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

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Phoenix Base, International Zone

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

MNFI Historian

This is my second interview with (b)(3), (b)(6) On the wall of his office, he has a photo of himself with his wife on their boat, which they keep in a slip in Maryland. He is returning to Army Material Command from this assignment, with a return date of 27 August 2008.

Abstract

ISF logistics has lagged behind due to the surge, during which American resources emphasized US forces. We've coordinated the mission with senior logisticians and made good progress on many projects. We can't impose American ways here. We've made mistakes trying to shape American solutions. The Iraqis will figure things out given the opportunity. They will not use half of what we implement. Our Type A personalities might break as much as they fix. The 6 April IDF attack, with two KIA, took a heavy toll. I take great pride in what we've accomplished.
*Listen to the middle part ** to get the full meaning.*

Interview

The was a major push in the surge for supporting the counterinsurgency fight, but this surge was of US forces to fight the US fight, and it came at the expense of helping Iraqi logistics. There has been a concerted effort of MNFI, MNCI, and MNSTCI for logistical development. We assembled a council of colonels that we called the Iraqi Logistics Development Committee. These were senior logisticians working with Iraqi counterparts on how to move it forward from facilitization perspective and mentoring. An example of what we've done is the Taji National Depot. 10 – 13 man supply depot team. \$600 to \$700 million for the Taji Depot. We are bringing facilities on line. We've opened the small-arms repair facility and we're now equipping and outfitting the personnel and training through FY09. We are enabling Iraqis to sustain that. On the MoI side, a lot of the \$ to develop Baghdad Police College warehousing and storage. With the MoD, we're developing the Bayji National Depot, improving it, and developing unit set fielding. We are training them for a September 2008 transition. They will have one year of contractor oversight. Class V storage.

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13 location commands. Significant capabilities with regional training centers. With the Iraqi National Depot, we will create significant capability. We're trying to avoid imposing an American way. We have to have Iraqi buy in.** We're taking logistics and doing hands-on training from depot down to the operator level. We're trying to identify

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weaknesses, develop Iraqi solutions, and institutionalize it. No one knows our timelines. We're trying to build up.

Mistakes:

1) A lot of times we put in a contract and then gave Iraqis six months to adopt or change it. They didn't take care of adopting or changing it, and invariably we blinked. The Iraqis did not act, and we wound up picking it up. Iraqis played us, because they knew we would keep paying. We must be firm and not worry. The Iraqis will figure it out. For example, in maintenance, they lack material maintenance capability. We finally transitioned, and the back log did not grow out of site. This was third line, DS level.

2) We tried to enforce or impose US policies and doctrines on the Iraqis, but they are a sovereign nation. They have strengths and weaknesses. We push contractors; they don't. When we stop paying, they revert to Iraqi solutions. They will not use half of what we try to implement. The solution is to work closer with Iraqi counterparts to design according to their models.

What about others? I dialogue with senior logistics representatives daily. We share lessons learned in ILDC. There is an element in the 3rd ESC that is trying to prescribe a US solution. (b)(3), (b)(6) says we're too US centric. The log community has learned and passed on lessons in the ILDC program. Senior Iraqi leaders are engaged. We're not just telling them. We're confident we've learned, but our people change over and we get a new batch of Type A personalities. We have to try to overcome that through training. There is an "Iraqi way of doing business." We do corrections when our people interfere.

On Iraqi support to troops in Basra and Sadr City: When I arrived last year, they couldn't move battalions across Baghdad. Now, they moved a division down to Basra along with food, water, and repair parts. They needed our help on a case-by-case basis, but have been largely successful. Basra-Sadr City-Amarah. We've made improvements each time. They did an AAR, had discussions, and learned. They're taking lessons, applying them, and improving.

In Basra, they lacked barrier material, and they learned from that, needing to think ahead and plan to fill the need. They realized they needed stuff they didn't have. That showed progress. They learned more about medical evacuations. They'd forgotten and then learned about the issue of Iraqi access to the airfield to evacuate wounded to the hospital. They figured it out and found the solution. They moved a maintenance support team from the 9th Division down to support the operation and did it on their own.

The Operations Centers brings up the issue of land rights. It demands coordination of Iraqi priorities.

6 April. I was back at Blackhawk. I had just returned to the hooch for my half-day off. We had the IDF and then I got a phone call from my deputy. It hit between about 1500 and 1530. When I got here, there were ambulances, fire trucks, and doing accountability. I had five people from J4 who'd gone to the CASH. One was evacuated to Germany with

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a lot of shrapnel, but is doing well. We exchange notes. We had two others with shrapnel and burns, but released next day with subsequent treatment. One had their bell rung, but nothing significant. I just needed to be checked. The atmosphere around here was heavy. We had two KIA, Wolfer and Scott. I knew them well. This followed the death of SGT Frost in March in a tragic Mi-17 accident. That was tragic, but this felt different since it was direct hostile action. It created high stress. People did not want to leave hard buildings. Someone who was due to leave within two weeks would not leave a building for fear of getting hit. It was high stress. The memorial service was stressful and combat stress sessions followed. We sent a couple of officers for additional counseling. One had a hard time of it, but he chose to stick it out and worked through it. He left yesterday.

Can you describe Colonel Scott?

He was joyful and friendly. He worked in the SAO office. You could rely on him for an answer to your questions. He was professional and well liked. I worked with him on a daily basis. He always greeted me in chapel and offered important fellowship.

An obituary I read indicated the rising IDF in the previous weeks had raised his anxiety.

Everybody was more anxious because of the IDF. Here we were all on the receiving end, whether we were here or in our quarters. There might be some warning, or no warning, just an explosion. Dust storms increased our stress because that meant there would be no air weapons teams overhead. Some people were wearing their IBA in the offices. Some slept in their IBA, on the floor. People thought of the gym as a safe haven, until it took a direct hit.

Did you go through stages of grief?

There was anger and frustration, and I got over it. People were emotional, sad, upset, depending on personal relationships. I took it very hard.

What will stick with you as you leave here?

1) Indirect Fire. Earning a CAB from shrapnel hitting my hooch and landing close. 2) Great friendships with Iraqis, which have provided me faith and hope in Iraq. 3) The great people in MNSTCI, taking pride in people who are serving. Everybody has stepped up. Folks are making a difference. The work is extremely important and we are making a difference. We will take pride in the GoI's success.

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