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INTERVIEW
OF
(b)(3), (b)(6)

PLANS OFFICE
MULTINATIONAL CORPS - IRAQ

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HEADQUARTERS, MULTINATIONAL CORPS - IRAQ
BAGHDAD, IRAQ

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PROCEDINGS

This is the Historian for Multinational-Iraq. Today is Saturday, the 7th of July 2007 at approximately 1600. I am here at the Headquarters of Multinational Corps-Iraq at Al Faw Palace, Camp Victory, outside of Baghdad, Iraq, and I am here interviewing who is the Chief of War Plans in the C-3 Section.

can you go ahead and introduce yourself to the listener with your rank, first name, middle initial, last name, spell those out, and also if you would give your branch and component.

Your branch and component?

Declassified by: MG Michael X. Garrett, USCENTCOM Chief of Staff
Declassified on: 201505
Okay, great. Did I get your title right, Chief of War Plans?

Yes, sir.

Okay, super. Can you take a few minutes or so and give me the highlights of your career thus far?
Great. When did you arrive in Iraq on this tour?

On this tour I arrived -- It was about the 7th of November of 2006.

Okay, great. You're kind of one of the unique members of the staff in that there's only a couple of folks who were here during III Corps' previous deployment into theater.

Any quick thoughts in your mind about, when you look at your previous experience, especially your present thoughts on the plans arena? What's different about this
deployment compared to that previous one?

I guess the thing that --

The one thing that you always find is, as soon as you have left Iraq for more than two weeks, it seems that the conditions change enough that you have to re-green yourself to actually what is going on.

So the conditions changed dramatically when we left Iraq in February of 2005. We were just coming off the high of the first elections here, and we've come back to something that was very different where we had a clear -- it seemed like insurgency, to now we come back to where it's insurgency coupled with a power struggle, sectarian violence, ethnic religious sectarian fighting as everybody tries to provide for the people and win the people's loyalty and allegiance to gain that power.

So it's a very -- It's a different environment. Although I got off the airplane, and it was like being home on R&R for a few weeks, then coming right back to it, Camp Victory hadn't changed all that much. It was the same trailers. I used the same shower trailer that I used, in fact, the last time I was here.

Are you working in the same
office area that you were working?

I actually moved three desks down from where I worked previously, with a bigger office but same area.

Anything different about the character or the working style of this III Corps staff compared to the last III Corps staff that's worth noting?

No. I think I've found that the Corps as a whole in its deployment -- it always picks up a number of members, the WYS ( Phonetic) and the joint bills that are part of the joint manning document.

I have really been proud, I guess, of III Corps, because I feel like we've been open and willing to accept those members in and use them and not treat them as outsiders. At least I hope so. So I've been very happy that that has always followed through.

It seemed -- It was that way when I got here as a new member to the Corps, being I deployed almost five months after they had begun their first tour. I kind of feel the same now, where we very quickly are able to acclimate other folks, especially the Coalition. We have really been fortunate with some great Coalition members in the back offices.
So that's the one thing that I've really noticed has been the same.

There's been some differences, but not -- just in style, I think, of the way that the command group and the C-3 run things, but for the most part it's -- they have been very trusting, and I've been, I guess, honored with the responsibility that they give me. You know, you always hope that you're up to that task to the advice that they ask me. So it's really been interesting both times. I've been happy in it. I found that in both command groups.

Great. Can you kind of think back in your mind to when you arrived here for this tour. Can you kind of synopsize where you saw the fight, from a planner's seat, in particular from your Chief of War Plans seat? How did you specifically see where we were at in terms of as you were trying to assess what your role was going to be, how that would affect your job as the Chief of War Plans? Where were we at with the fight, and what were the key issues?

I arrived just at the beginning of November, and the Corps didn't transfer authority from V Corps or the V Corps staff and General
Corelli until mid to late December.

So what happened was I deployed early as part of an LNO team to try to get some situation awareness and try to understand what was going on so we could transition to the new leadership fairly seamlessly.

During that time, it was clear that the approach that was moving forward -- that was, how do we transition responsibility for security to the Iraqi security forces, and that was apparent with a concept that was emerging and just short of being published before they departed that was called the Transition Bridging Strategy.

That was clearly to have the Iraqis step forward, transfer responsibility for the security of Baghdad and their cities to the Iraqis and allow the Coalition to back out from some of those security responsibilities and partner.

Almost immediately, mid to late December, General Odierno came in and said, this doesn't seem to be working; they are not quite ready for this, we need to move back in instead of letting -- and it was put very well by General Keane (Phonetic) when he came over to visit after we had gone through this, and we had discussions with him, that transition is not able to lead security. We are going to
have to go back in and secure the population.

By securing the population, partnering and working with the Iraqis, mentoring them, developing their capabilities, that security will lead transition. So it was almost a reverse in the way that we were going to develop the ISF.

We weren't going to sink or swim. We were going to coach them along and work with them. So it became this focus on the secure situation or secure environment will create the space that will allow the Iraqis to transition, not just the security forces, but through the other lines of operation that the Force has established, which is the government supporting security, economics, the infrastructure, the communications and the like.

So that was the immediate change that we saw.

\[(b)(3), (b)(6)\]: Let me ask you one or two finer details about that.

If I understood you properly, you were -- You had said the transition bridging strategy was just getting ready to be launched by V Corps?

\[(b)(3), (b)(6)\] They were developing the concept. It was never published in an order.
Okay.

However, I would say that, because the concept was worked and briefed and it was, I guess, socialized at the General Officer level, I think that at some places it would have been probably begun.

So even though nothing had been published, that's what people were --

Right. And that was the case, too, with our (Phonetic). Things were already starting to work in the background, because General Odierno was able to put his vision out to commanders in discussions with them. So they knew what his vision was and where he wanted to go.

You know, the op order really just documented that vision.

You mentioned General Keane (Phonetic). I just want to capture his role in the scheme of things a little bit better.

Was he part of an assessment team that came over?

General Keane came over on an assessment team, and I -- I don't remember -- I don't know if I have it in my notes or not -- remember exactly.
But he came over -- He's been over a couple of times as an assessment team. I think assessment 4 might have been General Petraeus himself, just to kind of say, you know, where can this go, what are the visions that you are seeing, and visiting with -- giving a brief back to him.

Did you interact with the assessment team or were in the room when they were briefing?

How would you describe your knowledge of what transpired with their recommendations?

was the escort officer. He asked -- He really wanted to have an explanation from the Corps on what was going on. Even though it seemed like General Keane was in -- He was there, I guess, to assess a little bit of both the Corps and Force to get back to General Petraeus.

I'm sorry. Was his presence here still during V Corps' presence or --

No. It was after TOA.

This was after TOA.

Okay.

I think it was even after General Casey had left and General Petraeus had --
I just wasn't totally clear.

I've heard his name. I heard about the assessment piece. I guess I wasn't exactly sure how it fit into the timeline of things.

And I'll have to look up the dates. But he came over a couple of times. What happened was that he sat down for two or three hours with us, and we had the C-2 planners really lay down -- the intelligence planners lay down exactly what they thought was going on with the extremists, Al Qaeda and the like, and then from that it went into kind of discussion on how we thought that -- General Odierno's concept and his vision to go at that.

It was a fairly small group. It was only about six of us in the room. So, you know, I think, was the senior. He kind of wanted an O&I, so Operations and Intelligence brief from us to know where it was going.

Then we went over -- He actually invited us over to the Visitor's Bureau where he was staying, and we had another couple of hours of discussion with him that night.

Talk to me more about -- You
were starting to talk about (b)(6) (Phonetic). So as this transition is happening between, wait a minute, we've got it backwards, we really need to shift to the idea of security first and move in that direction -- talk to me how then General Odierno's plan unfolded. How did that interact with your role? How did he convey that? How did you see it evolve, and what was sort of the timeline of that, if you will?

Was that the genesis of (b)(6) (Phonetic), was the shift to the strategy of security first?

I don't know if it was ever -- It probably was that clear in General Odierno's head. But he never --

And don't let me put words in your mouth. You know, it was never -- Until we really discussed with General Keane, it was never really as clear in words that way. But looking back on it, I think it was that clear in General Odierno's head that that's what he wanted to do, is that he had to get the security.

He saw that, and I don't know what all the --
because even during the time when -- before the RIP and when V Corps was still here with (b)(3), (b)(6) who was the Chief of War Plans for V Corps, and (b)(3), (b)(6) who was the C-3 at that time, there were requests for information coming down on how would we use additional forces.

So we started to hear the background, maybe the test balloons from Washington -- I don't know -- on how we would use additional forces if they came in.

So that some of that work was already being done before General Petraeus and V Corps left. So I was never sure, you know, how that was worked above me. So I don't want to speculate. But part of the being able to secure the populous was clearly the fact that it would take some additional forces to do that.

While we saw that there was a need for us to protect the populous of Baghdad as our main effort, we also saw that there was a number of what we called accelerants to sectarian violence entering the city from the Baghdad belts and Baghdad support zones.

The Baghdad belts were -- The way I understand it, is in the time of Saddam there was a belt around Baghdad that would protect the city from the outside, and now it is
really the belt that had the city under seize, and through the belts adn support zones would come car bombs and high profile attacks, typically Al Qaeda driven against Shia, which would then in turn cause the Shia to retaliate against the Sunnis, because typically the Al Qaeda was working out of the Sunni area, which would in turn make the Sunnis -- with the MERS (Phoentic) and some of the cleansing and the like would have the Sunnis become more apt and more willing to allow Al Qaeda to operate out of their areas to produce more spectacular attacks, cause more sectarian killings. So it was called the Cycle of Violence.

So these were -- These car bombs, suicide vest bombs and high profile attack explosivse that would come in were the accelerants that we would call coming in from the support zones.

So while we had to try to stop the violence and stop the actual bombins in Baghdad, we also saw that we needed to cut off the ability for those to come into Baghdad, which always calls the question, you know: If you are already in Baghdad, by sealing the city how would that -- Is that going to help? So we have, you know, a number of courses in the city, and we have really a security zone
around the city that pushes out and tries to really push Al Qaeda and extremists groups away from the city and their operating areas, support areas, away from the cities.

And General Odierno, with that, envisioned how to command and control, where he would focus Baghdad, MND Baghdad on Baghdad, and then wrap it to the north with MND-North assets, and then with the extra Division Headquarters that we had to the south and with the MNF-West to the west to try to set up over the support zones as Baghdad focused on inside the 10 security districts.

Now (Phonetic) was -- This whole concept linked into what I saw as the Iraqis stepping forward through, I think, discussions with General Casey on how they could establish Baghdad and clearly have -- Instead of just kind of units floating around Baghdad as kind of how it seemed before, he clearly chopped it up into what we call 10 security districts, and then each side of the 10 security districts had a clear commander.

General Casey was concerned that he couldn't -- When he saw it originally, he said I want to be able to point on the ground, and I want to know, you know, whose chest am I tapping that is responsible for that.
So inside the Baghdad security districts, it was the Baghdad Operations Command. The west side of the river and east side of the river, which were kind of the 6th and the 9th, kind of a combination between MOI and MOD. So it wasn't any singular ministry controlling that.

So we'll kind of break it down. It's the feeling that the MOI, a little bit more Shia, the MOD a little bit more even handed maybe, and then each of those having, I think 6 and 4 -- have to go back to a map and look at the security districts, and then -- So inside each of those there would be a Iraqi brigade -- at least a Iraqi brigade headquarters that would be in charge of that security district, and then coupled with that would be at least a U.S. battalion who would partner with that Iraqi brigade inside of that.

So there was a whole concept of really organizing Baghdad, so that you could clearly know what the command and control structure was for both the Iraqis and -- and it was never there was so much a question.

So when we look at a map and we see the Iraqi Security Zones as we see them now, which you see everywhere as you come in, that was an recent development,
so to speak?

That was, yes, at the beginning of this year.

And that still happened under V Corps or was that --

It was right on the cusp. I think that the continuity there was the Iraqis and General Casey.

Okay. Let me ask the real piggyback stuff. Let me ask you a very broad-brushed question, and then we'll dig deep on this. So just give me a pretty short answer on this, if you would.

Just as you look back, can you identify this bullet by bullet? What are the key plans, war plans, that you've focused your time, your team's attention on in the tour so far?

Obviously, we started out with (Phonetic), and that was a plan that we -- and as I said, I think General Odierno had it in his head. He had been thinking about it for a while. So we had to publish that plan, I want to say, within two weeks after the transfer of authority.
Then from that, it immediately went into -- The planning efforts that went into that were how do we enable that plan by employment of the additional five brigades, plus-up brigades that got the U.S. brigade count to 20; and as that moved out through that, I want to say employment of the MEU was a significant step for us, and then --

Sorry. MEU is?

Marine Expeditionary Unit.

I think -- I have to go back and look, but I think we employed that twice. I think we out-shopped one, and then we just pulled the 13th in for 60 days. It's still on the ground now.

So there is all the employment pieces for that.

What form in terms of plans did the pieces take place? Igt wasn't an Op plan, if I'm not mistaken? How was it published?

Well, how we publish it, we published -- Only rarely do we publish an Op plan. Most of our plans are just "fragulous" to an overarching -- it's almost campaign plan-like, although hard to say that it truly is a campaign plan with having higher headquarters who
publishes a campaign plan. This is really our operations plan to operationalize that campaign plan.

(b)(3), (b)(6) So (b)(6) was really a "frago"?

(b)(3), (b)(6) Frag material order.

(b)(3), (b)(6) So the first mention for (b)(6) was probably in a frago then? Okay.

In my mind, I'm piecing what your efforts are in fragos. Another was the operational concept that came out in early March of 2007, and then recently, most recently, we see the first full operations plan.

(b)(3), (b)(6) Right. And all the operations concept really did was it -- That was, I want to think, us helping General Odierno organize and communicate his vision. So the concept would continue to emerge until it was something close to what he wanted to publish, and then that quickly became O. plan 0701.

(b)(3), (b)(6) Like I say, I want to make sure I don't put words in your mouth. So (b)(6) Series of fragos that outlined various missions in terms of how to accomplish this issue of security of Baghdad, the belts, the --
Well, no, because really was the overarching document that kind of laid that out, what -- And as a corps, what we really do is we provide priorities, provide resources and forces.

So we are really almost the theater force provider or allocator of those resources. So that the Corps Commander will sometimes say I need to conduct a tactical task in one area, will more often than not -- What he says he needs, hey, we've got to take it and we've got to focus on this area, and on that area I'm going to give you these additional forces.

So the fragmentary orders were the orders that would give those forces then to Baghdad or West or North or Center when we sliced out a piece for Center.

That being said, he clearly has -- I think he clearly has a vision that he wants some force to go and work in the Abi Jabour (Phonetic) area, which is south. He has a vision that Baqubah needs to be secured. The populous needs to be secured. Of course, knowing that, you know, he still has to maintain some focus on Baghdad, how much can he balance the two; and then once Baqubah continues to develop, he wants to go out and work on some areas around Lake Farfah.
(Phonetic) and the quarries that, really, he is not certain what's there. So he would like to go in and find out, make sure that it is not being sued as a training and transit area.

While all that was going on, we saw great successes beginning to develop out west in Anbar where my feeling is that the tribes and the local populous became tired of Al Qaeda and the effects that they were having, the war and the fight itself, and started to reject them and begin some of these, you know, what at one time were called travel security forces, then provincial security forces.

Now I think they are local security units that our attempts are going to be that, if that's the case, what we will do is we will integrate those into the Iraqi Security Force, but that's going to take, I think, some time and effort on the government; because the government is going to have to figure out how to reconcile with them to get them to come to the table.

It's easy for them to reconcile with us. It's, I think, a much more difficult thing for the government to get them to reconcile. The fact is that them reconciling with us is not -- It doesn't necessarily help the government of Iraq
or the Iraqi -- Iraq as a whole.

Then that kind of falls back to General Odierno's whole premise of this whole thing as he thought about this thing on the way over and at the beginning. He sees this clearly as the people of Iraq have a set of needs, and the people of Iraq are looking for someone to fulfill those needs; and the question becomes: We would like to see the government of Iraq fulfill those needs, the needs of the people to be a -- to continue on what we would probably consider a legitimate government, a viable government or whatever the words you might like to use.

The piece right now is that there is a gap between the needs that are being provided and the needs that are desired by the people, until if there is a gap in between those, somebody will take and fill that gap. So if it's not the government, it will be somebody else; and if it's us or if it's AQI or if it's a tribal leader, that will -- you know, that then assumes some power from the government over the people, you know, in the whole structure of things, I guess.

: I did want to talk to you more specifically about Plan 0701, because it is certainly
the first full seminal document, I guess, looking at from the historian, under III Corps' role being MNCI.

Can you just kind of talk me back through the genesis of that? And I'm assuming -- stop me if I'm wrong -- that you had the lead on this. Your section had the lead on this, at least.

I'd say, really, the CG had the lead on it.

Okay. When did he involve you?

I think that some of the concepts that he was working through he was thinking about well before the deployment. He was thinking about it June/July/August time frame as we prepared to deploy the Corps, on how we were getting to this, and some of the concepts we were working with him back at Fort Hood.

It just -- The four or five months here gave him the situational awareness that allowed him to enhance, refine his vision to make sure that, you know, he clearly understood or understood the best that anybody could the operational environment as opposed to trying to look at it from afar.

So a lot of what we saw in was
carried forward into 0701. For a short time -- I want to say
four to six weeks -- he had a commander's initiative group
come in, and it was a little bit -- I'll say, from the plans
perspective, it was a little bit dicey at that time, because
what happened was that he had this group of four or five 06s
begin to work -- help him advance both his understanding and
his vision, but then they left, and we had to pick it back
up. So there was a short time of disconnect.

It wasn't that we -- You know, we felt bad,
because we didn't want him to think that we were going
against the boss, but we just didn't understand, because we
hadn't been part -- We hadn't, you know, watched -- been
along the road to see the sights to know what had driven him
to these decisions.

So it took a couple of weeks for us to get back
into the field, and even afterward, you know, he said, yeah,
we should have had planners in here while we were doing this,
because it would have kept it, you know, nested better as
they would continue.

There was an executive group
that he worked with to develop the plan, and then --

Well, it kind of went
back and forth. He started it. Then it went over to the
Executive Group, and then it got handed back to us. And it
was a little shaky there at the handoffs, because he had --
You know, he basically had to explain the vision and concepts
again to us, which I'm sure was frustrating to him.

Then we picked it up and continued to develop it.
I'm very fortunate that we have -- I have some great planners
that work for me, and between -- The lead, really, for the
campaign plan, what we call O plan, 0701, was
and he worked with
(Phonetic).

I was able to let those guys really focus on some
of the thoughts and try to develop concepts and show them to
General Odierno so he could explain, and that they really --
they really meshed well.

I think the dialogue -- Trying to put it on paper
and let him look at it and then just the dialogue built a
common understanding between those planners and the
Commander, the Commander and the command group and the C-2,
the C-3, the Effects Coordinator, who would basically -- We
get to go see the CG about an hour twice a week, and so as we
prepare these documents and show him, he will say what were
you thinking here; no, this isn't what I meant. And it became a very frank discussion between Lieutenant Colonels and Majors and a three-star General.

So it's -- As I said to begin with, it's quite an honor to be able to try to help or try to understand maybe how someone at that level thinks.

So you would go in there with a planning group, yourself, the C-2 rep, so on and so forth, to try and -- And would he review it in advance or he would sit there and go page by page with you guys while you were --

We would try to put some of the thoughts on slides and how we conceptually saw them. He would look at them, and we would talk him through what we thought that that concept was. It would be him then explaining where we were off on a vision, where it would be better articulated. So it was a -- It was a way to help us, as I said before, document his vision, document his guidance and guidance and document his priorities.

How long did the process in terms of days, weeks, months -- When did you guys sort of start these small groups? How long did it take you to go through this process until you got to a point where you were
close to the Commander saying, yeah, yeah, you got it?

We started -- We started when we first got here. When I was here last time, we had what we called senior plans meetings. Senior plans meetings at that time was a meeting of about folks that would get together and just do that, talk concepts with General Metz at the time.

That was carried over into 18th Airborne Corps who followed III Corps, and then V Corps. But by the time we came back, somehow it had merged into almost a command and staff of -- and I believe the head count was people.

That was in the process of reviewing an order, that sort of thing?

Well, it was putting concepts in front of the Commanding General. That was the planners' time to see the Commanding General.

So we would go up, and in front of people put concepts in front of him, and usually we obscured. And part of it was just that the Commander can't be as open or as frank with his discussions in a large group like that as he can with a small, trusted few.

So we went away from that, and we started to just
We go to his office now twice a week for an hour, and we put some concepts in front of him, and we are able to talk to him about that and get a feel for what he wants to do with that.

Like I said, we've got de-sync'ed when the Commander's initiative group came in, but when the initiative group left, the Commander said we've got to get this into a documented order. And at that time, it took us a couple of weeks to get re-sync'ed with the Commander, and then we went for about a 30-day where we went and we, with rapid succession, would go back to him, and all we did was focus on refining his thoughts on the concepts, the writing process, the reviewing process, and then really the briefing process where we were able to publish this to everybody.

Like I said, by the time that we actually did publish, I think that all the commanders were well aware of what was being published, had heard the Commander talk, knew what his guidance was. This was simply something that published it.

So it's because of the Commander and his communication with his subordinate planners that there were no surprises or did you guys take separate action
to communicate what the Commander was thinking out to the subordinate commanders?

(b)(3), (b)(6) Yes, but we wouldn't talk directly to the commanders. We talked to either their liaisons on the staff or -- and probably not as well as we should, but to the planning and the G-3s, I guess, of the Divisions.

(b)(3), (b)(6) You were helping pass that information as it was being developed out so that everybody would be up to speed on what the General was thinking?

(b)(3), (b)(6) I think so.

(b)(3), (b)(6) You mentioned the process and the lag, the commander's issues group, and then picking back up. Was that General Keane's group?

(b)(3), (b)(6) No. It was a small group. This is a small group that was --

(b)(3), (b)(6) I just lost track of the gaming. That was a small group of people who helped him piece together the --

(b)(3), (b)(6) (Phonetic), He has another one now that he has reestablished, and I'm not sure how long they will be here,
but they are looking at some other things.

I've taken some of my guys, my strategy guys, and really tried to link them in with that group so that they are -- so we won't have any surprises for the next time.

You talked about this intense 30-day period of really going back and forth a lot, of getting in sync with the --

Focusing -- The only thing we really would take him in that 30 days, those, I guess, eight sessions or so, was things that were focused on O plan 0701.

Okay.

And every once in a while, we would get 15 minutes at the end about, hey, the boss has still got to remember his decision point here, and how are you going to deploy your fourth plus-up brigade; and we would walk him through what we thought the concept was, where the risks would be, where the threat was the greatest on those projects.

When did that 30 days roughly --

Knowing that ultimately -- It was published first or second of June, I think?
First of June.

First of June. When was that 30-day block? Was that -- Could we backtrack from there, and were you working right up until the day before the first of June on this 30-days?

We were working right up until the 1st of June.

So roughly the month of May, the high intensity period, really, finishing up.

Right.

Okay. Were there any parts of Op Plan 0701 that you got pushed back? Even though you were feeding out the information, did any of the MNDs or MNS say anything about any surprises when it ultimately did hit the table, and everybody, you know, left the room? Was there anything that was missed in terms of, hey, wait a minute, what about this?

I don't think so. I think, because the top cover, the commander's conferences that he had and some of the slides that were actually part of the brief were briefed at commander's conferences or small groups that he had with the commanders, that there weren't
very many surprises.

I think always the bigger surprise had been -- I shouldn't say surprise, but the struggle is always allocation of forces, which it always will be, and that's what I call, you know, cognitive attention; and I think it's a good thing that, you know, I have someone over here saying that I need forces, and I have someone over here saying I need forces, and them arguing to the boss, just to make sure that the boss is aware of the risks that are involved with each not getting those forces, so that he can best make a decision on where they need to be allocated, so he's aware of the risk.

Is there a point in this process -- You've kind of discussed this methodology of working with the CG in this way. You know, in some ways I kind of think back to the old school process of, you know, you put three courses of action in front of the boss, and you know, he kind of picks one or he says I like this one but make it more like this, or take this and --

Does any of this process sort of approximate that? We talked about decision points, that you had to remind him periodically of that. How did he come to those decisions? Say, yes, we're going to put that force over here
or we are going to --

Well, we would always try to go in. We would say here's how the environment has changed based upon your last application of force. And, clearly, he is very comfortable -- and I truly believe it is a very sound process for the military decision making process that we go through.

So as we lay out what we know is the way things are, we would try to lay out and say to him, sir, these are what you can do; you know, based upon that, if you think this is your largest threat, we can put the whole brigade there; we can take and split and give half of it here and half of it down here. You know, Baghdad is going not too well; you might want to think about putting another force there to help them move faster as they secure the populous there, because we are not -- So we would always lay out some courses of action for him on how you could do that.

Then he would always come back and say, and we would discuss it, and we would go back and we would make the changes. Then we would go back and bring them to him and let him look at it, and he would do that.

So he's comfortable with that process. I think...
the process does what it needs to do. It provides him the
information. It tells him what task he has in front of him,
lays out ways that he can get to that task by courses of
action, and then it shows you what risks are involved with
each of those courses of action so that he can make the best
decision.

How did you find his decision style of decision making, in the sense that, if you were
laying out alternatives to get to the end state that he
wanted to get to? Is there a norm to the way he likes to
make decisions? In other words, did you find that, hey, I
laid out these options. He usually would look at them right
then and there and say, yeah, we're going to do this one or
does he like to think about them and catch you at the next
meeting and say, okay, yeah, I've thought about what you told
me last week, we are going to do this one?

Does he have a typical style?

Well, the one big thing is he's a very -- He's a visual person. So if you put a map
in front of him, he's drawn immediately to the map.

He also thinks much faster than your brief will
ever go. So you'll start laying out the facts, and he has
already formulated courses of action in his own head.

So you will be at the mission analysis portion of the MDMP, Military Decision Making Process, and he will already be giving guidance on the courses of action, and you'll get to the courses of action: Well, yes, that's what I meant to do or that's not what I meant to do.

So he clearly -- He is very decisive. So he can make -- And he will tell us, lay this one out, and he will often come back and say, okay, I want you to take two and develop that a little bit more, and then take two and add another battalion over here, and then have us come back and give him some more no that so he can look at the information again and see if that still makes sense to him.

That's great. I think you were trying to convey that, and I just hadn't really -- That sort of caught it, I think, nicely.

You talked about the interaction with the major supporting commands. What was the relationship between you and planners at the MNFI level, especially given that we sort of have something of an awkward situation where MNCI has published its op plan, but we still haven't seen MNFI's plan?

Well, in fact, they still
have the draft out. So we are almost 30 days of ours being published, more than 30 days of ours being published, and they are still working through their plan.

Now theirs is a much more strategic plan, is complicated by the fact that it is as joint campaign plan, meaning that it will be signed by both the Ambassador and the Forces Commander. So there has to be some -- I think, some concessions that go on between State and Defense at that level.

I think that -- and we briefed this concept, because we were going -- You know, one of the things that we always -- that always -- I think [b](3), [b](6) said the Plans shop seems to be the oracle of the staff, because when everybody has a question, they always like to come to the Plans shop to get the answer.

So we end up doing a number of briefs. Jim Powell, Ken Strader, the strategists that are really working those plans, have briefed Joint Forces Commander, have briefed -- We do not brief Admiral Fallon, the CG. Reserve the right to brief him on the concept. He kind of stays in the chain of command.

He has briefed Forces Command. You know, General
Campbell is here. The CG briefed that, but we were in the room, and we were able to participate in that discussion.

General Luck (Phonetic) -- We sat down with General Luck, the retired who is the advisor to Joint Forces Command, the Warfight Center, that comes over and does the mission rehearsal exercises with the Corps.

So all those briefs that we put together, we would pre-brief the boss, the CG. As he took a look at them, you know: Hey, make sure you talk about this. And it was another chance for us to get that information.

So all that was, I think, in line with and was continuously being vetted through General Petraeus, and I think that -- So I don't think -- There are not very many surprises in the tasks that are given to us in the Joint Campaign Plan or the Annex.

In fact, as I say, we are going through their draft 6 right now, and we are making sure that there aren't any inconsistencies from the way that we -- you know, General Odierno's vision, and I think that for the most part, with the exception of a few pieces, General Petraeus is fairly comfortable with General Odierno's vision of how the security piece should unfold.
Okay. So I guess the answer is that awkward a little bit, but not too bad, because even though, in fact, I sent a planner to Force to help write the security end.

Okay. So it sounds like there continues to be this communication kind of below the written formal level?

Indeed.

Okay. We've covered a fair amount of ground. I wanted to kind of ask you at this point, what haven't we talked about that you're thinking, hey, he's the historian, but he hasn't asked me about this?

What haven't we talked about relative to what you've been engaged in that you're thinking should be mentioned?

I think the one thing that I've found that has been very interesting, and it's been both my times as planning, and this is a -- It was new to me when I was Division Planner with 1st Armor Division when there was some -- it wasn't the political influence that you worried about, but there was some in-house -- there's more
Army, in-house Army as we were deploying to Bosnia.

There were the folks that were: I should remain relevant within the Army; so therefore, I need to have X capability to deploy to Bosnia, because this is the first big thing that we've had going for, you know, a couple of years.

Well, that is being carried over into this. It's interesting. General Odierno has, I think, done the right thing where he has laid out operationally the requirements as he sees them in theater, notwithstanding what the potential political constraints are from the world, the United States, that come back and say -- he will come and say, this is what I need to accomplish this mission that you have given me. But at the same time, we always maintain that in the back of our head, because what we plan for having the resources we need, we have to understand the real limitations.

So it's an interesting dynamic that you find yourself in as you say, you know, if I had, you know, 400,000 soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen, you know, we would knock this thing right out. But you know, where is the balance on what they can give and what -- But at the same time, he knows what line to go up to and say this is what I do need, and I can do -- I think that I can accomplish the
mission with this. So that there is no question in anybody's
mind that, without that, they are putting this whole mission
at risk.

It's interesting to see where we've come in the
last almost 30 days now that we've had the full plus-up on
the ground, and we are -- I think that Al Qaeda is off its
game, that we are making some ground against what's going on
with it as it tries to influence the environment.

At the same time, you'll watch the news, and you
don't necessarily see that in the media. So it's just an
interesting dynamic. I'll never know how, you know, the
General Officers balance that, but it's interesting to watch
to see it be done.

Hey, I want to ask one detail
question which I didn't take you through.

Can you just tell me: How big is your section?
Is it broken down in a particular way? You mentioned one of
your folks by name who was key to the planning process. I
don't necessarily need the names of others, just in terms of
who is in your section and how is it structured?

C-3 Plans consists of
myself and really five Majors that work for me. Now that's
what is on the Corps books. Along with that, I also have
three Coalition planners, Australian, British, Ukrainian, and
also am authorized -- however, they have been, I think,
farmed out to help back up FUOP -- am authorized a Air Force
planner and a Marine planner, and those should all work
directly for me where I have rating authority over those
folks.

Now with that, the Plans horizon really goes
across all the staff sections. So I'm also charged with
having to bring in planners from C-2 Plans and kind of have
them work in conjunction with a bigger, what I call the Plans
battle staff.

That comprises anywhere from
folks that will get together, and we will have discussions
with and interact with as we move forward on a given plan.

What I do is I have the C-3 planner then be the
lead planner for that effort, and have them in charge of
coordinating across that entire battle staff for that issue,
and then I can kind of farm it out that way so I have four or
five guys to work with.

A number of the folks are kind of contingency
plans, a little bit more operational tactical, and then what
I've tried to do is break out a couple of folks to stay at some of the conceptual, strategic, operational plans, campaign plan level. Of your five Majors -- Of my five. -- some may handle-- Five best Majors, and we've become better. We are not always good about bringing in the Coalition folks, but I tell you that, you know, they are all very capable once you figure it out. Just, you know, the arrogance of American -- it takes usually about six months for us to figure that out, but some great, great work and very smart people.

I truly believe that the Coalition only sends their best to positions like this, especially last -- in 2004 and '05 and seeing it again this time. The capabilities are just amazing.

Great. Anything else? Okay. Shall we make mention -- You had mentioned you hadn't been interviewed during your previous tour here in Iraq?

The Corps Historian back at Fort Hood after we returned sat down with me back there,
and we did -- It was primarily on Fallujah, the November Fallujah.

I just wanted to mention that on this interview, in case anyone listening to this would want to refer back to that. Okay. That concludes this interview.