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UNITED STATES ARMY

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CENTER OF MILITARY HISTORY

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INTERVIEW OF

MAJ. GENERAL EDWARD BERRAGAN

DEPUTY COMMANDING GENERAL (UK)

MULTINATIONAL CORPS - IRAQ

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11 JUNE 2007

BAGHDAD, IRAQ

(This transcript was produced from
tapes provided by the Center of Military
History.)

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(b)(3), (b)(6) -- Multinational
Corps, Iraq, Historian. Today is Monday, the
11th of June 2007, at approximately 1500. I
am here at the Multinational Corps
Headquarters, the Al Faw Palace at Camp
Victory outside of Baghdad, Iraq, and with me
is --

b 6 This is b 6
(b)(6) U.S. Army Center of Military History.

b 3, b 6 We will be here
interviewing Major General Berragan, United
Kingdom, who is the Deputy Commanding General
for Operations.

(b)(6): Sir, would you be so
kind as to introduce yourself in your own
voice.

MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: This is
Major General Jerry Berragan. I serve as the
Deputy Commanding General for Operations,
Multinational Corps - Iraq.

b 3 b 6 Great. Thank

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1 you, sir. Sir, I wanted to ask as a first
2 question: Can you give me a sense for what
3 issues you are focusing on in this capacity
4 as the Deputy Commanding General for
5 Operations?

6 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: My primary
7 focus is on the development of the Iraqi
8 security forces on behalf of the Corps
9 Commander, and in that role I really interact
10 with two senior Iraqi generals within the
11 Iraqi Army. That is Lieutenant General Aboud
12 (Phonetic) who is the Baghdad operational
13 commander, and Lieutenant General Ali
14 (Phonetic) who is the commander of the Iraqi
15 General Forces Command.

16 I interact with General Aboud on a
17 daily basis. I see him most days. (Several
18 words inaudible), have meetings with him,
19 and act as a mentor, really on behalf of the
20 Corps Commander. I interact with (Inaudible)
21 on a two or three times a week basis,
22 sometimes (several words inaudible). We have

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1 a weekly meeting, though, to discuss issues
2 that have arisen with the IGFC, Iraqi General
3 Forces Command.

4 [b 3, b 6]: Sir, in your
5 meeting with him, do you -- Is there a
6 separate interpreter or a political advisor
7 of some sort who acts as part of that team?

8 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: There is
9 always an interpreter, and normally I take
10 with me the Commander of Iraqi Assistance
11 Group, Brigadier General Pittard, and the
12 Chief of the Iraqi Security Forces there in
13 the Headquarters, which is [b)(3), b)(6)]

14 Between the three of us, we cover the
15 details, and there is always an interpreter
16 there.

17 Back to General Aboud, with
18 General Aboud normally my visits and my
19 interviews with him accompanied by an
20 interpreter, and also by [b)(3), b)(6)]
21 who is effectively acting as an Executive
22 Officer and sees General Aboud. He is a U.S.

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1 (Inaudible) Service Officer who speaks good
2 Arabic.

3 (b)(3), (b)(6) Do these meetings
4 usually take place here at Camp Victory or --

5 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: No. I
6 tend to go meet them on their own turf. So
7 I'll go to the Headquarters of the IGFC,
8 Iraqi General Forces Command, for General Ali
9 or take him on a trip somewhere, and with
10 General Aboud it is invariably in the Baghdad
11 Operations Command, which is in the
12 (Inaudible) Palace in the (Inaudible). But I
13 tend to get out and about more with General
14 Aboud, either in (Inaudible) around Baghdad
15 (several words inaudible).

16 (b)(3), (b)(6): Sir, could you
17 take me back to when you first came to the
18 billet? If I'm not mistaken, that was at the
19 very beginning of this year. Can you talk to
20 me a little bit about the handoff you got
21 from your predecessor, what was sort of his
22 description of what the situation was, and

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1 what were the major issues that were
2 identified to you at that time?

3 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: Yes.

4 (Several words inaudible) and we had about a
5 three-day handoff, which is quite short for
6 the U.S. Forces but actually quite normal to
7 the British group, having had the advantage
8 of about a day and a half visit the month
9 before in November. So I had had a feel from
10 him then as to what the job entailed, and
11 then we had a three-day handover where we
12 spent a long time discussing the nature of
13 the job and had some meetings (several words
14 inaudible) where we interacted.

15 b 3 b 6 Was your
16 predecessor also U.K., sir?

17 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: The U.K.
18 had the post, to my knowledge, since perhaps
19 August or so 2004 in the Multinational Corps.
20 So there's been a number of British generals
21 through this post.

22 He had been shot forward and --

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1 Traditionally, we do six-month tours. He had
2 done about four and a half months. He was
3 called back to London to fill a post there
4 that had become vacant. So I arrived
5 slightly earlier than planned.

6 What is interesting is that the
7 nature of the job changed quite significantly
8 after we -- as we handed over, because it was
9 about that time that the Baghdad Operation
10 Command was being stood up, and it was about
11 that time that General Odierno realized that
12 the Corps would be part of the U.S.
13 Headquarters and that he would need a general
14 to interact on a daily basis with the Baghdad
15 Operation Commander.

16 So there my predecessor spent a
17 lot of time with General Ali (Inaudible). It
18 was quite clear (Inaudible) that I would be
19 spending more time with General Ali and
20 probably less time with the Iraqi General
21 Forces Command.

22

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

What was your

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1 assessment of the situation as you got your
2 feet on the ground and took over the position
3 and switched that focus to the Baghdad
4 Operations?

5 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: Well,
6 again (several words inaudible), because as I
7 had come out in December the focus then --
8 and this was just as the V Corps handed off
9 to III Corps -- was on the transition
10 (inaudible). That was the new kid on the
11 block, and it was all about transitioning to
12 the Iraqi security forces (Inaudible). This,
13 of course, was 2007.

14 In the intervening period, the
15 month or so I was packing in the U.K., that
16 changed, and it was after the publication of
17 various reports in Washington that the U.S.
18 decided to, I think, implement -- and
19 "Choosing Victory," I think, was the
20 (Inaudible) report (Several words inaudible).

21 But it encapsulated the fact that security
22 would come first (Inaudible) to Iraqi

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1 security control, and that was then built
2 into the surge and also the new situation in
3 the Baghdad security plan, which became part
4 of the (Inaudible). So it was an interesting
5 time to come, because the thing had changed
6 quite significantly in the time between my
7 (Inaudible) and my deployment.

8 (b)(3), (b)(6): Did you receive
9 any particular unique guidance before coming
10 to theater from your own chain of command in
11 the U.K. or from the Ministry of Defense?

12 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: None
13 whatsoever. (Inaudible) doesn't have any
14 particular responsibilities in the U.K.
15 chain. I'm not in the senior military
16 representative's chain and, therefore,
17 although I went and had briefings in London
18 from various agencies and -- government
19 agencies and the Ministry of Defense -- there
20 was no specific instructions given to me
21 other than what I had gleaned from talking to
22 previous people who had done this job.

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1 I also attended the U.S. Joint
2 Command Commander's Course at Carlisle back
3 in October, and that was useful, because it
4 certainly gave me a good feel for what was
5 going on in the U.S. Army at the moment. It
6 gave me good insight into various (Inaudible)
7 on Iraq and, obviously, Afghanistan as well,
8 but also I took some -- another course,
9 (Inaudible), who are currently serving in
10 Iraq. So it was quite a useful interaction
11 with some of those as well.

12 [REDACTED] (b)(3), (b)(6) Did you know the
13 senior-most officers in the command before
14 arriving here, General Odierno?

15 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: No, I
16 didn't. No. In fact, the only one I know
17 well is (Inaudible), and he is coming in just
18 after I leave in October. In fact, it will
19 be later than that now, and that's General
20 Hunt.

21 [REDACTED] b 3, b 6 I was curious to
22 know your perceptions relative to your past

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1 experience, if you have been in Coalition
2 environments and joint environments. How are
3 you seeing this particular coalition
4 environment unfolding? What do you think
5 about it or have to say about it compared to
6 your previous experience?

7 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: Well, I've
8 worked in the Coalition that was part of
9 Desert Storm/Desert Shield. So I've worked
10 with Americans quite a bit before, and so it
11 was not unfamiliar, and also I had served in
12 the Headquarters (Inaudible) which is a
13 multi-national headquarters based around the
14 British corps headquarters but with a
15 significant American coalition component in
16 it, including their generals.

17 So I have some experience in
18 working with U.S. forces and, in fact, I
19 think the modus operandi of the Headquarters
20 (Several words inaudible) is not dissimilar
21 to this headquarters or indeed any American
22 (Inaudible). We use similar mechanisms of

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1 (Inaudible) updates. All of those things are
2 familiar. So making this transition wasn't
3 particularly difficult in terms of the
4 headquarters runs and operates and how it's
5 structured. It was familiar to me. I just
6 needed to get my head down on the situation,
7 the tactical situation, and also some of the
8 (Inaudible).

9 [b 3 b 6]: Because you
10 arrived at such an interesting time in
11 (Inaudible), did you have any personal
12 observations about just (Inaudible) style or
13 a different approach at the higher level as
14 the MNFI Commanders changed out and how that
15 impacted the staff at the MNC-I level?

16 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: Yes. I
17 think there has been. There has been a
18 change, and inevitably a change in style
19 between General Casey and General Petraeus
20 and, of course, General Casey had been here
21 quite a long time, and that is, in some
22 circumstances, an advantage, because you know

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1 a good degree of (Inaudible). You've seen
2 things happen before and know what the risks
3 and the opportunities are. But I think it
4 also can be a disadvantage in the sense that
5 you become less open to new ideas and new
6 developments and (Several words inaudible).

7 You certainly can become
8 conservative in thinking about how things
9 might change, perhaps having had
10 opportunities which haven't really been
11 developed.

12 So I think a fresh set of eyes in
13 the first case coming in when General
14 Petraeus did is probably essential, given the
15 change in staff. And of course, General
16 Petraeus has a very particular style, which
17 is different from General Casey.

18 So I think that is a -- That's
19 certainly been a significant factor in the
20 way the operation is being run. The change
21 in Commander would inevitably have an impact.

22 b 3 b 6

As that change

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1 happened, and you spoke earlier just about
2 some of the -- in the midst of the briefing
3 strategy, (Inaudible) into the security is
4 first strategy.

5 Has that evolved, and as you were
6 getting situated, did -- What kind of
7 conversations did General Odierno have with
8 you about what his hopes and expectations
9 were for your area of focus?

10 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: Well, I
11 think the first thing was that it was clear
12 that we needed to partner, not transition,
13 with the Iraqi security forces, and that was
14 a fundamental tenet of the Baghdad security
15 plan, that we would partner. Really, that
16 was right down to the county level, and that
17 preparations would be conducted in that
18 partnership.

19 That was (Inaudible) because, of
20 course, we were giving command to General
21 Aboud to the operation, for the Baghdad
22 operation but, clearly, he couldn't command

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1 coalition troops. So that's a really
2 difficult thing, was to work out a mechanism
3 whereby he had command in terms of setting
4 priorities and directing where the effort
5 should, but actually, in execution, as
6 always, it needed to be done by the chain of
7 command, down the coalition and the Iraqi
8 chain of command.

9 That really demanded a degree of
10 willingness at every level, certainly down at
11 MND Baghdad and, naturally, within MND
12 Central, to do a genuine partnering
13 arrangement, and to discuss plans with Iraqi
14 counterparts and to cement them together,

15 I was involved in drawing up the
16 Memorandum of Understanding between the Corps
17 and the Baghdad Operations Command, which at
18 the time was a bit difficult, because we
19 didn't really know what Aboud's agenda would
20 be, indeed whether it was a (Inaudible)
21 political agenda.

22 So that took a bit of work, and

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1 eventually I think we got to a position where
2 the command arrangements were accepted with
3 both, and effective.

4 [b 3, b 6]: I'm just curious
5 to know a little bit more about that. I've
6 read the Memorandum of Understanding. Can
7 you give me a greater sense for the degree of
8 involvement of the Iraqi general staff in
9 that process?

10 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: Well,
11 indeed, I don't think there was any
12 particular involvement of the Iraqi general
13 staff. It was really done between the staff
14 and the Corps here, myself and General
15 Aboud, with one or two of his key advisors,
16 his Chief of Staff and his Chief of Plans and
17 [b(6)] (Phonetic).

18 I don't think he exposed the
19 various drafts to anyone at all. It was like
20 he was empowered to do it, and he was really
21 looking for an MOU which gave him the
22 freedoms he needed, but recognizing that he

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1 was constrained in terms of what his command
2 of coalition forces would be.

3 It was really important that we
4 started from the same assumptions in terms of
5 boundaries, in terms of security districts,
6 in terms of the plan, which we worked up in
7 three or four months, whereby we would
8 conduct some destruction operations followed
9 by clearing operations, followed by
10 controlling, providing secure (Inaudible),
11 and then retaining those areas as secure
12 areas and developing the infrastructure of
13 the area and the reconstruction of
14 (Inaudible) services.

15 So he needed to sign up to that,
16 and did, and then he needed to sign up to how
17 we would carry this out in terms of
18 sequencing. Again, you know, he was
19 empowered to have a view on this, and I think
20 that was important. We didn't present him
21 with a fait accompli. We really got him
22 engaged in it. So MND Baghdad played

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1 a particular strong role in this, in engaging
2 him and his commanders in terms of various
3 conferences and mock drills and so on. So he
4 really did feel included and part of the
5 process, and I think that's been one of the
6 great successes of this operation, has been
7 our ability to (Inaudible) partner and
8 cooperate with our Iraqi ally.

9 b 3, b 6 looking at where
10 we are now in the fight this many months
11 later, and looking back on that Memorandum of
12 Understanding, what would be the areas that
13 you would focus on specifically that worked
14 very well in others that we -- This is still
15 kind of an area that's perhaps more --

16 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: What the
17 (Inaudible) did is it's the agreement that he
18 would be empowered to direct what authority
19 and effort should be, and indeed where the
20 sequence of terror operations should be, but
21 that we would retain the right, if we felt in
22 any way that he was being -- or that they

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1 were acting in a sectarian or political or
2 inappropriate way, we retained the right to
3 challenge that behavior (several words
4 inaudible).

5 I think that was a fundamental
6 aspect of the MOU, that really had to be
7 ironed out early on, so that we both
8 understood and were clear what was expected
9 and what wasn't. And over time it developed,
10 of course, because his early operations grew
11 from just the 10 security districts to
12 include the outlying areas like Abu Ghraib
13 and Medajin (Phonetic) where he had Iraqi
14 forces under command in the 6th and 9th and
15 another Iraqi division and some of the
16 national police down in Medajin.

17 So he has expanded the area
18 operations to include that, and then, of
19 course, Center came along, and we had to now
20 really partner with two MNBs, both Baghdad
21 and Center.

22 So it's developed over time. It's

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1 evolved over time, but the foundation for the
2 MOU has held good, and we have not really
3 had a problem in my experience. If you like,
4 go back and reexamine that fundamentally.

5 (b)(3), (b)(6) I'm just curious
6 about if there have been any sticky areas,
7 how you've hashed out some of the areas. I'm
8 thinking, for instance, of close air support,
9 an area that we -- From what I understand, we
10 are not going to give up that to the Iraqis.

11 On the other hand, there may be
12 occasions when they need close air support.

13 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: And that
14 was one of the areas that we said that was
15 part of the partnership. We would provide
16 for them, too, the access -- give them better
17 trained teams and (Inaudible) integrated
18 trained teams, and also through the partner
19 units say, when they found themselves in a
20 position where close escort or something
21 similar was required, for example, also to
22 cover that, and (Inaudible) evacuation.

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1 These are things that we, the Coalition, can
2 provide for them (Inaudible), and have done;
3 and that is part of the team effort. But
4 they were not qualified nor equipped to be
5 able to deal with them themselves. So it was
6 something that we provided, the capability to
7 (Inaudible) the force.

8 b 3, b 6 Working as
9 closely as you do with the (Inaudible) senior
10 commanders, do you have other opportunities
11 for conversations about what the future will
12 be, given that all of us are in a state of
13 unknown about, on the political side of
14 things, how long our respective countries
15 will continue to support troops in Iraq?

16 Is there a sense of urgency, as
17 you see it, in that relationship? Do they
18 have an understanding that there will be, you
19 know, an end at some point, and we don't know
20 when that will be? What is their take on
21 that?

22 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: Yes. They

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1 know. (Inaudible) them as being patriotic,
2 nationalists, and nonsectarian Iraqis, and
3 that they need to be, frankly, in their
4 position. Neither, to my knowledge, (several
5 words inaudible), and both want the best for
6 Iraq. And so both see -- At the moment, both
7 see the need for Coalition participation in
8 security operations, and I think both would
9 see or respond to positions of the Iraqis,
10 could even -- could claim them themselves.

11 What the time scale for that is, I
12 think, is still uncertain and, to a large
13 extent, depends on our success against some
14 of the extremists, some (Inaudible) of the
15 sectarian spectrum.

16 I think the Commander of the RGFC,
17 General Ali, is increasingly gaining command
18 of his own Iraqi Army formations, and he
19 really commands all of the Iraqi Army
20 divisions now outside of Baghdad with the
21 exception of 7 Division out in Al Anbar, and
22 the new 11 Division, which is still forming

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1 up, both of which will follow later, probably
2 toward the end of the year or early next
3 year.

4 General Aboud has command now of
5 the 6 and 9 Divisions, which are the two
6 Iraqi Army divisions inside Baghdad, and so
7 in a sense they have already got their hands
8 on the reins in terms of command over the
9 last, I guess, six or seven months.

10 So they see progress in that
11 respect. They understand there still are
12 challenges, but they see progress. But they
13 also recognize that in some cases, if we were
14 to leave them to it, they would be
15 (Inaudible). So I think there is a
16 pragmatism there in which, you know, we are
17 partners until we can run this thing
18 ourselves.

19 b 3, b 6 How often is
20 there a reassessment of, if you will, the
21 terms of the Memorandum of Understanding?
22 Maybe I should ask that in the context of:

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1 How often do you brief General Odierno or
2 does he consult with you with regard to how
3 are we doing in terms of watching those
4 things like sectarian influence, these types
5 of things? MAJ. GENERAL

6 BERRAGAN: We don't reference back to the
7 MOU, not at all, because it was thrashed out
8 in the early days in, I guess, late January,
9 early February, but the issue, I think, that
10 was always going to be one that we were
11 watching was with this issue of sectarian
12 influence.

13 We, frankly, have seen very little
14 of it in the Iraqi Army. I think we've seen
15 more of it in the National Police, and that's
16 an area of particular concern. But the --
17 Our reaction to it is pretty consistent, and
18 it's challenged at every level, the
19 (inaudible) level, the department unit level,
20 MND level and International Division level or
21 corps level. At every level, it was
22 challenged.

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1 Frankly, at my level when I
2 mention these things to General Aboud, he is
3 absolutely scrupulous in investigation and
4 challenging himself. He will not
5 (Inaudible), and indeed has been involved
6 recently in looking at investigations with
7 the National Police officers who acted either
8 in sectarian or conflicted ways with the
9 Jaish al-Mahdi.

10 So the MOU underpins what we do in
11 those circumstances. We don't reference back
12 to it. It's simply, if you like, an
13 agreement that that's what we would do.

14 [b 3, b 6]: Is there a
15 process just for a general, formal update on
16 a recurring basis to the Commander relative
17 to your perceptions of how the Iraqi Army is
18 doing -- or informal?

19 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: Well,
20 there. There is a formal process assessing
21 how the Iraqi Army is doing. It's called the
22 -- what was called the Transition (Inaudible)

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1 Assessment. It's now called the Operation
2 (Inaudible) Assessment. It happens every
3 month.

4 It's a fairly detailed
5 bureaucratic process of assessing the Army
6 and National Police and police across whole
7 zones of areas, from their operational
8 capability, their logistics, their equipment,
9 their strengths, training and all of the
10 things you would imagine, and that gives us
11 an overall assessment of how they are doing.

12 Then within that is a subjective
13 assessment as to whether there was corruption
14 or sectarian activity amongst commanders,
15 which is inclusive in that process.

16 So, yes, there is a formal
17 process. What it does, really, is it tells
18 us their -- It gives us a feel for their
19 ability to take things on by themselves, but
20 I think, more importantly, it helps identify
21 the systemic problems which are preventing
22 them from getting and becoming more capable,

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1 and those are really unsurprising since they
2 are the sort of things that (Inaudible)
3 armies find difficult, which is sustainment
4 and re-equipment and some of the G-1 issues
5 of manpower, personnel, policies, which take
6 time to evolve. And I think, to a certain
7 extent, in the past the Coalition has been
8 guilty of suggesting modern sophisticated
9 Western procedures that work for us, to an
10 army that really isn't equipped or trained or
11 educated to be able to cope with them.

12 Very small computerized personnel
13 policy systems may not be the right solution
14 for an army that's massive and have worked up
15 until now on pen and paper. So I think
16 sometimes we haven't had -- not purposely,
17 but with the best will in the world, we've
18 suggested things (several words inaudible)
19 that don't necessarily or won't work for
20 them.

21 [b 6] : Yes. I've got a
22 couple of follow-up questions, just a few,

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1 sir.

2 You indicated your assessment of
3 the Iraqi ground forces. Do you interface
4 with the National Police at all?

5 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: I do, but
6 only -- Not on a routine basis. I do make an
7 effort, and I go and see General (Inaudible)
8 Al Awadi (Phonetic) who is the commander.
9 Probably on about a monthly basis, I talk to
10 him, either -- because he is also the Deputy
11 of the Baghdad Operation Command. So I see
12 him there or I go and see him at his
13 headquarters, talk to him. But actually,
14 time is a problem, and trying to get around
15 to all these people is quite difficult, but I
16 try to.

17 I certainly make it a point to
18 talk to him about the concerns among our
19 (inaudible) to the National Police, much more
20 difficult with the Iraqi Police Service, with
21 the local police, because they are so
22 localized, and really is the business of the

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1 Multinational Division together with their
2 own Military Policemen to interact with the
3 local police, because they are so (Inaudible)
4 around the country.

5 b 3, b 6 Let me take you
6 back to February, middle of February. Rather
7 abruptly I saw a change in the naming of
8 Together Forward to Fardel al-Kanoun
9 (Phonetic), and I still haven't been able to
10 track down exactly how that came about. I do
11 know that it was an assessment to let the
12 Iraqis name it, and that's what they named
13 it.

14 Is that what General Aboud named
15 it or General Ali?

16 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: I don't
17 think (several words inaudible) General Ali.
18 He had little to do with the Baghdad
19 security plan.

20 I think there was a number of
21 things. The name we had given it was
22 Together Forward II, which I think was an

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1 unfortunate choice of terms, because it
2 rather implied that Together Forward I had
3 failed, and associating Together Forward II
4 with Together Forward I probably wasn't a
5 good idea.

6 I think that was a very smart move
7 by the Iraqis to say, actually, I think we
8 need to rename it, and I think it was also a
9 smart move on the Coalition's part.

10 I think it was General Casey who
11 said that, when they suggested Enforcing the
12 Law, which is what (Inaudible) Kanoun
13 (phonetic) -- he seized upon it and said,
14 yeah, we've got to use this and -- use this
15 title.

16 In fact, interestingly, I can
17 remember the debate quite clearly, because
18 when it was translated Enforcing the Law,
19 initially the U.S. response was, well, let's
20 call it Law and Order after (Inaudible) TV
21 program, I gather, which (several words
22 inaduable).

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32

1 Fortunately, that was challenged
2 by somebody. I think it was probably
3 (Inaudible) who said, you know, you don't
4 really have to change the interpretation to
5 law and order, because order itself has a
6 different meaning to (Inaudible), and
7 actually, Casey then said (Inaudible) in
8 their language; just keep it in their
9 language and actually use their terminology,
10 Fardel al Kanoun (Phonetic).

11 [b 3, b 6] So it was done
12 while General Casey was still here?

13 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: I'm
14 certain it was, yes. Certain it was, yes.

15 [b 3 b 6]: Okay.

16 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: And then I
17 remember him saying, let's use that analogy
18 and the (Phonetic). So that's what we did,
19 and I think that's right. And there was also
20 a change, in a sense, but (several words
21 inaudible).

22 One way of dealing with militias

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1 and terrorist groups -- not just those two,
2 but also with a whole range of criminals,
3 gangsters, corrupt officials -- (Inaudible)
4 has a much more wider resonance than just
5 taking on the terrorism, in a sense. It's
6 restoring law and order to a (Inaudible) that
7 has become anything but, and part of that was
8 through terrorism, and part was just through
9 (Inaudible) and crime.

10 I think that's what he was getting
11 at, was this is restoring law and order to a
12 city, not just fighting terrorism. And
13 that's been very much -- He's been consistent
14 in that effect. So whether we are dealing
15 with people who are fighting (Inaudible) or
16 terrorists planting bombs, you know, the
17 reaction has been the same, (several words
18 inaudible), and I think that's right.

19 It goes back to Mayor Guiliani's
20 approach that, you know, you've got to do the
21 little things as well as the big things.
22 Sometimes the little things lead to big

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1 things, and that approach, I think, is one
2 they -- you know, they recognized when they
3 went down that route.

4 b 3 b 6 Good. On the
5 strength of the Iraqi forces in Baghdad, and
6 the U.S. forces, too, I've noticed some
7 fluctuation.

8 I was here in March, and I saw the
9 1st Cav had like nine brigades, maneuver
10 brigades, and the Iraqis the two divisions
11 plus the National Police. Then when I've
12 come back in June, I've noticed the number of
13 brigades, U.S. 1st Cav. has gone down to
14 seven, and the Iraqi Army seems to have
15 stayed about the same.

16 I wonder if General Aboud thinks
17 he has enough. Is there enough force?

18 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: I've never
19 met an operational commander who thinks he's
20 got enough force, and that's been consistent
21 throughout my career. (

22 You've got to be careful about

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1 counting number of brigades in one
2 (Inaudible), because of course, two were
3 chopped out to MD-Center. So all that's
4 happened is the AAs get smaller rather than
5 they got smaller. Their (Inaudible got
6 smaller, and they (Several words inaudible.)

7 I think they have increased in size, because
8 the 282 came in, I think, in about March
9 time, and 41 -- So 41 ID came in then, and
10 they also have some reinforcements in terms
11 of additional battalions.

12 So I think they've actually got
13 bigger since March, even within the security
14 districts, the area they now cover.

15
16 The last time I looked at it, I
17 reckoned it about -- within the security
18 districts -- It gets confusing if you start
19 going outside -- about 14-15,000 troops from
20 both the Coalition and the (Inaudible). But
21 it's about equal now.

22 Of course, that doesn't quite work

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1 out, because whereas all of our forces are
2 here, largely, all the time, the Iraqis are
3 on a leave program so people get away from
4 whatever they do about a week, a month or
5 something to go back and pay their families
6 and things.

7 So the actual committed strength -
8 - I mean strength on the streets -- is
9 slightly different, and they are probably
10 only about 75 percent of that at any one
11 time. But they have consistently deployed
12 since really sort of early March about an
13 additional five to five and a half thousand
14 Iraqi Army troops from elsewhere other than
15 Baghdad.

16 In talking to my predecessor and
17 his predecessor, that alone has been a
18 significant commitment, because when they
19 first tried to do this at the first
20 (Inaudible) security plan, no one turned up,
21 and it was my -- basically, my predecessor's
22 efforts to try and improve that, and I think

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1 they were quite happy when I told him that we
2 had actually got these additional forces in,
3 and not just got them in, but actually
4 rotated -- done one rotation now.

5 So -- and when you can figure that
6 a lot of the forces are deploying into
7 Baghdad, certain various divisions that are
8 even numbered were set up on the basis of
9 being local forces set up, I guess, National
10 Guardsmen to work in their provinces and not
11 deploy elsewhere, and all of those divisions
12 have now been made national and are being
13 deployed as 2nd Division, 10th Division, both
14 forces into Baghdad. Both were set up as
15 regional divisions.

16 So those guys didn't sign up for
17 this when they first joined up. They joined
18 the Army, and currently have now deployed,
19 which I think is a considerable achievement,
20 and again something that's been in the last
21 nine months quite a transformation for the
22 Iraqi Army, because it has changed its nature

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1 very quickly.

2 Is there enough? No, there's
3 never enough, and particularly in the sort of
4 operations we are doing where, as you clear a
5 neighborhood, you then leave forces behind to
6 keep it secure and to patrol to maintain
7 security there, where you start to very
8 quickly absorb those troop numbers, and you
9 start to find that, you know, as you get
10 toward the end, the numbers clearing are
11 down, and the numbers left to retain it -- or
12 to control again are diminished.

13 That's where you are right now, I
14 think, and as we cleared Rashid east and
15 west, there were insufficient forces left on
16 the ground to keep it clear, and we are still
17 having trouble in those areas, and that's a
18 problem. But there's another two challenges
19 coming. So we'll see how that (Inaudible).

20 (b)(6) I wonder if you could
21 talk a little bit about the joint security
22 stations. Are there enough? How are they

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1 working, and could you talk just a little bit
2 about how they are manned?

3 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: Yes, and I
4 think the concept is actually sound, because
5 I think, and people have realized, that
6 notwithstanding the huge force deployment
7 here from the U.S. but from the coalition
8 generally, a lot of those forces were
9 deployed for efficiency reasons in huge big
10 blocks. It was easier to guard. It was
11 easier to feed, maintain and all of that.
12 But (Inaudible) they were becoming detached
13 from the centers of population, and as a
14 result, as General Petraeus put it, people
15 were commuting to war.

16 [b 6]: Right.

17 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: They were
18 going out in the morning and coming back in
19 the evening, and they worked sparingly.

20 So this is a complete change of
21 mindset that, you know, suddenly we were
22 going to go back out, live in some pretty

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1 austere conditions in the community, and get
2 to know the community better in terms of
3 soldiers patrolling it, and get to know the
4 neighborhood and understand the dynamics of
5 the neighborhood and understand where the
6 risks were. And that has happened and, you
7 know, since January there have been 34 Joint
8 Security Stations or combat outposts deployed
9 in some pretty austere conditions, and I've
10 been to quite a few of them, and it's hard
11 life for soldiers when you look at the
12 conditions they live in on Victory Base
13 versus what they live in in some of these
14 JSSes. It's very, very hard going.

15 They rotate out of those into some
16 of the bigger (Inaudible) inside Baghdad
17 which again are pretty austere.

18 So it's been a change of mindset,
19 really, but it has had dividends, because it
20 does mean they've made the areas better.
21 They are living and working alongside their
22 Iraqi Army counterparts and the Iraqi police,

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1 and it has had a very significant effect, I
2 think, on security in many of the districts
3 of Baghdad.

4 There are still some to go, and I
5 think, as I've mentioned before, we are
6 getting to a stage now where we are looking
7 around to where we've got sufficient troops
8 to control.

9 As for the JSS themselves, they
10 vary in their -- I think, their -- courtesy
11 is the wrong word -- in their affections
12 probably, really judging by where they are
13 (Inaudible) and how integrated they are
14 inside the community and how much people fear
15 they are part of (Inaudible) of Iraq
16 (Inaudible), and also, I think, in whether
17 they have any Iraqi police in them or not;
18 because most of them -- pretty well all of
19 them -- contain a mix of Coalition and Iraqi
20 Army or National Police. Not all of them
21 contain Iraqi Police.

22 Of course, the longer term vision

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1 is over time these things will become turned
2 over to the police. They will become the
3 neighborhood police stations, and the Iraqi
4 Army and Coalition won't be there. If they
5 were going to be there, they would provide
6 the police with back-up security for that
7 area.

8 So one can envisage over time that
9 areas become more benign, police taking on
10 the role of providing security from those
11 stations. So that essentially, that all the
12 stations have police (Inaudible), and while
13 (Several words inaudible) in Sunni areas
14 (Several words inaudible), because Shia
15 policemen don't work there, certainly don't
16 live there, and Sunni policemen won't join
17 the Police.

18 That's changing to a certain
19 extent now. We are seeing some encouraging
20 signs of laypersons wanting to become more
21 responsible for their neighborhood security
22 and, I think, have now challenged the Iraqi

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1 government to neighborhood police.

2 [b 6]: Okay. Let me ask you
3 a more general question or perception. You
4 know, when Fardel Kanoun (Phonetic) began in
5 February and through March, we saw an
6 decrease in -- We saw apparently working a
7 decrease in sectarian violence, a decrease in
8 violence overall, and then in April and May
9 it began to creep up a little bit, still not
10 as high as it has been. But what would you
11 say the forces are at work there?

12 Are they insurgents? Are the
13 anti-Iraqi forces rebounding or are things --
14 How do you see things going?

15 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: If you
16 want a very simple answer to that question,
17 Jaish al-Mahdi was told in January to really
18 close down all operations inside Baghdad, and
19 for the most of their commanders to leave
20 Baghdad.

21 [b 6]: Right.

22 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: And so it

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1 became, really, a one-sided fight, because
2 Jaish al-Mahdi just stopped operations. So
3 immediately all the sectarian killings,
4 (Inaudible) killings that have been, you
5 know, part of that tit for tat cycle of
6 violence before then stopped. And although
7 there were AQI, al Qaeda, vehicle-borne IEDs
8 or bombs, car bombs, causing casualties,
9 there wasn't the response.

10 So what you saw was a significant
11 reduction in terror and violence, because
12 only one side was playing.

13 What you saw in April and May was
14 Jaish al-Mahdi returning to the fight. And
15 so not surprisingly, the numbers of murders
16 went back up again, and intimidation and
17 clearing of areas starts to come back.

18 I have to say, those murders and
19 civilian casualties have not -- certainly not
20 gone back to anything like the levels of
21 January.

22 In fact, I think murders are about

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1 half the level they were before January, and
2 overall, if you look at the numbers of
3 civilian casualties and the number of
4 vehicle-borne car bombs and truck bombs,
5 there has been a steady decline over the last
6 five months.

7 So in that respect, the plan is
8 working. It's working in the sense that it
9 has reduced the cycle of sectarian violence
10 and the violence that is still ongoing is
11 localized in probably no more than three or
12 four districts in Baghdad of the 10.

13 In other areas, normalcy is
14 returning. People are going to the markets.
15 People are out shopping. They are clearing
16 up (Inaudible) and so on, which they weren't
17 doing in January, as streets were (Inaudible)
18 in January.

19 So I think there are positive
20 signs, and I think it is now, really, a
21 question of the extent to which the
22 government of Iraq can provide the addition

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1 of political and economic incentives for --
2 to capitalize on that reduction in violence,
3 and I think the security plan is still going
4 and is certainly not finished. But it is
5 showing signs of having an effect, and it
6 really now needs the other line to develop,
7 if you like, the other line of operation, to
8 play their part.

9 I think that is very much the view
10 of the Force, of the Force Commander, in
11 terms of the focus of the joint campaign
12 plan from here on in, which is to really
13 drive the political line of development,
14 which is a line of operation which is the
15 area, I think, that really offers in the
16 longer term much more benefit.

17 So, yes, I'm not of a pessimistic
18 nature. It may not feel very good and, in
19 fact, you know, casualties are up. So
20 Coalition casualties are up. You know, last
21 month 120 U.S. servicemen killed, about the
22 third U.S. month we've had there. But that

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1 is not surprising, given the numbers of
2 troops we've brought in and the fact that we
3 are taking the fight to the enemy, and we are
4 going to areas that we've not been in for a
5 long time.

6 I mean, to do that, you are going
7 to take casualties. So, yes, this is an
8 offensive operation, and it is going to -- It
9 is going to be hard, but you have to then
10 look at what the effect is and see what the
11 benefits are, and I think you can see those.

12 You can start to see them, and these are
13 early days.

14 It is definitely early days. It
15 will take probably another couple of months
16 of this sort of hard grind, this hard
17 pounding, before we really start to see a
18 sustained effect. And as I said, (Several
19 words inaudible) -- assessing conditions for
20 the politicians to get a political settlement
21 which brings together, really, the party
22 forum, the parties which are currently at

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1 odds.

2 [b)(6)]: So do you think by
3 December of '07 we will have created the
4 conditions to secure the population to --

5 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: I think
6 it's possible inside Baghdad, yes.

7 [b 6]: In Baghdad.

8 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: Yes, but
9 the question is what happens elsewhere,
10 because as we have borne down on Baghdad, we
11 have seen violence. And in fact, as we've
12 seen success in Anbar, we've seen insurgents
13 and terrorists going elsewhere.

14 So part of the plan, of course, is
15 not just looking at Baghdad itself, but in
16 the belts around it.

17 [b 6]: Right.

18 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: And I
19 think there is still a battle to be fought
20 and won in Diyala, and I think there are
21 still risks in terms of what might go on in
22 Mosul, Talifar and (Inaudible), and that's an

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1 area where I think we are taking a degree of
2 risk.

3 But I think, with the focus being on Baghdad
4 and the belts and with the arrival this month
5 of the final BCT and the additional aviation
6 brigade and so on, we probably will see an
7 impact on violence in Baghdad and
8 (Inaudible). The belts provide the support
9 for insurgents and terrorists to attach
10 inside Baghdad.

11 So it is too early to really see
12 the outcome of that, but the early trends are
13 encouraging.

14 [b 6]: Okay. Well, that's
15 all -- Okay.

16 [b 3 b 6]: Sir, I wanted to
17 come back around and ask: With the Iraqi
18 security forces, especially -- and I'm really
19 kind of asking this question not so much
20 about Baghdad but about the country overall,
21 and as we have continued on with the
22 Provincial Iraqi control in certain areas of

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1 the country where there are Iraqi Army forces
2 in those places, are you comfortable with the
3 flow of information, and perhaps military
4 information, intelligence information?

5 Is that still flowing to us
6 through the Iraqi security forces, to a
7 degree? Are we still getting that as we turn
8 over those areas and as the Iraqi Army takes
9 on that?

10 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: It's more
11 tenuous. It is more tenuous. We don't
12 always have a good handle on what's going on
13 in the provinces that have gone to
14 provisional Iraqi control, inevitably,
15 because we won't have the forces there,
16 either deployed forces or (Inaudible) to
17 leave there to be able to give us that
18 information, and I think we are relying more
19 heavily on some of the special operations
20 forces that have deployed out in small groups
21 in those areas to provide us that
22 information, and we do rely on, as you say,

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1 on the Iraqi security forces themselves to
2 provide it. But I think it is true to say
3 that we don't have as clear a situation of
4 awareness in those areas. But I guess the
5 question is, do we need to, because if those
6 areas are broadly peaceful and are broadly
7 under control and containable by the Iraqi
8 security forces, in a sense, that's a good
9 thing, and therefore, we shouldn't be losing
10 too much sleep over it. Then you worry if
11 those areas are turning bad and require some
12 sort of reinforcement or reengagement by
13 Coalition forces that we need that situation
14 awareness.

15 So I think the answer is we don't
16 have as good situation awareness, and as long
17 as they remain reasonably peaceful, we
18 probably don't need that.

19 b 3, b 6: To continue that
20 question to Baghdad. Is there a regular
21 intelligence conduit with the Iraqi elements
22 that are in Baghdad, part of the Baghdad

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1 Operations Center? Is there sort of a, if
2 you will, an intel --

3 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: Probably
4 not as good as it should be. I think -- I
5 know that the COIN present staff have regular
6 briefings with the ICF, Iraqi Current Forces
7 Command intelligence staff; and I think --
8 I'd say probably the information flow tends
9 in one way, from them to us; because I think
10 we are very restrictive in what we give to
11 them because of all our caveats.

12 I think that within Baghdad
13 itself, what you get is useful information
14 sharing down at unit level, so that the Iraqi
15 Army and National Police (Inaudible) with
16 their partner units can often provide some
17 useful human intelligence directly into those
18 units, and I think there is a real benefit
19 there, local knowledge and just understanding
20 the dynamics of a situation, they can provide
21 that.

22 The Baghdad Operation Commander is

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1 very neutral in terms of intelligence
2 capability. [REDACTED] 1.4c

3 [REDACTED] 1.4c It does a
4 bit of targeting, but it doesn't really have
5 anything like the capability that Coalition
6 forces have and, therefore, is at this stage
7 still learning how to do assessments and how
8 to provide some intelligent briefs --
9 intelligence briefs to commanders.

10 So I think the answer is we
11 probably could do a lot better than we
12 currently do. There is an inherent suspicion
13 in all intelligence, and -- but the services
14 that are sharing information (Several words
15 inaudible) probably dogs our own attempts to
16 be more open and sharing with the Iraqis.

17 We have tremendous capabilities in
18 terms of intelligence gathering on our front,
19 without going into specifics. [REDACTED] 1.4c

20 [REDACTED] 1.4c

21 [REDACTED] 1.4c

22 Really, we could probably (Inaudible), were

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1 we able to.

2 b 3, b 6 What is General
3 Ali's take, for instance, on the change, the
4 dramatic change, we've seen in Anbar? What's
5 the perspective on that? What are they
6 saying about how we can capitalize on that
7 and whether there's any risks to that in
8 terms of local militias springing up there?

9 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: I haven't
10 talked to General Ali about it specifically,
11 and I think, if you talk to different Iraqis,
12 you get a slightly different view.

13 I think, in the main, most Iraqis
14 see this as a positive step, because they see
15 what was a very dangerous, almost lawless
16 province becoming much more governed and
17 stable.

18 General Ali has not (Several
19 words inaudible). I've tried a couple of
20 times to take him out there. For some reason
21 or other, we haven't got there. So I don't
22 know that he particularly is a person who is

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1 particularly enamored by what is going on
2 there. But I think in general, certainly,
3 when you hear the Prime Minister and Minister
4 of Defense talking about it, they are
5 delighted at the progress being made there.

6 I haven't really engaged General
7 Aboud on the subject. It's not even his
8 battle station. Therefore, it's not really
9 pertaining to him.

10 I think the other thing is: But
11 there is -- You know, overall in the country
12 there is still -- you could still
13 characterize it as a Shia-led government
14 which is hugely suspicious of any Sunni
15 political resurgence.

16 They still are paranoid about the
17 (Several words inaudible). We see that as
18 being a highly unlikely course of action,
19 given the demographics of this country, but
20 they still see it as (Inaudible); and I
21 suppose, having suffered an extremist
22 Baathist regime for 30 years, I guess they've

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1 got some history there. But they see it
2 still as a threat, and I think they are still
3 paranoid about it, probably more paranoid
4 than they need to be about it, but paranoid
5 nonetheless.

6 b 3, b 6: Sir, I have a
7 last question, which is just: Do you think,
8 because of the longer involvement in history
9 that the United Kingdom has in terms of its
10 relationship with Iraq -- Do you think that
11 brings you to the table with a depth of
12 understanding or the U.K. forces with a depth
13 of understanding about what's happening here
14 that maybe lends something to the fight?
15 What is your perspective on that?

16 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: I wouldn't
17 say anything that we've done in the past in
18 Iraq gives us any advantage in this area,
19 because it was a long time ago. It was
20 almost 100 years ago. I've read some of the
21 books of those times, and so I've certainly
22 got some benefit from my military

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1 predecessors there, but I would say that's
2 not necessarily the case for U.K. soldiers.

3 What I think we do bring to the
4 party is we've always been a very, very
5 small, under-resourced army that's been
6 overcommitted, and if you look at our history
7 of running an Empire, we've always done so on
8 a shoestring.

9 So what we bring to the party is
10 years of experience of making do with
11 solutions that are not always 100 percent
12 (Several words inaudible). And so we bring a
13 sort of pragmatism that your own army doesn't
14 have, because it is so resourced and
15 (Inaudible), such a powerful machine that it,
16 I think, has an expectation of things to be,
17 you know, as they would expect it to be.

18 So I think what we do bring to the
19 party is a sort of innate pragmatism that
20 says, if it's good enough; and if it is good
21 enough, then that's good. If it's wrong,
22 then (Inaudible), therefore, we need to do

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1 more about it. And I think that, in general
2 terms, is what we probably have got. That
3 (Inaudible) in all our military culture.

4 [b 3 b 6]: Sir, is there
5 anything we haven't asked you that's still on
6 your mind?

7 MAJ. GENERAL BERRAGAN: I think
8 you've done pretty well, actually. You hit
9 on some of the key things in my area.

10 [b(3), (b)(6)]: It's been great,
11 sir. Thank you very much for your time.

12 [b 6]: Thank you very much.

13 [b 3, b 6]: That concludes
14 this interview.

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