

PRESS RELEASE

COALITION PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY

DATE : 3 July 2003

PR No. 0010

Text of Ambassador Paul Bremer's Message to the Iraqi People 3 July 2003

Mesaa al Khair. My name is Paul Bremer, Administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority.

We, the coalition, are continuing to do all we can to improve the lives of all Iraqi citizens.

The Saddam regime did untold damage to this country's citizens, to its economy, to its infrastructure, and to its relations with the rest of the world. And that affected every Iraqi, not just the thousands – perhaps millions - who were tortured or killed. The coalition came here to liberate all Iraqis from Saddam Hussein, his regime, and the clear danger which they posed to us all.

Many of you are now free for the first time. Free to speak openly, free to live without fear of torture or repression, free to practice your own religion as you choose, free to leave and enter your country as you wish. Torture is now illegal, under any circumstances. There are no "special police" and no mukhabbarat. There are no "special prisons" and no "special courts". There are fewer than 3,000 Iraqis in custody today in the whole of Iraq. Most of these are hardened criminals or senior members of the former regime.

But anyone today accused of breaking the law now has the unrestricted right to silence, and to defence by a lawyer, in an open and transparent process.

We came here to give you those freedoms, and to protect them as we help you build your own democratic future for your country. Our task is to ensure that the fragile, and hard-won freedoms that you are now starting to enjoy are not removed by elements of the old regime who continue to attack you, to attack us, and to attack the services vital to you – electricity, water, and healthcare. When they attack these targets, these renegades are attacking the Iraqi people. We will not rest until these criminals are dealt with.

In recent days, my colleagues and I have been working with many Iraqis from all over the country to quicken the march towards political responsibility for Iraqis. All of Iraq's main cities, and dozens of other towns, now have administrative councils. Within two weeks, the new Iraqi Governing Council will be established. And shortly thereafter, we will launch the process to write a new Iraqi Constitution. This will be your new constitution: written by Iraqis, debated by Iraqis and approved by Iraqis. It will not be written by Americans or British or anyone else.

COALITION PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY

Once a new constitution has been approved, Iraq's new Government will be chosen by Iraq's first democratic, free and fair elections. At that point, the coalition's job will be done.

To ensure that Iraq and Iraqis remain free – now and after the Coalition leaves - we need to ensure that the Ba'athist regime is truly finished . Not every member of the former Ba'athist party should lose their job. Far from it. I recognize that the majority of Ba'ath party members were forced to join the party to feed their families or get a job.

The Deba'athification Policy which I announced on 15 May makes clear that only those in the top four tiers of the Ba'ath Party, or in the top three tiers of management in public offices, are susceptible to losing their job. That has not changed. So there is no reason to fear for your future, if you were a Ba'ath Party member, but not in the Party's top ranks.

And I have certainly not forgotten Saddam Hussein and his sons - among the most evil men the world has known. They may or may not still be alive.

But I recognise that, until we know for sure, their names will continue to cast a shadow of fear over this country. That is why I am today announcing a 25 million dollar reward for information leading to the capture of Saddam Hussein, and a 15 million dollar reward for information leading to the capture of either of his sons. If any of you has such information, I encourage you to come forward and give it to any coalition official - civilian or military.

I have no doubt that determining the fate of Saddam Hussein would help us in our reconstruction efforts in Iraq, not least since he was responsible for so much of the damage inflicted on this country. But we will press forward with our work regardless of whether we solve the Saddam Hussein question. In the last twelve weeks, we have already spent over a thousand million dollars on thousands of reconstruction projects all over Iraq. From schools to hospitals, from the seaport to the airport, and from irrigation projects to electricity projects. From one fund alone – the construction fund – we have committed \$50 million in the last few weeks; while the irrigation fund – which has already employed 3,000 workers to clear and repair 350 kilometers of irrigation channels, will soon be employing 50,000 workers on over 5,000 kilometers of channels in the South of the country.

The Iraqi people need and deserve modern hospitals, schools, electricity and water systems, and a modern economy to serve and fund all these.

After so much mismanagement for so long, we won't be able to build all this overnight. But we've made a big start already, and my colleagues and I will work hard to improve your lives in every way possible.

Thank you for listening.

Notes for Editors:

Amb Bremer gives an address to the Iraqi people every week, broadcast over a number of days