

War Edition

The Journal News

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- U.S. forces take over Iraq's radio waves.
- Ships, subs launch missiles; F-117s attack.
- Main coalition force waits on Iraqi border.

WAR WITH
IRAQ

- U.S. hunts al-Qaida in Afghan villages.
- Unmanned Predators lead attack.
- Occupation of Iraq will be full of peril.

First strike

Bush says war to disarm Iraq, oust Saddam under way

ANALYSIS

Opening salvos aimed directly at Saddam

Chuck Raasch
Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — The first blow was aimed at Saddam Hussein.

The long-awaited, strategized and feared war in Iraq began with high political symbolism and attempted psychological impact. It came in a predawn strike yesterday in Baghdad, reportedly aimed at the Iraqi leadership.

In the struggle for world public opinion over the past tumultuous months, President Bush had insisted that Saddam's regime and the alleged weapons of mass destruction he controlled were the reasons the United States was risking war. Not a lust for oil, or regional domination or religious hatred, as Bush's critics have claimed.

By focusing an initial salvo of missiles and bombs on a "target of opportunity" — reportedly a gathering of Iraqi leaders — the United States was putting an opening exclamation mark on Bush's claims.

"We have no ambition in Iraq, except to remove a threat and restore control of that country to its own people," Bush said in a terse prime-time address after the initial attack.

Initial damage assessments were unclear, and reports from the theater were imbued with the usual caution and confusion of war.

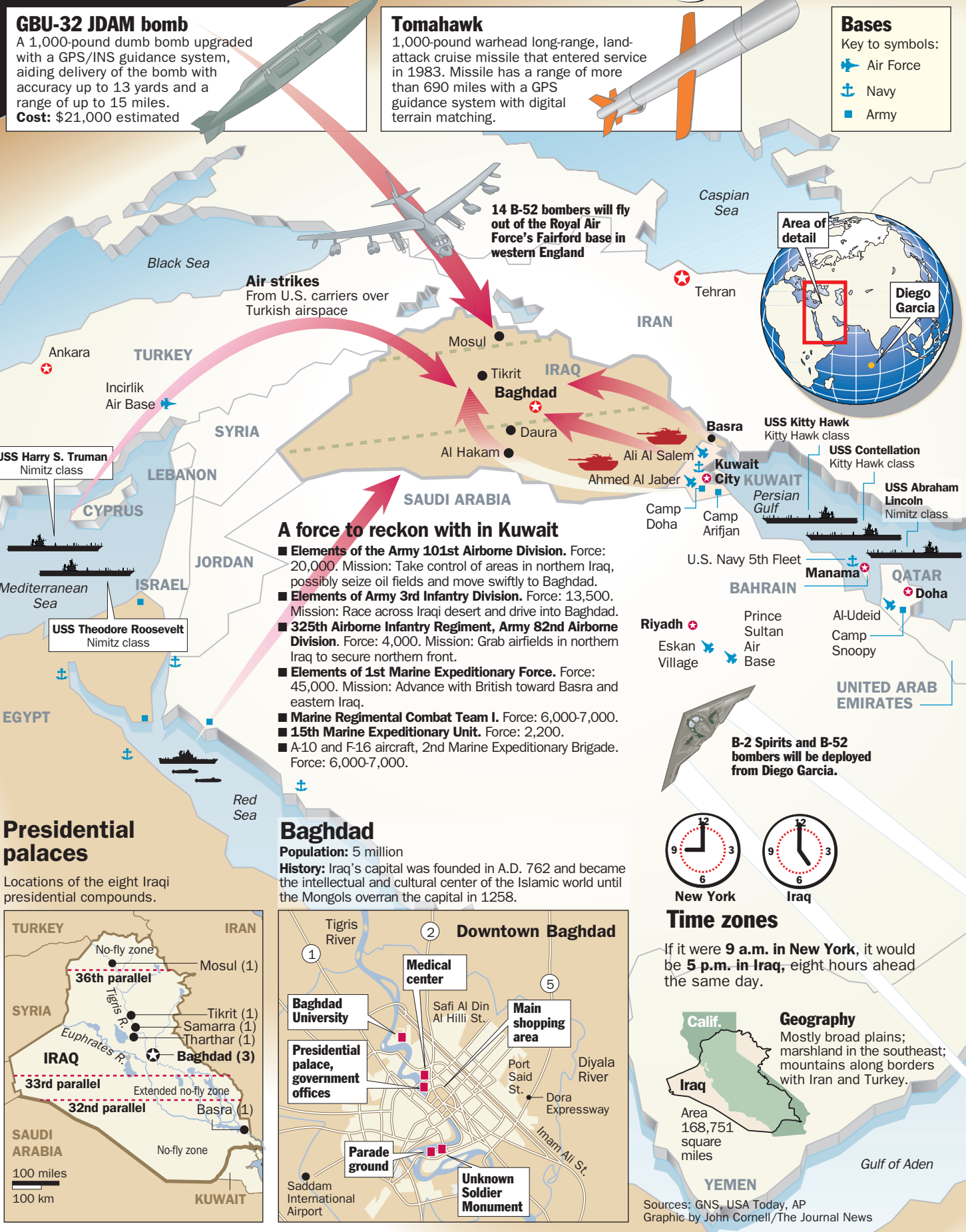
Saddam was shown on Iraqi television at 8:30 a.m. today (12:30 a.m. EST), but it was impossible to tell if it was live or taped. There was no specific reference to the initial bombing.

"The criminal Junior Bush committed — he and his aides — his crime he was threatening with Iraq," Saddam said, according to a CNN translation. Saddam several times referred to the "Zionist" coalition led by the United States.

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., said the strike was "a no-cost roll of the dice" after intelligence had suggested Saddam's leadership had

Please see SADDAM, 2A

The war theater's stage



THE ATTACK

Missiles fired at Baghdad targets

Combined wire reports

WASHINGTON — War erupted last night as the United States launched dozens of Tomahawk cruise missiles and aimed 2,000-pound bombs at Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein and other "leadership targets" in Baghdad.

The strike was aimed at "decapitating" Saddam's regime and specifically targeted him, his two sons and other senior leaders of the Baath Party and Iraqi Revolutionary Command Council, according to a senior Bush administration official.

Saddam, in an appearance on Iraqi TV at about 12:30 a.m. EST, hours after the first missile strikes, accused the United States of committing a "shameful crime" by attacking Iraq, urging his people to "go draw your sword" against the enemy.

Saddam, who was wearing glasses and a military uniform, vowed that "Iraq will be victorious" against the U.S.-led campaign.

U.S. forces also took control of the frequencies used by Iraqi state radio and began broadcasting messages in Arabic, officials said. The message said the Iraqi people's day of liberation had arrived.

But a fearsome array of U.S. and allied troops and weaponry poised for action at the Iraq-Kuwait border did not appear to have been ordered into combat as of last night.

At 5 a.m. Kuwaiti time, armored vehicles of the U.S. 3rd Infantry Division began moving into position to cross into Iraq from Kuwait as jet fighters soared overhead.

"On my order, coalition forces have begun striking selected targets of military importance to undermine Saddam Hussein's ability to wage war," President Bush said during a four-minute address to the nation last night. "These are the opening stages of what will be a broad and con-

Please see STRIKE, 2A

EXCERPTS FROM PRESIDENT'S SPEECH

My fellow citizens, at this hour American and coalition forces are in the early stages of military operations to disarm Iraq, to free its people and to defend the world from grave danger.

On my orders, coalition forces have begun striking selected targets of military importance to undermine Saddam Hussein's ability to wage war. These are opening stages of what will be a broad and concerted campaign.

More than 35 countries are giving crucial support, from the use of naval and air bases, to help with

intelligence and logistics, to the deployment of combat units.

In this conflict, America faces an enemy who has no regard for conventions of war or rules of morality. Saddam Hussein has placed Iraqi troops and equipment in civilian areas, attempting to use innocent men, women and children as shields for his own military — a final atrocity against his people.

Our nation enters this conflict reluctantly, yet our purpose is sure. The people of the United States and our friends and allies will not live at the mercy of an outlaw

regime that threatens the peace with weapons of mass murder.

We will meet that threat now with our Army, Air Force, Navy, Coast Guard and Marines, so that we do not have to meet it later with armies of firefighters and police and doctors on the streets of our cities.

Now that conflict has come, the only way to limit its duration is to apply decisive force. And I assure you, this will not be a campaign of half measures, and we will accept no outcome but victory.

Full text of speech, 9A



Rick Bowmer/The Associated Press
President Bush speaks to the nation last night after the U.S. military struck a site near Baghdad.



Dave Kennedy/The Journal News
A crowd gathers last night to watch the president speak on television screens in Times Square.

➤ Full index to coverage, 2A ➤ For the latest news and developments, visit, www.thejournalnews.com/iraq



WPX

DOW UP 71.22 to 8,265.45
NASDAQ DOWN 3.48 to 1,397.07

Stock listings: 2-3D

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YOUR WEATHER OUTLOOK

Today: Early afternoon rain. High in the lower 40s.

Complete four-day forecast, boating conditions and air-quality ratings: 15A

Tonight: Rain, heavy at times. Low in the lower 40s.

Tomorrow: Early morning showers. High in the mid-60s.