



A handout made available by the US military yesterday shows an air strike taking out what is believed to be an insurgent stronghold as members of the 3rd Battalion 1st Marines, 1st Marine Division move forward through the city streets of Fallujah.

Bush seeks to mend rift with allies

AFP, Washington

US President George W. Bush's post-election cabinet shake-up has left him with loyal friends in most key US administration positions as he seeks to rebuild Washington's links with traditional allies. Bush met with top congressional leaders Wednesday to discuss his goals for the next four years, two weeks after winning a second term in office in an election that also boosted his Republican Party's majority in Congress.

Bush has appointed several top White House advisers who are close to him to top cabinet posts.

On Wednesday, he named his former White House domestic policy adviser, Margaret Spellings, to succeed Rod Paige as education secretary.

On Tuesday, Bush picked his confidant Condoleezza Rice, the national security adviser, to succeed outgoing Secretary of State Colin Powell, who has reportedly clashed with the administration's hardliners on international policy.

Another close adviser, White House counsel Alberto Gonzales, was named attorney general last

week to head the Justice Department.

Since his re-election, Bush has announced that he will travel to Colombia next week and Canada in late November. He also said he will head to Europe, where his decision to invade Iraq last year created a rift with some allies, after his January inauguration.

Bush will be in Chile Friday for the summit of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) forum.

One of Bush's biggest challenges will be mending fences with France, whose President Jacques Chirac, an Iraq war opponent, told the BBC that "there's no doubt that there has been an increase in terrorism, and one of the origins of that has been the situation in Iraq."

Despite his plans to meet with allies, Bush does not appear willing to change his foreign policy.

"Now that Condoleezza Rice has been nominated to be the next secretary of state, the whole world seems to be noticing that George Bush is stuffing his second-term cabinet with yes men and women," The New York Times said in an editorial Wednesday.

EU lawmakers okay new commission

AFP, Strasbourg

European Union lawmakers yesterday approved the bloc's new executive commission, ending three weeks of institutional limbo sparked by protests over comments on gays and women by an Italian nominee.

The European Parliament voted by 449 votes in favour to 149 against, with 82 abstaining in the ballot, which was originally due at the end of October but was delayed by the vote.

Incoming commission chief Jose Manuel Barroso, who was originally supposed to have taken office on November 1, is now expected to start work in Brussels on Monday, officials said.

"We have a great deal of work to do and we will get down to it," Barroso told lawmakers after the vote.

He thanked the parliament "for the confidence which you've just voiced and vested in me," he said.

"We are going to work hard, give our all to serve the institutions of the EU and all of our citizens."

The parliament's president, Josep Borrell, said the vote marked "a very significant milestone in European history".

Chirac begins summit with Blair

AFP, London

French President Jacques Chirac begins a two-day visit to Britain yesterday for an annual Anglo-French summit with the issue of Iraq still hanging over relations between the two European powers.

Chirac will also attend festive events to mark the end of centenary celebrations of the Entente Cordiale, the act of friendship that sealed the alliance between Britain and France through two world wars.

On the eve of his official visit, Chirac, who led European opposition to the US-led invasion in March 2003, said he was "not at all sure" that the world had become safer since the downfall of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein.

In a BBC television interview, aired on Wednesday evening, Chirac suggested that the situation in Iraq - where US forces are still locked in battle with insurgents - has helped to prompt an increase in terrorism.

Chirac, who last visited London a year ago, was to arrive in the capital - with six ministers and 40 French members of parliament in tow - on Thursday morning when he will inspect a guard of honour before meeting Blair.

Bush picks loyalists for education, counsel jobs

REUTERS, Washington

President Bush picked two trusted advisers with roots in his native Texas to fill the jobs of education secretary and White House counsel on Wednesday, the latest additions to a second-term staff that includes key loyalists.

In addition to Burns, Arnold Kanter, a former member of Bush's father's administration, was also said to be under consideration for the deputy job. But some sources were skeptical Kanter, viewed as a moderate internationalist Republican, would be selected.

Nato ambassador Nicholas

'Iraqi insurgents not giving up'

AP, Baghdad

The recapture of Fallujah has not broken the insurgents' will to fight and may not pay the big dividend US planners had hoped to improve security enough to hold national elections in Sunni Muslim areas of central Iraq, according to US and Iraqi assessments.

Instead, the battle for control of the Sunni city 40 miles west of Baghdad has sharpened divisions among Iraq's major ethnic and religious groups, fueled anti-American sentiment and stoked the 18-month-old Sunni insurgency.

Those grim assessments, expressed privately by some US military officials and by some private experts on Iraq, raise doubts as to whether the January election will produce a government with sufficient legitimacy, especially in the eyes of the country's powerful Sunni Muslim minority.

Even before the battle for Fallujah began Nov. 8, US planners understood that capturing the city, where US troops are still fighting pockets of resistance, was only the first step in building enough security to allow the election to take place in the volatile Sunni areas north and west of Baghdad.

Ramadi, has been intimidated by the guerrillas and that the provincial security forces are nonfunctioning and their ranks infiltrated by guerrilla sympathizers.

That requires, among other things, an effective Iraqi police and security force.

Gen. John Abizaid, the commander of all US forces in the Middle East, said during a visit to Iraq this week that the Fallujah offensive was a major blow to the insurgents, and he said the only way the US forces and their Iraqi allies can be defeated is if they lose their will.

"But we are also under no illusions. We know that the enemy will continue to fight," he told the Pentagon's internal news service.

Speaking to reporters on Capitol Hill, Lt. Gen. Lance L. Smith said the military now had to keep the insurgency from regrouping.

"The issue for us at Central Command is make sure we keep the pressure on the terrorists and not allow another safe haven to occur, and we're going to do that," Smith said.

The Associated Press has learned that US military officials in Iraq concluded the population of Anbar province, which includes Fallujah,

is estimated to be 300,000 residents and that the Red Crescent which said it has still not been able to enter the heart of the battered city, where sporadic fighting continued yesterday.

"We are getting conflicting reports about what is happening inside and we were not able to enter Fallujah yet. We have only reached the hospital," said Abd al-Hamid Salim of the Iraqi Red Crescent Society.

"Right now, our work focuses on providing food, blankets and medical supplies to the families who have managed to flee Fallujah," he said.

A Red Crescent convoy reached Fallujah hospital on the outskirts of the city last week and delivered aid, but withdrew after failing to obtain US authorization to go inside the city, which lies some 50km west of Baghdad.

Almost two thirds of the city's estimated 300,000 residents fled before US forces backed by Iraqi government troops launched an assault on November 8, the largest military operation in Iraq since the March 2003 invasion.

Most of the civilians who left the city stayed with relatives in Baghdad and other cities, while others are still in camps around Fallujah.

Salim said the Red Crescent was providing assistance to 3,500 refugee families outside the city, including at a camp set up at a lakeside resort.

'150 families stranded in Fallujah'

AFP, Baghdad

Some 150 Iraqi families remain stranded in Fallujah, according to the Red Crescent which said it has still not been able to enter the heart of the battered city, where sporadic fighting continued yesterday.

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Annan urges swift end to Sudan war, Darfur crisis

AFP, Nairobi

UN chief Kofi Annan yesterday called for talks on ending Sudan's civil war to be concluded swiftly, telling a special session of the Security Council that it would help reverse the worsening crisis in the western region of Darfur.

Rebels in the Christian and animist south rose up against the Arab-led, Islamic Khartoum government in 1983, and a final accord to end the war in which some 1.5 million people are believed to have died elsewhere," said Annan.

Sudanese Vice-President Ali Osman Taha and SPLM/A leader John Garang both addressed the Nairobi meeting.

A separate conflict erupted in western Darfur in February 2003 the government quashed an indigenous rebellion was put down with the help of Arab militias, spawning what the UN terms the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

The bulk of the deal has been thrashed out over the last two years in Kenya, with key protocols on power and wealth sharing already struck, leaving only details of a

comprehensive ceasefire and some military security arrangements to be ironed out.

"I cannot help feeling that the formation of a north/south government in Sudan would add weight and impetus to the search for a settlement in Darfur and elsewhere," said Annan.

Sudanese Vice-President Ali Osman Taha and SPLM/A leader John Garang both addressed the Nairobi meeting.

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Nato ambassador Nicholas

Palestinian leaders hold more talks with factions

AFP, Gaza City

The interim Palestinian leadership was holding a round of talks with various factions in Gaza City yesterday, including the mainstream Fatah movement, officials told AFP.

Former prime minister Mahmud Abbas, who now heads the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) since Yasser Arafat's death last week, was meeting with the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP).

Interim president Rawhi Fattuh and prime minister Ahmed Qorei were meeting meanwhile at the parliament's offices in Gaza City.

The three were set to hold other talks with Gaza representatives of Fatah's central committee, the People's Party -- former communist party -- and the Palestinian Democratic Union (FIDA) later Thursday.

There was no talk about collecting (armed groups') weapons and Abbas did not request that the factions adopt a ceasefire," with Israel, said Amr who helped secure a truce from hardline Islamist groups during Abbas' brief tenure as prime minister in mid-2003.

Burns emerged as a possible candidate for deputy Secretary of State or another top job at the department.

Burns worked with Secretary of State-designate Condoleezza Rice on Soviet affairs during the administration of Bush's father and also served in the Clinton administration.

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Dhaka City Corporation Traffic Engineering Division Request for Expression of Interest (EOI) For Selection of Individual Consultants

Dhaka City Corporation has been allocated public fund from the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (GoB) toward the cost of the Panthopath-Rampura & Gulshan Link Elevated Road Construction Project, and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this fund to payments under the contract for following individual consultants:

Sl No.	Name of the post	No of post	Month	Educational qualification & experience	Brief job description
01	Procurement Expert	01	02	i) Bachelor/Masters degree in engineering ii) Fifteen (15) years experience in the field of procurement and evaluation for ICB contract with comprehensive intellectual and professional knowledge and skill	a. Review & finalize bidding documents for two-stage tendering method in accordance with the PPR-2003 & international practices.
02.	Design Engineer	01	01	i) Bachelor in civil engineering and Masters degree in structural engineering ii) Ten (10) years experience in the field of design of elevated road/bridges and evaluation for ICB contract with comprehensive intellectual and professional knowledge and skill	b. Assist the TEC of DCC in evaluation of all tenders received, ii) discussions, iii) minutes of the tender adjustments for second stage tender, iv) preparation of tender evaluation report and revise the tender documents including set out the detailed evaluation criteria for the second stage tenders, v) evaluation and recommendation to select the successful tendered in 2nd stage bidding.
03.	Quantity Surveyor	01	01	i) Bachelor/Masters degree in civil engineering ii) Ten (10) years experience in the field of preparation of BOQ and evaluation of ICB contract with comprehensive professional knowledge and skill	Assist the TEC of DCC in evaluation of all tenders received, ii) checking and reviewing the submitted BOQ by the bidder in 1st and 2nd stage, iii) prepare comparative statement.
04.	Resettlement Expert	01	01	i) Bachelor/ Masters degree in engineering/Social Science ii) Ten (10) years experience in the field of land acquisition related works with comprehensive professional knowledge and skill	Assist DCC regarding land acquisition/ resettlement works.

Dhaka City Corporation now invites eligible applicants to indicate their interest in providing services. Interested consultants are invited to provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (application along with CV, recent passport size photograph, educational certificates, description of similar assignments, specific experience in similar operating conditions, availability of appropriate professional qualification and experience). Applicants must be capable of independently preparing reports and other outputs for submission to the project authority. The duration of the assignment, depending on satisfactory performance, is indicated above.

A consultant will be selected in accordance with the Public Procurement Regulations 2003 and Public Procurement Procedures issued by the GoB.

Expressions of interest shall be submitted in sealed envelope, delivered to the address of the undersigned shown above on or before 8 December 2004 during office hours, and be clearly marked "Expressions of interest for the position of ... (name of the position)".

Persons who are already in employment shall send application through proper channel. Otherwise they shall not be considered for short listing. Only short-listed candidates will be invited for interview.

DCC/PRD/155/04-05
GD-712

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Police officers check vehicles before they drive past the US Capitol Wednesday in Washington, DC. The security checkpoints have recently returned to locations around the Capitol.