

AMERICA AT WAR

NEWS IN BRIEF

FBI has interviewed 5,000 Iraqis in U.S. since war began

Washington — The FBI has interviewed more than 5,000 Iraqis who live in the United States and has detained around 30 since war began with Iraq, officials said Monday. The purpose of the interviews, which the FBI says are voluntary, is to gain intelligence about the Iraqi government and military and to learn the identities of any spies or terrorists in the United States, the agency says. The FBI says it is also seeking to assure U.S. Muslims that hate crimes against them will be vigorously investigated. Although the FBI says it is not using the interviews to arrest large numbers of Iraqis, two law enforcement officials speaking on condition of anonymity said about 30 have been detained on immigration charges since the program began last week.

Polls still find strong backing of U.S. war effort

Washington — Americans express strong support for the war against Iraq, but early setbacks have diminished hopes that that the conflict will be swift and casualties few, polls suggest. Polls conducted for major media organizations over the weekend produced identical findings: 72 percent of the public supports the decision by the White House to go to war with Iraq. Pollster John Zogby said that a poll he will publish today also shows that about seven in 10 of the American public supports the war. Likewise, the British public has rallied behind Prime Minister Tony Blair. A poll of 976 people conducted for the Daily Telegraph showed Monday that British support for the war had jumped from 55 percent to 65 percent since the invasion began.

Kuwaitis find signs of sabotage as they snuff out oil well blaze

Kuwait City — Firefighters attacking blazes at oil wells in southern Iraq say they've found telltale signs the valuable field was sabotaged. But it appears Iraqi troops may have disobeyed orders to blow up the wells or prepared explosives that were too weak to do serious damage. It took Kuwaiti firefighters only 15 minutes and two water cannon Monday to snuff out the first fire quenched so far at a booby-trapped Iraqi oil well. Upon inspecting damaged well heads at several blast sites just across Kuwait's border with Iraq, the team discovered a telltale pair of black wires snaking away from each one.

British industry upset over rules limiting role in post-war Iraq

London — British government officials and business leaders fear that Washington wants to deny them lucrative reconstruction contracts in post-war Iraq despite Britain's unrivaled contributions to fighting the war. U.S. government purchasing laws are the rub. They stipulate that only American companies can be prime contractors for the U.S. Agency for International Development, which is to oversee reconstruction in Iraq. British industry is upset and wants some U.S.-financed reconstruction business steered its way.

Skirmishes again delay aid from reaching Iraqis

Kuwait City — Stockpiled in ships at sea and warehouses around the region is the stuff of life in a time of war. Emergency food rations, medical packs, plastic sheeting for temporary shelter and water are all awaiting delivery to the people of Iraq. U.S. and British minesweepers are clearing a path for relief supply ships, a slow and difficult process. But until the deep-water port at Umm Qasr and a surrounding waterway are fully secured and opened, the humanitarian assistance pipeline remains closed and an aid program is stopped in its tracks. As skirmishes in and around Umm Qasr dragged on for a fifth day Monday, and Basra coped with a water crisis, humanitarian aid workers and military specialists poised to move in the supplies anxiously looked on.

Iraqi POWs reported to be peaceful and helpful

Tillil Airfield, Iraq — Some Iraqi prisoners are more than cooperative — they're downright helpful, their captors say. One officer being held at this airstrip in southern Iraq even told Americans where to find Iraqi uniforms for the underdressed prisoners, plus directions on how to find a weapons and ammunition cache. Military Police with the Army's 3rd Infantry Division were holding 188 prisoners Monday in simple rings of concertina wire. The Iraqis appeared in good health, looking neither forlorn nor defiant toward their captors. They surrendered last week to American troops as forces drove past Basra and Nasiriyah en route to Baghdad. They were delivered to this captured airfield where they get meals-ready-to-eat, or

# Providence Continues Its Missile Strikes

From A1

But Electronics Technician 3rd Class Jason Rinaldo, who was on the boat 17 months ago as well, said it still gets his adrenaline flowing. "You know what to expect because you've seen it before, but it's exciting every time," Rinaldo said. "The guys who were here for Enduring Freedom, they understand the importance of what we're doing here and what we're doing. The guys here for the first time, they're excited and honored to have a chance to help do what we have to do."

Suddenly there was the sharp hiss, an increase in air pressure and a shuddering of the sub — characteristics of a torpedo-tube launch. All conversation stopped, heads snapped up off the tables, and everyone turned to the big-screen television at the forward end of the mess hall, which showed the bright green of the rocket motor igniting beneath the surface and the blossom of fire as it broke the surface and sped away toward its target.

"Everybody goes for the glow," Rook said.

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With several missile salvos under their belts, the men of the Groton-based Providence have settled into a combat routine and started to fill up any available time.

The Emergency Medical Assistance Team, for instance, must report to the wardroom when the captain calls "battle stations" and wait there until the strike is over, ready to respond instantly to any injury. Chief Hospital Corpsman Michael "Doc" Shoulberg decided to fill the time with training.

He instructed Mess Specialist 3rd Class Stephen Jones to put the team's neck brace on Yeoman 3rd Class Andrew Aulbur, then inspected the results.

"Do not be afraid to hold him in while you're doing it, and bind it down snugly," Shoulberg said, adjusting the straps so Aulbur could not roll his head. "That's the point of it, to prevent him from moving."

Aulbur said this is his second time as a "patient." Earlier in the deployment he was strapped onto a stretcher and given oxygen through a respirator.

"I don't mind, as long as Doc's watching," he said.

That apparently reminds Shoulberg of another procedure that needs practice, and soon he had Aulbur bolting a regulator onto a green oxygen bottle and running plastic hoses to the face mask.

"I never thought I'd be doing this, but it's pretty cool," Jones said. "Sometimes it's been a real situation."

A few months ago, another crewman fell out of his bunk and banged up his face, and Jones was on the team that responded.

"I'm just the assistant, so I don't really do anything," he said.

Senior Chief Electronics Technician Wayne Gilbert reminded him quickly that he was on the team that helped when one of the officers suffered a broken neck in an accident on the bridge this winter.

"You guys should feel proud of that," Gilbert said. "If you hadn't all done your job, it could have ended pretty badly. Not only is he alive, but in the not-too-distant future he's going to be back to submarining."

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In control, the chief of the boat serves as diving officer of the watch at battle stations, keeping an eye on the helmsman and planesman.

But on the Sunday-morning strike he was wordless as the experienced petty officers kept the boat exactly on course, with just the right up-angle and at the precise speed that had been ordered.

"Five minutes to window," came a voice out of the dark as the countdown began.

"Firing point procedures," said the captain, Cmdr. Jonathan H. Kan. His crew responded with the pattern that has become almost automatic after multiple salvos over the last 80 hours or so, ending with the words, "Normal launch."

"Very well. Backhaul tube," the captain ordered. Though no other strikes were on the ship's schedule, the Providence's crew has learned over the last few days that the schedule can change rapidly, and they have made it a habit to be ready to accommodate any task.

"I don't know that anybody in submarines has fired any more missiles than Petty Officer Seyerle," Kan said after the launch.

Fire Control Technician 2nd Class Ian D. Seyerle's battle station is on the attack console, and he presses the final button in the process. He had the same station during Operation Enduring Freedom, when the Providence fired missiles against Taliban strongholds in Iraq.

"My mom and my girlfriend both worked in New York on September 11th, and I didn't get word that they were OK until more than a month afterward," Seyerle said, so that mission had particular significance to him.

"I didn't feel any different at the time, because of all the times we'd trained to do it," he continued. "When I had time to sit around and think about what had happened, it hit me that I had launched something, done it for real."

"But it's my job — it's what I do."

Seyerle joined the Navy in 1998 and picked submarines on the advice of his uncle, who served as an electronics technician on aircraft carriers. His grandfather, who was a Marine, suggested any other service — he said Marines were "bullet sponges," and he wanted something better for his grandson.



TIM COOK / The Day

Crewmen aboard the nuclear submarine USS Providence prepare the boat for the launching of several Tomahawk cruise missiles in a strike against targets in Iraq while operating in the Red Sea last Thursday.

After high school Seyerle had tried college for one semester and it wasn't working out.

"I figured if I joined the military it would give me a little maturity and a little discipline," he said. He and the captain both think that it had that effect.

The other fire control technician in control during launches this time is 1st Class Jeff A. Moore, who isn't even a full-time member of the Providence crew. He has nearly finished a 20-year career working on weapons systems without ever being on a boat that fired a live weapon.

He's assigned to the USS Norfolk, which is in drydock at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine, where his wife lives with their three children, sons aged 8 and 3 and a daughter, 5.

Moore will reach the 20-year mark in 18 months, and the Norfolk will spend all that time doing maintenance and repairs. He was expecting an uneventful end to his time in the Navy

when he got the chance in January to transfer temporarily to the Providence.

"This is kind of the icing on the cake," Moore said of the opportunity to go into combat. "The chief I left back on Norfolk was pretty envious. The very first one we sent off, I remember hearing the cheer down on the mess deck and thinking, 'That was it. We've done it. We've done our jobs.'"

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The navigator, Lt. Cmdr. Joseph A. Baldi, was at the scope as the Providence got word that a destroyer in the area was tracking its missiles.

"That's it. The surface ships say it's gone, it's gone," Baldi said.

He was also on the 2001 deployment and has watched all but two of the missiles leave through the periscope, which he turned over to Lt. j.g. Jeff Yacker on one mission during this deployment and to another junior officer during the last one.

"Your night vision goes away, but not for long," Baldi said. "When we have the camera on, it makes the view pretty dark, so you're guessing where to have the scope trained at first. The first one was really hard because I had no idea where to look."

But after so many opportunities, Baldi has become an expert at training the periscope precisely on the launch, and tracking the missile as it boosts to its cruise altitude and makes the transition to level flight.

One advantage this year is a full-color video system that has been installed on the periscope; it gives everyone the same view Baldi gets on the television screens that monitor the watch.

"The video we took last year, we didn't have a color camera, so I was the only one who saw the green," Baldi said, referring to the glow of the rocket motors under the water an instant before the missile breaks the surface and streaks away.

"It's kind of spooky to see that fireball swimming around in the water," said Lt. j.g. Josh Powers.

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Back in the wardroom after the strike, the crew took advantage of being near the surface and put up the high data rate antenna and got GBS, or Global Broadcast Service, from the Commander of Naval Submarine Forces office in Norfolk, Va.

"It's funny," said Lt. j.g. John Killila as a broadcast journalist described a grenade attack on a U.S. encampment in Kuwait. "He's in southern Iraq, beaming his signal to Atlanta, which is sending it to Norfolk, and they transmit it to us here in the Red Sea."

With no strike on the schedule, talk turned to how to fill some "idle" time.

"Let's go deep and sleep," Powers suggested hopefully. Running on the surface is considerably more difficult for a submarine because the crew has to worry about surface ships and aircraft that can't detect it when it is far below the surface.

But a more senior officer suggested there must be a better way to use the spare time. Perhaps engineering drills?

"Yeah, that's what I meant," Powers said with a grin.

Even though the submarine is getting television news, the boats still operate under far stricter security rules than other Navy units. No one has been able to send family e-mails for several days, and since the strike started, they have not even been able to receive them.

"We spent 70-something days in Enduring Freedom out of touch with our families," said Mess Specialist 2nd Class David Rojas. "At least the surface guys, they can call home and they get e-mail every day."

"Down here, you can be out of touch for a long time."

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## Business is down for stores, restaurants near sub base

From A1

long lines at the gate have prompted some of her civilian patrons to stay at the base to eat instead of risk being late returning to work, she said.

Nevertheless, Papatthanasious seemed more distressed Monday about the news from the front.

"You just hope they'll come back safe," she said of those deployed in the war against Iraq, including the patrons she befriended and one of her bartenders.

Norbert V. Fay, co-chairman of the Groton Division of the Eastern Connecticut Chamber of Commerce, estimated that, depending on the type of commercial operation, merchants

have experienced a 20 percent to 40 percent decline in their businesses since the preparations for war began.

In addition to the sailors, local businesses may be losing customers because longer deployment cycles have prompted military families to head home rather than stay in Groton.

"This has had a big impact. ... Any business that does business on the base (and near it) has suffered from it because you have fewer people. It's that simple," said Fay, who owns Pop's Kitchen and Laundromat and Pop's Car Wash on Route 12.

Sixteen attack submarines and one deep-diving vessel are based at the submarine base. Four submarines are at

sea taking part in military operations, a Navy officer said last week.

Each submarine has more than 100 sailors, noted Joseph C. Quaratella Jr., owner and operator of the Nautilus Barber Shop on Route 12.

"You lose those haircuts. ... You miss them, but there are still plenty of people on the base," Quaratella said.

Outside his window hung a small, blue sign that read, "The Nautilus Barber Shop sincerely wishes that every ship and boat that leaves port returns safely with her full crew."

Joel Brickman, owner of JB's Fun 'N Food Clam Bar on Route 12, said the drop in foot and car traffic past his establishment could be attributed to the

war. His restaurant, which has been around since 1971, depends on the military for 50 percent of its business.

"Everybody around here is concerned about the war, and people are anxious to know what's going on," Brickman said. "During the week, they may be staying home glued to their TVs more so than going out. In this particular spot, we're surrounded by Navy housing. The concern around this area is heightened because this is a military town."

The Supply Depot, which sells Army Navy and paintball supplies, began to see the impact when the military started to prepare for the war, owner Christopher O'Grady said. He said he knows many of the sub-

mariners on the USS Providence, now deployed in the Red Sea.

Nearly 10 percent to 15 percent of his business depends on the Navy personnel that come in for supplies for paintball, a game that provides a "diversion from the normal daily grind," O'Grady said.

The tough economic times have made it hard for his shop to gauge the financial impact of the diminished customer base. Near O'Grady's Route 1 shop, Replay Sports employees said they've noticed no drop-off in business. But co-owner Donna Lotti worried that if the war "goes on for a long time, we may see a different story."

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## Bush to request \$75B for war costs; some opposition expected

From A1

When lawmakers are to begin their Easter recess. He is expected to send his recommendations to Capitol Hill as early as today.

Though lawmakers are eager to demonstrate their support for U.S. troops, Democrats and many Republicans are expected to have problems with parts of the proposal.

Of the \$62.6 billion for the Defense Department, the administration is proposing setting aside \$59.9 billion in an emergency reserve fund that the Pentagon could largely spend with limited input from Congress, said Democrats who said they were familiar with a preliminary version of the proposal.

"We need to provide every single dime the troops need, but I do think we need to know where it's going and for what purpose," said Rep. David Obey of

Wisconsin, top Democrat on the House Appropriations Committee.

Democrats were also expected to complain that Bush's request had only \$543 million in humanitarian aid for Iraq, \$1.7 billion to rebuild the country and nothing for a peacekeeping effort after the war. Prior congressional and private estimates suggested the long-range expenses for those efforts would be many billions of dollars, though administration officials are hoping allied nations will help with the financing.

Democrats said they were also unhappy that the measure lacked additional money for other domestic programs such as tightening security at U.S. ports, borders, dams and facilities that generate radioactive materials.

Bush was preparing to send the Republican-controlled Congress his request just as lawmakers write a \$2.2 trillion budget for 2004. The House and

Senate versions both excluded any funds for a war, though Senate Democrats last week — with support from three Republicans — added \$100 billion for the war in their chamber's version, taking the money from Bush's tax cut.

Democrats have complained repeatedly that the fiscal framework — which controls new tax cuts proposed by Bush — cannot be written without knowing what the war will cost. Some Democrats believe that information might undercut support for Bush's proposed tax reductions.

The administration had refused to provide its war estimate until now, arguing that there were too many uncertainties on the battlefield.

The requested defense funds will include \$10.4 billion for the call-up of Reserves and National Guard troops and extra salary paid to troops in combat. It will include money for troops search-

ing for terrorists in Afghanistan, the Philippines and elsewhere, said one congressional aide speaking on condition of anonymity.

Also included for the Pentagon will be \$44.6 billion for operations and maintenance, and \$6.5 billion for new munitions and for research and development.

Foreign aid will include \$1 billion for grants and for federal backing of up to \$9 billion in guaranteed loans for Israel; \$1.1 billion for Jordan; less than \$1 billion for Egypt and other funds for countries including Oman and Bahrain.

Afghanistan would get \$400 million for humanitarian aid and economic development.

The measure will also contain \$1 billion for Turkey. That country has balked at letting the United States base troops there for an invasion of Iraq from the north, but has allowed some U.S. use of its air space.

The request will also include \$500 million to improve the FBI's domestic counterterrorism efforts, and about the same amount for the Coast Guard, which has some ships in the Persian Gulf region.

There is also \$250 million for a fund the president can use to prevent and respond to terrorist activities, and \$125 million for Congress to continue its operations in an emergency affecting the Capitol.

So far, the administration has decided to exclude aid for U.S. airlines, which have been lobbying Congress for assistance to help make up for business lost because of terrorism and the war with Iraq.

Among the chief proponents of such assistance has been House Speaker Dennis Hastert, R-Ill., whose state is home to financially troubled United Airlines.