

USIP - ADST
Afghanistan Experience Project

Interview #15

Executive Summary

Interviewee was a staff officer for Combined Forces Command, stationed in Kabul and reporting to Lt. Gen. Barno. During the first three months of his assignment he monitored major activities of PRTs, which were spending around \$40 million, mainly of Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP) funds on reconstruction projects. Interviewee was a participant in PRT executive steering committee meetings, where PRTs and Kabul-based elements made program decisions. These committees, initiated by Gen. Barno, were effective. Over time, Gen. Barno stepped back to get the Afghan participants to take a greater role.

Effective force protection was a prerequisite for reconstruction operations, and the PRTs were dependent on military tactical units in the field. Because of relationships developed with local leaders, PRTs were involved in almost everything. Thus they had a role in DDR (Disarmament, Demobilization, & Reintegration), led by Japan. PRTs emphasized friendship, cooperation, and reconstruction but they remained military in character. They were very high-profile wherever they were placed.

After March 2004, interviewee was chief of the law enforcement cell for the remainder of his time in Kabul. The emphasis of the coalition effort was shifting from humanitarian and infrastructure activities to good governance and security. Germany had the lead role for police development. Afghan police were centralized in the Ministry of Interior, but there were regular police and soldier police, and the latter were much better paid; an Afghan Army non-commissioned officer got a higher salary than a colonel or general in the Afghan national police. In addition, the grade structure was top-heavy. Police faced shortfalls in recruitment, retention, training, facilities, transportation, weaponry, and communications. Central control did not reach throughout the country either. There were many "informal" policing activities through warlords or tribal leaders, and application of *sharia* law.

Interviewee established working relations with the Germans, the U.S. Department of State law enforcement activity (one or two officers in the embassy plus contractors), NGOs, the UN, other coalition entities, and the Afghan government. He formed mobile assistance teams to assess police organizations in the field, leading to recommendations. By the time he left, interviewee had developed a model and a structure, and needed funds and personnel to implement plans more quickly. A major issue was obtaining U.S. funds for providing weapons for police; State funds cannot be used for that purpose. They hoped to be able to use DOD funds and contractors.

According to interviewee, the State Department was not always effective in police development. Some State officers lacked relevant experience. And State had too few resources,

e.g., for follow-up training of police in the field. After interviewee raised these kinds of issues at a donors conference, relations with State became strained. But interviewee says that while recognizing funding constraints, and the different agendas of NGOs, the UN, US agencies, the coalition, and the Afghan government, the key is working together to come up with the best available solutions to problems.

Interviewee considers PRTs to be effective wherever they are located, but points out that they only cover a fraction of this large, geographically difficult country. Interviewee calls for more civil affairs teams, and more people in the field with specialist skills in such areas as government functions, economic functions, public facilities, and special functions like arts, monuments, archives, dislocated civilian management, fire, and emergency medical response. An overarching strategy – for example, in hydrology and water management – is needed, not only for a specific piece of the countryside but also for the whole country.

United States Institute of Peace
Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training
Afghanistan Experience Project

Interview #15

Interviewed by: Larry Lesser
Initial interview date: May 4, 2005
Copyright 2004 USIP & ADST

Q: Could you begin by giving basic information about when you were in Afghanistan and what your assignment was there?

A: I went to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. I arrived there on January 6, 2004. I served there just a few days short of 10 months.

Q: So that means you left in early October.

A: Actually, I left the latter part of October. I was released from active duty on November 15, 2004.

Q: Now let's go to what you did in Afghanistan. Can you describe the location, history, physical structure, size, staffing, bureaucratic organization, and the agencies of the U.S. and the Afghan governments represented in the PRTs, particularly the one in which you served?

A: I didn't actually serve in a provisional reconstruction team. When I got there, I was going to be a liaison officer working with the ministry of interior, which basically oversees the governmental functions and all law enforcement functions in Afghanistan. Just prior to my assignment, my assignment was changed and I was assigned to the CJ9, a newly formed staff section of the Combined Forces Command Afghanistan and the hierarchy of the command structure and its structure in Afghanistan. The Combined Forces Command Afghanistan was commanded by Lieutenant General David Barno. Lieutenant General Barno was the commanding general of all Afghan and Operation Enduring Freedom operations. As a major staff officer for General Barno, the CJ9 was a civil military operations element of the Combined Forces Afghanistan. When we arrived in Afghanistan, the command staff element in charge of the operation in Afghanistan was the task force run by the 10th Mountain Division. Then when the 25th Infantry Division Light from Hawaii arrived in March, they took over and became Task Force 76. So, in essence, Combined Forces Command Afghanistan was a command element which had oversight over first the 10th Mountain Division and later the Task Force 76, which was the 25th Infantry Division. I was stationed in Kabul. The subordinate element was based out of Bagram.

Q: You remained assigned in Kabul for the entire period that you were there?

A: That's correct. I did that for three months. The civil military operations element had basically staff oversight responsibilities over civil military operations. They also had a CJ9 down at Task Force 180 initially and then Task Force 76 later. Task Force 180 was the element basically run by the 10th Mountain Division and Task Force 76 was the element run by the 25th ID. What I did on a continuous basis daily was monitor the major activities of the provisional reconstruction teams. We had initially 12 provisional reconstruction teams. Then we went up to 16. Then just before I left, they were up to about 19 due to NATO expansion. I reported to General Barno on a regular basis on the major operations conducted by the PRTs and the status of the PRTs, and also we monitored funding. We had various funding sources. We had a DACA. We had emergency support funds. The main funding source when I was there was the Commanders Emergency Response Program funds, CERP funds. In 2004, the latest summary I got was that we spent \$40 million in CERP funds in Afghanistan during that time period.

Q: It sounds like your own duties had more to do with tracking and reporting and keeping tabs on their activities than decisions on approving projects and obtaining funding for them, is that right?

A: Well, that's true. However, General Barno had monthly PRT executive steering committees. I participated in those. Those committees were an executive level body which developed and promulgated executive policy concerning the PRTs. General Barno, Minister Jalali from MOI was on that committee. Any country that had any vested interest in a PRT also had representatives on that steering committee.

Q: The PRTs themselves sent representatives to those monthly meetings?

A: Usually one or both general officers from Task Force 180 or Task Force 186 would be there. Also, we had Task Force Victory, the civil affairs brigade command and staff element that for most of my tour over there actually had operational control over nearly all the PRTs with the exception of the German PRT in Kandoz. They even had operational control over the New Zealand PRT, which was in Bamian. Actually, Bamian was New Zealand and Mazar-e-Sharif was British. So, we had basically one PRT outside of the coalition and that was the Kandoz PRT, which was part of International Security Assistance Force, ISAF. That was run by the Germans. We had a New Zealander in Bamian. As I previously stated, we had the British PRT in Mazar-e-Sharif. All the other PRTs were U.S.-led. Then after about three months, we had another colonel come in from the California army national guard. He took over the CJ9 position. After that, my primary duties were associated with police development. I was the chief of the law enforcement cell. I led initially three men. What we did after that was to develop plans in an attempt to accelerate police development. When we first got to Afghanistan, our initial priority was humanitarian type operations. A big emphasis was on infrastructure improvements, but the emphasis really was on schools, clinics, wells, to a lesser extent bridges and roads, and things like that. Because security was such a key element in preparation for the elections and to basically establish an environment where good governance could flourish and the influence and reach of the national government could be more or less promulgated and impacted throughout the country, we kind of shifted the emphasis to good governance. That meant training the Afghan national army and helping the Afghan national police. Without that security element throughout the 34 provinces, the 355 districts, and the villages and towns, the other

reconstruction efforts were not going to be effective. So I shifted my emphasis to police development.

Q: I'm going to take my questions a little out of order because it occurs to me you put the emphasis on army and police, but police at least implies that the justice system is also operating. Was there an emphasis on courts and prisons as well?

A: One big problem in Afghanistan was that the United States was not the lead nation in developing the criminal justice system. Germany was in charge of the police development process. Italy was in charge of judiciary development. The British were in charge of counter-narcotics. The only thing the U.S. was exclusively responsible for – and they did very well at it, I might add – was training the Afghan national army. The criminal justice system was being dealt with in a piecemeal fashion. While the Germans did an admirable job with police development, their processes were slow and deliberate. When I was over there, they were trying to establish six regional training centers. They had the central training center and the German police academy in Kabul. But the U.S. was spending most of the money for police development when we left. For example, we had a donors conference in Doha, Qatar, in May of 2004. The neighboring nations and especially the Gulf states were just not stepping up to the plate and contributing a lot of money to police development in Afghanistan. The U.S. was filling a big void. Of course, we wanted to accelerate police development and that's what we were attempting to do while we were over there. We were trying to facilitate that. A lot of people try to compare us with Iraq. In fact, the Combined Force Command actually tried to apply an Iraq model initially. My team tried to take an objective view of police development and actually develop a plan and a series of recommendations for the military to take a bigger role in police development until the other countries could develop the mechanisms to do that on their own, which just wasn't happening very quickly over there. Of course, we had the military assisting. The primary role for police development from the United States' perspective was not the military but was for Department of State through private contractors, Department of Justice, the International Criminal Investigation Training Assistance Program, and vendors like DynCorp's provided trainers and support personnel to set up the regional training centers.

Q: I think I probably need to go back to the period before you became chief for the law enforcement effort and wind up what we say about the staff oversight over civil military operations. You mentioned the composition of this executive steering committee. Would you care to say some more about the kinds of relationships that had to be established among the various elements that were participating and that were necessary to be successful in making the PRTs effective?

A: General Barno was really the catalyst that made the PRTs work in my opinion. He also was the driving force and biggest influence behind the PRT executive steering committee. He developed it. Although near the end of my tour he kind of stepped back and attempted to get the Afghans, specifically Minister Jalali, to take a greater role in developing these policies and facilitating the success of the PRTs, he was definitely the main architect and operator as far as the PRTs were concerned. I thought Ambassador Khalilzad had a great mind and he was very supportive, too. I think we worked extremely well with the ambassador. He did a great job. He had some outstanding insights into how Afghanistan operated and what had to be done.

Q: I guess he got the job partly because of his insights.

A: Yes. He was great. He worked well with General Barno. Also, one of the key elements was Task Force 180 and later Task Force 76. The PRTs are really dependent on the tactical units out in the field in and around the PRTs because the major element of the PRTs is the force protection element and the support element and communications, medical, everything that made those PRTs safe to operate, especially in the east and south where we had some very contentious areas in which to operate and we still had Taliban and some Al-Qaeda and some HIG [as heard] elements that proposed a force protection challenge. So they worked well together. The UN, of course, especially in preparation for the elections, had a role, but until they started firing up the elections, the UN just did not have a major role in things. They definitely had a viable role, but most of the UN main players were actually based in Kabul. So the UN interfaced out in the provinces. It was there. UNHCR dealt with some of the refugee issues. But by and large, it was the U.S., it was the coalition, to a lesser extent it was ISAF, kind of running the operation.

Q: You stressed coordination with the Afghan government at the Kabul level. How did that work as you were looking out into the provinces and encountering local officials and Afghan warlords and Afghan security forces in the field?

A: Well, obviously, there are several other factors you had to take into account as far as the proliferation and the successes and the effectiveness of the PRTs were concerned. There are other issues that were working concurrently -- for example, DDR, the Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration program, which was being conducted concurrently. That was a Task Force 180/Task Force 76 Combined Forces Command Afghanistan-led effort with UN support. Believe it or not, Japan had the lead role in DDR. Yes, Japan assisted, but again, the main player which made this DDR work was the U.S.

Q: So Japan was nominally the lead but the U.S. was actually...

A: Yes, they provided some people and some financial support, but really the main catalyst was, again, the United States. The UN was involved in that, too, but the U.S. provided most of the personnel.

Q: That was not a function of the PRTs as I understand.

A: The PRTs were involved indirectly in DDR because they helped identify key players. They dealt with provincial, district, and local leaders, especially the warlords and the tribal leaders, to encourage them to participate in DDR. The PRTs did a lot of things that may not have been initially on their mission task list. The PRTs were involved in almost everything.

Q: They helped to create an environment in which the DDR program could be successful.

A: Yes, and mostly it was the cultivating of the relationships that made such a thing possible.

Q: And as a general matter, were they pretty good at cultivating those relationships? One thing that occurs to outsiders like me is that an awful lot – in fact, almost all – of the Americans, and I presume other coalition people – are there for very short tours and it's tough to go very far in cultivating relationships if you're going to be gone in just a few months.

A: Well, our PRT commanders were there basically for about nine months. Yes, it is difficult. The Afghans are great people, but they're the kind of people with whom you have to take time to develop relationships. Once you develop relationships with the Afghan people, they're very good, very easy to work with. But the thing is, the PRTs' primary role was reconstruction. They participated indirectly in a lot of other issues. DDR was an example. The elections were an example. You want a light footprint. You don't want to make it obvious that the PRTs are delving into issues that involve the use of military force or you don't want the appearance of military force. You want the appearance of friendship, solidarity, and of course cooperation and reconstruction, and humanitarian assistance, and you kind of want to remove yourself from those direct military actions. You don't want to lose that objectivity. You don't want to discredit your primary mission with the local populace or the leadership. But you're still military, you still support all these key programs, and of course you're to observe and report important developments along those lines to superiors at any time. People would tell us things. Whether it was DDR or a potential threat or suspicious activities, and those things were reported; they weren't actively solicited, but they were reported.

Q: Reported and then other elements would do the follow-up.

A: Right. Absolutely.

Q: Is it your impression that the PRTs kind of had the highest profile of any coalition entities out in the field, that local people if they wanted to get in touch with the Americans or coalition would think of contacting the PRT rather than any other element that was in the area?

A: Yes. The PRTs are very high profile. However, we had tactical units out in the field, too. What you've got to understand is that most of Afghanistan really wasn't covered by tactical units. The Herat PRT was the major military operation in the west, at least at one time prior to the removal of Ismael Khan from his governorship. So, the PRTs were generally speaking, depending on where you were, the focal point for military and humanitarian and reconstruction activities in the areas in which they operated. In some areas, they operated out of bases where you had large contingents of U.S. tactical military forces and may not have had as prominent a role.

Q: They were less accessible, had less contact with the local people?

A: Well, yes, some of them had less contact than others, but generally speaking they were pretty high profile.

Q: Okay, I've got to adapt the questions a little bit because they were designed for the PRTs themselves and you were at a little remove from the PRTs. Can you say something about the

approach to security for the PRTs in the field so that they could actually get out and make the contacts and conduct reconstruction projects?

A: Well, the PRTs varied in size and composition. Basically, they had a force protection element. We had basically two civil affairs elements in most of the PRTs. We had a Civil Affairs Team A and a Civil Affairs Team B. Normally, there were four to five people on each team and each PRT commander was a civil affairs officer. At least initially the U.S. PRTs were led by civil affairs lieutenant colonels. The Civil Affairs Team A were the civil affairs team that went out into the villages, districts, and provincial areas and met with leaders, assessed the need for reconstruction projects, submitted paperwork for ODACA, the emergency support funds, or the CERP funds. We were using almost exclusively CERP funds during my tenure. The Civil Affairs B Team typically would set up a storefront in a local village or town and it was like a CMAC where they would coordinate with humanitarian groups. We had a lot of NGOs and PVOs and some UN. The UN had eight regional offices in Afghanistan.

Q: Were the NGOs represented in the executive steering committee?

A: The UN was. Normally they would have the senior UN representative on the executive steering committee and they represented the interests of NGOs and PVOs because they were kind of the focal point.

Q: So you looked to them to express any views that were of particular importance to private NGOs.

A: Yes. Of course, some of the more prominent NGOs out in the field sometimes would contact PRTs directly through that CMAC, through that CAP B team. First of all, almost all the NGOs and PVOs were in Kabul. Certainly there were a lot of groups operating out in the field but most of them were probably in Kabul because of the force protection concerns. I would say that Doctors Without Borders was an example where they had field elements but they didn't really like associating with the military because they like to maintain their anonymity. They had some people killed up in the northwest. They pulled out of Afghanistan. I actually had a meeting with them and we encouraged them to contact PRTs where they were operating just to better coordinate their activities and also for force protection purposes to keep us informed of where they were in case they needed help, so we could assist them.

Q: And did they welcome that kind of offer?

A: Yes, they were very supportive of that proposal. However, as long as their contacts are indirect, they never wanted to be seen in a military compound or have direct contact. Most of the PRTs had e-mail capability, so we would hook up some of them via electronic means.

Q: Did you encounter any of the same kind of ambivalence about meeting with the military among local Afghan leaders, whether warlords or local officials or tribal leaders?

A: Well, most of the Afghans were pretty cooperative, but there was some ambivalence in some areas. I met with a lot of high ranking NGOs in Kabul when I was a CJ9. There were many,

many NGOs, some of which had been in the country for 20-plus years. Most of them were supportive of our efforts, but many of them had different views and opinions on how humanitarian and reconstruction projects should be initiated. A few did not like working with the military. Some NGOs and even the PRT in Kandoz, the best example, had national caveats and national agendas, too.

Q: When you refer to NGOs, I understand that to mean non-Afghans. These are normally led by people who have come to Afghanistan but their chiefs are not Afghans themselves, is that right?

A: That's correct. You had Afghans involved, employed by most of the NGO organizations.

Q: But the representatives from the ground...

A: Are from a lot of different countries, yes.

Q: The representative would be a foreigner and the person presumably who was essential for getting the resources that they would be expending in Afghanistan for that project.

A: That's correct.

Q: Moving on, maybe now is a good time to get into what you did in your law enforcement efforts, which I guess covered about 2/3 of your time in Afghanistan.

A: Yes, that's correct. I was over there for nine months and I was extended for a month.

Q: How would you describe the role and mission that you had in connection with law enforcement? If you can be as specific as possible, specific projects that were carried out.

A: The first thing we did when we established a law enforcement support team was that my team developed a model to assess Afghan police organizations, specifically provincial police stations. First we established a close working relationship with the Department of State law enforcement element.

Q: They had representatives in Afghanistan, too?

A: Yes. Unfortunately, they only had one to two reps. most of the time. They also had representatives on the counter-narcotics side, but I dealt primarily with police development. At times, they only had one or two representatives at the embassy. Then they had a lot of contractors. They had ISITAF and the DynCorps contractors who basically were responsible for running the central training center there in Kabul and we were setting up six regional training centers throughout the country to train police officers. We also had a close working relationship with the Germans.

Q: They were the lead country.

A: Yes, they were the lead nation. We met with their ambassador in charge of police development. They had an ambassador over there. They had the lead commanding officer in charge of the German police trainers. I worked with him. I worked closely almost on a daily basis with the deputy minister of interior or the minister of interior. I saw the deputy most of the time, Deputy Minister Halal (phonetic), and Minister of Interior Jalali.

Q: What was the condition of Afghan police at the time that you started your work?

A: The Afghan police were in disarray. We didn't even know how many police there were in the country. We thought there were around 50,000, but they had a very antiquated system that went back to the '70s. Of course, most of the infrastructure was destroyed during the 24 or so years of war, both during the Soviet occupation and during the Taliban reign. Most of the police officers had not been formally trained. They did have some good police officers who had been trained in the '70s, but some police officers had been trained by the Soviets as well. Most of the officers were not trained. They were poorly equipped, poorly paid, if they got paid at all. They had very few weapons, very few vehicles. Their uniforms were in short supply. Many of their facilities were destroyed. When we developed our assessment model, we traveled to a provincial police station in Nangarhar Province in Jalalabad and conducted a formal assessment of the police station. In doing so, we also worked with the minister of interior. But it was pretty obvious in working with the Afghans that they had significant shortfalls in recruitment, retention, training, facilities, transportation, weaponry, and communications.

Q: Were the police at least in theory all supposed to come under the ministry of interior?

A: Yes, they did.

Q: But I suppose the effectiveness of that must have varied quite widely depending on where you were in the country.

A: Afghanistan is a big country, a huge country, very rugged terrain. The government historically has not had a strong centralized control over the rest of the country. In the case of the police, the minister of interior, a very, very capable individual, a great guy, Minister Jalali, was attempting to implement strong control and influence from the central government in all the 34 provinces. Of course, the strength of the provincial police establishments was crucial to the 355 districts. You had police presence at the district levels and in the smaller villages and towns. The biggest struggle in many areas stemmed from the fact that the warlords or the tribal leaders had either control of the police or actually conducted the law enforcement role in some areas and they had the sharia law where traditionally Muslim Islamic law prevailed, and there were a lot of informal policing activities going on.

Q: And when you say "informal," that implies not attached in any way to the ministry of interior structure.

A: Or the central government, yes. It was tribal affiliations and through traditional family or tribal tradition or laws primarily based on Islamic and tribal affiliations.

Q: Did your program take that into account in any direct way? Was there any effort, for example, to train and regularize informal police elements in places like that?

A: Well, yes. One of the things we did out of our assessments was, through General Barno, to attempt to identify the number of police that were needed throughout the nation. Our focus was not just on training the police. There were big shortfalls in training, equipping, and financing a police development, even amongst the Germans and even our U.S. Department of State elements. My approach was, "You've got to look at the full spectrum of law enforcement. You have to have an organization structure, trained leaders. You want to select, retain and train and pay with an adequate salary competent, efficient police officers to serve in the field." Some of the issues that we were struggling with were just due to the system they had. They had regular police officers and they had police soldiers. Under the old system, you could be enlisted into the army or you could be enlisted into the police forces for two years. So they had police soldiers and they had regular police. They had a very top-heavy system that was, I think, more a result of the Soviet system. They had far too many generals and colonels and lieutenant colonels. They had a military type of hierarchy in the police. One of the things we identified very early on was, you've got to restructure the police and you've got to put the right people in the right positions. The U.S. and the Germans did a good job of training people but one of the problems was that there was no sustained training or field training officer programs in the field. The Department of State was developing a field training officer program just before I left.

Q: Let me interrupt you for a question. Where did the money come from to pay the police?

A: There was a structure that was set up where the police were paid. It was basically from international donations. Unfortunately, one of the big problems was in regard to the police in the provinces; there was not a full accounting of how many police there actually were. They were paid based on the names on the rosters. Well, the provincial police administrators would submit the rosters and they had a very antiquated system. We were trying to automate that system. DynCorps was working on this, and the UN to a lesser extent. But there was a structure set up. The rosters would be submitted to Kabul. Then someone would pick up the money and take it back to the provinces.

Q: Meaning cash money?

A: Yes.

Q: Envelopes with pay in them?

A: Yes. That was the process.

Q: There's no bank system?

A: When I first got there we were working on these people that were working on this automated system, and they had a great automated system and they were developing a formal ID card system that they were implementing, but it was kind of a slow, tedious process. Problems were happening. The provinces were overreporting the number of police officers that were employed.

Some of the money wasn't reaching the provincial police stations. If it did reach the police station, sometimes not all the money was there. Some police administrators actually took the money and never showed up. Things like that were happening. At the provincial level, there were some police that hadn't been paid in three or four months. The average was probably a couple months. First of all, their salary was very low. One of the things we were working on before I left was that the Afghan National Army (ANA) had a very, very, very high pay schedule. Their pay rates were very favorable. But the ANA was getting a lot more money than the police, which created a lot of morale problems and encouraged corruption, and malfeasance and things of that nature. So those were some of the things we were dealing with. Just before I left we had encouraged the MOI to restructure the ranks. Under the current rank structure there's no way that they could gain parity with the ANA unless they restructure. The U.S. set up a pay scale for the Afghan National Army which was by Afghan standards very good pay. But a non-commissioned officer in the Afghan National Army made more than a colonel or a general in the Afghan national police. That created a lot of hard feelings, a lot of animosity. The pay was so low and infrequent on the police side of the house it was tough to maintain a professional police force under those circumstances. So we were working on those kinds of issues.

Q: Let's say you come up with a proposal. What's the process for getting it adopted? Did it go through the Afghanistan legislature?

A: We developed kind of a police steering committee of sorts. We proposed that. We had a big committee. We met on a monthly basis with the Germans. One problem was that we had to go through the Germans on everything. In fact, before I left, we were developing a process whereby we would accelerate police training and development. My team submitted a proposal to acquire enough police advisors and trainers to impact every province and every district in the country. We were actually proposing to get a thousand people over there and form small teams and get out there and train the local police and mentor them. That was one advantage that the ANA had. The ANA had American National Guard mentors that actually worked directly with the Afghan National Army elements that were out in the field, and they did an admirable job; the ANA always did an excellent job. We had hostilities when I was in Herat, when Ismael Khan was removed, and the ANA performed courageously and very competently and efficiently in the field, and the police faltered. Here we had 500 additional police sent to Herat to try to mitigate these hostilities and we had three advisors. The ANA had American advisors in all their subordinate elements. So, we had literally a thousand to several thousand U.S. forces committed to the ANA to train and mentor the ANA and we had three of us working with the police. Of course, that was a sensitive issue.

Another issue that was very difficult to work and get things done on the police side was because there are specific Title X funds.... U.S. funds can be procured (because we were working in counterinsurgency) for the military, to help develop the military, but in getting funds for the police we were constantly hitting roadblocks. We would try to get weapons for the police. Well, we couldn't buy weapons. U.S. law precludes buying weapons for the police. You could do that for the military. You couldn't do it for the police. A lot of the funding mechanisms for police development were basically just not available for us when they were available for forming and maintaining the ANA forces.

Q: Given all of the obstacles that you faced, what would you say the significant achievements were? How far did you get in accomplishing your mission and strengthening the Afghan police?

A: I think that we did develop a structure before I left. We were finalizing an organizational structure, a cadre of individuals that were going to form the nucleus of a police development element that was much like the element we were using for the ANA and contingent upon getting enough police advisors. We also formed a concept called the mobile assistance team and we actually trained some national guardsmen that happened to be police officers in civilian life. We sent them out in the field, kind of did an experiment, and they went into the field and actually assessed police organizations and sent reports. They worked with a couple of the PRTs. That kind of helped us form a basis for our recommendations. The attempt that we were trying to make before I left was to train a lot more of these mobile assistance teams until we could get some civilian contractors over there to do the same job. They identified shortfalls in personnel, equipment, weaponry, and facilities, and they worked with a couple of PRTs and tactical units in the field and reported the information back. That was one of the reasons that we were able to successfully, under General Barno, form a big committee. We developed a plan to rapidly accelerate with U.S. military support police development in Afghanistan. The big issue was, would we use DOD funds to hire civilian contractors and procure some additional military personnel to really accelerate police development by sending people out in the field and getting things done? They just weren't being done fast enough. General Barno recognized that the ANA was growing exponentially and was doing a great job, but the police were lagging behind, and DOD was going to accelerate this process. Of course, he's working with Secretary Rumsfeld and the CENTCOM commander.

Q: Could you describe the arguments on both sides of that issue, about whether DOD funds could be used for this?

A: Some Department of State people were resistant to using DOD personnel and funding, because some of the Title X rules, and some other restrictions, in some cases forbid DOD funding or Department of State funding for police development. On the military side and in counterinsurgency there is more legal clarity and more legal authority to use funds in developing a military force. The perspective that I think we had and General Barno had was that we are not going to have successful elections, we can't reconstruct this country, we can't really initiate economic growth and do all the things we want to do from an infrastructure and reconstruction standpoint unless we have a strong police and military. Right now, the military is doing well. The police are lagging way behind. The Germans and the Department of State, as good a job as they did, did not put enough time, effort, and resources into the mix to exact significant and immediate change. The DOD perspective was, "Why don't we just put all the resources into this and get it done and get it done right? If we don't, all these other objectives are potentially going to fall by the wayside." I would say that, if you compare it to Iraq, they put a lot of money into Iraq. We were a little bit more systematic and methodical in what we did in Afghanistan. General Barno exercised some obviously excellent management control over what we did, what we spent. But looking out years ahead, we want to get something done; we want to get it done quicker. At the current rate, it just wasn't going to happen fast enough.

Q: You left in October of last year. Where did the issue stand at that time? Do you know anything about development since then?

A: Yes. The Office of Military Cooperation in Afghanistan (OMC Alpha) was a subordinate element of Combined Forces Command Afghanistan. I didn't really mention OMC Alpha initially. OMC Alpha was primarily tasked with developing the Afghan National Army. General Barno wanted to use a like organization to accelerate development of the police. When I left I was on a committee where we actually developed a model of how that could be done. I know that there was a big struggle about the time I was leaving because I was supposed to leave and then General Barno asked me to stay an additional month. I stayed an additional month to help this program get kicked off the ground. But the big question when I left was, okay, were we going to develop this organizational structure? What's actually going to be implemented? Were we going to get the funding necessary to put into the training and development effort like we wanted to? My team had a good idea what the Afghans had and what they needed. I'm talking personnel, training, sustainment in the field, vehicles, uniforms, equipment, weapons, and, a big issue, communications.

Q: And so you developed a model. My impression is you were still a long way from getting that thing really rolling and having a catch-up program.

A: We weren't really too far away. We had an organizational structure when I left. We had a model and an organizational structure and we had a pretty good idea of what we had to put into it if we were going to implement a nationwide police development effort. It was not too far off from actually launching the effort. I think the biggest issue was the money and the funding. Again, we kept running into these shortfalls. Near the end of my tour, a lot of CERP money was being used for police development, especially leading up to the presidential elections. But the jury was still out on whether or not DOD was going to come forward with significant amounts of money. We had an organizational structure. Probably the biggest question when I left was, how big was the structure going to be that would manage this big process? It was going to be kind of an OMC Alpha-type structure. The main issue was the personnel and funding. We had some personnel shortages and the funding was the biggest issue. The major issue was Department of State. I must say, we got a lot of good cooperation with the Department of State, but they had people that were working in the police development realm that didn't even have law enforcement experience. In my opinion, the Department of State had some great people, but they didn't have enough people; they didn't have enough expertise. They did have excellent ISITAF and DynCorps people, such as a retired police captain who did a great job. There were a lot of good things going on. But they didn't do enough fast enough and weren't putting enough money into it. I think Ambassador Khalilzad understood that. I gave him a couple briefings. He had a lot of insight. He knew what was going on.

Q: That doesn't sound like an easy problem to overcome though.

A: Initially, when we got there, the actual police assessments or the evaluations of the police were sometimes overly optimistic. I've seen this before, whether you're dealing with the UN or the Department of State. Again, Ambassador Khalilzad was the kind of guy that wanted to do things right and he was not the kind of guy that would misrepresent any facts whatsoever. But

sometimes career diplomats have different agendas than military folks. There is resentment from some elements. The Germans really didn't want us involved in police development. It was really tough to kind of get their support. But we did. They are professionals. I think the way we orchestrated this kind of fostered good working relationships. But the Department of State, I went to Tampa along with the representative from CJ5 Plans. We had a briefing in Tampa about police development. CENTCOM representatives were there, of course, and the Germans, the Department of State. The Department of State, after that, they really weren't talking to us much when we got back to Kabul. We were told, and it was pretty obvious, that some high ranking Department of State people didn't like some of the things we said about the police development process in Afghanistan. We weren't trying to criticize what the Department of State was doing. The Department of State was doing a lot of good work. What I was trying to say, and my team was trying to say, was that what they were doing was good and very positive and they had done a really good job with the money and resources they had, but in our opinion you need to put a lot more money and a lot more resources into it. We were training officers and reporting all these officers trained, but they were not adequately trained. They had really no follow-up training once they hit the field. We really weren't maintaining accountability or maintaining the integrity of the overall program. That was one of the things that we wanted to insist upon.

Q: And that observation was not appreciated by the State Department people?

A: Well, I think they appreciated us, but there were some high level bureaucratic issues that arose that prevented us from getting the job done or impeded progress. I was getting less cooperation when I got back from this conference. It wasn't because of the people that were working at the embassy. It was somebody higher up who told them not to talk to us.

Q: Somebody higher up would be in Washington though, not in Kabul.

A: Yes, Washington. Absolutely.

Q: I don't know how much further we can go on that subject, but if your criticism comes down to inadequate funding and other resources, that could be a frustration that everybody feels because it's always hard to get more when it's coming out of congressional appropriations and it has to get into a whole different political process.

A: I agree fully. We all operate under funding constraints. But if you make an assessment of how much money is needed for what purposes, you need to make sure that that assessment is a valid one. You need to be upfront and you can't sugarcoat things. You have to be not only objective but you have to provide an honest assessment. You've got to make sure that money's spent in areas where it's going to have the most impact. As far as the PRTs are concerned, General Barno was pretty good about maintaining control of funds. He tried to make sure the funds were used as efficiently for the right purposes. But there wasn't enough coordination all the time to assure that our funds were being used effectively, that there was proper coordination between the NGOs, the UN, the U.S., the coalition, the Afghan government, though we were getting better and better at that all the time. From what I've read about Iraq and Afghanistan, Afghanistan did a lot better job than Iraq did in that regard. But what we're proposing was not all that unreasonable. Furthermore, you've got to look at short-term and long-term gains. We

felt that one should put this money upfront, do this and do it right, and really that's kind of what it amounts to. If you're going to do this job right, put the money into the program, invest properly, and you're going to get more positive results in the future. And that's pretty much what we were saying. Sometimes the military has a different perspective than the Department of State. Sometimes we have a different perspective than the UN. Or the Germans kind of had their own agenda. The key is working together and coming up with the best solution to the problems that exist. Quite clearly, there were things being reported that did not portray a fully accurate picture of what was really going on.

Q: I've got to compliment you that you're more diplomatic than professional diplomats often are in your description. But I think your point comes across clearly. If you were to give an overall assessment, what would you say were the greatest successes and disappointments of your effort? I think you've actually been describing that. What lessons did you draw from the experience?

A: Considering we were a very small element, we achieved a lot of success in that we developed some pretty viable proposals that had an impact and influence on police development in Afghanistan. I think that General Barno, with very few resources, definitely had an impact. I think that we fostered some very good relationships with some of our counterparts, at the ministry of interior, the embassy, the German contingent, and to a lesser extent the UN. That's another thing; the PRTs, we did not have enough civil affairs teams. We need more CA teams. Why have 70 or 80 people in a PRT and only have two civil affairs teams? You need more civil affairs troops. I know civil affairs units are in short supply. They had something like 32 ministries. You need ministerial liaison officers, you need people – whether they're civil affairs or other reservists – you need specialists with expertise in government functions, economic functions, public facilities, special functions such as arts, monuments, archives, dislocated civilian management, things like that. You need those experts at those national levels so that you interact frequently with the key ministerial leadership representatives. Also down at the PRT level we needed engineering expertise, we needed city planner-type people, civil engineers. We had veterinarians, doctors, nurses, and they would do special medical civil action programs that were very effective. But you need to assess what the major shortfalls are in that nation, in that area of operations, and send in civic matter experts to deal with those issues. The tactical commander, the military, yes, they may have doctors, they may have engineers – and the engineers did a wonderful job over there, the Corps of Engineers and the engineers that I worked with on General Barno's staff. They did a great job, especially working on the ring road and some of these other major projects. But you need a more robust civil affairs presence, because civil affairs brigades and command elements have experts. We have city planners and education experts, doctors, attorneys, police officers, firemen. That was another thing. We paid very little attention to the fire and emergency medical response elements in Afghanistan. But you get all these subject matter experts and you put them at those high levels so they can not only assess but they can give some good advice to people who hold the purse strings for the money as to where the money could be effectively spent. One of the problems we had in the PRT as well was that hydrology was an issue in Afghanistan because they had a big drought. Some PRTs dug so many wells for their people that some of the aquifers dried up and it rendered the wells basically inoperative and they had to dig deeper. You need an overarching strategy not only for your piece of the countryside but also for the whole country. The PRTs did a wonderful job. You still need

proper coordination. Another thing that General Barno did that I thought worked extremely well was that tactical units stayed in the same geographic area and developed long-term relationships with the leadership, and they had a better idea of what needed to be done in their areas. That helped a lot, that ownership.

Q: What you're saying is very interesting indeed. But you're saying that even when you identify issues, you don't always have the personnel who can actually propose really viable solutions.

A: Yes, that's true.

Q: And also there was no overarching strategic group that was looking at an integrated approach to reconstruction.

A: I think General Barno did that with the PRT Executive Steering Committee and with the PRTs and with the establishment of the CJ9 element. I think that was being done as well as it could be under the circumstances, but we still needed more civil affairs representation and more specific expertise in some of those areas I mentioned, in the PRTs and the major staff elements. You still have to deal with the ministries at the national level. You've got to remember, too that there are 34 provinces. Some of the PRTs were technically responsible for three provinces. Because of the terrain in Afghanistan, typically they would operate in one and venture off into a couple of the others. Some of the provinces were almost inaccessible in the winter. So, the PRTs did an excellent job. Of course, we expanded the PRT concept. You got a lot of bang for your buck, but most of the country was not covered by a PRT-like effort.

[End of Interview]