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THE COMPASS

Elizabeth City State University's award-winning student newspaper

BEING IN THE MIDST OF WAR

ECSU STUDENTS CALLED FOR DEPLOYMENT

Susan Correll-Hankinson

Three Elizabeth City State University students have been called to active duty and others have been activated or notified of the possibility of deployment because of the impending war with Iraq.

Vivian Key, the university registrar, identified two students as Debra Vines and Steven Wilson.

"Debra Vines was sent to Virginia for basic training after 2 weeks into this semester. Steven Wilson left ECSU at the end of the fall semester, said Ms. Key.

She did not know Wilson was stationed.

A student who knows Debra Vines said that Vines was serving in Turkey, but due to recent developments, has been reassigned.

Cadet Dionne Blakley, a member of the Elizabeth City State University Reserve Officer Training Corp has been identified by Major Yancy D. Edmonds, Recruiting Officer for the ROTC unit on campus, as another student called into active duty.

"Several students have received notice of activation," said Major Edmonds. This means that they are put on alert and can be called into active duty at any time.

Pernell Bartlett, administrative assistant in the Language, Literature and Communications has 24 years of military experience. Bartlett served as a Master Sergeant in the Air Force.

"The students called into active duty are the privileged few because they get the opportunity to study democracy and defend it," said Mr. Bartlett.

Deborah Branch, Director of the

Counseling and Testing Center, was concerned about the possible withdrawal of students from the university because of the impending war.

"I contacted the ROTC office and the registrar early in the year about possible withdrawals and was told there were only a few students that had been called," she said.

Branch stressed the importance of the student's need to officially withdraw from classes. "Otherwise they will go on record as failing their classes," she said.

According to an informal survey of 100 ECSU students, approximately

90 percent showed little interest in the war.

"They won't until they hear the word 'draft.' Then the enrollment in the program will increase considerably," Major Edmonds said.

U.S. officials estimated that 230,000 American soldiers were now committed to the Persian Gulf region. With more troops deployed the week of March 3, numbers are rapidly approaching 300,000.

Since late August, half of the 70 ships based in Norfolk, VA, the world's largest navy base, have been deployed, carrying 27,000 sailors and

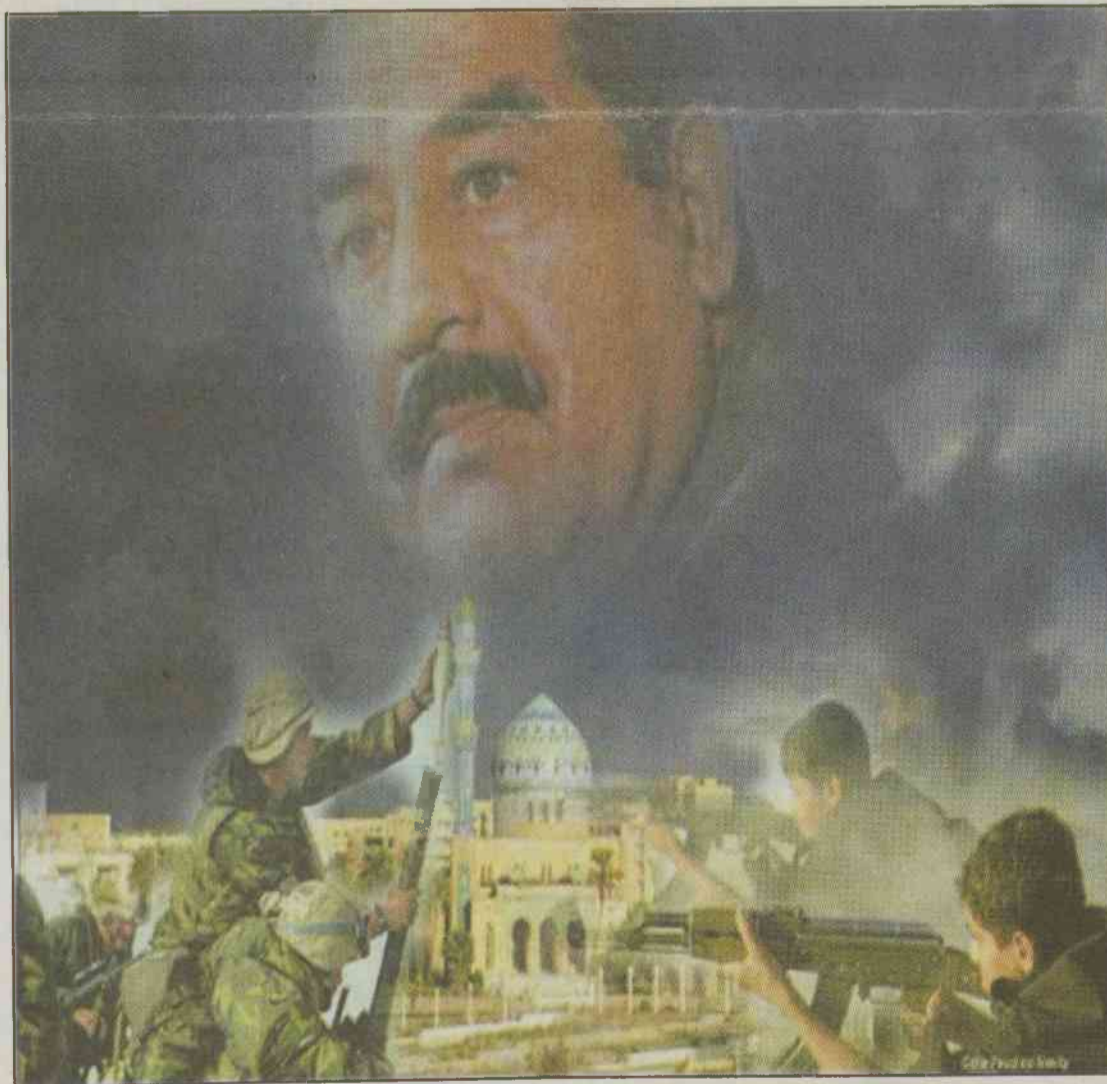
12,000 marines. These numbers come close to equaling the total population of Pasquotank County.

The Associated Press reported that three amphibious ships left Norfolk on March 4, carrying 2,000 sailors and then headed to Morehead City, N.C. to pick up 2,200 Marines based at Camp Lejeune. Navy Officials declined to say where the ships were headed. Capt. John W. Snedeker, Jr., commander of the amphibious assault ship USS Iwo Jima, told his crew to be prepared to be gone for a long time, indicating they were headed to the Middle East. With 2,078 registered students at ECSU the student body could, referring to numbers only, man one of these amphibious ships.

The United States has five aircraft carriers positioned in the Gulf region, two within striking distance of Iraq. A sixth carrier, the USS Nimitz, was deployed Monday from San Diego, CA and is on its way to the Arabian Sea. Typically each carrier is surrounded by a battle group consisting of at least two carriers, a destroyer and a submarine. These battle groups can have crews of up to 8,000.

It is not certain if the latest deployment will be sent to Turkey or Kuwait. This is because of the recent decision by Turkey's Parliament not to allow American troops to use Turkey as a base for its northern invasion of Iraq.

The invasion of Iraq is on hold for now, but Secretary of State Colin Powell said again that Saddam Hussein "must be disarmed...and he



Pictures compiled by Golar Newby from Jassim Mohammed, Simon Walker, Thorne Anderson

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PREPARED FOR THE IRAQI BATTLE

Susan Correll-Hankinson

The White House on March 25 revealed its expectations about the scale and length of the war Iraq when President Bush formally sent Congress a package requesting \$74.7 billion to pay for the war and other counter-terrorism activities.

The \$62.6 billion for the defense department covers anticipated expenses for the next six months of America's involvement in Iraq. This includes "a conflict, a period of stabilization in Iraq and the phased withdrawal of a large number of American forces," said the official.

Democrats on the House Appropriations Committee anticipate that the final cost of the war could be twice the amount mentioned on

March 25. Pentagon officials did not deny that there would be more requests made for resources to fund this war.

The spending request is expected to move through Congress easily.

"We need to make certain that our men and women in uniform have the resources necessary to get the job done in Iraq," said House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert.

President Bush also has made efforts today to quell the American public's anticipation of an early, relatively easy victory over Iraqi resistance.

"It is evident that it's going to take a while to achieve our objective," the President said. "I can assure the American people we're

making progress and I can also assure them that this is just the beginning of a tough fight."

A March New York Times/CBS News poll reported that 63 percent of Americans interviewed last week said that they thought the war would end quickly. This is a result of America's rising expectations as they watch, read and listen to accounts of coalition bombs and missiles striking their targets and as journalists accompanying American tanks as they race across the Iraqi desert.

At a news conference for the first time Gen. Tommy Franks, Commander of Central Command located in Doha, Qatar, offered a different view of how long the war might be.

"There will be tough days ahead," he said.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, acknowledging that the fighting would intensify, said that the United States could be engaged in a difficult form of urban warfare.

"The one thing I'd say is that there have to be tough days ahead. Wars are unpredictable. There are still a large number of the difficulties and things that can go wrong that are still ahead of us. The young men and women that are out there are doing a superb job," he said.

On March 23, American forces began battling for the "Red Zone," a one hundred mile area surrounding Baghdad that is defended by the Iraqi

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