most-wanted list who have so far been captured:

● **AMER HAMMOUDI AL-SAAD** (April 12): Saddam Hussein's top scientific adviser surrenders in Baghdad after learning he was on the US' most-wanted list. He was number 55 on the list

● **WATBAN IBRAHIM HASAN AL-TIKRITI** (April 13): US officials capture Saddam's half-brother near the Syrian border. Saddam removed him as interior minister in 1995 but he remained as a presidential adviser. Watban was number 51 on the list

● **BARZAN IBRAHIM HASAN AL-TIKRITI** (April 17): Saddam Hussein's half-brother was captured by US special forces in Baghdad. Barzan ran Iraq's intelligence service from 1979 to 1983 and was Iraq's ambassador to the UN in Geneva from 1988 to 1997. He was number 52 on the list

● **SAMIR ABUL AZIZ AL-NAJIM** (April 17): The Baath party regional command chairman for east Baghdad and number 24 on the list, was handed over by Iraqi Kurds near Mosul

● **HIKMAT IBRAHIM AL-AZZAWI** (April 19): Saddam's finance minister and a deputy Prime Minister was taken into custody in Baghdad after being captured by Iraqi police. He was number 45 on the list



FRESH START: Pupils at a village primary school near Basra on Saturday. The students were the first Iraqi children to get back to school since the war began. (AFP)

Basra's schools reopen

Basra, April 19 (AFP): Teachers and pupils ripped down portraits of Saddam Hussein and swept their classrooms free of debris today as Basra's schools reopened for the first time since the start of the war in Iraq.

Only around 100 of the 840 boys who usually attend the al-Marekarzia secondary school were able to make it to class but teachers and students alike said they were delighted to be back. Headteacher Ahmed Sabir looked on with pride as a group of boys swept broken glass from one of the classrooms which was targeted by looters in the immediate aftermath of the city's fall to British forces earlier this month.

"This shows how eager they are to return to school," Sabir said. The headmaster said that messages had been broadcast on radio and from loudspeakers yesterday, telling pupils and parents that schools were reopening. He said none of the teachers knew how they were going to be paid but around 30 of the 40-strong staff had turned up for work.

"We are hoping that normal life can return in Iraq. Salaries and other things are of secondary importance." Looters stole or wrecked much of the school's science laboratories, but classes in subjects such as English, Arabic and Mathematics were able to take place today without any problems.

Lift Iraq sanctions in phases, US to tell UN

STEVEN R. WEISMAN

Washington, April 19: The Bush administration plans to ask the UN to lift international penalties against Iraq in phases, retaining UN supervision of Iraq's oil sales for now but transferring other parts of its economy to a new Iraqi authority in coming months, administration officials said yesterday.

The officials said that instead of a single Security Council resolution to lift sanctions on Iraq, the US would seek three or four resolutions over several months, gradually turning over parts of the economy to an Iraqi authority assembled with US guidance.

The step-by-step approach was described as the latest US tactic to counter assertions by France, Russia and other Security Council members that they would oppose lifting sanctions without a broader role for the UN than the one envisioned by Washington.

At least in theory, France and Russia could veto the lifting of sanctions, giving them considerable leverage even though they opposed the war. Some in the Bush administration say they fear a messy situation in which lawsuits would be filed by those arguing that any oil sales in defiance of the UN measures would be a violation of international law.

"Nobody wants to have litigation on this," an administration

official said. "But the sanctions have to be modified or you can't have a reconstruction of Iraq."

This official, like others interviewed yesterday, requested anonymity because of the sensitivity of the subject and the fact that many aspects are unresolved.

How to approach this issue has been a matter of considerable debate in an administration that has long been riven ideologically on the issue of the UN. The Pentagon has favoured a minimal role for the UN, but the state department argues that its role is essential to lending legitimacy to a post-war Iraqi government.

"For a while there was a lot of talk about one omnibus Security Council resolution on Iraq," a senior administration official said. "We're now thinking in terms of several resolutions and letting Iraqis build their economy in phases before they get full control of the oil."

It was not clear, however, whether the latest administration approach would win any support from Security Council members who remain bitter about the administration's decision to go to war without the council's authorisation.

UN diplomats say there is confusion over how to return Iraq to normal status now that the war is over. France has asked for a "central" role for the UN, and President Bush and Prime Minister Tony Blair of Britain

say they want a "vital" role. But little has been put in writing.

"The US is facing a pretty stiff resistance from other members of the council on this," a European diplomat said. "The US position is: 'We're there in Iraq and it's going to be our effort, and maybe someone from the UN can come in and give it a blessing.' That's not going to fly."

One of the most contentious issues, expected to surface next week, is deciding the next phase of the multibillion-dollar oil for food programme, in which oil is sold and the proceeds are used for medicine and food for Iraqis. At present, the programme distributes at least some food to 90 per cent of Iraqis.

Before the war, the oil for food programme was jointly supervised by Iraq and the UN. When the war began, the Security Council authorised secretary general Kofi Annan to take it over, and it continued on a much smaller scale with Iraqis managing parts of it.

Now some in the Bush administration would like parts of it turned back to Iraq. Others argue that such a step is impractical because of the complexity of the programme.

In addition, there is a network for 44,000 food distribution centres throughout the country that many experts say the Iraqis are not yet ready to run themselves.

NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

The new colours of imperialism

By Mushirul Hasan

✓ 19-10 19/11
WAR, CONQUEST, the overthrowing of others, and their exploitation have constituted one of the supreme ends pursued by the United States establishment. But the pillage, plunder and murder in Iraq, concluded under the benign aegis of the so-called coalition, introduce an altogether new dimension to American unilateralism and belligerence. What is fearful is that George W. Bush & Co. seeks to legitimise war as the universally just course of conduct. Physical force, overpowering, or war become a fundamental element of America's foreign policy and one of the basic preludes for establishing its political and economic hegemony.

It was not so earlier. In the past, the great American thinkers and creative writers argued that the natural state of man is universal peace and not war, and peaceful coexistence is therefore the only just course of conduct. Today, peace is not one of the ends to be pursued but a means to other ends — political and economic dominance.

'Old' Europe matters little; it is the 'new' Europe that needs to be rallied round to bolster America's imperialist designs. With its revolutionary vitality totally dissipated, it can be bought over by throwing a few crumbs here and there. The United Nations, the sole guarantor of our independence and sovereignty, has lost its *raison d'être*. The U.S. has cleared its arrears to that body, so declared Colin Powell at a recent press conference, and it was time for its functionaries to press on with their humanitarian work and not meddle in American affairs. His arrogant and patronising tone must have added to Kofi Annan's sleepless nights.

What about the rest of the world? Islamists divide the world into *dar al-Islam* (land of Islam) and *dar al-harb* (land of war). This is an unacceptable distinction that springs from the imagination of dated theologians. The U.S. State Department has, on the other hand, discovered two types of regimes in West Asia: 'tyrannies' and 'peace-loving regimes'. Now that Saddam Hussein's regime has been brutally destroyed, the message to the Syrians and the Iraqis is that the

War has become a fundamental element of America's foreign policy and one of the basic preludes for establishing its political and economic hegemony.

method of persuasion or consent has run its full course. So the use of force and compulsion is necessary with those who, out of nature or habit, cannot be educated or persuaded to obey the Pentagon's or the State Department's norms. Consequently, the lazy, the wicked, and the incorrigible would be compelled to obey their laws.

This golden rule does not, of course, apply to Israel. The U.N. must prescribe general beliefs and practices for all the nations. No, says Mr. Bush. That is because the perpetrators of crimes against the Palestinians represent, in Washington's blurred vision, a virtuous regime.

The 'peace-loving regimes' in West Asia occupy the privileged position of supplying the most solid and the best starting point for bringing to an end the 'tyrannies' in the region. Look how virtuous their rulers are: the President of Egypt who seized power after a coup, and the innumerable kings and sultans who bear honorific titles that must embarrass the most diehard right Republican in Texas.

They are not corrupted by the love of money or honour, by indulgence in pleasures, or by the desire for glory. Moreover, they have, following Plato's description, set down the first principle of democracy (i.e., of pure democracy, or of extreme democracy, as Aristotle calls it). They rule only by the will of the citizens, who honour them, because they would some day lead them to freedom.

What is more, they are unmoved by the pan-Islamic claptrap. So, they let the U.N. sanctions run their course despite the plight of millions of innocent Iraqi women and children. That is because they, having come to power through a democratic process, are repelled by Saddam Hussein's authoritarian rule. Given their strong identification with America's democratic traditions, it is no surprise that they allow the American and the British troops to use their ter-

ritories to kill millions. The Iraqi army capitulated within three weeks. Otherwise, the Arab regimes would have aided the murder of more fellow-Muslims and the levelling down of more Iraqi cities.

Do the custodians of Mecca and Medina know the location of Najaf? It is Sir, the site of Hazrat Ali shrine. Do they know his antecedents? No, they do not: he is the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet of Islam. Do the Sultans know what is so sacred about Karbala? It is your Excellencies, the battleground on the Euphrates River where the grandson of the Prophet and his 72 companions sacrificed their lives to defend the Koranic precepts. They know all about the casinos in Europe, but do they know what Baghdad symbolises in human history?

Hulagu, the ferocious Mongol, ransacked Baghdad in the 13th century. The Arab countries and Turkey (with the exception of Syria and Iran) have allowed it to happen again. So what if the Americans bombed the city, killed thousands of recalcitrant Iraqis and destroyed their great heritage?

The city will recover with American assistance. The Americans will bring pizzas and hot-dogs to the starving population. They will quench their thirst with Coca-Cola.

Look at Afghanistan. They killed many people before flying in food and medicines to that country. They will do the same in Iraq. Destruction is followed with reconstruction. The Americans will build the bridges they have destroyed and rebuild homes and hospitals they have so recklessly wrecked. That is called the healing touch.

As for the lost civilisational heritage, rest assured the artefacts would pour into the crowded but 'safe' museums in Washington, New York and the British or the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. That is where the 'loot' will stay preserved, and

symbolise, as the American apologist, Bernard Cohn, who sense of triumph. Syria should send its artefacts European capitals before the Marines ransack its museum 'Thieves of Baghdad' will soon Damascus, another cradle of civilization.

Millions salute the Iraqi people for their courage and fortitude. They are victorious in 'defeat', as was Husain, the 'Lord of Martyrs', in an example at Karbala for all who fight evil and tyranny. Even years of suffering, the Iraqis have capitulated. But let me, at the time, sound a warning to all who desire peace in our world.

Admittedly Mr. Bush and Blair are the enemies of millions who have taken to the streets to register their protest against this naked aggression on a sovereign nation. So are Turkey, a country prepared to sell itself for a billion dollars, and Arab countries which back the

The roadmap is clear: the throw of the feudal and dictatorial regimes and their replacement by secular and democratic governments is the only antidote to American imperialism. This is what the Urdu poet Faiz Ahmad Faiz, dreamt of lines: "When will the crown be moved; when will the thrones be destroyed?" Not now, but it will happen.

Pan-Islamism is nothing but a quaint romanticism. Thanks to the clever and manipulative redrawing of boundaries by the colonial powers, there are no takers in today's world for nation-states.

Boundaries are defined and cannot be redrawn. The military might of the U.S. Ideas of freedom and sovereignty are alive and kicking the world over. Those ideas, rather than any form of terrorism, must inspire us to protect ourselves from the 'liberators'.

The Muslim communities must build bridges with the followers of other faiths, and not isolate themselves from those committed to defending freedom and democracy. Regeneration and reconstruction are the weapons with which they can defend themselves.

19 APR 2003

THE END

US calls for Israeli troops to withdraw

Washington: The US is pressing Israel to withdraw its troops from Palestinian cities and ease restrictions on travel, work to help a new Palestinian administration get on its feet, the *The New York Times* reported on Thursday. ^{18/4} ₁₁₋₁₀ ^{WSW WSW}

The US requests, which also included a speedier turnover of tax revenues to the Palestinian authority, came on Tuesday at a White House meeting between US officials and two top aides of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, the daily said.

"We've told Israel the kind of steps they need to take to get the peace process going again," an unnamed administration official told to the *Times*.

"The Israelis have gone off to consider what they can do. I suspect we will have to accept less than 100 per cent delivery on some of them."

Officials said the goal of the US pressure is to bolster new Palestinian premier Mahmud Abbas when he takes office by next week.

Israeli officials told the *Times* that Mr Sharon is considering the steps urged by Washington as well as some of his own, including the possible release of Palestinian prisoners. AFP

18 APR 2009

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Bush signs war bill

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By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, APRIL 16. The United States President, George W. Bush, has signed an \$80 billion spending bill for the war and related efforts in Iraq. But this appropriated money is only the initial tap for the conflict, which is expected to run into billions of dollars over the next several years.

Mr. Bush signed the bill in the Oval Office shortly before he left for St. Louis where he is expected to address employees of the Boeing Corporation on issues of national security, Iraq and the economy.

The bill came to the White House from Congress with a number of restrictions. While the White House wanted total control of \$60 billion in the overall Pentagon budget of \$63 billion, Capitol Hill agreed to only about one-fourth of that. And lawmakers have told Mr. Bush that he would have to notify Congress five days before any money is appropriated.

But Mr. Bush won some important concessions such as

giving the Pentagon a role in the \$2.5 billion humanitarian and reconstruction money that many lawmakers wanted the State Department to be in charge of. The final language of the Senate-House Bill gives the Defence Department a say along with other Government agencies.

The bill has allotted money for Homeland Security as well as about \$3 billion for the airlines industry that is in deep trouble. After visiting the Boeing company, Mr. Bush will leave for Crawford, Texas, to spend the Easter weekend at his ranch, where he will receive the Prime Minister of Australia, John Howard and his wife early next month.

Australia was a major supporter of the U.S. in the war against Iraq and had sent troops as part of the coalition.

Meanwhile, the Bush administration today lowered the national threat level alert status from Orange to Yellow, signalling that the threat of terrorism linked to hostilities in Iraq had waned.

17 APR 2003

THE HINDU

Syria springs arms treaty trap on Israel

Sydney, April 16 (Reuters): Syrian foreign minister Farouq al-Shara has said his government is willing to sign a treaty making the entire West Asia free of weapons of mass destruction.

Syria also said it was willing to cooperate with the US in the interest of Iraqis but would not close the offices of militant Palestinian groups, one of Washington's long-standing demands.

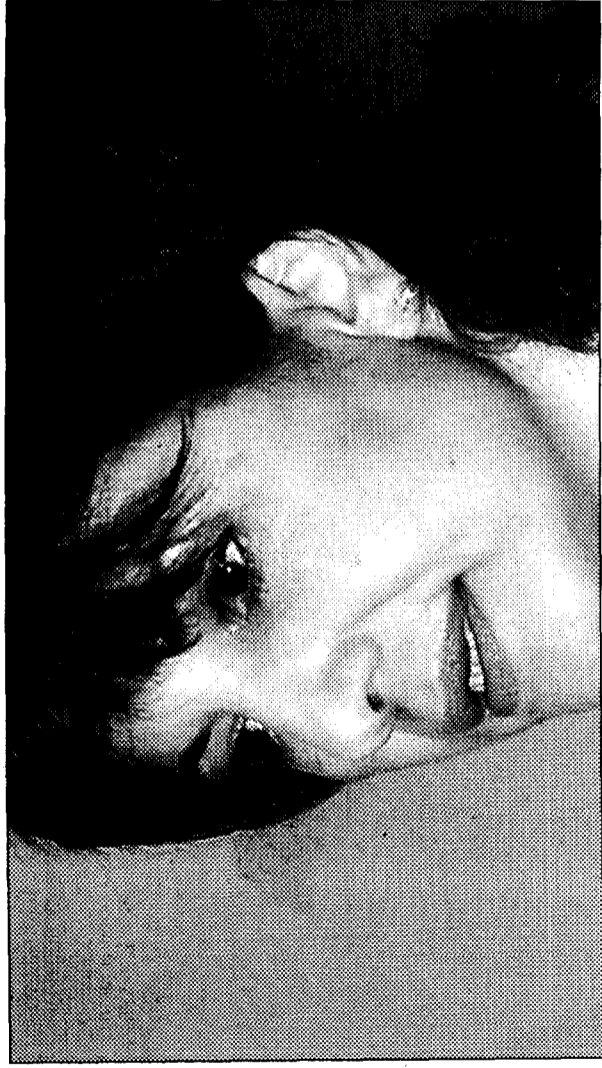
"Syria will always cooperate in things that serve the Iraqi people's interests," foreign ministry spokesperson Buthaina Shaaban said.

In an interview with Australian SBS television broadcast today, Shara vigorously denied US allegations that Syria had chemical weapons or had allowed Iraq to hide banned weapons on its soil during the Iraq war.

"The Syrian government is ready to sign a treaty under UN supervision to make the whole West Asia a zone free from all mass destruction weapons, nuclear, chemical and biological," he told SBS in Damascus.

Since the fall of the government of President Saddam Hussein after the US invasion of Iraq, Washington has begun to turn its rhetorical guns on Damascus, accusing Syria of harbouring Saddam's allies and of developing chemical weapons.

Arab diplomats at the UN said US ally Israel was the only country in West Asia with



Director of the Syrian foreign ministry's information department, Bussaina Shaaban, talks to the media in Damascus on Wednesday. (Reuters)

weapons of mass destruction and added they would seek a UN Security Council resolution declaring the region free of such deadly arms. A foreign ministry spokesman in Damascus said Syria was ready to propose such a resolution.

Israel is believed to have around 200 nuclear warheads not subject to any international monitoring regime.

US secretary of state Colin Powell said yesterday the US favoured a West Asia free of

weapons of mass destruction but linked any possible inspection of Israel's arsenal to peace with Syria and Lebanon.

"It is better for the Americans, for the Israelis, for every citizen on earth, especially in West Asia, and it is good for the American forces in Iraq, to see that the whole West Asia is a zone free from all mass destruction weapons," Shara said.

"Also it is very useful to see this taking place because in this case no terrorist, as the Ameri-

cans say and some Europeans say, no terrorists can have these mass destruction weapons with them."

Shara denied Syria, a staunch opponent of the US war on Iraq, had hidden any Iraqi weapons. "If Saddam Hussein had mass destruction weapons for so many years, as they say, he would keep them for the war," he said.

"Why should they smuggle or send them outside the country during the war?"

Israel, taking advantage of the US pressure on its hostile neighbour, said this week it wanted Syria to stop the militant Palestinian groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad from using Damascus as their headquarters.

Spokesperson Shaaban said that Damascus saw these as press offices and disagreed with the "terror" group label given to them by the US and Israel. "They are media offices, they only have the freedom of expression, which I think is ensured in the United States as well," she said.

Iran appeal

Iran's President Mohammad Khatami called on the US today to stop threatening Syria but said a US military attack on Iraq's western neighbour was unlikely.

"Our advice to the Americans is to abandon such threats," Khatami said after a Cabinet meeting.

"We reject US threats and allegations about ourselves, and I think the same goes with Syria".

Toning down Washington's sharp rhetoric of late toward Syria, US secretary of state Colin Powell said yesterday there was "no war plan" to attack Syria or Iran.

Khatami argued that "Syria is different from Iraq." "We've always had friendly ties with Syria and we hope to cooperate with Syria to establish peace ... in the region," he added.

Heat on master, sweat in Beirut

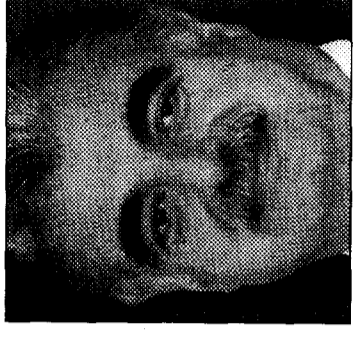
Beirut, April 16 (Reuters): Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri submitted his resignation yesterday, a move that a senior official said was triggered partly by mounting US pressure on Lebanon's neighbour and political master Syria.

"Prime Minister Hariri presented his resignation this evening and tomorrow (Wednesday) morning the President will begin his consultations with the deputies for a new government," Rafik Shlala, media adviser to President Emile Lahoud, said.

Government changes had been widely expected for a while due to domestic political tensions, but the resignation occurred as Washington turned up the heat on Damascus, which holds broad political and military sway in Lebanon.

Arafat Hijazy, an adviser to Lebanon's parliament speaker Nabih Berri, said US threats against Syria had helped fuel the resignation and the setting up of a new broader government.

He said the charges had pushed Lebanon toward forming



Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri. (Reuters)

a government with a broader popular base "in order to strengthen the domestic front and to create resistance for any penetration that might happen to dismantle the Lebanese-Syrian front".

Lebanese political commentator Joseph Qoseify said that meant Christians would be "more widely represented" in a new government. Lebanese Christians are the backbone of opposition to Syria's grip on its smaller neighbour.

IRAQ AFTER SADDAM

Claim of big catch in retired terrorist once America forgot

Baghdad, April 16 (Reuters): The US today trumpeted the capture of a veteran Palestinian guerrilla chief in Iraq as proof of a link between Saddam Hussein and terrorism as troops scoured Baghdad for the ousted President and his aides.

The US military said the detention in Baghdad of Abu Abbas, mastermind of the 1985 hijacking of the Italian cruise ship *Achille Lauro*, helped to justify the US-led invasion of Iraq.

"When we came into this the secretary of defence (Donald Rumsfeld) said one big concern was the nexus between this regime and terrorism. This proves the nexus was there," said Captain Frank Thorp, spokesman at the US war headquarters in Qatar.

But Abbas has long renounced violence and Israel has

allowed him to travel to Gaza, declaring him immune from prosecution over the hijacking. Washington itself dropped a warrant for his arrest several years ago, but he is wanted in Italy.

However, the US said today a 1995 agreement between Israel and the Palestinians did not give immunity to Abu Abbas.

Under an agreement signed on September 28, 1995, members of the Palestine Liberation Organisation may not be detained or tried for matters they committed before the Oslo peace accord of 1993, said Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat, who demanded the US set Abu Abbas free.

But a US state department official, who asked not to be identified, said: "The 1995 interim agreement concerns arrangements between Israel and the Palestinian Authority for the de-

termination and prosecution of certain persons. It does not apply to the legal status of persons detained in a third country."

US forces have launched spot raids around Baghdad in search of people linked to Saddam, who has vanished along with his two sons and most of his associates. Only two out of 55 people on a US "most wanted" list have so far been caught.

US Central Command said Abbas' capture "removes a portion of the terror network supported by Iraq and represents yet another victory in the global war on terrorism".

Special forces captured Abbas, who has never been linked with the al Qaida group blamed for the September 11 attacks, in a raid near southern Baghdad, the US military said.

Central Command declined

to say what would happen to Abbas, but Italy declared that it would seek his extradition. Abbas was sentenced in absentia in Italy to life in prison for planning the *Achille Lauro* hijack in the eastern Mediterranean.

The hijackers killed a disabled elderly American Jewish passenger, Leon Klinghoffer, shooting him and pushing his wheelchair overboard.

The Palestinian Authority demanded Abbas' release, saying his detention breached a West Asian peace deal stating that Palestinian officials were immune in cases dating from before 1993.

US officials said Abbas was not covered by that deal.

In recent years, Abbas has been clearly visible in the Gaza Strip, but largely out of mind. The Israelis had left him alone,

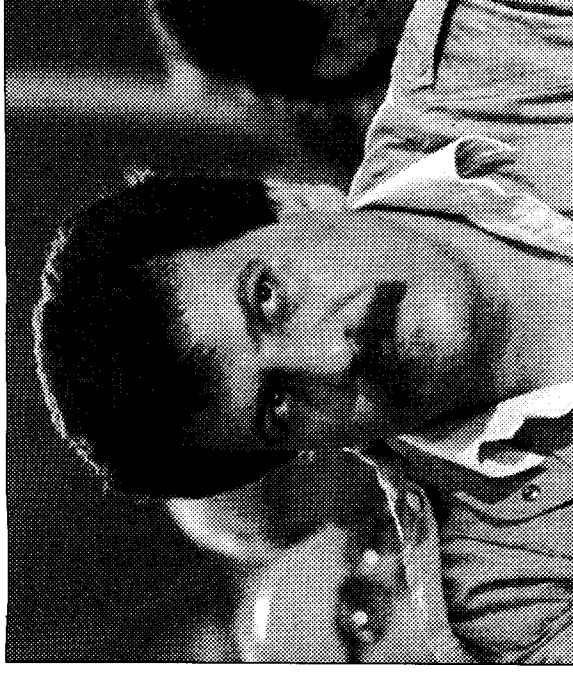
saying he was immune from prosecution in Israel under interim peace deals with the Palestinians.

Five years ago, Abbas, now in his mid-50s, won a "get out of jail free" card from none other than the Israeli Supreme Court.

The daughters of the elderly American who was killed on the hijacked *Achille Lauro* said today they wanted captured Abu Abbas tried in the United States.

Klinghoffer's daughters, Lisa and Ilisa, said Abbas should be brought to the United States immediately.

"We want him brought here. We want him tried here in our country. We want to know that he will serve his full sentence -- which is hopefully a life sentence," said Lisa Klinghoffer in an interview with NBC's *Today* show.



Veteran Palestinian guerrilla chief Abu Abbas. (AFP)

Bush signs war bill

1979 US @ W M 119-15
By Sridhar Krishnaswami

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17 APR 2008

THE FINCH

Digression in Damascus

THE US intervention in Vietnam was motivated by the fear of what was called the 'domino theory' which said that the success of the communists in Indochina would be followed by their incursions into other countries of the region. Now, in West Asia, the Americans seem intent on introducing their version of the theory, entailing the 'fall' of one 'rogue State' after another to the American forces. Even before the war has ended in Iraq, the US hawks are turning their eyes on Syria, which had earlier been identified — along with Iran — by a US official as one of the countries which had to be 'dealt' with after Iraq. The list of American grouses against Damascus is becoming longer. The earlier complaints were about Syria's links with the terrorist outfits. Now it is also being accused of sheltering Iraqi fugitives and having a chemical weapons programme.

At the moment, the US is talking only of diplomatic and economic pressure. But few are under any delusion that if Syria does not 'cooperate', the US will have little hesitation in launching a military attack. It's irrelevant whether the attack takes place now or later. In all probability, it will be much

later — if at all — since the US will first have to sort out the aftermath of Saddam Hussein's ouster in Iraq. According to present indications, the post-'liberation' scene may be quite messy although a similar mess in Afghanistan did not stop the Americans from invading Iraq. But what is shocking is that the US should so brazenly arrogate to itself the power to order things around in areas of its choosing simply because of its present overwhelming military power.

It's not that Syria is a paragon of virtue. Like Iraq under Saddam Hussein, its regime is a repressive one. But it is not for America to attack it although it presents no direct and immediate threat to the US (as Iraq also didn't) although Syria does possess the capability to harass Israel. What is more worrying is that there has been no mention of the UN in connection with the punitive measures which the US intends to take against Syria. It is the US which will decide and mete out the punishment. Clearly, the world is entering a phase in which most countries, more afraid of the US than of the 'rogue States', will begin to regard America as No. 1 in that unsavoury category.

16 APR 2003

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

Weapons of Disruption

On the weekend, a crucial disclosure came from Hans Blix, UN's chief weapons inspector and head of the team that went into Iraq to find and destroy its weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Mr Blix's discomfort with the Anglo-American line on Iraq has been apparent for a while, and now he has come out in the open to accuse the US and UK of having made up their minds in advance to attack Iraq. He also said neither country was really interested in finding WMD. Mr Blix's words confirm what has long been suspected: That the WMD served as a pretext for the war. The Bush-Blair team couldn't wait for the UN inspection team to find the weapons, not because the latter posed a huge and immediate danger to the world, but because the weapons might not have been found. Indeed, the offensive weapons have not shown up anywhere in Iraq. Was the attack on Iraq, then, deliberately mounted on a false premise? The world at large would be justified in reaching that conclusion, whether or not the US now finds WMD in Iraq. For logic dictates that in its dying moments a regime would use whatever weapon it possessed to protect itself.

Unfortunately, the story looks set to go into its second act, with Syria playing villain. Barely had Baghdad fallen, when president Bush and others started issuing not-so-veiled threats to Syria against harbouring members of Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath party. There were also dark hints about Saddam having moved his WMD into Syria. There is little Syria can do about this charge, given the way the US went about establishing WMD in Iraq. That Syria's government is run by a branch of the Ba'ath party further complicates matters for the country. Understandably, the current crackdown on the Ba'ath movement has created fears in Syria's ruling circles. Yet, in strictly legal terms, Syria has done no wrong. Mere membership of the Ba'ath party, a legitimate political entity with an ideology centred around secular Arab nationalism, cannot be held to be a crime. As for providing sanctuary to Iraqi officials, under the convention on the status of refugees, Syria is bound to accept those fleeing from persecution. If the standards now being applied to Syria were extended further eastward, India could find itself on a sticky wicket. India possesses WMD and it has been included by the CIA among those who helped Libya build its ballistic missile programme.

16 APR 2003

THE TIMES OF INDIA

U.S. ponders sanctions on Syria

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, APRIL 15. With the major military phase now seen out of the way in Iraq by the Pentagon, the Bush administration is intent on turning the heat on Syria and at the same time making the point that the United States is not going the route of a military strike.

The chilling rhetoric against Syria is coming from many directions and from different and senior players in the Bush administration and all with the same message — that Damascus must change its ways and start to cooperate with the U.S.

"They should review their actions and their behaviour not only with respect to who gets haven in Syria and weapons of mass destruction, but especially the support of terrorist activity," the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, said as he held out the prospect of economic and diplomatic sanctions. "We will examine possible measures of diplomatic, economic or other nature as we move forward... We'll see how things unfold," he said.

The White House spokesman, Ari Fleischer, seemed to go a step further in saying that Syria is a "rogue nation," its leader "untested" but one who had a chance to make "right deci-



A banner reads "Peace and occupation cannot meet" in downtown Damascus on Tuesday. — AP

sions." In the view of Mr. Fleischer, Syria's chemical weapons programme has been "well corroborated" and that Damascus "needs to cooperate."

The President's National Security Advisor, Condoleezza Rice, stressed that harbouring "remnants" of the Iraqi regime by Damascus was unacceptable but stopped short of warning Syria of military action.

"The President has made clear every problem in the Mid-

dle East cannot be dealt with the same way," Dr. Rice remarked.

In the past two weeks, particularly in the last few days, the Bush administration has been turning the heat on Syria on a number of fronts; and the repeated denials of top authorities from Damascus do not seem to make any difference here. The Pentagon, the State Department and the White House have all talked about Syria's weapons of mass destruc-

tion, its chemical weapons especially; assisting the Saddam Hussein regime militarily in the recent war; and shipping fighters across the borders, including the Hezbollah, to kill and harass coalition forces.

But the Republican administration is also making it known that the U.S. is keen on having Syria on board the West Asia peace process and in the process have some of its unresolved issues out of the way.

It is no secret that Syria would like to get back the Golan Heights it lost to Israel in the 1967 war. "As we go down the road to peace, we want it to be a comprehensive peace, and ultimately, of course, that would have to include finding a way to settle the outstanding issues with Syria, as well," Gen. Powell said.

The tone and tenor of the statements of the President, George W. Bush, and senior administration officials have led to a sense of apprehension among many foreign diplomats and at the United Nations.

In a statement issued on Monday, the United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, said that he was "concerned that recent statements directed at Syria should not contribute to a wider destabilisation in a region already affected heavily by the war in Iraq."

Blair, Schroeder discuss Iraq

By Batuk Gathani

BRUSSELS, APRIL 15. The German Chancellor, Gerhard Schroeder, and the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, on Tuesday met in Hannover to discuss the Iraq and West Asia situation. The German Government is keen to mend its diplomatic fences with the United States. Berlin proposes to move on from its role as a leading opponent of the Iraq war to one of a prominent player in the political and economic reconstruction of Iraq. It also has close trading and economic relations with Iran.

The German strategy is to first "drastically improve" its diplomatic and political dia-

logue with Britain and make efforts to mend relations with Washington, after nine months of bruising diplomatic exchanges over Iraq. This strategy also has the support of France and Russia — as highlighted at the recent summit of French, German and Russian Government leaders in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Meanwhile, the Foreign Ministers of the European Union have agreed to draw up a "common strategy" on weapons of mass destruction. The 15 Foreign Ministers on Monday night asked Javier Solana, the E.U.'s co-ordinator for foreign and security policies, to continue to work on a long-term strategy and "threat assessment" to prevent

differing perceptions among the E.U. members. Mr. Solana is widely rated as a "consensus" man on both sides of the Atlantic and has a close rapport with senior officials in the Bush administration.

Mr. Solana's team will report back to the European Foreign Ministers before the heads of Government summit in June, when the leaders will attempt to forge a "consensus" approach with the U.S. on Iraq and other unfolding crises in West Asia, mainly relating to policy options on Syria and Iran. Mr Solana's team will also examine problems relating to export controls and strengthening the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Bush frees arms and dollars for Musharraf

K.F. NAVAR

Washington, March 15: With the Iraq vote uncertain in the UN Security Council, Osama bin Laden said to be almost within allied grasp and a US President desperate for any straw of support in the Islamic world, Pakistan's shrewd military dictator yesterday blackmailed the White House into waiving all remaining American sanctions on Islamabad.

The waiver (reported briefly yesterday) immediately clears the way for \$250 million in US aid to Pakistan, which had been held up on account of what had come to be known as the "democracy sanctions".

But it also opens the way for full-scale cooperation between Washington and Islamabad, including military sales and a long-term strategic alliance.

If that happens, history will only be repeating itself. In 1978, Pervez Musharraf's predecessor in uniform, General Zia ul-Haq,

contemptuously dismissed President Jimmy Carter's offer of aid following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan as "peanuts".

He then manipulated Carter's successor, President Ronald Reagan, into opening Washington's purse strings and arming his regime, which helped create a chain of events culminating in the creation of the Taliban, bin Laden, and finally the now-powerful radical Islamic parties in Pakistan.

The "democracy sanctions" were imposed on Pakistan soon after Musharraf's military coup, which overthrew what America acknowledged as the democratically-elected government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

These compounded the sanctions imposed after Islamabad tested its nuclear weapons in May 1998. The nuclear sanctions were withdrawn when Musharraf threw his support behind President George W. Bush after the terrorist attacks on September 11. The "democracy sanctions" continued, partly because

there was opposition in Capitol Hill to waiving them until Pakistan returned to full representative government.

But in one of the biggest ironies in state-to-state relations in modern times, Bush said yesterday that the very sanctions imposed to bring in democracy were being dropped because a waiver "would facilitate the transition to democratic rule in Pakistan".

If Bush expected Islamabad to be grateful for yesterday's waiver, it is not — at least not so far. Just as Zia dismissed Carter's aid offer as "peanuts", Musharraf's information minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed responded today that the White House action "was overruled by a few months... This should have come through in October when Pakistan was returned to democracy".

Pakistan has been using every opportunity provided by its high-profile membership of the UN Security Council during the ongoing Iraq crisis to claim that, with the installation of Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah

Khan Jamali in office, it is now a full-fledged democracy.

Bush yesterday invited Jamali to come to the White House on March 28. Sources in the administration said this would be followed by a visit by Musharraf to Washington later in the year, indicating that it has been bowled over by Pakistan's recent capture of al Qaida's number three, Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, in Rawalpindi.

The state department is anxious to put on a front that yesterday's waiver is not a bribe to Pakistan as Washington seeks support in the UN Security Council on Iraq. In any case, as hinted by Musharraf's spin doctor, Pakistan is unlikely to be persuaded merely by the waiver to change its stand at the UN into supporting war outright.

Taking a leaf out of Turkey's book in bargaining for the last cent in aid and the final bit of military spare part in defence support, Islamabad is expected in the coming months to raise its stakes in dealing with Washington.

WS 16/3

Bush frees arms and dollars for Musharraf

WS 6/1

16/3

K.P. NAYAR

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Bush yesterday invited Jamali to come to the White House on March 28. Sources in the administration said this would be followed by a visit by Musharraf to Washington later in the year, indicating that it has been bowled over by Pakistan's recent capture of al Qaida's number three, Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, in Rawalpindi.

The state department is anxious to put on a front that yesterday's waiver is not a bribe to Pakistan as Washington seeks support in the UN Security Council on Iraq. In any case, as hinted by Musharraf's spin doctor, Pakistan is unlikely to be persuaded merely by the waiver to change its stand at the UN into supporting war outright.

"Taking a leaf out of Turkey's book in bargaining for the last cent in aid and the final bit of military spare part in defence support, Islamabad is expected in the coming months to raise its stakes in dealing with Washington.

Bush frees arms and dollars for Musharraf

K.P. NAYAR

Washington, March 15. With the Iraq vote uncertain in the UN Security Council, Osama bin Laden said to be almost within allied grasp and a US President desperate for any straw of support in the Islamic world, Pakistan's shrewd military dictator yesterday blackmailed the White House into waiving all remaining American sanctions on Islamabad.

The waiver (reported briefly yesterday) immediately clears the way for \$250 million in US aid to Pakistan, which had been held up on account of what had come to be known as the "democracy sanctions".

But it also opens the way for full-scale cooperation between Washington and Islamabad, including military sales and a long-term strategic alliance.

If that happens, history will only be repeating itself. In 1978, Pervez Musharraf's predecessor in uniform, General Zia ul-Haq,

contemptuously dismissed President Jimmy Carter's offer of aid following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan as "peanuts".

He then manipulated Carter's successor, President Ronald Reagan, into opening Washington's purse strings and arming his regime, which helped create a chain of events culminating in the creation of the Taliban, bin Laden, and finally the now-powerful radical Islamic parties in Pakistan.

The "democracy sanctions" were imposed on Pakistan soon after Musharraf's military coup, which overthrew what America acknowledged as the democratically-elected government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

These compounded the sanctions imposed after Islamabad tested its nuclear weapons in May 1998. The nuclear sanctions were withdrawn when Musharraf threw his support behind President George W. Bush after the terrorist attacks on September 11. The "democracy sanctions" continued, partly because

there was opposition on Capitol Hill to waiving them until Pakistan returned to full representative government.

But in one of the biggest ironies in state-to-state relations in modern times, Bush said yesterday that the very sanctions imposed to bring in democracy were being dropped because a waiver "would facilitate the transition to democratic rule in Pakistan".

If Bush expected Islamabad to be grateful for yesterday's waiver, it is not — at least not so far. Just as Zia dismissed Carter's aid offer as "peanuts", Musharraf's information minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed responded today that the White House action "was overdue by a few months.... This should have come through in October when Pakistan was returned to democracy".

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Khan Jamali in office, it is now a full-fledged democracy.

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Syria has banned weapons: Bush

US @ W An
 4/16/03

Bahrain, April 14

NT George W. Bush virtual chargesheet a over the weekend: chemical weapons in also accused Damas- ouring senior Iraqi government officials ed "cooperation" in am.

d European Union on ed the US to "cool in President Bashar urgent talks with UK ice Minister Mike ever; London insist- no plans for military t Syria.

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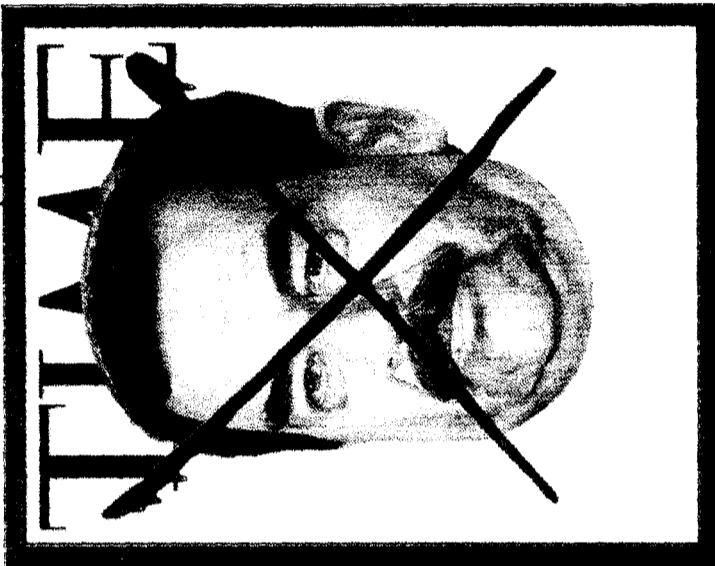
Officials made plain a afion with Syria. De- on. (AP) (AP) (AP)

land," said Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Buthaina Shaaban. Israel is widely believed to have about 300 nuclear warheads, but its policy is never to discuss this issue. "There was never any cooperation between Damascus and Baghdad, our support was for the Iraqi people who have suffered the plights of wars," Shaaban said.

Israel warned Syria not to "play with fire" after Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Sbara made a strong anti-Israeli statement on Monday. "Israel is not looking for an escalation with Syria but Damascus is playing with fire by threatening us with its terror arsenal," the official said. For now, Israel was restricting itself to "supporting US efforts to stop Syrian support for terrorism".

US to consider sanctions

The US will consider imposing economic and diplomatic sanctions against Syria for its support for members of Saddam Hussein's former regime in Iraq, US Secretary of State Colin Powell said on Monday. "We will examine possible measures of a diplomatic, economic or other nature as we move forward," Powell told reporters at the State Department. "We are in touch with Syrian authorities and will make them aware of our concerns and we'll see how things unfold as we move forward," he said.



58 years later, another dictator is scratched. Time has a portrait of Saddam that reprises the Hitler cover complete with red 'X'.

2003



Hitler on Time's May 7 cover. In April, the Nazi leader had committed suicide as Soviet troops knocked at his Berlin bunker.

1945

said the majority of foreign fighters in Iraq were from Syria, brought by the "busloads". Rumsfeld noted Syria was on the US list of state sponsors of terrorism. Hussein's half brother captured the prospect of war: le it clear there are ria to be next on the igh Secretary Jack Bahrain. Officials made plain a afion with Syria. De- on. (AP) (AP) (AP)

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

'I was given assurances that museums would be protected,' says expert

Pentagon warned of heritage loot, did nothing

GUY CIBULKOTTA

WASHINGTON, APRIL 14

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IN the months leading up to the Iraq war, US scholars repeatedly urged the Defence Department to protect Iraq's priceless archaeological heritage from looters, and warned specifically that the National Museum of Antiquities was the single most important site in the country. Late in January, a mix of scholars, museum directors, art collectors and antiquities dealers asked for and were granted a meeting at the Pentagon to discuss their misgivings.

McGuire Gibson, an Iraq specialist at the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute, told *The Washington Post* on Sunday that he went back twice more, and he and colleagues bombarded Defence Department officials with e-mail reminders in the weeks before the war began. "I thought I was given assurances that sites and museums would be protected," Gibson said. Instead, even with US forces firmly in control of Baghdad last week, looters breached the mu-



An employee at the Iraqi National Museum with an iron rod to protect it from looters

seum, trashed its galleries, burned its records, invaded its vaults and smashed or carried off thousands of artifacts dating from the found-

ing of ancient Sumer around 3,500 B.C. to the end of Islam's Abbasid Caliphate in 1258 A.D.

Asked on Sunday about the looting of the museum, Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld blamed the chaos that ensues "when you go from a dictatorship" to a new order. "We didn't allow it. It happened," Rumsfeld said on NBC's *Meet the Press*.

"There's a transition period, and no one is in control. There is still fighting in Baghdad. We don't allow low bad things to happen. Bad things happen in life, and people do loot."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Powell threatens sanctions on Syria

Agencies

WASHINGTON/LUXEMBOURG, April 14. — The USA today held out a veiled threat of economic and diplomatic sanctions against Syria for its support for members of fallen Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein's regime and participation in development of weapons of mass destruction even as EU foreign policy chief Mr Javier Solana urged America to tone down its warnings to Syria.

"Of course, we will examine possible measures of a diplomatic, economic or other nature as we move forward," US secretary of state General Collin Powell told reporters here.

He asked the Syrians to "review their actions and their behaviour, not only with respect to who gets haven in Syria and weapons of mass destruction, especially the support of terrorist activity." His one friendly gesture to Syria was that "as we go down the road to peace" in West Asia, "we want it to be a comprehensive peace and, ultimately, of course, that would have to include finding a way to settle the outstanding issues with Syria, as well."

The Syrian President, Mr Bashar al-Assad, met British and Saudi envoys today while the Syrian foreign ministry denied America's accusations of helping Mr Hussein to



KEEP TALKING: The Syrian President, Mr Bashar al-Assad (left), meets the British minister for West Asian relations, Mr Mike O'Brien, in Damascus on Monday. — AFP

flee Iraq, AP adds from Damascus

Mr Javier Solana said, "The region is going through a very difficult process and I think it'll be better to make a constructive statement to see if we can cool off and cool down the situation," he said. Asked if this was a call to America to temper its pressure

on Syria, he said: "That is my suggestion."

Mr Solana was asked about the US pressure on Damascus when he arrived for a meeting of EU foreign ministers in Luxembourg, the first such gathering since the collapse of the Iraqi regime. "In a region which is so convulsed, the best thing to do is to

'Damascus not next'

BAHRAIN, April 14. — British foreign secretary Mr Jack Straw today said Syria, which has been accused by America in the past of harbouring Iraqi leaders and having chemical weapons, was not the next coalition target after Iraq.

"We have made it clear that there are no plans for Syria to be next on the list... but there are questions that Syrians need to answer," Mr Straw told reporters at the British embassy.

"What we believe is that there is an important agenda for discussion with the Syrian government," Mr Straw said of whether Syria was harbouring former Iraqi leadership and has weapons of mass destruction.

The British secretary's statement follows speculation in the Western media that Mr Hussein and his top aides may have taken refuge in Syria. — AP

make positive statements, not negative declarations," he said. He was "concerned" about US warnings to Syria.

Israel's accusation: Israeli foreign minister Mr Silvan Shalom today accused Syria of supporting terrorist outfits and asked Damascus to end such backing, AFP adds from Ankara.

Despite the American sophistry on display before the war, the UN is no closed shop yet

United States vs Nations

BY A.G. NOORANI

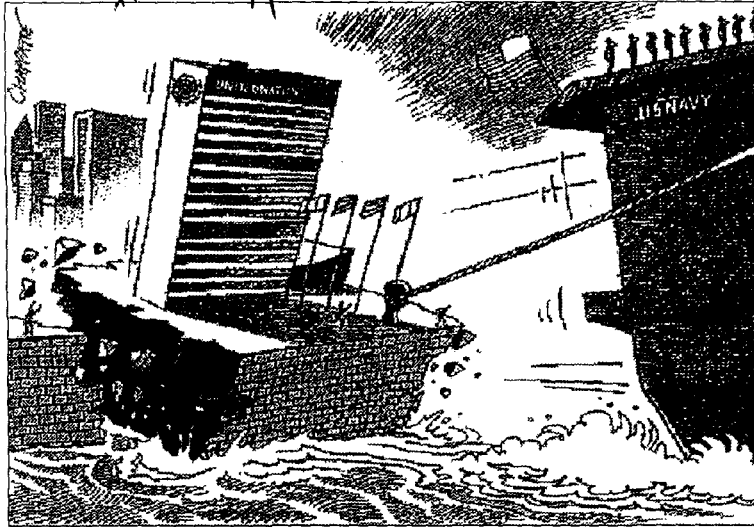
LAST YEAR, American Vice-President Dick Cheney advised President George W. Bush to tell the United Nations: "You are not important." To keep up appearances, the US moved the UN Security Council, secured a resolution on false assurance, but reneged on them once it found it could not secure its backing for a war on Iraq. The UN is being invited insolently to share in the cleaning. It is time to make a realistic assessment of the UN in a unipolar world, with its flaws and potentialities, and draw lessons from them.

Those who laud the collapse of 'the old international order' because India had little say in its management overlook the fact that it would have even less in a new one sans the UN. The say comes with power. The weak can only rely on diplomacy. It is the more effective with the UN.

There is not one country in the world of any significance — India included — which has not complained of the UN at some time or the other. The complaints would subside if people think of it as 'they' — the United Nations — and not as 'it'. As H.G. Nicholas noted: "It has no will of its own. It is a forum in which wills can be expressed and harmonised." It is, by its charter "a centre for harmonising the actions of nations in the attainment of... common ends". He, however, added: "Though it remains the creature of its members, [it] now has in addition a life of its own... It gives visible and continuing expression to certain canons of behaviour which members have agreed to observe." The UN became a source of legitimacy and developed the law through a host of international legislation.

The first complaint of significance was by British Foreign Secretary Lord Home in a famous speech at Berwick on December 28, 1961. There was "a crisis of confidence" in the UN and it was aired that it "openly condones aggression". His Metternichian outlook explains a lot we have seen since. The charter "named the great powers as permanent members in the expectation that they... would deal together (sic) with any breach of peace by the smaller powers" — not by themselves.

While submitting the charter to Parliament in 1945, the British government published 'A Commem-



mentary' on it which said: "Power must be commensurate with responsibility, and it is on the great powers that the charter places the main responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The Great Powers have, however, accepted great limitations on their power to act. They themselves give solemn undertakings that they will not use force or the threat of force for national ends. They promise to submit disputes which threaten the maintenance of international peace and security to pacific procedures and, if these fail, to the Security Council itself... only when enforcement action is necessary is the complete unanimity of the Great Powers always required."

That unanimity was absent in the war on Iraq. The disingenuous sophistry in which we have been treated cannot conceal the fact that the US and Britain prepared two draft resolutions to win the Security Council's sanction (February 24 and March 7) and went to war when they failed to get it. When Resolution 1441 was adopted on November 8, 2002, Russia, France and Germany said explicitly in a joint statement that "in case of failure by Iraq to comply with its obligations" the fact would be reported to the council and "it will be then for the council to take a position on the basis of that report".

The US representative, John Negroponte, said that the Resolution had "no 'authomacity' with respect to the use of force". On November 11, US Secretary of State Colin

Powell said that if the council failed to act on Iraq's breaches, "then the US certainly, as does any other member of the Security Council, retains its ability to act in self-defence". This is the only ground on which a member can act unilaterally. A day earlier, in a calculated fudge, he said that the US "retains its option to act if the Security Council doesn't act". This option is not legally available except in self-defence.

Rebuffed at the council, Bush demanded on March 17 that President Saddam Hussein must leave Iraq within 48 hours. Powell said his draft of March 7 "will die anyway because it had a built-in date of March 17" for Iraq's compliance. The US thus gave an ultimatum not only to Iraq but also to the UN. It launched a war on March 19 for its 'national ends'. Its Iraq Liberation Act, 1998, enjoined it "to support efforts to remove the regime headed by Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq". But none of the council's resolutions did; a fact which the British Attorney General, Lord Goldsmith, a personal friend of PM Tony Blair, ignored studiously. He damaged his credibility by his pathetic quibbles.

Under Paragraph 12 of Resolution 1441, the council was "to convene immediately" after the inspectors reported "in order to consider the situation". Joshua Rosenberg, legal editor of *Daily Telegraph*, wrote: "It is on that word ('consider') that Lord Goldsmith's entire argument hangs. If further decision

had been needed, he explains, then the resolution would have said so."

The council is, surely, not a debating society but an organ set up by the charter "to ensure... action". The words that followed the expression "consider the situation" remove all doubt — "and the need for full compliance with all of the relevant council resolutions". That a vast majority of the council saw no 'need' for military action itself implies 'decision'. Ambassador Robert Blackwill's *ipse dixit*, "no further resolution was required", is utter nonsense. Neither Resolution 1441 nor Resolutions 678 (1990) and 687 (1991) uses the words used in the resolutions of June 27, 1950, on Korea, or November 24, 1961 on Katanga, or April 9, 1966, on Rhodesia. They explicitly sanctioned use of force. The expression "serious consequences" belongs to diplomatic exchanges. It is inapt and inadequate as a sanction for war.

Rosenberg noted that Goldsmith "did not put his name to the full Foreign Office paper (on the subject), that he did not publish it sooner and did not speak on it in the Lords debate", on March 17. The Acts received his deserts that day from Lord Goodhart QC, a Liberal Democrat, and from Rabinder Singh, QC. Far more telling was the resignation of Elizabeth Wilmhurst, a legal adviser to the Foreign Office for many years.

The concept of collective security on which the UN is based is inherently flawed. It implies that States judge aggression — or for that matter, terrorism — impartially when, in fact, they judge it in the light of their national interest. The UN fails when States fail to unite in action. But they sometimes reckon with the larger interest. The council connived for a decade at Iraq's impoverishment at the US's behest. It recoiled from murder. Like others, India faced the dilemma. Friendship with the US had to be balanced against its naked display of brute power. We witness what Jessica Tuchman Mathews, president of the Carnegie Endowment, called the spectacle of "a US that seems to want to decide for the world". That is a challenge all other nations must face today.

Disparaging the UN is no answer. Tear apart the gift-wrapping and you have what Andrew Boyd called "a do-it-yourself kit, with incomplete instructions and a price tag".

Pentagon knew of museum risk



Iraqis cheer US soldiers in Najaf. (AFP)

America's plans face early test in Nasiriyah

Nasiriyah, April 14 (Reuters): Plans for a US-led administration of post-war Iraq face an early test tomorrow when US officials and divided and distrustful Iraqi factions meet in the southern city of Nasiriyah.

Many Iraqis regard the meeting with scepticism, but say any government is better than the anarchy and lawlessness that has swept much of the country since Saddam Hussein was toppled.

The meeting will be overseen by Jay Garner, a no-nonsense retired US general who received plaudits for running Operation Provide Comfort, the mission to assist Kurds in northern Iraq after the 1991 Gulf War.

"Nasiriyah will be the first meeting of the Iraqis and is a test case," said Nathan Jones, spokesman for Garner's Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA), the body charged with running Iraq immediately after the war.

"We're using the big tent theory — we want to bring in as many people as possible, to get a broad spectrum of Iraqis together and see what we can do."

Another senior US government official said the plan was to hold several more regional meetings leading up to a larger national meeting at which an interim administration would be set up, hopefully within weeks.

"We're talking about weeks and not a lot longer," he said.

Around 60 Iraqis are expected to attend, including radical and mainstream Shias and Sunni groups, Kurds and the former monarchy, overthrown in 1958.

While the talks may have the feel of another Loya Jirga, the days-long tribal meeting which helped shape post-war Afghanistan, there are already signs of deep division among Iraq's diverse factions and doubts over whether many will attend.

Some do not want to be seen to be at the beck and call of the Americans. Others plan to send low-level representatives to test the waters before committing their leaders.

"As long as the fundamental issues have not been addressed and the will of the Iraqi people has not been taken into account, we can't hope for much from this meeting," Mohsen Hakim, spokesman for the Iran-based Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, said from Tehran.

"For whatever reason, the US does not want to see the Iraqi Opposition seize power in Iraq. But if the Opposition had been given a role from the beginning, we would not have witnessed this chaos and looting," he said.

Ahmad Chalabi, one of the most high-profile Iraqi exile leaders and a Pentagon favourite, has said he will send a representative. The US has said the UN, which is to send observers to the meeting, would play some sort of role in the process as an interim authority is set up.

Many ordinary Iraqis regard the factions attending the meeting with suspicion. "Each group represents themselves. They have no power," said Sami al-Aqabi, 47, a Baghdad engineer and businessman. He had little faith in Chalabi. "He was 30 years out of Iraq. Definitely he doesn't know what's going on," he said.

GUY GUGLIOTTA

Washington, April 14: In the months leading up to the Iraq war, US scholars repeatedly urged the defence department to protect Iraq's priceless archaeological heritage from looters, and warned specifically that the National Museum of Antiquities was the single most important site in the country.

Late in January, a mix of scholars, museum directors, art collectors and antiquities dealers asked for and were granted a meeting at the Pentagon to discuss their misgivings. McGuire Gibson, an Iraq specialist at the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute, said yesterday that he went back twice more, and he and colleagues peppered defence department officials with e-mail reminders in the weeks before the war began.

"I thought I was given assurances that sites and museums would be protected," Gibson said. Instead, even with US forces firmly in control of Baghdad last week, looters breached the museum, trashed its galleries, burned its records, invaded its vaults and smashed or carried off thousands of artifacts

dating from the founding of ancient Sumer around 3,500 BC to the end of Islam's Abbasid Caliphate in 1258 AD.

Asked yesterday about the looting of the museum, defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld blamed the chaos that ensues "when you go from a dictatorship to a new order. We didn't allow it. It happened," Rumsfeld said yesterday on NBC's *Meet the Press*. "There's a transition period, and no one is in control. There is still fighting in Baghdad. We don't allow bad things to happen. Bad things happen in life, and people do loot."

Iraq also has 13 regional museums at risk, including another world-renowned facility in the northern city of Mosul, as well as thousands of archaeological sites, ranging from the fabled ancient cities of Ur, Nineveh, Nimrud and Babylon to medieval Muslim villages abandoned in the country's vast western reaches.

"To the extent possible, and as soon as though it were yesterday, someone needs to post border guards to intercept antiquities as they try to leave the country," said archaeologist and art historian John Russell, of the

Massachusetts College of Art. "There is a smuggling network in Iraq, and there could have been professional thieves among the looters."

In January a statement from the Archaeological Institute of America called on "all governments" to protect cultural sites during an expected conflict and in its aftermath. Gibson and others said they were especially concerned because of the example provided by the 1991 Gulf War. Allied forces scrupulously avoided targeting Iraqi cultural sites during the bombing of Baghdad 12 years ago — one attack put only a shrapnel dent in the National Museum's front door even as it levelled a telecommunications facility across the street. But the end of that war kicked off a looting rampage, and eventually allowed systemic smuggling to develop. Artifacts from inadequately guarded sites were dug up and hauled away during the 12 years between the wars. "We wanted to make sure this didn't happen again," Gibson said.

"They said they would be very aware and would try to protect the artifacts," Gibson said, recalling January meetings with

Pentagon officials charged with target selection and the protection of cultural sites. "We told them the looting was the biggest danger, and I felt that they understood that the National Museum was the most important archaeological site in the entire country. It has everything from every other site."

Pentagon officials knowledgeable about those meetings referred questions to the public affairs office, which said the military has tried to protect the sites.

Since the 1920s, Iraq has required that anyone digging within its borders file a report with the museum. In more recent years, expeditions had to submit all excavated material to the museum for formal cataloguing after each year's digging "season."

Looters apparently burned or otherwise destroyed most of those records last week, but Gibson suggested scholars worldwide could duplicate the archive by copying their files and reports and resubmitting them to Iraqi authorities.

The museum's artifacts are another matter. Although the damage done is almost certainly

catastrophic, Russell said. "It's going to be a matter of weeks or months before we're going to be able to identify any particular thing."

Iraq is the home of ancient Mesopotamia and has a cultural heritage that extends for thousands of years and encompasses the Sumerians, Akkadians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Parthians, Sassanids and Muslims, to name only the best known civilisations.

"There are thousands of unique items," said Boston University archaeologist Paul Zimansky. "If somebody walks off with those things, we'll never see them again. It is a disaster of major proportions." The museum houses the 5,000-year-old alabaster Uruk Vase, which shows a procession entering a temple — the earliest known depiction of a ritual. Also from Uruk is the "White Lady," the stone face of a woman that looks as if it was carved during the Greek Classic period but is 5,500-years-old, one of the earliest known examples of representational sculpture.

The bust of an Akkadian king, dated 2,300 BC, is the earliest

copper casting ever found. The Neolithic collection, of items about 9,000-years-old, includes small sculptures of birds' heads from Nemrik, north of Mosul. Russell said the museum staff attempted to pack up the portable items on display and stash them in vast below-ground storage rooms and vaults, but looters found them. The museum also contained a spectacular cache of gold artifacts from the burial tombs of Assyrian queens in Nimrud.

"They were sent away to the Central Bank, and I told the Pentagon about those too," Gibson said. "But I hear they looted the Central Bank as well." Zimansky said Iraq's isolation during Saddam's rule meant a great deal of material had remained unstudied and uncatalogued for years. An as-yet unresearched Sippar library of cuneiform clay tablets lay in the museum's basement and — if it survived — might contain the missing pieces of the Gilgamesh Epic, a heroic tale conceived by the Sumerians and written and rewritten in Mesopotamia for more than 1,000 years.

LOS ANGELES TIMES-WASHINGTON POST NEWS SERVICE



An Iraqi guard with a torn carpet in the ransacked National Museum of Antiquities, Baghdad. (AFP)

US forces storm Tikrit in last military assault

Tikrit, April 14 (Reuters): US Marines backed by tanks stormed into Saddam Hussein's final stronghold today, seizing control of his hometown Tikrit in possibly the last major military action of the Iraq war.

Attack helicopters swooped low over one district, firing heavy machineguns to blast out lingering clusters of do-or-die defenders, while Marine patrols combed a bombed-out presidential palace in search of senior supporters of the ousted government.

US commanders said the fall of Tikrit, 175 km north of Baghdad, brought their 26-day military campaign to a "transition point". The whereabouts of Saddam, who was born in a village near Tikrit in 1937, remained unknown.

US Brig. Gen. Vincent Brooks said at war headquarters in Qatar there could still be fighting, but that it would not be an "organised regime effort". US forces now see the main threat as hit-and-run attacks by paramilitaries.

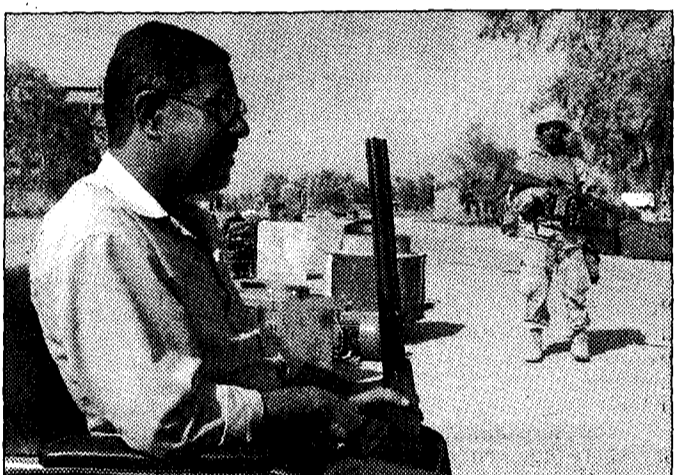
As the main thrust of the war effort eased, Washington upped pressure on Iraq's neighbour Syria, which it says may be harbouring top Saddam loyalists and chemical weapons.

Secretary of state Colin Powell warned of possible diplomatic or economic measures. Syria denied the US charges.

In Baghdad, more than 2,000 Iraqi policemen reported back for work in a move that US authorities hope will help stop the dramatic collapse of Saddam's 24-year iron-fisted rule last week.

Marines charged into Tikrit at dawn after a fierce overnight aerial bombardment of remnants of the Republican Guard. There was no sign of the jubilation seen when other Iraqi cities fell. A statue of a resplendent Saddam on horseback stood unscathed and pristine pictures of him adorned lampposts.

However, some locals flashed



An Iraqi civilian (left) and a US soldier patrol Baghdad University campus on Monday. (Reuters)

thumbs-up signs and said they were glad that fighting appeared over.

"It's a huge relief, we think of ourselves as peaceful people who got stuck with a dictator. Hopefully we'll get a leader who respects people and lets them be in peace," said 58-year old Hussein al-Khalidi.

Normality appeared to be slowly returning to Baghdad, battered by two weeks of air raids followed by four days of near anarchy. Some kiosks and food stores opened. Traffic jams once again started to clog the streets.

But the occasional crackle of gunfire could be heard in the distance, and with water and power supplies still cut, a few hundred Iraqis demonstrated to complain about the lack of security and public services.

"Islamic state! Islamic state! Not American, not American!" dozens of protesters chanted.

US officials tried to hasten the return of Iraqi security forces across the capital, organising a meeting of hundreds of police. Some former Iraqi officers hurled abuse at Saddam and others attacked his statue with hammers and metal bars.

In the central city of Najaf, tribal leaders halted a siege by

armed men of the home of Shia leader grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani and took control of the spiritual centre where two clerics were hacked to death last week.

"The siege has ended," said Mohammad Baqir Mohri, an aide to Sistani, whose home in the city had been surrounded on Saturday by groups demanding he leave Iraq. Sistani's whereabouts were unknown but relatives said that he was safe.

The standoff highlighted how difficult it could be to cement national unity in Iraq. Shias make up 60 per cent of Iraq's population of around 26 million and were persecuted for decades by Saddam's secular Sunni-dominated Baath Party.

British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Washington's main ally in the Iraq war, said he hoped elections could be held in Iraq within a year of an interim authority being established.

As Marines consolidated their position in Tikrit, US officials said Saddam's half brother, Wathban Ibrahim Hasan al-Tikriti, had been captured near the Syrian border.

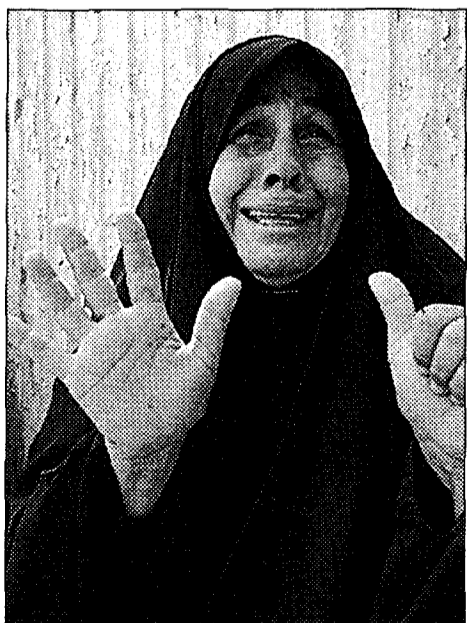
Wathban was on a US most-wanted list of 55 people. Saddam removed him as interior minister in 1995 but he remained an adviser.



LOOTER LOCKED: A looter, caught inside a bank by US soldiers, is taken away in Baghdad on Sunday. (AFP)

Support for US dies as Iraqis count their dead

IAN FISHER



A woman cries for her six sons who are inside the underground jails of the Iraqi military intelligence department building in northern Baghdad. (Reuters)

Baghdad, April 14: "I don't know how I'll tell him," Sindous Abbas, 30, said yesterday. At her back was a window, which looked out to the sidewalk where her husband, Saad, 34, sat in pain and ignorance.

He had been out of the hospital for just two days. She spoke inside so he would not hear.

"It wasn't just ordinary love," Abbas said. "He was crazy about them. It wasn't like other fathers."

What all his neighbours and relatives and his own wife have not yet been able to say to him is that three of his daughters — Marwa, 11, Tabarea, 8, and Safa, 5 — did not survive the missile that punched down into their apartment on the third night of the US airstrikes.

No one has any reason to believe it was anything other than an American missile.

Yesterday evening, Saad Abbas, sitting with his broken heel propped up on a chair, with scabs and cuts from the shrapnel that blasted into chest, legs and arms, told how his apartment filled with smoke that night and how he dragged three of his children out.

He rushed back into the apartment for

the other three. Then the missile exploded. "I still have three more children in the hospital," Abbas said. That is what everyone has been telling him.

While US military officials stressed repeatedly that all efforts were made to avoid civilian casualties in the attack on Iraq, there still were many — and only now that Saddam Hussein's government is not in power and restricting movement is the full toll of injury and death slowly trickling out.

There are still no definitive estimates, but it is clear that several hundred Iraqi civilians died and many more were injured both from bombs and from soldiers firing on suspected combatants.

It is also clear that those casualties have cost the Americans precious support here.

"Saddam Hussein is gone, and we are all left here to die," said Hussein Nameh, 22, who was standing on the street waiting for a taxi outside Saddam Medical Centre here.

Because this is one of the few hospitals still operating in the city — most of the others are looted and their employees gone — it is overflowing with the injured, including Nameh's cousin, Toma Sabar Toma.

On Saturday, a US Marine was also killed

outside the hospital by a sniper's bullet. Yesterday Toma, 18, stood barefoot, dazed and mute on the street, his nose crushed and his mouth swollen.

A feeding tube was taped into his nose because part of his tongue was blown off by what his cousin said was shrapnel from an American bomb, dropped in the Kadhim neighbourhood a week ago.

Toma's three friends with him inside the house were killed. On the street, too, was Adel Samurai, 40, lying in a hospital bed, wheeled out to wait for a taxi.

His brother, Ali, 50, said Samurai was sitting at home on Thursday night when a firefight broke out on his street involving US troops.

He was hit twice in the chest. One bullet passed through him; the other, doctors removed and identified as an American round.

"So many people were killed," said Ali Samurai, who said he had gone to the hospital straight from the funerals of nine people killed by what he said were US bombs.

"There was no need for this. The Americans are greedy and just want our resources. We never attacked the US."

In the old Awa section of Baghdad, with its narrow streets and balconies and mostly

poor Shia families, Abbas' relatives climbed to the roof of his home to show where the missile hit. It sheared through a thick metal bar of a rooftop sheep pen, then through an iron feeding tray, then through the roof and into Abbas' small home. Inside the apartment, the missile ricocheted off a wall, then smashed into the floor, near where Abbas' four daughters were sleeping.

Abbas rushed out with his two sons and one daughter, whose leg was smashed.

He did not see the shell, which exploded when he ran back inside for the rest of his family. Yesterday the walls of the home were still spattered with blackened pieces of flesh. A leg of one of the girls had blown off and was suspended that night from the ceiling fan.

"Even the Israelis don't do things this bad," said Thia Rashid, 35, one of Abbas' cousins, who lives nearby and helped clean the apartment. "There is no reason for this. It's a criminal act." Sindous Abbas, sitting beside her wounded daughter, Sara, 14, said she did not know whether she was angry at the Americans for the deaths of three of her daughters.

"I'm losing my mind," she said. "I just don't know what to say."

NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

JOINT PATROLS IN BAGHDAD, OIL WELLS SAFE, SAYS U.S.

U.S. forces control Tikrit

TIKRIT, IRAQ, APRIL 14. U.S. tanks barrelled today into central Tikrit, and American troops battled hardcore fighters defending the Iraqi President, Saddam Hussein's hometown.

Meanwhile, in Baghdad, Basra and Kirkuk, coalition forces teamed up with Iraqis to bring order to the cities ravaged by looting and lawlessness. In Baghdad, Iraqis and U.S. troops began jointly patrolling the streets.

Campaign easing

In a sign of the easing air campaign, two U.S. Navy aircraft carriers will leave the war zone this week, U.S. officials told the Associated Press.

Two U.S. aircraft carriers and ships in their battle groups were ordered to return to their homeports, according to a U.S. defence official. The USS Kitty Hawk will return to its base at Yokosuka, Japan, and the USS Constellation will return to San Diego, the official said.

Their departure reflects a winding down of the air campaign, although the Pentagon is still sending more ground forces to Kuwait and Iraq.

Amid these developments, Washington stepped up its criticism of Syria, where top Iraqi leaders are believed to have fled. The British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, however, said Syria was not the next U.S.-British military target.

The U.S. forces attacked Tikrit from the south, west and north, capturing a key Tigris river bridge in the city centre and securing a presidential palace as they searched for supporters of Mr. Hussein, Brig. Gen. Vincent Brooks said at the U.S. Central Command in Qatar. There were no defenders at the palace, he said.

South of Tikrit, the Marines were working to secure the town of Samarra, where seven American prisoners of war were rescued on Sunday and taken to Kuwait for medical treatment.

The U.S.-led forces now control all areas with Iraqi oil fields, but it will probably be weeks before crude is flowing again because explosives need to be cleared and wells repaired.

Looting abates



U.S. soldiers on Monday arrest a group of men in Baghdad on the charge of driving a vehicle with weapons and attempting to ambush American troops. — AP

remained closed. Marine First Lt. Greg Starace estimated there were 3,000 U.S. troops in town. A large number of U.S. troops were seen in central Tikrit, some wearing pink blossoms on their uniforms from flowers given to them by local residents.

"It was a ghost town when we first arrived," said U.S. Marine Brig. Gen. John Kelly, commander of the Tikrit operation. "Then they (residents) start sticking their noses out and approaching us and start pointing out where Baathists are, and the Fedayeen and the caches of weapons."

"We're beginning to see a downward trend in looting," Central Command spokesman, Frank Thorp said.

Elsewhere, U.S. forces were working with local authorities to restore order to Iraq's cities after several days of lawlessness, along with power, water service and medical care. Government buildings, hospitals and schools in several cities have been damaged or gutted by looters.

"Children are dying because

this is not enough," he added. "They must give us something tangible. They must restore the services."

Local leaders meet

In the first stirrings of Baghdad politics, religious and civil opposition leaders met in the capital today to discuss security and restoring basic services.

A ranking Shia Muslim cleric, Ayad al-Musawi, told the gathering of about 20 persons, including officials of the newly revived but still small police force, that there should be "no Sunni, no Shia, just one Iraqi nation."

"God willing," he said at the Palestine Hotel, "we will be one hand, one voice and not betray each other." Near the hotel, dozens protested the lack of basic services and demanded that the U.S. military leave.

In Basra, Iraqi traffic police worked alongside British troops in conducting joint neighbourhood patrols.

In the northern city of Kirkuk, American military personnel met the city's tribesmen, politi-

guarding bridges and key intersections. In the old city centre, civilians manned checkpoints armed with guns, clubs and metal pipes. A crowd in the southern city of Najaf surrounded the home of top Shia Muslim cleric for some time, demanding that he and other religious leaders leave the country.

Chalabi not to contest

According to an AFP report from Paris, the Iraqi National Congress leader, Ahmad Chalabi, the man tipped to be Iraq's next leader, said in an interview today that he would not seek political office in any future government.

"I want to participate in the rebuilding of civil society, which has been completely destroyed and corrupted," Chalabi told *Le Monde* in an interview. Asked if he intended to play a political role in post-war Iraq, he replied: "Absolutely not. I am not a candidate for any post."

Top U.S. officials said in As Saliyah that Mr. Chalabi was not the preferred choice of ruler for

15 APR 2003

THE HINDU

4

Death only remedy for Ali

PHILIP SHERWELL

Baghdad, April 13: Doctors treating Ali Ismaeel Abbas, the Iraqi boy who has become the symbol of civilian suffering in the war, say it would be a mercy if he dies because his wounds are so severe. An international campaign has been launched to raise money for Ali, who is likely to die within days if he does not receive specialist treatment, which is only available overseas. Yesterday, however, Dr Faisal al-Atabi, his hospital

paediatrician, told *The Daily Telegraph*: "To be honest, it is probably better if he dies. I don't want it, but that's the awful truth. He has no arms and terrible burns. His physical suffering is enormous and the psychological damage will be immense."

Ali Ismaeel Abbas, 12, lies in Baghdad hospital. The 12-year-old lost both his arms and suffered third-degree burns across much of his torso in a coalition missile attack on a Baghdad suburb that killed his pregnant mother, father, brother and six other relatives.

"Why? Why did this happen to me?" asks Ali, who once dreamed of serving as an army officer but now wants to train as a doctor. "Can they get me new arms? Why did they kill my mother and father?" Ali is nursed and comforted at his bedside by Sister Salima. "I tell him to be strong, not to be afraid, that I am with him now," she says.

She bends over to kiss his forehead and then, weeping, puts her lips to the bandages where his arms once were. "You said this war was about freedom, but instead you gave us death and suffering. Where

is the freedom for Ali?" she asks me.

Sister Salima sobs again. "Don't worry, Ali. I am here for you now," she tells him.

Ali groans constantly from the pain, a wad of white bandages covering the stumps of his amputated arms.

Cream is smeared across the horrific burns that blister his chest and stomach.

He lies on a dirty bed in a squalid children's ward in Saddam City, a sprawling, Shia slum quarter of Baghdad. The unhygienic surroundings are his greatest threat, his wounds leaving him susceptible to

lethal septicaemia. Dr al-Atabi said: "We are treating him with the most advanced antibiotics we have. But he needs a specialist burns centre and there is nothing like that here now."

Ali was first treated in the city's al-Kindi hospital, but that was looted in an orgy of lawlessness after American troops captured the city. In Saddam City, volunteer guards with Kalashnikovs strung across their shoulders patrol the grounds and man the gates to prevent the looters striking there, too.

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH



Ali Ismaeel Abbas

IRAQ AFTER SADDAM

LA 4 WSA W AS

SADDAM'S HALF-BROTHER CAPTURED; 7 MARINES FOUND

U.S. forces enter Tikrit

BAGHDAD, APRIL 13. Fierce fighting was heard late tonight on the edge of Saddam Hussein's traditional northern stronghold of Tikrit after Iraqi tribal leaders offered to surrender as the U.S.-led coalition forces closed in.

There were exchanges of gunfire and helicopters could be seen flying over the Governor's offices as the U.S. forces were preparing to attack.

Tikrit is the last major Iraqi city controlled by Mr. Hussein's forces and one where the remaining members of his regime have been expected to mount a last stand.

A Canadian journalist "embedded" with the U.S. Marines, Matthew Fisher, told CNN that 250 U.S. armoured vehicles had entered the city and quoted the U.S. Commander, Brigadier John Kelly, as saying that five Iraqi tanks had been destroyed on the outskirts and at least 15 persons killed in the fire fights.

U.S. officials said seven U.S. troops listed as missing were found alive and in good condition on the road between Baghdad and Tikrit. The seven arrived at a remote southern Iraq base and were to be taken to Kuwait later.

Meanwhile, Gen. Tommy Franks, commander of the war, disclosed that U.S. forces had samples of DNA from Mr. Hussein and other Iraqi leaders for potential use in the ongoing effort to determine if he is alive or dead. "We have the forensic capability to chase that down and we will chase that down," Franks told CNN. Of Mr. Hussein, Gen. Franks said: "He's either dead or he's running a lot, but he's not commanding anything right now."

A Kurdish television station reported that Mr. Hussein's half-brother, Watban al-Tikriti, was captured in northern Iraq.

Al-Tikriti, a former Interior Minister and Mr. Hussein's adviser, was found northwest of Mosul in an apparent attempt to reach Syria, said KTV, a station operated by the Kurdistan Democratic Party, one of the two main Kurdish factions. The station gave no other details.

Looting continues

In Baghdad, looters hit Al-Salam presidential palace to nab bone china with the Iraqi eagle insignia, fancy washbasins and bathtubs — even fish from the garden pond. "Look how he lived when we couldn't even get bread," a man said.

Looters also hit a vast stretch of army barracks and warehouses on the western outskirts. Using trucks and horse-drawn carts, they took toilets, bathtubs, sinks and construction materials. Nearer the city centre, an institute of military studies was looted and gutted by fire.

Chinese embassy attacked

China on Sunday said looters attacked its embassy in Baghdad, the official Xinhua News Agency reported. A Xinhua reporter said he saw 20 armed men in the inner courtyard removing refrigerators, computers and air conditioners early Saturday. Malaysian officials said gunmen ambushed and kidnapped three Malaysian journalists in Baghdad and killed their Iraqi interpreter. The journalists were later released unharmed. Two Malaysian doctors were wounded.

Elsewhere in the capital,



An Iraqi man carrying his mother as they return to Baghdad on Sunday after fleeing the U.S.-led bombardment. — AFP



U.S. Marines arrest a suspected looter in a street in Baghdad on Sunday. — AP

however, the convulsions of anarchy appeared to be petering out. People felt secure enough to leave their homes and drive around, causing late morning traffic jams.

Library torched

The National Library, which houses a number of rare volumes, was in flames today after being ransacked, said an AFP reporter. The library, built in 1961, is home to Iraq's national archives.

Meanwhile, British troops and Iraqi policemen worked together in Basra today — the first stage in efforts to restore order in Iraq's second largest city, which has been the scene of

mass looting in recent days.

The policemen, the first patrol in the city since the collapse of Saddam Hussein's rule, took to the streets, albeit in a limited capacity, in a bid to restore civil order. The British troops distributed a newspaper to Iraqis that military officials said was written "by Iraqis for Iraqis".

The U.S. Marines today reported finding five canisters with a substance testing positive for chemical agents but backed off their claim of finding 278 suspect artillery shells.

U.S. soldier shot at

In Mosul, the biggest city in the north, a U.S. soldier was shot and wounded Sunday

while on a patrol aimed at improving security. U.S. troops have control of Mosul's airport. The city in general appeared calm, but tensions between Kurds and Arabs appeared to escalate.

Many Arabs, who account for about two-thirds of the city, see the heavy presence of the Kurdish fighters in Mosul as an unwelcome occupation force.

In the old city centre, civilians armed with guns manned checkpoints to check for looters. The Arab TV station Al-Jazeera reported that 15 people died in a fight between residents and looters.

The U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, in an interview with the British Broadcasting Corp., tried to ease doubts about the U.S. role in Iraq's post-war reconstruction. "The U.S. has not anointed anyone to be the future leader of Iraq or to be the leader of the interim Iraqi authority," he said.

"We believe very strongly that the Iraqi people and the representatives of the Iraqi people should do that."

Bush warns Syria

In Washington, the United States President, George W. Bush, has warned Syria not to harbour fleeing Iraqi leaders, saying that Syrian mercenaries have been helping Iraqi troops against the U.S.-led coalition forces. — AFP, AP, Reuters

India can be a model for Iraq: Chalabi

NEW DELHI, APRIL 13. Ahmed Chalabi, head of the Iraqi National Congress and tipped to lead a post-war government in Iraq, has said that the Indian democratic system should be taken up as a model for his country. He also expressed his desire to visit India.

"Democracy in India is a marvel of civilisation. We hope in some respects to have a political system similar to India," Dr. Chalabi, now involved in the U.S.-led efforts to form a new interim government, told Third Eye TV, which covers the war for Doordarshan. "India is a great country. It is special for us. India also developed on her own and achieved great technological advancement. I am devoted to India and would like to visit India soon," he said in his first interview to the Indian media. — PTI

Rumsfeld in, Powell out

With his crafty strategy, the Defence Secretary changes war tactics, stymies Powell, for ever

GREG JAFFE
WASHINGTON

98-9-19A

VICTORY in Iraq promises to offer a big boost to Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's mission to transform how the US military fights, what it buys and where it goes.

The triumph amounts to a vindication of the Rumsfeld Doctrine, which envisions faster forces, with lighter equipment, fighting quicker wars. This new way poses a challenge to the Powell Doctrine, which called for the use of an overwhelming force and guided the US military for more than a decade.

The success of the US strategy in Iraq, with its emphasis on speed, is likely to have immediate consequences. In- stead of concentrating ground forces, Pentagon planners are likely to spread them around so they can be deployed quickly to hotspots. "What you see in Iraq in its embryonic form is the kind of warfare that is animating our desire to transform the force," says Stephen Cambone, Undersecretary of Defence (Intelligence) and adviser to Rumsfeld.

The core of the Rumsfeld Doctrine is that the speed of the invading US force is more important than its size. "Speed matters. Speed kills. It leads to less collateral damage and fewer US casualties," says retired Vice Adm. Arthur Cebrowski, head of Rumsfeld's Office of Force Transformation.

It isn't clear that the success US troops experienced in Iraq will translate elsewhere. The Iraqi army, while large, was hobbled by poor morale and a decade of international sanctions. Opposing forces already may be plotting new tactics to counter the Rumsfeld approach. The guerrilla attacks by Iraqi Fi- dayeen, though not well-coordinated, hampered the US advance. A more adept enemy could do more damage.

With the Iraqi regime collapsing, fans of the Rumsfeld doctrine are already crowing. Vice-President Dick Cheney, speaking to editors, declared that Iraq is "proof positive of the success of our efforts to transform our military".

number of heavy tanks they were bringing to the battlefield and to employ the forces they did bring in new ways.

The resulting 125,000 person ground force in Iraq was about half the size of the one that fought the first Gulf

have been debating Rumsfeld over the merits of mass versus speed since the defence secretary returned to the Pentagon two years ago.

The defence secretary and his senior aides battled Army officials throughout the summer and fall over how large a ground force would be needed in Kuwait to initiate an invasion of Iraq. Rumsfeld and his aides wanted to ensure that the deployed force was as small as possible.

But the bigger question is that finding money for these high-risk endeavours will be difficult. The biggest fear of the Army's brass is that Rumsfeld will see the swift US victory in Iraq as further proof that the Army is too large, and propose cutting it back to pay for a lighter, faster force in the future.

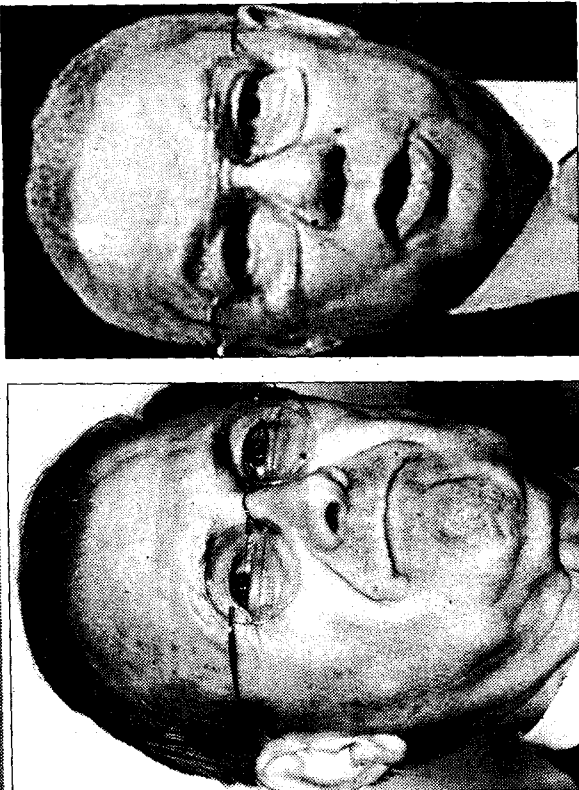
Many of his contemporaries, now retired, were vocal about their opposition to Rumsfeld's strategy. Even after a few coalition setbacks, Rumsfeld and his aides insisted a pause was not only unnecessary, but potentially catastrophic.

Although the Fidayeen attacks had been a surprise, they were never able to inflict significant casualties. Many in the military, both at the Pentagon and in the Persian Gulf, believed the guerrillas were ineffective because Iraqis could never get a clear fix on where the US troops were.

Also, those who were calling for reinforcements also underestimated the killing power of precision weapons from planes, helicopters and rockets.

The question now is how much mass still matters. Senior Army officers warn about drawing too many lessons from Iraq. Though large in numbers, the Iraqi military hasn't been able to get spare parts for its tanks for more than a decade and couldn't get its fighter jets into the sky. That allowed US bombers to fly circles over the battlefield. —WSJ

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL SPECIAL



The core of the Rumsfeld doctrine is that the speed of the invading force is more important than its size. Senior Army officers, schooled in the Powell doctrine, have been debating Rumsfeld over the merits of mass versus speed since the defence secretary returned to the Pentagon two years ago

Today better communications and surveillance equipment what Rumsfeld's advisers call the "unblinking eye over the battlespace" allow US troops to see what an enemy is doing more quickly than in the first Gulf War.

To achieve greater speed in this conflict, Rumsfeld took risks that made many Army officers uncomfortable. He pushed military planners to reduce the

War and far more dependent on air power. In the first Gulf War, military planners took more tanks and troops into battle than necessary and saw that as a strength of their strategy; it slowed US forces, but it protected them against unforeseen attacks or resistance.

For Rumsfeld, 70, such excess is more vice than virtue. Senior Army officers, schooled in the Powell doctrine,

Endgame at Saddam's home



A looter caught inside a bank by a US soldier in Baghdad. US forces detained suspected thieves for the first time in the Iraqi capital on Sunday. (AFP)

Baghdad, April 13 (Reuters): Marines entered the birthplace of Saddam Hussein today, advancing into the northern town of Tikrit in a sign that the 25-day-old war was in its last phase.

US troops battled remnants of the Iraqi army in Saddam's home town, sending attack helicopters and F-18 aircraft into the last significant town outside their control.

Americans rejoiced as all seven listed US prisoners of war were found safe and well on the road between Baghdad and Tikrit after their captors apparently fled from the Marines advancing on Saddam's besieged home town.

In Baghdad and Basra, life started returning to normal as Iraqis volunteered to help restore law and order and rebuild the war-scarred cities.

But in the holy city of Najaf, friction between Shia factions flared. An aide to a top Shia cleric said an armed group surrounded his house and gave him 48 hours to leave.

Military planners had expected that elements of the Iraqi army and Baath Party might mount a last stand in Tikrit, dominated by the clan of Saddam, who was born in a nearby village.

"This morning, Iraqi infantry came out of their holes to fight the Marines in their light armoured vehicles. About 15 Iraqis died in that exchange, no Americans," Matthew Fisher of Canada's *National Post* newspaper told CNN from Tikrit.

After nightfall, the Marines battled Iraqi troops on the outskirts of the town. "It's a very, very significant attack," Fisher said. He said troops had been told there was a core of about 2,500 Republican Guard and Sad-



A US soldier looks at a mural in Saddam's main palace in Baghdad. (Reuters)

dam Fidayeen in the town.

However, armed men in Tikrit told al Jazeera that tribal leaders were negotiating a ceasefire with US forces and that Iraqi troops and paramilitaries had left.

General Tommy Franks, who has commanded the US-led war in Iraq, said that although the core Iraqi army had been destroyed, militia, death squads and foreign fighters were battling on.

Normality slowly returned to Baghdad with street-traders and kiosks selling food and cigarettes for the first time since US troops seized the Iraqi capital.

Thousands of Iraqis who had fled the fighting drove back into the city with furniture and clothes strapped to their cars.

It was an emotional homecoming for 42-year-old Daoud Khashash Hussein. "I am so happy," he said as he hugged his tearful 70-year-old father, who had remained in Baghdad.

But scores of residents protested in central Baghdad, angry that power and water supplies were still disrupted. Some accused US forces of being concerned

only about oil rather than getting the country back on its feet.

"They have operated some of the oil facilities, but they are not operating the power and water systems because they are just after the oil," said 42-year-old civil servant Ali Zuhair.

Anxious to restore calm in Baghdad, hundreds of Iraqi police and civil servants responded to US calls to meet in the city centre and discuss returning to service. Baghdad police, fearing they would be mistaken for combatants, had quit their patrols and stayed at home.

Iraqi officials said local police should gather tomorrow at the police training college, health workers at a hospital and electricity workers at one of Baghdad's power stations. There they would be assigned duties.

In Washington, President George W. Bush warned Syria against offering Saddam safe haven. "Syria just needs to cooperate with the US and our partners, not harbour any Baathists, any military officials, any people who need to be held to account."

Defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld echoed Bush but declined to say what the US might do if Saddam surfaces in Syria.

The US-led forces have so far arrested just one senior Iraqi official — Saddam's top scientific adviser, General Amer Hamudi al-Saadi. US intelligence officials believe he could be the key to unlocking secrets about Iraq's weapons programmes. But Saadi insisted Iraq had no banned chemical or biological arms — the ostensible reason for the war.

NBC television network reported late tonight that the head of Iraq's nuclear programme, Jafar al-Jafar, has surrendered to an unnamed foreign government.

Hunt with DNA

Will America ever know for sure whether Saddam Hussein is dead or alive?

America's war commander General Tommy Franks said on Sunday that US-led forces had DNA samples of Saddam and would use it to check whether attempts to kill him had succeeded.

Asked if the US-led forces had samples of Saddam's DNA, Franks said: "Oh, of course... what you should know is that we have the forensic capability to chase these things down and we'll chase them down, every one of them, all the way."

"He's either dead or he's running a lot," Franks added. "He'll simply be alive until I can confirm he's dead."

"The appropriate people with the appropriate forensics are doing checks... in each of the places where we think we may have killed regime leadership."

Brother caught

Saddam's half-brother Watban Ibrahim Hasan was captured as he tried to cross the border into Syria, AFP reported, quoting Kurdish TV. Watban was interior minister in the Saddam regime.

QUOTE

I wouldn't say it's over, but I will say we have American forces in Tikrit right now

TOMMY FRANKS

IRAQ AFTER SADDAM

5

Iraq-spy slur on Russia

DAVID HARRISON

Baghdad, April 13: Top secret documents obtained by *The Daily Telegraph* in Baghdad show that Russia provided Saddam Hussein's regime with wide-ranging assistance in the months leading up to the war, including intelligence on private conversations between Tony Blair and other Western leaders.

Moscow also provided Saddam with lists of assassins available for "hits" in the West and details of arms deals to neighbouring countries. The two countries also signed agreements to share intelligence, help each other to "obtain" visas for agents to go to other countries and to exchange information on the activities of Osama bin Laden, the al Qaeda leader.

The documents detailing the extent of the links between Russia and Saddam were obtained from the heavily bombed headquarters of the Iraqi intelligence service in Baghdad yesterday.

The sprawling complex, which for years struck fear into Iraqis, has been the target of footers and ordinary Iraqis searching for information about

relatives who disappeared during Saddam's rule.

The documents, in Arabic, are mostly intelligence reports from anonymous agents and from the Iraqi embassy in Moscow. Tony Blair is referred to in a report dated March 5, 2002 and marked: "Subject-SECRET". In the letter, an Iraqi intelligence official explains that a Russian colleague had passed him details of a private conversation between Blair and Silvio Berlusconi, the Italian Prime Minister, at a meeting in Rome. The two had met for an annual summit on February 15, 2002, in Rome. The document says that Blair "referred to the negative things decided by the US over Baghdad". It adds that Blair refused to engage in any military action in Iraq at that time because British forces were still in Afghanistan and nothing could be done until after the new Kabul government had been set up.

It is not known how the Russians obtained such potentially sensitive information, but the revelation that Moscow passed it on to Baghdad is likely to have a devastating effect on relations between Britain and Russia and

come as a personal blow to Blair. The Prime Minister declared a "new era" in relations with President Putin when they met in Moscow in October 2001 in the aftermath of the World Trade Centre attacks.

In spite of warnings by the British intelligence and security services of increasing Russian espionage in the West, Blair fostered closer relations with Putin, visiting his family dacha near Moscow, supporting the Russians in their war in Chechnya, and arranging for the Russian President to have tea with the Queen. Blair was surprised and dismayed when Putin joined France in threatening to veto the American and British resolution on Iraq in the UN, but continued to differentiate between President Putin and President Jacques Chirac.

The Prime Minister refused to join the French, German and Russian leaders in their summit on Iraq this weekend, but still regarded Putin as an ally in global politics.

The list of assassins is referred to in a paper dated November 27, 2000. In it, an agent signing himself "SAB" says that the

Russians have passed him a detailed list of killers. The letter does not describe any assignments that the assassins might be given but it indicates just how much Moscow was prepared to share with Baghdad. Another document, dated March 12, 2002, appears to confirm that Saddam had developed, or was developing nuclear weapons. The Russians warned Baghdad that if it refused to comply with the UN then that would give the US "a cause to destroy any nuclear weapons".

A letter from the Iraqi embassy in Moscow shows that Russia kept Iraq informed about its arms deals with other countries in West Asia. Correspondence, dated January 27, 2000, informed Baghdad that in 1999 Syria bought rockets from Russia in two separate batches valued at \$65 million (£41 million) and \$73 million (£46 million). It also says that Egypt bought surface-to-air missiles from Russia and that Kuwait — Saddam's old enemy — wanted to buy Russian arms to the value of \$1 billion. The Russians also informed Iraq that China had bought military aircraft from Russia and Israel at

the end of 1999. Moscow also passed on information of Russians who could help Iraqi politicians obtain visas to go to many Western countries.

The name of Osama bin Laden appears in a number of Russian reports. Several give details of his support for the rebels in Chechnya. They say Laden had built two training camps in Afghanistan, near the Iranian border, to train mujahideen fighters for Russia's rebel republic. The camps could each hold 300 fighters, who were all funded by Laden.

Training materials found at the complex give insight into the Iraqi intelligence gathering methods. One certificate shows that a Rashid Jassim had passed an advance course in lock-picking. Other papers found at the headquarters include reports on the succession in Saudi Arabia and on US-Yemen relations.

The intimate relationship between Baghdad and Moscow is further illustrated by copies of Christmas cards sent by Taher Jafil Habosh, the head of the Iraqi intelligence service, to his Kremlin counterpart.

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

Pax Americana

Bush's pre-emptive doctrine has worked -- in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is now the template for the New World Order

Pranil Pat Chaudhuri
New Delhi

WHEN PRESIDENT George W. Bush defined the 'axis of evil' in a speech before the US Congress in April last year, opinion was divided. Most thought this was rhetorical bombast. America had begun with all three countries for a decade or more.

Presumably following 9/11, the Bush administration would yell loudly at Iran, Iraq and North Korea, possibly tighten the sanctions thumbscrews. This sense was heightened when the Taleban short work of the Taliban but was left snuffing like a puff of wind for a dispersed Al Qaeda.

But Bush was true to his word. By the fall of last year, Washington was telling the rest of the world that Saddam Hussein had to go. And at the United Nations for a war and got a fuzzy resolution in return. More usefully the world was told that Iraq was a danger to US public support for unilateral action.

And then the Marines landed. Three weeks later, Firdos became the world's image of a nuclear attack.

There is now a Bush doctrine. The pre-emptive doctrine outlined by the US in its National Security Strategy last September is not just some unrepeatable of the past. It's the template for a new world order. Today governments are holding it to a mirror to

see if their country's name is hidden in the text.

The doctrine's first component: The US will hold countries to a yardstick of behaviour -- sponsoring terrorism, pursuing WMD, not liking the West and so on. And if the index of 'badness' gets too much, the US will take that government out.

It's the international relations equivalent of racial profiling. And as the NSS made clear: "The US will not hesitate to act alone" over Vietnam.

Even those who couldn't stand Saddam hoped the US would at least singe its fingers enough to think twice about pre-empting another country. No chance. Iraqis killed even less Americans than they did in 1991.

Pentagon chief Donald Rumsfeld had felt his army could get to Baghdad in 10 days. They did it in 26. But his argument: the US can wage war on the cheap thanks to silicon chips and satellites still stands. And he has two wars under his belt to prove it.

Its third component is the most controversial. Namely, that the US will use its overwhelming power to bring an end to what one State Department official called the 'democratic exception'. Read: Open up the political haven of the Arab world.

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HOW KEY CABINET MEN FARED



Dick Cheney: Vice-President, recent convert to neo-conservatism, will benefit most



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US FOOTPRINT: The defeat of Saddam Hussein proved many points.

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counter Al Qaeda

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But this does not ride out airstrikes, covert ops and assassinations. This has Iran, whose nascent nuclear reactors are juicy targets for precision-guided munitions, in cold sweat.

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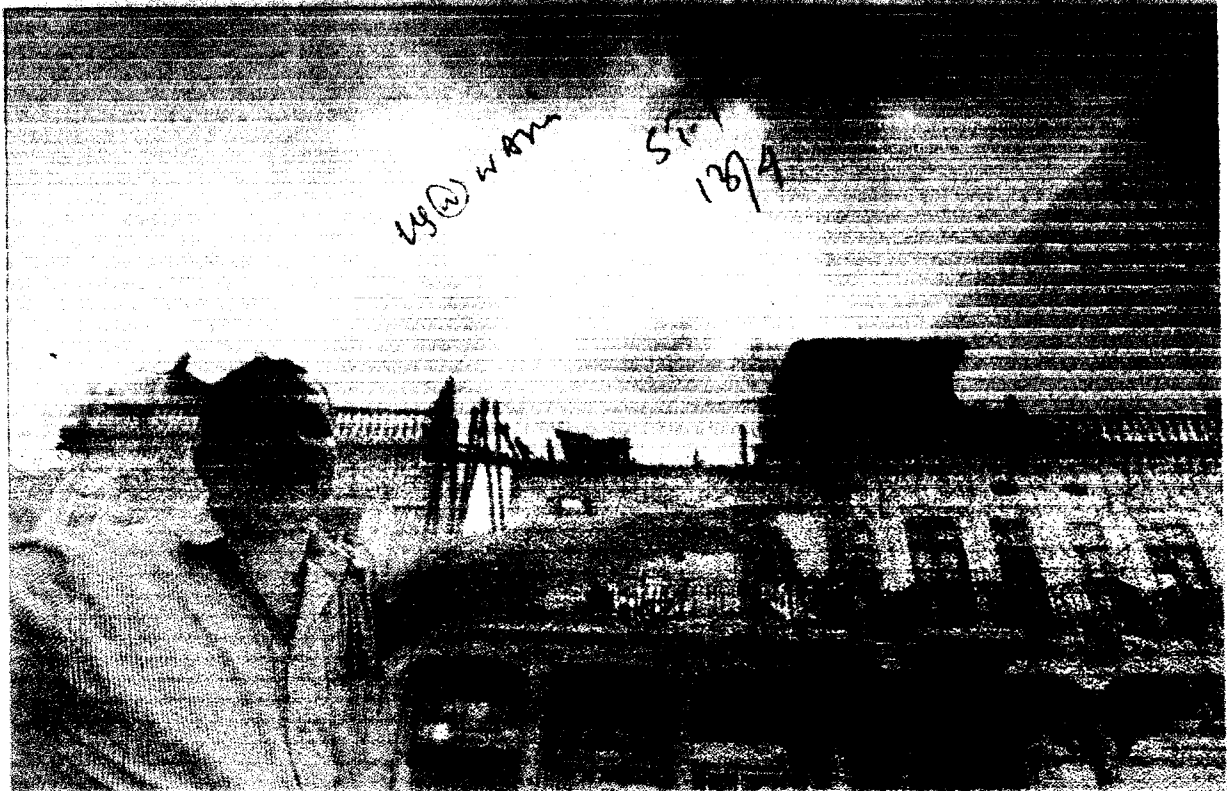
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■ 1,200 cops, officers will enforce order in Saddam's shadow



ANARCHY REIGNS: An Iraqi shopkeeper gestures at looters in front of a barabgy building in central Baghdad's al-Rashid Street on Saturday. — AFP (More Iraq War reports on page 12)

ASSOCIATED PRESS

BAGHDAD, April 12. — As looting persisted today across Iraq, US officials said they will send 1,200 police and judicial officers to help restore order. US commanders also indicated the last major military challenge, that of taking President Saddam Hussein's hometown of Tikrit, may be easier than expected thanks to desertions and bombing. In other developments, the No. 1 Iraqi wanted for questioning about the chemical weapons programme surrendered to US authorities, while Kurdish fighters began withdrawing from oil-rich Kirkuk. Troops remained focussed today on erasing military threats instead of curbing lawlessness. In Baghdad, US Marines showed reporters a cache of about 50 explosives-laden suicide

UN staff set to return

AMMAN, April 12. — The UN Humanitarian Coordinator For Iraq announced here that a group of international UN staff will return to northern Iraq on Monday. But the UNHCR chief, Mr Ramiro Lopes da Silva, warned the US and British coalition must first assume their responsibilities under the Geneva Convention and restore law and order in exchange for the full return of UN staff there. Next week, a special adviser to UN Secretary-General Mr Kofi Annan will be briefed by the Bush Administration on its plans for post-war Iraq. — AFP/AP

■ Editorial: IMAGES OF WAR, page 6

home. At a nearby junior school, seven classrooms were filled with crates of grenade-launchers, surface-to-air missiles and ammunition. Residents said Iraqi soldiers and militia had positioned weaponry across the neigh-

bourhood to US military authorities today, insisting Iraq had no weapons of a destruction and the US-led task was minimal and. Late Amir al-Samir was the weapons adviser to the President and oversaw chemical programme in past. He is believed to have depth knowledge of other weapons programmes as well.

Searching for weapons for holdout bands of pro-Saddam fighters, has been the primary task of coalition troops in Baghdad. But US officials, criticised for doing too little to curb looting, say law-and-order

will now become a higher priority. As looting spread to new areas of Baghdad, Marines agreed to joint patrols with Iraqis. Hundreds of Iraqis also volunteered to help restore order in the city after

Pax Americana

*Bush's pre-emptive doctrine has worked
— in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is now
the template for the New World Order*

Pramit Pal Chaudhuri
New Delhi

WHEN PRESIDENT George W. Bush defined the 'axis of evil' in a speech before the US Congress in April last year, opinion was divided. Most thought this was rhetorical grandstanding. America had problems with all three countries for a decade or more.

Presumably, following 9/11, the Bush administration would yell more loudly at Iran, Iraq and North Korea, possibly fight the sanctions thumbscrews. This sense was heightened when the US made short work of the Taliban but was left snuffling like a truffle hound for a dispersed Al Qaeda.

But Bush was true to his word. By the fall of last year, Washington was telling the rest of the world. Saddam Hussein had to go. It asked the United Nations for legal cover and got a fuzzy resolution in return. More usefully, the months of diplomatic frustration led to a surge in US public support for unilateral action.

And then the Marines landed. Three weeks later, Firdos Square was the world's image of iconoclasm.

There is now a Bush doctrine. The pre-emptive doctrine outlined by the US in its National Security Strategy last September is no longer just some unreadable officialese. It's the template for a new world order. Today governments are holding it to a mirror to

see if their country's name is hidden in the text.

The doctrine's first component: The US will hold countries to a yardstick of behaviour — sponsoring terrorism, pursuing WMD, not liking the West and so on. And if the index of badness gets too much, the US will take that government out.

It's the international relations equivalent of racial profiling. And as the NSS made clear: "The US will not hesitate to act alone."

Its second component: the US is over Vietnam. Even those who couldn't stand Saddam hoped the US would at least singe its fingers enough to think twice about pre-empting another country. No chance. Iraqis killed even less Americans than they did in 1991.

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Its third component is the most controversial, the part no one quite believes. Namely, that the US will use its overweening power to bring an end to what one State Department official called the 'democratic exception'. Read: Open up the political harem of the Arab world.

This policy, unthinkable of Bush pre-9/11 when he showed a complete disinterest in the world, is the most striking example of the rising new intellectual force in Washington: The neoconservative lobby.

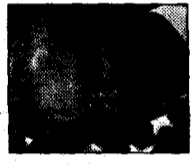
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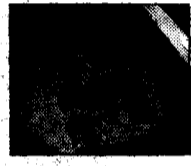
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13 APR 2003

13 APR 2003

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

US sweeps north, anarchy in trail

Mosul falls, Tikrit the last bastion

David Rohde and Jane Perlez
Mosul, April 11

US FORCES entered the northern Iraqi oil city of Mosul on Friday after it fell without a fight as the last of Saddam Hussein's loyalists vanished during the night. After a day of frenzied looting, the few people on the streets gave the Americans a lukewarm reception.

With the breakdown in authority the US forces and their Kurdish allies at first hesitated outside the town. But by mid-afternoon, the Americans came in to claim control of Iraq's third-largest city.

US commanders had expected a hard fight to win control of Mosul, but as their forces positioned themselves for an attack, the commander of the Iraqi 5th Army Corps, a regular army unit, sent word that he wanted to surrender. A formal ceasefire was signed on Friday, according to officials at the US Central Command in Qatar.

The capture of Mosul left Tikrit, Saddam's hometown 110 miles north of Baghdad, the remaining major target for the coalition troops.

In Mosul, as in other cities captured by the coalition, chaos spread through the city. Banks and hospitals, favourite targets in towns that were taken earlier, were looted. At the central bank, fights broke out among looters trying to snatch stolen money from each other. The main vaults were smashed open and bank notes poured out.

At Saddam General Hospital, three of the five ambulances were stolen. Armed men, described as Kurds, tried to enter the hospital but the staff managed to hold them off. Some doctors said their cars were stolen at gunpoint. Officials at Jumbhuriya Hospital said all eight of its ambulances were stolen at gunpoint.

"There is absolutely no security. The medical staff is scared for their safety. The city has fallen into anarchy," said Dr Darfar Ibrahim Hasan, staff physician at Saddam General.

There was no vestige of authority left to control the crowds that poured onto the streets and into the centre from outlying districts. Kurdish fighters were manning checkpoints but were not an obvious presence inside the city. US special forces were not visible in the city by mid-morning, either.

In Baghdad, the tide of looting and chaos gathered steam shortly after dawn. Hospitals again appeared to be the focus of the looters. Armed men swept through a children's hospital on a looting rampage where the bodies of civilians and soldiers have been collected. US troops mostly stood by as the trade ministry burned and the archaeological museum was looted.

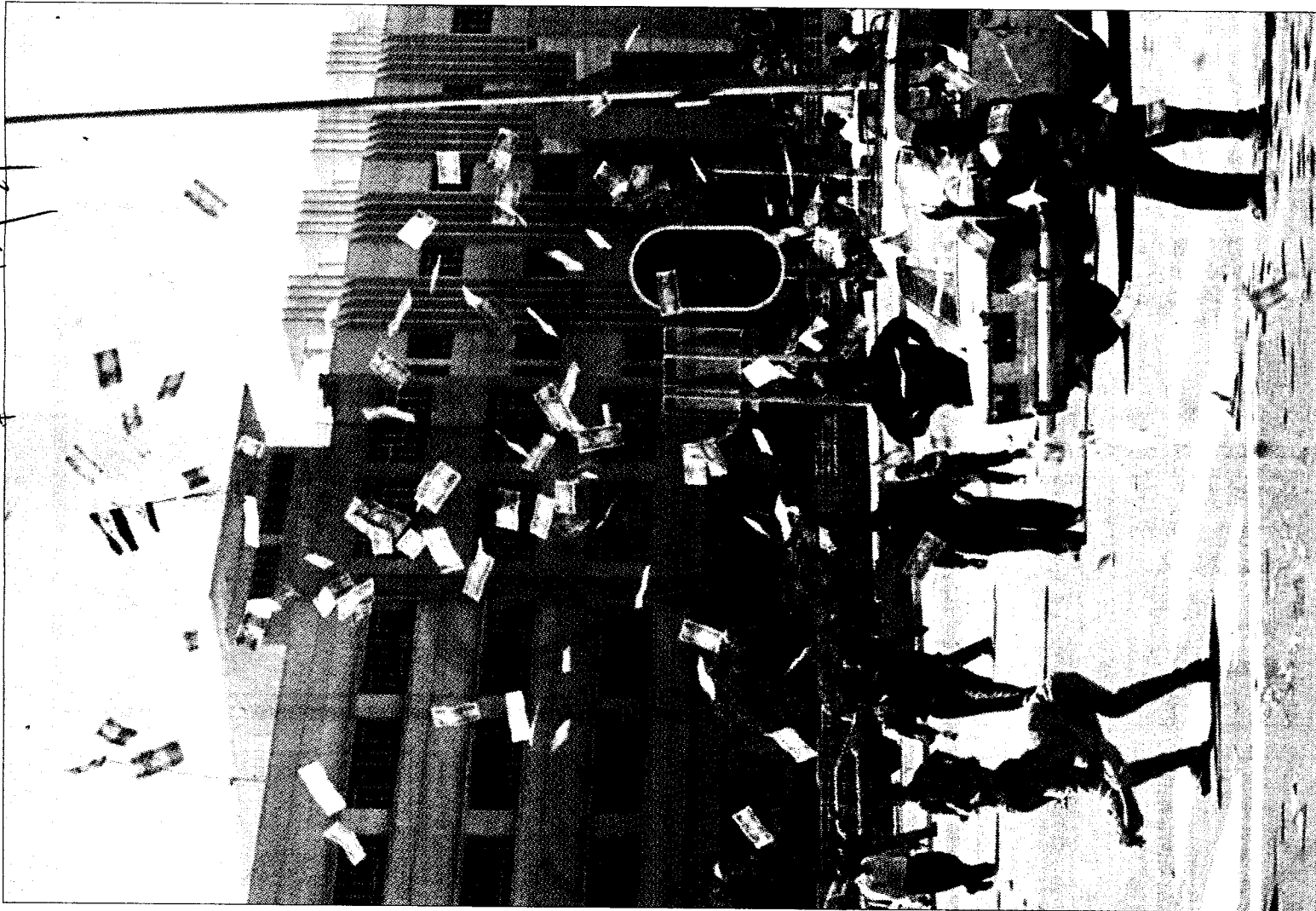
A youth wearing a red baseball cap back-to-front brandished an AK-47 assault rifle by the side of a main road in the centre of the city, waiting for a passing car to hijack. A Reuters correspondent who drove past saw him shoot the driver of the car behind, drag him out and drive away in the car.

"The situation has become worse since yesterday. It is anarchy," one Reuters correspondent said. Another who toured the city said: "The looters are armed and are shooting at people. There are a lot of guns in the streets."

Reuters cameraman Ahmed Bahaddou filmed Arab paramilitaries shooting at civilians in the street. One then stuck the barrel of his AK-47 in his face and told him to stop filming. Criticism of US troops mounted as they again failed to prevent the looting.

The New York Times

Full coverage on Pages 15 & 16



IT'S MONEY, HONEY: Iraqi dinars fly as residents loot a bank in Mosul on Friday.

APF

Saddam dead, or in hometown

John Diamond
Washington, April 11

US INTELLIGENCE is not sure of Saddam Hussein's whereabouts, but the betting in the Pentagon's executive offices is that the Iraqi dictator lies dead under a pile of rubble in Baghdad.

What is left of the Iraqi regime's top leadership is believed to be in Tikrit, 100 miles north of Baghdad. Tikrit, Saddam's hometown, could be the next — and possibly the last — battleground of the war.

Some other reports say the inner circle of Saddam Hussein's family was using Mosul as a way to get to Syria. But with the city falling on Friday, that escape route is now closed off.

The theory given most credence is that Saddam died in Monday's bombing on a home near a Baghdad restaurant.

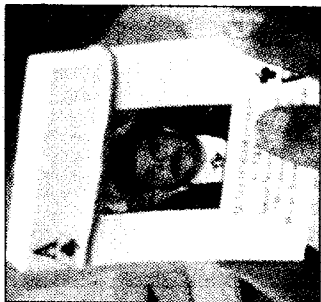
A defence intelligence official said an abrupt end to an electronic intelligence intercept of Iraqi leadership conversations indicated Saddam and his sons were at the site when it was bombed. "The signal died when the bombs hit," the official said.

Intelligence officials say the next likely scenario is that Saddam escaped to Tikrit before the encirclement of Baghdad was complete.

Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld reported seeing "scraps of intelligence" indicating senior Iraqi officials have fled to Syria. But there is no evidence that Saddam is in this group.

Many officials think Saddam is unlikely to leave Iraq. "We will die here in Iraq," the dictator had told CBS on February 26. "And we will maintain our honour, the honour that is required of our people."

One intelligence analyst said Saddam has always been a survivor and is likely to try and hold out as long as he can, thinking he



- 1 **SADDAM HUSSEIN**
(Saddam's son)
- 2 **OUSAY SADDAM HUSSEIN**
(Saddam's son)
- 3 **UDAY SADDAM HUSSEIN**
(Saddam's son)
- 4 **TAHA YASSIN RAMADAN**
(Vice President)
- 5 **TAHA MUHIE-ELDIN MAROUF**
(Vice President)
- 6 **TARIO AZIZ**
(Deputy Prime Minister)
- 7 **NAJI SABRI**
(Foreign Minister)
- 8 **MOHAMMED SAEED AL-SANHAJ**
(Information Minister)
- 9 **ABED HAMEED HIMOUD**
(Saddam's personal secretary and cousin)
- 10 **GEN. IYAD FUTAYEH AL-RAWI**
(Friday's chief)

will survive as in the past. At his media briefing at Central Command on Friday, Brig. Gen. Vincent K. Brooks displayed a deck of 55 cards, each with the name and face of an Iraqi regime leader who must be captured or killed. The cards are being distributed to allied troops and the list is being publicised around Iraq on posters and handbills.

USA Today

WAR ANALYSIS

The best and the worst of the war... so far

William Safire

I NEVER made it higher than corporal, but it doesn't take a military genius to figure out the strategy when you have air superiority: break the back of the enemy's armor and its infantry before your big ground assault. A month's bombing worked in the last Gulf War and a couple of weeks should "degrade" the Iraqi Army again.

Here are ten of my snap judgments about this war:

● **Best gamble:** jumping the guns a few days early in a daring bid to win all at once. The air strike to kill Saddam and his gang may not have succeeded, but failing to try on the basis of a sleeper spy's tip would have been a great mistake.

● **Biggest diplomatic mistake:** trusting the new Islamist government of Turkey. This misplaced confidence denied the US an opening pincers movement and shocked the awesomeness out of "rapid dominance."

● **Best evidence of Sad-**

dam's weakness: his reliance on suicide bombers for media "victories". Individual self-destruction may or may not terrify a civilian population but is not a weapon capable of inflicting decisive casualties on, or striking fear into, a powerful army. (It does vividly demonstrate the Baghdad-terrorist nexus.)

● **Most stunning surprise:** the degree of intimidation of Shiites in southern cities by Saddam's son Uday's Gestapo. When Basra falls, however, fierce retribution on these thug-ish enforcers by local Shia may send a message of uprising to a third of Baghdad's populace.

● **Most effective turnaround of longtime left-wing lingo:** Defence secretary Rumsfeld's labelling of Uday's paramilitaries as "death squads".

● **Most profound statement from a military leader:** General Tommy Franks, refuting criticism of a "pause" in the ground war, said, "We have the

power to be patient."

● **Most overdue revelation by the Pentagon:** that Russia has long been smuggling sophisticated arms to Saddam's regime with Syria's hostile connivance. Who suppressed this damning data for a year, and to what end? And is the CIA still ignorant of the transmission to Iraq through Syria of a key component in rocket propellant from China, brokered by France?

● **Most inexplicable weakness of US intelligence and air power:** the inability to locate and obliterate all of Saddam's

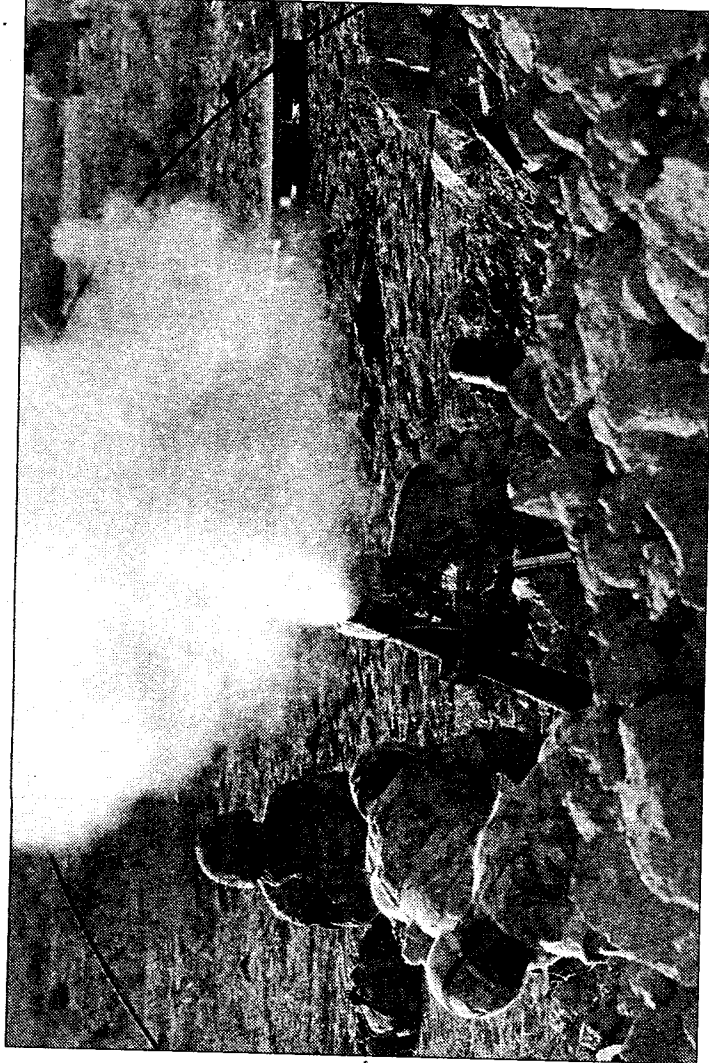
TV propaganda facilities.

● **Best military bribe:** General Franks is less of a showman than the last war's bombastic Norman Schwarzkopf, but his low-key deputy, Lt. Gen. John Abizaid, is Franks' secret information weapon. Since Abizaid speaks fluent Arabic, why doesn't he hold a cool news conference with some angry Arab journalists?

● **Greatest wartime mysteries:** What tales of special-ops derring-do await the telling? Who, in the fog of peace, will honor Iraqis inside Baghdad spot-

ting military targets to save civilians? Will we learn firsthand of the last days of Saddam in his Hitlerian bunker? What scientists, murdered lest they point the way to germs and poison gases, left incriminating documents behind? Where are the secret files of Saddam's Mukhabarat, detailing the venal transactions with Western, Asian, Arab and Persian political and business leaders — and connections to world terror networks? Snap judgments, these. Considered conclusions come later.

The New York Times



"Do you think the aftermath of the war will bring improvements?" I asked.

"Only God knows."

"Is Saddam a good president or a bad president?"

"A good president." Long pause. "Well, maybe not good. So-so."

Fear of Saddam explains some of the reticence (half the Iraqis I've asked have said Saddam will win the war), but you also see nationalism fermenting in Iraqis who proclaim that they will fight US occupation the way Palestinians fight Israeli occupation.

The risk is not that America will lose the war, but that it will never fully establish a peace. Al-

Nicholas D Kristof

LET'S BE clear: Iraq will not turn into another Vietnam. I keep getting doleful e-mail from Vietnam vets drawing the comparison, but it's false. Sure, bloody street fighting in Baghdad may lie ahead. But the US will easily win this war — expeditiously by historical standards (remember that just four years ago, President Clinton required 78 days of airstrikes to subdue the Serbs).

Yet if this isn't Vietnam, neither is it the Afghanistan campaign, where the US was hailed as liberators. I was in Afghanistan during that war, and the difference is manifest. Afghans were giddy and jubilant, while Iraqis now are typically sullen and distrustful —

and thirsty. Many ordinary Iraqis regard Americans as conquerors rather than noble liberators.

Although US Vice-President Dick Cheney has said "we will, in fact, be greeted as liberators", it's too early to know definitively what Iraqis think. The signals are mixed, with jubilation in Najaf and anger in many other areas.

Iraq these days is almost as varied, tribal and polarised a society as America. All in all, most Iraqis seem watchful and ambivalent, as reflected in this conversation I had near Safwan with a Shiite farmer in his 40s.

"Money was OK under Saddam," he said. "Freedom was not so good. As a people, we were doing OK before the invasion. But the war upsets our lives."

ready the coalition-controlled south is, particularly after dusk, a Hobbesian world of banditry and anarchy.

But there's hope of bringing Iraqis around. Consider Germany and Japan in 1945, when initial attitudes toward Americans were ferocious. One of my best Japanese friends was born in 1945, and his father wrote from the field to instruct his mother to kill the baby if the American brutes landed in Japan. As for Germany, the first significant German city occupied by the Americans was Aachen, and there the US troops initially could not find a single German sympathetic to the Allies.

Sensitivity and diplomacy managed to turn around public opinion in Japan and Germany. But this administration wages war better than it wages diplomacy, and the Pentagon's apparent plan to make an Iraqi leader out of Ahmad Chalabi, whose support lies along the Potomac rather than the Tigris or Euphrates, is emblematic of the administration's Attila-the-Hun brand of diplomacy, which risks antagonising the world and alienating the Iraqi people themselves.

The danger is not that Iraq will turn into another Vietnam but that it could turn into another Lebanon or Gaza.

The New York Times

■ KURDISH FIGHTERS BEGIN TO LEAVE KIRKUK ■ ANARCHY REIGNS IN BAGHDAD

MOSUL CAPITULATES

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Associated Press

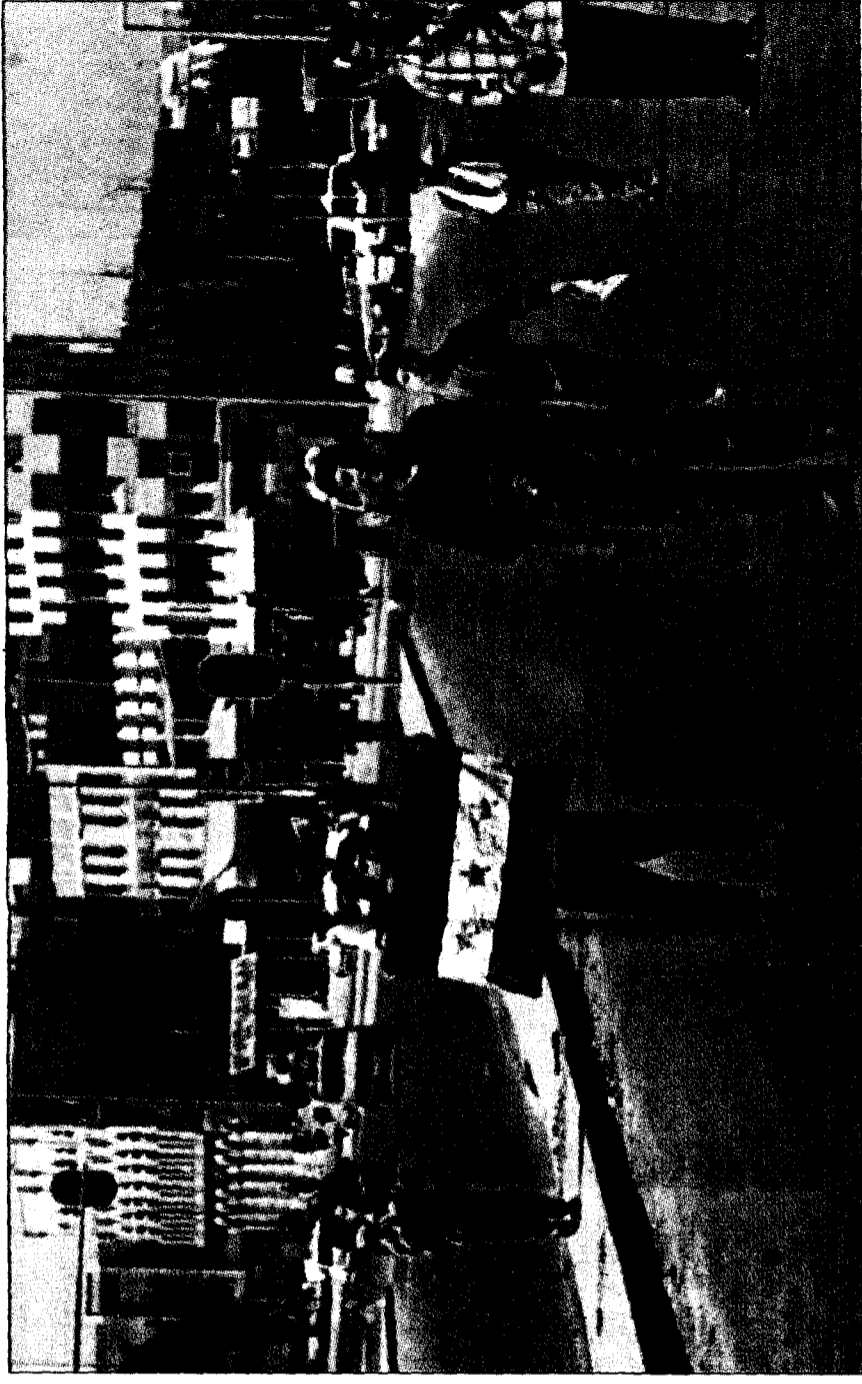
MOSUL (Northern Iraq), April 11. — An entire Army corps surrendered in northern Iraq's largest city today, leaving President Saddam Hussein's hometown of Tikrit as the last major holdout of his regime. Unarmed, bootless ex-soldiers began a long trek home while looters moved in, pillaging banks and other buildings.

Mosul, the main city in the north and the third-largest after the capital and Basra, fell without bloodshed as US forces arrived and accepted the surrender of the 5th Corps commander. Looting and cheering spread quickly; some people wasted no time in grabbing wads from the Central Bank.

But despite the sweeping successes of the coalition over the past few days, some of the inherent fissures have emerged with Kurdish fighters beginning to leave the northern city of Kirkuk after US officers sent out an "order" to this effect late last night. Kurdish *peshmerga* fighters numbering about 10,000 had captured the oil-rich northern stronghold of Kirkuk with US support. A small number of *peshmerga* have decided to stay back to help the US forces secure the town, a commander of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan said today. Earlier, Turkey had repeatedly threatened to intervene militarily in northern Iraq if Kurdish forces seized Kirkuk or Mosul, which control some of the largest oilfields.

Earlier in the day Kirkuk's Kurdish Governor said the situation in the city was spiralling out of the control of local Kurdish leaders and many people had been killed. Speaking shortly before the US War Command headquarters in Qatar confirmed that Kirkuk and Mosul had fallen, Mr Rizgari Hamgam said pillaging and vendetta came to the fore following Kirkuk's capture by US special forces and *peshmerga* yesterday and carried on through the night, killing and wounding an unspecified number.

Humanitarian sources said some 40 people, mostly civilians, were killed in the city since the war began, including children killed in US bombings. A hospital source said three persons died and 57 were injured



EUPHORIA, POST-SURRENDER: An Iraqi boy holds up the pre-1991 national flag while his friends cheer in the city centre of Mosul on Friday. — AFP

since the capture of the city after being hit by celebratory gunfire.

In Qatar, Brig.-Gen. Vincent Brooks of the Central Command said officials have drawn up a list of 55 regime leaders who must be captured or killed; cards with names

and photos are being distributed to soldiers to help them identify those still at large.

In Baghdad, US troops today were trying to curb looting that continued unabated for a third straight day. In parts of the capital Marines began to enforce a dusk-to-dawn

'Unguarded uranium'

WASHINGTON, April 11 — Three Iraqi warehouses filled with 2,500 barrels of uranium, enough to make nuclear weapons, and 150 radioactive isotopes, ideal for making "dirty bombs", lay unguarded for several days this week inside an Iraqi facility known as Location C. The *Los Angeles Times* reported today.

The daily said the facility, Iraq's only internationally sanctioned nuclear material storage site, was a potential prize for anyone seeking to steal radioactive substances. Republican Guard troops abandoned Location C late last week after US troops approached the nearby Hawatha nuclear research centre in south Baghdad. — AFP

More Iraq War reports on page 2

12 APR 2003

TOP STATESMAN

Rush to fill power vacuum

Richard Beeston & David Charter
The Times, London

LONDON/QATAR, April 10. — Iraq was transformed from a one-party dictatorship into a confusion of competing factions yesterday as ethnic, religious and tribal groups rushed to fill the vacuum left by the ousting of Saddam Hussein.

As US and British forces tried to impose order on the territory captured over the past three weeks, they were faced with the unenviable mission of running a deeply-divided nation with no Iraqi leadership capable of assuming power in the near future.

Iraq's political map used to be simple and one-dimensional: the Ba'ath party.

Yesterday it included two Kurdish factions controlling the north; a pocket of Ba'athist control loyal to Saddam around his hometown, Tikrit; US military authority in Baghdad and a string of central and southern cities; Iraqi opposition forces in al-Nasiriyah; an unknown militia in the city of al-Amarah; British military rule in the south, with an unknown tribal Sheikh promoted to Mayor of Basra; and the new US civil administration established in the southern-most port city of Umm Qasr.

Exiled leaders and other groups, some of them supported by foreign governments, are planning to return in the coming days and weeks to stake their claim to post-Saddam Iraq. Even the main coalition partners, the USA and UK, differ on the role of the UN and the composition of any future Iraqi leadership.

Senior Western diplomats gave warning yesterday



Mr Saddam Hussein's bust lies on a Baghdad street blocked by US Marines on Thursday. — AFP

that there was only a small window of opportunity to stabilise the country and establish a new Iraqi administration. They are clearly worried about a

Kurd cup of joy brimmeth over

The Times, London

LONDON, April 10. — It took less than 30 minutes to turn the Kurds' capital in northern Iraq from a city of television watchers and radio listeners into a city of revellers.

As scenes of American tanks in Baghdad's main square flickered into their living rooms, thousands of Kurds poured on to the streets of Arbil in a spontaneous celebration of the crumbling of Saddam's rule. "Bye, Bye Saddam," chanted the crowd as the street erupted in a cho-

rus of honking horns as vehicles crowded the main thoroughfare through the ancient bazaar.

Crowds threw handfuls of tape, confetti and water over the passing cars in the street outside the main hotel where foreign journalists are staying. Before long, the flood of traffic had morphed into a parade of carnival floats proclaiming joy at the apparent ousting of the man responsible for atrocities against them. "Thank you President Bush," read one placard in a truck full of cheering young men sporting the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) bandana and "Thank You Tony

matter their politics or allegiance.

Blair," read another. A mother made her baby daughter wave a tiny US flag. Construction workers banged their helmets in rhythm with the chanting of "No, No, No, Saddam". A riot of coloured flags flew from car windows, from the KDP yellow, the Kurds' tricolour to the red, white and blue of the Stars and Stripes. Many held aloft portraits of the Kurdish leader, Massoud Barzani.

This was a moment so long in coming that most in the Kurdish region could claim it as a personal victory. Saddam was an enemy of every Kurd, no

WS @ KSR SCB 11/1

lawless hiatus undermining the military victory and are concerned about losing support in the Arab world. They also gave warning against expecting elections in Iraq any time soon.

The fate of the country will lie largely in the hands of retired US Gen. Jay Garner, head of the Pentagon's Organisation for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (Orha), the future civil administration of Iraq. Initially, his several hundred-strong force will lead relief efforts from their first base in Umm Qasr, under the command of the retired US Gen. Buck Walters, who is charge of the southern third of Iraq.

"Umm Qasr is the first corner of Iraq that is totally free," said Gen. Walters, who likes to compare his team to the geriatric heroes of the comedy film *Space Cowboys*, who are brought out of retirement for one last mission. The British also have a stake in the Orha operation, with half a dozen Foreign Office officials and army officers assigned to General Garner's staff.

In the coming days Gen. Garner is expected to move his operations from Kuwait to Baghdad and other Iraqi cities. After dealing with humanitarian issues, such as the supply of food and medicine, they will try to restart the machinery of government. They hope to complete their mission in a matter of months. While the job of distributing aid and rebuilding the country will be a tough assignment, building a new democratic political infrastructure from scratch is the real challenge.

Despite their best efforts to wrap up the job as quickly as possible, coalition forces cannot control the political dynamic now under way in the country and the danger that Iraq could move from dictatorship to anarchy.

Chaos hits relief work

The Times, London

LONDON, April 10. — Aid agencies suspended their humanitarian operations in Iraq yesterday owing to "lawlessness" and demanded that coalition forces restore order.

Relief workers said that there was no point in delivering aid if it was going to be looted and that the chaos was disrupting the programmes that were operating.

UN agencies said euphoria could turn to violence leading to people fleeing their homes. The Red Cross stopped work in Baghdad after one of its vehicles was shot at and an injured member of staff went missing.

It said in a statement: "Given the chaotic situation in the city, getting from one place to another involves incalculable risks."

"Chaos in Iraq's cities and the precarious humanitarian situation can spark the displacement of civilians. We urge the forces to maintain law and order and to ensure that humanitarian assistance reaches those who need it," the UN High Commissioner for Refugees said in a statement from Jordan.

Syria, Iran won't be next targets: Powell

WASHINGTON, April 10. — US Secretary of State Gen. Colin Powell sought to assuage fears today in Syria and Iran that the USA might be planning military action against them, saying recent US warnings do not mean that "war is coming" to these countries.

"We believe that all of these nations — Syria, Iran, others should realise that pursuing weapons of mass destruction, supporting terrorist activities, is not in their interest," Powell told the *Los Angeles Times*. "That doesn't mean that war is coming to them, it just means that the world is changing," he said. — AFP

Iraqis loot houses of Saddam aides

W3(W) W. Azim S.F. 11/9

Agencies

BAGHDAD, April 10. — Looting of foreign mission offices as well as deserted houses of Mr Saddam Hussein's close aides and firing by the President's loyal fighters on US Marines marked the second day of the coalition's capture of Baghdad. One Marine was killed and 20 were injured in the firing, while one more soldier died in a suicide attack.

In the north, the Kurds reported a major gain, with a convoy of *pehmerga* fighters moving into the oil-rich city of Kirkuk. But later in the day US secretary of state Gen. Colin Powell persuaded him to ask the Kurdish forces to return. A Patriotic Union of Kurdistan official said PUK fighters would vacate Kirkuk following "harsh reaction" from Turkey.

Iraqis looted the deserted villas of senior figures of Mr Hussein's regime, including his son Uday, under the watchful eyes of joking Marines. They also turned their attention to the German embassy and a French cultural centre.

Among the houses looted were that of Deputy Prime Minister Mr Tariq Aziz, irrigation minister Mr Abdel Hussein Sawadi, Mr Hussein's daughter Hala and his half-brother Watban.

Mr Uday Hussein's villa was totally stripped except for a fixed wrought iron barbecue in the middle of the garden. A truck outside the house was laden with a huge oak table and gold chairs. A portrait of the "fallen" President, much 'revered' once, was left abandoned on the ground.

A looter said: "We also found a photo album and an address book with names of young women Uday brought to his home to satisfy his filthy tastes."

A US army unit that had been stationed outside Mr Aziz's home joked with about 20 looters who had gathered outside. As soon as the Americans left, the group rushed in.

Other places targeted by looters included the house of Mr Hussein's



WARTIME ANARCHY: Looters in the house of the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Tariq Aziz, in Baghdad on Thursday. — AFP (More reports on page 3)

secretary Mr Abed Hmoud, offices of telecommunications and higher education ministries and an oil storage facility.

Even as US defence secretary Mr Donald Rumsfeld dumped the Iraqi President into the "pantheon of failed, brutal dictators", forces still loyal to him engaged US Marines in "intense fighting" at Imam Mosque, Az Amihyah Palace and the house of a Ba'ath party leader.

Coalition spokesman Capt. Frank Thorp said the troops acted on an information that Mr Hussein's aides were trying to hold a meeting in the area. Marines, he said, were fired on from the mosque. He said he didn't know whether Mr

Hussein was among those trying to organise the meeting or whether any of his aides were captured or killed.

In Kirkuk, more than 100 vehicles, from pick-up trucks to a garbage van carrying Kurdish fighters, drove through the streets. The cars and trucks flew the flags of the two major political parties that rule the two sectors of the Kurdish autonomous region — the Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan.

A US officer said special operations forces were trying to secure a presence in the city "in the interest of regional stability," a reference to Turkey's concerns about Kurds taking over Kirkuk.

Mr George W Bush and Mr Tony Blair sought to calm fears of Iraqis and other Arabs that the coalition would occupy Iraq. "We'll help you build a peaceful and representative government... and then our forces will leave," the US President said in a video message. Mr Blair said: "Our forces are friends and liberators of the Iraqi people, not conquerors."

But, ironically, the coalition's bombing on Iraq prevented the messages from reaching their audience: Iraqis have been living without power and TV.

Editorial: Buddha speaks his mind, page 8

Mission impossible in Delhi

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, April 10. — It was definitely not business as usual at the Iraqi Embassy at New Delhi's 1/24 Vasant Vihar. The building was deserted, the gate shut and a lone guard outside allowed people in after some hesitation. No crowd waited for visas. Inside, there was hushed silence.

The reception wore a forlorn appearance. A portrait of Mr Saddam Hussein still adorns the wall. Two Iraqi officials, watching an Arabic TV channel, kept quiet when asked how they were coping up with the evolving situation back home. They summoned an Indian official who refused to identify himself, and said the Charge d'Affaires was not there. "He will be here tomorrow. You can come at 10 a.m. tomorrow." The Iraqis admitted later that there had been no communication with Baghdad.

The Iraqi CDA, Mr Aadday al Sarab, has not appeared at the embassy since yesterday. The mission has been without an ambassador since early March when Mr Salah al Mukhtar was posted to Vietnam. Speaking from Hanoi in a defiant tone, he said the war would go on for "one month, one year, 10 years..." and added "fighting is still going on in Baghdad... the battle of the capital has not ended yet".

USA renews shut-down call: The USA has renewed its call to more than 60 countries to shut down Iraqi embassies, seize their assets and expel senior diplomats, AFP reports from Washington.

US envoys in the 62 countries where Iraq has diplomatic presence have been told to take the request to their host governments, many of which refused when it was first made shortly after the war broke out.

MYSTERY SURROUNDS WHEREABOUTS OF SADDAM AND SONS AFTER BOMBING

Coalition strikes kill 3 journalists



Reporters carry a wounded Reuters cameraman out of Palestine Hotel minutes before he died on Tuesday. Two other journalists, including Tareq Ayyoub of Al-Jazeera (inset), were killed when the hotel was hit by the Americans on Tuesday. — AFP (More War reports on page 3)

Associated Press

BAGHDAD, April 8. — An American tank fired at Palestine Hotel, where several hundred journalists have been staying, killing two cameramen and wounding three other journalists today. US officials said the tank had taken fire from the area of the hotel. Less than a km away, another journalist died when an Al-Jazeera TV office was hit from the air in a US bombing run, the network said. An Abu Dhabi TV office in the area was also hit.

In another major offensive by the coalition, US forces dropped bunker-busting bombs demolishing a building, reportedly a restaurant, where they believed President Mr Saddam Hussein and his two sons were meeting, and launched an all-out assault on key buildings in the capital even as the Iraqis hit back with a bloody counter-attack.

Acting on what US officials said were three credible sources, including a listening device planted in the building (reports said a voice sounding like Mr Hussein's was overheard discussing routes out of the city), a B-1 bomber struck and demolished with four bombs a building in the al-Mansour residential district where Mr Hussein and his sons were reportedly meeting to discuss escape routes. A number of civilians were killed and the building obliterated, but mystery surrounds the fate of the Iraqi leader and his sons Udai and Qusay.

"I do not know whether he (Mr Hussein) survived," President Mr George Bush said at a press conference with British Prime Minister Mr Tony Blair after their meeting in Northern Ireland. "The only thing I know is that he is losing power." Echoing Mr Bush, Mr Blair said: "In all parts of Iraq our power

is strengthening and the Iraqi regime is weakening ... the people are turning towards us."

But defiant Iraqi fighters staged a major counter-offensive after they drove into Baghdad in buses and trucks and took vantage positions on roof-tops to target US tanks, trading machine-gun, rocket and mortar fire.

The US Central Command said from Doha, Qatar, that American forces encountered "significant" enemy fire from Palestine Hotel and from the building where the Al-

Jazeera journalists were working. "These incidents appear to be the latest examples of the Iraqi regime's continued strategy of using civilian facilities for military purposes," the statement said. But journalists were quoted saying they had not heard any shooting from the hotel before the shell hit, though the American military insists in both cases they were fired at first.

Frightened reporters in flak vests could be seen carrying wounded colleagues to the lobby of the 18-storey hotel, where reporters and camera-crews have been covering the war from balconies and rooftops. The shell hit balconies on the 14th and 15th floors, spraying glass and shrapnel.

A Reuters spokeswoman said Ukrainian cameraman Taras Protsyuk was killed and three staff members injured. Spanish TV network Teletinco said its cameraman Jose Couso, hit in the leg, also died later.

About 1,000 metres to the west, across the Tigris river, an earlier US bombing run struck an Al-Jazeera office in a residential area, the network said. The two-storey house is on a road along the river that links the information ministry with the old palace presidential compound. Jordanian reporter Tareq Ayyoub was killed.

Chalabi flown into Iraq

LONDON, April 8. — Mr Ahmad Chalabi, leader of the Iraqi National Congress opposition group and the Pentagon's favourite to succeed Mr Saddam Hussein as Iraq's President has been flown into southern Iraq by US forces. Britain also plans to appoint a senior Army officer to act as deputy to Mr Jay Garner, former US general who will head the interim post-war authority. Mr Chalabi, a Shiite exile, heads the 600-strong Free Iraqi Fighters.

In Kuwait, British forces have asked a senior Iraqi tribal leader to form a committee to run captured Basra, a spokesman said today. "We have been approached by a local tribal leader, a sheikh," Col Chris Vernon told reporters. — AFP & PTI

and three staff members injured. Spanish TV network Teletinco said its cameraman Jose Couso, hit in the leg, also died later.

About 1,000 metres to the west, across the Tigris river, an earlier US bombing run struck an Al-Jazeera office in a residential area, the network said. The two-storey house is on a road along the river that links the information ministry with the old palace presidential compound. Jordanian reporter Tareq Ayyoub was killed.

Turn to page 2

New Fundamentalism

Equal and opposite of Islamic fundamentalism

Into day 19 of the cowardly attack on Iraq, the Americans and British are not master of a single city in Iraq. They almost control Basra, say the British; they are in the centre of the capital, echo the Americans, adding in the same breath that they will not stay in Baghdad. Having virtually razed Baghdad to the ground in vicious and unremitting air raids, killing and injuring thousands of civilians, it is still a surprise to Americans that Iraqis are not welcoming them as liberators. On the contrary television screens show Saddam Hussein mixing freely with his people in the streets, calm, cool and collected and urging them to fight on and promising them victory. If Saddam appears as a heroic figure with his people cheering him in their hour of trial, Bush's contribution to the creation of the image must be acknowledged.

Bush, described as a born again Christian, betrays his determination to wage war on Iraq, when he made that extraordinary speech in the Security Council in September 2002 abusing the country and its leader, Saddam Hussein. That there was crass avarice beneath the veneer of religious fanaticism — it seemed like he was leading the Crusades in some speeches — the real motivation was to get his grubby hands on Iraqi oil. Muslim nations without oil reserves or gold deposits or mineral wealth are not in danger. The celebrated winner of the Nobel Prize, Gunter Grass surely had this in mind when he equated Bush and Osama bin Laden as having *taken God hostage to support their horrible aims*. And he conveys the blinding truth with an economy of words, which is commendable.

Bush is oblivious of the fact that when he faces carefully selected audiences before television cameras to ensure wild applause at every pause in his words, his feet are firmly planted on shifting sands. He begins with the objective of getting rid of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction; when weapons inspectors fail to find any, he gets Colin Powell to present fabricated evidence from some old web sites. When the subterfuge is exposed, he tries to get another resolution from the Security Council authorising war. Against determined opposition from France, Germany, Russia and even China, he retreats saying the earlier resolution 1441 authorises war anyway, inviting the obvious retort that if he thought it was enough why did he try so hard to get another resolution? Somewhere along the line is added the objective of getting rid of Saddam Hussein, because *that man tried to kill my Dad in 1991*. *Regime change* was the inelegant phrase used. By that time he had massed the most extensive weaponry of mass destruction in history — Tomahawk cruise missiles, precision guided bombs, and the vicious cluster bombs, designed to explode on touch over a huge area to ensure maximum civilian casualties. Bush codenames the international banditry — *Operation Iraqi Freedom*. We have a taste of the Freedom reserved for Iraqis. Umm Qsar port would be operated by an American stevedoring company and an open-ended contract for putting out oil fires is given to Vice-President Dick Cheney's company. Only a spurious religious fervour can sustain such corruption and nepotism. Bush allows the UN only a role in humanitarian aid, which would not have been necessary if he, Bush, had not wrought such destruction in the first place. It is made clear even to ally Tony Blair that America expects to recoup itself for the billions spent on the war from sales of Iraqi oil.

8 APR 2003

THE STATESMAN

lition raids Saddam palaces

RAMADAN, defence minister Mr Sultan Hashim Ahmed and Deputy Prime Minister Mr Tariq Aziz.

Armoured columns of the US army's 2nd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division entered Baghdad early today with more than 70 tanks and 60 Bradley fighting vehicles. A few hours later, US Marines entered the city from the east. Two Marines were killed and two injured when their carrier was hit by an artillery shell on a bridge spanning a canal.

Colonel David Perkins, a brigade commander in the 3rd Infantry, said another palace of Mr Hussein, on the eastern side of the Tigris, too was attacked.

Iraqi soldiers tried to take back Saddam International Airport, renamed Baghdad International Airport by the coalition, but an estimated 100 were killed in a firefight that lasted seven hours. There were no US casualties.

British Desert Rats went into Basra with tanks to find the resistance weaker than expected amid reports that the local Ba'ath leadership was crumbling. The British forces, which lost three soldiers, were reportedly greeted by hundreds of citizens.

Chemical weapons: US commanders in Karbala said tests on substances found at a military camp in central Iraq suggested that they contained banned chemical weapons, including deadly nerve agents.

Annans' advisor: UN secretary-general Mr Kofi Annan today named Mr Rafeuddin Ahmed, a Pakistani national and former associate director of UN Development Programme, as his special advisor on Iraq.

Editorial: New fundamentalism, page 6

forces penetrated and stormed a Hussein, while re thrusting to

Tony Blair are to review the post-war recony of state Gen.

Oil, gold rates

LONDON, April 7. — Oil prices fell by four per cent today, raising expectations of a quick end to the war in Iraq. Gold tumbled further in Europe, shedding its safe haven premium for the same reason. — Reuters

Details on page 9

reality that the chief General ition troops at and the crackle berated across rming a presi o briefly placed ion ministry, a ne that coalition l at will.

tion minister / broadcast a si- in meeting son r Taha Yassin



WIDE-EYED-WONDER: Soldiers from the US 1st Brigade Combat Team of the 3rd Infantry gazed at the reception hall of a presidential palace near Baghdad airport on Monday. US forces claim to have raided two of President Hussein's palaces.

IRAQ

Bomb scare precedes Bush visit to Ireland

Associated Press

BELFAST, April 7. — Bomb threats forced police to shut down the airport and a major highway here today hours before the arrival of President George W. Bush in Northern Ireland for talks on Iraq with Prime Minister Tony Blair.

British army explosives experts used remote-controlled robots to blast apart a suspicious package discovered by police beneath an overpass of the M2 motorway. Traffic along the road — the major route from Belfast to Belfast International airport — was diverted onto side streets for several hours. Police couldn't immediately confirm whether the package contained explosives.

Among those facing delays and diversions were the White House press corps, which flew to Belfast International hours ahead of Air Force One carrying Mr. Bush, Secretary of State Mr. Colin Powell and scores of other US administration aides. Unlike the later flight, the US journalists were using the M2 to reach downtown Belfast.

Earlier today, police said a telephone caller claiming to represent Irish Republican Army dissidents warned that a bomb had been left in the terminal at Belfast City Airport, a smaller airport in east Belfast.

That threat, delivered in the name of the Real IRA, forced police to shut another major road beside the airport for about two hours, snarling morning rush-hour traffic. Police declared the threat a hoax after finding nothing suspicious, and both the road and airport reopened.

Rice in Moscow: The US National Security Adviser, Ms. Condoleezza Rice, today held talks with Russian officials during a visit intended to mend ties that had frayed badly amid sharp differences over the Iraq war, adds a report from Moscow.

After meeting the Russian foreign minister, Mr. Igor Ivanov, Ms. Rice only said they had "very good discussions".

The Russian foreign ministry didn't immediately comment on the agenda, but the *Interfax* news agency quoted an unidentified diplomat as saying that yesterday's attack on a Russian convoy was discussed.

8 APR 2003

THE STATESMAN

Troops search for Presidential bunker

110-14
819

By Atul Ameja

AS SAYLIAM (QATAR), APRIL 7. In seizing one of the palaces of the Iraqi President, Saddam Hussein, in Baghdad this morning, U.S. forces appear to be looking for an entrance to a key underground Presidential bunker.

In his daily briefing, the spokesperson of the U.S. Central Command, Vincent Brooks, said that by raiding palaces, the forces were seeking "regime leaders" and searching for "command and control" nodes. It now appears that some of Mr. Hussein's palaces lead to fortified "command and control" facilities through an intricate network of tunnels. Not surprisingly, Gen. Brooks, said that the forces were aware of the existence of a network of tunnels in Baghdad that were "large enough to accommodate automobiles."

Highly-placed sources say that the forces, which took over Baghdad's international airport,

discovered on Saturday a passage that leads out of the guest lounge and links up with an elaborate network of tunnels. It is suspected that some of these tunnels feed into an underground command post, to which only the Iraqi leadership and top military commanders have access. However, the forces entering this tunnel maze from the airport side are yet to make much headway.

The incursion this morning by the U.S. Third Mechanised Division from the Dora district, south of Baghdad, into what has been called the Northern Palace was therefore, it appears, meant to find the second entrance to this underground command facility. The Special Forces belonging to the 101st Airborne division who were looking for this ingress suspect that the Iraqi underground post, connected by an interlocking system of tunnels, could be located several kilometres away.

Analysts point out that in seeking the underground bunker, the U.S. wants to paralyse the Iraqi regime by denying it the capability to communicate with its combat troops. By disabling the Iraqi leadership, the forces fancy their chances of avoiding the forcible occupation of Baghdad — a city of five million people. According to Gen. Brooks, U.S. troops were targeting the residual capability of the Iraqi leadership to command its forces.

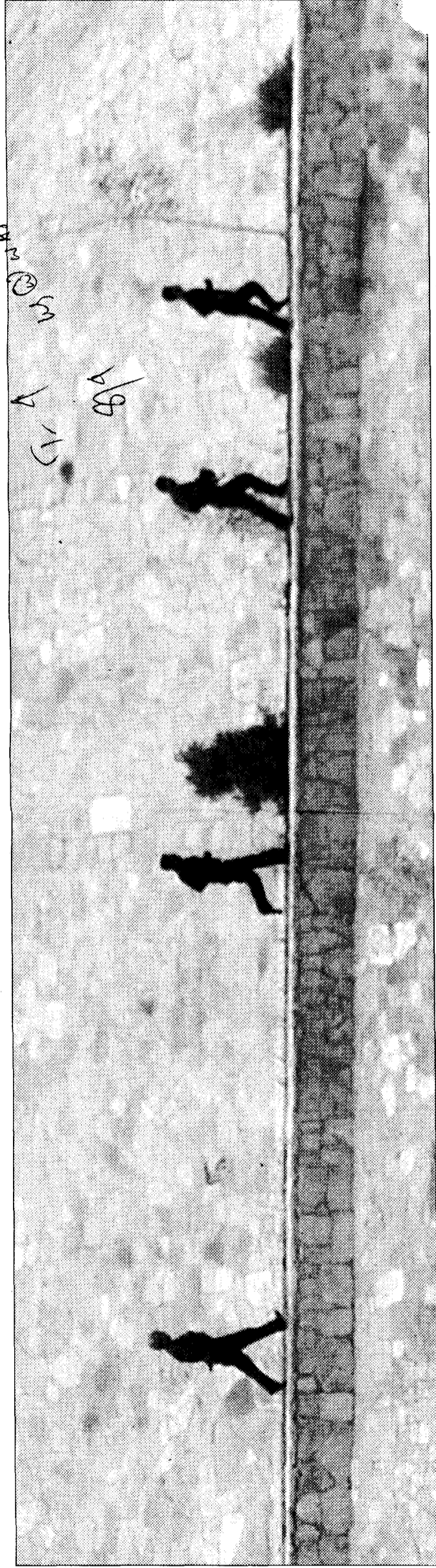
He also indicated that the troops were still not in full control of the eastern flank of Baghdad and more fighting lay ahead. Despite their exertions, the Anglo-American forces were yet to find any mass destruction weaponry, he said.

Signalling that preparations for a political transition in Iraq were already underway, Gen. Brooks said U.S. forces were in active contact with the Iraqi opposition.

8 APR 2003

THE HINDU

3 minutes to sum up life at war



Republican Guards flee from advancing US Marines in the compound of Saddam Hussein's main presidential palace in Baghdad on Monday. (AFP)

ANTHONY SHADID

Baghdad, April 7: Some clamored on flowerpots. Others pushed impatiently against a door barricading the entrance. They thrust tattered business cards into the air, yellowed scraps of paper and pieces of newspaper, all with phone numbers beyond Iraq.

Crowds besieged the small, sandbagged compound of the International Committee of the Red Cross yesterday in the neighbourhood of Alwiya. In a city with no working phone lines, they had heard rumours true, as it turned out — that residents could make a call for free to anywhere in the world. They had three minutes to sum up to their friends and relatives their lives at war. "Every family has someone worrying about them," said Laith Hazem, a 41-year-old electrical engineer waiting to call his brother, Luai, in Stockholm. "They worry about their lives, they worry about the danger

they face." Hazem waited on the sun-drenched sidewalk for hours to make the call. Rockets, anti-aircraft guns and artillery thundered within a mile of the compound, far closer than during any day since the US-led invasion began.

With practiced understatement, he shrugged. "War is very dangerous," he said. The ravages of war methodically advanced on many residents' homes yesterday. Ambulances careered through the streets with sirens blaring. Some hospitals treated hundreds of wounded, civilians and soldiers in the line of fire on Baghdad's outskirts. Through the day, the deafening sounds of battle built to a crescendo.

After days of an unrelenting exodus, the government declared that no one could leave Baghdad between 6 pm and 6 am, and the streets were deserted by nightfall. Phone lines that went dead because of US airstrikes last week remained down, and

the government has warned of severe penalties if Iraqis are found with satellite phones it believes can be used for spying. A blackout has left swathes of the city without water, sanitation and electricity.

In a search for safety, some residents hauled blankets, mattresses and suitcases from the city's southern outskirts to neighbourhoods closer to downtown. Many are without cars. A few braved the fighting to walk the streets, suffused with soldiers, militiamen and civilians carrying rocket-propelled grenades, rifles and heavy machine guns. Others waited in their homes, shrouded in darkness, hoping to hear word about relatives just miles away.

"Everybody has run away," said an elderly doctor, in the upscale district of Mansour. "Everybody has run away from Baghdad."

He sat at home alone yesterday, offering a guest a warm soft drink. He had sent his wife

abroad. His son lives in the US, one of his daughters in Britain. His other two daughters live in Baghdad, but are too frightened to leave their homes to visit him.

In the solitude of his house, talking to a journalist without the presence of a government escort, he reflected on Iraq, those



who rule it and those who may rule it soon.

"We've had enough. Really, we've had enough," he said.

The screech of planes caused a moment of suspense — a deep breath as he waited to hear where the bombs had landed. The cadence of artillery fire sounded with monotonous regularity. At times, it was interrupted by the crackle of gunfire.

He looked out of the window, which was covered by tape in the shape of an "x" to prevent it from shattering. "All the time, boom, boom, boom," he said.

His grievances poured out, as if the moment and the isolation had made bold talk permissible. He despised the government, he said, and didn't understand why President Saddam Hussein would not step down, "for the sake of his people and the sake of his country."

As a Shia, the country's repressed majority, he listed the crimes of the state: its brutal rule, the exile of tens of thousands to Iran, eight years of war with Iran and then an invasion of Kuwait in 1990. And now, Saddam was bracing for a battle over Baghdad that many, in private moments, say is suicidal. "We don't know when it's going to end, this war," the doctor said. "I wish tomorrow."

Still, his resentment of Saddam's government was matched by his scepticism about US

promises of liberation and democracy. He predicted that Baghdad would wait and see the outcome, but that the window of opportunity would be precariously brief.

"You don't want to be governed by foreign people," he said. "British, French, Americans, they're all the same to us." "If they say: 'Okay, this is your country, we can give you all that you need, and then we'll leave,' that would be great. But when you hear that American generals are coming to govern Iraq and that it will last one year, two years, three years, six months, this view, when you explain it to simple people, the majority, that will be very difficult. They can't digest it," he said.

"They'll say: 'Who's better, Saddam or the Americans?' At least Saddam's from the country, and they're from the outside."

In a softer voice, he suggested Saddam might even find a way to survive. He asked for news, trying to sort out the contradictions

he heard on Iraqi radio and the Arabic-language broadcasts of Radio Monte Carlo and the BBC. On some days, he said, he has had little to do but listen alone to the radio and wait. "Time is slow," he said, "very, very slow."

He was not alone in his confusion. Those residents who still listened to Iraqi radio were inundated with official denials of US advances. Information minister Mohammed Saeed Sahaf declared again that the war was progressing as Iraq had planned and that a war of attrition was already under way. In his news conference, he denied claims by US military officials that as many as 3,000 Iraqis were killed in an incursion on Saturday into Baghdad.

Hours after the attack, no bodies were visible in the streets. While Red Cross workers said 100 wounded a day were entering Baghdad's hospitals they had no overall figures on casualties.

LOS ANGELES TIMES-WASHINGTON POST NEWS SERVICE

JOURNALISM of COURAGE

The Indian EXPRESS

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DAY 18

- Bombs, artillery thunder across Baghdad as US forces tighten grip on capital's outskirts
- Iraq says it fired five missiles at US-led forces on the outskirts of Baghdad
- US forces said they have killed about 2,000 Iraqi fighters in Baghdad since they attacked the city's outskirts
- British forces make second thrust into Basra from the south to the edge of the old city, says UK spokesman
- Brother of Kurdish leader Barzani in critical state after US "friendly fire" attack kills 18, injures over 45
- Commander of the US air war against Iraq said attack jets, air controllers and unmanned spy planes were on 24-hour alert over Baghdad ahead of a ground war in the city
- Jay Garner, Washington's "viceroys-designate" for post-war Iraq, will be briefing the media in Kuwait on Monday

■ NATIONAL NETWORK
Top Harkat
militant shot

BUSH: 'City by city, liberation is coming'



12-year-old Ali Ismaeel Abbas lies on a hospital bed in Baghdad. Reuters photo by Faleh Kheiber

'Can you get my arms back?'

SAMIA NAKHOUL
BAGHDAD, APRIL 6

ALI Ismaeel Abbas, 12, was fast asleep when war shattered his life. A missile obliterated his home and most of his family, leaving him orphaned, badly burned and blowing off both his arms.

"It was midnight when the missile fell on us. My father, my mother and my brother died. My mother was five months pregnant," the traumatised boy said at Baghdad's Kindi hospital. "Our neighbours pulled me out

and brought me here. I was unconscious," he said on Sunday.

In addition to the tragedy of losing his parents, he faces the horror of living handicapped. Thinking about his uncertain future, he timidly asked whether he could get artificial arms. "Can you help get my arms back? Do you think the doctors can get me another pair of hands?" Abbas asked. "If I don't get a pair of hands, I will commit suicide," he said with tears spilling down his cheeks.

His aunt, three cousins and three other relatives staying with

them were also killed in this week's missile strikes on their house in Diala Bridge district, east of Baghdad.

"We didn't want war. I was scared of this war," said Abbas. "Our house was just a poor shack, why did they want to bomb us?" said the young boy, unaware that the area in which he lived was surrounded by military installations.

With a childhood lost and a future clouded by disaster and disability, Abbas poured his heart out as he lay in bed with an

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Advani regrets BJP injustice to Pandya

■ On backfoot, Modi says killers will pay

HIMANSHU KAUSHIK
AHMEDABAD, APRIL 6

THE Bharatiya Janata Party had been unjust to Haren Pandya in denying him a ticket for the Gujarat assembly elections. This is how Union Home Minister L K Advani unburdened himself at a condolence meeting organised on Sunday, in the presence of Chief Minister Narendra Modi. Modi, riding on a Hindutva wave after the Godhra killings and the riots, had made keeping Pandya out of the contest at El-lisbridge a prestige issue.

"Denying the ticket to Pandya was an injustice to him, and it was a burden that weighed upon me and other senior leaders," said Advani. "We were making up for that by including him in the national executive council of the party, but it was too late."

Also present to pay homage to Pandya was his mentor, former chief minister Keshubhai Patel — in whose ministry Pandya was first a minister of state for home and then in charge of the revenue

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

■ A political murder, says emotional father

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
AHMEDABAD, APRIL 6

AS a speechless L K Advani listened with folded hands, the father of Haren Pandya, Vithalbhai Pandya, today lashed out at the BJP, describing his son's killing as a "political murder".

The Deputy Prime Minister was confronted by Vithalbhai Pandya when he climbed down from the stage and walked to Pandya's family members at Sunday's condolence meeting organised by the party.

"The national leadership watched helplessly, even when they were aware that injustice was being done to my son," shouted Vithalbhai. "Advani and others have handed the party over to a Ravan who is doing exactly what pleases him."

The tearful Vithalbhai said, "My son is a victim of political murder. If you were aware that injustice was meted out to him, you are equally responsible for his murder. In the past six-and-a-half months nothing happened. And the day after he received a fax of his appointment in the national executive

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

BJP shows Shanta the door

■ Union minister pays the price for speaking out

PRADEEP KAUSHAL
NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

Kalam for acceptance, the garh — leadership, after initially deciding to let Ku-

'Hum dil le chuke Salman'



PRADEEP KAUSHAL
NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

Kalam for acceptance, the garh — leadership, after initially deciding to let Ku-

■ FRIENDLY FIRE KILLS 17 KURDS ■ RUSSIAN ENVOY INJURED IN CROSSFIRE

US forces encircle Baghdad



A member of the Fedayeen militia loads a rocket-propelled grenade while another one flashes the 'V' sign while heading for the southern frontlines in Baghdad on Sunday. — AFP (More Iraq War reports on page 3)

Associated Press

NEAR BAGHDAD, April 6. — US forces encircled the Iraqi capital today and as many as 3,000 Iraqi fighters were killed in a show-of-force foray into Baghdad by armoured vehicles, the Central Command said. As if in response, Iraqi information minister Mudd Saeed al-Sabhat warned Baghdad residents against "rumours" and "lies": "Open your eyes and keep your minds alert to be able to differentiate between information and the inadequate ones," he said.

In another episode of "friendly fire", a US plane bombed a convoy of Kurdish *pesymenga* fighters and Special Forces in northern Iraq, killing 17 Kurds and injuring 45, Kurdish officials said. The dead include the younger brother of Kurdistan Democratic Party leader Massoud Barzani, who controls the western sector of the Kurdish autonomous enclave. The *BBC* said one of its translators was killed. The US Central Command has ordered a probe.

The Kremlin said a convoy of Russian diplomats, including ambassador Mr Vladimir Titorenko, was caught in a crossfire as they were leaving Baghdad for the Syrian border. A Russian foreign ministry official said five persons including the ambassador

were wounded, but the correspondent of the *Ro* was in a convoy said the in a crossfire while passing near the capital's outskirts vice-chairman of the Joint said in Washington that probing the attack but that US forces were involved. The coalition forces



NAKED RAGE: A Republican Guard gestures with a knife somewhere in southern Baghdad on Sunday. — AFP

Central Command said. Soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division changed sporadic fire with the Republican Guard on Sunday, killing two Iraqis when a dozen people

The Telegraph

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Any lengths for a designer baby lifeline

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SUPER SIX COSMOS SLEUTHS

IN KNOWHOW

British break for Olonga

SPORT



Muslim leaders show the way out of airport's mosque dilemma

SUNANDO SARKAR AND BAPPAMAJUMDAR

Calcutta, April 6: A solution to the problem of a mosque next to the tarmac of the airport here and one outside has come up from the Muslim community in the area.

Community leaders suggest the government lay off the mosque that is outside the perimeter wall of the airport — and has recently become the target of eviction — by taking a “practical and realistic” view on the one within that has been labelled a security threat.

Many within the community have said for the first time

that this mosque does “hamper normal operations within the airport and (the problem) should have been taken care of long back”.

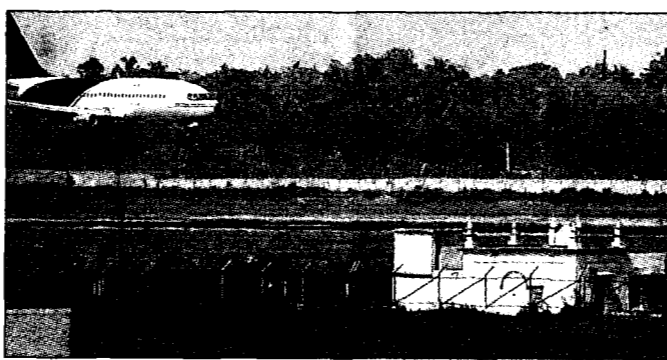
Standing about 100 metres from the main runway, the mosque is referred to as the Mathpara Masjid. The one outside — accompanied by an *idgah*, two *mazhars* and, most important, a graveyard — is called the Burra Masjid. Annual festivals bring throngs of devotees to this mosque, most of them non-Muslims.

The mosque within the airport, officials say, is an obstacle to operations and entails constant watch. But it has not been

touched — despite years of efforts from official channels — and seems to have got a fresh lease of life after a recent parity between civil aviation minister Shahnawaz Hussain and chief minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee.

But the mosque outside the airport boundary, despite not coming in the way of operations, found itself in the midst of a controversy after the district administration and the airport authorities paid it several visits — the last one on March 29 — with the intent of “removing it”.

The local Muslim community believes that this is not how



The mosque inside the airport. Picture by Amit Datta

the issue should be tackled and its leaders expressed their sentiments to The Telegraph. The

mosque within the airport has forced the authorities to spend extra money on operational

costs and the problem has been allowed to fester till it has got to “unmanageable proportions”, they feel.

Citing many reasons why the mosque outside the airport was “much more important” to the community, the leaders said they “always tried” to get this point of view across to the administration.

“But who do we talk to when we have not been given even one written order asking us to vacate this land?” asked Munna Sapui, an important member of the Burra Masjid committee.

“No one seems ready to listen to us,” committee joint sec-

retary Ramzan Ali Mandal said, adding that the administration always acted like a bully, “coming here when they felt like and ordering us around”.

The mosque within the airport has a fixed number of devotees with passes to keep a tab on them. “No *musafir* can enter it to offer namaz but things are very different here,” Mandal said, explaining why the one outside — where such restrictions are not there — is more important to Muslims.

But it is the graveyard with the Burra Masjid that makes it of “paramount importance” to the community, the leaders say. “People die,” Sapui said.

“Where do they go then?” he wondered, explaining that the graveyard serves Muslims from all over the neighbourhood and the other nearest one is at Kankurgachhi, several kilometres away.

“The masjid inside does not offer this absolutely necessary facility,” he said, adding that he was only echoing the sentiments expressed in “several community meetings”.

Muslim leaders are showing the government and the airport authorities the way to proceed in a gesture unparalleled in any dispute — and that includes Ayodhya — by any community over a religious place.

Enough! no more Salman for Ash

OUR BUREAU

Mumbai, April 6: Aishwarya Rai ended even her professional relationship with Salman Khan by declaring she would “not work with him any more”.

In a statement issued from her hospital bed, the actress described the Salman chapter as a “nightmare”, speaking for the first time about a private relationship that has been the subject of unending media speculation.

“For the sake of my well-being, my sanity, my dignity and self-respect of my family — enough! I will not work with Mr Salman Khan,” she said.

The immediate provocation for the declaration seems to be continuing rumours about her acting in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's *Bajirao Mastani*, for which Salman has been signed.

She said she wanted to end the speculation. “I have been wrongly projected as agreeing to work with Mr Salman Khan.”

Aishwarya made the blockbuster *Devdas* with Bhansali. It was also the Bhansali movie *Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam*, during whose shooting her relations with Salman reportedly blossomed.

She admitted that she has had a “fabulous relationship” with Bhansali, but revealed that in the very first meeting with the director on *Bajirao* she had made it clear that she would not star with Salman.

“Since the past two months, I have categorically declined to work with Mr Salman Khan.”

A public declaration vowing not to work with a colleague is perhaps unprecedented in Bollywood, but it's clear Aishwarya took this unusual step to draw the curtain firmly down on an unhappy episode of her life.

“The Salman Khan chapter was a nightmare in my life and I am thankful to God that it is over,” she told PTL.

“I have maintained a dignified silence about him and his wrongdoings,” Aishwarya said.

“I stood by him, enduring his alcoholic misbehaviour, in (the) worst phases and in turn I was at the receiving end of his abuse (verbal, physical and emotional), infidelity and indignity. That is why like any other self-respecting woman, I had ended my relationship with him almost two years ago,” she added.

QUOTE

This is a really bad own goal by the Americans

JOHN SIMPSON on the friendly-fire disaster in northern Iraq

American plane lands in Saddam's airport, coalition troops cut off most roads to Iraqi capital

Baghdad writhes in enemy embrace

Baghdad, April 6 (Reuters): An American military plane landed at Baghdad airport today as bombs and artillery crashed around the Iraqi capital which US forces said had almost been encircled.

The barrage flooded hospitals with casualties and relief organisations warned of a growing humanitarian crisis.

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's information minister insisted that loyalist forces were pushing back the invaders. But US troops said they had cut most approaches to the sprawling capital of five million people, the biggest prize in the 18-day-old war.

“We're just about there,” Colonel Will Grimsley of the US 3rd Infantry Division said, asked if the American forces controlled all access to the capital.

As if to emphasise the point, the first US military aircraft, a C-130, landed at Baghdad's international airport about one hour after nightfall.

“At least one aircraft has landed at the airport,” said a source in the 3rd Infantry's aviation brigade, who was at the airport.

He said the C-130 Hercules transporter landed around 8 pm local time (9.30 IST) on the western, military side of the international airport.

The source said the US could land up to three aircraft at the

SHUT-AND-SQUEEZE STRATEGY

● **SQUEEZING THE REGIME:** US forces use a checker-board approach shutting off the southwest, south and southeast of Baghdad. They will squeeze Saddam Hussein's forces slowly and take parts of the city. Some strategists call it enclosing the city by taking full control of the perimeter to stop military units from leaving or coming in. This is a phase of the war that will take at least another 48 hours.

At the same time, the northeast side of Baghdad is being left open, apparently to allow civilians to flee.

● **HITTING NEW TARGETS:** Special forces foray into Baghdad and mark out targets for bombardment from the air as well as from the ground. Once the resistance is diminished, the forces are expected to try to use tanks. As soon as they have secured general control of the town, the forces, in small groups, will target Baath Party buildings and the palaces of Saddam.

● **HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE:** Analysts differ on this. Some say a week, others longer. The conservative expectation is that it will take another 10 to 12 days for Baghdad to fall.

airport after dark.

It was not immediately clear whether the plane was carrying a load or was testing the landing strip, which had been slightly damaged by US bombing during Friday's assault on what was formerly known as Saddam International Airport.

After seizing the airport, some 20 km southwest of the city centre, the US forces had renamed it Baghdad International Airport. About 7,000 US troops are now said to be at the airport.

Once cleared and fully secured, the airport is likely to be used to bring in troops, equipment and supplies, easing pressure on a long and vulnerable

supply chain that stretches to Kuwait in the south.

US military maps seen by Reuters showed only one main road, Highway 2, remained to be secured on the outskirts of the capital. It leads north to the oil city of Kirkuk.

“Look at it from this point of view — the 1st Brigade holds the airport and the west of Baghdad, the 2nd Brigade is securing the south, the 3rd Brigade is holding the northwest and the Marines are in the northeast,” Grimsley said.

In the north, a US plane bombed a convoy of American special forces and Kurdish fighters, killing 18 Kurds and wounding over 45, including the broth-

er of Kurdish leader Massoud Barzani.

BBC world affairs editor John Simpson said he was in a convoy of eight or 10 cars when it was hit by an air strike, apparently called in by US special forces to deal with an Iraqi tank ahead. (See Page 6)

In the south, British forces punched into the heart of Basra, changing tactics after encircling and gradually stepping up pressure on Iraq's second city since early in the war.

Mortar and artillery fire thundered over Baghdad during the day. Shops were shuttered and streets deserted. “It is getting dangerous. The battle is in Baghdad now,” said Halitham Abdel-Rahman, 45, a mechanical engineer.

By night, a power cut plunged the city into darkness. Panicked residents fled the fighting for Baghdad. With temperatures above 35 degree Celsius, thousands of families set out on foot and in overloaded cars.

A US spokesman said about 2,000 Iraqi soldiers had been killed since the assault on Baghdad's outskirts began.

Relief agencies warned of a health crisis with hospitals overwhelmed and infrastructure devastated.

A Red Cross spokesman said that “during fierce bombardment, hospitals received up to 100 casualties per hour”.

American nominee in a hurry to move into Iraq

Govt-in-waiting can't wait

SUJAN DUTTA

Kuwait, April 6: They camp at the Hilton in Kuwait, rarely publicise their presence and the security at the beach resort on the Persian Gulf here discourages wanderers and tourists. The nucleus of America's government in Iraq to be headed by Lieutenant General Jay Garner is here.

Even before the fall of Baghdad, the “government” is likely to move to southern Iraq, possibly to Umm Qasr, and then on to the Iraqi capital.

Garner (picture right), a former three-star general, is not alone. His teammates who may find slots in the interim administration to be run from the Pentagon could be a former American official who worked in Sudan, Timothy Carner; a former director of Voice of America radio, Robert Reilly; and a former US ambassador to Yemen, Barbara Rodine. The interim administration may also co-opt some British officials.

Indications are the interim administration will be planted in Iraq even as the war rages. The most “secure” of Iraqi territory is in the south of the country where the British forces are in command.

General Garner has been designated director of the Pentagon's Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance for Iraq. The “coalition forces’ land component command” is understood to be working out a meeting with the media for him shortly,

The Telegraph IRAQ EXCLUSIVE



possibly as early as tomorrow.

The anointing of the interim government is not contingent on the fall of Baghdad or the demise of Saddam Hussein. Even in Afghanistan, during Operation Enduring Freedom, the interim government of Hamid Karzai was installed while the war continued (and continues). The difference, however, is that in Iraq, the head of the administration is likely to be an American. Washington is not yet unanimous on appointing leading Iraqi dissident Ahmed Chalabi to the post.

Garner is 64 years old and since retiring from the armed service, worked with a defence contractor, L-3 Communications. He was in charge of protecting Kurdish refugees in northern Iraq after the 1991 Gulf war. This time, he will be in charge of everything that the military is not.

However, he and the interim arrangement would report to General Tommy Franks, chief of the US Central Command. Garner's immediate task will be to provide a semblance of civil administration in “liberated” Iraq's war-ravaged and lawless land.

Though it is not yet confirmed, the possible location of the interim administration in Umm Qasr — to begin with — has been made because it is close to the border with Kuwait and is also Iraq's only port, where large quantities of military equipment and humanitarian aid would be landing. The seat of the interim administration may be moved to the renamed Baghdad International Airport if and when it is secured.

For Pete's sake, we are Baez-ed

'Just remember, 40 years ago I was right,' Joan Baez reminds her audiences. In the time of the Iraq war, NICHOLAS WAPSHOTT takes us down history lane to the anti-Vietnam protests of the Sixties

As long as the war lasts, few Americans seem interested in the nay-saying of celebrities. At the Oscar ceremony the documentary-maker Michael Moore yelled "Shame on you, Mr Bush" from the platform. Since then there has been impatience with the qualms of self-important film stars. Actors and singers used to having their stray comments noted find that their opinions are not being sought.

Most Americans believe it's a time for patriotism and holding your tongue. Records by the Dixie Chicks were banned by country radio stations after they dared to criticise US President George Bush. Smart press agents tell their stars to avoid mentioning the war except to wish the troops God Speed.

Yet even in this atmosphere of self-censorship there are still two big names who continue to expound their peace message unabashed. At the end of the Sixties, when protest songs went out of fashion, Joan Baez and Pete Seeger stuck to what might have at times seemed a lonely road. They have been rewarded for their persistence. In recent weeks the two have been singing to filled halls and enjoying renewed popularity.

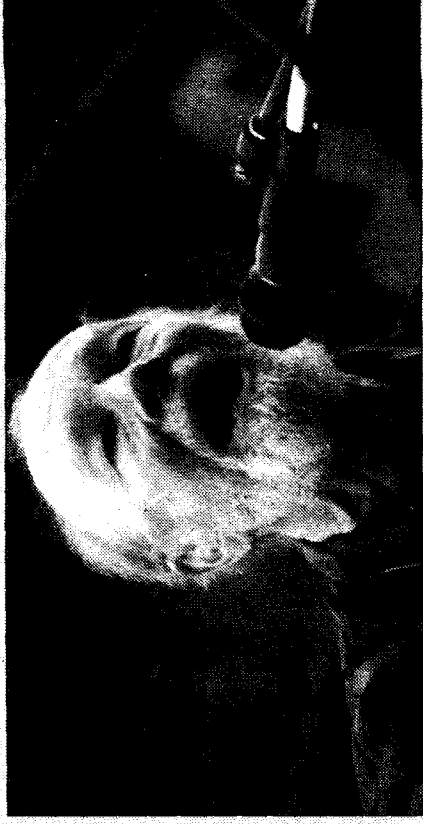
Pete Seeger and Joan Baez were pioneers of the American Folk Revival of the Sixties, a musical movement that reclaimed the folk song for political purposes: rejection of racial segregation; warning of the threat of nuclear confrontation; and from the mid-Sixties, campaigning against the Vietnam War. They modernised the art of the protest song and revived the spirit of Woody Guthrie, hero of the young Bob Dylan.

The protest singers moved from fringe clubs to big rallies and concerts - and eventually their message became so mainstream among the Baby Boomers as to seem almost superfluous. Dylan, meanwhile, became less interested in protest than in poetry for its own sake, and replaced his acoustic guitar with an electric Fender.

For 40 years Joan Baez and Pete Seeger defied fashion. Now aged 62, Baez is little changed from the days when she first strummed her songs of injustice in the bookstores of Men-

lo Park. She remains a formidable character, her integrity untarnished. The purity that her singing voice retains conjures a time when the truth was clear and moral choices were simple.

She gives about 70 concerts a year across the USA, yet for many years her songs gained little attention - until the Iraq war loomed. Now she



ANTI-WAR PROTESTERS ALL: (From top anti-clockwise) Pete Seeger, Joan Baez, Michael Moore, Bob Dylan and Woody Guthrie

is newly in demand, and is clearly enjoying it. "Just remember, 40 years ago I was right," she reminds her audiences.

This summer Baez is releasing a new album, ominously titled *Dark Chords on a Big Guitar*, which might appeal to the new generation of peaceniks.

Seeger, whose *Where Have all the Flowers Gone?* became an anti-war classic and whose version of *We Shall Overcome* was the anthem of America's civil rights movement, is still going strong at 83. He, too, had been mostly forgotten for 30 years. Now he jokes, "I'm senile, but I'm still here." His sole concession to the advancing years is to appear on stage early enough in the evening to give him time to get home to sleep in his own bed.

Seeger has noticed that while the marchers of the Sixties linked their opposition to the Vietnam War with adoption of broader, hippie-style attitudes, and immersion in the counter-culture, today's protesters are focused on the war. Seeger reports that the new protesters are of all ages - in contrast to those of the Sixties who were predominantly young. On issues other than the war, they hold a variety of views, he says. "We don't all agree all the time," he said, "but we all agree it's better to talk than shoot."

Today's anti-war protesters do not represent a revival of Sixties values. The new breed are less idealistic, more ideological than their predecessors. War has silenced the parade of well-meaning, anxious citizens who wanted Iraq to have more time to comply with UN resolutions. Now, marches are aggressive, and populated by angry protesters who hold opinions far removed from the wry liberalism of Baez and Seeger.

March 29 Last Saturday's New York protest in Union Square was a far cry from the good-natured marches of the Sixties. It was an ill-tempered frenzy consisting of three distinct political groups: pro-Palestinians, who blame the USA for Israel; Islamists, who blame the USA for everything; and belligerent pacifists, who blame the USA for the war.

- *The Times, London*

We are in Baghdad, claims US

● American soldiers move in and out of Iraqi capital ● Saddam regime still in control

TIMES NEWS NETWORK
AND AGENCIES

Washington \ Baghdad: US troops and armour moved in and out of the 'centre' of Baghdad on Friday night as the war against Iraq entered a decisive stage with a defeat of Saddam Hussein regime, from all accounts, still largely in control of the capital.

Amidst conflicting claims and counter-claims, the US military said that its tanks and soldiers rode into downtown Baghdad unopposed on Friday, but there were no eyewitness accounts or visuals to back the assertion. Instead, accounts from news agency reporters in Baghdad said Mr Hussein's Fedayeen were patrolling the city centre on Saturday and there was no sign of coalition forces.

Both the invading army and the cornered regime sparred verbally, broadcasting their respective claims and throwing city residents and the rest of the world into confusion. The Americans said they had completely secured Baghdad airport while the Iraqis claimed they had taken it back. Iraqi information minister Mohammed al-Sayyat even promised journalists a bus tour of the airport.

A US tank commander was killed and two soldiers were wounded during the drive through Baghdad, where they encountered intense Iraqi fire. Col David Perkins, commander of the 2nd Brigade of the 3rd Infantry Division, said,

about 1,000 Iraqi troops were killed in fierce fighting, Iraqi television claimed that Mr Hussein's forces killed "hundreds" of "enemy" troops south of Baghdad. "The enemy had to halt and retreat," it said, adding that the airport had become "a cemetery" for the US forces.

The television statement followed reports of a suicide attack at the airport. A US marine gunnery sergeant told a Reuters correspondent that the bomber targeted US soldiers. However, the US Central Command in Qatar said it was not aware of a new suicide attack at the airport.

From all accounts, the American sortie into the heart of Baghdad was more in the nature of an exploratory thrust and US forces did not stay long. There were no cheering crowds to welcome the Americans. Most Baghdadis stayed indoors while some fled the city.

Asked where the US forces were in Baghdad, coalition spokesman Maj Gen Victor Renault said, "I'm not sure we can define where centre of Baghdad is, our forces move in and out wherever they want."

But AFP correspondents reported that there was no sign of a US military presence in Baghdad. On the west bank of the Tigris, where most government buildings are based, quiet had returned after a tense morning. The city seemed strangely normal in the afternoon.



PIT STOP AND KARBALA: US soldiers stand next to a portrait of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein damaged by gunfire after conducting the search for a military complex in Karbala, on Saturday.

Avoid pre-emptive strike against US cautions in

By Chidanand Raighat
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Washington: The Bush administration has placed a restraining hand on the threat to punish Pakistan for its precedent, rejecting New Delhi's contention that it had a better option than Washington had with Islamabad to curtail violence in Kashmir.

The administration scrambled out the cautionary message Friday following comments by affairs minister Yashwant Sinha in the week that India would be taking pre-emptive action against Pakistan because of its exposure to mass destruction.

"Any attempts to draw parallels between the Iraq and Kashmir situations are wrong and are overwhelming differences between them," a department official said on Friday.

Citing Iraq's 12-year refusal in the face of UN Security Council resolutions, the official said the circumstances that made military actions against Iraq did not apply in the subcontinent.

PTI adds: Reacting to Mr Sinha's statements, Pakistan said that it would not permit the US to take advantage of the US-Iraq war and launch pre-emptive strikes while dispelling the impression that it would be the next target of US military action. After the Iraq war, Gen Pervez Musharraf and Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif asserted that India had made itself "imprudent" to threaten to hit back with nuclear weapons. India launched pre-emptive strikes against Pakistan in 1999.

● Sinha's interview on Page 7

US troops sweep in and out of Baghdad

Fedayeen and fear on streets

AP ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEAR BAGHDAD, April 5. — US armoured vehicles drove through parts of the capital today, commanders said, as other coalition troops advanced from the south to test the strength of President Saddam Hussein's defenders who are believed to have fallen back for an urban battle.

Air Force Maj.-Gen. Gene Renuart said a unit swept in and out of Baghdad. The incursion was not an attempt to capture territory but to show the Iraqi leadership "that they do not have the control they speak of on their television", the General said at a Central Command briefing in Qatar. Today's incursions, he said, "were a clear statement of the ability of the coalition to move into Baghdad at the time and place of their choosing". Though another Central Command officer said earlier that US forces were in the city to stay, Maj.-Gen. Renuart described only a brief sweep by one unit in and out of the capital and declined to say if any troops remained inside. The US sweep left burning tanks and bodies of Iraqis behind.

Footage on *Fox News* showed a convoy with the 3rd Infantry moving unopposed on an empty highway near Baghdad, passing burning trucks, abandoned artillery pieces and numerous portraits of President Hussein. It was impossible to say exactly where they were, though they were outside the city proper.

Amid conflicting reports of the extent of today's incursion coming after dramatic gains at the international airport last night, a reporter touring the city by car at mid-day said he saw no coalition soldiers. Eyewitnesses in Baghdad said they saw no coalition soldiers either. As night fell the streets were teeming with armed Iraqis who took up positions on major intersec-

tions leading to the city's exits along with the deployment of tanks and artillery.

Amidst the storm of confusion about the extent of the coalition presence in Baghdad — where explosions and machine-gun fire could be heard across the city throughout the day — members of the elite *Fedayeen* militia led by Mr Hussein's son Uday, identifiable by their distinctive black uniforms, appeared on the streets of central Baghdad for the first time.

Speaking on *Al-Arabiya* TV, a man who claimed to be a *Fedayeen* vowed to keep up the fight: "They are cowards. They control the sky, but we are able to confront whoever goes on the ground."

At Baghdad's airport, US soldiers used explosives to clear abandoned buildings and examined an extensive underground complex. Lt.-Col Lee Fetterman of the 101st Airborne said several hundred Iraqis were killed at the airport, including some suicide attackers with bombs strapped to them. But Iraq's information minister Mr Md Saeed al-Sahhaf contended that Iraqis had retaken the facility: "Today, we butchered the force at the airport," he said, and alluded to planned suicide attacks. Over 300 US troops were killed in last night's fighting at the airport, he said today. "We have pushed them outside the area," he said, to be countered by Central Command claims that the airport was "secure".

In marshy lands barely a mile south of Baghdad, Marines fought a bayonet battle with militiamen, many of whom were Jordanian, Egyptian and Sudanese, said Lt.-Col. McCoy. "It's like *jihad*. They were given a rifle and told to become a martyr."

■ See BAGHDAD: page 11

■ Editorial: Views on news, page 8

■ Exploding myths and more, page 9

6 APR 2003

THE STATESMAN

THE STATESMAN

De-Baathise: US to rewrite Iraqi school text books

DAVID B OTTAWAY AND
JOE STEPHENS

When the new Iraqi school year begins in five months, the Bush administration hopes to have in place wholesale revisions to textbooks that have taught a generation of Iraqis to be ready to die for Saddam Hussein.

The revisions are part of an ambitious US effort to demilitarise a school curriculum that touted Iraqi battlefield prowess and weaponry and demonised the US as a fearsome enemy.

Expatriates and scholars point to that curriculum, in place for the past quarter century, as one explanation for the die-hard devotion of the suicide bombers and fanatical militiamen that Saddam is threatening to unleash in the final defence of Baghdad.

More than half of Iraq's youthful population knows no other form of schooling. Iraqi expatriates working with the State Department are discussing strategies for devising a whole new approach to education. The US Agency for International Development (AID) is preparing to award education-related contracts worth an estimated \$65 million.

A coalition headed by Creative Associates International of Washington, recently won a \$16.5 million contract for similar educational reform in Afghanistan. Foreign aid documents obtained by *The Washington Post* suggest the Bush administration plans to repeat its Afghan strategy, which show-

cased schools as a quick and highly visible demonstration of improvements stemming from US intervention.

Stakes are high. A recent study by international security experts described the reconstruction of Iraq as a "test case" that will go far in establishing the US' enduring image in the Islamic world. The current Iraqi curriculum was crafted to inculcate extreme nationalism and love for Saddam at an early age, said Phebe Marr, a former National Defence University professor and author of *The Modern History of Iraq*.

From an early age, Zainab Suwajj and her Iraqi classmates would line up to pledge allegiance to Saddam. "With our souls and our blood we sacrifice for Saddam," they would sing. "We will sacrifice ourselves for you, O Saddam."

Even in texts used by the youngest Iraqi students, violence spreads across the pages. One sixth-grade text in use in recent years says, "The Army is the school of heroes and the field of chivalry, courage and daring." A civics text directs students to find a photograph of the 1991 Persian Gulf War and then point out "our army as they plunge into the noble battle against...the imperialist American attack."

Within a few years, the children are shooting real firearms and many begin attending paramilitary summer camps. The education system's martyr-building machine meshes with

a series of Baathist paramilitary youth groups, which recruit schoolchildren as young as 5, according to the federation report. The scouting organisations, each tailored to a particular age group, are known by a variety of names: Saddam's Cubs, the Vanguard, the Order of Chivalry, the Youth Brigade.

Before Gulf War I, the Iraqi education system ranked among the best in the Arab world. But the war and subsequent UN sanctions brought sharp decline.

Last April, the State Department launched a "Future of Iraq" project, under which exiled Iraqis have begun studying political, economic and social reforms. One committee,



composed of representatives from all of Iraq's major ethnic and religious groups, was given the task of proposing educational reforms.

Hind Rassam, Culhane, a psychology teacher at Mercy College in Dobbs Ferry, N.Y., said: "We recommended we look at different models and not just the US model." They discussed "participatory education," promoting "student rights" in the classroom and courses in English as a second language. "We have experts on child psychology," added Suwajj, who also sits on the education committee.

"A lot of work is going to be how to de-Baathise these kids, to make them like regular human beings."

(*The Washington Post*)

6 APR 2003

INDIAN EXPRESS

U.S. targets Iraq's 'eyes and ears'

By Atul Aneja

MANAMA, APRIL 5. Amid tall claims and counter-claims by Iraqi authorities and the U.S. media managers about their military successes, the battle for Baghdad began in right earnest today.

After claiming that it had secured Baghdad's international airport, the U.S. Central Command in Doha has asserted that its forces have entered the city from the South. Moving north towards the Baghdad University, these troops turned west in the direction of the airport. According to analysts, the movement of the U.S. armoured patrol in Baghdad was mainly symbolic. It was to convey a psychological message to residents of Baghdad that the U.S. forces had arrived at their doorstep and had the freedom of unimpeded movement in the city.

Iraqi authorities, however, spoke an entirely different language. According to them, there was, indeed heavy fighting during the day which resulted in the Republican Guards retaking the airport complex, after 'crushing' the U.S. forces there. The invading troops, according to them, had now been ejected outside the airport's perimeters. Having won the battle for the airport, the Iraqi forces were in the process of silencing the U.S. artillery guns that were still pounding this facility, they said.

Amid the confusion, a third interpretation about the developments on the ground during the day has emerged. According to this view, there was heavy fighting on Saturday, but much of it was not visible. This was because the U.S. special forces targeted some of Iraq's key underground command and com-

munication centres. They were apparently engaged in addressing some of the four underground facilities, which reportedly are the nerve centres of the Iraqi regime.

One of this is huge underground complex, which can be approached at the end of the airport's outer runway. A similar facility exists in the north and is called the "northern palace."

Two other centres, which are suspected of being connected by an elaborate network of tunnels are located well within the city might also have been targeted.

One such centre lies beneath Baghdad's Karah district while another has been positioned under the Dora neighbourhood,

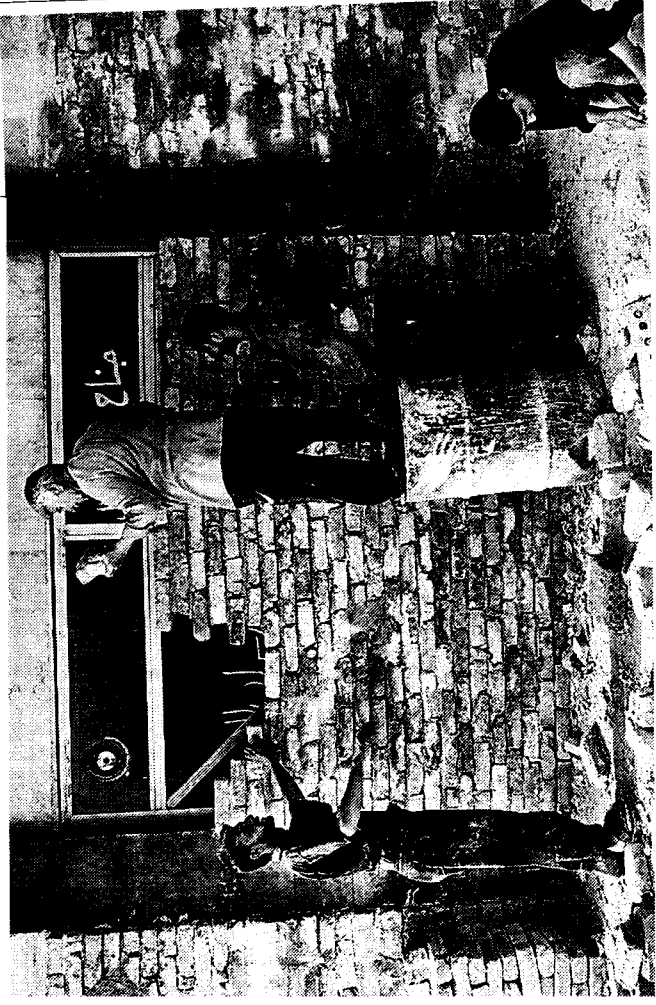
south of the Tigris river and the Baghdad University. It is likely that the U.S. forces attacked these facilities as their tanks had been reportedly spotted close to these locations this morning. The special forces, it is suspected, might have also hit a fifth facility, which is reportedly located in the Iraqi President, Saddam Hussein's stronghold of Tikrit.

Outcome not clear

The outcome of this fighting was still not clear. Analysts point out that today's attacks should reinforce the view that the U.S. does not plan to storm Baghdad. Rather, the troops are attempting to block the Iraqi regime's "eyes and ears" so that a coordinated resistance to the

U.S. force the coming days collapses. U.S. forces, at this point, were, therefore attempting to precipitate the collapse of the regime from within by assuring it with a heavy dose of psychological warfare and commando raids.

At the U.S. Central Command headquarters in Doha, its spokesperson, Major General Victor Renuan indicated that the battle for Baghdad was likely to be a long haul. "This fight is far from over and the fight for Baghdad is far from finished," he said. "Withstanding the unmatched superiority of the U.S. military hardware, it is estimated that side was fielding around 20,000 troops for combat in and around Baghdad."



A shopkeeper builds a wall to protect his shop as troops of the U.S.-led coalition reportedly advanced toward the centre of Baghdad on Saturday. — AP

'Liberation' of Iraq soon: Bush

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, APRIL 5. With American and coalition forces said to be in "heart" of Baghdad, the United States President, George W. Bush, has argued that full liberation is around the corner and the forces will press on until Iraq is totally free.

"Village by village, city by city, liberation is coming. The people of Iraq have my pledge: Our fighting forces will press on until their oppressors are gone and their whole country is free", Mr. Bush said in his weekly radio address. "The United States and its allies pledged to act if the dictator did not disarm. The regime in Iraq is now learning that we keep our word", the President said, making the point that by actions in this war, a great and just cause is being served. "Free nations will not wait and wait, leaving enemies free to plot another September 11th — this time perhaps with chemical, biological or nuclear terror", he argued. Mr. Bush also said that with the liberation of each village, the coalition forces are learning more about the "atrocities" of the Saddam Hussein regime and the "deep fear" that has been instilled in the Iraqi people. "Yet, no crime of this dying regime will divert us from our mission. We will not stop until Iraq is free", the President said. Aside from listing the movement and achievement of coalition forces, Mr. Bush took the opportunity to talk about some of the actions of the Iraqi regime. "As the vice tightens on the Iraqi regime, some of our enemies have chosen to fill their final days with acts of cowardice and murder", the President said, going on to talk about troops using women and children as human shields, killing local citizens who have come forward to welcome coalition forces, executing prisoners of war, using hospitals and schools as combat zones and waging attacks using a white flag.

The Pentagon has announced that eight dead soldiers found during the rescue of a prisoner of war were American and were in the same unit as PFC Jessica Lynch — the 506 Maintenance Company. Special forces found a total of 11 bodies during the raid, and nine are believed to be those of Americans. The nine bodies are being returned to Dover Air Force Base in Delaware for forensic examination. What is further being clarified is that the five soldiers who were shown on Iraqi Television after an ambush were not among the bodies found during the rescue raid of Ms Lynch.

To meet Blair

Meanwhile, as coalition forces are believed to be moving at a speed not quite anticipated, Mr. Bush and the Prime Minister of Britain, Tony Blair, are getting ready for their third meeting in three weeks. This time, it is near Belfast in Northern Ireland with the Irish Prime Minister, Bertie Ahern, also taking part in the talks. The meeting has been scheduled for next Monday and Tuesday. Mr. Bush and Mr. Blair, prior to the start of the war, met at the Azores along with the Prime Minister of Spain; last week, the British Prime Minister was at Camp David for private consultations with the American President with only top aides of the two present.

The two leaders this time will be talking about the ongoing military operations. That apart, a deep focus is also on the cards on humanitarian relief and reconstruction efforts of Iraq along with a broad discussion on the kind of role envisaged for the U.N.

Massive crowds attend anti-war rally in Java

Solo: A crowd of 10,000 burned a mock Statue of Liberty and chanted "Bush is a terrorist" during a boisterous anti-war rally on Friday in the world's largest Muslim nation.

Crowds marched through the streets of the central Javanese town of Solo, holding hundreds of posters calling for a peaceful end to the Iraq war and labelling US President George W Bush a terrorist and baby killer.

Others strode through the streets holding a plastic foam replica of the statue of Liberty but with a machine gun in her hands. As the protest ended in front of a university campus, the crowd burned the two-meter-high statue and joined in a chorus of "Bush is a terrorist".

Protesters included students from the Islamic boarding school of Abu Bakar Bashir, a radical Muslim cleric being held in jail on treason charges. He is the alleged leader of the terror group Jemaah Islamiyah, which is blamed for the Oct 12 Bali bombings that killed 202 people.

Meanwhile in Jakarta, more than a dozen students as young as five joined in a festive anti-war protest outside the US embassy.



A protester with a mock Statue of Liberty during an anti-war demonstration in Solo on Friday.

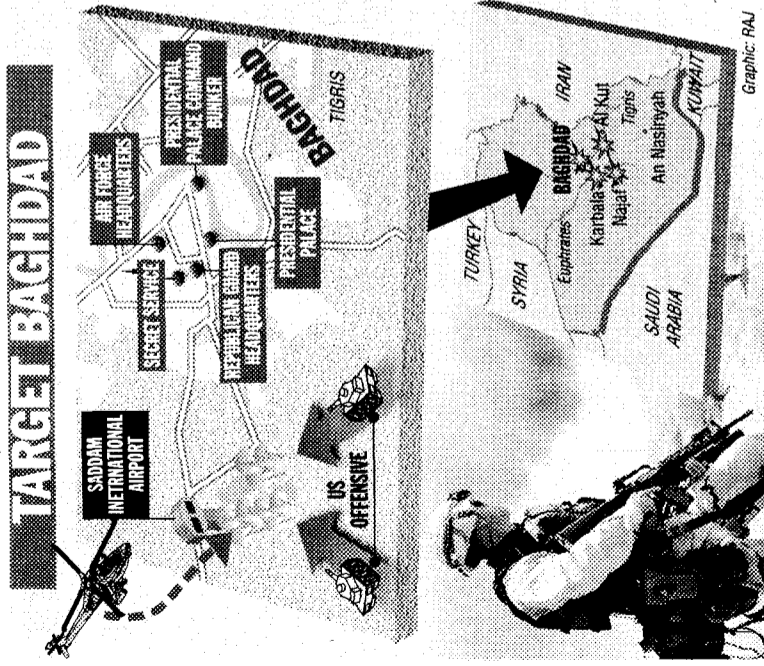
Wearing puppet masks and straw hats, the youngsters quietly joined their teachers in chants of "We want peace."

The Indonesian government has been a vocal opponent of the war in Iraq and President Megawati Sukarnoputri has denounced it as "aggression that violates international law."

Noisy but peaceful protests have been widespread across the country since the war began. AP

F 5 APR 2003

Airport falls, suicide threat rises



Baghdad, April 4 (Reuters): US troops have seized Baghdad international airport in their biggest victory of the war to oust Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, drawing a bitter Iraqi threat to hit back with "non-conventional" means.

Information minister Mohammed Saeed al-Sahaf, admitting that an "isolated island" of US forces was at the gates of the capital, said Iraq would strike back, perhaps as early as on Friday night.

"We will commit a non-conventional act on them, not necessarily military," he told a news conference.

Asked if Iraq would use weapons of mass destruction — which it denies possessing — Sahaf said: "No, not at all. But we will conduct a kind of martyrdom (suicide) operations."

As Baghdad went into the evening of day 16 of the war, heavy artillery rumbled from southwestern Baghdad, the direction of the airport.

"The thud of artillery fire is reverberating across the capital, from the southwest. It just started," a Reuters correspondent said.

The US and Britain attacked Iraq on March 20, accusing its president of hiding chemical and biological weapons. They have made no confirmed finding but remain on alert for a gas attack as their forces approach Baghdad.

Sahaf was speaking after the US military said the second suicide car bombing of the war on Thursday had killed three soldiers, a pregnant woman and the driver, in northwestern Iraq.

Southeast of Baghdad, a US Marine officer told Reuters correspondent Sean Maguire the Nida division of the Republican Guard had "ceased to exist as an effective fighting force".

A US spokesman said earlier that about 2,500 Republican Guards from a different division had surrendered.

"Just last night there was a (military field) report of about 2,500 soldiers of the Baghdad Division surrendering, stripping off their uniforms," Captain Frank Thorp told Reuters.

That claim prodded world financial markets out of their wait-and-see mode. European stocks jumped, safe-haven bond



A bombed-out plane at Baghdad International. (AP/PTI)

The airport was a key objective for US forces, who can use it as a forward base in any battle for this sprawling city of five million people. Brooks said its capture contributed to US efforts to prevent any escape by Saddam or his associates.

He said air raids had already made the runway unusable. Brooks said the US military was confident that it had breached the defensive ring around Baghdad, but Iraqi Special Republican Guards were still operating in the area.

The apparent suicide attack took place on Thursday night, he said. The Haditha

a suspected chemical warfare training school. US forces also reported finding vials of unidentified liquid and white powder at two sites near the town of Latifiya, just south of Baghdad.

The Bush administration said a lethal struggle could lie ahead for US forces arrayed on the edge of Baghdad.

"I still want to caution everybody. We are still in the middle of a battle — a battle that remains deadly it's not over," a US official said in Washington.

The apparent suicide attack took place on Thursday night, he said. The Haditha

dam in northwestern Iraq, the US military said.

"A civilian vehicle approached a coalition checkpoint. A pregnant female stepped out of the vehicle and began screaming in fear," a statement said.

It said the vehicle then blew up. Apart from the deaths, two soldiers were hurt. The nationality of the troops was unclear.

Four US soldiers died in a suicide car bombing at another checkpoint on Saturday. Iraq had promised more such attacks.

It was unclear when US forces intended to move into

Baghdad, but US Marine Captain Matt Watt said the plan was to encircle the capital and gradually reduce its defences.

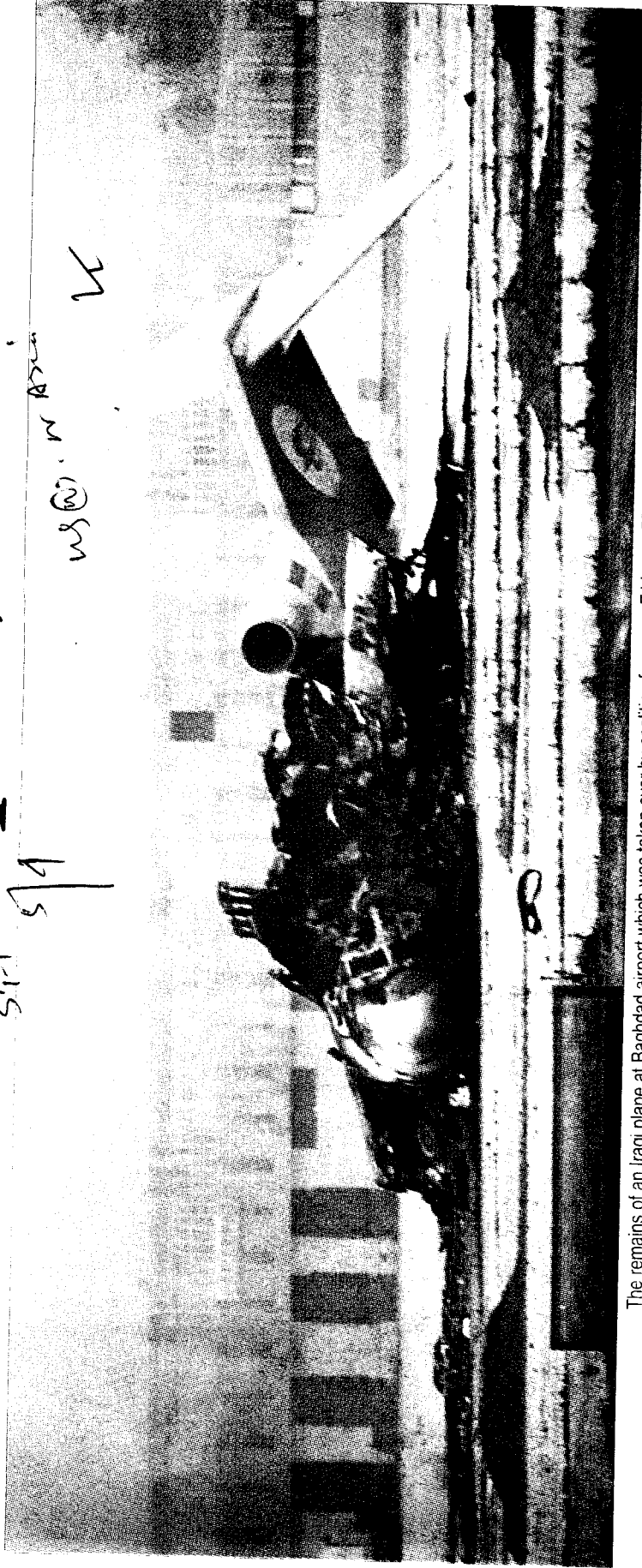
"We're going to surround Baghdad and start taking chunks out of where the enemy are," he told Reuters correspondent Matthew Green, travelling with the Marines.

The US military said 320 Iraqi soldiers had been killed in fighting for the airport. Dozens of Iraqi troop carriers, trucks and anti-aircraft guns had been captured or destroyed.

US troops later fought off an Iraqi counterattack.

BUSH, BLAIR TO REVIEW SITUATION ■ SUICIDE CAR BOMB ATTACK KILLS FIVE

Coalition in airport, Saddam on streets



The remains of an Iraqi plane at Baghdad airport which was taken over by coalition forces on Friday. — PTI (More reports on pages 3 & 4)

V for victory and without

WASHINGTON, April 4. — The USA plans to declare victory in Iraq in due course, whether or not Mr Saddam Hussein and his aides have capitulated, the *Washington Post* said today, quoting US officials. "The objective is not necessarily to take buildings or occupy areas," a military officer involved in planning for the war's conclusion told the *Post*. "It's the people. It's getting them to accept the fact that the regime is gone. That's the essence of the thing."

And the "rolling" victory theory will come at an yet unspecified moment when US forces are in control of "significant territory and have eliminated a critical mass of Iraqi resistance," the *Post* said. — AFP

Sahhaf, in a statement on behalf of Mr Hussein, urged Iraqis to rise up and defeat coalition forces in a "blazing fire" at the gates of Baghdad.

At al-Yarmouk hospital in the capital, doctors and nurses scrambled to cope with the rush of casualties — including civilians and Republican Guard soldiers.

Summit: Mr George Bush and Mr Tony Blair will meet in Northern Ireland next week to review the situation.

launch further strikes on Mr Hussein's seat of power. US army's 3rd Infantry Division launched the attack on the airport last night, initially facing stiff resistance from Iraqi troops which melted as the day broke. The soldiers conducted a building-by-building sweep for Iraqi defenders.

The US troops were backed by navy warplanes dropping satellite and laser-guided bombs on the airport and a nearby military complex, while *F/A-18 Hornets* and *F-14 Tomcats* hit a hangar and a fuel depot at the airport

On Friday morning, Mr al-

tal killed three soldiers, a pregnant woman and her taxi driver. Iraq's official INA news agency claimed that the suicide attack was carried out by two Iraqi women.

Coalition commanders said 2,500 Republican Guard soldiers had surrendered to Marines advancing north from Kut.

Following the seizure of the airport, thousands of residents were reportedly fleeing Baghdad in a stream of bumper-to-bumper vehicles.

The airport's capture gives coalition forces an effective base to

Hussein called on his countrymen to strike at coalition soldiers. "Every time they come closer to your beloved city, resist them... Let the criminals lose."

Earlier, the Iraqi information minister threatened "martyrdom" and other unconventional attacks against the invading troops. "I mean some kind of martyrdom, and there are very new ways which we are going to carry out," said Mohammed Saeed al-Sahhaf.

A second suicide car bomb attack on the coalition forces at a checkpoint north-west of the capi-

In this unannounced telecast, which the Iraqi authorities claimed was being shown live, Mr

Agencies
NEAR BAGHDAD, April 4. — Coalition forces today took control of Saddam International Airport, on the outskirts of the capital, and renamed it Baghdad International Airport, even as President Saddam Hussein was shown on Iraqi TV nonchalantly walking the streets of Baghdad urging the citizenry to stay firm in the face of the assault.

In this unannounced telecast, which the Iraqi authorities claimed was being shown live, Mr

US troops take Saddam airport

Baghdad: US forces were on Friday engaged in fierce gun-battles with Iraqi troops to gain full control of the strategic international airport on the outskirts of Baghdad while five people were killed in another suicide attack.

Saddam International Airport in Baghdad was seized and renamed by coalition troops after overnight fighting, the US Central Command said.

"The airport now has a new name, Baghdad International Airport, and it is a gateway to the future of Iraq," Brigadier General Vincent Brooks said at Centcom's forward base in Qatar.

The US claimed that soldiers of the 3rd Infantry Division fought their way into the airport after heavy bombardment overnight but continued to face Iraqi shelling this morning.

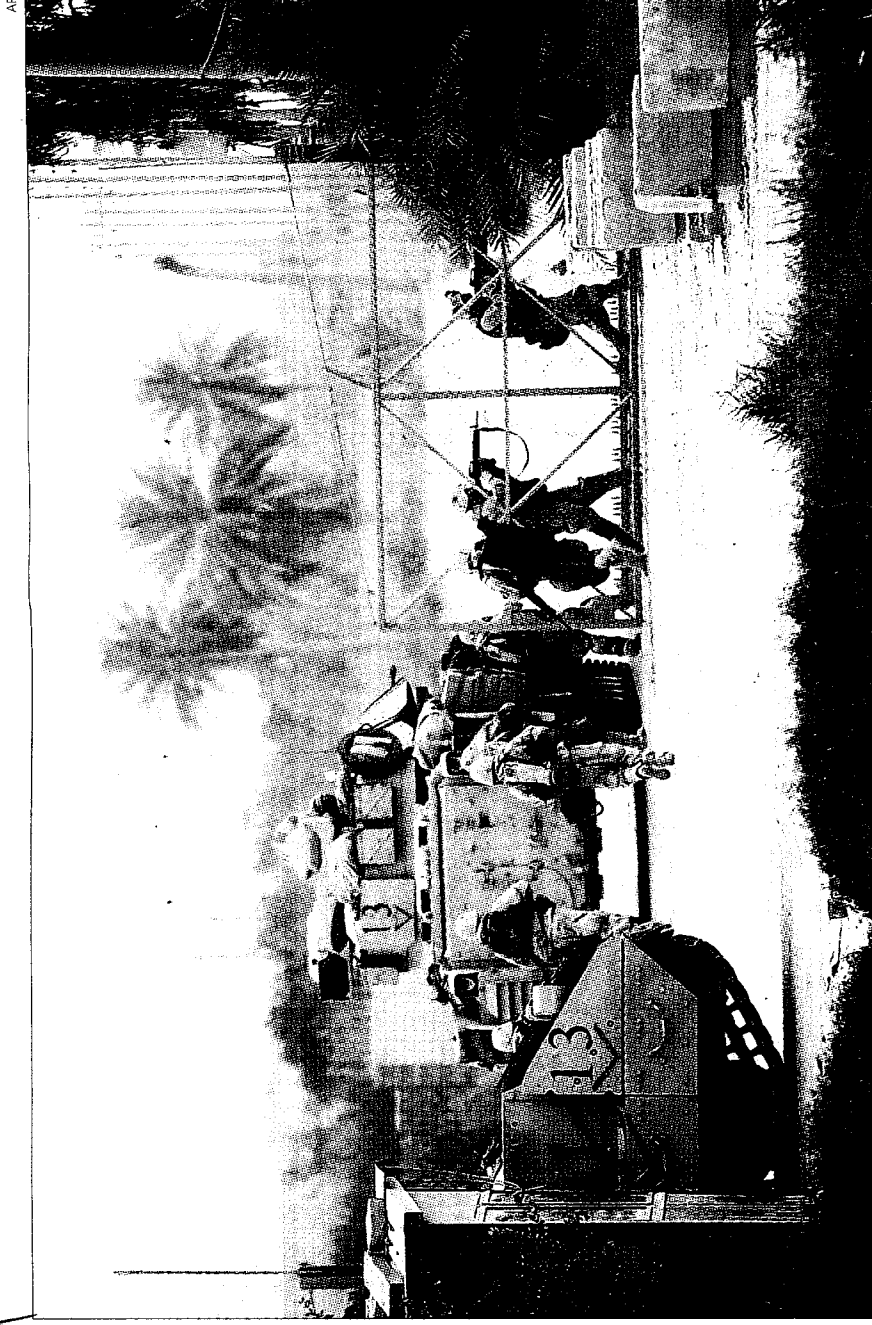
There was fighting to clear the airport of Iraqi soldiers and the Iraqis appeared to be piling up reinforcements. People were reported to be fleeing areas close to the airport.

Much of Baghdad remained without electricity and water after being hit by another night of sustained bombing. However, US Gen. Brooks said the coalition didn't knock out the power in the city.

US troops also found thousands of boxes of white powder, nerve agent antidote and Arabic documents on how to engage in chemical warfare at an industrial site south of Baghdad, a US officer said.

Some 2,500 Iraqi troops are reported to have surrendered to US Marines advancing north on Baghdad from the town of Al Kut, a US spokesman said.

"A strong force is moving toward Baghdad from Al Kut,"



FORGET THE IMMIGRATION FORMALITIES, JUST PROCEED FOR THE SECURITY CHECK: Ground forces from the American Third Infantry Division secure a gated area at Saddam International Airport, 20 km outside Baghdad, early on Friday morning.

Navy Captain Frank Thorp said, adding that 2,500 Iraqi soldiers were reported to have given themselves up.

Meanwhile, a car exploded near a coalition checkpoint in Iraq, killing three coalition soldiers, a pregnant woman and the car's driver, the US Central Command said.

It said the incident occurred on Thursday evening about 18 km southwest of the Haditha Dam, northwest of Baghdad,

when a civilian vehicle approached a coalition checkpoint. "A pregnant woman stepped out of the vehicle and began screaming in fear," a statement said. "At this point the civilian vehicle exploded, killing three coalition force members who were approaching the vehicle and wounding two others." It said the woman and the driver were also killed.

In other military developments across the country, Kurdish fighters, backed by small groups of US soldiers, advanced towards Mosul but were reportedly facing heavy fire from Iraqi troops.

US troops also moved into the centre of Najaf to search for paramilitary fighters. British soldiers also claimed to have made deeper inroads to capture Basra.

But, US Joint Chief of Staff General Richard Myers ob-

US Congress bars non-allies from Iraq reconstruction plan

Washington: The House of Representatives has passed a supplementary budget amendment excluding France, Germany, Russia and Syria from taking part in US-funded reconstruction bids in Iraq because they opposed the US-led war against Saddam Hussein's regime.

Proposed by Minnesota Congressman Mark Kennedy, a Republican unrelated to the famous Kennedy clan, and passed by show of hands late Thursday, the measure would even bar access by the four countries to information on reconstruction bids in Iraq.

The Kennedy amendment stipulated "that none of the funds made available in the bill for reconstruction efforts in Iraq may be used to procure goods or services from any entity—that includes information on a response to a request for proposal—that indicates that such entity is organised under the laws of France, Germany, the Russian federation, or Syria".

A similar amendment from Washington State Congressman George Nethercutt, also Republican, that included China was voted down.

The Kennedy amendment was included in a supplemental budget amendment authorising \$77.9 billion in funding to cover the cost of war and the start of reconstruction passed by the House by a 414-12 vote.

Reacting to the US decision, Russia said that reconstruction in post-war Iraq was up to the UN and not the US.

"The forms and standards of Iraqi reconstruction should not be decided by the US Congress, but by the United Nations," Russian deputy foreign minister Yuri Fedotov told a briefing in Beijing. AFP

● **Related reports on Pages 10, 11**
● **See Edit: Baghdad Blogbuster, Page 12**

We'll finish what we began, says Bush

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

NEW YORK, APRIL 3. With American troops said to be in the vicinity of Greater Baghdad and military planners here pondering over the next phase of action, the United States President, George W. Bush, told cheering Marines at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, that "a vise is closing" on the Saddam Hussein regime.

"What we have begun we will finish. We will not stop until Iraq is free," Mr. Bush said at his third appearance at a military installation.

Since hostilities began on March 20 Camp Lejeune has been one of the hardest hit bases in the United States — at least 13 Marines from this Camp have died in Iraq and six are listed missing.

Mr. Bush met with some of the family members after his address to the troops.

"Having travelled hundreds of miles, we will now go the last 200 yards," Mr. Bush said stressing that no Marine had died in vain.

"These were sacrifices in a high calling: the defence of our nation and the peace of the world," the President said.

"By our actions we serve a great and a just cause. We will remove weapons of mass destruction from the hands of mass murderers. Free nations will not sit and wait, leaving enemies free to plot another September 11, this time perhaps with chemical or biological or nuclear terror," he said.

The Pentagon is making some difficult decisions on the war with Iraq, one of which is whether to continue to keep hammering away at the capital city of Baghdad or give a small pause for re-grouping and supplies as well as the opportunity to the Iraqi regime to lay down its weapons.

Senior Pentagon officials are saying that American troops have entered the Greater Baghdad area and are perhaps within 6 km. of the main city.

The Pentagon is also making the point that it is not counting on the capitulation of Saddam Hussein, at the same time, military and civilian officers are playing down expectations that Baghdad can be taken quickly or easily.

"We are planning for a very difficult fight ahead in Baghdad. We are not expecting to drive into Baghdad suddenly and seize it," Major General Stanley McChrystal said at a Pentagon briefing.

THE HINDU

APR 2003

Indefensible war

By Rajeev Dhavan

Just because there is a perceived threat, it does not mean that any country can simply shoot from the hip whenever and however it wants.

WED WASH
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THE UNITED States' invasion of Iraq defies legality. It is not a war of liberation. No one in Iraq has asked to be liberated. It is not a retaliatory war either — Iraq has not attacked America. It is not a case of supporting Iraqi or even Kurdish self-determination. It is not to give effect to peace-keeping through the United Nations.

The U.N. has not granted the rights of individual and collective action to the U.S. and its allies. The rules of international law on waging a just war have been totally violated.

The basis for international peace is Article 2 (4) of the U.N. Charter calling upon "all members to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations." Pious words or statements of principle? The world's capacity for military insanity makes Article 2 (4) a foundation principle for international affairs.

There may be occasions for collective action ordained by the U.N. itself under Chapter VII of the Charter — using force only as a last resort. But no one wants the lesser measures of embargo on Iraq. The U.S. and its allies want the oil. The only direct way to do this is by war, conquest and annexation through its own regime.

Since 1945, there have been only two determinations of "breach of peace" by the U.N. — Korea (1950) and Argentina (Falklands War in 1986). The use of force was authorised only in the case of Korea and Rhodesia. Economic and other sanctions were imposed against apartheid in Rhodesia and South Africa.

America has generally been unperturbed about the U.N. It fought a long war in Vietnam from 1965 to 1973 when it had no business to do so. It was the chief protagonist in the Korean War — assuming leadership of the U.N. to suit itself as it did in 1991 when Kuwait was attacked. As the leading arms manufacturer, it has benefited from wars — supply-

ing weapons and military support whenever it wanted. War is America's business. And, it has made a business of it.

The U.N. embargo is on war, but more widely so on the use of force or the threat to use. In the U.N. General Assembly Resolution of October 24, 1970, clarity was added to common sense to make it clear that international law prohibited (a) direct or indirect intervention in the internal or external affairs of another state, and (b) armed and all other forms of interference against the personality of the (other) state or against its political, economic or cultural elements. These statements embody the basics of keeping peace in a troubled world.

As an imperial transgressor state, America constantly subverts basic principles of peace. Just because there is a perceived threat, it does not mean that any country can simply shoot from the hip whenever and however it wants. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) warned Britain in the Corfu Channel case as far back as in 1949 that its "Operation Retail" to minesweep as a part of its right to passage through the straits was impermissible. All this has gone unheeded.

Despite the U.N. General Assembly Resolution of 21 December, 1965, forbidding the financing or supporting of even subversive terrorist or armed activities to overthrow a regime or cause internal strife, America not only interfered in Vietnam but was rightly told by the ICJ in Nicaragua vs. U.S. case (1986) that it had totally violated international norms and law in Nicaragua. This neither chastened the U.S. nor deterred it. It has directly and indirectly provided money and arms to support violence wherever it wanted. In effect, it has wrecked the political economies of Central and South America after having destroyed large

parts of South East Asia. And for several decades now, its new target has been the Middle East through a policy that is anti-Muslim, communal, greedy and wholly contrary to the right of these nations to govern themselves without wilful pressure. Using its imperial might, it has divided to try and rule; and, destroy strong indigenous governance.

The U.S.' actions in Iraq cannot be justified as self-defence. Even if we accept the French text of Article 51 of the U.N. Charter (as opposed to the English and Spanish texts), the question of self-defence arises only in the context of an attack. The mere fact that someone stores missiles or chemical weapons does not justify the invocation of self-defence. This was the cardinal principle that emerged from the U.S.-Cuban missile crisis. However, even if we assume that there is a right to self-defence, it cannot defy proportionality. No one can overrun another state on this basis. This is what Hitler did in 1939 to make the world safe for fascism. The U.N. rightly condemned Israel's bombing of Iraq's nuclear reactor as not constituting a legitimate use of the right of self-defence. The U.S. wrongly invoked the right to anticipatory self-defence in bombing Libya as part of its anti-terrorist drive. Strictly speaking, Israel's successful raid in Entebbe in Uganda in 1976 or the U.S.' failed attempt to rescue the hostages from Iran in 1980 were violative of international law and constituted acts of aggression.

Nor was the U.S.' invasion of Grenada in 1984 justifiable on the basis that "American citizens were in danger". The fact that the Soviet Union's invasions of Hungary (1956), Czechoslovakia (1968) and Afghanistan (1979) were not justified does not help America's case in Iraq or its general brutal practice of unscrupulous interference.

Controlling Iraq's oil

By Sudha Mahalingam

FEW OUTSIDE the "coalition of the willing" doubt that the second Gulf War is less about weapons of mass destruction and more about oil. The United States, acutely aware of this global perception, assiduously denies it covets Iraq's abundant energy reserves and says they will be used for the benefit of the Iraqi people and, that too, in conformity with international laws and conventions. These statements, however, are neither here nor there. They do nothing to address the key issues — who will manage the Iraqi oil infrastructure during the American military occupation, under what law, and how will it be used "for the Iraqi people". More crucially, they are silent on what will happen to the existing oil contracts awarded to foreign oil companies after the exit of Saddam Hussein.

The unfolding of the war in Iraq and the statements made by the Bush administration suggest that the military occupation of Iraq could extend for a fairly long period of time, some say up to two years. If that is the case, will the U.S. then represent Iraq in OPEC during this period? There can be no greater irony than the largest oil-importing nation sitting in a producer's cartel discussing production quotas to fine-tune prices. Under international law, the U.S. and its allies would be deemed belligerents. In the event, the traditional Laws of Occupation codified in Articles 43 of The Hague Regulations and the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 that set forth the rights and obligations of a belligerent occupying power vis-a-vis the occupied territory should apply. The rights and duties of the occupant power are conditioned primarily by the necessity of maintaining order, and administering the resources of the territory to meet the needs of the inhabitants and the requirements of the occupying forces.

Under the Geneva Convention, movable state property — which includes oil — can be used by the occupant to support the costs of military occupation. The U.S. law that governs similar situations — The Law of

Land Warfare — has similar provisions with respect to movable property in the occupied territory. Now that the Oil-for-Food programme has been resumed, current levels of Iraqi oil production will fetch around \$ 27 billion a year, of which a quarter will go to the U.N. Compensation Fund.

That would leave less than \$ 20 billion a year at prevailing prices. Compare this with the costs of military

The U.S. could install in Baghdad a regime favourable to its interests and get it to annul existing oil contracts on the plea that they were awarded on political considerations.

occupation and reconstruction, not to mention the cost of the war itself. The U.S. President, George W. Bush, has already sought \$ 75 billion from the U.S. Congress to part-fund the war effort. Michael O' Hanlon of the Brookings Institution puts the post-war cost of military occupation at \$ 50 billion to \$ 100 billion a year. William D. Nordhaus of Yale University estimates the cost of reconstruction to be anywhere between \$ 75 billion and \$ 500 billion. It is naive to expect that the American and the British taxpayers would be called upon to underwrite these humungous costs of war, military occupation and reconstruction of Iraq. The failure to secure the U.N.'s backing for the attack has limited the financing options for the war effort. Unlike in the first Gulf War, this time around, the U.S. cannot expect Iraq's Arab neighbours, already incensed over what they perceive as an unjustified and unprovoked aggression on one of their kind, to foot the bill. The desperate attempts by Washington and London to rope the U.N. into the post-war reconstruction effort reflect this ground reality. In the circumstances, the temptation to dip into oil revenues at least to pay for the cost of occupation would be irresistible.

The other key issue that is of concern to the international community is the fate of the oil contracts awarded by Saddam Hussein to foreign in-

vestors. Oil companies from 20 countries — among them three members of the U.N. Security Council, but the U.S. and Britain excluded — have some form of title or claim to exploration and development of oil wells in Iraq. Even by international standards, these deals are sizeable. For instance, the Bin Umar and Majnoon oilfields promised to France's TotalFinaElf can together produce

upwards of one million barrels of crude a day while Al Ahdab awarded to China can produce around 90,000 barrels a day. Apart from the cancelled Lukoil deal for West Qurna, five other Russian companies have been awarded or promised some prize oil concessions in Iraq and these are still intact. For any potential investor, these deals mean huge profits. For any oil-importing country, they promise a secure source of supply. Which explains why France and Russia have vowed to defend their interests in a post-Saddam regime. In the handling of the existing oil contracts, the U.S. will be subject, in addition to the laws of occupation in the Geneva Convention, to American case law and the U.N. General Assembly Resolution 1803 on Permanent Sovereignty over Natural Resources (PSNR). The one common thread that runs through all the sources of international law is the advocacy of respect for private property rights. As for the legitimacy of the Saddam Hussein Government in entering into these contracts, a fundamental principle of international law is that property rights awarded by an effective Government — constitutional or not, well-governed or a rogue state — must be respected even after a regime change. As for U.S. case law, in the *Percheman Case*, Justice Marshall, Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, had held

Even a theory of collective self-defence under Article 51 has a limited scope. In the case of Nicaragua vs. U.S., the ICJ limited this right to armed attack.

America's justifications for the war on Iraq fall into no recognisable justifications for a just war. It cannot claim that it is implementing Resolution 1441 as the U.N. Security Council has not authorised the war. It is not a form of anticipatory self-defence. As for nuclear and chemical arsenals, the biggest repository of these weapons is America, which did not hesitate to drop atomic bombs on Japan or use chemical weapons in Vietnam. Even the elliptical Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty of 1968, which now dangerously allows nuclear weaponry to five nations, does not permit war to scale down arsenals. In its advisory opinion of nuclear weapons in 1996, the ICJ ordained negotiated results based on good faith under strict and effective international control.

So, what is the war about? As a self-assured and self-styled imperial power which wants the hegemony of the world and especially of the Middle East and Muslim world, America is waging a communal and racist war for its own benefit. In one estimate, America not only recovered the \$ 40 billion spent on the 1991 Gulf War but also gave itself and its arms and oil conglomerates a further benefit of about \$ 70 billion. The net benefit of Iraqi war will be much greater and will also place the U.S. in-charge of one of the largest oil reserves in the world.

America's attack on Iraq not only wholly lacks justification but is vulgar, extreme, vicious and cruel. It will destabilise and devastate the Middle East and trigger terrorist acts by way of counter-reaction. When we look back at America's imperial reign from 1950 and at the events in Korea, Vietnam, Central and South America, the Middle East and now Iraq, we confront a terrifying legacy. This is genocide by war while the world watches. No less, India's political parties' lack of condemnation willfully surrenders moral courage when it was needed most.

that change of sovereignty did not impair the rights of private property validly acquired. The PSNR limits the scope for breach of international law principles. It upholds the inalienable right of all the States to freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources in accordance with their national interests, and champions respect for the economic independence of states. It further says, "...the provision of economic and technical assistance, loans and increased foreign investment must not be subject to conditions which conflict with the interests of the recipient state".

However, all this is not to say that the contracts signed during the Saddam Hussein regime are therefore unassailable. The new sovereign, by virtue of its sovereignty, can do what it pleases with the country's resources, even abrogate existing contracts, but under international law that would be considered as expropriation requiring compensation by the repudiating party. Even the PSNR can be cleverly turned into a double-edged weapon to abrogate the existing contracts in the name of the "people of Iraq" on the plea that they were awarded on political considerations and were, therefore, against their interests. Besides, a determined party can get around most of the obstacles by applying the fine-print — which require absence of corruption, obligation to tender public contracts, etc. which may have been part of the domestic law, but had been suppressed by a dictatorial regime. The validity and extent of the title of the various contenders for the Iraqi oilfields will depend on the nature and terms of the contracts themselves, about which there is little information in the public domain. But the U.S. need not even fuss over the finer legal details. It could install in Iraq a regime favourable to its interests and get it to annul existing contracts on the plea that they were awarded on political considerations. Along with Russia and France, which have the biggest stakes in Iraqi oil, a whole host of countries are closely watching the U.S. moves, wondering which excuse would be used to jettison their hard-won oil concessions in Iraq.



Plan to avoid all-out street battles

Elite units targeted outside Baghdad

Washington, April 3

ONE OF the most important episodes on Wednesday in the intensifying war in Iraq was not the American advance toward Baghdad. It was the American military's effort to stop the Iraqi Republican Guard from getting to the Iraqi capital.

As American Army and Marine columns rumbled toward Baghdad, Republican Guard units began to withdraw from their defensive positions outside the capital and retreat into the city, where some Republican Guard units have already managed to redeploy.

"The enemy is taking what forces he can muster and is ordering them back into the city," a senior American military officer said tonight. "He is bringing in the Republican Guard for a last stand. We have been trying to kill anything that is moving toward the city. We don't want a big siege at the end of this."

"If it becomes an all-out, hand-to-hand urban battle for Baghdad, then we'll have done something wrong," a senior military officer said.

It does not appear that the battle for the city itself will be joined for at least a few days. Gen. Richard B. Myers, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has counselled a more deliberate pace to set the conditions for the best time to unleash the military might coiled against Baghdad.

Over the next several days, American forces will continue to attack remaining Republican Guard with artillery barrages, jet and helicopter strikes, and tank attacks.

The opening phase of the attack that began on Tuesday was intended to finish off the two divisions guarding the southern entrances to Baghdad, opening a hole to the city for allied troops. The attack had been scheduled to start on Sunday, but commanders held off to allow allied warplanes to weaken the reinforcements with heavy bombing, a senior military officer said.

The decision to strike on Tuesday may have been influenced by a spy tip. The National Security

Agency, the government's eavesdropping and code-breaking organisation, intercepted communications between Baghdad and the Iraqi Republican Guard divisions south of the capital ordering the divisions to pull back from their forward positions and move closer to the capital, according to US intelligence officials.

A military officer said that Gen. Tommy R. Franks, the allied commander in the Gulf, now faces three likely battle options: push ahead to Baghdad through the defeated Guard divisions south of the city; destroy the four other Guard divisions that could attack the allies' flanks, or wait until the long-awaited Fourth Infantry Division and its 21,000 soldiers arrives later this month. The first ship carrying the division's equipment unloaded in Kuwait on Tuesday.

The battle for the city itself will be step by step, a US officer in Iraq said this week. American planners have spent years studying Baghdad, breaking down the city neighbourhood by neighbourhood and plotting their geographic and demographic features. Using sophisticated computer-mapping models, American warplane and helicopter pilots have rehearsed "virtual" attacks against targets in the city using actual satellite imagery of buildings and other sites.

Some officers warned that the US-led ground offensive still does not have enough troops to take the Iraqi capital, a sprawling city of 4.5 million people, if intimidation fails. "Now comes the hard part," said an American officer in Iraq who is deeply involved in the planning of the Baghdad offensive. "Do we have enough troops? No."

Exactly how Gen Franks deals with Baghdad hinges, in some measure, on how the battle goes in the next day or so. Commanders will not discuss details of certain secret strategies, saying only that US troops will not immediately surge into the city, but stay on the fringes, and focus attacks on remaining Iraqi government buildings and vestiges of the regime.

The New York Times



A Marine looks at a portrait of Saddam Hussein found in a school in Numaniyah on Thursday.

Saddam goofs on deployment, plays into allies' hands

Amatzia Baram
Baghdad, April 3

ON WEDNESDAY, it was reported the Medina division of the Republican Guard ceased to exist as an organised strike force. The same was said about the Baghdad division after a far shorter engagement with coalition forces.

What can we understand from these reports? It may be that most, or almost all the Guard's tanks were destroyed. The coalition outguns and outnumbers T-72s, and the coalition command and control system is intact and very effective, unlike the Iraqi one.

By keeping his best army divisions outside of Baghdad, confronting the allied forces with very little ground-to-air protection, Saddam in fact sentenced them to death.

Their only chance of survival and inflicting damage on the advancing coalition forces is from within Baghdad. There they will be protected by the formidable anti-aircraft power in and around the city. This will limit the effectiveness of the coalition's helicopter gunships.

When they engage the coalition from behind their civilians they will present their enemy with a daunting dilemma: if the Americans and British use all their firepower, they are very likely to kill many Iraqi civilians, but if they hold their fire, they will be paying a heavy price in terms of their own troops' vulnerability.

It is not clear why Saddam decided to expose the Guard. It is all the more puzzling as the other Guard tank divisions, the Hammarabi and the Nida, are also outside Baghdad and apparently have in the same suicidal way been ordered to engage the allies before they reach the capital. If these orders stand, these two divisions will be decimated.

The Iraqi leadership may withdraw the Guard into town, but this would present a problem for Saddam. The Guard is regarded as less loyal than the Special Republican Guard. Until now they were not allowed into Baghdad, for fear of a coup d'etat.

The Guard served as a buffer between the capital city and it is this system that is crumbling.

The Guardian

The sun's no fun but moon's a boon

Chris Vaccaro and Steve Marshall
Baghdad, April 3

AS COALITION troops move within striking range of Baghdad, they will face the challenge of hot temperatures that will blast the terrain for the remainder of the week. They'll also have to face them while wearing stifling chemical-protection suits.

But allied forces will benefit from one natural event: The new moon's darkness will allow them to exploit their night-vision devices against the ill-equipped Iraqis. "They have about a week when they can conduct dark-of-night operations anywhere in the world," Geoff Chester of the

US Naval Observatory said. The moon's phase will provide "a window of four to six hours of darkness after midnight," Chester said.

Temperatures in Baghdad climbed to near 30 degrees on Thursday and will soar towards the mid-50s on Friday and Saturday. A temperature of 40 degrees is forecast for Sunday before temperatures drop on Monday.

"Heat is a factor like an enemy position is a factor," Marine Maj. David Andersen said. "That is simply something you have to take into account."

Military planners have long known that warmer conditions could hamper — or at least slow — an advance. As the tempera-

tures rise in Iraq, these concerns could come to bear. Thunderstorms and sandstorm-producing winds could accompany the cooler temperatures on Monday.

Normal April temperatures in Baghdad are a high of 29 degrees and a low of 17 degrees. The soaring temperatures and unforgiving weather may prove to be the ultimate test of the military's training and technology.

Last week, sandstorms that dropped visibility to a few feet slowed the Army infantry's advance toward Baghdad. Intense heat could force military commanders to adjust their strategy. "You may see even more night operations," Andersen said.

For British forces, training for the heat was an early requirement. The troops, who operate under a buddy system, are required to make sure their partners consume plenty of water each day, Capt. Martine McMee said. "Commanders are responsible for making sure the troops drink enough water," she said — 6 litres per day. If troops are inside their chemical suits, the requirement goes up to 15 litres daily.

Under intense heat, commanders will rely on a heat stress index, she said. "As the index goes up, the amount of work you can do without a rest is less and less," McMee said. "For example, it could mean 15 minutes of hard work and 30 minutes of rest."

USA Today

CRISIS UPDATE

Saddam palace raided

THE US forces on Thursday raided one of Saddam Hussein's palaces near Baghdad's international airport. The troops seized some documents but made no arrests. "The raid did not yield any regime officials but documents were seized," Brigadier General Vincent Brooks told a briefing. He declined to provide any information on the nature of the material seized. But Iraqi Information Minister Mohammed Said al-Sahhaf denied that US forces were pushing towards Baghdad. Denying the American claim, he said the allied troops were more than 100 miles away from the capital.

PTI, Dubai

Turkey help offer

YIELDING TO pressure from the US, Turkey agreed on Wednesday to increase its cooperation with the US military campaign in Iraq by permitting use of its territory for the overland supply of food, water, fuel and other non-lethal necessities to American armed forces operating in northern Iraq, not far from the Turkish border. In another step deemed helpful to the war effort, Turkey also agreed formally to open its airfields to US military planes in distress or for the evacuation of wounded American service personnel. Turkey has extended such help occasionally since the war began two weeks ago, but the new accord will make it more routine, American officials said.

NYT, Elgrade (Serbia)

Friendly fire

ONE US soldier was killed and several others were missing or injured in a possible friendly fire incident involving an F-15E fighter jet, the US Central Command said. A statement from Central Command said only that the incident involved a F-15E Strike Eagle and coalition ground forces. It did not give any other details.

AP, Camp As Sayliyah (Qatar)



President George Bush and wife Laura at Camp Lejeune on Thursday to be introduced to Marines and their families.

America, Europe wrangle on post-war Iraq

Brussels, April 3

SECRETARY of State Colin Powell told Washington's European allies and friends Thursday the US — not the United Nations — must have the lead role in Iraq's post-war reconstruction.

In a series of meetings with his Nato and European Union counterparts at the Nato headquarters here, Powell did not resolve differences over the nature of the United Nations' role after the fighting is done in Iraq.

"I think the coalition has to play the leading role," he told a closing news conference. "But that does not mean we have to shut others out. There will definitely be a United Nations role, but what the exact nature of that role will be remains to be seen."

Powell's comments clashed with the view in European capitals that the reconstruction of Iraq should be guided by the UN, not the US or Britain, which went to war against Iraq on March 20.

"We must stabilise Iraq and the region," said French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin. "The United Nations is the only international organisation that can give legitimacy to this."

Powell played down the differences, calling his meetings consultative. "I'll report back (to President Bush) what I heard. We are still examining the proper role for the United Nations."

Powell and the European leaders did reach tentative agreement, however, that Nato should consider deploying peacekeepers in Iraq.

Powell said the US made no formal request, but said, "I am pleased that there was a receptive attitude" to the suggestion which was first made last December. He tried to counter European objections to American primacy in an interim military and administrative setup by holding out hope for a United Nations connection.

AP

I fought on pain of death, Iraqi soldier tells allies

David Rohde
Kre (Iraq), April 3

FIFTEEN DAYS ago, a 20-year-old soldier said, Baath Party officials surrounded his home in southern Iraq, tied his hands behind his back and took him away as his mother wept. Now, the soldier is hundreds of miles to the north, wounded and alone, a prisoner in a hospital in Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq.

"I am not afraid," he said from his bed here, while Kurdish soldiers stood guard. "I only miss my father and mother."

With nearly all of Saddam Hussein's Republican Guard divisions shifted south for the defence of Baghdad, most of an estimated 100,000 army conscripts like this one are left manning the frontlines in northern Iraq.

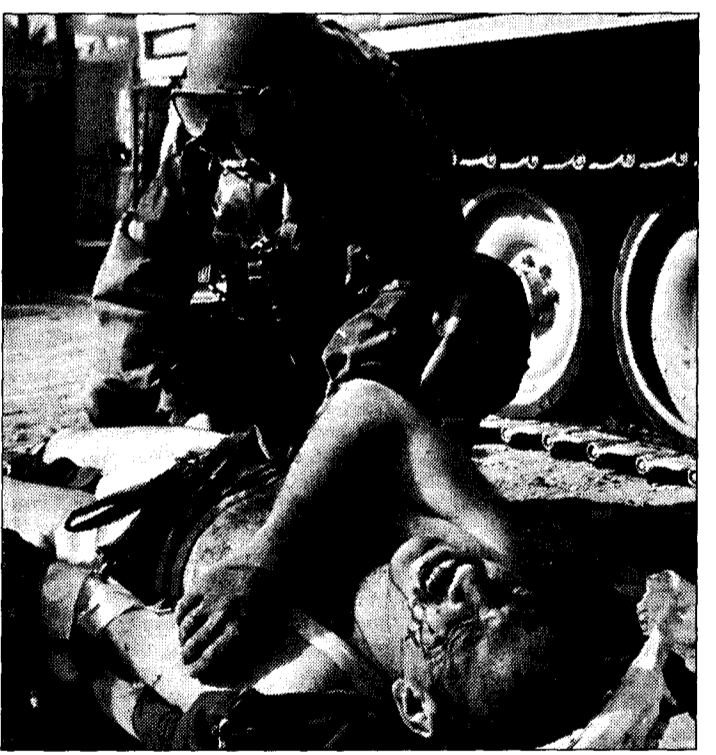
An interview with this soldier, who refused to give his name for fear of reprisal against his family, offers a glimpse of life in Iraq's low-paid and ill-equipped regular army. Here in the north the soldiers are facing increasingly fierce bombardment from the US and British planes and — at least in this case — death threats from Iraqi officers.

While none of the soldier's account could be independently verified, his physical state — gaunt, battered and pallid — was a testament, at least, to his suffering.

The soldier deserted from the army two years ago, he said, during his mandatory military service. Before he was arrested by the Baath officials last month, he had spent two years in hiding in his parents' home.

After his arrest, the young man was quickly taken to a nearby military base and given a rifle, and he was then shipped out with a unit to northern Iraq. There, the unit frequently changed positions, an effort, according to Kurdish officials, to limit the number of soldiers surrendering.

His life settled into a grim routine. The US bombing was fiercest in the morning and afternoon. "I



A US army medic treats an Iraqi PoW near Baghdad on Thursday.

can't count them," he said, referring to airstrikes. "I can tell you in just one day you are getting out of the bunker 10 to 15 times."

Their rations were meagre, rice and bread. He had no appetite. "Death was always upon our heads," he said. "We never could eat." Many of his fellow soldiers wanted to desert, he believed.

Officers repeatedly pointed out a group of menacing military intelligence officials stationed behind him. They threatened the soldiers, saying, "If you run, this is the execution squad." But he never witnessed an execution, he said. The young soldier is not sure how he got to the hospital. Doctors say a piece of shrapnel — maybe from an American bomb, maybe from a fellow Iraqi soldier's weapon — ripped a small hole in his head

on Tuesday afternoon.

On Wednesday, he complained of "terrible headaches" and of not being able to feel the left side of his body. Curling his wiry body beneath a blanket, he appeared spent. A large bandage covered his head. An intravenous tube jutted from his stick-like arm. A scrape on his chin and a streak of dried blood on his nose marred his boyish face.

But he was composed, speaking in a soft and steady voice and pausing only occasionally to complain about pain. He should recover, his doctor said. Despite all the suffering in Iraq, the soldier doubted that much would change.

His only concern, he added, was contacting his family. "I am very worried about my father and mother," he said.

The New York Times

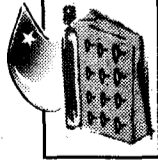


HUSAIN HAQQANI

"Show them no pity. They have stains on their souls."

To those familiar with anti-western rhetoric in the Arab and Muslim world, the above might sound like a line out of an Al Qaeda statement. In fact, it comes from the exhortation by a British commander, one Lieutenant Colonel Tim Collins to be precise, to his troops in Iraq.

For moderate Muslims who have, for years, argued for reconciliation with the West, the war in Iraq is becoming their worst nightmare. Moderation in the Islamic world might turn out to be the most significant casualty of this war. Everyday fresh images of destruction of the



PAKISTAN
Periscope

historic capital of Islam's caliphs, Baghdad, are beamed into Muslim homes, courtesy a vibrant and increasingly independent Arab media. The emphasis here is on the death and destruction caused by a precision-guided Goliath relentlessly pounding a largely helpless David already debilitated by sanctions. That the war was not provoked by an immediate *casus belli*, does not have broad international support and is seen as an American war of choice even by some of its supporters does not help.

Over two weeks into war, the weapons of mass destruction that the US-led coalition went in to eliminate have not been found or seen. There has been no popular uprising

by the Iraqi people to support the invading troops. Progress in the march to Baghdad is reportedly good but slow compared to the expectations built by the Bush administration. To make matters worse, Coalition military sources and their embedded journalist partners have ended up circulating half-truths and outright fabrications, unnecessarily eroding their credibility despite their overwhelming advantages. The otherwise deceptive and dishonest Iraqi Baathists are looking increasingly like beleaguered defenders under attack, rather than the hated authoritarian regime they actually represent.

British and US 24-hour television news stations remain obsessed with the technological superiority of the Anglo-American Alliance and on repeating claims and rhetoric that fail to take into account historic realities or Muslim sentiments. In fact, key segments of the Western media have been badly hurt by the impression that they have allowed themselves to be inducted into the psychological operations of the US-British military effort. Claims about the fall of Umm Qasr were broadcast nine times and three days earlier than the port city's actual subjugation. Stories about the discovery of a chemical weapons facility near Najaf and the surrender of the Iraqi 51st Division turned out to be untrue. The reported fall of Basra to British troops on the third day of the war did not materialises after over a week. The family of a British soldier alleged to have been executed by the Iraqis denied Prime Minister Blair's assertion in this regard, saying the Army told them their son had been killed in action. And the British have had to retract their claims about the capture of an Iraqi General after circulating

How Bush silenced the moderate Muslim voice

REUTERS



Few people in the Muslim world like Saddam. In fact, most observers recognise his role in bringing destruction to the Iraqis. But at the same time, the Bush-Blair war is widely seen as an effort to occupy Iraq, not liberate it. The US and UK have not been able to convince many Muslims that their military effort is a humanitarian project

them through the BBC and CNN.

The US networks, in particular, have acted more as cheerleaders for their country's war-machine than as independent sources of news. There is little interest in reporting on civilian casualties or hardship and there seems to be little desire to guard against being spun by those leading the charge. Al-Jazeera, which has shown greater professional competence and integrity than the US cable news networks, is being viciously attacked for being an Arab news network as if being Arab was a crime. Those Muslims who looked up to and hoped to emulate the higher ethics of Western democracies find this partial adoption of the propagandist ways of dictatorships by the free world very disturbing.

Few people in the Muslim world like Saddam Hussein. In fact, most commentators and observers recog-

and awe" instead of trying to "befriend and embrace" the world's one billion Muslims. The underlying assumption, articulated by neo-conservative intellectuals as well as by historian Bernard Lewis is that the Arab-Islamic world has never been receptive to Western idealism while it fears and respects force. The problem with building an empire through force is that it remains vulnerable to the kind of sniping that terrorist movements represent. The American public has traditionally shown little appetite for empire or for protracted conflict. Moreover, Israel's experience in the West Bank and Gaza, and Russia's in Chechnya, disproves the theory that overwhelming force can persuade Arabs and Muslims better. Instead of marginalising Muslim moderates by setting aside its own ideals in favour of a policy based solely on demonstrations of power, the US should review its relationship with the world of Islam.

There is a long tradition of Muslim leaders looking up to the West. Kemal Ataturk, the founder of modern Turkey, told a peasant who asked him what westernisation meant: "It means being a better human being." Pakistan's founder Muhammad Ali Jinnah cited the Englishman's sense of justice and fairplay as the value that bound Muslims with Westerners. Even the religiously conservative founder of Saudi Arabia, King Abdul Aziz, allied himself to the United States because he found God-fearing Americans better than God-less Communists. Seeking out democratic allies in the tradition of these elders would have ensured Muslim friendship for the West more effectively than raining tomahawk missiles on Iraq.

— The writer is currently a Visiting Scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He served as adviser to Prime Ministers Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto and as Pakistan's Ambassador to Sri Lanka

ideas. Since the first strike aimed at decapitating Saddam Hussein and the Iraqi leadership, all we have heard from Washington and London is how there is no doubt that their superior military technology will prevail. A post-occupation American governor for Iraq has already been identified. Some contracts for Iraqi reconstruction have been parceled out among favoured US companies. US and British marines have put in greater effort to secure the Rumailah oil fields than in providing water to thirsty civilians in southern Iraq. Is it surprising then that promises of building an Iraqi democracy and making a new beginning in the Middle East are not being taken seriously by an overwhelming majority in the Arab-Islamic world?

Recent polls show that approval for the US stands at less than ten per cent in almost every Muslim majority country polled. There is, of course, no moral equivalence between the western democracies and a totalitarian regime that used chemical weapons against its own people. Saddam's regime represents an anachronistic Stalinist system which disregards human rights and civil liberties. Even at their worst, the US and Britain represent far greater adherence to norms of civility than Iraq's Baathist regime has done in its entire history. But the recent conduct of the US towards Muslims and the Muslim world has been a particularly low point for those in the Muslim world who admire the United States as a leader of the free world. Beginning with the televised images of blindfolded prisoners in chains from Guantanamo to the post-9/11 violations of civil liberties of ordinary Muslims in the US and the conduct of the propaganda war in Iraq, the Bush administration has seemed willing to continually lower the moral bar for itself. It is as if Washington is stooping to the same level where it finds its "enemies".

The US has decided to "shock

an approximate \$ 75 billion. Surely, after allocating more money to fighting than helping the people, the coalition should not expect its efforts to be seen as anything other than a military conquest.

From the point of view of the Muslim moderates, the Iraq war is polarising the world between a Muslim "us" and a Western "them". It is no longer easy for Muslim moderates to praise the West's moral purpose when US leaders emphasise their power at the cost of their

American troops reach gates of Baghdad

● Iraqi forces shoot down Black Hawk, US fighter jet

TIMES NEWS NETWORK & AGENCIES

Washington/Near Baghdad: American forces led by tanks and armour of its 3rd Army infantry rumbled into the outskirts of Baghdad with the barest resistance from Iraqi soldiers, according to US officials and live reports from the battlefield. Combat boots and military uniforms of Iraqi soldiers, along with many dead troops, littered the southern approach to Baghdad, suggesting that some of them had fled or retreated back into the city. Live reports of the approach to the city showed advancing US tanks taking only small arms fire from small detachments of soldiers buried in foxholes on either side of the road.

The US leadership in the war theatre and in Washington are now wondering if the Iraqi troops have deserted their units to return home or if they have retreated to Baghdad to put up a last-ditch stand in the city. Although the Americans claimed that Iraqi command and control appeared to have broken down completely, the Iraqi information minister said in Baghdad that US forces would be taught a lesson today.

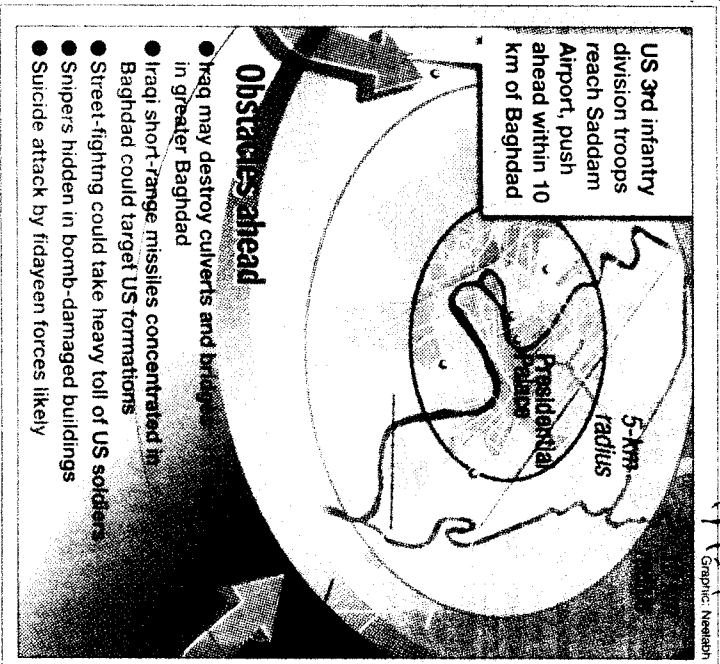
US forces are not only swallowing up what one official termed as real estate en route to Baghdad but they are also trying to cut down Iraqi troops retreat-

ing into the capital to offset the chances of urban combat in the days ahead.

American officials also talk of having completely wiped out the Baghdad Division of the Iraqi Army, but there is no estimate or evidence of Iraqi armour or troops being destroyed or captured in large numbers to substantiate the claim. One commanding officer was quoted as saying US troops were finding "more empty uniforms" than Iraqi soldiers.

Typically, the Iraqi divisions have between 10,000-15,000 soldiers and around 200 tanks, and the US claim of having obliterated two divisions did not show up in images. It's not possible to account for all the Iraqi soldiers some have fled, some have gone home, some have deserted and some have gone to fight another day, a US military officer told reporters in Qatar.

Some Iraqi forces are still active, what choices they will make we don't know, said Maj. Gen. Vincent Brooks, who briefed reporters in Qatar, adding that some Iraqi leaders are looking to change their association.



- Iraq may destroy culverts and bridges in greater Baghdad
- Iraqi short-range missiles concentrated in Baghdad could target US formations
- Street-fighting could take heavy toll of US soldiers
- Snipers hidden in bomb-damaged buildings
- Suicide attack by fideyeen forces likely

Without giving a said coalition forces

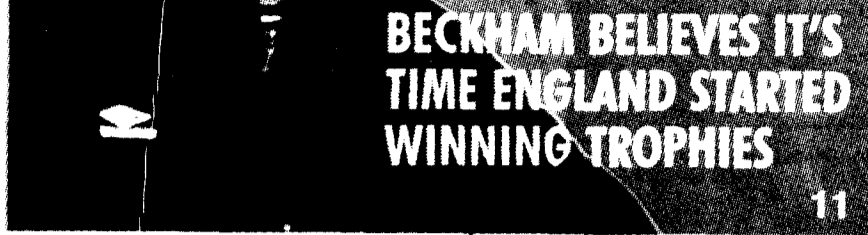
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The general added t from the capital. "It i that is used by Sadd sons." General Broo special forces were al regime "movement" Baghdad towards Mr stronghold of Tikrit.

The Iraqis did put through in terms of b Black Hawk helicopte net jet fighter; althou not confirm that the fire.

Pentagon officials a forces would "lay sieg rounding it, taking c and seizing its bridg the Hussein regime v will of the majority, or destroying their r

● Related reports on Pag



BECKHAM BELIEVES IT'S TIME ENGLAND STARTED WINNING TROPHIES

EXPLOSION IN PHILIPPINES WHAT?



FASCINATION OF BIRDWATCHING



VOICES

Young warriors



Palestinian children trample a US flag after it was set on fire during an anti-war demonstration in front of a UN office in Beirut on Wednesday. — AFP

Sourav for Dhaka

MUMBAI, April 2. — Sourav Ganguly will lead the Indian team in the upcoming triangular series in Dhaka. Virender Sehwag has been named vice-captain for the tournament. — SNS

Details on page 12

Hizb chief shot

SRINAGAR, April 2. — Security forces tonight shot dead the chief commander of Hizbul Mujahideen, Saif-ul-Islam, at Nowgam area on the city's outskirts. — PTI

Hijack case

BARASAT, April 2. — Barasat sessions court today adjourned till 23 June the hearing of Mr Soe Myint, a pro-democracy Myanmar student charged under Anti-Hijacking Act. — SNS

Details on Kolkata Plus I

Dhantala arrest

KOLKATA/RANAGHAT, April 2. — The main accused in the Dhantala robbery case, Chimu Sardar (35), was arrested after an encounter with police near Machlandapur in North 24-Parganas last night. He was admitted to Shaktinagar hospital with an injury on his leg. On 20 March, Chimu had managed to escape from CID custody in Ranaghat. — SNS

Petro stir

KOLKATA, April 2. — The West Bengal Petroleum Dealers' Association has called a 24-hour strike at petrol pumps in the state from 6 a.m. tomorrow in protest against "various burdens" imposed by oil companies on dealers. — SNS

Rural polls

KOLKATA, April 2. — The panchayat elections will be held on 11 May. The government will issue the polls notification tomorrow. — SNS

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NEW VERSION OF CLUSTER BOMB DROPPED ■ TIGRIS BRIDGE CAPTURED

Coalition knocks on Baghdad door

Associated Press

NEAR KARBALA, April 2. — The 14th day of Operation Iraqi Freedom saw US Marines punching through the Baghdad division of Republican Guard near Kut and moving within 50 km of the capital after taking a strategic bridge on the Tigris. South of Baghdad, US army's 3rd Infantry Division moved through a gap near Karbala after a night-long bombing of the holy city, 80 km from Baghdad, even as coalition troops battled other Republican Guard units to the west.

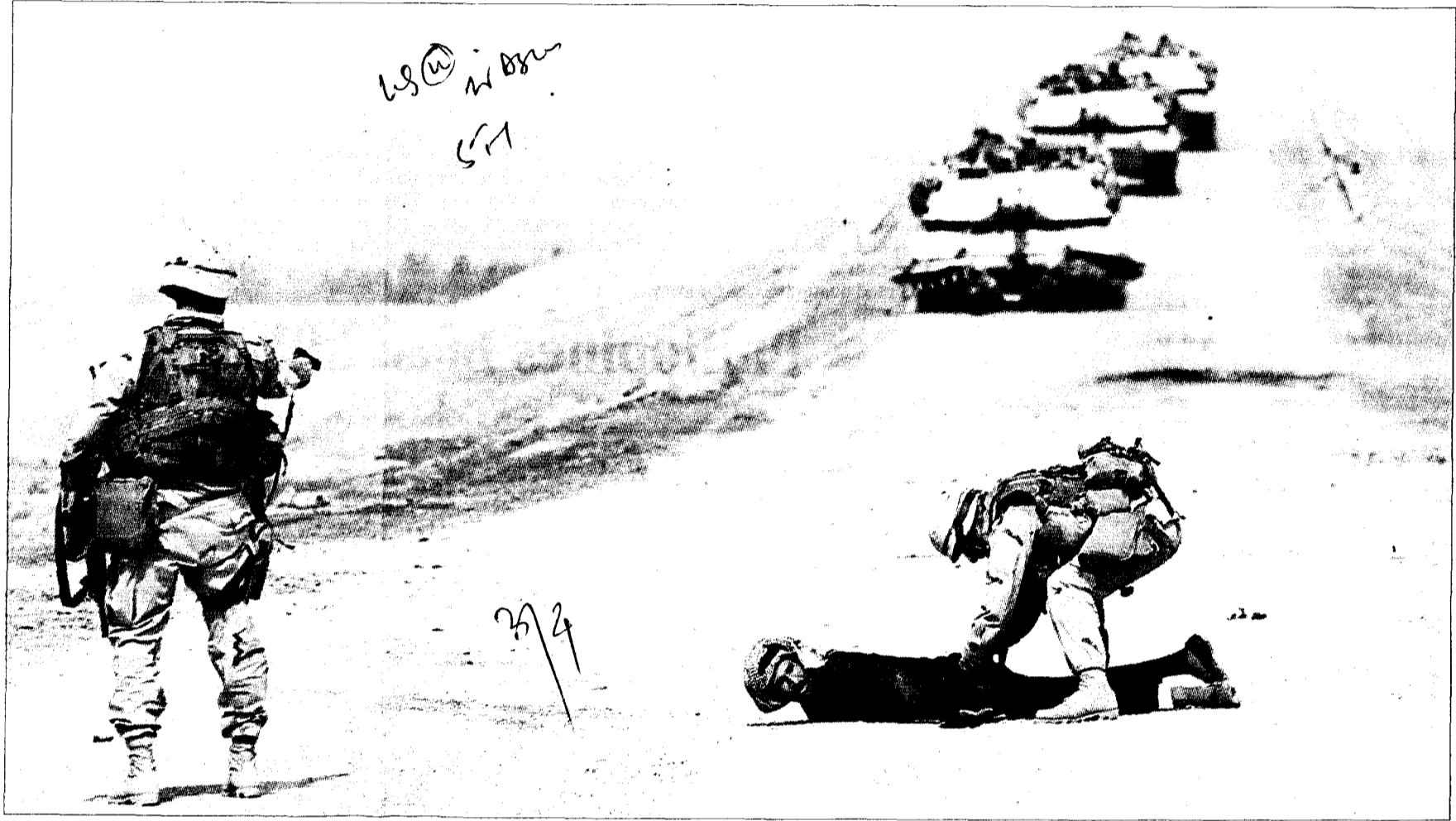
In Washington, Maj.-Gen. Stanley McChrystal, vice-director of operations for the joint chiefs of staff, said: "Republican Guard's Baghdad and Medina divisions are no longer credible forces." Coalition troops, he said, are gearing up "for a very difficult fight in Baghdad. We aren't expecting to drive into Baghdad suddenly and seize it easily."

Coalition's air assault on the capital today targeted telephone exchanges, with the nine-storey Al-Rasheed exchange suffering major damage. One person was killed and a dozen people were injured when coalition aircraft, targeting the site of Baghdad's annual trade fair, blasted a Red Crescent maternity clinic. A woman had a miscarriage because of the shock.

For the first time in combat history, coalition planes dropped on Iraq a new version of a cluster bomb that adapts to wind and weather to hit targets more accurately, central command said. Six CBU-105 Wind Corrected Munitions Dispensers were dropped on central Iraq "to stop an Iraqi tank column".

US Marines, Capt. Frank Thorp of the US central command said, moved beyond the "red line" of Baghdad — the area within artillery and missile range of Republican Guard units defending the capital, where coalition commanders believe Iraqis might use chemical or other weapons of mass destruction.

Iraqi information minister Mohammed Saeed al-Sahhaf, however, described reports of breakthrough by US forces as



The action, en route to the Iraqi capital. American soldiers and armour bring their might to bear on an Iraqi. — PTI (More war reports on pages 3 & 4)

"illusions." On the capture of the Tigris bridge, he said: "We welcome them, but this is not true."

Around Karbala, Iraqi forces fired anti-aircraft guns most of the night as US artillery pounded suspected military positions. In Najaf, 50 miles south, the central command said US forces were being fired on from Ali Mosque, one of the most important Shi'ite sites.

The Iraqi information minister, however, alleged that Americans were bent on destroying Shi'ite shrines in

Najaf and Karbala. US aircraft, he said, are flying low over the holy sites to cause vibrations that would damage the tombs of Ali and his sons, Hussein and Abbas.

Last night, US planes dropped 16 2,000-pound "precision-guided" bombs on an intelligence compound in Basra and hit radar sites, a Republican Guard barracks and other targets in and around Baghdad.

Mohammed Al-Sahhaf said 24 civilians were killed and 186 wounded in Iraq between Tuesday night and Wednesday morning.

Saddam meets advisers, says Iraqi TV

BAGHDAD, April 2. — Mr Saddam Hussein chaired a meeting of his top advisers, Iraqi TV said today but didn't telecast any footage of it.

The report, without mentioning the date of the meeting, said Mr Hussein was accompanied by his two sons — Qusay and Uday.

Those present at the meeting inclu-

ded defence minister Mr Sultan Hashem Ahmed, air defence chief Mr Abdul Tawab Mulla Howesh and military industrialisation minister Mr Hameed Raja Shallah.

Yesterday, two messages had been read out on TV in Mr Hussein's name sparking speculation that he might have been wounded or killed. — AFP

Jeep hits Ash during shooting

Press Trust of India

NASIK, April 2. — Aishwarya Rai suffered minor injuries when a jeep accidentally hit her during a film shooting at Trimbakeshwar, 25 km from here, today. She was shifted to Hinduja hospital in Mumbai late tonight. The actress was flown to Mumbai by a Sahara flight.

Aishwarya had her left foot fractured around 5.45 p.m., when she was watching the rehearsal of a scene along with Amitabh Bachchan and Akshay Kumar. The film being shot was Raj Kumar Santoshi's *Khaki*.

Doctors said she had suffered a minor fracture and would be treated at Hinduja hospital.

The entire unit packed up for the day after the accident.

Aishwarya, former Miss World, was first rushed to Vijay Kakatkar Orthopaedic Hospital



Aishwarya Rai

here from where she was shifted to Mumbai.

Dr Vijay Kakatkar, who attended on Aishwarya in Nasik, told reporters that she also received minor scratches in the

back and on the hands as she fell on a cactus after being hit by the jeep.

The actress, who received 10 stitches, would require rest for at least a month and would not be able to take part in shooting during that period, he added.

Amitabh Bachchan, Akshay Kumar, Aishwarya's mother Mrs Vrinda Rai, producer-director Raj Kumar Santoshi and others accompanied the actress to Mumbai.

Elaborate security arrangements were made outside the hospital and police had to resort to mild lathicharge to disperse the mob, which had gathered outside the hospital after hearing the news, police sources said.

It may be recalled that Amitabh Bachchan had been seriously injured during the shooting of *Coolie* in the 80s during a fight sequence.

Marxists procure paddy... from kulaks!

Statesman News Service

MIDNAPORE, April 2. — Now the Marxists are procuring paddy from kulaks! Those who swear by the peasantry have now been detected cheating them.

Food department officials have detected forgery in paddy procurement by the CPI-M run panchayat samiti in Mohanpur block, Midnapore West.

A farmer, Uma Kanto Raul, lodged a complaint with Mohanpur police against the panchayat samiti sabhapati, Mrs Anita Prodhan. The farmer stated in his complaint that the samiti had purchased 10 tonnes of paddy at prices much lower



ENTER THE MIDDLEMAN: That's Operation Barga in Midnapore West

than Rs 530 per quintal (acquisition price of paddy fixed by the government) from businessmen in favour of a mill in Midnapore town.

Suspecting forgery in the purchase of paddy, some CPI and BJP workers intercepted a truck which was taking the paddy to the rice mill on Sunday night. Papers seized from the driver had the names of Raul and 24

other farmers vouching that they sold the paddy at Rs 530 per quintal. The list was signed by Mrs Prodhan and countersigned by the BDO of Mohanpur.

Raul, however, said neither he nor the other farmers had sold the paddy and their signatures were forged. In fact, the paddy was purchased from businessmen at lesser prices.

The Mohanpur BDO said he had no knowledge of the scam as the samiti was empowered to make purchases according to the government's guidelines and prepare the list of sellers. He simply countersigned the list which was forwarded by the sabhapati, the BDO said.

Turn to page 2

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Iraqis raise their hands in air after they were forced to get out of a van they were travelling in, to be searched in Samawah in Iraq recently. The US soldier is believed to be a member of the 41st Infantry Regiment, from Fort Riley, Kan. — AFP

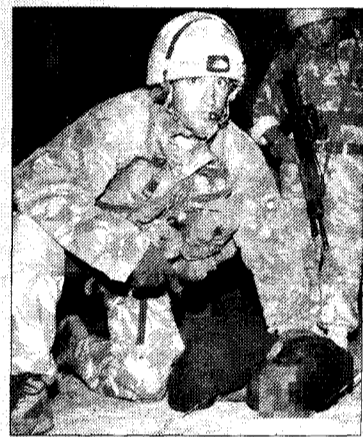
Iraq War UPDATE

UN on human rights

UNHQ: The UN owes it to the Iraqis to help them in the healing process, tackle humanitarian crisis, and protect the supreme right to life in the face of war, Mr Andreas Mavrommatis, UN expert on Iraq's human rights, has said. — PTI

US policy shift

SYDNEY: In a policy shift, the USA is willing to let the UN play a role in running post-war Iraq, Australian foreign minister Mr Alexander Downer said. Key US officials are still opposing the idea, "but the argument has been won by those who believe in UN's role". — PTI



Royal Marines overpower an Iraqi man in a raid on Fedayeen troops in Umm Qasr on Wednesday. — AFP

S Korea sends troops

SEOUL: South Korea's National Assembly today authorised the dispatch of non-combat troops to support the US-led war on Iraq. The decision would strengthen the US-South Korean alliance, President Roh Moo-hyun said. — AP

PoW rescue

AS-SALIYAH: US troops found 11 unidentified bodies during a mission to rescue a female POW, a US officer said on Wednesday. — AFP

French aid for Iraq

PARIS: A convoy of trucks carrying 60 tons of blankets and food pulled out from the foot of the Eiffel Tower marking the first batch of French humanitarian aid for Iraq. — AP

Unicef unprepared

MADRID: Unicef was unprepared for what could be its worst crisis ever, its Iraq representative said. He insisted that coalition countries waging the war should bear a large chunk of the financial burden. — AP

Arundhati raps war

LONDON: Booker-winning writer Arundhati Roy and Jemima Khan, wife of Imran Khan, on Wednesday criticised the US-led war against Iraq. — PTI

Powell's no to Turkey

ANKARA: There was no need for Turkey to send military forces into northern Iraq as US forces there had the situation "under control", Mr Colin Powell said here on Wednesday. — AFP

Victory is at hand: Saddam

Associated Press

BAGHDAD, April 2. — Declaring that "victory is at hand," Iraqi President Mr Saddam Hussein issued a new statement today urging Iraqis to fight on and defend their towns, according to a broadcast on Iraqi satellite television. A separate decree, also attributed to Mr Hussein, offered cash rewards to anyone who helps uncover spies assisting the US-led coalition.

The Iraqi President did not appear in person, and there's no way to verify if any of the statements are actually his. US officials say they are not sure whether he is alive and well, wounded from an air strike on one of his bunkers, or dead. The statements were issued as Baghdad again experienced intense bombardment today, with telephone exchanges among the targets that were hit.

In the latest statement attributed to Mr Saddam Hussein, which was read by an Iraqi news anchor in a military uniform, the Iraqi President repeatedly called upon his people to fight and said the Iraqi forces have not used their full capabilities in the battle.

"Fight them so that Iraq, the bastion of religion and principles, will be secured and our nation will come out of this crisis glorious," the statement said. "Fight them. Victory is at hand. God willing, although we have only utilised a third or less of our army while the criminals have used everything they brought in."

"Their failure was manifested and victory is glowing. God willing," the statement said.

The statement singled out the 11th Division of the Iraqi army and Baath Party members in Nasiriyah and other southern towns who have "exhausted" the coalition forces, and it urged Iraqis to follow their example in defending their cities.

The statement, which was monitored in Doha, Qatar, was different from one broadcast yesterday in which Saddam called for Iraqis to wage jihad against coalition forces. That statement was read by Iraqi information minister Mohammed Said al-Sahhaf.

Mr Al-Sahhaf dismissed reports of a breakthrough by US forces on the fronts near Baghdad as "illusions." As for the report of crossing the Tigris River, he said: "We welcome them, but this is not true."

He said around 24 civilians were killed and 186 wounded in Iraq between last night and today morning, including 10 killed and 90 wounded in Baghdad alone.

The Al-Rasheed telephone exchange in the heart of the capital suffered major damage. The nine-story building on the east bank of Tigris remained standing but rather precariously since some of the support pillars on the middle floors were missing.

Al-Rasheed was targeted last week, but the missile apparently missed, lodging just meters away on the road and causing only slight damage to the building. Another telephone ex-

change, in the Bab al-Moazam district, was hit Wednesday for the second time this week. The building sustained severe damage the first time, and it was not clear why it was targeted again. Telephone calls could still be made Wednesday within some neighbourhoods.

Buildings at the Baghdad International Trade Fair compound in the upscale Baghdad district of Al-Mansour were struck and severely damaged Wednesday morning. It was not immediately known why coalition forces would target the site. A thunderous explosion was heard south of Baghdad in the early afternoon from the direction of the large al-Rasheed military barracks. Shortly afterward, three plumes of gray smoke rose from the area.

Saddam has made two televised speeches since the war began on 20 March, one in the opening hours of the fighting and another four days later.

However, in both speeches, it wasn't clear when they were recorded by the Iraqi leader, whose offices and residences have been repeatedly bombed by missiles from US ships and warplanes.

Mr Al-Sahhaf today said Americans were bent on destroying Shiite shrines in the south-central cities of Najaf and Karbala.

He claimed that US aircraft were flying low over the holy sites to cause vibrations that would damage the tombs of Ali and his sons, Hussein and Abbas, the three most revered saints in Shiite Islam.

'Iraq should be run by its people'

Associated Press



Blair: Forceful

LONDON, April 2. — British Prime Minister Mr Tony Blair today said coalition forces should hand over power to an Iraqi government as soon as possible once President Mr Saddam Hussein's regime is overthrown. "Iraq at the end should not be run by the Americans, should not be run by the British, should not be run by any outside force or power, it should be run for the first time in decades by the Iraqi people," Mr Blair told the House of Commons.

"In the immediate aftermath of the conflict of course the coalition forces will be there," he added, after Liberal Democrat leader Mr Charles Kennedy asked whether an interim government would be led by the USA or the United Nations. "The UN has made it quite clear itself that it doesn't want to lead an Iraqi government, what it wants is the ability to work with us in partnership to make sure that we assemble the broadest possible representation from within Iraq itself." Britain has urged a strong role for the United Nations in rebuilding Iraq, but the USA, which has carried the brunt of the invasion to topple President Hussein, appears to be less enthusiastic about UN participation in an interim administration.

The USA has set up a team to administer Iraq immediately after a war, and appointed retired Army Lt Gen. Jay Garner to act as a civil administrator. Pentagon officials have said their intention would be to hand over authority to an interim government of Iraqis within months.

Al-Jazeera pips sex to the post

Associated Press

NEW YORK, April 2. — In spite of being mostly knocked offline, the Website of Arab satellite news network Al-Jazeera was among the most sought-after on the Internet last week. The Web portal Lycos reported that Al-Jazeera and variant spellings became its top search term last week, with three times more searches than "sex".

Al-Jazeera drew intense interest from Web surfers after it carried Iraqi TV footage of dead and captive US soldiers in Iraq. US TV networks had decided not to air footage of the corpses. Al-Jazeera later honored a US request to stop until families could be notified, a statement from the network said.

Al-Jazeera drew intense interest from Web surfers after it broadcast pictures of dead and captive US soldiers in Iraq. US TV networks had decided not to air footage of the corpses.

The Internet's leading search engine, Google, said Al-Jazeera was the term that showed the greatest increase in the week ending 31 March. Google does not report absolute rankings of search terms. Hackers also homed in on Al-Jazeera, bringing down its Website early last week in what the Web host called an attack characterised by a flood of bogus traffic.

Hackers calling themselves the "Freedom Cyber Force Militia" later diverted visitors to the English site to a page with a US flag.

The managing editor of Al-Jazeera's English site, Joanne Tucker, said it would be back up by Wednesday and that steps were being taken to strengthen the Web pages against hacking attempts. Al-Jazeera, based in the Gulf state of Qatar, is funded by Qatar's government but is an unusually independent voice in the Arab world. Its English Web site launched last week with the aim of giving Western audiences an Arab perspective.

At least one other regional site, Arabia.com of the United Arab Emirates, was blocked by hackers last week, said Mr Duri al-Ajami, the site's marketing manager.

US Internet users are visiting foreign sites in huge numbers for news on the war, according to a study by the Pew Internet & American Life Project released Tuesday.

The heat is on for US troops

KUWAIT CITY, April 2. — For the battle-weary troops already two weeks into the war, desert heat pose a looming challenge.

Come April and 26 degree Celsius temperatures will mark the start of summer. Heat will be another heavy element of the war apart from the 45 kg packs they carry. Temperatures in southern Iraq were expected to reach 30 degree Celsius by tomorrow. By June, temperatures will be 38 degree Celsius and 49 degrees by July.

The soaring temperatures may prove to be the ultimate test of the military's training. Though they insist it doesn't change their ultimate timetable, commanders know that weather can become an important ally or enemy. — AP



HEAL THE WORLD? A six-year-old girl smiles as she sits on her doorstep watching Iraqi militiamen passing by in Baghdad on Wednesday. — AFP

Mountain warriors brave desert without harm

Sudeshna Sarkar in Kathmandu

April 2. — The 580 Gurkha soldiers fighting in the Gulf seem to have charmed lives with no news of any casualty yet even on the 14th day of the war.

Nepalese soldiers fighting in Iraq as part of the British Army "are doing an excellent job", said Lt Colonel Edwin Griffith, chief of staff of the Royal Gurkha Rifles of Kathmandu. "Once a Gurkha has said he will serve somebody, they are very determined", he said. The majority of the soldiers are involved in non-combatant duties. One rifles company attached to the Royal Irish Company is involved in active combat. The unit has over 100 Nepalese soldiers, with their majority serving as engineers, with war-time constructions duty, clearing hazardous obstacles like mines, etc. Gurkha squadrons are also assigned engineering,

communication and supplies convoy duty. Though there were reports of the targeting of supplies convoys of the coalition army by Iraqi forces, Griffith said there were no news of any Gurkha casualty. He said there is a British Army unit monitoring the welfare of the British Gurkha troopers in the Gulf. "If anything happens to them, we would know in 48 hours". This is the fourth time the Gurkha soldiers of the British Army are fighting in Iraq. The 28th Squadrons, taking part in this battle, were in the previous Gulf War as well.

In the World War II the bravery of the Gurkha soldiers contributed to the capture of Basra. "In 1941, there was a small-scale attack in Iraq since it was pro-German," says Griffith. "The Gurkhas were superb during the campaign." The first time the Gurkhas fought in Iraq was in 1915 earning fame for their wielding the 'khukuri', the traditional Nepalese dagger. They were part of the coalition

that fought Turkey till the Turk defeat in 1918. As part of the British-Indian forces, the Gurkha soldiers took part in the capture of Nasiriyah. The Gurkhas are ideal for peace-keeping operations, like in Kosovo in 1999, says Griffith. "During peace-keeping, when you have to deal with local people, you have to be both tough and soft," Griffith explains. "And the Gurkha temper is ideal for that". Furthermore they pick up the local language easily. Gurkhas serving in Albania were speaking Albanian while those in Serbia had picked up Serbian, Griffith said. Last year, there were over 20,000 applications for a berth in the Gurkha regiment of the British Army. From them 230 were recruited after a fiercely competitive educational, medical and physical fitness tests. Another 100 were taken for the Singapore Police. Fascinated by a khukuri dance in 1968, Griffith said he wanted to join the Gurkha regiment ever since.

Iraqi President the lodestar for Nepalese poets

Statesman News Service

KATHMANDU, April 2. — Belaguered Iraqi president Saddam Hussein, who is increasingly being forced into jihadi sloganeering and taking 'Islamist' positions to drum up support in West Asia against the Anglo-American invasion of his country, is being hailed as a hero in a part of the world far-removed from the Islamic brotherhood.

In Nepal the younger generation of poets are expressing solidarity with the

Iraqis. Despite local media's scathing coverage of the War some of them even find a hero in Saddam Hussein. Among them is a young poet from Terai eulogises Mr Hussein, calling him "this century's greatest warrior". Kafle sees him being pitted "on geography's chessboard" against "chicken-hearted modern monarchs, black-dressed phantoms and mentally disabled men". Buddhi Sagar Chapain, another Nepalese poet empathises with the people of Iraq, who have no say in either war or peace. "Perhaps moonlight/died in the gloom

of your burqa/Ruksana, at this moment/What could I send except these words?" he writes. "The red rose you planted in your courtyard/The abstract painting you hung on the wall/The one you loved more than your life/Might just vanish after April, 2003 AD." Purna Infada, a schoolteacher, sees oil politics behind the war. "On the sands of the desert/Are flowing barrels of blood," he writes. "Oil is turning into blood/And blood oil." Yuyutsu RD Sharma, an Indian poet living in Nepal is concerned that this tone in Nepalese

poetry will lead to sectarian violence. "After the demise of communism, the tone is shifting from class war to communal war," he says. This war will make a demigod out of Mr Hussein. People will forget that there are casualties on both sides. America would become the most hated nation, he feels. "We don't want that kind of repression," he said. While Mr Hussein should not be eulogised, the violence against innocent Iraqi civilians should be condemned, he feels. He has translated American poet David Ray's poem, *To a*

child of Baghdad satirising the US declaration that the war is for a betterment of the Iraqis. Increasingly American and Australian poets are writing against the war, said Sharma.

In Nepal, anti-war poets are mostly young. Ishwar Ballav, a senior poet and columnist in a Nepalese daily thinks it's because of caution. "If you use literature to convey a blunt message, it becomes propaganda. So the better poets are trying to convey their thoughts through subtle symbols and images which perhaps are not as forthright as

the writings of avant-garde poets," he feels. Being a small country itself, Nepal tends to empathise with David and not Goliath. Ballav plans to write against the war in his upcoming columns. Krishna Bhakta Shrestha, another well-known Nepalese poet who had gone into 'virtual retirement', thinks of taking up his pen again. He sees the coalition attack as a war against "people of the Third World, who are at the receiving end." "Saddam Hussein is not Iraq," he says. "You can't punish all Iraqis because of one man."

The naked emperor

By Achin Vanaik

The war is being fought for imperial purposes, no matter what Washington's official explanations are.

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THE UNITED States' assault on Iraq marks a turning point in history. There are those, of course, who cynically ask, "so, what is new"? After all, they would say, throughout the ages great powers have invariably pursued their interests and indulged in hypocrisy to cover up their real motives. Moreover, other countries, for example India, must simply pursue their own interests always keeping in mind the need to adjust to the "realities of power", hence the value of the "middle path". Such voices have simply missed the crux. The worldwide popular revulsion to this war of a depth and scale not witnessed even during the Vietnam War means that the war has, in fact, the character of a profound revelation regardless of its eventual outcome. That the opposition should be so strong despite the dictatorial nature of the Saddam Hussein regime only reinforces the point.

The sheer brazenness of American behaviour has forced upon the international public's consciousness the recognition as never before that the U.S. is an emperor without clothes; that this war is being fought for imperial purposes, no matter what Washington's official explanations are. These are the claims that Iraq has accumulated sufficient WMD (weapons of mass destruction) to be a threat to the U.S. and the world, and that the invading forces are really "liberators", motivated by deep concern for ordinary Iraqis. No matter how dedicated a job the Western-dominated global media (as well as sections of our own) does to sell these justifications, the double standards involved are simply too stark.

Indeed, the longer the war drags on and the more obvious it becomes that the invading forces are not being popularly welcomed, the more the reality of U.S. empire-building as the primary purpose of the whole exercise gets exposed.

It is the widespread negative public reappraisal of America (outside of it) that is the decisively new and historic development. It is not as if previously

many people were not aware of the U.S.' imperial ambitions. But there was always a widespread sense (outside of the Left) that the U.S. was a benevolent power, guilty sometimes in its foreign policy of overreaching itself and making mistakes that could cause great suffering to others, but nonetheless a power to generally support even if to specifically criticise. Furthermore, the existence of a seemingly enduring Cold War forced most people to take sides. Most liberals and the politically non-committed chose the West and the U.S. Most party-affiliated and party-influenced communists chose the side of the Soviet Union or China.

Only a small section, comprising for the most part the independent Left and the radical liberal, took the only morally honourable position of opposing both sides by attacking their respective "empire-building" and undemocratic proclivities, even as they reserved the right to qualify their criticism in specific cases or take sides on specific issues.

Victory for the West and the U.S. in the Cold War and the acceptance by the defeated side of the values and norms of the other side (a common enough historical occurrence) only reinforced the image of the U.S. as a benevolent power, basically liberal, not imperial or imperialist. The truth has always been very different.

There has always been a political disjunction of sorts in the U.S. It has been strongly democratic in its internal structures (though less so than the West European advanced, industrialised democracies) but brutally imperialist over a period of 150 years, first towards Central and South America, then towards the Pacific, and after the Second World War, towards Eurasia and Africa, though its foreign policy was cloaked in the mantle of "defending the free world".

However, it is not as if the current assault on Iraq is going to lead to quite this kind of radical reappraisal. It is simply that this imperialist behaviour is at such obvious odds with the generally accepted view of what the U.S. stands for, that a fundamental yet popular reappraisal of what the U.S. stands for today and in the future is now taking place on a scale previously unimaginable. This has greatly disturbed even those American conservatives and liberals who continue to believe in the myth of American foreign policy benevolence, including the general justice of waging a war on Iraq, but worry about whether a) this is the right way to wage war on Saddam Hussein's regime, and b) international opposition might not lead to a level of political isolation that bodes ill for the U.S.' future "benevolent" foreign policy ambitions and plans.

The stakes in this war are extremely high. The main issue is not what Iraq has done or not done. Nor is it what feeble "rewards" the Government of India might get from following the "middle path". It is whether one opposes or supports the unbridled expansion and consolidation of the American empire. Those who refuse to oppose, or advise the Indian Government not to genuinely or seriously oppose the U.S., are passively and indirectly supporting American plans. Washington understands the stakes clearly, knows it cannot take on every country and therefore expresses frustrated but essentially ineffectual anger against those diplomatic positions that weaken it by enhancing its political isolation. The opposition from Malaysia (which gets much more FDI than India), Greece, France, Germany (all NATO members) and others has left it seething, but Washington is comfortable with New Delhi's official position.

Today, we have the sorry spectacle

of both the dominant ruling party, the BJP, and the main Opposition party, the Congress, separated on crucial terrains by tactical shades, not strategic differences. On neo-liberal economics, they are indistinguishable. On Hindutva, one is hard, the other soft.

Regarding the American imperium, both aim only at adjusting to whatever power realities might subsequently emerge. Neither wishes, however subtly on the diplomatic front, to help change power equations in ways benefiting all countries and peoples. This would come about from a taming of the U.S. and of it coming to realise that it cannot pursue aggressive unilateralism without paying an unacceptably high price.

The tragedy of the Indian Government's position lies not simply in refusing to recognise the true nature of the stakes involved but in pretending that this posture is in the "national" or "popular" or "global" interest when it is the reverse — the defeats that the U.S. might suffer in its expansionist plans — that can most promote such various collective interests.

This moral-political failing is made all the worse because the U.S. today can win the war on Iraq, yet lose the peace because it has aroused more collective hatred and political isolation towards it than ever before. The contrast between the posture of a world statesman such as Nelson Mandela and the pedestrian thinking of the "experts" who advise the BJP and the Congress could not be sharper.

The clarity of Mr. Mandela's opposition to the U.S. comes not just from a greater moral integrity but a greater political wisdom. He knows that, as in the struggle against apartheid, so in the struggle against American empire-building, you never compromise on the goal itself.

Flexibility and compromise on the means, including a Government's or a movement's diplomatic postures, is acceptable but must always be directed towards achieving that goal.

THE HINDU

1 APR 2003

Tariq Aziz, Iraq's face for the world, turns himself in

NADIM LADKI
BAGHDAD, APRIL 25

IRAQIS today hailed the surrender of high-profile former deputy premier Tariq Aziz to US forces, saying it proved the Saddam Hussein era was over.

With the best-known face of Saddam's ousted government in their control, US officials guiding the reconstruction of the war-ravaged country predicted that some government ministries could resume work by the end of next week.

But wrangling continued at the UN over control of Iraqi oil revenues that Washington wants to use to pay much of the multi-billion-dollar bill for setting Iraq back on its feet.

Aziz, No. 43 on a US list of 55 most-wanted Saddam aides, gave himself up in Baghdad on Thursday. "He did surrender. He is currently being questioned by coalition forces," a US military spokesman said in Qatar.

Aziz, 67, last appeared in public on March 19, the eve of the war, after rumours that he had been shot or had defected.

CNN quoted his sister as saying he had recently suffered two heart attacks. She said he had been holding discussions with the Americans through an intermediary for several days, seeking assurances that he would be treated "in a dignified manner" and receive medical care.

She told CNN that US Army medics were on hand when he surrendered. The

ter in the run-up to the 1991 Gulf War. Later he was the defiant international voice of Iraq before the invasion that overthrew Saddam.

Ordinary Iraqis welcomed the report of his surrender. "I heard the good news this morning. This is another proof that Saddam is finished," said street vendor Mohammad Hareth on the quiet, early-morning streets of the capital. "If Aziz surrenders to the Americans, who is still with Saddam? He is on his own with a handful of people, among them his two sons," Hareth added.

Another Baghdad resident, Ali, said Aziz was the most important figure in US hands. "He was very important to Saddam."

In the United States, President George W. Bush responded to questions about Aziz's fate with a smile and a thumbs-up sign. Aziz, who had vowed on the eve of the war to die in a long and bloody battle with the United States, was the 12th of the 55 individuals on the US wanted list to be taken into custody, officials said. Three others are believed dead.

Earlier, the US Administrator in Iraq said the formation of a new Iraqi government would start next week.

Meanwhile, Bush told NBC there was some evidence suggesting Saddam might be dead after being targeted by US air strikes. "The people will wonder if Saddam Hussein is dead or not. There's some evidence that...suggests he might be."



NDIAN EXPRESS

26 APR 2003

NDIAN EXPRESS

The neo-imperialists are coming

THE US has demonstrated its possession of the most formidable military machine in the contemporary world. It has used it to oust Saddam Hussein — somewhat akin to swatting a fly with a sledge hammer. Realism demands both the recognition of this power as well as its limited achievement.

In the foreseeable future it would not be possible to match this power militarily by any other power or coalition of powers. At the same time, it would not be necessary to match this power militarily in order to prevent its possessor from dominating the globe.

In order to prevent US overlordship of the world, it is, first of all, necessary to accept the fact that the present US administration seeks to achieve this overlordship. Strategic, tactical or any other kind of cooperation with it is not possible unless it abandons this goal which, of course, will take a lot of doing.

This does not mean that India and other nations would have to pursue a strategy of anti-Americanism. It is possible to pursue a course of normal relations steering between running after the present US administration for help against Pakistan and petulant annoyance when such help is not forthcoming. We should leave the US in no doubt that we are for normal civilised relations with it, nothing more and nothing less.

There is considerable scepticism in influential quarters in our country whether this objective is a realisable one. These sceptics hold that whatever noises we choose to make, in the final analysis there is no alternative to making the US realise that we are the best bet when it comes to choosing satellite powers to assist it in attaining world domination



But it isn't necessary to match them militarily to fight them

■ MOHIT SEN

terms its military might is greater, perhaps, than that of the rest of the world put together. So far, however, it has been used relatively successfully only against Milosovic's Serbia and Saddam Hussein's Iraq — neither were military giants. What is even more important is in both these countries there was neither civil libertarian democracy nor was the ruling regime hegemonic in any meaning of that term.

Though it was in a different world and the balance of military might between the contending parties was not so skewed as in the two cases mentioned above, one is reminded of the defeat Vietnam inflicted on the US. To

military power but whether nationalism and democracy can be overcome by the neo-imperialist juggernaut. This is not a new query, nor does it confront only the US. It was there when the Soviet Union was at the height of its military power and when it attained strategic-military parity with the US.

Possession of this power enabled it to blow away the Prague Spring in 1968 but this proved the turning point in its fortunes. It defeated Dubcek but it surrendered the banner of nationalism and democracy not to the US but to the heterogeneous millions who emerged from the subaltern regions of history.

India has a crucial role to play in rebuilding the unity of newly emerged nations. The greatest ally such nations have is the worldwide explosion of democratic consciousness

personalise the difference one has only to remind ourselves of Ho Chi Minh and how utterly different he was from Milosovic and Saddam Hussein.

The Vietnamese did not confront the dilemma of fighting a foreign invader which simultaneously meant defending a tyrannical domestic order. For them, the fight was for freedom and justice all the way. The Iraqis, in fact, were eventually defeated not so much by inferiority in weaponry but by the compulsions of the dilemma mentioned above. In this matter, they had been preceded by the Serbians at the time

When the Soviet Union aided and allied with the Vietnamese it grew greatly in stature itself because it was on the side of subaltern forces. It was then that Le Dan, general secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, declared that the Soviet Union was the second homeland for the Vietnamese because it helped their motherland to survive and win.

Contrary to a fairly common assessment of where history has reached, we are not in the post-nationalist epoch. On the contrary, nationalism is the strongest history-making force

for its continuation and erosion. Capitalism, of course retreat and radical reform able to thwart the non-cap and socialist assault on it. has not been able to do the with nationalism and founded on nationalism. not been able to totally subjugate this ideolo states based upon it.

On the contrary, the continuing conflict between imperialists and their successors against emerged and emnations. The shaping of nat a protracted process which aborted on occasions or away from multinational ters. Still it represents the phase in the evolution of munities into which hun groupingly groups itself.

What the next phase cannot be told but it is ce not going to be a disintegrated nations into a herd of gated communities based ligation. Nations have not ypleted their historical rol against the neo-imperia the communal fragmente

The only advantage t neo-imperialists have is tporary one of concentrat session of military power failure of the newly-emer tions to unite. The dire s which the non-aligned ment finds itself today or miliation that the Un tions has had to suffer a reminders of this fact.

It is precisely here th has a crucial role to ple building the unity of the emerged nations. The ally that such nations ha worldwide explosion of ratic consciousness, incl the US. But to forge su liance requires the estab and reinforcing of civil ian democracy in the e nations themselves. It r be that nationalism has rathels because the ne

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In the United States, President George W. Bush responded to questions about Aziz's fate with a smile and a thumbs-up sign. Aziz, who had vowed on the eve

of the war to die in a long and bloody battle with the United States, was the 12th of the 55 individuals on the US wanted list to be taken into custody, officials said. Three others are believed dead.

Earlier, the US Administrator in Iraq said the formation of a new Iraqi government would start next week.

Meanwhile, Bush told NBC there was some evidence suggesting Saddam might be dead after being targeted by US air strikes. "The people will wonder if Saddam Hussein is dead or not. There's some evidence



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INTERNATIONAL

Rumsfeld in Gulf for post-war talks

CHARLES ALDINGER
ABU DHABI, APRIL 27

US DEFENCE Secretary Donald Rumsfeld met leaders of the oil-rich United Arab Emirates on Sunday, launching a tour to thank Gulf allies for help in the Iraq war and discuss possible new American military arrangements in the region.

Rumsfeld landed in Abu Dhabi six hours late after a mechanical problem delayed his aircraft, causing him to miss a planned Sunday visit to Afghanistan. Officials said he hoped to go to Kabul later in the week.

Rumsfeld held talks with Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed al-Nahyan, UAE Defence Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum and Lieutenant General Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed al-Nahyan, Chief of the Emirates' armed forces. He was due to fly later in the day to Qatar.

The Emirates are one of the



Rumsfeld speaks to reporters aboard his plane somewhere over the Atlantic Ocean on Saturday. Reuters photo

launched on March 20, which ousted Saddam Hussein.

US aircraft that used a base in the UAE included the RC-135 electronic reconnaissance plane, refuelling tankers, and high altitude spy planes—the U-2 and the unmanned Global Hawk. The US

to predict whether the UAE

benefit from any shift in US military forces in the region.

Due to security considerations, Pentagon officials gave no advance indication of whether the secretary would visit Iraq itself, where more than 130,000 US troops are now deployed, and would not name other stops on the trip.

But Rumsfeld told reporters travelling with him that he was anxious not only to meet American troops at regional bases but to thank Gulf allies and discuss the future US Military.

He said he planned "to discuss with our allies around Iraq the arrangements that we have with them and our partnership and cooperation as we look forward at some point to the end of major combat activity in Iraq."

The secretary said he would stress with regional leaders "both with respect to Iraq and Afghanistan the evolution that's taking place from major combat operations to stability operations."

Military analysts say they expect the United States to sharply

decades, and perhaps move some air power from there to Qatar, Oman or the UAE. Washington also has a major military presence in Iraq's southern neighbour, Kuwait.

Dozens of US jets have been flying out of remote Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia for years to police a "no-fly" zone over southern Iraq. But that operation is no longer needed.

The US Air Force used a sophisticated Air War Command Centre at Prince Sultan for the air war against Iraq, but leaders of the conservative kingdom refused to allow attack jets to use the base against Iraqi targets.

Rumsfeld said on his plane he would meet President Hamid Karzai to discuss declaring a formal end to combat operations in most of Afghanistan and speed up reconstruction of the country.

Rumsfeld said a formal declaration could speed deployment of international reconstruction teams to at least eight cities and was important in clearing the way for other countries and relief

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DOCTRINE OF AGGRESSION

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LEADERS OF NATIONS who failed to stand up and condemn the American war of aggression against a sovereign, independent Iraq must share the blame for the unfolding consequences of the superpower's unilateral action. Before the dust has settled over its first unprecedented invasion, the United States has begun to target a second nation, with dark hints of possible other victims being added to the list. The combined verbal assault on Iraq's neighbour, Syria, by the U. S. President, George W. Bush, and his Secretaries of Defense and State, with warnings to Damascus and threats of sanctions against providing sanctuary to fleeing leaders and officials of the defeated Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein and against developing its own chemical weapons capabilities, must alert the international community to the continuing dangers of American unilateralism born of arrogance and its pursuit of the doctrine of pre-emption. The unprecedented ease with which the regime in Baghdad has been driven out has apparently whetted the appetite of the hawks in the Pentagon. The warnings have now acquired an ominous ring. Their progression in the case of Iraq, beginning with the demand that it disarm voluntarily and ending with forcible regime change, must be a grim pointer. The stridency of the demands on Syria, ruled by the socialist Baath Party like Iraq till recently, is especially ominous. On Sunday, Mr. Bush charged that Syria had chemical weapons (of mass destruction) and wanted it "to just cooperate" by not providing refuge to Iraqi leaders. His Secretary of State, Colin Powell, was more to the point: "With respect to Syria, of course we will examine possible measures of a diplomatic, economic or other nature as we move forward." Donald Rumsfeld, Defense Secretary, repeated the allegation that Syria had tested chemical weapons in the past 12 to 15 months.

Britain's Prime Minister, allied to Mr. Bush in the war on Iraq, has denied that there is any

plan to attack Syria. But Tony Blair's word lacks credibility or weight as shown up during the Iraq crisis when the U.S. remained undeflected and unpersuaded by British entreaties. He must convince his American ally that targeting Syria has even less logic than the arguments against Iraq since it is not a signatory to the chemical weapons convention and would therefore not be breaking international law if it seeks to possess these weapons. Washington's agenda appears to be to exert its extraordinary military muscle to reorder the geopolitical map of the region and tilt the balance in favour of Israel. The next few weeks will show whether targeting Syria means military action or is a less ambitious pre-emptive strategy to stop the young ruler, Bashir Assad, in Damascus from sponsoring terrorism or fuelling a guerilla movement in occupied Iraq. The latter is a potential threat as the U.S. consolidates its hold and increases its presence in Iraq. Occupation hazards can be impossible to foresee in the unfamiliar terrain, as the Americans have been recognising everyday. A guerilla movement led by the retreating supporters of Saddam Hussein can prove a formidable foe.

In many parts of Iraq, there was by the weekend some movement towards restoration of a semblance of law and order and an end to the looting and mayhem that erupted at every city when the regime of Saddam Hussein lost its hold and the invading forces were at the gate. It will take months of stupendous effort for a return to normal life for a people who had faced the most vicious bombing campaign in the past quarter century. The fall of Tikrit where rumours had it that the Iraqi dictator might make his last stand means that the country is at a turning point in its long history, heralding the decisive end of rule by the Baath Party. As the Iraqis pick up the pieces, they must continue to be puzzled by the sidelining and paralytic silence of the United Nations, which had for a decade sapped their energy through a sanctions regime.

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