

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iraqi TV shows two men said to be captured U.S. pilots

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) — Iraqi state television on Monday showed two men said to have been the U.S. crew of an Apache helicopter forced down during heavy fighting in central Iraq.

Gen. Tommy Franks, the U.S. war commander, confirmed that one helicopter did not return from its mission Sunday and that its two-man crew was missing. The men were identified as Chief Warrant Officer Ronald D. Young Jr., 26, of Lithia Springs, Ga., and Chief Warrant Officer David S. Williams, 30, of Orlando, Fla.

If confirmed, the airmen would be the second set of POWs displayed by the Iraqis in as many days. On Sunday, the Arab satellite station Al-

Jazeera carried Iraqi television footage of five U.S. soldiers who were captured near An Nasiriyah, a crossing point over the Euphrates River.

Unlike those soldiers, the men shown Monday did not appear to be injured.

The two wore cream-colored pilots' overalls and did not speak to the camera but appeared confused. They turned their heads and looked in different directions while being filmed. One of the men sipped from a glass of water, looking wary but not cowed.

The contents of one man's wallet were displayed across a table, including a Texas driver's license, a card from the Fort Hood National Bank, phone cards and credit cards.

A spokesman at the U.S. Army Post in Fort Hood, Texas, said that a helicopter from its 1st

Battalion of the 227th Aviation Regiment was missing in action in Iraq.

Kuwaiti firefighters find signs of sabotage of oil well blazes

KUWAIT CITY (AP) — 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.

Even though fighting nearby forced some civil-

ian firefighters to clear out of the region. Mubarak Kuwait's senior firefighter, Aisa Bouyabes, said he believes his team and others can douse the remaining blazes in Iraq's Rumeila South oil field within two weeks.

Upon inspecting damaged well heads at several blast sites just across Kuwait's border with Iraq, a team discovered a telltale pair of black wires snaking away from each one.

"These are the same wires that were used to blow up our wells — the same wires I've seen it before. I inspected the wells in Kuwait immediately after the liberation," Bouyabes said by telephone from northern Kuwait.

Saddam Hussein's troops sabotaged more than 700 well heads in Kuwait's oil fields as they fled from the emirate in the closing days of the 1991 Gulf War.

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