

how well we do in building up the Iraqi security forces, and as you heard this morning there are more than 200,000 already at work, they will not be able to deal with the security threat that will still exist after June 30th. So the coalition that we have now will transform itself from being an occupation to being a partnership. We will be invited guests by the Iraqi government to help them assure their security. Exactly how that will be organized is a matter that still lies in the future, but the political context I think is quite clear and Iraqis when you look again at the polls and talk to a lot of Iraqi politicians, they understand that there's going to be a need for a partnership here after the first of July.

Q: Given the volatility of the situation, what of the gaps, to use your term -- what if the government decides, in whichever form it takes that a U.S. military presence for some reason is not needed?

Bremer: It's a hypothetical question and not very likely. If you look at the current situation and talk to Iraqis, they understand that there's going to be a security situation with both the dimensions I talked about. An active insurgency though I think reducing but a real threat from these external terrorists. They understand that they will need the partners to deal with that in the time going ahead.

Q: Do you feel that you need a Status of Forces Agreement in place before June 30th?

Bremer: We're operating here now under a U.N. Resolution, 1511, which authorizes a multinational force under, as it happens, American command. And that provides the framework that is in effect now and will be in effect until June 30th.

Q: What are the basic elements of the transitional law that you talked about? Does it resolve this issue of Islamic law --

Bremer: The transitional draft, and it's still a draft, but the latest draft conforms to the principles that were set out on November 15th. It provides for a very robust bill of rights -- freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom to strike, freedom of religion and religious beliefs. It provides, in other words, for a framework of rule of law. It provides for an independent judiciary. It provides for civilian control of the military. It provides for the separation of power among the branches of government.

The freedom of religion is actually confirmed in two different places in the current draft. Islam is recognized as the state religion and as the religion of the majority of the Iraqi people, again, in conformity with the November 15th agreement.

This document is a revolutionary document in Iraqi history. There's nothing like it. One of the Iraqi Governing Council members said to me last night when we were talking about it, he said it's not only revolutionary in Iraq, it's revolutionary in this part of the world for its forward-looking defense of individual freedoms. It's a fitting tribute to the Iraqis that they should be able to write such a document, and of course the inspiration is the tyranny that they lived under. They don't want anything like that again.

Q: What are you going to do after June 30th?

Bremer: I am going home to sleep for a very long time. I'll show you my house in Vermont where I'll be if you want, but I won't tell you the phone number. (Laughter.)

Q: [Could you clarify] a statement that you will have broad support from the Shiites?

Bremer: I think we're going to have to have a very substantial information campaign on the transitional law all across the country. In fact we started a major IO campaign about a month ago. Of course not on the text of the law because we didn't know the text, but on the general principles. The principle of the bill of the rights, what does it mean, independent judiciary, the civilian control of the military, and on federalism which is another