OrdnanceReports

News updates from around the world

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U.S., Britain defend weapons claims: 'Our credibility is intact'

USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — U.S. and British officials defended their allegations that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction amid growing charges that the Bush administration may have overstated ambiguous intelligence to sell the war in Iraq.

Secretary of State Colin Powell said Monday that everything he told the United Nations in his indictment of Iraq's weapons programs in February had been vetted by the CIA and that only information backed by multiple sources were made public. ''Our credibility is intact,'' he toldABC News. ''Everybody knows that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction.''

Also Monday, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, speaking to reporters at the close of a summit of industrial nations in France, said he stands ''absolutely 100% behind the evidence. . . . The idea that we doctored such intelligence is completely and totally false.''

The comments came as criticism mounted on Capitol Hill and among intelligence professionals. Senate committees will investigate the issue as soon as this month.

A U.S. intelligence expert who helped prepare Powell's presentation in February said the effort was rushed and, in some cases, relied on circumstantial evidence. For example, Powell said Iraq ''could have produced'' 25,000 liters of anthrax. According to the expert, who spoke on condition he not be identified, there was no hard evidence that Iraq had produced the anthrax. Instead, the charge grew out of findings by U.N. weapons inspectors in the mid-1990s that Iraq had failed to account for anthrax growth media.

A senior congressional Democrat urged President Bush to personally address questions about the Iraq evidence.

''The credibility of the United States is now in question,'' Rep. Henry Waxman of California said.

Powell's 90-minute presentation Feb. 5 to the U.N. Security Council was a watershed moment in the run-up to war in Iraq. With CIA Director George Tenet seated behind him in a silent endorsement, Powell laid out evidence he said proved Iraq had banned weapons.

''This wasn't material I was making up. It came from the intelligence community,'' Powell said Monday as he flew to Egypt for a Middle East summit. But Powell, in the news conference and in an interview with ABC News, was careful to say Iraq ''had'' weapons of mass destruction in the past.

At the CIA, officials rejected suggestions that intelligence had been manipulated. Tenet issued a statement Friday defending the evidence on Iraqi weapons.

Retired Army colonel George Robertson, an authority on biological weapons who served as a U.N. inspector in Iraq, defended the work of the CIA and the Defense Intelligence Agency. But he said U.S. intelligence had been under pressure for failing to warn of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks and did not want to underestimate another threat. Nor did military intelligence analysts want to underplay the threat, only to see U.S. troops in Iraq come under chemical or biological attack.

A majority of Americans seem indifferent to the growing clamor. A USA TODAY/CNN/Gallup Poll shows that 56% of respondents say

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U.S. soldier shot and killed in Iraq

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) - A U.S. soldier was shot and killed while on patrol in central Iraq early Tuesday, the military said.

The shooting took place near the town of Balad, about 55 miles north of the capital, said Maj. William Thurmond, a spokesman for the U.S. Army's V Corps.

Thurmond said he had no further details and the soldier's name was being withheld pending notification of the family.

A statement released later by the U.S. military said the soldier was attached to the 4th Infantry Division, which controls Balad.

The attack included small arms and rocket-propelled grenades, the statement said.

There has been a series of hit-and-run attacks on U.S. troops across the central region of the country since the end of ground combat almost two months ago. At least six soldiers have been killed and more than two dozen wounded.

Pentagon launches national salute to U.S. troops waging war on terror

by Denise Brown, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, June 3, 2003 – The Pentagon's latest military operation doesn't involve tanks, ships or aircraft. Operation Tribute to Freedom involves the American public.

Defense officials want people to be able to thank the men and women in uniform for waging war on terror.

On Memorial Day, traditionally a day to pay tribute to the nation's fallen service men and women, Defense Department officials launched Operation Tribute to Freedom. The initiative is "a way to thank the men and women in uniform who have done such an amazing job," said Chris Willcox, a deputy assistant secretary of defense for public affairs.

"There's an enormous number of spontaneous events going on around the country to thank troops," Willcox added. "Everything from Kiwanis events, Chamber of Commerce events, parades in small towns to declarations by cities and towns thanking the men and women in uniform."

Although most of these events have been focused on troops returning from Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Tribute to Freedom also salutes troops serving in other parts of the world. Troops serving in Afghanistan, the Philippines, the Horn of Africa and Georgia are all engaged in Operation Enduring Freedom's war against terrorism, Willcox said, "a war that continues, a war in which we are determined that we will prevail."

Willcox explained the Defense Department initiative encompasses three goals: first and foremost, to thank the troops. The second goal is to create a stronger bond between the military and citizens, and third, to underscore the fact that the global war on terrorism continues.

"It's not over yet," he stressed. "It's not even over in Iraq. It's still a dangerous place. We still have a lot of work to do in helping that country rebuild itself."

U.S. forces remain engaged in "ensuring stabilization activities in Afghanistan are successful and rooting out the terrorist groups and terrorist organizations that still operate globally and still represent a tremendous threat," he added.

As part of Operation Tribute to Freedom, defense officials are lining up military officers and enlisted troops, as well as civilian leaders, for speaking engagements in interested communities and organizations.

"We've got two major speakers programs," Willcox said. "In the coming months, veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom will be available to go communities and talk about their experiences. The second program, which we're calling our Hometown Heroes program, will send civilian and military leaders of all ranks back to their hometowns to talk to interested groups and organizations about ongoing efforts in the war against terrorism."

Holidays and special commemorations, such as the upcoming Flag Day on Saturday, June 14, will feature events to express support and appreciation for the troops.

For example, Major League Baseball will feature notable Flag Day troop tributes. Flagpoles at stadiums hosting more than a dozen games scheduled that day will sport a U.S. flag that has been flown over the Pentagon. Fans can focus on this special flag during the singing of the national anthem.

Also, Air Force Gen. Richard B. Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, will throw out the ceremonial first pitch at the New York Yankees-St. Louis Cardinals game that day.

For more information about Operation Tribute to Freedom and upcoming events, go to DefendAmerica.mil, the Defense Department's Web site for news on the war on terrorism. The site features a way for the public to send welcome home messages to the troops and read a daily sampling submitted from across the country.

Site visitors can also search the online "Thank You Note" to pick out the names of people they know out of the nearly 11 million signers of the note since it was launched in May 2002.

With the Red Sea as a backdrop, President Bush, left, and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, deliver remarks during a summit Tuesday June 3, 2003 in Sharm El-Sheik, Egypt. Joining them on stage are from left: King Abdullah II of Jordan, Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Abdullah, King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain, Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas. (AP Photo/Pablo Martinez Monsivais)

Iranians detain soldiers, chopper crash in Afghanistan

by Jim Garamone, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, June 3, 2003 – Iranian forces released four U.S. soldiers and three civilians unharmed yesterday, U.S. Central Command officials said today.

The seven were in small boats going up the Shatt al Arab waterway when the Iranians detained them. Two other boat drivers remain in Iranian hands, command officials said.

The soldiers were from the 1092nd Engineer Company, and one civilian is a U.S. citizen and contractor who works for Kellogg, Brown and Root. The nationalities of the other two civilian boat captains and the two still-detained boat drivers are unclear.

The Shatt al Arab is a narrow waterway. Iran controls the east bank, and Iraq the west. The Shatt al Arab is Iraq's only connection to the Persian Gulf. "The boats may have strayed in Iranian waters," said Central Command spokesman Marine Maj. Brad Lowell.

The men and their boats were released and U.S. Navy craft located them in the Shatt al Arab. Central Command officials would not comment on why the Iranians detained the boats. It was the first incident of its kind.

The men were reported missing on Sunday.

Action continues in Afghanistan. Two pilots were unhurt after their AH-64 Apache helicopter crashed near Orgun-E. The chopper was supporting combat operations, but it does not appear to have crashed due to enemy action, said Combined Joint Task Force 180 officials at Bagram Air Base.

"Although the primary focus here is on civil affairs and humanitarian activities, we conduct combat operations every day," said Army Col. Rod Davis, task force 180 spokesman. "We continue to pursue al Qaeda and Taliban elements – capturing, killing and denying them sanctuary."

There are just over 6,000 American service members in Afghanistan. The major combat element is a brigade from the 10th Mountain Division from Fort Drum, N.Y. They are replacing soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division from Fort Bragg, N.C.

Hunt for al Qaeda, Taliban goes on in Afghanistan

SHAHI KOT, Afghanistan (Reuters) - U.S. forces mounted a major operation in Afghanistan this week to hunt for suspected al Qaeda and Taliban militants crossing from Pakistan, but arrested just four men on a farm.

The two-day operation "Dragon Fury," involving some 500 troops, was the latest in a series of actions concentrating on the east and southeast of the country.

"The reason why we came here was because we have some reports of al Qaeda and some other anti-coalition members and militants that have been operating through this area," Lieutenant Michael Swift told reporters in the Shahi Kot district 16 miles south of the town of Gardez.

"We know that they cross over from Pakistan, move through Khost, through this area and then on to the rest of Afghanistan, so we want to disrupt and stop this activity," he added.

There was no fighting during the sweep of rugged mountains and valleys where Taliban and al Qaeda guerrillas have continued to evade U.S. forces since the fall of the Taliban in late 2001.

Most such operations near the Afghan-Pakistan border have resulted only in a few low-level arrests and the seizure of caches of old weapons. They have however fueled anti-American sentiment as troops often use force to search homes.

U.S. soldiers took four men into custody during "Dragon Fury." Several others escaped as Apache helicopters closed in on their farm compound. The detainees were hooded and handcuffed before being taken away for questioning by military police.

"If they were not actually Taliban or al Qaeda members, they would appear to have been facilitators," Swift said.

Two 107mm rockets were fired at U.S. positions in the area after dark, but landed far off and caused no damage.

Afghan officials are convinced that an increase in attacks on troops and aid workers in Afghanistan this year was masterminded in Pakistan, and have urged Islamabad to do more to catch Taliban and al Qaeda members hiding on its territory.

Pakistan says the accusations are exaggerated.

The U.S. military leads a coalition of around 11,500 troops in Afghanistan seeking remnants of the Taliban and the al Qaeda network of Osama bin Laden, accused by Washington of masterminding the September 11, 2001 attacks.

A Member of the U.S. 82nd Airborne takes an Afghan prisoner on suspicion of being Taliban and/or al Qaeda, June 2, 2003 during Operation Dragon Fury in eastern Afghanistan. The two-day operation involving some 500 troops, was the latest in a series of actions concentrating on the east and southeast of the country. Reuters photo.

Cheney tells West Point cadets "Bush doctrine" is serious

by Sgt. 1st Class Doug Sample, American Force Press Service

WASHINGTON, June 2, 2003 — "If there is anyone in the world today who doubts the seriousness of the Bush Doctrine, I would urge that person to consider the fate of the Taliban in Afghanistan, and of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq," Vice President Richard Cheney told an applauding 2003 West Point graduating class May 31.

The doctrine asserts that states supporting terrorists, or providing sanctuary for terrorists, will be deemed just as guilty of crimes as the terrorists themselves, Cheney noted in his commencement address at the U.S. Military Academy.

"Before 9-11, all too many nations tended to draw a distinction between the terrorist groups and the states that provided these groups with support. They were unwilling to hold these terror-sponsoring states accountable for their actions."

After 9-11, the president "decided that the distinction between the terrorists and their sponsors should no longer stand," he said.

Cheney added perspective to the president's actions by saying that in 20 months since the Sept. 11 attacks, "the United States has freed two nations from oppression and terror."

"We destroyed the al Qaeda's grip on Afghanistan, removed the repressive Taliban regime from power, and nearly half of al Qaeda's leadership has been captured or killed. In Iraq, a regime that supported terrorists, brutalized its own people and threatened its neighbors and the peace of the world is no more," Cheney said.

But the vice president cautioned cadets that although the battle of Iraq was a major victory in the war on terrorism, the war itself is far from over.

"We cannot allow ourselves to grow complacent," he said. "We cannot forget that the terrorists remain determined to kill as many Americans as possible, both abroad and here at home, and they are still seeking weapons of mass destruction to use against us.

"With such an enemy, no peace treaty is possible; no policy of containment or deterrence will prove effective. The only way to deal with this threat is to destroy it, completely and utterly."

If that must be done militarily, Cheney told the graduating cadets that they would help lead military transformation to "confront the threats of a new era. "To defend our country from terrorists and terror states, the American armed forces will continue to gain in speed, agility, precision, and every advantage we need to dominate the field of battle," he said.

"The military," he said, "displayed vast new capabilities (in Iraq) that were not yet operational 12 years ago when I was Secretary of Defense. With less than half the ground forces used in Desert Storm, and two-thirds of the air power, our military achieved a far more difficult objective in less time and with fewer casualties."

Cheney told the class that historians and military planners will study the battles in Iraq for years to come, but he said the "basic reasons" for U.S. success is already known: "The most obvious factor was speed," he noted.

"Our soldiers and Marines raced to Baghdad across 350 miles of hostile terrain in one of the fastest advances in history," he said.

"The rapid advance prevented the enemy from mounting a coherent defense, from turning unconventional weapons against our forces, from harming its neighbors with Scud missiles, and from destroying the bridges, dams, and oil fields it had wired with explosives," he added.

Cheney said another factor in victory was the use of precision technology, noting that Tomahawk missiles fired from U.S. ships "were more accurate" than those used in Desert Storm. Those missiles could be re-targeted in a matter of hours instead of days, he said.

"Artillery groups could rely on satellite guidance and computerized targeting. A dozen years ago, only 20 percent of our air-to-ground aircraft could hit targets with precision munitions," he said.

"In this battle, all of our air-to-ground aircraft had precision-guided capabilities. Thanks to all of these advances, we were able to destroy the command centers of the Iraqi regime, while minimizing civilian casualties and leaving Iraq's economic infrastructure largely intact."

Cheney took time to thank U.S. and coalition forces for maintaining the initiative at every stage of the Iraq campaign by controlling the war's pace to determine its outcome.

"The most important ingredient for success was the men and women who served, beginning with our Secretary of Defense, Don Rumsfeld, our outstanding theater commander, Gen. Tommy Franks, and the men and women of our armed forces," he said. He named special operations forces; the First Marine Expeditionary Force; the Army's 3rd Infantry and 101st and 82nd Airborne divisions; and the air and naval units that supported them.

"With our victory in Iraq, we have removed a threat to our country and to our friends in the region. And all nations, friend and foe alike, can be certain that the United States military is second to none, and our commander –in chief is indeed a man of his word."

"The fundamental interest of this nation requires that we confront and defeat aggressive threats," Cheney said. "Yet, as the president has said, 'We find our greatest security in the advance of human freedom. We stand for the values that defeat violence, and the hope that overcomes hatred.'"

Cheney concluded his speech by reminding the graduates of their commitment to serve. "Wherever you are posted, wherever your

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U.S. force review won't degrade deterrence in South Korea

by Gerry J. Gilmore, American Forces Press Service

TOKYO, June 2, 2003 – Any realignment of American military forces in South Korea would enhance, rather than degrade, that country's ability to deter potential threats such as those posed by North Korea, U.S. Deputy Defense Secretary Paul D. Wolfowitz said June 2 in Seoul.

Wolfowitz had given a keynote luncheon speech to a group of South Korean business leaders before flying to Tokyo.

Japan is the last leg of the deputy defense secretary's trip to address East Asian security matters after stops in Singapore and South Korea.

Because of the changed nature of today's threats and the dramatic new capabilities of U.S. forces as exhibited in Afghanistan and Iraq, Wolfowitz pointed out it's time to evaluate how U.S. forces are postured around the world and the United States and how to achieve more effectiveness while maintaining deterrence capability.

Consequently, Wolfowitz said to business leaders at the luncheon, the alignment of U.S. forces in South Korea likely needs to be adjusted.

Yet, the deputy defense secretary emphasized, "We're aware that everything we do should enhance, not diminish, the credibility of our deterrent."

Wolfowitz related several "drivers" for the U.S. military posture review:

- New capability for long-range, high-precision targeting systems that greatly increases warfighting prowess.
- Improved military organization achieved through improved intelligence collecting and information management systems.
- The integration of joint operations for improved military effectiveness.
- Appreciation of the military benefits of speed during operations – the ability to move great distances quickly and to use temporary basing, as required.

U.S. Deputy Defense Secretary Paul D. Wolfowitz, left, and Soo-Young Lee, the vice chairman of the Korean Chamber of Commerce and Industry, a group of South Korean business leaders, converse in a downtown Seoul hotel June 2 before the deputy defense secretary's keynote speech at the KCCI-hosted luncheon. Photo by Gerry J. Gilmore

So far, U.S. and South Korean have met twice in discussing possible realignment of American troops stationed in Korea, Wolfowitz explained, noting officials will meet as often as necessary to complete the process.

Wolfowitz said he hopes U.S. and South Korean officials can reach mutual concurrence on necessary changes no later than by the end of the year, so as to begin implementing agreed changes next year.

While change "is often difficult," the deputy defense secretary noted, he pointed out that change "is also positive."

"We are determined that the changes we make will enhance the quality of our alliance with the Republic of Korea, will strengthen deterrence on the Korean Peninsula and will reinforce stability in northeast Asia, more generally," Wolfowitz asserted.

The U.S.-South Korean alliance indeed "is a remarkable and unqualified success," Wolfowitz declared. That partnership "has stood its ground and defended this nation for half a century," he continued, "as Korea emerged from a massively destructive war and went on to prosper, both economically and politically."

South Korea today has the world's twelfth largest economy, Wolfowitz pointed out, "with a thriving democracy that's the envy of the world."

And, Wolfowitz said he was "extremely impressed" with the quality and confidence of South Korea's armed forces.

Korean troops, he added, have served elsewhere in the world too "to ensure peace, when and where needed." Wolfowitz cited Korean

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Cheney tells West Point cadets "Bush doctrine" is serious continued

career leads you, I trust you will always remember how others see the uniform of the United States," the vice president said. "Your service might take you to the most stable place in the quietest of times, but that uniform is a reminder of what assures stability and keeps the peace. At other times, your service may take you to dangerous places, and there the sight of an American in uniform will bring fear to the violent and hope to the oppressed.

"This nation is grateful that four years ago, every man and woman graduating today made a life-changing decision. You left the comforts and familiar surroundings of civilian life, and devoted yourselves to one of the noblest professions in a free country — the profession of arms.

"You made that commitment, and you've kept it," he declared.

Stryker Brigade completes certification exercise

FORT POLK, La. (Army News Service, June 2, 2003) — The Army's first Stryker Brigade Combat Team completed its certification exercise "Arrowhead Lightning II" last week at the Joint Readiness Training Center.

A Stryker Command Vehicle from the SBCT's 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment moves out during exercise Arrowhead Lightning II at Fort Polk, La. (photo by Pfc. Andrew Hillegass, 107th MPAD) .

The 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division from Fort Lewis, Wash., conducted operations simultaneously in four separate training areas on or near Fort Polk. It was the first time a brigade training at JRTC has controlled such a large area, officials said. As Stryker Brigade units fought the enemy in one region, they were engaged in civil-military operations elsewhere.

Exercise Arrowhead Lightning II began May 17 and since then 3,600 Stryker Brigade soldiers engaged in a constant series of attacks or defenses against an unconventional enemy at Fort Polk. The battlefield had additional threats such as terrorists, car bombs, and sniper attacks - part of the contemporary operating environment.

"The Stryker unit performed superbly," said Gen. Larry R. Ellis, commander of U.S. Army Forces Command. "The next step in the process is to finish analyzing the results of the exercise and provide our report through the secretary of Defense to Congress."

Arrowhead Lightning demonstrated the Stryker Brigade Combat Team's ability to deploy rapidly over great distances by air and sea, execute early-entry operations, and conduct combat missions across a range of military operations, potential threats, and terrain, officials said.

The first phase of the exercise actually began March 23 when the Stryker Brigade deployed in its entirety to the field for the first time. Then it conducted seven days of battalion-level training and live-fire exercises.

"Arrowhead Lightning I" was then conducted April 1-11 at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, Calif. It involved both offensive and defensive operations against a mobile heavy enemy in desert terrain.

No other brigade has completed back-to-back maneuvers at two combat training centers, Army officials said. The Stryker Brigade conducted a cross-country deployment exercise as it moved its equipment from Fort Irwin to Fort Polk.

The SBCT vehicles were moved by rail, C-17s, C-130s, Fast Sealift Ship and Logistics Support Vessel.

About 830 SBCT vehicles convoyed to San Diego and loaded onto a U.S. Navy Fast Sealift Ship. The FSS sailed through the Panama Canal to the Port of Lake Chjarles, La., where the vehicles were offloaded May 9-10 in 36 hours.

More than 150 vehicles moved by rail from NTC to Beaumont, Texas, and Fort Sill, Okla. The LSV sailed some of the vehicles from Beaumont to Lake Charles. At the same time, five C-17s flew 55 Strykers and 75 other vehicles from Fort Sill to Alexandria, La., north of Fort Polk. The C-17s completed 45 round-trip flights in 42 hours.

In early-entry operations, C-17s flew a Stryker company from Chennault to Geronimo field unimproved landing strip at JRTC. Five C-17s flew 30 Strykers in 15 sorties over a six-hour period. On average, each plane was unloaded in 4.5 minutes.

More than 1,000 SBCT vehicles convoyed 61 miles from Lake Charles to Fort Polk. The brigade safely completed 52 20-vehicle convoys in less than two days.

In intratheater airlift operations, C-130s flew 21 Strykers, equipment and full crews, plus other vehicles on 24 sorties in 9 hours from Geronimo field landing strip to Esler National Guard Airfield.

The certification exercise and the operational evaluation were designed to determine the SBCT's capability to operate on different terrain against a wide range of threats in the contemporary operating environment, officials said. The JRTC Opposing Force, which is highly trained in light force, urban and complex terrain operations, challenged the SBCT's capabilities.

Now the unit will continue to hone its warfighting skills, officials said, by applying lessons learned at NTC and JRTC in follow-on training at its home station, Fort Lewis, as the SBCT enhances some systems and equipment.

"The soldiers and leaders have done a magnificent job in forming and building this brigade into a highly effective combat formation," said Ellis. Once certified, the Stryker Brigade Combat Team will provide the combatant commanders a decisive force capable of rapidly deploying anywhere with great lethality, survivability and maneuverability, he said.

(Editor's note: Information provided by FORSCOM and I Corps releases.)

Wolfowitz praises DMZ soldiers, Marines 'on the front Lines of freedom'

by Gerry J. Gilmore, American Forces Press Service

SEOUL, South Korea, June 1, 2003 – U.S. soldiers and Marines deployed along the demilitarized zone separating North and South Korea "are on the front lines of freedom," U.S. Deputy Defense Secretary Paul D. Wolfowitz said June 1 during a visit to Camp Greaves – located a mile from the DMZ.

"The country is grateful for your service," Wolfowitz told the 500 Army soldiers and Marines gathered inside the camp's gymnasium. He noted that both President Bush and Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld "have asked me to send a message to you: that we appreciate what you're doing — it is fantastic."

Wolfowitz and his traveling party flew about 35 miles north of Seoul on Army Black Hawk helicopters to visit with Camp Greaves' service members. After meeting with 2nd Infantry Division commander Army Maj. Gen. John Wood, who has jurisdiction over the camp, Wolfowitz got together with the troops.

The deputy defense secretary said he was in South Korea "to update my own knowledge about the situation in this country and particularly about the defense issues we have with (South) Korea."

Wolfowitz added he was slated to discuss mutual defense issues with South Korean President Roh Moo Hyun and other senior officials the next day in the capital city of Seoul.

Recalling the recent victory over Saddam Hussein's forces in Iraq, Wolfowitz told the troops: "We have the best men and women anywhere in the world serving in our armed forces."

American troops, he continued, "are brave, they're professional, they fight joint, and they're probably the most humane warriors any country has ever fielded."

When U.S. and coalition troops were defeating Hussein's forces in Iraq, Wolfowitz noted, other American troops stationed along the DMZ "were preventing a war here in Korea."

It requires skill, dedication and professionalism to serve along the DMZ, he asserted.

Army Pfc. Corey Brown, 21, an artillery fire support specialist from Tucson, Ariz., said he volunteered to serve near the DMZ. He explained that his cousin, an Army staff sergeant, told him the DMZ "was the best place to come to learn your job."

Brown, assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery Regiment, noted that his cousin was right.

Army 2nd Lt. Mike Murphy, 22, a fire support officer in Brown's outfit, declared that duty along the DMZ has a special meaning.

"That's the reason most of us joined the military … to help protect the freedoms that we have," Murphy, a Springfield, Mo., native, observed, "and to keep on with the tradition of helping South Koreans stay free." Duty along the DMZ is a joint endeavor, with U.S. Marines serving alongside U.S. soldiers. And Marine Corps Cpl. Lucious Robinson, 22, said he and his 3rd Battalion, 8th Marines, 4th Marine Regiment, buddies are training with Republic of Korea marines.

Robinson, who hails from Fort Lauderdale, Fla., said he's learning about Korean culture during his DMZ tour of duty. He complimented his ROK marine counterparts: "They are pretty tough guys."

Many soldiers were pulling 12-month, unaccompanied tours at Camp Greaves. Wolfowitz acknowledged that performing such duty "means long, long months away from your families … and that is a huge sacrifice."

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armed forces' peacekeeping contributions in East Timor and Afghanistan.

Also, Wolfowitz pointed out, "As we sit here this afternoon, Korean troops have just arrived in Iraq and are working to help build a new and free Iraq."

This action "further enhances Korea's international prestige and standing," he pointed out, noting South Koreans "should be justly proud that your armed forces have risen to the challenge."

Wolfowitz remarked to the business leaders that he'd just returned from "an excellent meeting" with South Korean President Roh Moo Hyun, whom the U.S. deputy defense secretary characterized as "an impressive man."

The deputy defense secretary said he told Roh about his June 1 visit with U.S. and South Korean troops at Camp Greaves, about one mile from the demilitarized zone.

Wolfowitz noted to Roh that these "strong, smart, dedicated and disciplined" U.S. troops came to Korea "to ensure the peace."

Soo-Young Lee, vice chairman of the Korean Chamber of Commerce and Industry that hosted the luncheon, thanked Wolfowitz for coming to South Korea to offer American support in the wake of recent reports that North Korea was developing nuclear weapons in violation of previous agreements.

The United States, Lee observed, is South Korea's largest trading partner and investor, and he noted his thanks for the efforts of U.S. Forces, Korea, in continuing to provide military deterrence against potential North Korean aggression.

FALLUJAH — *Soldiers of 346th Psychological Operations Battalion, Cinncinatti, Ohio, conduct a foot patrol in a local marketplace in downtown Fallujah, Iraq. U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Albert Eaddy*

www.goordnance.apg.army.mil

Wolfowitz praises DMZ soldiers, Marines 'on the front Lines of freedom' continued

Yet, U.S. and South Korean troops serving on the DMZ, Wolfowitz asserted, have made and still make "a huge difference."

"With the protection that you and your comrades have provided over the years (and) with the dedication and commitment of your South Korean colleagues, we've enabled our allies to build one of the strongest democracies in the world," the deputy defense secretary pointed out.

However, North Korea's behavior over the past year, in both its public declarations and actions on its illicit nuclear weapons programs, "threatens regional and global stability," Wolfowitz said May 31 at a Singapore defense conference.

Wolfowitz pointed out to Singapore conference attendees that in October 2002 North Korea had declared it had violated and would continue to violate its promise not to press on with its uranium-enrichment programs.

And earlier this year, he continued, the North Koreans announced that they were reactivating their plutonium production program.

Also, just two weeks ago, the North Koreans characterized the 1992 North-South Korean denuclearization agreement they had signed as "a worthless piece of white paper," the deputy defense secretary noted.

It's evident that North Korea is "a state that has little regard for the commitments it undertakes," Wolfowitz said at the conference, "or for the delicate nature of the northeast Asia security environment."

Regarding North Korea's desire to deal exclusively with America in discussing its nuclear program, Wolfowitz declared in Singapore: "This is not and cannot be a bilateral issue, as Pyongyang would like it – limited to a two-way dialogue between North Korea and the United States."

North Korea's nuclear program "affects the whole region," the deputy defense secretary observed at the conference, noting the issue therefore "requires a multilateral approach."

North Korea is "heading down a blind alley" in its pursuit of nuclear and other weapons, Wolfowitz asserted at Camp Greaves, a point he had made also in Singapore. The United States, Japan, South Korea, China and Russia, he has often reminded audiences, all strongly oppose nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula.

Meanwhile, Wolfowitz told Camp Greaves' troops that the United States and South Korea rely on them to keep the peace by deterring possible North Korean aggression.

"I thank you for your service. I thank you for your dedication," Wolfowitz told the troops.

"Keep it up. Both our countries depend on you and I'm glad to be here this afternoon to say that," he concluded.

The "Interim Vehicle-Mounted Mine Detector" is the new state-of-the-art mine-detection system designed in South Africa for clearing roads. C Company, 27th Engineer Battalion, deployed to Afghanistan from Fort Bragg, N.C., is one of the first Army units to ever test the equipment. U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Christina Carde

Engineers in Afghanistan test new mine detector

by U.S. Army Pfc. Christina Carde, 11th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — After being tested in South Africa and sitting in the Army's warehouse for more than four years, the new "Interim Vehicle-Mounted Mine Detector" is being tested here by Company C, 27th Engineer Battalion, deployed from Fort Bragg, N.C., the engineers chosen to be the first in the U.S. Army to use the system.

Afghanistan is rated one of the top five countries in the world for having the largest number of landmines. The U.S. military decided this would be the perfect place to test the new IVMMD system to see what it can do.

"The systems arrived here in boxes as one complete kit ready for assembly," said Sgt. Sean McDonald, combat engineer team leader, 1st Platoon, C Co. "It consists of four different modules. A Meerkat that is the main mine-detection system, a Husky which is the center and personnel vehicle, a trailer and a red pack or replacement module that contains parts should something break or get blown off."

Because three out of four of these modules connect together to form the complete system, extensive training has gone into the operation of the IVMMD.

"We have been training every day for about a month on how to correctly assemble, drive and do (preventive maintenance checks and services) on the system," said McDonald. "Since we are one of the first to ever test the system, it is important that we are proficient in operating it so we are completely prepared for anything when it comes time for a real mission."

Along with the privilege of being the first Americans to use the system comes the responsibility of discovering all of the problems and glitches it may have.

"The training manual that arrived with the systems from the engineer school house in Fort Leonard Wood (Mo.) was rather vague," said McDonald. "Many of the components that go into working the system we had to figure out for ourselves such as the assembly, mechanics and being able to correct malfunctions on the spot."

"We have also been testing different theories to decide on the most effective method of dispatching and operating the systems on real mine-clearing missions," McDonald added. "The IVMMD systems' distance from each other, the speed to be maintained and the area to be cleared are all important factors that must be considered and thoroughly tested before mine clearing can begin."

After a month of testing the IVMMD, the engineers are starting to realize what the key factors are in properly operating the system.

"Having a good sense of direction and knowing the route you're on is very important when driving the complete system," said McDonald. "Because the system is made up of several modules connected together, turning it around in the event that you take a wrong turn is not an option. The trailer must first be disconnected, the Husky turned around on its own, and then the trailer must be reconnected. This process can take up to an hour – time you don't have in a real situation."

Since the system originated in South Africa, a team of contractors and mechanics from that area were deployed here with the system to assist the engineers in their training and in developing a good Standard Operating Procedure.

"This may be the first time the U.S. is testing the system, but the South Africans have been using it in mine detection for the past 15 years," said Shon Craig, a U.S. contractor with Critical Solutions International, Washington, D.C. "The system has been slightly modified to fit the needs of the U.S. military, but the operation and mechanics of the system are the same."

According to Craig, the system is fairly simple to operate, but the

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A U.S. Army Blackhawk helicopter hovers above Baghdad during one of its patrols on Sunday June 1, 2003 in Iraq. Apache and Blackhawk helicopters are now tasked to provide security in the sprawling capital. (Photo/Slobodan Lekic)

Clash between allies kills three Afghans

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan (AP) - Forces of two regional Afghan army commanders, both loyal to President Hamid Karzai, clashed in southern Afghanistan, leaving three soldiers dead and wounding two others, a senior official said Tuesday.

The fighting between the soldiers of commanders Abdul Raziq and Gud Fahida erupted Monday near a U.S. base at Spinboldak, about 75 miles southwest of the southern city of Kandahar, district chief Fazaluddin Agha told The Associated Press.

One of the Afghan soldier's killed, Sakhi Dad, was also a part-time translator for the U.S. army, Agha said.

Agha said the fighting had stopped. He had no details on what caused the clash.

Engineers in Afghanistan test new mine detector contined

engineers may encounter some problems due to their area of operation.

"The terrain out here is pretty rough, which may make it difficult for the engineers to stay in their lane," said Craig. "In other areas where this system has been used, roads have already been determined. This may not be the case here so the engineers may have to use better judgment when conducting mine clearing."

Craig and his team only have a few days left to train the engineers before they leave for their next mission.

"We are trying to give the engineers as much insight into our experience as we can before we leave," said Craig. "Once we depart from here we will be going to Kuwait to train soldiers over there on the same system."

Presently, there are three complete $1 million IVMMD systems in Bagram that the engineers are testing. Once training is complete, the engineers will use the systems to clear roads throughout Afghanistan.

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com

Tony Schumacher's Army Top Fuel dragster won the 6th annual Lucas Oil Route 66 Nationals at Route 66 Raceway in Joliet, Ill., on Sunday. *Auto Imagery, Inc / AP photo*

French special forces to help U.S. in Afghanistan

EVIAN, France (AP) - In a sign of reconciliation, French President Jacques Chirac told President Bush on Monday that he will send French special forces to operate alongside U.S. troops in Afghanistan.

"This decision taken by France corresponds both to a wish from the United States and a wish from our country to take part in the stabilization of Afghanistan, so it's a shared interest," said Chirac spokeswoman Catherine Colonna.

She would not say how many special forces would be sent.

The new troops will be separate from several hundred French soldiers already in Afghanistan. Those troops are part of an international force operating in the war-torn country or are working as advisers training Afghan soldiers.

The decision comes as Chirac and Bush are working to put aside their feud over the war in Iraq. They met Monday on the sidelines of a summit of the powerful Group of Eight nations in Evian, France.

Chirac riled the U.S. leader and many Americans by strongly opposing the military campaign that ousted Saddam Hussein.

Newly commissioned second lieutenants toss their hats Saturday at the United States Military Academy at West Point. *Mary Altaffer / AP photo*

A jury on Tuesday, June 3, 2003, reached a verdict in the trial of four Arab immigrants accused of conspiring to support Islamic extremists plotting attacks in the United States and the Middle East. The verdict was expected to be read shortly. Clockwise from top left, Ahmed Hannan, Farouk Ali-Haimoud, Karim Koubriti and Abdel-Ilah Elmardoudi are shown in these undated police photos. The case, which began with a raid on a Detroit apartment just six days after the Sept. 11 attacks, was seen asa test of the government's ability to prosecute terrorist "sleeper" cells. (AP Photo/U.S. Marshals,)

OPERATION TRIBUTE TO FREEDOM
www.defenselink.mil/specials/tribute/

Web site links public to war experiences

by Michael Norris, Pentagram assistant editor

As part of the Veterans History Project, the Library of Congress added a link to its Web site this Memorial Day weekend to provide access to stories of veterans who participated in the nation's wars.

The site allows the public to read letters from the home front, view personal photos or listen to audio clips of veterans and civilians describing their experience during World Wars I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War and the Persian Gulf War. The profiles often include audio clips where subjects reflect on their war experiences. Sometimes video streams are provided.

"The Veterans History Project gives all veterans the opportunity to speak openly and freely about their wartime experiences," said Librarian of Congress James H. Billington in a press release announcing the new link.

"We think it a fitting tribute on this Memorial Day, that Americans across the nation can go to the Library's Web site and experience firsthand such an important piece of our national memory. Every veteran has his or her own war, and each is custodian of a unique story and memories."

For the link's kick-off, 21 oral histories are presented under the subject headings Courage, Patriotism and Community.

The interviews run anywhere from 45 minutes to an hour and 20 minutes, said Anneliesa Clump, media coordinator for the Veterans History Project

On the site is the first-person account of Violet Hill Gordon, a Woman's Army Corps veteran who credits the service for transforming her from a shy girl into a military leader.

Then there are the remembrances of John Walter Earl, a Special Services officer with the Army's 14th Infantry, 71st Division, who describes in correspondence with family members his efforts to bring entertainment to soldiers. Another clip and supporting documentary material chronicles the experiences of Max Cleland, who lost two legs and an arm in Vietnam, but went on to become a U.S. Senator from Georgia.

These are just three of approximately 7,000 personal narratives the library has already collected for the project and will gradually post on its Web site, according to Project Director Ellen McCulloch-Lovell.

She said the project is ongoing and continues to collect veterans' histories. "We're still looking for people to volunteer and collect

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South Korean Navy Capt. Yoon Won-shick conducts a news conference about Sunday's incident over North Korean fishing vessels that crossed into southern waters, at the Defense Ministry in Seoul, Sunday, June 1, 2003. South Korea's navy fired warning shots Sunday after eight North Korean fishing boats entered the South's territory along the western sea border, South Korea's Defense Ministry said. There were no immediate reports of damage or injuries. (AP Photo/Lee Jin-man).

Web site links public to war experiences continued

stories and memoirs," she added, explaining how those who are interested can access volunteer opportunities on the Web site.

The project relies a great deal on the labor of volunteers. The project has partnered with hundreds of national and local organizations — veterans groups, museums, libraries, folklore societies and advocacy organizations — to gather stories for the project and help in other ways. The National Court Reporters Association, for instance, has voluntarily had students transcribe video and tape-recorded interviews so that the texts of interviews can be available on the Web site. The American Association of Retired Persons has been one of the project's primary sponsors.

McCulloch-Lovell said there is still much to do. In addition to compiling the stories of the dwindling World War II generation, she said the Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that there are still 500 to 600 World War I veterans out there who could be interviewed.

Peter Bartis, a senior program officer with the Veterans History Project, said the library has catalogued between 25-27,000 objects for the project. Each day new things arrive in the mail, he said, and archivists "are blown away by what they see" in the "raw materials" coming in.

"This is bringing people of all types together," he said. "It's intergenerational. It's the best thing I've ever done. It recharges the spirit."

The Veterans History Project, a part of the library's American Folklife Center, was launched with congressional authorization in October 2000.

The Web project is part of a larger effort by the library to make its collections accessible online to the public so more people can take advantage of the library's resources. Clump said the Web site, which usually gets approximately 3,000 hits a day, spiked to 15,000 on Sunday and Monday after the link's launch.

For more information, visit www.loc.gov/warstories or www.loc.gov/vets .

Undated file photos of the evolution of Steve Mann of the University of Toronto's wearable camera and computer gear. From left. 1980, mid 1980's, early 1990's mid 1990's and late 1990's. The Pentagon is promoting a diary to end all diaries — a multimedia, digital record of everywhere you go and everything you see, hear, read, say and touch. Mann's work is along lines similar to the Defense Department program, known as LifeLog, the project has been put out for contractor bids by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, or DARPA, the agency that helped build the Internet and which is now developing the next generation of anti-terrorism tools. (AP Photo/Wearcam)

An Israeli soldier guards as Palestinian workers wait at the Erez border crossing on their way from the Gaza Strip to work in Israel, early Tuesday June 3, 2003. (AP Photo/Eitan Hess-Ashkenazi)

Anti-aircraft weapons, RPGs and explosives were among a modest cache of weapons soldiers found on the roof of el-Salaam mosque in Baghdad, Iraq, on Monday. *Saurabh Das / AP photo*

U.S., Britain defend weapons claims: 'Our credibility is intact' continued

the war on Iraq would still be justified even if weapons of mass destruction were not found. The poll of 1,019 adults Friday through Sunday has an error margin of +/—3 percentage points.

Tuesday, June 3, 2003

United States Army Spc. Jennet Posey, right, of Chicago, has a "face to face" meeting with physicians assistant Capt. Paul Jacobson Wednesday May 28, 2003, as part of her post Iraq deployment health assessment at a family clinic on Fort Stewart, Ga. The meeting is part of a series of check ups the Army requires from soldiers returning from the war in Iraq. Posey recently redeployed from Iraq for a family emergency after being in the Middle East since September last year. (AP Photo/Stephen Morton)

A UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter of the 1st Armored Division's 2nd Battalion, 501st Aviation Regiment piloted by Chief Warrant Officer 2 Rick May and 1st Lt. Sarah Stitt flies over the Iraqi countryside on the outskirts of Baghdad. Photo by *Michael Abrams / Stars and Stripes.*