Interview with Brigadier General Mark Milley

Q: All right. We're recording. This is (b)(6) Garnet, United States Army Combat Studies Institute (CSI), on 18 August 2009. I am talking to Brigadier General Mark Milley about his experiences as Deputy Commanding General for Operations for the 101st Airborne Division in Afghanistan. The Director of CSI, (b)(6) will be listening to this interview but won't be participating in it.

And, sir, how are you doing today?

A: I'm doing great, (b)(6) Garnet. How are you?

Q: I'm doing good. Okay. You know, I already have obviously read your biography [attached at end of interview]. But I just want to start off by asking if there were any previous experience that you felt really prepared you for this deployment or that really had a significant impact on your career?

A: Well, a couple of things. You know, you mentioned in some of the questions that you sent to me about education source and all that kind of stuff, source of commission, you can get that from the biography. But with respect to service in Afghanistan over the last 15 months, that was my third combat tour since 9/11, four total tours. I commanded a Brigade in Bosnia shortly after 9/11 and then came back, -, came back, took 2nd Brigade 10th Mountain to Afghanistan with General Hagenback and then Major General Austin. -. And then redeployed from Afghanistan after, I think, we did about a seven month tour or so. [Colonel] (b)(3), (b)(6) Emerald was the other 10th Mountain Brigade Commander at the time. I came back to Fort Drum and then deployed to Iraq on very little notice, 36 days from notification to wheels up. Took 2nd Brigade 10 Mountain to Iraq. The initial plan was for my brigade to go into Najaf. And you may or may not remember at the time, it was the time of the Shia uprising that began in, I want to say, 6 April or so.

Q: Right.

A: And there was some real concern that they didn't have enough combat power. So the call came for some reinforcements and we were the unit that was relatively easy to move, although we only had a very short amount of dwell time. We had about four or five months dwell back at Drum at that point. But we were a light infantry unit and we got the call, we went ahead and did a very hasty pre-mission preparation and the JRTC folks and folks actually out of Leavenworth and others piled on and helped out put together a CPX. We were already combat seasoned guys, but we put together a quick CPX train-up and

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[inaudible]intensified small unit train-up plan for - four or five weeks -, and then began to move out. So our lead units left literally at 36 days. We kept training while the flow was going on.

I did ask for a longer time in Kuwait and so we did a train-up there in Kuwait for I want to say it might have been 15 or 20 days vs. the normal 12 or 14 days. So we did get a little bit extra time there. Then we moved up the road and we got a change of mission while we were in Kuwait, not to go to Najaf. But we went to Baghdad, west Baghdad, and rolled in on the 1st Cavalry Division and became attached to them. And then so we did that tour in Iraq under [Major] General [Peter W.] Chiarelli in the 1st Cav. And I came back from 2nd Brigade 10th Mountain, changed command, got assigned here to the Pentagon in the J3 as the GFM and later Joint Operations Division Chief.- -. And then I got selected, picked up out of that job, and assigned to the 101st as the DCGO. I've got – and I don't want to sound embellishing in any manner. But I've got a lot of combat experience going back to when I was a captain. I've served in combat or contingency operations at every rank since captain and I've got combat tours in Panama and Afghanistan and Iraq, and deployments or contingency operations to Sinai, Haiti, Bosnia and did a tour that I considered combat but no one else did was in Colombia, South America. And then as a commander, I commanded an air/assault battalion in Korea ~~unaccompanied~~ for two years there. [Well, not unaccompanied.] My family was down in Seoul. But I was up in the DMZ with the 1st Battalion 506 and that was a very, very extraordinarily battalion... It was pre 9/11. Extraordinarily well trained - battalion and it was a very focused unit and although it wasn't a combat deployment per se, pre 9/11, that was about as close as you could get to that sort of thing. So without sounding overly self embellishing, I went into Afghanistan as a seasoned commander and did not, was not over-confident, but was confident in my skills and remain so today.

So now I would also say that in terms of education, you know, you saw the bio there. Political science there at Princeton. One of the things I took an interest in early on was guerrilla warfare, counterinsurgency, ~~you know~~, low intensity conflict that had multiple names throughout the years. And throughout my time in the army, I have been assigned primarily to light infantry or special operations type units, multiple rotations through- - JRTC [Joint Readiness Training Center, Fort Polk, Louisiana] and a tour as an OC [Observer/Controller] - I feel - that there is a lot of complexity to counterinsurgency and there's a lot of complexity to - guerrilla warfare -. But most of my career, the vast majority of it in terms of troop assignments, has been involved in those type of units.

You asked specifically, did I have JTF [Joint Task Force] level experience. The answer is a bit of a yes and a no-On a lot of those various contingency operations, we were a subordinate unit to JTFs. But if you mean JTF, like it exists in either Iraq or Afghanistan prior to the train-up and deployment, the

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answer is no. Although I was Commander and Deputy Commander - of CJTF [Combined Joint Task Force] Phoenix, but I wouldn't equate CJTF Phoenix to a full blown CJTF.[1]

Q: Right, right. Okay.

A: That's kind of the background there.

Q: Fantastic. And we ...

A: But when I joined the 101st, that was summer '07. Let's see, wait a second. I come out ... Command was '03-05, '05-07, so yes, summer '07 showed up at Fort Campbell coming out of the Pentagon, out of the Joint staff and then a tour there with Secretary Gates. And then we did the preparatory training and I knew I was going to Afghanistan as soon as I showed up.

Q: Okay.

A: So we had the prep training and got involved in that right away, beginning in July, and then did that all the way through deployment in March. And I can discuss some of the third question, - the pre-deployment training -. I wrote some notes down and can discuss some of that if you want to do that.

Prep

Q: Yeah, I actually talked to [Major] General [Jeffery] Schloesser [Commanding General, 101st Airborne Division] last week and he specifically said that I should ask you about some of the studies that you utilized in preparing for your deployment.

A: - Okay, as far as the preparation goes. First of all, I'm a personal believer in self study. I do a lot of that. I always have and I can thank Dr. (b)(6) and folks out there - -, but I remember Colonel (b)(6)[2] there and I would say to this day that it was probably one of the finest -military history courses I've ever taken. So. But aside from that, I've been a reader all my life and I've always believed in that. So I did a lot of that and I can discuss what I read-. - I'll talk about that if you want me to. But as far as the actual preparatory training, we had two things going on simultaneously. We were preparing the CJTF and the subordinate units to go to Afghanistan. At the same time, we were preparing brigades to go to Iraq. So we had the 506 [Airborne Infantry Regiment] -, 4th Brigade [Combat Team] going to Afghanistan and then we had 1st, 2nd, 3rd going to Iraq. And then we had the Aviation Brigades going to Afghanistan along with the Logistic Sustainment Brigade. And I was involved both as a participant and a trainee if

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[1] CJTF Phoenix is a Battalion/Brigade sized command responsible for training the Afghan Security Forces.

[2] Col. (b)(6) Ph.D., director of the Combat Studies Institute during the 1990s.

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you will at the CJTF level, and then supervising the training of those subordinate units as they prepared for deployment and then deployed. With respect to the subordinate brigades, attended several of the JRTC rotations, spent the whole time down there at JRTC as [Colonel] (b)(3), (b)(6) Topaz 2nd BCT, 101st Air Assault] prepared to go ahead and deploy to Iraq, and then also with [Colonel] (b)(3), (b)(6) Eagle (b)(3), (b)(6) Eagle and the 506 [4th BCT, 101st Air Assault] as they readied to go to Afghanistan and at the CJTF - over-watched the Aviation, a lot of the preparatory training for the Aviation. By the way, if you want to do a study – this has got nothing to do with why we're talking right now, but if you do want to do a detailed study on how to train an Aviation Brigade for combat operations, this is worth studying. For combat operations in Afghanistan as part of their pre-deployment preparatory packages and it's very worthwhile to take a look at what the two Aviation brigades and 101st did, specifically the 101st Aviation and the 159 Aviation [Brigade]. They, in my mind, set a standard for how Aviation should train for deployment.

But aside from that, for us at CJTF level, you know, we did the MRE [Mission Readiness Exercise], so it was a series of academics and then a CPX – –The MRE Academics- included the history, culture, negotiations, -, the various tribes, enemy situation- and a wide variety of other topics. I don't have the actual POI [Program of Instruction] with me, but there was a whole slew of topics taught. Very well done, I thought. Very good, –these classes were taught to the whole staff. In addition to that, there is a general officer language course, short course. I think it's four or five days. But that was a –recommended GOMO [General Officer Management Office] type thing for GOs deploying to CENTCOM. - -That was TDY [Temporary Duty], you sit down one on one with an Afghan language instructor and he also talks about culture and the tribal influences and all that along with the language. I will say that Dari, I don't speak it. I tried to learn it a little bit, but it is very difficult and I don't speak it. But I did learn some basic phrases.

We also did an off-site, which I thought was very well done. General Schloesser had put that together with the staff. Two days. And we did have a specific part of that focused on - Afghanistan. We had, because we still had brigades over in Iraq, we had Afghan and Iraq experienced people come and talk to the group of commanders. This went down to battalion commander. Included in that group of guest speakers were now General, then Colonel, [John] Nicholson who commanded the Spartan Brigade 10th Mountain. And then we brought in H.R. McMasters who commanded the Cav actually about, a little bit after me, over in Iraq. Also, at a different sessic (b)(3), (b)(6) Hawk came out and spoke to us. And We had [Lieutenant] General [Benjamin] Freakley [former CG of CJTF-76 and 10th Mountain Division] come out and spoke to us. We had a wide variety of other speakers and I don't remember all their names, but those names jump out at me. We had, for the MRE itself, we brought in a very robust staff from the 82nd to

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include now Major General, then Brigadier General, Joe Votel and the 82nd Chief of Staff Vic Petrenko, along with a lot of their key staffers, and a variety of subject matter experts. And there was also – I don't remember his name – but there was an Afghan general officer that accompanied them. In addition to that, you had - several of - graybeards who are very combat seasoned guys coming out -, with the BCTP [Battle Command Training Program, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas] - In particular, we had LTG Vines and LTG Bernard as I recall. [Lieutenant] General [David] -Vines had a lot of experience obviously in Afghanistan from his time there -. As you know, I think BCTP ran part of that MRE and then JFCOM [Joint Forces Command] runs another part. Well done, trained up the CJTF staff, did a good job. It's primarily, you know, staff focused and it really focuses in more than anything probably on Current Joint Ops and processes. I thought it was a pretty good workout for the -Current Ops guys.

In addition to that, we - tracked the 82nd -CUAs which are done in the morning by the 82nd and their CUBs [Combat Update Briefings] in the evening. Piped in those things on a weekly basis, and then as we got closer to the deployment, we piped into them daily. We also, myself and the staff, we were all tracking the 82nd actions on SIPRNET, so we were plugged in on all their nets in that way. Did two PDSSes, pre-deployment site surveys. Normally, the people do one, but I did two. I think General Schloesser actually did two as well.

LS/RS

Q: Yes, that's what he told me.

A: I did two and I linked up with Brigadier General Joe Votel who -was the DCGO for the 82nd, my counterpart. Did a great job and took me around and really got a good overview of -Regional -Command -East and the duties and responsibilities that I would assume when I got there. I also did a visit to a variety of agencies primarily throughout the - east coast US. I visited Department of State. And while at Department of State talked to analysts and policy folks, etc. But also of note, we talked to (b)(6) and we sat down with him. It was a small group, about a half a dozen of us. Sat down with Kilcullen and had a very good session with him. Went over to CIA, OSD, talked to all the variety of subject matter experts and analysts. Also, talked to FBI and DEA. Came here with the Pentagon, linked in with the Joint Staff guys, went over and saw [Lieutenant] General [Doug] Lute in the White House and he gave us I want to say about an hour or 90 minutes or so of his time on what he thought of the situation in Afghanistan –from his perspective [On 15 May 2007, Lute was appointed by George W. Bush to serve as Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Advisor for Iraq and Afghanistan]. We also visited the National Defense University and had a round-table with LTG(R) Dave Barno who had previously commanded CFC-A in Afghanistan. We did weekly OPDs [Officer Professional Development]. We did those skull sessions on a variety of topics. And then there was the constant planning effort of campaign design and the sessions that went into that. And then en route, also, like I say it's part of the

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preparatory stuff, en route, I stopped off in England to visit an intelligence organization that I won't discuss. But they do a lot of work, and they have -a reach back capability. And flew across the Channel to JFC Brunsum-NATO in Brussels. Talked to that whole staff. Got a good rundown from them. Flew from there to Al Udeid to the CAOC [Combined Air Operations Center. A component of U.S. Air Force Central Command, the CAOC provides the command and control of airpower throughout Iraq, Afghanistan and 18 other nations]. Linked in with General Rayberg who was the Commander of CAOC. They're the guys that do all the -CAS and air coordination, etc. And then also actually before I left CONUS, I spent -a day down at Central Command in Tampa and then Special Operations Command also in Tampa. So that's a feel for kind of the preparatory stuff.

And you said General Schloesser had mentioned about independent study or what I was studying. Quite a few things. One of the ones I found very useful was a book by Giustozzi, *Koran, Kalashnikov and Laptop*.[3] And I had lunch with him when I visited that intelligence organization in Great Britain. Sat down with him and it was an extended lunch. It lasted several hours. It was very interesting. But in addition to that, worked closely with our intel guys, had them become pretty familiar with all your standard type of works, many of them already were by the way. But you know, to make sure that folks were doing all the appropriate professional reading on guerilla warfare, counterinsurgency and Afghanistan-] –Studied a lot of Mao Tse Tung[4] and Galula and several other theoretical works to include "War of the Flea".- Did a lot of reading -on Pakistan as well. -[5] These are just off the top of my head here, the ones that I emphasized. Also, Barnett Rubin's book, "Fragmentation of Afghanistan," and "Malakand Field Force" which I thought- absolutely fascinating.[6]

Q: Churchill, right.

A: That's right. And then a whole slew of others. So I thought that that was a pretty good and robust and rigorous preparation –for Afghanistan ... and, you know, there's a lot of other things going on. You've got Fort Campbell and the other BCTs going to Iraq -. But clearly our CJTF focus, and my personal focus, was on preparation for Afghanistan and - supervising the brigades to get ready to go

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[3] Antonio Giustozzi, *Koran, Kalashnikov and Laptop, The Neo-Taliban Insurgency in Afghanistan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).

[4] Samuel B. Griffith, Translator, *Mao Tse-Tung On Guerilla Warfare* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publisher, 1961

[5] Robert Taber, *War of the Flea, The Classic Study of Guerilla Warfare* (1965; various reprint editions).

[6] Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (2nd Edition, Yale University Press, 2002); and Winston S. Churchill, *The Story of the Malakand Field Force, An Episode of Frontier War* (1897; various reprint editions).

both to Afghanistan and Iraq. So I felt, you asked, - did I feel individually ready to perform my duties and my answer is yes, I did. Based upon my previous experience both in contingency operations and combat operations, and then based on our focused preparatory work that we did prior to getting there. Overconfident? No. Cocky, hubris? No. But confident, just quietly confident. That's the way I came in here.

Q: Fantastic. It sounds like you had, just like the 10th Mountain had, already started the RIP [Relief In Place] really before you got over there. But how did your RIP and then the TOA [Transfer of Authority] with the 82nd go?

A: I thought it went very well and I thought the 82nd – kudos to the 82nd here. I thought they did an excellent job. [Major] General [David] Rodriguez [CG of CJTF-82 and 82nd Airborne Divison in 2007-2008], [Brigadier] General [Joe] Votel [DCG-O of CJTF-82], [Brigadier] General [Rodney] Anderson [DCG-S of CJTF-82] and their whole team did an excellent job at facilitating an excellent RIP. And I don't know if you're 100 percent familiar with ... I think you are because I saw you were at the 10th Mountain Division. But you know, a Division RIP, at least ours, was extended over a fairly lengthy period of time. This is not something that happened in just a week or two. So you've got things like Comm's guys coming in and other pieces and parts. So the intent there is that by TOA day, - the new incoming division is operational. And I think that the 82nd did a fantastic job. I would say something though that is worth looking at from an AAR [After Action Review] perspective. And this is something I picked up quite awhile ago as a Brigade Commander. And it was something that General Austin told me as I pulled out to go to Iraq. He said, you know, remember that it takes some time to get going even though we do left seat/right seat rides and we do preparatory work, etc. And he said something that stuck in my mind ever since. He said, in his experience, that it took a battalion about four plus weeks after TOA to get into stride and then they're still on the upswing, but they're in stride. It took a brigade – at that point, I was a brigade commander – he said it took a brigade six to eight weeks and it takes a division probably about 90 days. Now, I think that's borne out by a variety of studies that I think you guys have done over time on the RIP process. But it does take time and units are not at TOA, you know, completely 110 percent, you know, at full stride, comfort zone level, if you know what I mean.

Q: Certainly, certainly.

A: And I think that's, that's not to say they're not ready to go. They're ready to go, but ... and they are capable of conducting combat operations. But they're not in their stride, they're not at their absolute maximum performance level at that point. And my experience has borne that out over multiple deployments, even contingency ops where there's no combat. You know, things like Bosnia. -Even in Bosnia, - it still took awhile to get folks stood up and completely squared away. It takes that amount of time -before you're in the-, they used to call it the band of

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excellence, - - where you're at full running speed kind of thing. And in some units, it's probably a little bit different than others. And repetitive tours over time take the edge off that, increased levels of combat veterans in the organization take the edge off that as well. But I think that is something that you just keep in the back of your mind. But for the RIP with us, I thought the 82nd did as good as anyone could ever do at the CJTF level. They did a great job.

Now, just specifically, and just jotted notes down based on the question. -. And these are in no particular order. These are just notes from my notebook. Some of the things that we did, and I say "we," I mean, Joe Votel with me. There was a larger process ongoing with the RIP of the staff and all the sections and all that. But specific to me and the handoff at the O [DCG-O] level, I arrived on the 28th of March at Baghram. Joe met me, Joe Votel, and Rodney. And then on the next day began a left seat/right seat ride and that began with the opening, grand opening of the Border Coordination Center at Khyber Pass Torkham Gate where the 82nd wanted to get that opened on their watch -. Now, that was an interesting event because to my knowledge, that's the first time that the Pakistan military and the Afghan military of the ranks that I saw there – and these were all the senior guys of both militaries – showed up and met at Torkham Gate and it was a very interesting affair. And - so got to see that and got to be introduced to a lot of the Pak mil guys and the Afghan guys that we were going to work with which was integral to one of my functions and duties which was to overwatch the ANSF partnership and PAK border -operations. - -And then – I'm not going to go day by day – but over the course of the left seat/right seat ride, I went to all the battle rhythm driven things, went to all the CUAs, the sync meetings, he gave me smart books. I got briefs on the ANSF[Afghanistan National Security Forces], did executive dinners every night where they took a certain battlefield function and went through it. One of the ones that I think is pertinent was-,a unit -in-contact and asset management tools. Went over that with General Rodriguez and that was good and I actually used that. In fact, on the day of Wanat, pulled that out of my pocket and used it. And then did a lot of battlefield circulation everyday. Went around most of RC(E). Marty Sweitzer, Brigade Commander in the 82nd, got to see him - on the PDSS and during LS/RS and then our Brigade Command[redacted], as he was coming in as well. Saw Chip Preysler [Colon[redacted], Commanding Officer, 173rd Airborne BCT, TF Bayonet in Afghanistan] and saw all the various battalion commanders to include 2nd of the 503rd [Airborne Infantry, TF Rock in Afghanistan]. I didn't get to all the companies. I got to a few. But I definitely got around a lot. In addition to that, you know, we focused -in Konar, Pech, Ghazni, Gardez, Kowst, saw the PRTs, Torkham Gate, looked at fusion cells, attended a COAB [Coalition Objectives Assessment Board], -HVT targeting, Operations and Intell Sync -. - Watched the nightly CONOPS [Contingency Operations], We also practiced that method in the MRE. But witnessed a bunch of those. Then during - the LS/RS, I took a few at the tail end there once we, -, switched seats so to speak and Votel would sit

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

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Duties – LS/RS

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there and watch me take over. Integrated fully with the various special operations forces that we have there. –CJSOTF and - the JSOC guys. Went down to ISAF, did all the various incalls down at ISAF, got briefs, talked to CIA, did in briefs with them. Met all the key leaders of the ANSF at the Ministry of Defense level-, the G-3, LTG Karimi, the ANA Chief of Staff BK, [redacted] Bismullah Khan and those guys, and the Minister of Defense -General Wardak. Did office calls with all those guys. And then also, more importantly for our purposes, went down to the two –ANA Corps that were operating in our, area – 201st and 203rd Corps.

Q: All right.

A: Talked to them. Got a chance to meet with - both ANA and ANP and the various Embedded team leaders there. Did a lot of work on the border; that was one of my duties and responsibilities -. - Joe brought me around all the various outposts along the border. Went through the fullup battle rhythm. At that time, when I got there by the way, at ISAF, the –DCOS Ops was General Champoux [redacted]. He would be the G-3 -above me -. Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations at the two star level at ISAF. And that at that time was Bernie [redacted] Champoux and later became Major General [Michael] Tucker [Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations for ISAF, Deputy Commander for Operations, U.S. Forces Afghanistan]. And then the Commander at that time was General [Dan K.] McNeil [Commander, ISAF and US Forces Afghanistan from February 2007 – June 2008] who later became General [David] McKiernan [Commander, ISAF and US Forces Afghanistan from June 2008- June 2009]. Went and visited the –SOCCE (Special Operations Command and Control Element) down there in Kabul and reviewed terms of reference. We talked about counterinsurgency in general and then the specifics - vignettes. I did get briefed. We all did. General Schloesser and - the entire staff on [redacted] battlefield systems specific to what this study's about. You know, we got briefed on lots of vignettes. But one of them was, was [redacted] - the Ranch House attack and the general situation up at -Bella and the Waygal Valley. We went ahead and reviewed their campaign plan and adopted it with minor modifications and then –the overall - command and control and all the radio systems in the office - - and all the computers, etc. Talked about the focus district development program. Visited CSTC-A, went through all that. Talked about the various fights that, you know, you've got a CJTF fight, brigade fight, BCT fight, -Battalion fight, company fight-. -. Went through a very, very rigorous sensor laydown that we sustained and kept doing that.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Went through NSA which has a variety of capabilities which I'm not going to talk about, but fully up to speed on them. Went through the Tripartite system. Don't know if you're familiar with that.

(b)(6) Garnet

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Q: No, I am not.

A: The Tripartite system is a system of meetings, – locations, - procedures and communications to link Afghanistan, Pakistan and us, ISAF/Coalition, but really it was RCEast, together. It was just getting re-initiated. It had fallen back a little bit for a variety of reasons. But the BCC [Border Coordination Center] was part of that. That's why they, the 82d, wanted to do that opening. So at the highest level, you've got the four star, which at that time was General McKiernan with Kayani and Bismullah Khan Mohammadi They would discuss, -, policy among the three, military policy among the three -parties. And then you drop down into a two star level and that would be - the RC commanders, RC South, RC East and their respective PAKMIL and ANSF counterparts. I think it's just getting off the ground down at RC South, but we did it all year long and it's very, very good and very effective and I think there's a lot of positives to it. There's a lot of issues with regard to Pakistan which is not the subject of this talk. But that system goes a long way towards helping things out. And then at my level, we had - what was called the BSSM, the Boarder- Security Subcommittee Meeting, and there was a series of one stars, Pakistan and Afghan, that would meet periodically with me and other members of the RC(E) staff. And that was one of the mechanisms that I could talk to Pakistan so that I developed a relationship with the Pakistani senior leaders at my level. And as incidents occurred along the border, I'd be on the phone, you know, picking the phone up and we'd go direct and got a lot of things sorted out that way.

So we got introduced to that system and got introduced to all the players of it. There's a whole communications package that goes to that which communicates back and forth across the border and then we're putting in a whole string of Border Coordination Centers, Torkham was the first of a planned six that will go in over time and then we're now starting to put them in down south as well. So that will go over time towards, we think, some improvement along the border. But got introduced to all that. And then we had a - discussion about the use of Pathfinders. Our – that was one area where we differed a little bit with the 82nd. So we use our Pathfinders a little bit differently. And then talked - alot about the targeting process. Went over some compartmented programs. Obviously talked a lot about IEDs. Went over -CCIR (Commanders Critical Information Requirements), wake up criteria, and one issue that 82nd was working and I picked it up was a boundary change, an ANSF boundary change between 201st and 203rd Corps. Toured the Afghan NMCC [National Military Command Center] which is their command post in Kabul which is being improved now, but at that time was just getting stood up. Went over the Baghram [Air Base] security and the Baghram security zone. Went over human rights, which I found interesting in that I was the primary face and spokesman for the command to interact with a variety of NGOs and human rights groups, specifically with regards to consequence management –things we did in the event of allegations of civilian casualties, things like investigate each case and make solatia payments to the

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family. - We met monthly. Joe started that, Joe Votel, in an effort to improve our relationships and improve our transparency with those groups a couple of months before I got there, and I sustained that throughout the time I was there. Talked about, you know, there's an old term called -arbaki which is a system of using the tribes to help local security which is not necessarily applicable in all of Afghanistan but worked historically in some areas. We put our ideas -about this concept into various sessions with both CGs and about troops to task and the use of indigenous forces in addition to ANSF. Some of that has come to fruition in what is now called the AP3 program (Afghan Public Protection Force). And a lot of that I -did with General Schloesser as well as the staff so we worked the troop-to-task analysis pretty hard. -Also went over the lines of operation—security, governance, and development. Talked about priorities and, you know, operational priorities, etc., escalation of force, agricultural development teams, which we got going, and what Joe called "Spheres of Influence," people you have to –engage on a routine basis -and I sustained basically his "spheres of influence" and kept those going. And then information management and -also participated in the weekly set of VTCs [Video TeleConferences], etc.

Issues that got handed off that, you know, there were many obviously. But some that I think might be particularly germane that they handed off to us saying these things are issues out there, you need to come to grips with. And we did that and TOA was 11 April [2008].

General Schloesser wanted to do a 60-90 day assessment sort of thing. So we took a look at these issues. - some of these issues were aviation and the allocation of ring aircraft [i.e. helicopters that fly the weekly "ring routes" between COPs and FOBs] in which we reallocated some to Bayonet and took some others and put them down in TF Currahee AO [TF Currahee was 4th BCT, 101st Air Assault's Area of Operations].[7] So we put some additional Apaches up with

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

Q: Right.

A: Took some Kiowas [OH-58D Kiowa Warriors] and put them down with TF Currahee. So the aircraft were better balanced for the type of -terrain they were involved in. ISR [Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Assets] shortages and ... you know, the whole ISR issue – I don't know if you're aware. ISR was a constant issue over there. It was constantly in short supply, below demand and we came in approximately anywhere between 19 and 25 percent of requirements filled on a daily basis. With regards specifically to Predator, we had

[7] The 1st-503rd Airborne Infantry from 173rd Airborne BCT was attached to TF Currahee throughout their deployment in Afghanistan.

one Predator line. And that was a fact that was made known up and down the chain at many levels repeatedly and often and loudly. And to their credit, by the way, I think of some of our senior leaders, they heard those words - during the tour that we were there because - a lot of corrective action was getting done while we were there. And I have to credit our predecessors, but also the 101st and General Schloesser specifically and me and a whole lot of others were beating that drum pretty loudly and it wasn't on the front page of the paper necessarily, but it was being beat pretty loudly. And we're seeing the fruitions of that. We saw a significant increase over the course of our 15 months and we're going to see additional increases. But that was an issue and still is and that will be the issue for quite some time. But it is being addressed and has very high level attention.

District center attacks and vulnerability. There was an increase in - district center attacks and there was an increase in attacks primarily in Wardak and Logar provinces and AO TF Currahee, not so much up in the Bayonet at the time. Troops- to- task, we did our own troop to task analysis before we got there; 82nd did their troop to task analysis and then we used the first 60 days or so, or less actually, General Schloesser did, to confirm or deny troop to task and he concluded early on that he needed additional combat power and he made that known also through various channels but he also, on the record, in public, in a Pentagon press conference made that call. And again, to the credit of those that make decisions to deploy forces, we over time ended up getting the 3rd Brigade 10th Mountain Spartans - back to Afghanistan and in the January time frame I think was when they pulled in. So that work was all being done even in the first 90 days.

There was also a perceptible increase in enemy activity primarily along the border, and primarily in the TF Currahee AO, but also up in Kunar [Province] and along the border in AO Bayonet, even in that first 90 days for sure. Had to work boundary issues because we were- doing a lot of transitions. And there was some command and control relative to Pakistan, a lot of improvement and we made those over time. It's still not there yet in terms of all the communication systems that was handed off to us. The LNO issue, there's a huge LNO bill to be paid by the CJTF over there, so we worked that. And then one of them – I'm just going to call it random neurons, but what we're talking about is units operating in the battlefield uncoordinated. That was an issue that the 82nd said you've got to really pay attention to that, and that proved to be true over time and that is not a new issue for me. That is an issue that I can remember being taught - at JRTC years ago. The little team out there by themselves and that kind of thing. You know, vehicles driving around getting ambushed without anyone knowing they're there. And then there was clearly a gap in combat power south of Kabul in the Wardak and Logar [Provinces] area. And then you have the summer transitions which we can talk about. But those are all things that were discussed in the left

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seat/right seat ride and I think frankly that Joe Votel, General Rodriguez and the whole 82nd staff and our guys did a great job in that whole CJTF handoff.

Q: Okay. Fantastic. I want to make sure that I have a good understanding of your campaign plan, what your objectives were, and specifically obviously in the Waigal Valley, but within Nuristan and Kunar region.

A: Okay. You asked a question on the duties and responsibilities – you just want to hold that until later?

Q: Yeah. Let's just hold that until later and then we'll jump back to that.

A: Okay. Well, I don't know if you had a chance to talk to General Schloesser or not with respect to the overall campaign plan. We took the 82nd campaign plan, modified it slightly and then executed that. Do you have a copy of that?

Q: I do not. I have a non-classified copy that's supposed to be coming to me from Fort Campbell, but I have not received that yet.

A: Okay. Well, I don't have the campaign plan in front of me. But the campaign plan's emphasis is to focus on the population, and I would encourage you to read it. It's a very rigorous, thorough campaign plan and it's got the lines of operation and sub-tasks and all kinds of stuff in there. It's very well put together. But as an overview, and I'm doing this a little bit from memory, but as an overview, you know, the mission that General Schloesser gave us was clearly to focus on the population. It was a population centric campaign plan. And what we did - in terms of our mission analysis, we focused on centers of commerce and friction points since that is where the populations densities were found. And that was I thought a pretty unique and interesting way of approaching that. Not so unique actually, but an interesting way of approaching it. I think some of that comes from the 10th Mountain days. Some of it was adapted from the 82nd. Some of it was coming out of doctrine. But -the analysis if you will was to focus in on population centers and friction points. And friction points are those areas in which the enemy was contesting the security measures and advances. Then the lines of operation that General Schloesser laid out for us were the security line of operation, the governance line of operation, the development line of operation and then the strategic communication or information ops line of operation.

I was primarily responsible with the security line of operation and I was involved in and supportive of the governance line and development line and then everybody was kind of involved in information ops more or less. But it was clear to all of us that General Schloesser's intent was to secure the Afghan people and increase their security and then to improve development and governance. And it was – it's probably old hat today, but it may not have been 10 years ago or even 5 years ago, but our doctrine has come an awful long way in counterinsurgency

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and I mean that is clearly the way to do it. You've got to establish a sense of security and at the same time you've got to be moving out on the other Lines of Operation. It's like a intertwined rope [redacted] one of those charts where you've got to have the good governance wrapped in with the economic development to -give the people a sense of hope and attachment to a legitimate government—each of these lines are interdependent and linked to each other. And the center of gravity of the whole thing is the people. And you've got to get the people off the – you know, those that are committed to the insurgency, ideologically committed, they're going to have to either be killed or captured, but others can be weaned off the insurgency and most the people are fence sitters and what you try to do is get them to connect to the government. So in terms of the specific pieces or the intent of those lines of operation, it was to protect the people, but separate the people, not just physically but maybe physically, but separate the people psychologically from the enemy, from the insurgent and connect them psychologically to the government. And then try to transform or try to build up the development part of it and the economic development and give them a sense of hope. Key to all of this is a government that is viewed as legitimate in the eyes of the people. So separate, connect, transform – those are the kind of things that jump out of my memory on it, but I thought it was a very comprehensive campaign plan. One of the most comprehensive ones I've ever seen.

With respect to the security line of operation -, some specific things that we worked very closely was the Afghan partnership program in order to secure the people.-. That was fundamental to ... we all recognized and still do that one of the keys to success in any counterinsurgency is to develop an indigenous counterinsurgent who - knows the culture and speaks the language and will identify with the people and he will ultimately fight the insurgent far more - effectively than any of us ever will. So developing the Afghan National Security Forces was fundamental to the security line of operation and our piece of that was to conduct partnered operations at all levels.

Also, fundamental to it was the border piece that I was charged with working. -. Those were two key areas within the security line of operation that was emphasized within the campaign plan. I would encourage you to read the campaign plan.

Q: Okay. Will do that. Now, I understand that you had been up at -Bella a couple of times and had been up in the Waigal Valley?

A: It was during the PDSS. Went up – didn't go to Bella during PDSS, but I went up in that area and I don't remember exactly which COPs I went to during the PDSS, but did get up in that area. But when I got there –after the TOA, I went up to Bella. I looked in my notebooks and I got a note in there that said "Battlefield Circ [circulation] Bella" and it was dated 6 May, but I'm not sure if that's 100 percent accurate, -. But anyway, - I went up to Bella.

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Impressions? I thought it was on poorly selected ground, not on good terrain, very difficult to defend, high risk, very costly and consumptive of resources, specifically rotary wing air, high risk for putting aircraft in there day or night. In fact, I'm pretty sure it was Bella that you almost had to land on like a rooftop or something to get out of the aircraft, but I'm not positive.

Q: I think that was Ranch House, but I know Bella was very tight also.

A: Oh, it was real tight. So anyway, I thought that – and this wasn't just me by the way. Votel talked to me about this and Rodriguez talked to me about this, -, that the situation up in the various valleys, not just the Waigal, but several of the valleys that were up there, had very limited value added with respect to a population centric counterinsurgency. If the purpose is to secure the population, then I did not think that Bella was securing the population and the condition that I saw was fundamentally they were securing themselves and that their interaction with the population was minimal. And I saw that elsewhere too. It wasn't just there. And then there wasn't much population to secure. The Waigal, as I'm sure you know, in Nuristan in general and north of the Pesh there in Kunar has minimal – even south of the Pesh for that matter – has minimal population in some of those valleys.

A: Clearly, there was goodness that was done in Konar. And when I was there before in '03, it took a long time to drive from Kabul, for example, to Abad. And you had risk doing it. But just the road conditions were horrible. I mean, the roads were all messed up and it just took a long time. And it was, as I recall, there wasn't anything north of Abad at that time. There might have been some SOF and some -OGA but there wasn't much north of Abad. So the conditions I found when I got there this time was a huge and significant improvement in the populated areas – Jalalabad and then as you go up the Kunar Valley up to Abad [Asadabad] there -was significant improvement by the 173rd and the road construction- that -was going up the Kunar River Valley. As you get further north, however, the situation was not as promising as it was further south in that same valley. Then as you break to the west there and you go into the Pesh or south of Pesh valley, then I think your return on your combat power investment starts to diminish. Now the Pesh I can make a good argument for, that - clearly has value. There is population there and it does link to the Kunar River Valley. If your intent is to link the roads into Abad, then you're going to have to work that Pesh River road and get up to [redacted] Paruns, capital of Nuristan, and try to connect the people to the government. So there is a certain logic to it. The problem that comes with limited resources, if you have limited combat power, you can't be everywhere--, -, if you attack everyhere then you attack nowhere -, -or if you defend everywhere then you defend - nowhere. So you have to rigorously prioritize and this analysis is going -on, this is initial impressions, you have to rigorously prioritize where you're putting combat power and I mean

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counterinsurgency combat power. I'm not talking tanks in the Fulda Gap. I'm talking about infantry, special operations, aviation, counterinsurgency money, interagency USAID [US Agency for International Development], getting in the NGO's [Non Government Organizations], doing development and projects and so on -. The whole gamut of counterinsurgency combat -power. You have to rigorously prioritize that if you're going to have an effect, a lasting effect. And by putting – what my observation, again, not just of Bella, was that there were many COPs that were -out of position in order to serve the purpose of securing the population so that you could hold the ground, continually secure them in order to bring good governance and economic development to defeat the insurgency. And if the bandit, the guerrilla, the criminal is way up in the hills and he's not having an impact on a significant chunk of the population, then so be it. You know, you can deal with that other ways. But the population density in RC East, if you look at a map – and I know you're familiar with RC East – but if you look at the map, we had roughly speaking 50 percent of the population of Afghanistan was in the area of Regional Command East.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And, - Kabul, - was in the heart of Regional Command East. And then you've got the ~~415~~ 450 mile border -. But there are population belts within Regional Command East and the level of effort, the focus, has got to be on those areas. The majority of that population lived within 20-25 miles of hard paved roads or improved dirt roads. So you've got to focus on the population areas and there are some areas where you might not be able to get to - this year or maybe even next. So you have to prioritize that.

So when I went up to Bella, my takeaway from Bella and I pulled this out of my notebook, was, value, cost benefit value was the note I took. So I wasn't convinced that there was value added to that particular outpost. Now again, General Rodriguez and General Votel had already pulled troops out of the Ranch House and then the plan for withdrawal out of Bella was already far along. The 173rd had worked that long before we ever got there. The 82nd was overseeing that and there was, you know, when we arrived, there was no question that the general direction was to pull out of Bella and the site selectivity was going on prior to our arrival. But that wasn't the only one that I observed while I was over there. There were 10 or 15 - or 20 of these - throughout the AO and not all up in Bayonet, many of them down in TF Currahee, that I thought were ill positioned and needed to be readjusted. But that wasn't just me. That was General Schloesser, our staff, input from the 82nd, input from all those guys. So one of the things we, as part of our assessment, that 60-90 day assessment - that General Schloesser wanted us to do was to take a hard look at the positioning and alignment of the force and he said as one of his objectives, again based on recommendations from General Rodriguez, to reset the force so that we could get the maximum effective use out of the combat power that we did have. And

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the whole COP Bella-Wanat attack I think has to be understood within that overall context of what General Schloesser was trying to accomplish there by resetting some of the force.

Q: Excellent. Okay. This is getting us to the heart of the engagement there. CONOP Rock Move was the operations order that executed pulling out of Bella and setting up Wanat, and I know that you were briefed on that by [Lieutenant] Colone (b)(3), (b)(6) Diamond [TF Rock Commander]. What were your impressions of the operation? Did you have any concerns or particular issues with it?

A: - I took the CONOP on the 7th and I was briefed by not just Colone (b)(3), (b)(6) Diamond, it was also Colone (b)(3), (b)(6) Delta. Let me back up a little bit.

Q: Okay.

A: This wasn't a single kind of CONOP brief. It, that particular event for which I think you probably have some slides or something, that was a specific standalone CONOP briefing per se, but it was part of a larger iterative process of which the Brigade Commander and the Division Commander, the Division staff and many took part in and it was all embedded within a greater program of the summer transitions. So this wasn't just something that just kind of happened, -the-briefing occurs and then it's over and then you execute and then the attack sort of thing.

Q: Right.

A: This was a long term effort. Let me just walk you through a couple of dates here. 8 April. These are just out of my notebook. 8 Apr r reviews next steps with me, CG and others and he talks specifically about Waigal, Bella and that kind of thing. 14 April, 9:30 (b)(3), (b)(6) r discusses moving footprint. 20 April, relief in place brief, RIP to CG to include discussion of the Bella move. That's from (b)(3), (b)(6) Delta r. 21 Apr (b)(3), (b)(6) r discusses the transition plans, clearing the zone, setting conditions for 3/1 BCT, the Bella move with CG and Division staff. 22 April, planner session with CG.[8] CG establishes various priorities. I have written force alignment as one of them. I don't know if we specifically talked Bella at that, but he was talking force alignment amongst other things. 27 April, senior plans, I wrote down a whole bunch of notes about other things which we can talk about on another – you wanted to know what else was going on, and I'm willing to talk to you a little bit about that, the wide scope that General Schloesser was facing. But summer transitions, again, 3/1 BCT piece and summer transitions. 6 May is when I have my note to self there about visiting Blessing, Bella, -Honaker-Miracle,] Abad, -Chowkay, Korengal, and Joyce on battlefield circulation. And

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

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

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

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[8] 3rd BCT of the 1st Infantry Division, TF Duke, performing a RIP into RC-East, Afghanistan in June 2008.

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then 20 May, we have a COAB. Part of the COAB, again a COAB is like a four or five hour -Commanders meeting with the CG, but part of it is the brigade-commanders do briefs and assessments and that sort of thing. -. You know, I've got pretty good notes of the whole COAB thing. As a former OC, by the way, I happen to take good notes. That's why I have times written down. But anyway, 20 May, I have an entry here from the COAB that the 173rd Commander briefs adjusting Combat Outpost [COP] footprint -and transition to 3/1 BCT. 23 May, Bayonet 6 to Eagle 6, RIP timeline 3/1 BCT transitions.[9] 24 May, RIP back briefs to CG and then senior plans meeting with CG discusses force alignments. 27 May 1930, Bayonet 6 discusses the N2KL [Nuristan, Nangahar, Kunar, and Laghman provinces] - realignment with General Schloesser amongst other topics. These aren't the only thing he talked about during any of these meetings.

Q: Of course, I understand.

A: -. Then 31 May, I've got a note here, Bayonet 6 with the CG 1730, gives an update on a variety of things to include the upcoming RIP and moves, summer RIP sort of thing. 8 June, CG gets an update on 3/1 BCT RIP which this again, understand that this is part of a subset of that.

Q: Right.

A: And -, 20 June 1330, Bayonet - reviews status of transition. 23 June, CG reviewed 3/1 BCT RIP and other transitions. Doesn't say who that was with, so I'm not sure if that was with the staff or wit[redacted]r. And then 28 June, CG gets another update on all kinds of thi[redacted] them was 3/1 BCT RIP and the Bella operation. 3 July, CG makes decision in principle to go ahead and confirm movement of COP Bella down to Wanat with a follow on CONOP brief. So your CG decision point is not the night of the 7th. It's the night of the 3rd or the day of the 3rd. And that's just a note to myself here, and that's a discussion he had wi[redacted]r was very emphatic, along wi[redacted] [redacted], about moving [redacted] on their watch, while on -the 1[redacted] watch. And he (C[redacted]) absolutely did not want, and strongly recommended against, handing that task off to the incoming brigade. And -, that played heavily in General Schloesser's decision making I think. And frankly, even in hindsight - I think the 173rd -were the right guys to do that and we can discuss ~~some of~~ RIPs and I can walk you through all that. But so anyway, 3 July, COP Bella, CG makes decision in principle to go ahead and move. Then at the COAB, this is the last COAB that's done w[redacted]r at it. He gives another update at that, and then he specifi[redacted] Waigal Valley and closure of Bella at that point. 4 July, as you know, there was at Bella an incident there. Allegations of civilian casualties, not really sure if it was enemy or friendly,

(b)(3), (b)(6) Delta
(b)(3), (b)(6) Delta
(b)(3), (b)(6) Delta
(b)(3), (b)(6) Diamond
(b)(3), (b)(6) Diamond
Delta
(b)(3), (b)(6)
(b)(3), (b)(6) Delta

Summary

[9] "Bayonet 6" is Colo[redacted]r; "Eagle 6" is Major General Schloesser.

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

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or enemy or civilian. Don't know that we'll ever know. Investigation was complete, but yeah, there were guys with chest racks and all the rest, but you never fully know in some of these situations. And then you get -to the 7th. So that brings you up to the CONOP. So what I guess I'm trying to point out there is I took a CONOP on the 7th, but it wasn't a "one of" sort of thing. This was an iterative process. The Commanding General was very much involved in it. Due diligence was done by him and the CJTF staff. It -had gone through multiple reviews. The actual CONOP itself was briefed on the 7th and now you said, what was my kind of impression that ... are you familiar with the process of how things were reviewed and what our battle rhythm was and how we did things? I don't know if you are, but ...

Q: I'm familiar with how the 10th Mountain did, but I am not familiar with how CJTF 101 did.

A: I think it was a very rigorous process and I think, frankly, I think it's very similar to, if not exactly the same, as what the 10th Mountain did. But I think it was a pretty rigorous process. And I don't know what General Terry did as a whole, but I assume he briefed CONOPs and stuff like that as well. But we did, we mimicked, we did exactly like what we were shown in the left seat/right seat, PDSS and the MRE in terms of this CONOP process. In addition to that, there's an ISAF SOP which governs the CONOP process and what has to be briefed and at what level and so on -. I would encourage you to take a look at and get a copy of our battle rhythm so that you can get a feel for the flow of the CJTF staff and I'll walk you through some of the pieces and parts that I played a role in in the battle rhythm. The CONOPs -were a nightly event that occurred – I set aside an hour or 90 minutes. It depends on how long it took. Sometimes two hours depending on how many I did. But every night for 15 months, I took CONOPs and approved probably over a thousand Level One and Level Two CONOPs. Now, I couldn't actually approve Level Two. That had to go to ISAF to do that. But I approved them in the CG's name – because I don't have command authority or responsibility sort of thing. So I'm reviewing those for the CG and then what we did with those, and I'll describe how those ran. And what we did with those was we took those briefs and gave them to the CG right after the CONOPs, the CHOPS[10] guys in G-3 went in and gave those to CG and then the CG reviewed them. He just didn't sit through the entire briefing sort of thing.

Q: Sure.

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[10] Chief of Current Operations (CHOPS), a key member of the Division J-3 staff. The CHOPS is responsible for daily, current operations; provides the Joint Operations Center Battle Captain; and directs the actions and activities of the CJTF JOC at Bagram Air Base.

A: But he reviewed each one of those CONOPs bar none for 15 months, every single one of those things. He reviewed those and I don't know how well or not well you know General Schloesser. But I can tell you, he's very much a detailed guy. He reads everything he gets. He plays close attention to what is put in front of him. So those CONOP briefings, that particular one as well as all the others, were put ... he had a little book and put in there right after the brief. So he reviewed those. And then following the CONOP brief every night, we did what was called an intelligence and operations sync meeting. Ops Intel Sync Meeting. And what we did there was we went ahead and synchronized assets out to 96 hours from the day of that meeting. So you had D-Day, D+1, D+2, D+3. And you synchronized all your intelligence/surveillance/reconnaissance assets, all your rotary wing GS (General Support) aviation, all your close air support, other joint fires and then I would throw other things in there like an RCP[11] if I thought the RCP's thing was an issue at the moment or other things entered at my choice. But that meeting would typically last about an hour, but we would sync those assets and that was exactly the same system that the 82nd was using before us. And both of those systems are being used today and I'm almost positive they were handed off to the 82nd from the 10th, but I'm not 100 percent positive. But it was a good system of review and it was rigorous. And then in the morning, at the CUA [Commander's Update Assessment], the outputs from the previous night's Ops intel meeting -were briefed to the CG. So what I'm telling you is that twice a day this was getting looked at at the General officer level by the CG, the DCGO, the DCGS and all the primary staff -, plus interagency to include CIA and others. And it was not just a happenstance sort of system and it was rigorously adhered to throughout.

In terms of numbers of CONOPs, one to two to three was typical every night. On very rare occasions I would have none and these CONOPs were from, they were presented from two levels down. So the Battalion Commander - would be the briefer and his staff, and the Brigade Commander would be on there. And we did this over Breeze. Are you familiar with Breeze?

Q: No, I'm not.

A: Breeze is a sort of like a VTC, but the slides pop up in front of you.[12] You have a headset on and it is a mechanism where it's a technology by which dispersed forces can do ...

Q: Okay. I've seen it in operation. I didn't recognize the acronym.

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[11] Route Clearance Package (RCP). A tailored Engineering detachment specifically dedicated to clearing transportation routes of obstacles, particularly including IEDs.

[12] "Breeze@" is a macromedia audio broadcasting tool, created and owned by Adobe Software@.

A: Well, I call it the Breeze. I don't know if that's the right -name. So these were done by Breeze every night and then I'd take them from the Battalion Commanders, [they] would be the briefers and the BCT Commanders would be on there and their staffs. The Company Commander if it applied to him. I'd take briefings from OGA, CIA, not for their approval, but for coordination. DEA, FBI and then our various special forces. -One of the purposes of taking the CONOPs was obviously to run the trap lines. But we weren't trying to be squad leaders and platoon leaders, commanders in the sky sort of thing. We wanted to make sure that the system checks, to make sure that this thing is lined up and is most importantly adequately being resourced within our capabilities. And it was an opportunity for Battalion and Brigade Commanders to articulate their need for the resources that were required outside the BCT. And in fact, one of the requirements of the Level One – they became Level One CONOPs not because – well, for a lot of reasons. But one of them is they needed resources that the BCT couldn't provide them.

Q: Right.

A: -Another purpose is to - make sure that the Division CJTF staff, Division staff, RCE [Regional Command East] staff is getting situational awareness of upcoming operations so that they can resource and coordinate and synchronize, but also to track and monitor and help in terms of joint fires, GS [General Support] level aviation, CAS [Close Air Support], ISR, etc. So that was kind of the system that was in place. We maintained that system the whole time I was there and it was a good system and it still is a good system. ~~-So that was that.~~ So you have this lead-up iterative process. You have concept development sort of thing happening and an interactive process between green tab, you know, Brigade Commander and green tab CG along with the staffs and this culminates in a briefing on 7 July as a CONOP (b)(3), (b)(6) -was the briefer and his staff- And Diamond I got to tell you that I didn't know (b)(3), (b)(6) before I went over there. Met him Diamond during the PDSS and then received several briefings prior to this by him. And I found him to be the most competent and detailed battalion level planner in Afghanistan, and I say that unequivocally and without reservation. No doubt in my mind. And Joe Votel and General Rodriguez told me that they thought he was the best battalion -Commander over there. Now, they had the 173rd for roughly speaking 12 months under them, so I would say they're pretty good judges of who they had. But we had them for 90 days. But in the amount of time that I was able to personally observe (b)(3), (b)(6) between PDSSes and the time I Diamond got there after TOA, I found him to be a very capable and competent battalion commander and that he was a very detailed planner. So in addition to that, him Delta and (b)(3), (b)(6) at that point, along with, you know, (b)(3), (b)(6) and (b)(3), (b)(6) and the Brass, Buff other 173rd commanders, those guys were the most experienced combat

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Back-Brief

veterans in Afghanistan at that point in time.[13]

-I don't remember the exact questions on this particular brief. I do have some general questions out of my notebook. But as a matter of course, I tended to drill down and ask lots of questions on lots of things. So what you may see on a slide doesn't necessarily indicate the conversation that might have taken place on a briefing. I think if you were to ask any of the CJTF staff or if you were to ask any of the briefers, they thought that doing a CONOP brief, you know, got a fair amount of attention from me. It wasn't just a pro forma sort of briefing. So that occurred every night.

I guess the other thing I'd mention was the attendees. In addition to the BCT Commander and Battalion commanders out there, I also had the Aviation Brigade Commander on every single one of these things no matter who was involved because there was always aviation involved. So I had him on there. And then we would have all the primary staff on the headset and CHOPS. So we were getting a broad horizontal integration and vertical integration of the CJTF. That was what the thing was designed to do. And on this particular one for Rock Move, as I look back on it, I thought we gave it a thorough review and I found it acceptable given the intelligence presented at the time.

Now the intelligence in the briefing versus what happened I think are a little bit different ... you know, the idea of a massed attack was never presented to me. The idea that there were threats to both Bella and Wanat was. The idea of a massed attack by significant enemy force in a concerted effort, that was never presented-.

Q: Okay.

A: Now, there was clearly indications of enemy in the area. There was attacks on Bella. We were very concerned with the attacks on Bella and there was clearly indications and intelligence that indicated significant enemy forces in and around Bella, but the numbers they were talking were not anywhere in the hundreds and two hundreds and three hundreds as I recall any of these briefings. And I think if you look at the actual size, you'll see icons that will show you numbers considerably less than that. But the words "massed attack" or that kind of stuff I don't recall anyone raising that level of flag during the course of this briefing. And I typically cross examined intelligence I thought pretty well. So given that, in my estimation, I did the review, the task organization and the combat power

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[13] LTC (b)(3), (b)(6) Brass was Battalion Commander of 1-503rd Airborne Infantry from the 173rd Airborne BCT, detached to TF Currahee in 2008; LTC (b)(3), (b)(6) Buff was Squadron Commander of the 1-91 Cavalry from the 173rd Airborne BCT.

pieces, the mission and took a look at the maneuver and fires and asked questions on logistics and went over the risk assessment and the CONOP checks and those sorts of things. Those were all part of a CONOP brief and then each of the JTF's staff went around and all the JTF staff gets to ask questions, etc. And I did specifically ask, specifically, if the Battalion and Brigade Commanders thought that they were overcommitted due to the RIP and both BCT and Battalion Commander were certain that they were the right team to execute this. And given that they were the most experienced commanders there and that this was part of a longer term developed thing, you know, we went with that. And I have to tell you, in hindsight, you know, what you know now is not what you knew at the time relative to the enemy. And looking back, you can tell easily you might have asked or done something differently. But I might have done something differently, but one thing I don't think that I would have, or General Schloesser – is the 173rd not to do that operation, I think it would not have been right given the conditions in that valley, given the conditions up at Bella, given the threat streams that were coming across at different areas, given other things that have gone on throughout the area, I still think the 173rd was the right force to have done that. There were issues with intelligence to be sure. But picking the 173rd, I think, even today I think they were the right force to have done that and not the incoming unit. They were the most familiar with the Valley, they were the most experienced and capable force by a long shot, by any measure of comparison. They were in their stride in terms of their skill sets. There was a lot of things going on, true enough. But when a Battalion Commander and a Brigade Commander come on strong and they are the most experienced guys in the box at that time, I think the Division Commander made the right call and frankly I still think that. I think that was not an issue in this case. But I did ask that question and that was the answer I got. And, you know, they wanted to set the conditions for 3/1 BCT arrival. That was important.

So on the enemy piece, again, you know, 10, 20, 30 enemy, harassing attacks, stand off weapons, indirect fire, those sorts of things, the air ambushes against inbound and outbound helicopters from Bella, IED, potential IED on the movement up to Wanat, those sorts of things were all discussed. Indications of significant attack against Bella just prior to them getting out was clearly discussed. But massed attack against Wanat, if that was discussed ... I mean, I don't remember that ever being discussed. That would have caught my attention. I am not an inexperienced guy. That would have caught my attention.

Went over the ISR, specifically talked about what they needed. They asked for a couple of hours on either side of the air assault extraction windows. Specifically, they were looking for FMV [Full Motion Video] prior to -infil and exfil. And that was provided. And I'll go over the whole ISR thing for you to make sure that we're clear on what was and what was not provided.

Red Ridge – are you familiar with Red Ridge?

Q: Yeah, I am generally familiar with Red Ridge. I don't want to get, obviously in an unclassified format, too much into that system's capabilities.

A: Okay. Well, that is the ISR of choice in the Bayonet AO. That is the single best ISR collection platform up there and they have that and they had it from day one. And they also had internal stuff. You know, they had their I-Comm's and the-battalion had their LLVI, I was briefed that they had the THTs [Tactical HUMINT Teams]. And then they've got, you know, their own internal UAV systems as well. So anyway, we reviewed the ISR. They stated what they needed and CJTF provided it for them out through the 12th by the plan. Now, they asked for two hours either way of the air windows. But that's not what we gave them. We gave them a lot more than that and I'll go over the numbers here that I -based on the charts at the time. [Note: BG Milley articulated the ISR allocations in a supplemental telephone conversation dated 20 August 2009, provided as an Appendix to this Interview Transcription]

Q: Fantastic.

A: Okay. In terms of combat power, I was briefed not one platoon, but two platoons. Not US, but a platoon of ANA and a platoon of US and the ANA has U.S. advisors with them. Now, remember, partnership was one of the fundamental things. So I'm briefed -on two platoons and then you've got a company minus and then a company headquarters reinforced with anti-tank engineers and mortars for a total more or less of somewhere around 75 guys. Now, in terms of combat power, that's a significant amount of combat power for what I had previously seen, what I had studied and what I had observed. And over the course of the 15 months, 75 is still a significant amount of combat power anywhere in Afghanistan. So I know that combat power is a discussion point- 75 guys is a lot of guys and if properly used and employed, then that's a significant amount of combat power. That is not someone just being hung out to dry out there. 75 guys, two platoons, mixed US and ANA is significant and you put a company -and the air on top of them, that's how it was briefed to me and I believe that was an adequate amount of combat power given the enemy threat that was being briefed to me.

Fire support, I was comfortable with the fire support. I knew they had CAS, artillery and attack helicopters and then they had their organic mortars. I think they had the heavy and the light mortar there. For the air assault piece, they asked for ... you know, they didn't ask for general support aviation, but they have ... let me do a diversion here on the air piece. The 101st organizes air a little bit different than everyone else. General Schloesser takes the Aviation Brigade and gives each Ground Maneuver Brigade Combat Team its own multifunctional

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aviation battalion task force. The one led by (b)(3), (b)(6) Chestnut worked for (b)(3), (b)(6) Delta

Q: Task Force Out Front.

A: Right. He works for (b)(3), (b)(6) Delta He doesn't work for the Aviation Brigade Commander. He works for (b)(3), (b)(6) And these Aviation -Battalions or Multifunctional Battalions were, the way the 101st organized itself is they worked for each of the BCTs. So a Brigade Commander in the 101st, if you work for the 101st, you get your own Aviation Battalion which is quite a bit different than most other divisions. So that's a huge capability that has to be managed at the Brigade level. Now, the Aviation Brigade Commander oversees that for the Division Commander. -you remember -in the old system with the artillery? I think you were an artillery guy. If you took a DIVARTY [Division Artillery] and you took an artillery battalion out of the DIVARTY and you gave it to a Brigade, but the Division Artillery Brigade Commander or the DIVARTY Commander was the principal FSCOORD [Fire Support Coordinator] for the CG, remember that?

Q: Check.

A: Same thing the 101st does with the Aviation basically. The Aviation Brigade Commander becomes senior aviation guy -the Aviation Brigade Commander becomes -the senior aviation guy at the Division level. That's why I had him on all those CONOPs, and then he would also manage the GS support - and then he would manage standardizations. And he'd do a lot of other things. But in terms of the task and purpose and how to apportion and allocate the Aviation Battalion Task Force within a BCT, in this case, the guy is working for (b)(3), (b)(6) Those were for (b)(3), (b)(6) Delta to do. And the same thing with -TF Currahee and (b)(3), (b)(6) Delta (b)(3), (b)(6) Eagle

-. Our third Aviation Battalion Task Force was down in Kandahar at the time. We since have gotten them back. But that's how we organized ourselves. In this particular case, as part of this CONOP they presented to me that they had adequate aviation support, mix of 47s and 60s along with the AH-64s and there were no issues presented to me about a lack of aviation support.

A2C2 [Aviation Command and Control] typically would go over things like that especially on what we consider is essentially an air assault and that checked out, no problem. You know, on the engineer assets, because I recall a brief and they did brief that they had adequate engineer assets and I specifically asked if they thought they had enough equipment, etc. and I was given a thumbs up from everybody. -No issues that I recall were presented with regard to Class 4 and [redacted] engineers and the tools and the bobcats. - -.

Q: Right.

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A: And I didn't go down and say, "Do you have a bobcat, do you have gas" and all that kind of stuff. But did talk about Class 4 and was given thumbs up, good to go, no problems, no issues with the Class 4. And then in terms of log, like Class 1, Class 3, Class 5, those are the standard questions I would ask. I wasn't the DCGS. Brigadier General McConnell was DCGS and our task was really to make sure that the BCTs and battalions at COPs and FOBs are being properly supplied and he would oversee all that. But any of these CONOP briefs, I would always ask up questions on log and I was briefed that they had plenty of it and that they had five days of supply and that there were no issues. Checked out Med Evac stuff and then looked over the C2 -. And then reviewed the Go/No Go criteria, standard air assault type things, and then looked at the risk piece and there was no question in my mind that there was risk to this and it was rated by the Battalion and Brigade Commander as moderate risk and we had a lot of other operations going on simultaneously. But one of the reasons I gave them a little bit extra ISR despite other operations was because I knew that coming in and out of Waigal and the Pesh can be tough business and that a withdrawal from point A to point B is always subject to enemy attack. So I wanted to make sure that they did get appropriate levels of ISR. And so those are the things we went over.

What were the things we didn't go over? Military deception plans. -. Frankly, I'm not so sure that that MILDEC [Military Deception] would have done anything in that valley at that time given the nature of the enemy and the nature of the population and the broader situation and frankly we didn't get a lot out of that sort of stuff in Afghanistan in our time there anyway. There are other capabilities that do and there are other capabilities that we did do in terms of deception. But in terms of operational level deception to try to hide a larger operation or deceive a larger operation, it wasn't briefed and I didn't ask questions about it. -.

But bottom line is I thought it was a good brief. I thought it was a thorough brief and I thought it was acceptable risk given the mission and the overall intent for General Schloesser and I thought it met General Schloesser's intent.

Q: Okay. From talking to a number of commanders and officers who were in on that brief at some level, they told me that they felt that the aviation withdrawal from Bella was the highest risk of that operation. Was that your impression?

A: I would say of the two, between Bella and Wanat, it was the higher risk. No question about it. The enemy assessment, both from actual reporting, seeing it - with other means and from contacts, and most importantly for us, for me anyway, is the commanders' assessment - (b)(3), (b)(6) and (b)(3), (b)(6) - - at the end of the day, the commander is his own intelligence officer and the intel system has got to input and do a lot of things and I'll talk about that if you want. But at the end of the day, the Commander is the most important guy in the intelligence system and the feel that (b)(3), (b)(6) and (b)(3), (b)(6) wasn't on the briefing, but the feel that (b)(3), (b)(6) has or the feel that (b)(3), (b)(6) has or the feel that (b)(3), (b)(6) has is fundamental. And

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they clearly expressed that they thought that Bella was the most risky part and I concur with that. I think based on the intelligence presented, Bella was clearly higher risk. The extraction from Bella was a higher risk than the insertion of Wanat. That is not to say that risk at Wanat was ignored. I don't feel that ... I mean, I have some questions but again, I don't want to be the gigantic wizard in the sky sort of thing. But there was clearly risk also at Wanat, but Wanat was ... I thought the infill to Wanat as briefed and the setting of conditions at Wanat, again, was acceptable risk in accordance with the intelligence that I knew at the time.

Q: Okay. The platoon, heads up to Wanat. We know that on 8 July the evacuation from Bella is completed successfully. No American casualties. Evening of 8 July, the platoon goes up to Wanat and begins the establishment. How much information were you getting as to how the platoon was doing, what input was going on, what progress or what intelligence they were receiving, what progress they were making setting up that Combat Outpost?

A: Again, I've got to refer to my notebook here. Well, the JTF staff, CG and myself at our level, and again I'm going to talk at our level. I'm not going to drop down into ...

Q: I understand.

A: - But the CG, me, the staff, we were monitoring the situation closely and appropriately at the level we were at. And the CG, General McConnell, DCGS, the staff, myself were briefed a minimum of twice a day on the situation everyday along with all the other missions that were going on. Understand that I need to talk to you about other things to give you a proper contextual perspective.

Q: I certainly understand there's a lot of stuff going on at any given time.

A: But I wanted to lay out to you what was going on.

Q: Right.

A: But with respect to Bella/Wanat, that was briefed and I got my notebook here and I just have Bella, NSTR [Nothing Significant To Report], - and it's twice a day minimum. So I think that that for sure was being done with respect specifically to intel. There was, you know, intel to indicate increased threat to Bella. We knew that. That was briefed and not just during a CONOP, but it was briefed during the CUAs and the CUBs and the threat sounded like it was more to shoot down an inbound or outbound aircraft and attack Bella with indirect/direct fire, that kind of thing. But the threat being presented during those days against Wanat, it was NSTR at our level. And on 5 July, I'm going back prior to the CONOP. 5 July, Bayonet 6 reports nothing significant to report reference enemy activity in vicinity

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of Bella. Bella appears disrupted from the 4 July contact according to his comments. 7 July, at the CUB, Bella is reported to have had multiple TICs - -. And then later on that night, of course, we do a full up CONOP brief. Then on 8 July, at 0800, the CG gets briefed on the Go/No Go conditions check, the risk assessment, everything is green. You know, everything is approved for execution for us to move and they're moving at that point. That evening, 8 July 1730, I've got a note here that says -CG - and 3/1 BCT RIP overall NSTR- And then at 2215, 8 July, CJTF 101 CHOPS on the CG's check out. CG would check out every night with the CHOPS. And the times varied, but on this particular one it's at 2215 and CHOPS reports to him nothing significant to report relative to the enemy at Bella. On 9 July at the CUA, in the morning, CG update – and again I'm snapping out individual things relative to Bella.

Q: Sure.

A: - CG is updated on Bella, the RIP intel and NSTR at the CUA. At 0930, CG briefs COM ISAF [Commander ISAF] on Highway 1 Operation Bella/Wanat CONOP, Border Coordination Center and gives him an overall campaign plan update. At 1630, at the evening CUB, Bayonet 6, Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) reports that Bella -exfil was complete, nothing significant to report with respect to enemy activity. 1900 Tandberg@, you know what Tandberg@ is? The little face phone?[14] We use them all the time. Principal means of doing a point – it's a telephone with a video screen basically and we had them over there. I have one on my desk right here. It's one of the principal means of doing a point to point VTC [Video Teleconference] with an individual and there can be other people in the room at the same time. But the CG – let me divert for just a second. Almost nightly, the CG would Tandberg@ with all of his Brigade Commanders and I would sometimes sit in there because I would be in and out of his office kind of thing. But if I was there. But you know, different staff –on occasion would be sitting in and listening to these things. But every night, even after the CUB, even after the CUAs and all the rest of battle rhythm, he would Tandberg@ with the Brigade Commanders because they would dial in one on one and they'd have a little conversation and it would range everything from non-tactical stuff to tactical stuff. But he did that every night or pretty much every night.

Delta

So 1900 on the 9th, on a Tandberg@, discussion, I have a note, CG and Bayonet 6 discuss Bella, Wanat, COP, NSTR. -. And -he also talked about the civilian casualty incident status which was a result of the AH-64 -engagement on the 4th.

Q: Right.

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[14] Tandberg@ is the manufacturer of video telephones.

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A: Bayonet 6 reviews with Eagle 6 the RIP with 3/1 BCT. And then the Chairman was visiting around that time and he asked the CG if the Chairman would be okay to [redacted] Silver Star to one of his soldiers. - So that was just kind of a range of topics there, but that was 1900 hours on the 9th. And then I have a note, I don't know why I took this note, but on the 9th at 2200, I have a note that says, "Bayonet," and I don't know if it was Bayonet 6 or not, but it says, "Bayonet shifts FMV to TIC [Troops In Contact]. Now, there was ... up in the Bayonet AO, there were other --troops in contact happening around these same times and it was up in -Barge Metal I think that there was some contact that night. But my notebook reads that, "Bayonet shifts the FMV." So mechanically, the way that would work, we allocate, the Division allocates the asset to the Brigade and then the Brigade, if it's within his AO, he can use it in any way, shape or form he sees fit. Now, it's allocated principally because of, in this case, it's allocated principally because of the operation at Bella. But if other things are going on, the Brigade Commander does have the prerogative to move that thing around as long as it's in -his Brigade AO. - And I don't know how long it went up there. I could find out. I could dig it out. You know, I could figure it out through the tasking orders or the log books of these planes and stuff. -. [Note: refer to 20 August 2009 supplemental interview]

But anyway, that's a note. So 10 July, back on the intel stream here. 10 July, at the morning CUA, the Bella/Wanat operation NSTR – and the morning CUA is attended by all the Division staff, CG, DCGS, me, the -SOF guys, - -, CIA, DIA, the interagency. You know, you've got about 15 senior people around the room and they're getting formally briefed by the intel guys every morning. That's what the CUA is - and it's done down in the SCIF [Secret Compartmented Intelligence Facility, a secure, restricted access J-2 facility]. So anyway, part of that briefing, the NSTR is reported on 10 July.

On 11 July, I don't know where this brief occurred. I just have a note that says, "3/1 BCT RIP update." I don't know if it was with CG or where this was. But I just have a note that says -3/1 BCT RIP update on track, Wanat NSTR.-

12 July 0710, CHOPS. Bayonet reports Wanat at 75 percent complete. 0800, CG update Wanat status NSTR. - We also discuss what I would refer to as the wedding party incident.[15]

Q: Right.

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[15] Referring to an incident that occurred in Nangarhar province on July 6, 2008. A US air strike allegedly killed 47 civilians, including 39 women and children, as they were travelling to a wedding. The bride was among the dead. Another nine people were wounded.

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A: And then cross border incident that occurred -.[16] At 0830, CUA briefing by CJTF intel reference Wanat intel NSTR.

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

12 July 1630, at the evening CUB, Bayonet 6 Col reports Wanat intel NSTR and then he talks about [redacted], he talks about threat streams against Nigel, talks about indirect fire at Torkham, then he talks about troops and contact at Bostik and Barge Metal. Currahee, his brother Brigade Commander to the south, he reports significant contacts in the Tangi Valley, Jelrez Valley, and lack of significant contacts in -Saberi District. He gives a review of -Tangi Valley which was the division [redacted]main effort depending on the date. He talks about the clear indicators and warning from a variety of intelligence sources of significant threat to [redacted]o COP Wilderness and I can talk about [redacted]KG Pass also. And then a threat to [redacted]he border. And that's just some of the CUB. I mean, a CUB goes on for an hour.

Q: Sure.

A: But those are some things that I think may be relevant to what you're getting at now. So bottom line, the staff, CG, myself, others, I think we were monitoring this situation closely and with all appropriate levels of attention being paid at our level. You know, that's not to say that something didn't slip through the cracks kind of thing. But I think that the staff was paying attention to it and I was paying attention and I know that CG was paying attention because that's the kind of guy he was. –And CHOPS, of course, CHOPS was monitoring 24/7. So again, you know, there was significant – I don't know if I would put it in a category of significant – but there was intel indicating increased threat out to Bella. No question about that, particularly - shoot down of an [redacted] aircraft, no question. Indirect fire, direct fire against Bella, but any kind of massed attack warnings against Wanat, that never registered on me. If they're out there and they entered the CJTF, it was never registered with me and I'll let the CG speak for himself, but I can't imagine it was registered with him either. You know, we clearly expected harassing attacks. Clearly expected IEDs on the road. And expected 20 or so guys to –do intermittent fire at both Wanat and a whole bunch of other COPs and FOBs.

Now, with respect to the ISR, we concentrated ISR on this particular area. FMV, from multiple platforms, plus aviation, plus the organic pieces of - the systems that they have. At least I was briefed on -that - But at the CJTF level, we did concentrate ISR from 7 to 12 July and there were no reports coming out of anything to indicate a massed attack that was ever brought to my attention. If

[16] Referring to a July 12, 2008 incident in which SAF and indirect fire (mortars) were exchanged across the border between ANSF and Pakistani forces near Angore Adda in South Waziristan Province, Pakistan. This resulted in both ANSF and Pakistani soldiers being wounded.

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there's something buried somewhere in the bowels of some analyst cell, you know, that needs to come out as a lesson learned.

Q: Colonel Alpha (b)(3), (b)(6) [Lieutenant Colonel Alpha (b)(3), (b)(6), CJTF-101 G-2] told me he wasn't getting anything that he considered to be an indicator.

A: No. To give you a flavor for the ISR that was committed as a result of the CONOP, for all intents and purposes with the exception of the diversion of ISR for the TIC which Bayonet 6 makes that call, and I don't have actual, and I wish I did, all the little data because there's tons of it. And I could get it though. We can dig this out. But I'm just looking at some cards that I had shoved in the back of the book and it just, I think they're pretty good and I've got one of the matrixes, - but for the pred line, again just a reminder, we had one single pred line and there were three priorities of support for ISR at that time from the CG that he reviewed every morning, approved every single morning. Priority one was Tangi Valley at that moment in time or that week. Tangi Valley which is – I can talk to you separately about that. Second was TF Currahee Operatioin Radu Barq and KG Pass which was the overall Division main effort. And third was the CONOP for the Bella/Wanat move. We had a single pred line. Now that pred line was dedicated to Task-Force Bayonet. By my notes from the 7th, they might have even been earlier, but the 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, and to 0730 on the 12th, that was my plan. That was more than what they asked for and that is what the plan called for. The idea that someone pulled ISR, I don't think, from my memory, no one told me they were pulling ISR. If someone was going to pull ISR, then that someone should have come to me because kind of the rules of the game were, if ISR, you know, the pred line, was going to get pulled – because we only had one of them – if it's going to get pulled then I'm going to be part of that decision. And no one came to me and said, "General Milley, we're pulling an ISR pred line that we have dedicated to Bella move because of XY or Z." Now, they didn't need to do that. They didn't need to come to me because part of the plan was to resource it through the 12th. So the idea that it was "pulled." I do not think is accurate. Now, I can understand where the language gets, you know, if I'm down at the level or I'm losing the ISR-, it doesn't matter whether it's pulled or whether it's part of a process. It all sounds the same at that level. So I got it. But the idea that there was some kind of, other than executing the plan, was not so.

Now, what they –were allocated was -20 hours- of pred line support on the -, 8th - 9th, 10th, and 12.5 hours on the 11th and up to -0730 on the 12th. Now every single one of those hours over Wanat and Bella? I think most of it was in that general area. Bayonet can tell can know is what –the CJTF allocated. I can know what v to Bayonet which was -20 hours of pred a day for –three c then 12.5 up through -0730 on the 12th. And in addition tc hours of Warrior Alpha a day, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th. So for tl

then they had a Hunter, but the Hunter didn't work up there and they had, you know, there were other systems there – the Raven and the Shadow. And the Shadow's got limitations as you know.

Q: Right.

A: Now, that's just FMV. They had other systems, [redacted] SIGINT systems, specifically Red Ridge which I won't go into the technical details. But I got to tell you this thing is an incredible system. It works wonderfully up in the northern mountainous areas of Afghanistan. But anyway it is a very good fixed wing, medium altitude, signals intelligence capability. And it is the intelligence of choice system in that area. - they had that system dedicated to them 8 hours a day. And they had it the night of the attack, the morning of the attack. And so the idea that all the CJTF ISR systems were pulled from the- Brigade is not correct by my memory and the records I have-. Now, you're the historian, you can verify everything that I said. You can go, you're going to have double tap all this stuff because I'm an army of one here going out of notebooks and partial records and memory from a year ago.

Q: Understand.

A: But the idea that they didn't have -any ISR I don't think is accurate. So they had the Red Ridge and then the Green Dart system they had- The Brigade had that.[17]

Now, there's another Brigade operating over there and we did give them some time on the Warrior. The other Brigade by the way was the main effort at the time, TF Currahee and he got time with the Warrior and he got some other systems – Guardrail, –Rivet Joint, and some Buckeyes. So what we're trying to do every night, I guess what message I'm trying to get across here is every single night we're doing this, allocating and synchronizing assets.

Q: Right, I understand.

A: Doing it out for 96 hours and we're -synchronizing this stuff and cranking orders and messages and so on back to the CAOC and zipping around the Joint world to coordinate and synchronize and then prosecute the execution of all these assets. And lots of people are paying close attention to this stuff on a literally daily basis and literally twice a day at a minimum. The CG reviews that every single morning at the CUA, reviews the outputs every morning, and again he gives the stamp of approval to it and then we go through that cycle again. And

[17] Referring to the Hunter UAV operated by TF Out Front from Jalalabad. As previously noted, this system could not operate in the Waigal Valley, but it could operate in other areas throughout TF Bayonet's AO.

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then every evening at the Ops and Intel session, I chair that session and we go through it and that's where your - making sausage kind of session where we're cranking it out, we give it our stamp of approval at that session and then we keep rolling. And that's the cycle that we're doing.

Now, there's a whole array of sensors over there. I'm not going to go over every one of them here on the phone. But there's a whole array of sensors and I'd love to get you up here to go over in a classified way all of the sensor laydown type stuff that we have available. But in terms of that day at that time at that moment, from the CJTF level- they had Red Ridge, they did not have FMV from the CJTF, the plan that had been briefed and was approved was executed -I was trying to show you their reports of NSTR for five or six days and all those technological systems weren't picking anything up at our level. So if you had the CG priorities - of 1, 2 and 3, and you had nothing significant to report at 3, but number 1 and 2 were A) your main effort, B) ongoing TICs, and -C) threats of imminent attacks, and you had one pred line, where would you put it? - And by the 12th, you know, the plan looked as if it was on track and the pred line was moved down to the main effort.

Q: Okay, great. You know, we're starting to go over here [the allotted time for the interview].

A: I've got all day.

Q: There's a couple of things I do want to make sure I ... go ahead sir.

A: I'm just saying I've got nothing but time. I cleared my -

Q: Great, thank you. One thing I wanted to make sure that we talked in length was the decision to pull out of Wanat and how you are involved in that and how you understood that decision to be formulated and created?

A: - Well, let me back up a little bit to the overall campaign plan. And then within that campaign plan is a 60-90 day assessment, kind of incoming unit sort of thing. Part of that 60-90 day assessment is the –COP and troop-to-task analysis and the realignment of the footprint in order to better achieve what General Schloesser wanted to achieve based on inputs from the 82nd and his pre-mission study -. And so it's part of that review -. And then also part of that is the summer transitions and please make sure you ask me about summer transitions. But the 82nd had done a lot of work on this. 173rd had done a significant amount of work specific to the COP Wanat -move well before we ever got there. And - overall -, the context was to -execute the CG's -intent. Clearly, it increased the effectiveness of protecting the population and I think that if you ask yourself the question of why we're not, I think there's reasonably good answers for why we're –at Wanat in the context of protecting the population and the proximity to

WANAT

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Blessing and the idea of working with the ANSF and the Governance and – Development lines of operations. You know, to me that makes a certain degree of sense-to move from an isolated outpost to one co-located with the political center of the district with the police and within ground movement range of the battalion base.

And then, so based on that, I was involved in all of those. Well, not all of them, but I was involved in a lot of those discussions. And based on my analysis, as I already mentioned about the effectiveness of COPs deep in isolated valleys and their effectiveness of protecting population, you know, I don't think -they generally achieved the intent in - General Schloesser's campaign plan. So I was involved in all of those things and so to that extent I fully support that they were, these COPs, were out there almost daily in contact and again, not just Bella or Ranch House, but lots of these things. We had 120 or so Combat - outposts in Regional Command East. We had -approximately 50 rifle companies or maneuver companies and about 150 platoons and –MG Schloesser had about 120 Combat Outposts out there and a lot of these guys were engaging in daily fire fights or troops in contact. But as an overall look, many of these, much of the combat power was fixed to the self protection of small isolated outposts because they had to do that in order to survive.-In terms of combat power, and 75 by the way is twice as much as what was at most of these things - these -COPs ended up having, in many cases, having to simply protect themselves. General Schloesser recognized all that and so did General Rodriguez. And so there was this idea to go ahead and adjust these COPs. So to that extent I'm involved in all of that and I was definitely involved -with the Brigade and exchanges with General Schloesser and all the lead up. That's why I put them in my notebook. So my cut is that relative to the entire Regional Command, we definitely needed to do a better job of realigning the force to accomplish the campaign objectives. There was no doubt in my mind. There wasn't then and I still think that that was the right overall concept to adjust footprints. And we didn't finish it all throughout the AO. You know, there's still work to be done in that regard over there.

So Delta (b)(3), (b)(6) presented his concept to CG on many different occasions. That is the process. Was I a part of all that? Yes, and obviously I took the CONOP itself and then played a key role in allocation of assets and the CG's approving all that stuff, but yeah, I'm part, I'm one of his principal guys to do all that stuff. And I also think it's important to reemphasize that part of (b)(3), (b)(6) argument to the Delta CG is to set conditions for Duke and I think that was a compelling argument. And I know the CG agreed with it because he's the one that blessed off on the whole thing anyway. But I do think it was a compelling argument. Task Force Duke deployed, roughly speaking, round figure, as – you know, this is from memory – you know, the G-1 of the Army can come up with actual numbers, but I'm talking in the order of magnitude of 300-400 guys less than what the 173rd had.

Q: Yeah, General Schloesser emphasized that also.

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A: So he had less combat power, plus there was a whole other issue of second of the second, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry, which we thought was going to go to Duke, but then USFOR-A [U.S. Forces Afghanistan] made a decision shortly after the handoff between [Generals] McNeil and McKiernan. General McKiernan, because of the situation in Regional Command South, General McKiernan made the decision to take the 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry and send them to the south. So Duke lost an infantry battalion. So in addition to coming in with - overall personnel understrength he lost an infantry battalion.-. So his combat power was not the same as (b)(3), (b)(6) His level of experience was Delta nowhere like the 173d--like I said at the beginning, was, you know, I got this kind of 30, 60, 90 day kind of ramp up, even after TOA, where guys take some time to reach their full stride. Here you have 3rd Brigade, 1st Division, brand new brigade, brand new. Right out of the hopper. Never been a brigade before. And that brigade had never deployed to combat before. They did all the pre-mission training. They were in pretty good shape. I went and visited their pre-mission training at the National Training Center. You know, they had done an MRE ... they were good, but they were no 173rd, I'll tell you that. 173rd was in stride. The 173rd came in and replaced the Spartans up there in Nuristan and they got punched right in the nose right off the bat and we, all of us, wanted to make sure the same did not happen to 3/1.

Q: Right.

A: Hard. In the summer of, I guess it was what?

Q: '07.

A: Yeah, summer of '07. Delta (b)(3), (b)(6) comes in there with the 173rd and they get punched hard. Now, immediately ... during actually the RIP and right afterwards. So that causes them to reel a little bit in the July/August/September/October time frame the year prior to our arrival. And I saw some of that when I did my PDSS which was in the early fall. I could tell that these guys had been in some really significant combat. And then the winter sets in and the battle rhythm of Afghanistan sets in. And they recovered themselves, 173rd did, because when I came back from my second PDSS, it was obvious that there was recuperation going on, refitting going on in their own morale and their own constitution so to speak. The human factor of soldiering. And by the time we came for TOA, they were clearly in stride in my mind. Now, were the conditions of counterinsurgency in operations and the conditions of the Waigal Valley and some of these other valleys all great? No, they weren't. That's why we were trying to realign things. But the unit itself was clearly at a very high level of combat performance. There was no doubt. And so the choice between having 3/1 BCT occupy Bella or do some of those things, or Wanat, or have 173rd do it, (b)(3), (b)(6) made the argument Delta to Schloesser that absolutely he should do it. He, (b)(3), (b)(6) And frankly it made Delta sense and it makes sense today. So yeah, there was a RIP and there was a lot

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of things going on. But the 173rd was far and away the most capable outfit in Afghanistan by a long shot at that point in time. So Eagle 6 makes the call, but as I recall, as my memory serves me, I didn't hear anybody dissenting from it. - I recall recommendations for approval from everybody and a very strong case presented by the Brigade Commander personally to Eagle 6 to make sure that he did it and did it on his watch. Duke 6, the incoming Brigade Commander, you know, he concurred, but he wasn't the -driving force by a long shot. It was ... the way I saw it play out in briefings and meetings and Tandberg@'s was Bayonet 6 was making that compelling argument and the CG agreed. And that's kind of what plays out there.

Q: Okay, great.

A: That answer your question?

Q: Well, yeah. We promised to go back and enable you to talk about what other operations are going on at this time frame and particular the summer transitions that's going on.

A: I've got a couple of things here. Just flip a page on my notebook here.

Q: Sure.

A: Okay. So start with priorities. At the time, and again priorities shift sometimes and you've got an overall campaign priority, sort of overarching constant intent which in General Schloesser's case was to protect the population. That was absolutely positively no questions asked, number one. And then there's operational priorities that come from that. You know, what operation is priority one at this point in time. And at that point in time, -Radu Barq, which was a large operation down in TF Currahee AO. When I say large, I don't mean – it was large actually in numbers of troops, but it was also large spread over a lengthy period of time. And the purpose of the operation was to build and construct the KG Pass Road in order to connect the people of Khost to Gardez and on to Highway 1 in order to connect the Province of Khost to the greater Afghanistan, to connect the people to the government. So you've got the KG Pass which you are probably familiar with and that whole fight down there was really the area of focus for the CG and that Brigade, Currahee, was the main effort in general. It was also against our, by far and away, our most dangerous enemy of RC East which was Haqqani[18] who was operating right across the border and infiltrating his guys in there and that's who does all the work down in

[18] Jalaluddin Haqqani, a former Mujahideen leader who controlled the Haqqani Network, a Taliban oriented insurgent organization that extensively operated against the Soviets, and is currently fighting against coalition forces in Khost, Paktia, Ghazni, and Paktika Provinces.

there in that area was Haqqani. I don't want to overhype it, but kind of the battle of the KG Pass Road is what the CG called it. That is ongoing in a counterinsurgency sort of sense. And the operation name for that was [redacted], Radu Barq so when you hear -Radu Barq that's what they're talking about.

Q: Okay.

A: And the Currahees were the American Brigade and then the 203rd Corps was the ANA Corps that worked that and we're pumping a lot of effort into that. So that was your - overall main effort. At the time of the attack itself however, the main effort had, the operational main effort and the priority of effort for intelligence support at the moment in time shifted to Tangi Valley with with the Currahees and Radu Barq being –second and the -3/1 and 173rd RIP with the Wanat/Bella move was a component of that as being number three. But the Tangi Valley piece is important. Are you familiar with what happened there?

Q: Only through open source media accounts. But I understand there was [an American soldier missing or unaccounted for] going on at that time frame.

A: Yeah. What happened was an embedded training team from the New York National Guard was moving through the battle space, - through the Currahee battle space, and got ambushed. And we lost four soldiers and they were CJTF Phoenix guys. Lost four soldiers. It was a bad contact. And one of the soldiers was missing for a short period of time, about three or four hours as I recall. We immediately got a rifle company in there and searched and scoured the area and all that kind of stuff, significant contact, but this was a bad ambush. It was a bad area to be ambushed in and it was known to be a bad ambush area. It was right adjacent to Highway 1. So, and –the enemy did some horrible things. I'm not going to describe what they did to this guy, but they did some horrible things to him. So what we wanted to do here was to rip apart this network that was working in this area because this was an area that was adjacent to Highway 1, they were influencing Highway 1, and Highway 1 was Commander ISAF's number one priority. So, now operations along Highway 1 were very, very important and that week might have been number one, and Tangi Valley/ Highway 1 becomes number -one So those two, Radu-Barq and Highway 1/Tangi Valley were always number one and two throughout that summer. So anyway at this point in time, this Tangi Valley/Highway 1 operation is the main effort because we had to rip this [Haqqani] network apart. They were doing significant damage to Highway 1 and we had to get on it and we did. And so those two things are there.

In addition to that, has anyone talked about the "Gates of Kabul"? I don't know if anyone talked to you about it.

Q: General Schloesser briefly mentioned that.

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A: Well, the Gates of Kabul – now, I'm rolling the clock back to last summer. I haven't heard the term Gates of Kabul in a long time, well, for a year. But last summer, there became quite frequent reports in the media of the term "Gates of Kabul." An overall operational, if not strategic objective of the enemy – or enemies as plural and I can talk all day long about the enemy if you want or the enemies – but one of their major objectives was to isolate Kabul. Not in a traditional/conventional Stalingrad sort of sense. But in a counter insurgency sort of sense and psychologically as much as physically. One of the ways the insurgent wants to do that, if you read -War of the Flea or the Bear went over the Mountain, -, what they do is terrorism in and around the urban area and they try to create a sense of isolation in the major dense urban area of Kabul in order to disconnect the government from the people. How do they do that? They do that through attacking the main lines of communication that come in and out of Kabul. And as you're familiar with, there's basically four – north, south, east, west – and each one of those passes through some restricted terrain. Each one of those areas of restricted terrain is called a Gate of Kabul by the Afghans. And that became repeated in the media many, many times. Now, the enemy was doing stuff. It wasn't like they weren't doing things in order to create that mental image, it's an act of armed propaganda. -

Q: Uh-huh.

A: So, they're trying to, the enemy is trying to do actions and the actions themselves are acts of propaganda in order to influence the psychological mindset of the people you're trying to protect. So what they're doing on Highway 1 is they're blowing up culverts, they're blowing up bridges, they're ambushing convoys. The one that I clearly remember was the ambush of a 40 truck, -Jingle truck movement, burned up all kinds of stuff. They were doing significant attacks and they were to the south of Kabul. Specifically at Tangi Valley and Highway 1 in Wardak, but also the road that goes down through Logar [Province] which is an adjunct road to Highway 1. They were not having great success going east into Jalalabad, although if you might remember, they did attack the French in the Uzbin valley where the French lost about 10 soldiers.

Q: Right, I remember that.

A: That's right. So that happens around the 10th. So that was the eastern gate. You've got these attacks down -Wardak in the southern gate and Tangi Valley's part of that. And then you've got the western gate which is the -Jelrez Valley]. And they're really mixing it up in the -Jelrez]. And then the northern gate goes up to the Salang Tunnel and they made an attempt a couple of times but they were unsuccessful in interdicting that. But anyway, they definitely were working the four gates of Kabul, less so in the north although they were positioned – they had a significant enemy presence in Tag Ab Valley. I know they had a significant enemy presence and we had a lot of contacts in that area throughout the

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summer. In the Kapisa Province, specifically the Tag Ab Valley and the associated Valley of Kohe Safi, it was from that area where they launched attacks into Kabul proper. So if you recall, there was the attack on the parade. That was a big deal. There was the Indian ...

Q: Indian Embassy attack.[19] Right.

A: Those sorts of things were all happening at this time. So the Gates of Kabul needed attention and we needed to increase security forces in order to protect the areas in and around Kabul– and I'm talking on the outskirts. Not in Kabul proper because we didn't have responsibility for that. But the outskirts of Kabul, on the approach march to Kabul, through these restricted terrain areas. So that requires lots of attention. Coming from that, -is a request for forces by General Schloesser, putting out a call for additional forces which results then in 3/10 BCT—3d Brigade 10th Mountain Division - which is there now to the south of Kabul in Wardak and Logar Provinces and the situation is quite a bit different today.

But at that time, it wasn't. In addition to that, the French stepped up to the plate and offered up a full up French battalion, which we put right into the northern gate into the –Kapisa Province area. So anyway, that's all happening last summer. And then the ... and the Tangi Valley thing is a subset of that larger Gates of Kabul/Highway 1 piece.

Then you've got the border. Now, along the border, we're averaging, I don't know, anywhere between three and five to seven incidents a day, cross border incidents a day. And if you were over there, you're probably pretty familiar with some of that. I don't know how intense it was then, but it was ...

Q: Yeah, it was pretty intense. Yeah, I watched a couple of combat actions from the JOC.

A: Right. So it's pretty intense there along the border. The Border was one of my personal areas there, but it was also, - a big -area right there along –the border for both Brigades, both Bayonet and Currahee had pieces and parts of the border. But the major, the significant attacks for the most part weighed in the Currahee AO, although there was some very significant attacks in the Bayonet AO specifically up around -Nawa Pass. All happening just prior to the attack on Wanat. So the whole border, all that stuff is – those are everyday things. So when I isolate these -larger events], those are just snapshots of things I think you

[19] The Indian Embassy in Kabul was attached by a suicide bomber on July 7, 2008. This was a major attack that killed 58 people and wounded 141, it was the deadliest attack in Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban in 2001.

might be interested in relative to Bella-Wanat. But there would be other things happening as well.

Then you've got your network targeting –that personally I was involved in and you're also paying close attention to the special operations forces - in the area. And you know, just as an aside, in terms of the task organization. The task organization then was a little different than it is now. General Schloesser had responsibility for the U.S. forces in RC South. He –had US National Command Element responsibility for all the US forces down in the south as well and in the rest of the country.

Q: Right. I understand that.

A: That's a little different than it is today.

Q: Right.

A: It was more along the lines like when 10th Mountain was there. But he had I want to say it was 28,000, but I don't remember the stat. But it was a lot, it was a lot of US forces and he had responsibilities spread out through all of Afghanistan, not just RC East. And when I say "he," I mean, all of us. So you had that going on. Within Bayonet itself, in addition to the Bella/Wanat operation, you had -other COPs that were perceived to be of high risk and you had the [redacted] stuff going on, and then you had ops down in Shinwari Tribal district of Nangarhar and those are always kind of contentious sort of thing -]. But if you're familiar with the wedding thing, then that was also happening.

Q: That's great. Let me, let's ... my recorder runs out at a certain point here. But I did ...

A: I can talk for as long as you want. I have no time limit on me.

Q: Okay, that's great.

Q: I promised you that you'd have a chance to present lessons learned. So let's kind of make sure we get that.

A: Let me hit some transitions real quick.

Q: Fantastic.

A: You got transitions of 173rd to 3/1 BCT.

Q: Check.

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A: That's a big one. Then you've got a Polish battle group – this is all happening at the same time. Polish battle group RIP, French battalion, Air Force Expeditionary Wing, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry heading to the south, all the preparatory work and the arrival of the new 3rd Special Forces Group handing off to 7th Special Forces Group, MI Battalion handing off to, you know, incoming/outgoing MI Battalion.

Q: Right.

A: Engineer Brigade, in and out. And then this other supporting effort called Task Force Warrior which ... well, incoming unit was- Task Force Warrior, the 1st Maneuver, -Enhancement Brigade (MEB). So you've got 10 literally major unit transitions all occurring within this first 90 days in addition to 173rd and 3/1 BCT. The 173rd 3/1 BCT was the major ground maneuver combat unit one, but there was all these other ones being done around the same time. Part of that-, was I went to the Special Ops guys and –OGA and others, in combination with Bayonet, and asked them to do a whole series of operations in order to shape the battle space for 173rd 3/1 BCT RIP, which they did. I can't talk about it on this net, but they were shaping operations that were done by Special Operations and other governmental agency forces as part of the preparatory work for the 173rd and 3/1 BCT RIP. It is true that Wanat happened, but there were a lot of things that didn't happen that might have otherwise happened. And it is also true that I think when 3/1 BCT comes in the box, they don't get smacked in the face the way the 173rd did. And the reason 3/1 BCT didn't was because of the efforts that the CJTF and others did but also the efforts that the 173rd did in setting those conditions for the 3/1 BCT. And I think there's a lot of kids alive today in 3/1 BCT Infantry that are alive because of the efforts of the 173rd, because of the efforts of setting those conditions and the efforts of Special Operations and the efforts of CJTF staff identifying that that was a friction point transition in general in setting those conditions. So I can't prove that because you can't prove a negative. But ...

Q: Sure, I understand.

A: ... there was a lot of stuff done there. Imminent threats average six a day, typically from my memory, five to six a day. TICs at this time, just giving you other things. TICs, we're talking across the RC East AO at that time we were averaging 20 to 22 per day. We're in the midst of -COP analysis, but at that point we had identified the top 20 most vulnerable COPs. Bella was among them, but it certainly wasn't the top of the list. But it was clearly vulnerable. We were doing a troop to task analysis –as part of the RIP stuff. You know, also the normal battle rhythm stuff. I had done just prior to this -attack, the week or so prior, a BSSM with the Pakistanis who were working the border stuff intensively, working

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the ANSF stuff very closely. And then you've got this Sarposa prison break that happens down south.[20] Again, we have responsibilities down south so we have interest down there. You've got the Shindan civilian casualty case that happens out west which is a big deal. I don't know if you remember that one.[21]

Q: No, actually I don't remember that one.

A: Yeah, just Google that one if you want to find out more research material. I think it was called Shindan, a big civ cas case – in RC West, so we had peripheral interest in that, in the sense of there's blowback and there's vibrations for those things that come our way, you know, through the population, but also General Schloesser does have responsibility as the NCE at this point before this change of command and control arrangement happens. And then we also got a -FRAGO from ISAF which directed us to send an aviation package in support of -CJSOTF to RC West. This all happens within a week or two prior to this and so we're working through all that. And that's a pretty big deal. We ended up doing it actually. Then you've got your daily grind of visitors and all that kind of stuff that's going on. And so, and then the -NAWA Pass, I'm not going to talk about that. So that's an idea there of what else was on Schloesser's plate. Again, an area the size of West Virginia, North Carolina and Virginia combined, as you well know from the geography, an area that he's got lots of platoons, lots of COPs, he's got lots of companies and battalions and brigades. He's got a wide scope of responsibilities. He's got a wide scope and... he's got to look up, down, left, right, across the border, all of that. And given that context in my humble opinion, I think the CJTF staff, General Schloesser, myself and a whole bunch of others were paying due diligence and attention to this operation.

What was your other question?

Q: Well, we wanted to make sure you talked about some of the lessons learned from your perspective.

A: Yeah. As a former OC at JRTC, there's a lot of small unit lessons learned here that I think are extremely important to get out to the force. And I think that you guys will do that and you'll do that in fine fashion and the true tradition of Center for Army Lessons Learned and that will filter its way –out and that will all be good. Many of those are lessons that are really being relearned, but you know, those are all good. Things like patrols, weapons cross training, you know, the medical stuff. General Schloesser placed a big emphasis on medical training, first responder type training, you know, integration of fires, establishing the

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[20] A large prison break occurred at the ANA operated Sarposa Prison in Kandahar on June 13, 2008. A Taliban attack heavily damaged the prison, and freed a large number of incarcerated insurgents.

[21] There were allegations of large number of civilian casualties that occurred as a result of coalition airstrikes in the Zirko Valley of Shindan District, Herat Province in western Afghanistan on July 17, 2008.

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defense, counterinsurgency, ETPs, cultural training, those sorts of things at the company, battalion level, even brigade level. But you guys will bring all that out and I think those are extraordinarily valuable and should be learned.

And then one of the things I used to preach for lack of a better term, I used to call it Ranger School 101. And I think that that is very important that that be brought out as a lesson learned at multiple levels. And what I mean by that is, you know, the principles of patrolling and the conduct of patrols and executing patrols and how you do them. There's a lost art there. You know, there was a time way back when in the Vietnam era when we had unbelievably capable and competent dismounted -light infantry patrolling techniques spread throughout the American army. And I think to a large extent, that has got lost over time, then we recouped it a bit. It's ebbed and flowed. But the principles that you learn in Ranger School about dismounted -light infantry operations, I think, are so fundamental and so critical. And the art of patrolling is really important and I think that is worthwhile bringing out. That is not to say – that is not meant to be interpreted nor in any way, anything about what anyone did or did not do. But patrolling matters and it's important and there's lots of lessons learned out there. There is no question that in this case, but I could cite you hundreds of cases where patrolling makes a difference for better or worse. And that's important.

So at a higher level, I think the intelligence system. I think that, you know, post facto, post battle, I find out that there were clearly some indicators and warnings down at the platoon and company level. And I know that you're aware of them and I became aware of them shortly - after the attack. And a lot of soldiers had a kind of ... and they weren't just feelings. They were actual observations and things that could be turned into solid reports and that sort of thing. And then there was some limited interaction with Afghan civilians. The report, you know, the one that comes out that everyone talks about is a report to Captain (b)(3), (b)(6) the evening prior based upon the meeting with the tribal elder. Oscar

Q: Right, the dinner that he had.

A: Yeah. The actual words that are said to him, even in hindsight, don't strike me as, you know, like imminent, no kidding, it's going to happen like now. But it's just one of many indicators at that level. Now, are any of them absolute? No. I mean, intelligence is a system of probabilities. It's not a system of absolutes. But those reports were indicative. Now they get filtered through the experience and the system of command. You know, Company Commander, Battalion Commander, Brigade Commander, Division Commander and their associated staffs and pieces and parts. I think that a lesson learned, not just from this incident by the way, that we must do is we must adapt our MTOE at the company

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level to incorporate what all the companies are doing anyway which is these company intel cells.[22]

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And they need to be trained, equipped, fitted out, going through MREs, etc., and recognize that - need, recognize that in widely dispersed, decentralized oeprations against an adaptive enemy, that company commanders are going to have to have a capability of intelligence that 20 years ago only Battalion Commanders had or even Brigade Commanders and they have to have that system built into their MTOE. I think that's very important. Would it have mattered in this particular case? I don't know. But it might have. And I also think that there's technologies out there today. I know there's technologies out there today that if we could arm the platoon leader and the Company Commander and the ETT driving down the road to Tangi Valley and a whole bunch of others where they could send in reports and it would automatically populate throughout the entire system -- now there are some techno people out there who will tell you that this already exists. You know, Blue Force Tracker, for example, has some capabilities to do this and there's other systems out there that do have some capabilities. But there's not a holistic, unified, technological system by which a junior leader can input electronically and digitally a report and have it be populated throughout the system. In the fires world you can do that. In the fires world, you can input a call for fire and it can be seen all the way through the fires system and it's the consent rule and the higher level fires system can override it and abort the fire mission. Or if they stay quiet, it gets fired. That system exists. In the intelligence system, the technology exists and there's some sporadic systems out there that show some promise. But right now, we are not arming, you know, the system is not arming our young leaders with the capability of input.

Now, what would that do for us? In WWII they had regimental clerks. They had company clerks that worked at the regiment. You ever wonder how is it that we have written records from World War II? At the regiment and the division level. And they were actually pretty good stuff and they're typed up and they have them in libraries and all that kind of stuff. How did that happen because company commanders certainly weren't running around with that stuff. The way it worked was a company commander and a battalion-had those clerks I think at the Regimental level. They were essentially a group of RTOs, but they were dedicated to watch a specific company. So I would be the Company Clerk, or the clerk at the higher headquarters and I'm keeping the log for the company. And

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[22] Modified Table of Organization and Equipment, the core U.S. Army document that mans and equips any organization.

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the company would call a report and then I'd collate it and pass it up the chain.

Well, I don't know if there's an analogous -possibility out there organizationally given conditions in Afghanistan but it is worth exploring. You know, and Afghanistan may or may not be a predictor of the long range future to change the entire army structure. But I do think that the fighting in Afghanistan, we must have an intelligence system that is flatter and faster and is capable of processing, disseminating information better, human information from small units. Because I can tell you that all the technology in the world isn't going to be the answer. This is a light infantry, dismounted fight -but we can leverage the technology that we have. We can leverage money. We can leverage ISR systems and helicopters and all these other things. But at the end of the day it's going to be the Afghan individual soldiers and the Coalition soldiers or the ISAF or the American soldiers out there that are in contact with the population that carries the day or not. And with respect to an intelligence system, those soldiers, what they're seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, the vibes they're sensing, the reports they can generate, you know, almost like blog sites. Now we can do this in parts of our military right now. You know, we're doing it in a lot of the special ops world. That needs to be populated I think throughout the system.

I think that it would be helpful at our training centers if we really bore down and trained the defense. I think that in this case there -are positive lessons learned. Granted, there's no question there was significant casualties. But these kids, you know, A) they were heroes, but B) they put in a defense in a relatively short amount of time that held their position... you know, it held. And they paid dearly for it, no question about it, and there -were lots of things that could have been done in order to improve that defense. You know, and you pointed them out aptly. But there were these positives that were done. You know, Range Cards. A lot of the small stuff. The Range Cards, the laying all the wire, putting sandbags in, digging positions, spotting this, spotting that. And those sorts of things. Those are important. The fundamentals of the defense, setting in and engaging where there's current dead space. That needs to be part of the positive and then there are some things probably could have been done better. But a holistic look at small unit defense because that's what happens over here anyways is small unit defense in terms of these COPs.

Q: Okay, listen...

A: The offense patrolling, mounted and dismounted, but fundamentally dismounted and then I think defense. And as an old OC, I would very much like to see those things driven -hard in the training base. You want to cut me off there?

Q: Yeah, my tape recorder has a limit and it's backed up to the limit here. So what I'm going to do is ...

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A: Here's some final thoughts ...

-I was informed by CHOPS and was on the JOC floor along with the CG and others -shortly after the troops in contact reports were received at the CJTF.

-My primary responsibility at that point was asset management, and reviewing the CHOPS actions. We ensured that ISR assets were shifted, joint fires were on station, medevac was working, and reports were flowing. Additionally, we coordinated with CJSOTF and alerted JSOC and OGA for possible reinforcement if required.

Early in the morning, -I realized how serious the TIC was and that TF Bayonet/TF Rock needed assistance. He told MG Schloesser (who was also on the JOC floor) that he "needed to go down there" and MG Schloesser immediately concurred and told him to go no further forward than Blessing.

--I then flew by - helicopter down to JAF to TF Bayonet, and then to TF Rock at Camp Blessing. He arrived at JAF at approximately -mid morning on 13 July. Delta Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) was "visibly shaken." While he was at TF Bayonet TOC LTC Diamond (b)(3), (b)(6) called COL (b)(3), (b)(6) with "bad news" that 1LT Brostrom was KIA. COL Delta Delta (b)(3), (b)(6) was "close to the Brostrom family" and he knew 1LT Brostrom Delta personally. COL (b)(3), (b)(6) was extremely upset at the news. I called MG Schloesser and rendered a report and flew to Blessing.

Once - I arrived at TF Rock TOC -I reported back to MG Schloesser and - provided -my helicopter to LTC (b)(3), (b)(6) so that he could personally move to the Diamond Wanat battlefield. LTC Ostlund then temporarily moved up to Wanat while -I operated from the TF Rock since it had sufficient radios so that -I could exercise effective C2 back to the CJTF.

On the night of July 14th at approximately 2215 various Courses of Action (COA) on the way ahead were presented to CG. These were presented verbally by Delta Tanenberg by both Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) and Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) Commander of Gemini TF Duke, 3rd BCT of the 1st Infantry Division. The following CJTF-101 officers were in attendance as I recall, CG, DCG-O, DCG-S (BG Jim McConville), Chief Brewer of Staff (COL (b)(3), (b)(6) J-3 (Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) Palm J-2 (LTC (b)(3), (b)(6) PAO Alpha (LTC (b)(3), (b)(6) Jet, and CHOPS (LTC (b)(3), (b)(6) Bronco. --COAs presented were:

- Attack;
- Withdraw;
- Hold; or
- Battle Hand-off to TF Duke.

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MG Schloesser made the decision to withdraw based on cost-benefit logical military decision making given the conditions at the time. -I felt that the decision to withdraw from Wanat was a -correct decision based on the factors of METT-T and the conditions at the time.

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BG Milley Supplemental Interview

Performed by (b)(6) Garnet U.S. Army Combat Studies Institute

20 August 2009

[Note: BG Milley called without a schedule, and the interview was accordingly not able to be recorded. These are (b)(6) Garnet notes taken during the supplemental interview over the telephone.]

Topic: ISR Coverage at Wanat, 8-13 July 2008

1. - ISAF had three Predator lines available. CJTF had one Predator line allocated and one Warrior—A These - two lines were allocated by CJTF-101 daily at an evening synchronization meeting with DCG-O, J-2, and J-3 input. - Execution was then done by an Air Tasking Order (ATO) issued daily -.
2. The period 8-13 July covered five Air Tasking Order (ATO) cycles.
3. He noted that Predator was off station from TF Bayonet at 0730 local on 12 July. [note that this confirms that ISR was withdrawn from Wanat by morning of 12 July at the latest and flown in support of the CJTF Main Effort).
4. He also noted that allocation was to BCT Level (TF Bayonet level). TF Bayonet S-2 would then allocate ISR within TF Bayonet sector.
5. Predator from (b)(1) 1.4 a, c. Maximum Predator availability was 20 hours per day per line.

Cycle	Date	Predator Allocated to TF Bayonet	Predator Flown for TF Bayonet
Cycle #1	8/9 July	20	
Cycle #2	9/10 July	20	
Cycle #3	10/11 July	20	7 (-10 TIC, -3 weather)

Cycle #4	11/12 July	12.5	Flown to 2330 Zulu then -shifted to the CJTF Main Effort, TF Currahee
Cycle 35	12/13 July	0	
		72.5 (TF Bayonet allocation 72% of available)	62 (TF Bayonet 54% of available)

6. Definitions:

   Aportioned- Planning purposes

   Allocated- Actually -committed to BCT.

   Executed- What actually flew.

7. Warrior- Alpha (MQ-12 UAV) from Classified Location. Maximum Warrior-Availability was 16 hours per day per line. On Cycle #4 and #5 Warrior was flown in support of operations IVO Tangi Valley, Wardak-Logar, TF Currahee, CJTF 101 Main Effort.

Cycle	Date	Allocated to TF Bayonet	Available	Flown for TF Bayonet
#1	8/9 July	9	16	9
#2	9/10 July	9	16	9
#3	10/11 July	9	16	8 (diverted to support a TIC)
#4	11/12 July	0	16	0
#5	12/13 July	0	16	0
		27	80.	26

			Actually flown-50.	

8. Red Ridge (Fixed Wing, Medium Altitude SIGINT Platform)-other details on this system are Classified. Maximum Red Ridge availability was 12 hours per day per line.

Cycle	Date	Allocated to TF Bayonet	Available	Flown for TF Bayonet
#1	8/9 July	8	12	8
#2	9/10 July	8	12	8
#3	10/11 July	8	12	8
#4	11/12 July	4	12	4
#5	12/13 July	4	12	4
		32	60 Actually flown-50.	32

9. Green Dart (Hunter from JBAD) and Shadow were both BCT assets and TF Bayonet had 100% availability of these sensors. They could not operate north of Camp Blessing, and could not operate at Wanat or in the Waigal Valley as discussed the Wanat study (draft).

10. BG Milley feels that TF Bayonet was given "considerable allocation" of CJTF level airborne ISR and that "diligence" was performed to ensure that CONOP ROCK MOVE was adequately supported with ISR given the intelligence presented at the CJTF level at the time. These systems were managed intensively at the CJTF level.

11. During our conversation -BG Milley recommended a book called: Cynthia M. Grabo, "Anticipating Surprise: Analysis for Strategic Warning" (University Press of America, 2004).

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