

IN SPORTS: THE UCONN WOMEN EASE INTO THE ELITE EIGHT WITH A 70-49 TROUNCING OF BOSTON COLLEGE

# The Day

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## AMERICA AT WAR

# U.S. TROOPS CLOSING IN ON BAGHDAD



DAN CHUNG / Associated Press

Families leave Basra in southern Iraq across one of the town's bridges manned by British soldiers.

## Ground Soldiers Hit Republican Guard Unit For First Time

By PATRICK E. TYLER  
New York Times News Service

Kuwait — U.S. Marine and Army infantry units arrayed along a broad front south of Baghdad on Sunday made their first probing attacks against the Republican Guard division at Karbala, 67 miles from the capital, after a week of heavy aerial bombardment on the Iraqi forces that guards the approaches to Saddam Hussein's stronghold.

After another day of airstrikes on Baghdad and its southern outskirts where at least two Republican Guard divisions are deployed, the 5,000-member 2nd Brigade of the 3rd Infantry Division wheeled its armored columns north from the region around Najaf, 100 miles south of the capital, to begin engaging them.

The probing attacks were not the opening act of the battle for Baghdad, but were nonetheless intended to shape the coming battle and reestablish allied momentum. American commanders have made no secret of their determination to keep the pressure on Saddam.

"We just want to maintain the initiative," said Maj. Michael G. Birmingham, spokesman for the 3rd Infantry. "We don't want to dig in our heels here."

Momentum has been stalled in recent days by fierce attacks on allied supply lines. This has led to recriminations over whether allied commanders misjudged the willingness of Saddam's loyalists to resist and underestimated the size of the armed force needed to subdue them.

The American commander in the region, Gen. Tommy R. Franks, spoke publicly on Sunday in defense of his war plan, as did two of his superiors, Gen. Richard B. Myers, chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff, and Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld.

Franks said that his war strategy was being misperceived by "pundits" who believe "we are in an operational pause." "It's simply not the case," Franks said Sunday at his headquarters in Doha, Qatar. "There is a continuity of operations in this plan. That continuity has been seen. It will be seen in the days ahead."

But despite Franks' expression of confidence, the situation in Iraq appeared tense. The war continued to unfold as a far more complex tapestry than expected, with dispersed engagements, political and psychological warfare against Sad-

See TROOPS page A8

## Iraq boasts of volunteers for more suicide bombings

By JOHN F. BURNS  
New York Times News Service

Baghdad, Iraq — Gen. Hazem al-Rawi, a spokesman for the Iraqi armed forces, said Sunday that 4,000 volunteers from 23 Arab countries stand ready to carry out suicide attacks against American forces.

Citing Ali Hammadi al-Namani, the soldier identified by the Baghdad government as the man who carried out a suicide bombing on Saturday that killed four American servicemen, Rawi said the volunteers would follow that soldier's example.

"They have pledged never to return to their homelands, insisting that they remain in Iraq after their martyrdom," Rawi said. "It is our duty to chase the invaders from Iraq at any price."

Within hours of the suicide attack Saturday on the outskirts of Najaf, 100 miles south of Baghdad, President Saddam Hussein of Iraq awarded the Iraqi soldier two posthumous medals, vowing that "battalions" of Iraqi and other

See IRAQ page A8

## Fear and Uncertainty Grip Refugees From Basra

### ADDITIONAL WAR COVERAGE

The nation's top generals and Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld defended their Iraqi strategy on Sunday against new criticism they had underestimated the opposition and started the war with too few troops. A3

A blockade was the most visible response Sunday to the suicide bombing that killed four Americans. A3

The men of the 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines, grow more frustrated by the day. Many wait longingly for word of a potential combat mission, something to make them feel useful. A3

Thousands of Iraqi Shiites who fled into Iran to escape repression by Saddam Hussein are poised to return home if he is dethroned, with some bringing extra baggage: strong anti-American sentiment. A4

The bombs are dropping on Baghdad, but reverberations of war in Iraq are being felt in capitals elsewhere. Moscow and Washington are bickering about Russian technology transfers to Iraq. Talk is stirring in an irked Russian lower house of parliament that perhaps new U.S.-Russian arms control treaty should be postponed. A4

By MARC SANTORA and CRAIG S. SMITH  
New York Times News Service

On the bridge to Basra, Iraq — They crossed the bridge wearing tattered shoes if any at all. Their arms were filled with bags packed for exodus and children too young to walk. The city behind them, Basra, presented an apocalyptic landscape, jet black smoke from burning oil fires spilling over the flat desert horizon. They were afraid.

Afraid of Saddam Hussein's troops inside the city that they said were executing people freely, afraid of the forces outside the city whose intentions they did not yet know, and afraid of what would come as their supplies of food and water continued to dwindle.

"We have nothing," said Saeed, a young man from the nearby town of Zubayr. He was trying to salvage scrap from a car that was little more than a charred skeleton. "No water, no food, no electricity, nothing." On Sunday morn-

ing, Iraqi soldiers positioned in a factory complex around 500 yards beyond this bridge let loose a barrage of machine gun and mortar fire toward the civilians walking out of Basra, sending them diving for cover in ditches, ponds and the bombed-out remains of vehicles, eyewitnesses said.

One British soldier was killed in fighting nearer to the city, and several others were injured, according to the British Defense Ministry in London. See REFUGEES page A8

## As war goes, so might go Lieberman campaign

### Anti-war Democrat Dean leads New Hampshire poll

By MICHAEL COSTANZA  
Day Staff Writer

As American bombs rain down on Baghdad and targets across Iraq, the war is shaping more than U.S. foreign policy and the balance of power in the Middle East. Recent polls show that public opinion of the U.S.-led invasion is al-

so changing the battle back home for the White House, especially for those Democrats competing for the chance to challenge President Bush in 2004.

Despite patriotic fervor and strong support for the war among Americans at large, anti-war sentiment among liberal voters is threatening the campaigns of Connecticut Sen. Joseph I. Lieberman and other pro-war Democrats vying for their party's nomination.

The dissent already has shaken up the race in New Hampshire, a key state

that will hold the nation's first presidential primary next Jan. 27.

In a poll by the American Research Group, concluded as the first strikes were launched against Baghdad 12 days ago, former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean — who has emerged as the most vocal anti-war candidate — has surged to the front of the pack. He is now tied with Massachusetts Sen. John Kerry, who voted to authorize the use of force in Iraq. See WAR page A5

## For Submarine Far From Home, Tender Ship Provides More Than Supplies

### DISPATCHES AT SEA

EDITOR'S NOTE: Day reporter Robert A. Hamilton and photographer Tim Cook are aboard a Navy submarine covering the war.

By ROBERT A. HAMILTON  
Day Staff Writer

Aboard the USS Emory S. Land — In the weeks before the USS Providence pulled alongside this tender, Chief Machinery Repairman Rob Randall and dozens of skilled technicians were preparing for repairs the submarine would need.

Randall had received e-mails from the ship listing stock numbers and technical specifications for the parts the Providence required, and what he didn't have in stock, his men would make from raw steel on one of the 42

precision tooling machines in his shop.

"There is no other ship in the Navy that has the capability we have," Randall said. "If you can think it up, there's a good possibility we can make it. I don't say no, even if it's something we've never done before."

Within hours of its arrival, a leaky valve in the Providence control room had been replaced with a spare off the Land, and other fabricated parts were being moved aboard.

Randall said his machine shop improves the quality of life aboard the Providence in many ways, from

restoring air conditioning to fixing hydraulic oil leaks. And there is an important national security factor to be considered as well, he said.

"What we make for submarines lets them stay on station longer," Randall said.

The Land, operating in the Mediterranean, essentially provides U.S. Navy submarines — and surface ships on occasion — with a friendly port far from home where they can pull in under the protection of its security force for a few days of quiet.

The warships take on food and other. See TENDER page A5



Aboard the USS Emory S. Land, divers Matthew Cox, left, and Christopher LaRocque secure their oxygen masks as they prepare to perform a hull inspection of the USS Providence in the eastern Mediterranean.

TIM COOK / The Day

### INSIDE TODAY

#### NEWS

30 wounded in Israel  
A Palestinian suicide attacker wounds 30 people outside a packed cafe in northern Israel Sunday. A2



Not just another supermarket  
Local residents currently receiving regular shipments of natural foods have a vision for a grocery store. E1

#### WEATHER

Back to winter  
Today, mostly cloudy, breezy and cold. High 38, low 24.  
Tuesday, chance of rain. D8

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