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(b)(3), (b)(6)

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Embassy Annex, International Zone, Baghdad

by (b)(3), (b)(6)

MNFI Historian

Interviewer's Comments: *I served with (b)(3), (b)(6) in the late 1980s in the 2nd Armored Division's Aviation Brigade. When I first saw him again a couple of weeks ago, at the MNFI Commander's Conference on 15 December, he was very reluctant to submit to an interview. He works very long hours and travels extensively, so he is worn down. Moreover, he gives the impression of believing his views on the situation are so unorthodox that no good would come from saying clearly what he really believes. Outside the interview, he suggested the MNFI staff is perfectly attuned to General Petraeus' talents, but it would not function effectively under any other commander. In this interview, (b)(3), (b)(6) focused on the situation. He sees time as the main enemy. He identified who and what organizations are key to his work, the challenge of finding a qualified replacement, and the top three issues he deals with in terms of geography, government, and economy.*

(b)(3), (b)(6) acknowledged the interview belongs to U.S. Central Command.

Kinetically, the enemy is AQ and JAM Special Groups, but Corps handles the day to day kinetics, and those enemies. We deal with a higher level fight.

Time is an enemy for us. An enemy is a Shia-majority country surrounded by Sunni neighbors. We have to face how to deal with Saudi Arabia. Our 'partner' is (b)(3), (b)(6) 1.4b The question is what forces are required for a fully functioning GoI.

Plans and Issues compete on a wide-spectrum of issues for a future vision, for the country within the region, when they will be left a minority within the region.

There are many clocks running against us:

1. The U.S. political clock, revolving around the election, the press, and popular attitudes.
2. The Army and its ability to sustain. By (b)(3), (b)(6) assessment, this clock is the closest to running out.
3. International Partners, the coalition partners, and this is not a U.S. problem, it is an international problem.
4. The regional clock. Some want to set it back hundreds of years. Some want less tolerance, more fundamental politics.
5. There is an Iraqi clock that is fearful of a resurgence of Ba'athist and Saddam. It may take a generation to overcome the fears, hatreds, and obsessions. It makes progress difficult, and the process needs intense, personal supervision.

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We need to synchronize all these clocks to meet expectations.

(b)(3), (b)(6) lane includes the following:

- Petraeus. He has awareness to give guidance and intent, to serve his intent.
- Robinson. He deals with (b)(3) 10 USC 424 as they ask for assistance. We provide assistance as it links to our campaign.
- Central Command - The JOA belongs to Petraeus, and he controls where we're headed.
- Handles critical issues with Debra Kagan, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for ???. Manages expectations at the Pentagon.
- The Joint Staff, Central Command, MNFI collaborative process. Have to ensure everyone keeps a common understanding and situational awareness to avoid surprises.

Efforts are underway to identify (b)(3), (b)(6) replacement. It can't be anybody. He has to be a 59 Strategic Planner. He needs combatant command and joint staff experience in order to comprehend the necessary strategic nuance. It takes great situational awareness and significant experience. SPA has pushed back on names of individuals who lack the needed experience. Our effort ties into the security line of operation, so the individual needs the operational, cultural experience to make it work.

We try to shape issues before they require decisions. We are trying to look deeper, and develop risk assessments of the issues we've framed. As we get agreement on the issues, SPA takes control of turning them into plans.

(b)(3), (b)(6) top three issues are:

1. Baghdad and Fardh al Qanoon. This is a center of gravity of the government and of our success. Success here leads to the next phase, which is looking at the northern and southern regions. In the North, risks include the Kurds, Article 140, and revenue sharing. The north is the most stable, and we don't want to jeopardize that. There are trade routes, tourism, and travel interests involved. The Kurds are a significant political block. In the south, there is the only port, access issues, and investment opportunities. There is access to the international community and trade. Where we see the closest ties are to the (b)(3) 1.4b We are looking to frame the political, diplomatic, and security lines of operation.
2. Forming a fully functioning government. The various ministries were given to specific parties or sects as a spoils system for those who participated in the elections. We have to get them to share and balance power, to work together.
3. Securing the population has been the central focus for months. Having improved security, we now have to get economic development going at both macro and micro levels. We can't remove our presence until there is hope for a better future. We face the problem of a single-commodity economy under centralized ownership and direction. The concept of popular representation is new.

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