

IN SPORTS: MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL CANCELS ITS SEASON-OPENING SERIES IN JAPAN BECAUSE OF THE THREAT OF WAR IN IRAQ. E4

The Day

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PREPARING FOR WAR

SADDAM SCOFFS AT ULTIMATUM



Iraqi officials remain defiant as war looms

By DAVID ESPO
AP Special Correspondent

In an edgy prelude to war, Saddam Hussein mocked an American ultimatum Tuesday to surrender power, and

the Bush administration claimed public support from 30 nations for its international coalition supporting Iraq's disarmament.

The streets of Baghdad captured the moment — panic buying by residents bracing for a fearsome U.S.-led attack, side by side with a government-prompted, mass demonstration in support of Saddam.

"This war, in short, is tantamount to genocide," charged Mohammed Al-Douri, Iraq's ambassador to the United Nations, in one of a string of insults the

Iraqi high command hurled at Bush.

It was a daylong act of defiance in the face of an invasion force of more than 250,000 troops ringing Iraq, a nation of more than 23 million that Saddam has ruled brutally for nearly a quarter century.

One day after President Bush set his deadline of 8 p.m. EST today, troops in the Kuwaiti desert began loading their ammunition and combat gear into fighting vehicles, ready to invade on short notice.

"I think I'd probably have a better

chance of being elected pope than we have of Mr. Saddam Hussein leaving the country," Capt. Thomas A. Parker said aboard the USS Kitty Hawk — an aircraft carrier preparing to take on a supply of 1,000-pound, satellite-guided bombs from a nearby munitions ship. "So this is probably going to follow to its logical conclusion."

As the hours dwindled toward Bush's deadline, the White House worked to keep Saddam guessing.

Presidential spokesman Ari Fleischer would not rule out a U.S. attack before

Bush's 48-hour clock ran out. "Saddam Hussein has to figure out what this means," he said.

One official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Bush was leaving the door open in case Saddam makes a pre-emptive attack or U.S. intelligence warns that one is likely.

Underscoring what Bush said Monday night, Fleischer said U.S. troops would enter Iraq, either as an invading force or as part of an unopposed effort

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See related coverage throughout this section

TAKING UP POSITIONS



A British Scimitar light-armored vehicle from the Queen's Dragoon Guards moves into position in the northern Kuwaiti desert close to the Kuwait-Iraq border late Tuesday. An army of 130,000 American and British soldiers, arrayed with a host of M1A1 Abrams tanks and armored vehicles of every description and supported by heavily armed helicopters, continues to take up positions along the border as the deadline issued by President Bush nears.

SIMON WALKER/AP



TIM COOK/The Day

While submerged on station in the Red Sea, officers aboard the submarine USS Providence gather in the wardroom to watch President Bush's address to the nation live Monday evening.

Bush address bolsters sub crew's resolve

Sailors aboard USS Providence in Red Sea rate president's speech as 'to the point' and 'adamant'

By ROBERT A. HAMILTON
Day Staff Writer

Aboard the USS Providence

THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH AT 8 P.M. MONDAY night didn't arrive here until the early hours of Tuesday morning, but any crewman who wasn't on watch was glued to a television screen nonetheless.

The men aboard the Providence only get a few hours of sleep a night, but they were willing to give up an hour of it to listen to what their commander-in-chief had to say as they cruised the Red Sea, waiting for the order to launch missiles against Iraq.

The Providence left Groton on Feb. 10, prepared to carry out any orders received from President Bush to wage war, and Bush's 15-minute speech seemed only to strengthen their resolve.

From the most junior enlisted person to the most senior officer, there was an appreciation for the hard and fast 48-hour deadline that Bush set — and the steadfast tone with which he delivered it.

While some of the pundits and analysts seemed to expect a longer address, among the 140 military men on board there was wide approval of the language Bush used: unembellished and unequivocal.

"He got to the point, and got it over with," said one

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INSIDE

While the nuclear submarine USS Providence awaits the almost certain order to join the war against Iraq, its crew is able to find a few moments here and there to play cribbage or stage a 'Monday Night Football' game. Day reporter Robert A. Hamilton files a notebook from the sub now deployed in the Red Sea. A5

Cruising hundreds of feet below the surface of the Red Sea, the Providence has to make its own air. And Electronics Technician 3rd Class David J. Horn is one of the men making sure that the ship is up to the job. A5

Rowland strengthens security around the state



National Guard troops helping to protect Millstone

By KATIE MELONE
Day Staff Writer

Waterford — With war looming and the potential for terrorist attacks increasing, Gov. John G. Rowland announced Tuesday that he has enhanced security across the state, activating National Guard troops to protect Millstone

Power Station and other sites in southeastern Connecticut.

"This, in my opinion, is the most important facility to protect to the best of our ability," Rowland, flanked by advisers and military personnel, said outside the gates of the Millstone nuclear power complex.

Rowland said 36 National Guard troops, five Army National Guard helicopters and the state police helicopter, Trooper One, will patrol waterways and other critical infrastructure. Patrols will be instituted at major bridges, includ-

ing the Gold Star Memorial Bridge, and state troopers will conduct in-depth inspections of larger trucks at the five weigh stations across the state, including the one in Waterford, he said.

Rowland, who flew to Millstone by helicopter, also requested that the Federal Aviation Administration institute a no-fly zone within a 10-mile radius of Millstone, as was done immediately after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

The announcement came hours after federal

See ROWLAND page A6

As war nears, America's image is rapidly eroding

By JOCELYN NOVECK
Associated Press Writer

Dan Vlasin, a 23-year-old teacher in Romania, has no doubts that the world would be better off without Saddam Hussein. But he's just as certain that America doesn't have the right to overthrow the Iraqi leader.

"America is acting as if it were God," says Vlasin, from the city of Cluj in Transylvania. "Saddam Hussein is a paid assassin, but it's up to the Iraqi people to get rid of him."

Donna Wright, a massage therapist in London, is sensing more anti-American feeling these days. "I'm not anti-American people, I'm anti-American administration," she says. "I don't agree with what they're doing."

Both Romania and, of course, Britain, America's staunchest ally, support a U.S.-led war against Iraq. Vlasin and Wright disagree with their governments, and they're

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Families Also Play Waiting Game

Angie Hart, 16, a junior at Norwich Free Academy and an anti-war activist with the group Youth Peace, displays an anti-war sign Tuesday. Hart's brother, Billy Lee Hart, is a mechanic in the Marines stationed in Kuwait.



SEAN D. ELLIOT
The Day

For those with loved ones in service, a time for worry and concern

By EILEEN McNAMARA
Day Staff Writer

Judy Finn disliked President Bush's Middle East policies even before he set a deadline for attacking Saddam Hussein.

With two sons in the military, one of them in Kuwait, she now finds herself more at odds with Bush.

"I'm not much in support of my president right now," said Finn, who lives in East Lyme. "My whole opinion on the Middle East is I'm wondering why we're even there."

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INSIDE TODAY

NEWS

On The Hunt
American soldiers in Afghanistan, right, take a brief break from scouring the mountains for al-Qaida fugitives who could try to launch fresh terror attacks. A2



Healthy Menu

Teachers at Sacred Heart School in Groton don't feel cheated when they make healthy food choices — thanks to the chef. B1

WEATHER

Bright And Crisp
Today, mostly sunny and cooler. High 45. Tonight, partly cloudy and chilly. Low 28. Thursday, thickening clouds. High 47. E6

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