

Republicans debate in New Hampshire

by UPI

MANCHESTER, N.H. -- Most Republican presidential hopefuls defended the U.S. invasion of Iraq in a New Hampshire debate but criticized how the war has been handled.

"I'm going to give you a little straight talk. This war was very badly mismanaged for a long time," Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., said in response to a question from a woman whose brother died in the war, CNN reported.

The debate Tuesday was the first in Republican debate in New Hampshire, site of the nation's first presidential primary.

"We knew what we knew at the point we made the decision to get in," said former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, CNN reported. "At this stage the right thing is to see if we can stabilize the central government."

Sen. Sam Brownback, R-Kan., meanwhile, told the audience at Manchester's St. Anselm College that he supports breaking Iraq up into separate Shiite, Sunni and Kurdish regions.

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