



## Negroponte: War in Iraq justified

By Rhiannon Meyers  
THE BATTALION

U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations John D. Negroponte said Monday night that the United Nations, like the United States, is helpful in securing democracy worldwide.

"If the United States is necessary, but not sufficient to good things happening in the world, the same is true of the U.N.," he said.

Negroponte, who has been an ambassador since 2001, told an overflowing audience of 350 in the George Bush Presidential Library Conference Center that the United States never attempted to undermine the United Nations.

"A strong vigorous, democratically-disposed United Nations is in our national interest," Negroponte said. "This administration has never challenged the United Nations to weaken it;

rather, it has challenged the United Nations in order to challenge it."

Negroponte said in a question-and-answer session that America was justified in going to war with Iraq without the U.N. resolution.

"(The resolution) did not say if we were to use force we have to go back for yet another resolution, it simply said that we would have to come back to consult the Security Council," Negroponte said. "As far as we were concerned, there were more ways than one that Iraq continued to not be in compliance."

Negroponte said that although no weapons of mass destruction were ever found, Iraq had missiles that were prohibited.

"I don't have any doubt in my mind that we were justified for what we did," he said.

Negroponte said U.S. troops that are now in Afghanistan and Iraq are defending the U.S.

Constitution as well as democracy all around the world.

"We believe that not only is the national security of the United States good for us, it's good for the world, because we think democracy, modeled on our own constitution or not, is the best guarantor of national security," Negroponte said.

Negroponte said one of the progressions that the United Nations has made is the support of President Bush's vision of peace in the Middle East.

"We are engaging in crucial work designed to bring about the democratization of Afghanistan and Iraq," he said.

College Station Mayor Ron Silvia said he enjoyed the speech and learned a lot about the United Nation's role in the world.

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ART WRIGHT • THE BATTALION

U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations John D. Negroponte delivers a speech to a standing room only audience at the George Bush Presidential Conference Center Monday evening. Negroponte has served as a diplomat for 43 years and received his first appointment in 1960 from President Eisenhower.

## Airborne



EVAN O'CONNELL • THE BATTALION

Sixteen-year-old Duskie Snowdy of Bryan skateboards in Williamson Park in Bryan behind the Municipal Golf Course. The skatepark

opened on May 30, 2003, and has been a popular hangout for BMX bikers, rollerbladers and skateboarders.

## Closing the gender gap

### Women make strides in job market, society

By Carrie Pierce  
THE BATTALION

Before Title IV was implemented, women could not take certain classes, stay out late or participate in certain activities, said Dr. Nancy Dickey, president of the Texas A&M Health Sciences Center College of Medicine and vice chancellor for health affairs.

Dickey spoke before a full crowd at the Women's Week kick-off luncheon Monday at Reed Arena, beginning a week of events that celebrate women's accomplishments.

Dickey was asked to speak as part of this year's luncheon because she is admired and respected, said Karan Watson, dean of faculties and associate provost.

"This particular observance of Women's Week is important because it shows how far women at

Texas A&M have gone and will go," said Julia Kirk Blackwelder, associate dean of the College of Liberal Arts and co-chair of Women's Week.

Dickey spoke about women competing on the same level as men, such as in the job market and in school.

"Prior to Title IV, it wasn't who went to school, but being able to go to school," Dickey said.

In 1963, 150 women attended A&M, yet there were few restrooms for women, Dickey said. There were no residence halls for women, and they could not participate in some student organizations, she said.

Women also had curfews on campuses, and female professors could not belong to faculty clubs, but were encouraged to join faculty wives

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## Bush drops in on livestock show

By Brian D. Cain  
THE BATTALION

HOUSTON — President George W. Bush appeared Monday at the Houston Livestock Show to meet and greet potential voters between fund-raising dinners in Dallas and Houston.

Bush entered the cattle barn area of Reliant Center amid a roar of applause and began inspecting the Brahman bulls as he spoke to exhibitors and shook hands with Livestock Show visitors.

With the Texas primaries beginning Tuesday, the visit was a sign that the 2004 presidential

campaign has begun in Texas.

"It's good to be here and it's good to be home, and I thought there was a lot of bull in Washington!" Bush said as he studied the Brahman finalists.

Bush said the trip was an opportunity to view one of Houston's proudest events.

"It's nice to be at the Houston Livestock Show among people with strong values who stand up for what they believe in," he said.

The crowd was largely made up of Bush supporters and students who wanted to get a glimpse of the president.

"I came with my family

today to see the president, and I think it's great that he came," said Houstonian George Simons. "It shows that he supports his roots and we were lucky to have him here."

Some A&M students working as interns for the College of Agriculture met the president and were able to get his autograph.

Jen Biser, a senior agriculture journalism major, and Jamie McDonald, a junior animal science major, had the president sign their Houston Livestock

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## Candidates ready for state primary

By Kelley Shannon  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUSTIN — Hours before Texas' primary Tuesday — the first test of the contentious, Republican-drawn map for congressional voting districts — candidates fanned out across the state to put the finishing touches on their campaigns.

Some primary battles were hard-fought and expensive, particularly in key congressional races where the GOP hoped to take seats away from Democratic incumbents and share the advantage in Texas' evenly split 32-member congressional delegation.

Besides congressional races, voters will decide a primary race for Texas Railroad Commission and contests for the Texas Supreme Court, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, State Board of Education and the Texas Legislature.

Texas won't play a big role in choosing the

Democratic presidential nominee because John Kerry is the only major candidate left in that race. Ten candidates will be listed on the Democratic ballot, however.

Two weeks of early voting concluded Friday. A total of 272,722 ballots were cast in the state's 15 most populous counties, the Texas Secretary of State's Office reported Monday. The office estimated that nearly 1.7 million people, or 14 percent of the state's more than 12 million registered voters, will cast primary ballots.

Some of the heaviest early voting came along the U.S.-Mexico border in Hidalgo County, the southern population base of the new congressional District 25, and Austin's Travis County, the northern base of the district.

Lloyd Doggett, a five-term congressman from Austin, chose to run in the heavily

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## Differences remain unresolved as Iraqis sign interim constitution

By Hamza Hendawi  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BAGHDAD, Iraq — For an hour anyway, Iraqi leaders put aside their disagreements during the signing of a landmark interim constitution Monday, heaping praise on the U.S.-backed document amid patriotic songs and Quranic verses urging unity. But sectarian differences resurfaced as soon as the event ended.

The Shiites' most influential cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Hussein al-Sistani, issued a religious edict saying he had reservations about the interim constitution and that it will gain legitimacy only when adopted by an elected assembly.

His supporters on Iraq's Governing Council pledged to try to amend parts of the charter, saying they effectively give minority Kurds and Sunni Muslims a veto over a permanent constitution due to be drafted and put to a referendum next year.

"This law places obstacles in the path of reaching a permanent constitution for the country that maintains its unity, the rights of its sons of all sects and ethnic backgrounds," al-Sistani said.

President Bush praised the 22-page document, saying in a statement that its adoption was a "historic milestone in the Iraqi people's long journey from tyranny and violence to liberty and peace."

Still, al-Sistani's edict and the Shiite Muslim council members' comments somewhat devalued the historic significance of the signing of a charter that promises to compensate Iraqis for years of oppression under Saddam Hussein, safeguard the freedoms and human rights of their ethnic and reli-

### Iraqis sign interim constitution

Iraqi leaders signed a landmark interim constitution Monday, a key step in U.S. plans to hand power to the Iraqis by July 1. It will remain in effect until the permanent constitution is approved in 2005.

#### Timeline of events

March 20, 2003	U.S.-led invasion of Iraq begins	MAR	May 1	President Bush declares major combat over
Nov. 15	U.S.-led coalition and Iraqi Governing Council sign agreement on transfer of sovereignty ultimately by July 1	NOV	Jan. 15, 2004	Shiites demonstrate seeking direct elections, not selection by caucuses
Dec. 13	Saddam Hussein is captured	DEC	Feb. 28	U.S. deadline for adoption of interim constitution passes
March 1	Governing Council agrees on interim constitution	MAR	March 7	Shiites consult with Iraq's top Shiite cleric, and say they will sign
March 5	Planned signing delayed after Shiites oppose clause giving Kurds veto power over a permanent constitution	MAR	March 8	Governing Council signs charter



SOURCE: Associated Press

gious groups and lay down the foundations for a genuine democracy.

Senior Shiite clerics like al-Sistani are exploiting the void left by Saddam's departure to exercise

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### 2004 Texas Primaries Tuesday, March 9

- ★ Poll Hours: 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- ★ Voters may be asked to present their Driver License and/or voter registration card.
- ★ To vote in Brazos County, voters must be registered to vote in Brazos County.
- ★ Go to [www.thebatt.com](http://www.thebatt.com) for primary coverage and a list of polling places.