

THE BATTALION

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War countdown begins

Bush: Saddam has 48 hours to leave Iraq

By Ron Fournier
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — President George W. Bush said Monday the United States will unleash war against Iraq unless Saddam Hussein flees his country within 48 hours. The president warned Americans that terrorists may strike in retaliation and put the nation on higher alert.

"The tyrant will soon be gone," vowed Bush, commander in chief of 250,000 U.S. troops poised to attack.

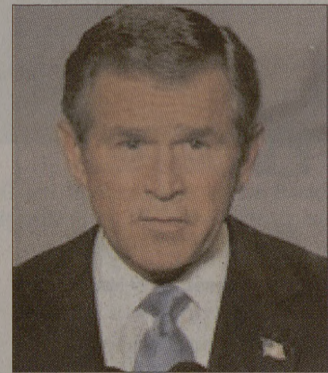
Bush set a course for war without U.N. backing after months of futilely trying to persuade Saddam to disarm. In an address televised worldwide, he spoke to several audiences at once, starting with the American public and skeptical allies and including Saddam, Iraq's military and its citizens.

"The day of your liberation is near," Bush told Iraqis.

The speech did not silence opposition from home and abroad to Bush's tough-on-Saddam policies. Senate Democratic leader Tom Daschle said Bush had failed "miserably" at diplomacy, forcing the United States to go

to war with Iraq.

From the ornate cross halls of the White House, Bush said for the first time that Saddam could not retain power even by beginning to disarm his nation of weapons of mass destruction — long the stated goal of U.S. policy in Iraq. The only way war can be avoided now is Saddam's exile, Bush said.



BUSH

"All the decades of deceit and cruelty have now reached an end," the president said. "Saddam Hussein and his sons must leave Iraq within 48 hours. Their refusal to do so will result in military conflict commenced at a time of our choosing."

The 48-hour clock started at 8 p.m. EST Monday, White

House spokesman Adam Levine said.

At home, Bush raised the terror alert status from yellow to "high risk" orange, the second-highest level.

"War has no certainty except the certainty of sacrifice," Bush said.

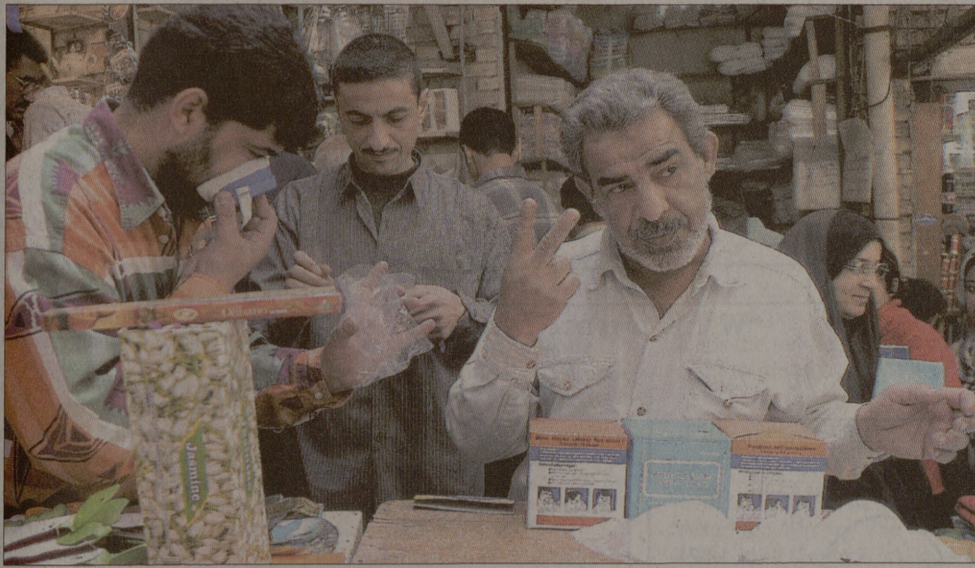
An intense White House debate over whether to establish a timetable was settled hours before the president's speech. Some argued that Bush should not set a deadline because Saddam could use the notice to build opposition to the president's case or even launch a pre-emptive strike.

Bush told journalists and weapons inspectors to leave Iraq immediately.

He issued his ultimatum after U.N. allies refused to back his bid for a resolution sanctioning military force. The diplomatic defeat led Bush to move toward war accompanied by Britain, Spain, Australia and a handful of other nations in his self-described "coalition of the willing."

He lashed out at France and other wary allies at the U.N. "These governments share our

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PHOTOS: KRT CAMPUS

(Top) Iraqis look over small pollution masks at a market in Baghdad, Iraq, Monday. They are stocking up on supplies such as candles and water to prepare for war. (Bottom) A night view of the Baghdad skyline.

America's terror alert raised to orange status

By Curt Anderson
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Worried that war in Iraq could lead to terrorist reprisals at home, the Department of Homeland Security raised the terror alert Monday to orange,

indicating a high risk of attacks, and implemented enhanced security measures nationwide.

"Operation Liberty Shield" was announced just as President Bush completed his speech giving Saddam Hussein 48 hours to leave Iraq.

The homeland security plan

includes more Border Patrol officers, stepped-up patrols at seaports, airports and nuclear power plants, and increased safeguards over the nation's food supply.

Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge also called on governors to deploy National Guard troops or extra

state police to protect bridges and other key infrastructures.

The terror alert was raised from yellow, or elevated, to orange, the second-highest level on a five-color scale. Counterterrorism officials said the decision was based on threats from al-Qaida, Iraqi operatives and freelance

terrorists.

"A large volume of reporting across a range of sources, some of which are highly reliable, indicates that al-Qaida probably would attempt to launch terrorist attacks against U.S. interests claiming they

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Terror Alert Raised to Orange

- Red Severe condition
- Orange High condition
- Yellow Elevated condition
- Blue Guarded condition
- Green Low condition

SOURCE: The Office of Homeland Security AP

Panelists speak in support of president

By Lauren Smith
THE BATTALION

Even though former President Bush had not yet spoken with his son Monday afternoon, he was sure that the president would have a certain peace of mind — a quiet confidence before facing the country in a televised address last night.

"We have been blessed with a very close family, and my son gets his strength from family and his faith," Bush said during Monday's leadership forum at the George Bush Presidential Conference Center.

Alongside the former president, sitting

on a panel discussing attributes of a successful leader and answering questions from the audience, were Diane Sawyer of ABC News, Tom Selleck, an actor and producer, Steve Lindsey, a NASA astronaut, and Steve Wynn, chairman of Wynn Resorts.

"Leadership can be put on a tripod of competence, integrity, and passion," Sawyer said. "I am so honored anyone thinks there is such a thing as leadership in the press. It is the journalist's job to every day be fresh, curious and faithful to fact."

After sharing a story from her recent trip to Kuwait, Iraq and Jordan, Sawyer left the panel discussion early to return to New York, but not before leaving the full audito-

rium with a final thought:

"America is the only country with a national anthem that ends with a question," Sawyer said. "Democracy is the choices we make every day."

Selleck said public figures such as celebrities are role models whether or not they like it, so they should choose their words carefully.

"There is a problem in Hollywood with framing the war debate," Selleck said. "Whether you agree with the president or not, the president deserves respect, which he is not getting from that community in

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JOHN C. LIVAS • THE BATTALION

Owner of Las Vegas Wynn Resorts, Steve Wynn (left) listens to ABC News reporter Diane Sawyer.

SBP candidate platforms stress tradition, communication

Matt Josefy

By Melissa Sullivan
THE BATTALION

With a campaign theme of "Your Voice Matters," Matt Josefy said that if elected student body president he will focus on two-way communication between student leaders and the student body.

"Right now students feel like administration and student leaders are using a bullhorn and shouting right in their faces telling them the way things are going to be," said Josefy, a senior accounting major. "I want to turn that bullhorn around and tell individuals their voice matters, and they should be using the bullhorn in my ear."



JOSEFY

Josefy said creating a student body president link on the A&M Web site and holding meetings in the quiet room of Sbis Dining Hall are possible ways of achieving this.

With the future of Bonfire uncertain, Josefy said, he knows how much Bonfire was valued, but no candidate should try to bring it back.

Instead, he said, he believes something needs to be done immediately in place of Bonfire.

"One of the ideas we have going is called push week," Josefy said. "What push week would be is a week-long set of events leading up to Elephant Walk and E-Walk and leading into the yell practice before the t.u. game."

STUDENT BODY ELECTIONS 2003

This is the first of three installments featuring two of the six candidates for student body president. The profiles are based on candidate interviews with The Battalion editorial board.

The elements of push week would be modeled after those of Bonfire, such as unity, spirit and camaraderie, Josefy said.

Josefy said he does not support and would not promote an off-campus bonfire if one were to occur in the fall.

Last month, students were given the opportunity to vote on three fee referendums. Josefy said he was in favor of the Student Recreation Center fee increase and the computer upgrades, but said the University should hold off on increasing the Student Services Fee.

"I think the student services

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Ed "El Ramos" Brown

tant goal as SBP would be restoring a family atmosphere on campus.

"My main priority is really reaching out to students and going out and finding a way to start tying them back together," he said.

Brown said he wants Bonfire to return to campus, but the first step in bringing it back is reminding students how great the tradition was.

"If we take steps now and remind these future classes of what it meant and have them work on getting Bonfire back as much as the previous classes worked on building it, then we will have it back eventually," he said.

Brown said he applauds members of the Unity Project

off-campus bonfire for attempting to remind others of the Bonfire tradition.

"It's not Bonfire, and it's not going to replace Bonfire because Bonfire involved all Aggies," he said. "I think it's good, though, that we have Aggies that take initiative."

Brown said he voted against the three fee increases proposed in the February referendum.

"I'm not saying I'm completely opposed to having a fee increase, but I want to see an examination of where this money is going," he said.

Brown said the motivation

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BROWN