

THE IRAQ WAR

'The major combat operations are over' — Maj. Gen. Stanley McChrystal

War winding to a halt

LITTLE RESISTANCE MET IN SADDAM'S HOMETOWN

By James O'Toole
Post-Gazette Staff Writer

With the evaporation of the last organized resistance in Iraq yesterday, the Bush administration moved to exploit the geopolitical leverage conferred by a swift victory over the reign of Saddam Hussein.

"The regime is at its end, and its leaders are either dead, surrendered or on the run," said Torie Clarke, the Defense Department's press secretary, 25 days after coalition divisions entered Iraq.

She spoke hours after U.S. Marines, overcoming surprisingly light resistance, seized Tikrit, Saddam's ancestral home and the last major population center to fall to coalition forces.

"I would anticipate that the major combat engagements are over, because the major Iraqi units on the ground cease to show any coherence," said Maj. Gen. Stanley McChrystal, vice director for operations for the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

As plans to reconstruct Iraq moved forward, senior Bush administration officials offered a united front of warnings to Iraq's neighbor,

Syria, to cease support for terrorism and to ensure that it was not used as a haven for members of Saddam's Baathist regime.

White House Press Secretary Ari Fleischer, echoing recent statements from President Bush, Secretary of State Colin Powell, and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, said Syria "should think seriously about their program to develop and have chemical weapons. I think it's time for them to think through where they want their place to be in the world."

While stopping short of definitive declarations that the war was over, coalition commanders made clear that the conflict had entered a new phase with the last city seized, the

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Marco DiLauro/Getty Images

A U.S. Marine rests before entering Saddam Hussein's palace in Tikrit yesterday.



David Guttenfelder/Associated Press

A man is held at gunpoint by an American soldier in Baghdad yesterday. He was believed to be part of a group of non-Iraqi Arab fighters using a vehicle filled with weapons for an ambush.

General eager to reshape Iraq's political battlefield

By Jane Perlez
The New York Times

KUWAIT CITY — The retired U.S. general who will run postwar Iraq for the Bush administration flew to Iraq yesterday on a mission to remake the country's politics, a process he predicted would be messy and contentious.

But Lt. Gen. Jay G. Garner insisted that U.S.-style democracy could sprout on the shards of President Saddam Hussein's government. "I don't think they had a love-in" in 1776, when the Declaration of Independence was adopted, he said in an interview here before his depart-

ure. "Anytime you start the process it's fraught with dialogue, tensions, coercion — and should be."

The general will preside over a meeting of Iraqis and Iraqi exiles in Nasiriyah today, the first of many meetings that the Pentagon says are intended to form the basis of a representative government for Iraq.

The invitations to about 70 to 80 people, including prominent exiles like Ahmed Chalabi and Iraqis unknown to the outside world, were issued in the name of the war commander, Gen. Tommy R. Franks, to whom Garner reports.

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Chorus is raised against Syria

By Ann McFeatters
Post-Gazette National Bureau

WASHINGTON — The Bush administration yesterday stepped up pressure on Syria, again accusing it of harboring fleeing Iraqi leaders, of developing chemical weapons and of letting foreign fighters cross its border to attack U.S. troops in Iraq. Given numerous opportunities yesterday to state on the record that

the United States was not seeking a military confrontation with Syria, the administration would not do it.

White House spokesman Ari Fleischer was pelted with questions about Syria at his briefing yesterday but refused to go beyond the administration's message that Syria must change its ways.

"I think that what's next is Syria

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Outrageous outfit leads to an arrest

By Tom Gibb
Post-Gazette Staff Writer

If nothing else, Shaun Yawkey is guilty of high crimes against fashion.

Police say that when the 23-year-old man turned up at a State College bank early Friday night, he was toting a purse, wearing a wig and sporting a frilly turtle-neck blouse and jumper.

Not Ralph Lauren, maybe, but tolerable.

But then, there were those touches that just screamed "tacky" or, more like it, "What the

heck was this guy possibly thinking?" There was a yellow glove on one hand, a blue glove on the other and a scarf wrapped around his face. He had a backpack. And he was pushing a bicycle.

"It was a very feminine outfit," State College Police Lt. Diane Conrad said yesterday. "But he's not effeminate-looking."

It was more than umbrage over Yawkey's affront to fashion

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One person can fuel epidemic

SARS investigators looking into several disease 'superspreaders'

By Donald G. McNeil Jr. and Lawrence K. Altman
The New York Times

A child in China so infectious that he is nicknamed "the poison emperor." A Chinese doctor who infects 12 fellow guests in his Hong Kong hotel, who then fly to Singapore, Vietnam and Canada. An elderly Canadian

woman who infects three generations of her family. Watching as the mysterious illness called severe acute respiratory syndrome hopped around the world and exploded in new outbreaks, epidemiologists began to ask themselves an unsettling question: Is it carried by "superspreaders"?

The notion that some people are hyperinfective, spewing germs out like teakettles while others simmer quietly like stew pots, has been around for at least a century, ever since Typhoid Mary became notorious in 1907.

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Region gets new 'concept'

Image Gap panel makes another try, but please don't call it a slogan

By Dan Fitzpatrick
Post-Gazette Staff Writer

Whatever you do, don't call it a slogan.

Instead, think of the 12-word "core theme" and the 16-word "brand promise" released yesterday by a group known as the Image Gap Committee as both a conceptual picture of the Pittsburgh region and a way to sell that image to prospective visitors, companies and young workers.

That's what the 120-member committee tried to emphasize yesterday as it came to the end

"Good luck making sense out of it."

— Image Gap member
Bill Flanagan

of a seven-month, \$200,000 attempt to "brand" the Pittsburgh region, market it and change its outdated image around the country.

While less diffuse than the Image Gap Committee's much-maligned 45-word "brand essence" statement released last December, the recommendations made yesterday may be as difficult to digest and understand.

The committee's "core theme" that defines southwestern Pennsylvania is:

"Accomplishment through connected individuality — linking vital individuals, vital communities and vital resources."

The "brand promise" that the committee wants southwestern Pennsylvania to make and keep is:

"We will connect you to the people, resources and communities you need to accomplish your goals."

Image Gap member Bill Flanagan spoke for many when he told reporters later, "Good luck making sense out of it."

Admitting the recommendations are a bit difficult to understand, committee members said the "core theme" and "brand promise" are meant more for the ears of marketing professionals than for everyday people. The hope is that dozens of local organizations that already market the region to tourists and businesses will know how to use the "theme" and "promise" to form their own campaigns, while incorpo-

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