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Tuesday, September 11th at 8:30pm in MSC 212
Wednesday, September 12th at 8:30pm in MSC 212

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Army says troops will stay in Iraq a year

By Robert Burns
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The Army is telling National Guard and Reserve troops in Iraq they will be there a full 12 months, apparently surprising some who had believed the clock started ticking on one-year tours once they reached mobilization stations in the United States.

Counting time they spent getting ready before they went and to demobilize after their tours, many reservists now in Iraq probably will find themselves on active duty and away from their civilian jobs for well over a year, officials said Tuesday.

An Army spokesman, Lt. Col. Tom Rheinlander, said this does not represent a change in policy, even if some National Guard and Reserve soldiers had thought their active duty would end after a 12-month period that included the weeks or months they spent getting ready to go to Iraq.

Reaction from reservists in Iraq indicated confusion.

"The biggest problem is not having a definite answer," said Maj. Stephen Iacovelli, 37, from Schaumburg, Ill., a member of the Army Reserve's 362nd Psychological Operations Company, of Fayetteville, Ark. "We've heard two things," said Iacovelli, interviewed in the

Tikrit area. "One is that we'll be stateside by December. The other is that we'll stay here till March or April. If the case is the latter, it will be a disappointment for some, but the troops were told initially that their tour could last up to two years."

The military has authority from President Bush to keep reservists on active duty for up to two years at a stretch, and some have served that long. Most, however, had expected to return to civilian life after 12 months.

Separately, the general who commanded all Marine forces in Iraq during the war said Tuesday the last group of Marines will leave Iraq by the first week of October. Lt. Gen. James Conway, commander of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, returned Monday from Iraq after turning over responsibility for security in south-central Iraq to a Polish-led multinational force.

Conway said he found the Iraqis to be more than eager to regain control over their country. "I used to think Americans were the most impatient people on earth; I now believe that distinction belongs to the Iraqis," he told a Pentagon news conference.

Conway also said that although no weapons of mass destruction have been discovered in the part of Iraq in which his troops operated, he thinks it likely that elements of a

weapons program eventually will be uncovered.

Rheinlander said the policy of keeping Army soldiers in Iraq for 12 months has been in effect since it was announced July 23 by Gen. John Keane, then the acting Army chief of staff.

In his presentation, however, Keane did not say that 12-month tours for National Guard and Reserve members excluded the predeployment period in the United States and the demobilization period.

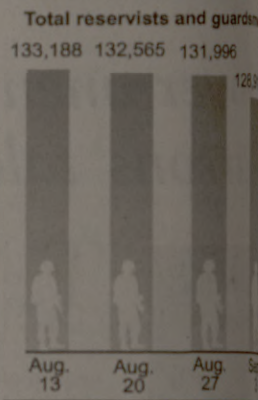
In fact Keane made a point of explaining that two National Guard brigades designated for deployment to Iraq next March would serve six months there, with their total time on active duty not to exceed 12 months. "From alert to redeployment and return to home station will last a year," he said. Left unsaid was that this would be the exception rather than the norm.

Rheinlander said a message was delivered to all troops in Iraq in recent days clarifying that both active duty and reserve units will serve 12 months in-country. Rheinlander refused to release the message, saying it was classified.

Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was asked about tour lengths for National Guard and Reserve troops during his testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee. In contrast to the

Active reservists

Recent weeks have seen a decline in the total number of Army reservists and National Guardsmen on active duty.



SOURCE: Defense Department

statements by Army officials, Myers seemed to indicate there had been a change of policy.

"They will be extended to meet our policy goal of up to 12 months in Iraq," Myers said, "and given their mobilization and demobilization time frame on top of that, they'll be here one year."

Myers said extra hardships are to be expected during the war.

"We are a nation at war... we expect more, at least temporarily, from our reserve component," he said.

Economists worry Iraq deficit will drag on economy

By Martin Crutsinger
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — President Bush's request for \$87 billion in new spending for Iraq and Afghanistan will worsen already gloomy forecasts for the budget deficit — sending it above the half-trillion-dollar mark next year — and could ultimately translate into weaker economic growth in the United States.

That is the assessment of private economists who believe the surging federal deficits, while helping to boost a lagging economic recovery this year and next, will mean trouble down the road in the form of rising interest rates and higher inflation.

Bush administration officials, briefing reporters on the details of the president's plan, rejected this bleak scenario. They said the additional \$87 billion that Bush is seeking for military operations and reconstruction will not prevent the administration from achieving its goal of cutting the budget deficit in half over the next five years.

But these officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity, conceded the request will add from \$50 billion to \$60 billion to next

year's deficit, which the administration projected in July would hit a record \$475 billion.

The Congressional Budget Office, in its own mid-year update last week, was even more pessimistic with a 2004 deficit forecast of \$480 billion.

The CBO, without taking into account the extra spending for Iraq, had already forecast that the deficits over the next decade will total \$1.39 trillion, a remarkable turnaround from when Bush took office and officials were forecasting surpluses over a decade that would total \$5.6 trillion.

Part of the deterioration in the government's books reflects the 2001 recession and the weak recovery since. Analysts said the administration was right to push through tax cuts and increased government spending to jump-start growth over the past three years.

Many now believe growth will be boosted by more than 1 full percentage point this year and next because of the stimulus provided by Bush's third round of tax cuts, which took effect this summer, and the increased government spending on the military and homeland security.

"The tax cuts are getting spent and all the money the government is spending to buy

new tanks and planes and missiles represents jobs as well," said David Wyss, chief economist at Standard & Poor's Co. in New York.

The trouble will come, analysts said, if huge deficits persist, as they now expect, if the economy starts growing at faster rates.

Then the government's huge borrowing costs will bump up against investment needs of private companies seeking to expand and modernize. The increased demand represented by higher government and consumer spending will threaten higher inflation if the economy operating at full capacity.

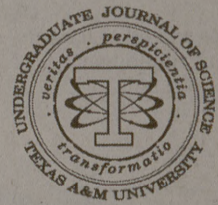
Higher interest rates and higher inflation will mean slower economic growth.

"We are on an irresponsible path for fiscal policy," said Martin Baily, head of the Clinton Administration's Council of Economic Advisers.

Other private economists also question how long the U.S. commitment in Iraq will last. The \$87 billion request will cover the 2004 budget year, which begins Oct. 1.

"Investors' expectations are being changed," said Mark Zandi, chief economist at Economy.com. "I don't think anyone anticipated the magnitude of the commitment we are now taking on in Iraq."

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Volume 110

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By Tori Fo

THE BATTAL

A loud ex from the Tower World Trade Cen shocked former T A&M student M Hurt out of his no Tuesday morning on Wall Street. H looked up to see a ball shoot out fro building and bega search for cover rained down on h As Americans re the second anniver the terrorist attacks 11, 2001, Hurt and Aggies residing in New York, look back an ber the tragedy as w their Aggie family t helped them throug time of terror in the "After I heard th explosion, the gro of the tower began explode and I didn what it was. Then, alarms began to go car windows shat Hurt said. "I ran a street under a cons scaffolding. There man sitting on the injured and in sho him up and found officer to ask for h Hurt was speak the police officer heard the second p the South-Tower. "I didn't know ly that it was a pla though foul play d my mind. As soon second plane hit I wasn't just a mere dent," Hurt said. Hurt then began search for a phone his parents in Texa them know that he "As I was tryin find a phone, I fel thing like an earth

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By Ba

THE

The Texas Service, which National Emergen Training Center, in funding since \$11.7 million prior "What Sept. 1 demand for (TEEX) Todd, director of TEEX. "It gave us ing to be taken ligh Created in 1998 training center was fighters, hazardous managers and other from across the nat more professionally offered classes and ernments in their pr

Studen

By Esthe

Sarah Szumi

THE

Southside garag e-mail Tuesday Transportation Ser nounced number o facility, creating a garage that current reserved spaces. TS Director Rod give a presentati Wednesday to disc but did not show. About 20 stude the meeting began, not present to hear "No one was c Speaker of the Ser suspicion is that C