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

(USA)

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MNSTCI HQ, Phoenix Base Camp, International Zone, Baghdad

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### ***Abstract***

(b)(3), (b)(6) I interviewed (b)(3), (b)(6) in Kosovo in 2002 and that interview is in the CMH archives. (b)(3), (b)(6) has had a standard infantry career, heavily shaped by 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment, and served in TF 1.4a in northern Iraq in 2004-2005. Their expectations changed as the situation evolved. He came to MNSTCI in May '07 when asked by Dubik. They reconsidered the entire situation, redefined the mission, and re-organized MNSTCI as of 1 January 08 for a structure better focused on the mission. The Iraqi Security Forces have many problems, but they are developing quickly, and it has to be their solution. Transcription priority: High. These notes are a good overview, but the details are worth listening to the recording.

### ***Background***

(b)(3), (b)(6) enlisted in the Army in 1974. After completing his enlistment, he enrolled at Oklahoma State University and joined ROTC. He was commissioned as an infantry officer and then proceeded through a normal infantry officer's career path. His first assignment was to the 4<sup>th</sup> Division at Ft. Carson. He then went to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment. There he found the discipline and the standards that he expected in the Army. He commanded two companies and then was a small group tactics instructor. Commanded 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion in Korea, then served in the Pentagon as a Director of Requirements, and later as the Chief of Staff of 1st Corp. His military education followed the normal path through the advanced course, CGSC, and the Army War College. He has not had joint courses, but has done joint exercises in the Pacific region.

He was first assigned to Iraq in 2004. 1st Corps deployed its tactical command post to serve as a division headquarters over the Stryker Brigade deployed to northern Iraq. They had Albanians with them. The commander was Brigadier General Carter Ham, and they formed Task Force 1.4a. Their AO was MNB-North. They turned it over to 11<sup>th</sup> Armored Cavalry Regiment.

The defining element in (b)(3), (b)(6) career was the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment. In 1979, the Army was the hollow force. (b)(3), (b)(6) was ready to get out, but in the 75<sup>th</sup> he found the discipline and the high esprit de corps he was looking for. They trained hard and had high standards, and he spent many years at Ft. Lewis. His circle included Ham, (b)(6)

b 6 These were people from his basic course that he kept working with through the years.

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### *First Iraq Tour, May '04 to April '05*

TF [1.4a] AO was much like MND-N's today, geographically, from north of Baghdad up to the borders. As it is today, above the green line it was quiet. South of the green line, they saw increasing violence. When they took over in May '04, MG Petraeus was on the verge of transitioning to soft cap patrols in HMMWWVs. They were in soft skins, few IEDs. What TF [1.4a] saw in Mosul and in Tal Afar was that when operations in any given area targeted insurgent nests (like Ba'qubah) the bad guys would go to other cities that lacked a robust coalition presence, like Tal Afar or Mosul. This happened with Operation Arrowhead Ripper, going into Ba'qubah. When forces went into Ba'qubah a few months ago, (b)(3), (b)(6) wondered "what about having gone into Ba'qubah in '04; what happened that we had to go in again?" The answer is that we lacked the combat power to retain it. The surge helped us by providing the combat necessary to hold areas that we cleared.

The groups we faced in 2004 were different from those we face today, and they ebbed and flowed with the surge. Then, maybe they weren't terrorists so much as criminal opportunists conducting extortion and blackmail in a lawless environment. We had the Iraqi National Guard, but not the Iraqi Army. We were trying to assemble the National Guard. We had General Rashid as a division commander, but the rest of the divisions were not fleshed out. Battalions were spread out in combat outposts. The ING had checkpoints and snap traffic control points. We did not see IEDs like we see today.

At the beginning of that tour, BG Ham thought ours would be the last coalition force conducting security operations in the north. By the end, it was worse than at the beginning. Why? First, this was due to the lack of a functioning government. The CPA did not help. Second, when CF went after terrorists havens, like Ba'qubah, it was too easy for terrorist groups to simply go somewhere else where they weren't under pressure.

### *Between Iraq Tours*

When (b)(3), (b)(6) left in April '05, it was clear that we were in Iraq for the long haul and anyone in the Army should just assume they are coming here, and would do so repeatedly. In May '05, (b)(3), (b)(6) became the (b)(3), (b)(6). In February, he became the (b)(3), (b)(6).

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

LTG Dubik was the Ist Corps Commander when he was chosen to take MNSTCI, probably in February of '07. He still needed Senate confirmation. But Dubik selected (b)(3), (b)(6) to come with him to be (b)(3), (b)(6).

### *MNSTCI*

In early 2007, Ist Corps was involved in preparing units to deploy as part of the surge. It was clear that the status quo was not going to solve the problem in Iraq. (b)(3), (b)(6) (b)(3), (b)(6) serving with LTG McChrystal) was giving him assessments from Baghdad. We were headed for strategic failure. The surge was the only hope. We had to get rid of

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the FOB and the 'transition' mentality that saw US forces pulling back into base camps, reducing their presence, and hoping Iraqis would solve everything. LTG Dubik does not like the "transition" idea. What we have to do is not transition, it is to build capacity and capability. As we looked at the situation, we found ten required institutional functions. We had to build the MOI, build the MOD, build their capabilities, and continue to grow the ISF. When it comes to forces, it is simple math. You have to have robust and capable forces, and you can't stretch them thin across the battlefield. We had allowed ourselves to get FOB-bound and shipped in thousands of tons of stuff to make life on the FOB comfortable. The way to make a surge is to tell brigade commanders to get all their troops off the FOB for 96 hours. Then you've got a surge. The FOB mentality was hurting us. Troops ventured out briefly, then went back to the FOB, having accomplished nothing. We're spending \$10 to \$15 billion on this.

We have allowed our reliance on contracting to bring us to our knees. The cost of the war is a huge problem. KBR and other groups, led by retired generals, charge unbelievable amounts for what they do. It costs us \$500,000 for a contractor, and the cost is ridiculous.

We've lost accountability of equipment. This arose partly from the practice of leaving equipment behind. It was cheaper than shipping it home since incoming units needed it, but the property accountability never caught up. Now, too many people are writing stuff off.

As a vignette, 1st Corps spent two years equipping 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Stryker Brigade. They needed common equipment. The Class VII bill was for \$40 million over two years. We had to fight the battle with FORSCOM over those years to get the money needed. We got it in increments of hundreds of thousands of dollars and a time, and we had to synchronize the spending with the train-up of individual, small unit, and collective training. Ultimately, we spent \$36 million. We got over here and people scoffed at \$36 million. It was a drop in the bucket, but ridiculously hard for us to get it done, to spend what was needed, back in the states. It was all too complicated.

In May '07, MNSTCI completed an In-Stride Assessment, a White Paper for LTG Dempsey. MNSTCI had been expecting to be done with the train-up of Iraqi forces by December '07. The in-stride assessment suggested we might not be done by the end of '07. The plan had been for a force of 390,000, but it would be a force that lacked many things. The ISA projected budget needs of \$5 billion for enablers in FY 08.

Dubik appreciated the in-stride assessment, but he wanted an independent assessment in order to figure out what the correct size was for Iraqi forces. He adopted a couple of key assumptions. First, he assumed the US would keep 10 BCTs in Iraq. Second, he assumed the level of violence in Iraq would be at pre-February 2006 levels. He asked (Center for Army Analysis, Lt Gen Odierno, and Iraqi commanders) to calculate the necessary size of Iraqi forces based on those two assumptions. By late summer, they had finished their work and we received estimates from all three sources. All three were very close, ranging from 601K to 646 K. On this basis, we modified the May '07 in-stride

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review. We pitched it to the Iraqis to get their buy in. The surge is not going to last forever; we know that. This calculation gave us an idea of what the Iraqis would need to maintain security with a reduced US presence.

In 2007, we did force generation for the 11<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Divisions. In 2008, we're rolling out the 12<sup>th</sup> division and a Special Forces brigade. The national police goal is 420,000. Most ISF are illiterate. We screen applicants to determine if they are literate, and the ones who can read and write get technical training for specialty positions, such as medic. Though illiterate, the population is smart and they're very hands on. Show them how to do something, and they will quickly pick it up and operate effectively.

Strangely, they operate without contracts. There is no term of enlistment, so troops can just leave anytime they want. ISF does not want to introduce or enforce enlistment contracts for fear of the legacy of Saddam's brutality toward deserters or his forced conscription. However, this hasn't been a problem. Annual attrition runs at 17%, pretty much like US forces. We have no problem recruiting, signing up recruits, or filling up training slots. The MOI/MOD are the country's largest employers, so young men don't have a lot of other options.

Junior leadership is a real problem. Not many countries embrace the value of the NCO the way the U.S. and a few western countries do. They like our NCOs, but lack the mentality for creating their own. In February '07, (b)(3), (b)(6) was visiting Japan when they stood up their first Command Sergeant Major as a test case of senior NCO leadership, and that was after 60 years of seeing US forces relying so heavily on NCOs. The CSM as senior leadership is key to junior NCO leadership.

The Iraqi officer corps presents other challenges. Their junior officers are old and often broken down. What Iraqis need to follow is a one-year Sandhurst model to churn out competent junior leaders quickly, but they've insisted on going with a four-year military academy model. They need English language training for pilots. Their police training program is three years, where it should be just months. The Iraqi officer corps suffers from an inverse pyramid, with too many generals and colonels. They lack initiative and the TOE to get the job done.

How does MNSTCI come together? We all generate and replenish forces and develop ministerial capacity, from the tactical to the strategic level. Some of it focuses on MOI, and some on the MOD. The MNSTCI review of last summer led up to our 1 Jan '08 reorganization. Since we can't focus on all ten of the functional capabilities, we've focused on the six that LTG Dubik has prioritized (acquisition, budget, training, sustainment . . . ). Through all the ministries, we have to develop processes, policies, and procedures.

Dubik's priorities: 1) growth rate of Iraqi forces, 2) ISF to be mostly self-sufficient, 3) a slower/steady timeline for Navy and Air Force development, 4) and Iraqi counter-terrorism law.

### ***Risks***

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The risks of early '08: We want Iraqis to be more self-sufficient, but with that comes less control for us. It leaves us less able to influence what the Iraqis do. Their priorities are not the same as ours. The risk comes in not letting them take the reins. We have to check ourselves from doing too much. It (any given solution) has to work for them, not us.

The power of the purse gives us a carrot and a stick, but that does not foster self-sufficiency.

We must be willing to let them fail. The example of the 1 Dec '08 cut off of life support (food and fuel) by US to ISF, which was ugly, but ISF then figured out 95% how to do it themselves. It has to be their solution, and that is good enough. We risk trying to apply western standards, which don't apply.

### ***Issues for Dubik***

The Iraqi Surge – He needs to be able to talk about this more.

How does he explain things to Congressmen. Congressmen and congressional staffers always come to Iraq with preconceived notions of how things are based on what they've read or previous trips. The truth is that things change. What was is not what is. A lot has happened. This is a huge challenge, and MNSTCI's success is key to the US getting out decently. The MNCI surge and offensive created maneuver space, but the fight is far from over. We have to press the fight. Congress wants a timeline, but there can't be one. Why would we leave Iraq after all that we have invested? DOD needs to commit to a permanent presence and invest in the future. Then we can craft the future. The model may be Korea, Japan, or Germany, but long-term presence helps everybody. Now is the time for a strategic concept. It will not be 15 BCTs here long-term, but it will likely be a division and key bases.

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