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War?



Secretary of State **Collin Powell**, National Security Adviser **Condoleezza Rice** and Secretary of Defense **Donald Rumsfeld** are pictured at the White House where President **George W. Bush** met with NATO Secretary General, **Lord Robertson** on Feb. 18.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Natural gas cause of home explosion

GAINESVILLE, Texas (AP) — Investigators have determined that a natural gas explosion caused the destruction of a Gainesville residence on Monday and damaged every house within a two-block range, the Gainesville Fire Department said Wednesday.

No one was in the house at the time, but an adult and two children in a passing car suffered minor injuries from flying glass.

Six investigators and engineers completed an on-site investigation late Tuesday, officials said.

The investigation of the natural gas explosion focuses on the gas plumbing beneath the house, the fire department

Plans under way to free up prison space

AUSTIN (AP) — As the state prison system approaches its operating capacity, Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst said Wednesday plans are under way to free up 4,000 prison beds.

"At the end of the day, the state of Texas is not going to compromise on safety," Dewhurst said.

Some of the additional capacity would come from

shortening a substance abuse program

for offenders from nine months to six months. That would free up about 2,000 beds, said Sen. John Whitmire, chairman of the Senate Criminal Justice Committee.

Another 1,000 beds could come from converting the Hamilton Youth Commission facility in Bryan into an adult prison operated by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

Sen. Steve Ogden, R-College Station, said he supports the logic behind using the youth commission facility, but said he wants to make sure that

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