

IFIT-35-111 Sergeant [REDACTED] <sup>b(u)-1</sup>

Q: SGT [REDACTED] <sup>b(u)-2</sup> ((sp?)) of the 35th Military History detachment. I'm with Staff Sergeant [REDACTED] <sup>b(u)-1</sup> He's with the first squad leader, third Platoon of the 314 MPs.

SGT [REDACTED] <sup>b(u)-1</sup> could you please state your name, spell your last name and give us your duty position please.

<sup>b(u)-1</sup> [REDACTED] My name is [REDACTED] <sup>b(u)-1</sup> Last name spelled [REDACTED] <sup>b(u)-1</sup> First, [REDACTED] I'm First Squad Squad Leader in 3rd Platoon 314th MP Company.

Q: OK, now what was the day that you were mobilized?

[REDACTED] The date I was mobilized was 6 February.

(break in tape)

Q: SGT [REDACTED] <sup>b(u)-1</sup> where were you actually--where did you report to your move station?

[REDACTED] 18 February 2003.

Q: And where was that?

[REDACTED] Fort Bliss, Texas.

Q: And how long did you stay there?

[REDACTED] Approximately two weeks. We left 24 March 2003.

Q: OK and while you were at Fort Bliss, how did your mobilization go?

[REDACTED] Fairly well actually. The MSRP itself, getting certified, it went fairly fast considering the number of

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soldiers being mobilized out of there at that time. You can imagine, there were a few, about a hundred units. Seemed like they were moving all at once. So there were soldiers from all over. 3,000 soldiers at one time went through the same stations and it went fairly fast. It seemed like it was coordinated well and it went smoothly and efficiently.

Q: And when you were ready to dissent overseas, did your vehicles leave ahead of you?

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[REDACTED] Yes they did, they left approximately two weeks ahead of us.

Q: And were they in country when you arrived in Kuwait?

[REDACTED] Yes they were.

Q: So when did you actually arrive in Kuwait?

[REDACTED] We actually arrived 24 March here in Kuwait.

Q: And upon your arrival in Kuwait, when did you come to Camp Buka?

[REDACTED] We came to Camp Buka on 29th of March.

Q: And what was the condition of the camp when you arrived?

[REDACTED] It was extremely packed. There were units everywhere. It was dry and bare and there was not a whole lot out here. I remember when we got here and got off the bus, the sand was glowing. It was extremely hot. You had all your gear with you and you're on the bus and for miles and miles, all

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you saw was dessert. When you got off the bus, it was extremely hot and extremely high, extremely high winds.

Q: Let me take you back to your arrival in Kuwait. What happened upon your arrival when you just got off the aircraft?

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[REDACTED] First thing that happened I remember is that we had a scud ((sp?)) alert where we had a scud missile alert it went off and the sound went off. We were inside the plane, we didn't know it went off. So you can imagine we've come to a rolling stop in the plane, getting ready to get off the plane and I look outside the window and I see some of the grounds crew and they have their protective masks on. I look around and everybody's got the same look and immediately somebody yells gas and everybody starts to put on their gas masks. I remember thinking to myself at that very moment that this was the real deal, that I wasn't in Kansas anymore. I remember thinking that I was scared, I didn't know what was coming next, I didn't know if a missile was actually going to hit. I didn't know what to expect. A thousand things going through my head at that time. My family was going through my mind, my children, my wife, my mother, my father. And then I stepped back and I remember I felt the sense of helplessness as we're packed in this airplane thinking, if there is an attack, we're all

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trapped in this airplane, we're not going to be able to get out. You have your gear with you, your M16s, full battle rattle, you're barely able to move, maneuver around one person, let alone trying to get out of a plane that has over [REDACTED] people on it.

Q: And what was the feeling of the other soldiers with you at the time?

[REDACTED] I remember they felt pretty much the same thing. A little bit of panic, a little bit of terror. Not knowing what was ahead. The uncertainty of whether or not it was the real thing or not. Everybody had the same scared, confused look in their eyes. And they were just waiting for someone to assure them that everything was going to be okay. Waiting for that all-clear sign to be given. And once it was, it was just the sign of relief. I remember looking at the crew that was working board the airplane, the pilots and the stewardesses and I remember looking at them putting on their protective masks and half of them didn't know how to put them on. So, many of our soldiers assisted them, putting their masks on. I knew for sure that if this was serious, this was something that definitely needed immediate attention.

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Q: So with all the training that you had, your past training really paid off when being able to direct your soldiers and to get everybody off the aircraft in safety.

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[REDACTED] Yes, yes. All of our training with the NBC training which is Nuclear Biological Chemical training, all the different drills we've had. Practice drills, putting our masks on, putting them away, putting them on, putting them away. Going through the procedures over and over again. The repetitious drills that we've done, it actually paid off because when it came time to it, when we looked around, everyone had their mask on within the amount of time allotted for normal conditions. Mind you, it was close quarters, it was very cramped, lack of space. Everybody had all their gear. And everybody did really well. Our training's what stopped the panic from taking over and the fear from clouding our judgment, it helped us make clear decisions.

Q: While you were in Camp Arifjan, were there other occasions when you had to go into your (inaudible) gear?

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[REDACTED] You know, as soon as we got off the plane, got on a bus, even before we got to Arifjan, while we were making way to Camp Wolf, which was our first destination, it was kind of like your reception camp. I remember it was over 100 degrees and I was sitting in the front of that bus and

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each bus had about 60 soldiers. SO we were caravanning these busses and all of a sudden, another scuddler ((sp?)) went out and we went to MAC4 ((sp?)) and in MAC level 4, I remember I was sitting in this bus, crammed so tight, I remember thinking to myself I was going to pass out it was so hot. I just felt like I couldn't breathe. I was already in a confined area and in those conditions, I remember feeling like I was going to pass out. I looked in the eyes of my soldiers equally as scared, equally as confused, and I remember one thing that stood out in my mind was that the driver of that bus, he was of Mid-Eastern descent, maybe Kuwaiti, maybe Indian, and he had a radio playing and he put the siren on for the scud missile, for the scud alert, and the siren made this unforgettable annoying siren sound that just kept playing over and over and over again. And I looked at him and he smiled at me because it's something that--scud alerts are something that he's obviously been used to for quite some time now, and it was something that had us completely flustered and scared. But it was no big deal because to him it's just part of his everyday life out here in a country that's so unsettled and chaotic.

Q: OK. And did you actually see any scuds or any patriot missiles being shot off?

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[REDACTED] We didn't see any, I don't think. Thankfully we didn't see any until we got to Camp Arifjan. Once we were in Camp Arifjan, about a week into our stay there, we would be woken up about 2 o'clock in the morning by a loud explosion and some vibration that shook the particular warehouse that we had been sleeping in. I remember everybody yelled gas and we donned our protective gear as fast as possible, took cover and waited for the all-clear sign to be given. Once the all-clear command was given, that next morning, just a few hours later, we had learned that a scud missile had landed approximately two miles away from Camp Arifjan where we were staying, and again, a sense of reality set in and it really brought it home to each soldier how serious this really was. And how serious they had to take this mission.

Q: Okay and once you got back up to Camp Buka, had you been under scud attacks or missile attacks while you were here as well?

[REDACTED] No, once we got here, scud attacks had already ceased by about a few days, so ever since we arrived, we had not had a scud attack out here at Camp Buka. There were instances where there were small arms fire from rebels or militia type soldiers passing by the perimeter. There was reports of a couple RPG rounds being launched from outside vehicles as they drove away but no scud attacks.

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Q: OK, SGT [REDACTED] could you tell me a little more about your primary responsibilities here at Camp Buka?

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[REDACTED] Yeah. Primary responsibilities here at Camp Buka is to lead a feed team, one of [REDACTED] b(2)-3 into the compounds. And our mission was to conduct feed operations. This operation entailed feeding the prisoners twice a day, breakfast and a late lunch or early dinner, if you will. And also, to ensure that our soldiers had everything they needed. They had to make sure their tents were set up properly, organizing their tents, making sure we had the right number of bodies in each tent. Separating the females, making sure they had whatever they need. So the first initial is just the set up, once the set up was over the next mission was to get ready for work and assign various tasks, who would be on what team. And from there on, it was just your normal, everyday operations. Taking care of soldiers and completing the mission.

Q: And what kind of food do the prisoners receive?

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[REDACTED] Usually, they--okay for breakfast, a typical breakfast would consist of milk, something they call biscuit, which is a cracker type meal, some bread which usually consists of a pita bread, one jelly, one butter or cheese, and usually two hard boiled eggs. That's your typical breakfast. For dinner, you'd have one scoop of rice, one

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scoop of soup, a cup of soup, that they would pour onto the rice, a glass of tea, three cigarettes, bread, jelly, cheese and that's all.

Q: Was this enough food for them? §

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[REDACTED] It was sufficient but they always claimed that they were hungry and they always claimed that there was not enough, that they weren't getting enough portions. But portions were clearly weighed out beforehand and it was determined how much food each of them would need to sustain normal health, good health.

Q: And during that period of time, was there any fighting among the prisoners, as far as for the food?

[REDACTED] Not as far as for the food, but there were instances where they did try to take extra food and steal extra on many many occasions. Not necessarily from each other, but from the feed line itself. From the people handing the food out, they would try to get extra any time they could. A hundred times over, even if they've been caught the day before, they would try the next day. If there friends were on the serving line serving the food, they would try to use their friendship to gain extra food. More soup, more rice, more cigarettes and we'd have to constantly monitor that because we would run out of food and the food was accounted for.

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Q: SGT [REDACTED] during your feedings and other guard duty, were there other circumstances that came up that may have put you or your guards in danger?

[REDACTED] Well, there were a few incidences where tensions within the camps got really high for various reasons. Reasons like when they would hear on their radios, that they had, their little home-made radios or radios that they had acquired somehow or brought with them. As they heard the war winding down, their tensions got higher. They wanted their freedom. They felt that they no longer deserved to be prisoners because the war was over, Saddam Hussein had been chased out of Iraq. That was probably one of the most motivating factors for the tension I would say. Was the fact that they heard on the radio through a media source that the war was winding down, that Iraq had been conquered, that Baghdad had been conquered in general. SO that caused tensions to rise. Also, whenever we would extract a prisoner for reasons, maybe he wasn't compliant, maybe he was aggressive and he needed to be taken out and put into another camp where he couldn't do any harm either to our soldiers or to the fellow prisoners inside. Sometimes that would cause tensions to flare up. Sometimes the prisoner would protect that individual, not wanting that individual to be taken out of that camp. Sometimes it

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would be a matter of maybe a prisoner being fed up, he's just fed up with following rules. We had--you know, it's really ironic, we had to teach these people how to live by rules when it seems like they haven't known any rules all their life. Generations and generations of chaos and animosity, and yet we brought them into an environment that was controlled and we expected them to know that they should follow the rules and then we expected them to enforce them by disciplining them or rewarding them. So we took a--basically a non-civilized society and taught them how to live, civilized, respect each other, don't steal each other's food, don't steal each other's blankets. There's plenty to go around. Don't cut in front of one another in line. Don't hit one another, don't assault one another. Respect each other's human beings. Respect each other's rights. It was a hard concept to break to them, to get them to actually believe in, and to actually want to do. Because we had no reason to do it. They'd been living in their eyes just fine before. We had to show them that there were rewards for doing these things, for living in-- and one of the rewards was being able to self feed. This meant that we would take the food, drop it off and that compound would, with the help of the compound representatives and their helpers, would be able to feed

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themselves without having soldiers decide. This gave them a sense of freedom and it helped them to give them something to shoot for as they saw other camps do it. A sense of liberation in a way, if you will.

Q: Any occasion where the prisoners may try to attack the guards?

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All ██████████ Yes. Two occasions during both riots. The guards were attacked. We had to bring our quick reaction force in and during both riots, guards were attacked by both physical objects i.e. shoes, poles, rocks, cups of sand, anything that they could get into their hands to use as weapons they would. And during both of those riots, many of those items were used.

Q: OK, you said you had two riots. How were they started and how did you contain those?

██████████ The first riot was started due to the fact that there was a rock throwing frenzy among the compounds. The prisoners one day just decided that they were going to riot and they weren't going to stop until they were let free. We had to withdraw everybody from within the compound, assemble a quick reaction force and a plan, and we had to go in physically and take one compound out. This compound was the compound that contained the officers. One of the officers was a high-ranking general. The general had

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instigated these riots. He had planned them, coordinated them and instigated on that date. It was on his order that the riot happened. So the first thing to do was, we went in there and we set the perimeter. We chased each compound back to give us a safe perimeter in the middle and we took a quick reaction team and went in and physically escorted those officers to another compound far away. They should have never been that close to the lower enlisted soldiers. So that's how we controlled that one, and again, unfortunately that did result in the shooting of one EPW who refused to listen to the orders given and the rules of engagement and he was shot. The second riot was started due to the fact that a trouble maker was identified. He was going to be extracted by myself, by making contact with an Enemy Prisoner of War, he resisted and he was taken down to the ground where he was subdued to be extracted. The crowd then stood up and came at me in a hostile and aggressive manner, attempting to do great bodily injury to me. During the course of us trying to get out of the compound safely, while backing the crowd up, trying to sit back down and prepare to be--continue to be fed, a crowd of over <sup>b(2)-3</sup> [REDACTED] someone ran passed our formation and went into the tent. Came out with a three foot tent pole and went to swing at my head. He missed my head by inches due to the

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fact that one of my soldiers yelled, "watch out SGT [REDACTED] he's got a pole behind you." I turned, just as I turned, he swung the pole and missed my head again by inches. And the EPW then turned and kept coming at me with that pole. I was clearly at a reach disadvantage and my only action was to evade and try to talk him into putting the pole down. But to no avail he kept coming and approaching at a very rapid pace, in a very aggressive manner and he was shot at center mass and killed.

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Q: So are you the one that actually shot him then?

[REDACTED] One of my soldiers, by the name of Specialist [REDACTED] ((sp?)) was the one that actually shot him.

Q: And what was his question of knowing how to handle, how to react in this situation?

[REDACTED] No, he was clearly knowledgeable in how to react. All of our soldiers knew exactly what the rules of engagement and the rules of interaction were. He saw the rules of engagement try to be implemented, he saw the first two levels, he saw the third level and the fourth level. He reacted quickly, without hesitation, with due regard to personal safety for other innocent EPWs. But he made a split decision that was the right decision, and he eliminated a threat which is obviously--was not going to stop for anything.

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Q: What happened to the rest of the prisoners? They got back  
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[REDACTED] They got down. Once they heard the shots fired, they  
got down on their knees and put their heads down. They  
were afraid that they would be shot next. They gave us  
this split second to get out of the compound safely without  
being mobbed by [REDACTED] EPWs standing there.

Q: Did you try to separate the trouble makers or separate the  
possible other trouble makers as well?

[REDACTED] What happened was--yes. What happened was, the second  
riot started because of the fact that we tried to separate  
them. We were unsuccessful, the riot happened, there was a  
shooting. But the very next day, we went back and we had a  
formation, we had them sit down like they normally would.

And as they went to get their ISN number checked in, we  
just made an excuse. Led to ISN counts. This gave us the  
ability to separate the prisoners one by one in an orderly  
and safe manner without them having the protection of the  
rest of (inaudible) sitting down. So, as they came up to  
me, I was able to physically identify them and say yes or  
no. If I said yes, then this prisoner was able to go past  
and get his food. If I said no, then this prisoner was  
extracted. At that point, he was apprehended right there  
and he was rushed out of the compound, quicker than anybody

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could realize what was going on. And we did that, and that day we extracted a bunch of them, like <sup>b(2)-3</sup> prisoners out of that facility that were determined as trouble makers

Q: And with the different prisoners, were these soldiers, were they civilians, were they a mixture? What kind of prisoners did you actually house?

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██████████ They were a mixture of everything. They were a mixture of citizens, a mixture of civilians, mixture of soldiers, both officers and enlisted. All walks of life, all walks of life. All ages. There were civilians who were innocently caught up in the whole thing. I met two Syrian brothers who were teachers and were here in Iraq studying their doctorate degree. And on their campus, the university that they were at, they had an anti-war demonstration and it got a little out of hand on the way, walking to their next class, the police came in and the next thing you know, they were taken prisoner and here they are. There was another gentleman, an older gentleman in his late 50s. He's from Jordan. He owns a--he's a retired Jordanian army lieutenant, now runs a library with him and his wife. Again, in his mid-50s. And the way he got captured was he was here in Iraq in a taxi cab, coming to look for his brother who had been missing for two weeks.

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Goes through a checkpoint, gets captured. So there were many civilians and--mixed in with the crowds of soldiers.

Q: You have some young adults that were captured as well?

[REDACTED] Yes, we had juveniles. We had a whole compound of juveniles, approximately 35-40 bodies. Ranging from the age as early as 10 years old. And some of them were caught with their families, some of them were caught with their friends. Some of them innocent, some of them not. All the way up to the age of 18 until they were considered an adult. Some of them very, very educated. Some of them were just babies who didn't know what they were doing.

Q: And did you see if any of these prisoners had identifying marks on them that would identify them as soldiers or part of different militias?

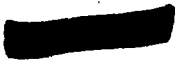

[REDACTED] Other than the wrist bands that would declare whether they were civilian or soldier, no.

Q: On your different guard duty, as you've been here for a while, has that--has your position here, as far as your service, has it changed as far as your mission goes?

[REDACTED] No, no. It's pretty much the same. It's pretty much the same.

Q: As of recent date, have you done any type of escort service of escorting prisoners from one area to another that you recognize were a significant find?

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 Yes, three days ago while I was working our new mission, which is the out processing center now, we're no longer conducting feed operations as the prisoners have been moved over to the new permanent facility next door. So our unit has been tasked with running the tribunals and the in and out processing station. While I was over there, I was NCOIC that shift and it was told to me that there were three individuals that needed to be escorted over to the JFIZ ((sp?)) which is the MY complex to be interrogated. Once I got over there to see who the three individuals were, I was told that two of them were the  and the third one was a Unabomber. This individual had been known for blowing up a lot of things. He had left a signature on a lot of the things that he had blown up and he was a very hard catch. We weren't able to catch him for a long time but finally I'd caught him. And I was asked to escort him over there and I remember thinking to myself as I'm looking at these individuals and I'm walking them, and it's just me and them and I'm thinking ya know, these are some bad people that made some bad history happen in this war and here they are within reach distance from myself. And I couldn't help but feel a little bit of anger, a lot of anger actually, knowing what they did to that poor girl, knowing that she's

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one of ours and a lot of anger. I felt no sympathy for them. And I couldn't help to feel like I just wanted to do something for her, ya know. Knowing that if she had the chance, she would.

Q: Did you have different occasions where you actually talked to any of the prisoners?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

On many occasions I got to know a lot of the prisoners, especially during the feed operation. Many of them knew me by name. They would call my name out, [REDACTED] I developed a certain trust and rapport with them. Many times there were riots that were going to happen. One particular instance, we were going into compound nine, which is a compound that I fed on a regular basis. Many of them trusted me and I trusted them a great deal. Upon going into the compound, a compound representative stopped me and said he would advise me to not come in today, that it was not safe, to take my team and go feed another compound. I took his word for it, I thanked him for giving me the warning. And as soon as my team got in the vehicle and left the compound, within seconds a rock throwing frenzy had ensued. And there were many, many soldiers who had

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gotten hit by rocks and there were also a lot of prisoners who had sustained injuries due to the rocks flying.

(break in tape)

Q: SGT [REDACTED] obviously with the type of prisoners that you are watching, you have to be on a high state of alert. How are you going to maintain that with your soldiers?

[REDACTED] We're able to maintain that by talking to them. Communication was the key. It's too late to train out here. There's not training involved. It's just doing what you know, using your people skills, being alert, being on your toes, knowing how to read body language. Many of our-  
-there's a few of our soldiers, NCOs within our company, who have correctional type experience. People we left, those NCOs gave little classes on how to read body language, ways to avoid being manipulated by the prisoners. Our soldiers were told that there would be many attempts and the prisoners trying to manipulate them, whether it's to get something they want, get something they need, or to get something, get the soldier to do something that they normally wouldn't do. So, we talked to them on a regular basis, prepare them by telling what to expect, what you could expect. But at the same time, letting them know that, although it's OK to be scared, not to let the fear

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cloud your judgment. To be confident in your soldiering skills and in your military police skills.

Q: Did you find that the type or prisoners that we had here in Iraq, as to the correctional officers that were giving you instruction, the circumstances would be different, where there would be a different style of body language that was different than the Americans?

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[REDACTED] Yeah, it's different, but it's similar. The basic concept is the same. They will try to get extra, just like back home. The prisoners who are incarcerated back home, they'll try to get extra. Just like the prisoners back home, they'll try to manipulate you for things. There are just different items that they'll manipulate you for, but there's still manipulation, the deceit, the dishonesty, the ability to lie directly to your face. And it's all the same to prisoners back home. The only difference I would say here is that they have nothing to lose. Back home, you know, they know if they have a time to get out, they can go back to their families and live a life. Here, it seemed like a devotion to where they had nothing to lose, so they didn't mind, you know, trying anything, because they knew that the consequences, they were willing to deal with them.

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Q: During your training and your off times, how do you keep your soldiers motivated, keep them alert and sharp for the next day's service?

[REDACTED] Well, the only way we could do that was by talking to them, seeing where they're at every day after a shift, conducting after-action reviews after every shifts, brief, you know, discussing how the shift went--what went right, what went wrong--what could be done differently and room for improvement. Other than talking to our soldiers, the only thing we could do was try to provide some kind of MWR or R&R within our own company because of the lack of support. So, we acquired a tent from another unit that was nice enough to give us one. And we put up, made that our MWR tent and then some of the NCOs pitched in, we bought a TV and a DVD player. Now, those soldiers had somewhere to go relax and unwind and not be a soldier for an hour or two, watch a movie, go and relax (break in tape) civilian.

Q: That's helped. What about personal relationships with (CEGI?)soldiers?

[REDACTED] Well, just like any deployment in any situation where you have a certain group of people crammed together at all times, tensions are going to flare up. For the most part, the morale was really good. And collectively as a company, we're pretty close. However, you do have tensions flaring

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up due to the fact that it's getting hotter, it's harder to stay cooler, people are more irritable, so short fused, short tempered. And so, you're going to have natural spats and disputes, disagreements, but there has not been one single incident where it has escalated to a physical level.

Q: Has your mission started to change since you've been here?

[REDACTED] Yes, it's gone from an (MP?) operation and external security and it's now changed to the in-processing out-processing tribunals. That is our new mission.

Q: And what exactly would be doing for those?

[REDACTED] We provide bodies for the inside of the in-processing, make sure it runs smoothly, makes sure that the newly-arriving prisoners can be placed in their proper pens, make sure that the prisoners who are going through the in-processing out-processing stations, make sure they get there, to their station, make sure once they go with their station they go on to the next. Make sure that circle is complete so they can be released.

Q: And have you noticed a difference between the style of prisoners that you've received as to the beginning part of the war as to today?

[REDACTED] Yes. We're noticing that now they're criminals. These are criminals; they're not soldiers. So, although they may be more dangerous in some ways, they're less

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aggressive. There's a sense, they have a sense of: I've been caught. I don't want to be here but I've been caught, so I'm just going to take whatever I've got coming to me so I can go home. So, it's a different atmosphere.

Q: And the wanting to go home, I'm sure the loneliness is starting to set in. Have you had the need to actually sit down and have to counsel any of your soldiers to, you know, change their feelings and console them in any way?

[REDACTED] No. No, I haven't had to do that. Everybody knows that we're going home someday and that they're not to speculate, guess, or wonder when that is. They know that when it comes, it comes. Rumor control is a job of an NCO, make sure when you hear a rumor you dispel it. You crush it. You stop it, and that's all there is to it. So, for the most part, everybody is just doing their job and when they get the word we're going, and our stuff is on the plane and we're heading to the bus station, then we'll believe it. Until then, we've got a mission to do and we can't even concentrate on going home.

Q: OK. (break in tape) So, if I could talk about the support of lack of support that you may or may not have received within the company here at Camp Buka.

[REDACTED] Well, the lack of support has not been from the company level; it's been actually at the brigade level.

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There are many things that should have been done way before our arrival here. For instance, phones. There is no phone center set up for the soldiers. There are only DSM lines, which have been shut on and off on a regular basis due to the overloading on phone calls. A soldier's ability to call him and talk to his or her loved ones is a direct reflection of the morale. If a soldier does not have good morale, you can look at whether a soldier made a phone call home. Has the soldier had a chance to do his laundry? Has a soldier had a chance to get on the internet and check their email? All those little things are things that should have and could have been done as preventive medicine but have not. I clearly believe that it's a failure and a lack of initiation on the part of the senior leadership, mainly the senior NCOs and senior officers. They seem to have forgotten about the soldier, concentrating solely on the mission. They seem to have forgotten somewhere down the road along the lines of soldiers' morale and welfare. There are many things they could do, provided a USO soldier, maybe a source of entertainment for our soldiers. Just show the soldiers that they generally care. So, that would have to be my biggest problem with the support.

Q: You mentioned a USO show. Has anything of that sort been, has anything like that come to Camp Baku as yet?

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[REDACTED] No, it has not. The closest we heard it's come is to Camp Doha, where they had a celebrity band playing with a guest (inaudible) of Conan O'Brien. Events like that bring the morale of the soldiers to an extremely high level, especially when they're down pretty low right now.

Q: What kinds of amenities are you trying to make in the camp here to make it more livable?

[REDACTED] Well, just within our own camp itself, we have an MWR tent, which is, which shows you movies at night. Everybody can go relax, watch a movie on the DVD player. And we have a weight room now where soldiers are able to conduct physical fitness. They're able to get back in shape, work out some of the aggression, and that seems to be helping a lot. We're trying to build better showers, more showers. We're putting in hardwood flooring in the tents to get everybody off the dirt. Amenities like that. We can't do anything about the phones because that's out of our lanes, out of our hands, that's a whole different level. But hopefully, it'll be fixed soon.

(Break in tape.)

In relation to morale, another area that I feel is a definite concern that should be look at somewhere down the road is the politics that seem to have set in now. Now that the mission is winding down, the prisoner count is

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just over [redacted] now, and it dropped from [redacted] to [redacted], now 62-3  
that the war machine is slowing, the activity is slowing,  
now it seems like there are--there's almost too much time  
on our hands because the politics are setting in. When I  
say "politics," it's coming from the brigade level.  
Soldiers who are working are no longer allowed to yell or  
push or touch the soldiers in any way. When we were  
working with them before during their most hostile of  
times, the MPs felt like they had more support, more  
backing from brigades and from their H battalion. Now the  
brigade is listening to the CID and MI people, and many of  
the prisoners are making complaints that they're being  
yelled at, that they're being treated too aggressively,  
when just a month ago, they were being shot at and being  
hit by the British. And I don't understand that. I think  
it's, it directly affects morale. On two occasions, we've  
had speeches from the major from the 320th, from our  
battalion. And he's, on two occasions he basically gave us  
a chewing out for a unit's actions that was not ours on our  
own. One unit had been escorting prisoners and had gotten  
too aggressive and had pushed one of the EPWs, and because  
of that, there was a mass type punishment where everybody  
was going to get the same lecture. So, a little politics  
like that, I don't understand. We have one prisoner who

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would make demands for certain items, i.e., a cold Sprite. Or he asked for crackers or a salad. And he would get these items. I think that, yeah, we should be humanitarian about our operation, but at the same time, we should remember that they are EPWs, and so long as we give them the basic necessities, we should be able to do our job without brigade sticking their nose in and telling us--or micromanaging, telling us how to operate.

Q: (break in tape) Any quick solutions?

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[REDACTED] Quick solutions? I would say, first of all, maybe someone needs to take the MI guys, the military intelligence, and the CID people and take them and have them get a better view of what's really going on out there, closer to what we're doing, rather than sitting in a tent all day just interviewing, hearing the stories, because they're only hearing one side. But if those CID agents would have seen what kind of hostile environment we were in just a little over a month ago, how each of our lives were at stake, I don't think they'd be making these--be so quick to make the judgments they've been making.

Q: And --

[REDACTED] Just in my chain of command, but they say right now that this is what the brigade wants. The brigade has also made, recently came down with a policy list. Many things

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were on this policy list. One, for instance, was you confine each--soldiers are confined to their immediate company areas. They're not to leave. They're not to associate with the Spanish or the British. They are not to consume alcoholic beverage. And little things like that is affecting the morale of the soldiers. Again, my suggestion was that these are adults. They've behaved like such, they should be treated like such. (Break in tape.)

Q: Sergeant, would you like to make any conclusion to this interview?

FRANCO: The only conclusion, I just want to say that I realize that it's not the higher-ups, it's not the officers, it's not the senior leadership that make this mission happen. It's the soldiers. It's every young man and young woman here who's wearing that uniform with that flag on it, no matter where they're from, all walks of life, all parts of the world. It's these soldiers who get up day in and day out, who live and deal with the dust, who walk through the sand and deal with the heat, the bugs, the prisoners who smell and who are disease infested, it's these soldiers here who will make this war happen.

Q: Thank you, Sergeant [REDACTED] and this concludes this interview on 20 May, 2003. b(6)-1

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END OF INTERVIEW

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