

Bush announces war in Iraq has ended

Diego Ibarguen
Knight Ridder Newspapers

SAN DIEGO (KRT) — Hours before he declared Thursday that major combat in Iraq is over, President Bush celebrated by landing in a Navy jet on the deck of a U.S. aircraft carrier returning home from war.

Clad in a green flight suit and looking every bit the fighter pilot, Bush sat next to the pilot in the cockpit of a Navy S-3B "Viking" jet on the 20-minute flight from San Diego to the USS Abraham Lincoln, 30 miles offshore. Painted on the side of the plane were the words "Navy One" and "George W. Bush, Commander in Chief."

With news cameras broadcasting live, the president's plane made two passes over the carrier before roaring to a safe landing.

Its tail hook snagged the last of four cables on the carrier's deck, jolting his plane from 150 mph to a complete stop within about 400 feet.

The drama of Bush's arrival and his war-is-over message gave the moment a red-white-and-blue sheen of patriotic enthusiasm that is destined to highlight political TV ads next year as Bush runs for re-election. Perhaps only Ronald Reagan's tribute to the D-Day veteran "boys of Pointe du Hoc" on the cliffs of Normandy in 1984 rivals this event in melding patriotism and politics into a photo opportunity.

Later, in a primetime TV address to the nation from the ship, Bush essentially proclaimed victory in Iraq, and a major step forward in the broader war on terrorism.

"The liberation of Iraq is a crucial

advance in the campaign against terror. We have removed a key ally of al-Qaida, and cut off a source of terrorist funding. And this much is certain: No terrorist network will gain weapons of mass destruction from the Iraqi regime, because that regime is no more," Bush was to say, according to prepared remarks released in advance.

At the same time, the president took pains to note that U.S. efforts are not over.

"We have difficult work to do in Iraq. We are bringing order to parts of that country that remain dangerous," Bush said, according to the speech. "The transition from dictatorship to democracy will take time, but it is worth every effort. Our coalition will stay until our work is done."

If the content of Bush's speech was familiar, his aircraft carrier

landing was anything but; it was unprecedented for a president, and Bush made the most of it.

Bush strutted off the plane holding his flight helmet in the crook of his left arm and wearing a broad smile as cameras broadcast his every move nationwide. He shook hands, saluted sailors and posed for photos with pilots on the flight deck before taking a tour of the carrier.

Asked whether he had flown the plane, Bush, a former pilot in the Texas Air National Guard, said, "Yes, I flew it. Yeah, of course, I liked it."

White House aides said security was reviewed thoroughly before the decision to let Bush make the landing; the Lincoln has had over 12,700 takeoff and arrested landings in the last nine months without incident. "If it was

not safe, it would not be done," said White House spokesman Ari Fleischer.

At least one Democrat bidding to take Bush's job in next year's election, Sen. John Kerry of Massachusetts, was unwilling to cede the day to Bush. In a conference call with political reporters, Kerry contrasted Bush's carrier imagery with less dramatic scenes back on shore.

"The president is going to an aircraft carrier to give a speech far out at sea with military surroundings while countless numbers of Americans are frightened about the economy here at home," Kerry said.

Knight Ridder Newspapers correspondents Steven Thomma and Jessica Guynn contributed to this report from Washington. © 2003, Knight Ridder/Tribune Information Services.

News briefs

U.S. files new charges against Enron execs

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department expanded its prosecution of Enron Corp. on Thursday, filing dozens of new charges against the failed energy giant's onetime financial wizard Andrew Fastow while also indicting his wife and top executives of the company's Internet division.

Fastow, Enron's former chief financial officer and chief architect of the complex accounting schemes that led to the company's sudden collapse, now faces 109 criminal counts on charges ranging from tax and securities fraud to money laundering and insider trading. Fastow's wife, Lea, former assistant treasurer at Enron, was charged in a six-count indictment alleging conspiracy to commit wire fraud, money-laundering conspiracy and tax evasion. Andrew and Lea Fastow have pleaded innocent.

Nineteen people have now been charged in connection with the unraveling of Enron, the once high-flying Wall Street darling that filed for bankruptcy in December 2001 amid charges of accounting tricks and inflated profits. The company's shares plummeted, wiping out millions of dollars in pensions for employees.

In its heyday, Enron's political action committee donated large sums of money to lawmakers in Washington. In a sign of how widespread their influence was, Attorney General John Ashcroft has recused himself from the investigation, having accepted Enron-related contributions as a U.S. senator.

— Shannon McCaffrey,
Knight Ridder Newspapers (KRT)

House OKs increased anti-AIDS spending

WASHINGTON — The House of Representatives passed legislation on Thursday that would triple current spending to \$15 billion over five years to combat the global epidemic of HIV/AIDS in the developing world.

The measure passed by an overwhelming bipartisan vote, 375-41, despite controversial provisions added by conservative Republicans to re-

strict anti-AIDS counseling and emphasize abstinence and monogamy as the preferred methods of prevention. The House voted 220-197 to require that one-third of the money go to "abstinence-until-marriage" programs.

President Bush, who asked for the big funding increase in his State of the Union speech in January, lauded the House for its speedy work.

Bush said he'd like to have the legislation enacted into law before he visits Africa in June. More than 65 million people have been infected with the deadly disease, and more than 25 million have died. The vast majority of people with AIDS live in Africa. Millions of children have been orphaned by it.

— Sumana Chatterjee,
Knight Ridder Newspapers (KRT)

Senate Democrats succeed with filibuster

WASHINGTON — In a day that showed the Senate at its most fractured and its most unified, Republicans failed on Thursday to break a filibuster of Texas Supreme Court Justice Priscilla Owen's nomination to a federal appeals court — just hours before the Senate unanimously granted a seat on that court to a San Antonio judge.

Owen becomes the second appellate nominee Democrats have thwarted, at least temporarily. Republicans have lost four tries in three months to force a confirmation vote on conservative lawyer Miguel Estrada. The simultaneous filibusters were a first for the Senate, and lawmakers in both parties lamented the continuation of a partisan spiral that defies obvious solution.

Republicans, though, expressed frustration at the attacks launched on Owen and Estrada, and vowed to keep trying to get them on the bench.

"A great injustice has been done today," said Texas Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison. "She deserves better treatment and I will not rest until she gets it."

Democrats, for their part, basked in their ability to block nominees they call ideologues who would inject right-wing views into rulings.

— Todd J. Gillman,
The Dallas Morning News (KRT)

TOO MANY BOOKS?

We buy texts and other good books all year long

SMITH FAMILY BOOKSTORE
CAMPUS
768 East 13th
345-1651
DOWNTOWN
525 Willamette
343-4717

a proud member of Unique Eugene

Want Krispy Kreme?

Help send a Eugene Kid to Young Life camp this summer!



Just \$10 a dozen

For each dozen you buy \$5 goes to kids for camp!

CALL 342-7513

To get your donuts!!!

Place your order with the Young Life office and your donuts will be waiting for you at 12:00 noon May 10th at Hirons on 18th!

YOU WANT TO CHANGE THINGS.

find out how:

Visit us at the Career Fair on May 7th.

Learn more at the Information Session on Wednesday, May 7th, 7:00pm, EMU-Fir Room

TEACHFORAMERICA
www.teachforamerica.org

