

**Handout #1** – Lead Articles from *Arab News*, April 3  
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**Article #1** Exclusive: Western Journalists Beaten, Starved by Americans  
*Essam Al-Ghalib, Arab News War Correspondent*

KUWAIT CITY, 3 April 2003 — Two Western journalists have arrived safely back in Kuwait City after being arrested, beaten up and deprived of food and water in Iraq — by members of the US Army's military police.

Arab News has learned that Luis Castro and Victor Silva, both reporters working for RTP Portuguese television, were held for four days, had their equipment, vehicle and video tapes confiscated, and were then escorted out of Iraq by the 101st Airborne Division.

Despite possessing the proper "Unilateral Journalist" accreditation issued by the Coalition Forces Central Command, both journalists were detained.

Their ordeal at the hands of the Americans is in stark contrast to that received by Newsday journalists in Baghdad, who yesterday in Jordan described as "humane" their treatment at the hands of their Iraqi interrogators despite suffering various indignities. "I have covered 10 wars in the past six years — in Angola, Afghanistan, Zaire, and East Timor. I have been arrested three times in Africa, but have never been subjected to such treatment or been physically beaten before," Castro said in an exclusive interview with Arab News.

"The Americans call themselves liberators and freedom fighters, but look what they have done to us," he added.

Castro and Silva entered Iraq 10 days ago. They had been to Umm Qasr and Basra and were traveling to Najaf when they were stopped by the military police.

According to Castro, their accredited identification was checked and they were given the all clear to proceed.

"Suddenly, for no reason, the situation changed," Castro told Arab News. "We were ordered down on the ground by the soldiers. They stepped on our hands and backs and handcuffed us.

"We were put in our own car. The soldiers used our satellite phones to call their families at home. I begged them to allow me to use my own phone to call my family, but they refused. When I protested, they pushed me to the ground and kicked me in the ribs and legs."

"I believe the reason we were detained was because we are not embedded with the US forces," he continued. "Embedded journalists are always escorted by military minders. What they write is controlled and, through them, the military feeds its own version of the facts to the world. When independent journalists such as us come around, we pose a threat because they cannot control what we write"

After being held for four days, they were transported to the 101st Airborne Division to be escorted out of Iraq. Castro told Arab News: "A lieutenant in charge of the military police told me, 'My men are like dogs, they are trained only to attack, please try to understand'."

The journalists were then transported by truck to Camp Udairi to await a helicopter transfer out of Iraq. At Camp Udairi, they told their stories to members of the US Marines. One soldier, who Castro asked not be

identified, wrote out a note, which was shown to Arab News. The note said: "I am so sorry that you had to endure such bad conditions, but remember that I care and pray you can forgive."

"The Americans in Iraq are totally crazy and are afraid of everything that moves. I would have expected this to happen to us at the hands of the Iraqis, but not at the hands of the Americans. This is typical of the American attitude, as related to us by British forces. The attitude is 'shoot first and ask questions later'", Castro added.

Castro, a veteran journalist, has had all his tapes and equipment returned to him, but not his jeep. When asked by Arab News what he intends to do next, he replied: "Return to Iraq as soon as possible to tell the truth to the world about what is happening there."

**Article #2:** also from *Arab News*

Exclusive: US Forces Cross Tigris  
*Naseer Al-Nahr, Arab News War Correspondent*

BAGHDAD, 3 April 2003 — Iraq dismissed as "baseless" a US statement yesterday that the Baghdad Division of the Republican Guards had been destroyed. "This is a baseless statement as the Baghdad Division is in command of the situation and it enjoys high morale to fight the enemy and destroy it," a military spokesman said.

He added that the division had not even suffered casualties in its engagement with US troops.

US Brig. Gen. Vincent Brooks told reporters US troops had "destroyed" the Baghdad Division near the town of Al-Kut, 170 km (105 miles) southeast of here, and had inflicted damage on two other Guard divisions.

Each of Iraq's six divisions of Republican Guards defending Baghdad has about 12,000 men at full strength. Brooks said the Baghdad Division was "no longer effective at conducting combat operations as a cohesive force."

US officials said their forces pushed closer to the capital yesterday after dramatic advances across the Tigris River and past city of Karbala.

US Third Infantry Division's vanguard units were 30 km from the southern edges of the capital.

Forces advancing along the Tigris Valley from the southeast were as near as 40 km away, sources said.

US Army and Marine divisions punched their way north after major battles, in a two-pronged offensive, securing two key routes to the capital and putting infantry units close to President Saddam Hussein's seat of power.

Their advance was met by a confusing mix of friendly cheers and ferocious enemy fire.

"It's hard to decipher whether people are friends or enemy," tank driver Sergeant Michael Simmons said.

There was also concern that Saddam may have drawn a "trigger line" in the sand as US troops close in on the city which, once crossed, would be the cue for chemical or biological attacks, officers said.

The double-headed attack saw US troops passing through a tight strip of desert southwest of here at Karbala, while Marines crossed the Tigris River to the southeast.

“The final push to Baghdad is now on,” a senior US Marines officer said.

US missiles struck the Red Crescent Maternity Hospital and other civilian buildings here yesterday, killing several people and wounding at least 25, hospital sources and witnesses said.

The attacks, which occurred at 9:30 a.m. (0630 GMT), caught motorists who had ventured out during a lull in the bombing. This correspondent saw at least five burned-out and twisted cars halted in the middle of the road. Witnesses said the drivers burned to death inside.

US planes pounded central Baghdad, striking at least three times and sending thick smoke into the sky.

Residents and doctors said US planes raided the Mansour area, firing at least three missiles. The hospital, the nearby Baghdad trade center complex and offices housing the Pharmacist and Teachers’ Unions were hit, they said.

“There were air raids. Some 25 people who work and live in the area were wounded. Three of our Red Crescent staff were also wounded. We brought all the wounded in our ambulances to two hospitals,” Red Crescent official Abdel-Hameed Salim said at Baghdad’s Al-Iskan Hospital.

The facade of the two-floor “Red Crescent Maternity Hospital”, its drug store and the waiting room were damaged. The false ceiling in the room collapsed and the floor was littered with glass shards, debris and blood of the wounded.

Some women who were at the hospital to have their babies were spared and moved out to other hospitals, doctors said.

“The ceiling fell on us. Glass and debris cut through many patients and staff members. Most of the patients here were pregnant women but they were taken to other hospitals,” Dr. Mohammad Ibrahim told reporters.

Doctors said although it was a maternity hospital, it also served as a vaccination and medical center for the Red Crescent Society and provided treatment and care for patients.

He said a total of 10 patients and staff were injured at the hospital.

Salim said among the Red Crescent casualties was Dr. Mohammad Fadel, who was preparing for a normally hectic day in war times. Also injured was a patient who had come to see a doctor. He was hit and his leg had to be amputated.

“We had a lot of medical supplies for rescue operations and we don’t know if they were destroyed or not,” Salim added.

Brooks told reporters: “I am not aware of the Red Crescent report, so I cannot address it. We will approach Baghdad. The dagger is clearly pointed at the heart of the regime and will remain pointed at it until the regime is gone,” Brooks added.