



TODAY, YOU STILL OWN IRAQ

Prior to the invasion of Iraq, Secretary of State Colin Powell reportedly warned President Bush that if he invaded Iraq, "you'll own it all." Powell was right. The idea that Iraq achieved sovereignty yesterday is as false as the President's insistence that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. Or that our mission was accomplished.

Sovereignty? Today, 138,000 American troops are stationed in Iraq. And more may be requested. The only true power for the foreseeable future will remain those U.S. soldiers, commanded by U.S. officers. This is the definition of occupation, and it will continue to inflame the insurgency.

We own it. And we're paying for it. So far, more than \$150 billion, and the requests for more just keep coming.

The old Republican Palace – Iraq's White House – is becoming part of the new U.S. embassy, the largest in the world. This despite an Iraqi government demand that

we return the palace to them. (Incidentally, \$184 million in embassy construction costs were diverted from programs for safe Iraqi drinking water.)

Handover? Hardly. Every U.S. soldier, Coalition employee and private contractor will be immune from Iraqi law. And we're leaving behind more than 100 U.S. edicts – covering everything from crime to foreign affairs – designed to perpetuate U.S. power for years to come.

Iraqis looking for leadership free from U.S. control will also be sorely disappointed. Prime Minister Iyad Allawi has been on the CIA payroll for years. Maybe that's why, in a recent independent poll, Iraqis rated him 16th among 17 of that country's potential leaders. Last in the poll: the new President Ghazi Ajil al-Yawar.

Perhaps someday, Iraqis truly will enjoy sovereign control of their country. We fervently hope so. In the mean time, yesterday's hurried handoff is looking more like a fumble.

**DON'T BE DECEIVED.
YESTERDAY'S
CEREMONY WASN'T
A HANDOFF AT ALL.
IT WAS A FUMBLE.**

YES! I WANT TO HELP.

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