

IRAQI HANDOVER COMES EARLY

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U.S.-led military occupation formally ends

For Bush, a chance to change headlines

By Brian Knowlton

WASHINGTON: Coming on the day when NATO promised help for the interim Iraqi government, the sudden handover of limited sovereignty Monday in Baghdad allowed the Bush administration to wrest the headlines momentarily from the relentless assaults across Iraq by an unexpectedly potent insurgency.

"The Iraqi people have their country back," President George W. Bush said in Istanbul. "This is a day of great hope for Iraqis and a day that terrorist enemies hoped never to see." The U.S.-led coalition, he added, has advanced the causes of liberty, peace and security.

But as Bush and his supporters evoked historic achievement, much remained unclear about what actual difference the day's events would make to a country still rattled by chaos and unexpectedly fierce attack. How realistic are promises of liberty, peace and security, some Iraqis asked, when even the restoration of basic services has proved elusive?

How firmly will the new Iraqi government act, with what level of public support? And how much more discreet can the American presence become, when there are no signs the 140,000-strong U.S. force will be leaving any time soon? Bush surely got a boost this week as televised images of newfound allied comity replaced some of the bloody scenes of car bombings and the grim news of continued casualties and threatened beheadings. Setbacks in Iraq clearly have weighed on Bush's voter approval ratings.

A new New York Times/CBS News poll found that only 42 percent of voters approved of the way Bush does his job, a new low. And while three Americans in four, according to a Gallup Poll, supported the handover of sovereignty, nearly twice as many said that it reflected a failure of U.S. policy as called it a success.

Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts, Bush's presumptive Democratic rival, said the promised NATO support was insufficient at a time when Americans provide the large bulk of the coalition's financial and human resources.

"It is critical that the president get real support, not resolutions, not words," Kerry said in Boston.

But on the world stage, where Bush has spent much of the month, he clearly has made progress toward at least a workable reconciliation, following the deep bitterness over the war.

June has been a month for binding wounds, from the United Nations Security Council resolution supporting



Iraq's new leaders, from left: Vice President Jaafari, Prime Minister Allawi, Deputy Prime Minister Salih and President Yawar.



The former U.S. administrator, L. Paul Bremer 3rd, center, being escorted to the airport by Deputy Prime Minister Barham Salih, right.

A transfer of sovereignty 2 days ahead of schedule

By Dexter Filkins

BAGHDAD: The U.S.-led military occupation of this restive land formally ended Monday, 15 months after Saddam Hussein was swept from power, with Iraq's new leaders taking over in a surprise ceremony designed to foil attacks by guerrilla insurgents whom U.S. forces are still struggling to vanquish.

L. Paul Bremer 3rd, the chief U.S. administrator who arrived last May in a country in flames, restored Iraqi sovereignty at a simple meeting called two days ahead of schedule with no public notice, deep inside the heavily fortified area known as the Green Zone.

U.S. aides and Iraqi officials, had been bracing for a wave of terrorist attacks on Wednesday, the date initially set for the transfer. They said they had moved up the date of the ceremony and held it in nearly total secrecy to foil possible terrorist plots.

Standing amid an array of gilded furniture left behind by Saddam, Bremer handed Ayad Allawi, the new Iraqi prime minister, a leather-encased note from President George W. Bush, indicating that the U.S.-led military occupation had formally ended. The Coalition Provisional Authority, the civilian administration that Bremer led, was dissolved.

As he did often in his tenure here, Bremer harkened back to the crimes of Saddam as starting point for the U.S.-led efforts to build a democracy in this country, which has never known it. Only a day before, Bremer said, he had visited Hilla, site of one of the mass graves dug for the thousands of victims of Saddam's murderous regime.

"Anybody who has any doubt about whether Iraq is a better place today than it was 14 months ago should go down to see the mass graves in Hilla, or see any of the torture chambers or rape rooms around this country," Bremer said. "Anybody who has seen those things that I have will know that Iraq is a much better place."

With that, Bremer flew by helicopter to the Baghdad International Airport, where he boarded an American C-130 military transport and left the country. The entire ceremony, witnessed by no more than 30 people, lasted about 10 minutes.

Only hours after Bremer's departure, the new U.S. ambassador to Iraq, John Negroponte, landed at Baghdad International Airport.

Less than three hours later, Allawi and the other members of his government, chosen during a United Nations-sponsored process earlier this month, took the oath of office, with Allawi and the new Iraqi president, Ghazi al-Yawar, celebrating the restoration of the country's independence but warning that difficult days lay ahead.

"We want a free, democratic Iraq that will be a source of peace and stability for the region and the whole world," Yawar said. "We would like to express thanks to our friends in the coalition for their efforts and dedication."

"We want to tell them all their sacrifices will not go in vain," Yawar said. "We are determined, we are committed. There is no way to turn back."

According to the United Nations resolution declaring an end to the occupation, Yawar and his colleagues regained full control over their country, its people and its borders. But the reality is likely to be quite different; Iraqis' new leaders, for all their assurances Monday, still depend largely on the United States and other countries for their security and solvency.

About 160,000 troops from the United States, Great Britain and other countries still remain in Iraq, most of them tied down fighting a guerrilla insurgency whose ferocity and ruthlessness seems to grow by the day. It is unclear how much control, if any, the new Iraqi government will exercise over the foreign troops on its soil. Indeed, it is uncertain how much practical, day-to-day

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NATO agrees to train Iraqi forces

By Eric Schmitt

ISTANBUL: NATO leaders agreed Monday to help rebuild Iraq's beleaguered security forces just hours after the U.S.-led occupation turned sovereignty over to an Iraqi interim government that requested the alliance's aid earlier this month. But many crucial details remain unresolved.

Bush administration officials heralded the Iraqi training accord and an agreement to increase NATO troops in Afghanistan to bolster security for elections there in September elections as proof the alliance could overcome divisions to reach consensus on contentious issues far beyond the members' national borders.

"We have decided today to offer NATO's assistance to the government of Iraq with the training of its security

forces," Bush and the other 25 national leaders said in a statement.

But the Iraq accord fell far short of the administration's original goal to dispatch NATO ground troops to join U.S.-led forces in Iraq, which France and Germany flatly opposed. In a sign of the rifts still lingering since the Iraq war, the statement said the alliance would only "encourage nations to contribute to the training of the Iraqi armed forces."

The United States and other allies have provided some training inside and outside Iraq for months, and a three-star American general was recently assigned to help improve how Iraq's 206,000 security forces are trained and equipped. But with Iraqis regaining sovereignty, the interim prime minister, Iyad Allawi, asked NATO earlier this month for additional help.

NATO planners will now meet with Iraqi officials to decide on training priorities, then match up the requests with those willing to help. They were also ordered to report back on other possible assistance for Iraqi security institutions. But the timing, location and numbers of trainers involved remain unanswered.

"How this training will be worked out I do not know yet," Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, NATO's secretary general, told reporters.

NATO leaders opened the two-day meeting under extraordinary security and to the surprising news that the transfer of sovereignty in Iraq had been moved up 48 hours in an effort to preempt insurgent attacks. Large swaths of Istanbul, a city of 15 million people,

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U.S. detainees get right to appeal

By David Stout

WASHINGTON: The Supreme Court ruled Monday that people being held by the United States as enemy combatants can challenge their detention in American courts. It was the court's most important statement in decades on the balance between personal liberties and national security.

The justices declared their findings in three rulings, two of them involving American citizens and the other addressing the status of foreigners being held at the U.S. Naval Base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. Taken together, they were a significant setback for the Bush administration's approach to the campaign against terrorism that

began on Sept. 11, 2001.

"Due process demands that a citizen held in the United States as an enemy combatant be given a meaningful opportunity to contest the factual basis for that detention before a neutral decisionmaker," an 8-to-1 majority held in the case of Yaser Esam Hamdi, a Saudi-born U.S. citizen seized in Afghanistan in 2001. Only Justice Clarence Thomas dissented from the basic outlines of the decision.

Justice Sandra Day O'Connor wrote that the campaign against terrorism notwithstanding, "a state of war is not a blank check for the president when it comes to the rights of the nation's citizens."

In the Guantánamo case, the court

ruled, 6 to 3, that federal courts have the jurisdiction to consider challenges to the custody of foreigners. The finding repudiated a central argument of the administration.

"Aliens at the base, like American citizens, are entitled to invoke the federal courts' authority," Justice John Paul Stevens wrote for the majority. "United States courts have traditionally been open to nonresident aliens."

The dissenters were Chief Justice William Rehnquist and Justices Thomas and Antonin Scalia.

And in the other case involving an American citizen, José Padilla, the court ruled on what at first glance was

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CURRENCIES New York		
	Monday 4 P.M.	Previous
€1 =	\$1.2186	\$1.216
£1 =	\$1.8301	\$1.8258
¥1 =	¥107.9	¥107.66
₪1 =	₪1.2488	₪1.2494

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OIL New York		
	Monday 4 P.M.	
Light sweet crude	\$36.24	↓ \$1.31

STOCK INDEXES		
	Monday	
The Dow 4 P.M.	10,357.09	↓ 0.14%
FTSE 100 close	4,518.70	↑ 0.55%
Nikkei 225 close	11,884.06	↑ 0.88%

UPDATE
After 24 years, U.S. renews Libya ties

WASHINGTON: The United States resumed direct diplomatic ties with Libya on Monday after a 24-year break, even as the Bush administration pursued reports that its leader, Muammar el-Qaddafi, took part last year in a plot to assassinate Saudi Arabia's crown prince.

The announcement was made in Tripoli by Assistant Secretary of State William Burns, after talks with Qaddafi, and also at the State Department. Burns inaugurated a new U.S. liaison office in Tripoli. (AP)

On the Web: www.ihf.com

'Our job is to help'

- President Bush said coalition forces would support a possible decision by the Iraqi leadership to declare martial law. [Page 4](#)
- Most Iraqis are withholding judgment on the new government, saying they want to see results first. [Page 2](#)
- The shift of sovereignty is not quite cut and dried for hundreds of reconstruction projects, many of them just starting. [Page 2](#)

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