THE WALL STREET JOU

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What's News—

Business and Finance

THE WHITE HOUSE is preparing to award a contract valued at as much as $900 million to begin rebuilding a post-war Iraq. At least five U.S. engineering firms, including Bechtel, Fluor and Halliburton, have been asked to submit bids.

■ **ChevronTexaco has stopped** unloading crude oil from Iraqi ports. Other U.S. oil firms also have curtailed purchases, possibly for fear of political backlash.

(Articles on Pages A3 and A5)

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■ **The economy lost** 308,000 nonagricultural jobs in February, the biggest drop since the aftermath of Sept. 11, 2001, in a sign business conditions are deteriorating.

(Article on Page A2)

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■ **UAL workers lost** their majority voting power and veto rights on the board after labor's stake in the airline fell below 20%.

■ **United and other airlines have** few protective hedges in place for jet fuel, potentially exposing them to huge price increases.

(Articles on Page A3)

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■ **GE's pension plan continues** to be overfunded, even though its liabilities increased 9%, according to the annual report.

(Article on Page A2)

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■ **Capital One told** some investors of an insider-trading probe and finance chief's resignation before publicly disclosing the news.

(Article on Page C1)

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■ **The number of immigrants** in the U.S. is continuing to surge, despite the economic downturn and tighter border controls.

(Article on Page B2)

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■ **A Global Crossing report** criticizes law firm Simpson Thacher for its handling of a letter that raised accounting concerns.

(Article on Page B4)

World-Wide

■ **THE U.N. MOVED toward a fateful vote this week over war in Iraq.** With diplomatic stakes excruciatingly high, Powell said he may be able to garner a majority in a vote that could come as soon as tomorrow, but that would be moot if veto threats are carried out. France, emboldened by inspectors' reports Friday that said recent Baghdad compliance has been encouraging, leaned on African allies to oppose the U.S.-British resolution that sets a March 17 cutoff. A British cabinet minister threatened to quit if London goes to war without U.N. backing. A high-level Arab delegation is due in Baghdad soon. (Column 5 and Page A16)

The Turkish ruling-party chief, who favors letting the U.S. invade from his nation, won an election that will make him prime minister shortly.

A U.N. observer force on the Iraq-Kuwait border has begun a pullout.

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■ **North Korea warned** all ships it plans a Sea of Japan missile test by Wednesday. Powell again rejected direct talks with Pyongyang, but a Japanese report emerged of a back-channel effort in Berlin last month.

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■ **Israel killed** a top Hamas leader and three guards and has seized a northern Gaza security zone. Friday, two Palestinians dressed as yeshiva students were killed in a West Bank raid that left an Israeli couple dead.

■ **Palestinian lawmakers convene** today to delineate powers of the new premier, Mahmoud Abbas. An aide said that Arafat, despite U.S. opposition, plans to retain control over security forces and peace negotiations.

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■ **Afghanistan's Karzai plans** an offensive to disarm warlords. Reports of seven detentions in the southwest Friday set off unfounded speculation that two bin Laden sons were caught.

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■ **Iran's nuclear program** is more advanced than had been thought and U.N. inspectors should more closely monitor it as a bid to acquire atomic arms, senior Bush aides are warning.

■ **An Argentine judge asked** Interpol to arrest four Iranian diplomats in a 1994 attack on a Jewish center that killed 85. Tehran denied involvement.

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■ **Bush's budget would result in defi-**

A Home on the Web: The Afghan Struggle For Internet Domain

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New Nation Lacks Essentials, But at Least It Has '.af'; Searching for Mr. Razeeq

By BILL SPINDLE

NEW YORK—In the data room of a United Nations office building, a tiny piece of Afghanistan's sovereignty resides on a computer the size of a large pizza box: the .af Internet domain.

Across the globe in Kabul, the government has begun to fill it with e-mail and Web-site addresses all ending with the distinctive .af. This is Afghanistan's "little slice" of the Internet, says Marc Lepage, a 29-year-old U.N. hand who spearheaded the Afghan government's yearlong effort to claim this patch of cyberspace.

In the grand scheme of Afghanistan's reconstruction, the right to control who uses the .af suffix may seem a small comfort for a country still unable to bring its citizens basics such as food, education and freedom from violence. But winning control of the domain—essentially a seat at the highest level of the Internet's organizational hierarchy—was a hard-fought victory.

The domain had to be wrested from an elusive Afghan man with apparent connections to the militant world of the previous Taliban regime. Technical obstacles included a communications ministry without heat and a scarcity of experienced engineers inside the country. The primary server sits in New York because Afghanistan still doesn't have the people and technology to support the domain within its own borders.

Marc Lepage

Government officials hope the .af domain will be the seedbed for a local computer industry, and a sign to the outside world that Afghanistan is open for business. "It's a step into the information age," says Mohammad Masoom Stanakzai, the minister of communications.

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...killed a top Hamas leader ...e guards and has seized a ...n Gaza security zone. Friday, ...alestinians dressed as yeshiva ...ents were killed in a West Bank ...l that left an Israeli couple dead. ...alestinian lawmakers convene to ... to delineate powers of the new ...nier, Mahmoud Abbas. An aide ...l that Arafat, despite U.S. opposi-... plans to retain control over se-...ty forces and peace negotiations.

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...an's nuclear program is more ad-...ced than had been thought and ... inspectors should more closely ...itor it as a bid to acquire atomic ...s, senior Bush aides are warning. ...n Argentine judge asked Interpol ...rest four Iranian diplomats in ...4 attack on a Jewish center that ...d 85. Tehran denied involvement.

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...ush's budget would result in def-... totaling $1.82 trillion over the ... decade, according to a CBO re-... Friday that didn't factor in the ...ntial price tag for a war on Iraq.

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...nate debate begins this week ... bill to ban certain late abor-..., a ritual being played out this ... against the backdrop of a pres-... eager to sign such legislation.

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...ilippine gunmen seized a bus, ...d two and took 40 hostages on a ...hern isle. Manila charged Moro ...nic Liberation Front leaders in ...week's Davao airport bombing.

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...ina plans to move about 500,000 ...le a year from areas where de-...ment prospects are poor. Mean-..., a farm worker was arrested in ...t Beijing university bombings.

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...e U.S. has imposed sanctions ...rozen the assets of Mugabe and ... top Zimbabwe officials, actions ...y taken against a head of state.

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... INS Friday freed a nephew of ...stani President Musharraf. He ...eld two weeks for an expired ...n a forced-registration program.

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...nian Serbs were ordered to pay ... million to help Muslims bury ... from the Srebrenica massacre ...andmark court ruling on Friday.

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...SA studied data suggesting a ...inute bid to override Colum-...autopilot, but investigators ap-...skeptical of that interpretation.

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... to 40% of a strep family may ...sistant to both penicillin and ...omycin by 2004, according to a ...rd study in the journal Nature.

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...as is to execute Wednesday its ...person since it resumed capi-...nishment in 1982. That is one-...

uses the .af suffix may seem a small comfort for a country still unable to bring its citizens basics such as food, education and freedom from violence. But winning control of the domain—essentially a seat at the highest level of the Internet's organizational hierarchy—was a hard-fought victory.

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Marc Lepage

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A month after the Taliban abandoned Kabul in November 2001, the U.N. Development Program, backed by the new government in Kabul, approached the body responsible for assigning Internet domains. The U.N. wanted the Afghan government and U.N. agencies located in the country to have the .af designation.

But a check of the records at the independent Internet Assigned Numbers Authority, known as the IANA, showed the suffix was already taken. The domain was registered to a man named Abdul Razeeq, who gave Kabul as his address.

That's about the time Mr. Lepage arrived in Kabul for the first time. Mr. Lepage was an old hand at plugging out-of-the-way places into the Internet. He had been part of a small team of information-technology specialists working for the U.N. Based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the five-person team specialized in helping developing countries get on the Internet.

Few wired up easily. After years of politely ignoring U.N. offers of help, the Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan, a land where both television and the Internet were illegal, suddenly phoned up in March 1999 to ask whether the U.N. could get the nation online by June 2 of that year. The date marked the 25th anniversary of King Jigme Singye Wangchuck's coronation.

The team worked long hours to meet the deadline. Among the issues resolved along the way: Bhutan's two-letter code, .bt, was already registered by British Telecommunications PLC. Although the company was involved in the Bhutan project—providing the main trunk line from Bhutan to the outside world—it took some persuading before its marketing arm agreed to give up the .bt designation, according to Mr. Lepage. BT officials said they had never used the designation anyway and were happy to give it up to Bhutan. Mr. Lepage was present in

Please Turn to Page A14, Column 1

them to take over from Sandy?" demanded Mr. Mark, according to others who were present. "Just naming names isn't enough," said Mr. Mark, the chairman and chief executive of Colgate-Palmolive Co. "The most important decision we'll make is picking Sandy's successor."

Sanford I. Weill

Turning to Franklin Thomas, co-head of the succession panel, Mr. Mark said that the full board "always needs to be fully informed and involved" in the succession matter, especially in this era of heightened attention to corporate governance.

"What do you want to do, add three more hours to every board meeting?" shot back succession-committee member Andrall Pearson, a former president of PepsiCo Inc. "Why not let the committee do its work?"

Mr. Mark finished up his board duties and walked upstairs to Mr. Weill's office—where he said he wanted to leave the board.

The corporate succession at Citigroup will be one of the most-watched

...as to challenge him effectively.

Mr. Weill, who ... exerts a rare level ... some insiders call ... succession is perha... tion facing Citigrou... ued to post strong ... economy and regul... though its net income ... $15.28 billion, Citigr... 27% over the past yea... as the Dow Jones In... which it is a part.

Mr. Weill's depart... He appears in good ... hurry to leave a com... world to him. He als... his last chapter not ... sies involving Citigr... Enron Corp. and Wor... discredited stock rese... com analyst Jack Gru... clined to comment o... him or when.

The chairman has ... an explicit "horse ra... cause high-level de... leader is clear—as h... Electric Co. Director ... trast, believes sound ... good governance req... their boards identify ... ble successors. Mr. M...

Please Turn to Pa...

For Bush, Outcome of U.N. Could Have Effects Beyon...

By Carla Anne Robbins

WASHINGTON—President Bush has just a few days to pull off a diplomatic victory at the United Nations or proceed without broad international support in a war against Iraq that could have consequences reaching far beyond the showdown with Saddam Hussein.

Already, the bitter divisions on the Security Council may make it less likely the Iraqi leader will suddenly decide to give up his forbidden missiles and chemical and biological weapons to avert a war. In the long run, a decision to fight without the U.N.'s blessing could undermine British Prime Minister Tony Blair at home and make it harder for America to rely on the U.N. in the North Korean nuclear crisis.

With the stakes that high, the U.S. and Britain are pushing hard for a Security Council vote this week on a resolution authorizing the forcible disarming of Iraq. Officials from both countries yesterday began sounding more hopeful that they can rally the nine votes necessary for its passage. These officials said they believe that, among the six undecided Council members, they've won over Cameroon, Angola and Pakistan, with Chile, Mexico and Guinea ... lobbied. Bulgaria and ... sponsoring the resoli... tain yes votes.

But France and R... nent members of the ... have publicly declared ... sition and hinted they ... toes. Still, U.S. official ... Russia will abstain. In ... heated atmosphere, an... certain. France's forei... nique de Villepin, left ...

Please Turn to Pag...

Oil and Postwar Plans

- **U.S. will award a big contract for rebuilding postwar Iraq, page A3**
- **ChevronTexaco has stopped loading crude oil from Iraqi ports, A5**
- **Turkish election may aid U.S., A16**

The Lineup

Where United Nations ... members stand now o... resolution giving Iraq ...

CLEARLY IN FAVOR: U.S.*, U.K.*, Spain, ...

CLEARLY OPPOSED: France*, Syria, Germ...

THOUGHT TO BE LE... Cameroon, Angola, P...

ON THE FENCE: Chile, Mexico, Guine...

 THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Afghanistan Struggles to Take Control of Its Internet Domain

Continued From First Page

the Bhutanese capital of Thimphu when, after some ceremonial chanting by monks, Queen Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuk fired off the first e-mails with the .bt domain to some Bhutanese students overseas.

Mr. Lepage had also worked in East Timor, which won its independence from Indonesia in 1999. The newly independent nation needed years to get the suffix it wanted. To get the country around the biggest roadblock—a man in Ireland who owned rights to the country's logical domain and refused to give them up—Mr. Lepage's boss paid the $30 fee out of his own pocket to buy the domain east-timor.org and gave it to the government. Only now is that being phased out in favor of East Timor's new domain .tl (for the country's official name Timor-Leste).

Mr. Lepage came to Kabul as the development program's telecommunications point man for the country. He went to work trying to find Mr. Razeeq, the man who had registered .af back in 1997. But Mr. Lepage didn't have any more luck finding Mr. Razeeq than the IANA had been having since 2000, when it lost touch with him. Mr. Razeeq had never signed up anyone to use the .af suffix, according to the IANA. The Taliban regime then outlawed the Internet in August 2001.

Mr. Lepage traced Mr. Razeeq's e-mail address to a service provider in Pakistan, and from there to another e-mail address to which messages had been forwarded. Incoming traffic to the second address had been directed to yet another address, that one affiliated with a Web site. When Mr. Lepage opened the Web site, it was filled with virulently anti-Semitic and anti-U.S. slogans, mostly in Arabic, says Mr. Lepage. The site has since disappeared. Meanwhile, a few people seemed to recognize the name around the communications ministry, but no one knew where to find him. Many wondered whether he was even alive.

> Officials hope the .af domain will be the seedbed for a local computer industry.

By this time, however, the IANA opened a new route to claiming the domain: If the new government could document that Mr. Razeeq couldn't be located and had never put the domain to any use, then the .af domain could be taken away from him under IANA rules.

But that didn't mean the IANA was ready to let Afghanistan take over the domain quite yet. For that to happen, the government had to show it could support an active domain—provide skilled engineers to maintain registries of addressees, take care of multiple backup servers and maintain consistent security, among other things on a long list of IANA requirements.

This was a daunting challenge for a ministry that operates out of a 16-floor concrete building in Kabul with no heat, no elevators and just two bathrooms. When Mr. Lepage moved his 25-person staff into the building in August, there was no furniture. Among his first problems was the lack of qualified technicians in Afghanistan. He found Muhammed Aslam, an Afghan working for an Internet-service provider in Peshawar, Pakistan. Mr. Aslam, who is now taking over much of the day-to-day technical work, will eventually oversee the domain.

But this transition to local control, like the U.N.'s overall plan to leave Afghanistan, could prove tricky. One problem: the salary discrepancy between U.N.-paid workers in the country and local staff. Mr. Aslam, who is on the U.N. payroll, makes $600 a month in U.S. currency. Mr. Stanakzai, the telecommunications minister, makes the equivalent of $50 a month in local currency.

Afghanistan isn't currently up to the task. Even with two backup generators, power blackouts were too frequent to risk placing the .af domain's main servers there. For at least a year, the main server and a backup will remain in New York. Two more servers were set up in Kabul—one that will become the main server and the other for training of staff.

On a chilly day—both inside and outside the ministry—late last month, Mr. Lepage got permission from Internet authorities to bring the domain to life. Copied to the communications minister, the permssion was the first e-mail sent out under an .af address. Mr. Lepage printed it out and walked up a floor to show it to Mr. Stanakzai, who was thrilled. He hadn't yet checked his e-mail.

For Bush, Oi Of U.N. Vote Broad Implicc

Continued From F

to argue the case again three African members c

Moving against the w is rare but not unpreceder Clinton administration, veto from Russia, decide resolution authorizing n Kosovo and acted anyway has vowed he will force a matter what the apparen

Secretary of State C yesterday on Fox TV th Britain are "in striking d ning nine or 10 votes c Council. "But we'll just l see what individual na have to make up their mi for on the day of the vot

U.S. officials say Mr. mined to go to war soo the size of the stakes, cautioned France agains He said that while the would remain friends, a serious effect on bilater least in the short term."

As a sign of how frag the U.S. and Britain, onc said that the resoluti pushed, and the politic fence sitters, has been c so that no country ever voting for a war. Under a U.S. and Britain agreed t resolution simply says th to disarm and that Bag March 17 to change that

"It would allow a cou the resolution and still c tary action if that's wha politics requires," said t