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

(USA)

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Phoenix Base Camp, International Zone, Baghdad

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

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***Abstract***

(b)(3), (b)(6) discussed his experience as the S1 of 12th Avn Bde in the invasion of 2003 and his PCS departure from Balad in June 2003. MNSTCI faces a plethora of personnel challenges due to its very diverse make up of military and civilians. It is struggling for resources, with the Army frequently pushing back for justifications for critical billets.

(b)(3), (b)(6) morale and belief in the mission are higher here than they were at ICAF before he deployed. Part of that comes from the success of the surge and the lowering of violence, but being part of the mission also strengthens morale. Transcription priority: medium. This is a good interview, and the note on morale at the end confirms my much broader perceptions of views on the mission in US vs. in Iraq and how being in the mission makes people invested in it and more committed to it.

***12th Avn Bde in OIF I***

(b)(6)

In fact, units had deployed out of Europe to the Balkans repeatedly from the mid-'90s on, so I believe (b)(3), (b)(6) point illustrates the dearth of institutional memory in a high-optempo Army.

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### ***MNSTCI***

This is the place to learn about personnel issues in all their wide-ranging aspects: contractors, DOD civilians, DoS, all military services, and coalition forces. They all have different assignment systems, different promotion systems. There are awards issues unique to each and greater turnover among non-Army personnel. We have to watch and manage the assignments. We want more coalition forces. We handle travel and TDY, R&R, linguists (500).

The other piece we handle is the Joint Manning Document. We have individual augmentees, RFF teams, strategic level concerns. We have a RIP TOA coming up with the 104th Army Reserve Division turning things over to the 2125th General Support Unit. The 2125th has 140 empty positions that they have to--or have had to--go out and find IRRs to fill. These are our personnel challenges.

Our training teams function much like Tradoc Training, and we have the logistics training team.

GEN Petraeus recently approved our re-organization, but that does not provide the sourcing we need. We having to reduce our RFFs and our footprint, but reductions are conditions based.

We are very concerned about sourcing the organization. Every other month we have to answer Requests for Information to justify our positions. We have a critical billet review because the Army and the services are strained. It is a very challenging personnel environment. We stay very busy just making sure we get the people we need. We have peacetime processes (JMD) trying to support wartime requirements. DC is working 8 hours a day, five days a week. Some things that are expected of us, and the systems designed to support us, don't line up. The JMD takes months to figure out, source, and fill, but situations change drastically in a matter of weeks. There are the inputs, the time

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it takes to approve, the sourcing. The Security Assistance Office is changing, and the optempo stays in flux.

(b)(3), (b)(6) has been impressed by MNSTCI's diverse organization, the common goal animating its many personnel, the interaction with Iraqis. Maybe I came in at just the right time, but things are moving forward in Iraq, so maybe it was just luck, but there is progress. It is not as bad as what you read in the paper every day.

WOULD YOU SAY YOUR MORALE (BELIEF IN THE MISSION) IS HIGHER HERE THAN IT WAS BEFORE YOU DEPLOYED?

59:18 "Yeah, my morale is higher, just being part of it, being part of something that looks to be moving in the right direction. Even at ICAF, (Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Ft. McNair), probably half the discussion was about how this wasn't working here. I mean half the time was spent about why this was the wrong decision, what we're doing wrong. So on and so forth. And that's fine because you know that's why you go to school to get different perspectives and learn to see it from a different point. So, that's how we make things better the next time, what did you do right, what did you do wrong, but we spent probably just as much time . . . So, being in Washington, DC, and seeing the papers . . . and things weren't going well up until August, September. Again, being part of it. You know, you have family, you obviously wish you weren't gone so long, and so on and so forth, but being part of the solution here, and the people that I work with is the best part of the assignment for me."

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