

TRANSCRIPT

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Commanding General, 2nd Marine Division  
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**DWG:** Our guest this morning is Major General John Toolan. The General was Commanding General of the 2nd Marine Division and Former Commander of Regional Command Southwest and Commanding General of the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force forward, also known as Helmand Province. He's just back from Afghanistan, obviously completed a one year tour there. General, let me begin by saying thank you for coming to visit with us. We do appreciate it.

**MG Toolan:** I thank all of you too, because I do believe it's very important to get the messages out, so I appreciate your interest.

**DWG:** You made some comments yesterday that were fairly critical of the corruption situation in Afghanistan and the lack of support that you've been getting from Pakistan in terms of sealing off the border. Obviously there's a lot of work to be done before Afghanistan becomes a stable location, so from your perspective, what needs to happen between now and the end of 2014 for the U.S. to be able to withdraw responsibly?

**MG Toolan:** I think my statement—I really wanted to give a balanced look at Afghanistan. I can tell you about all the positive things that have been done, but it's never really, I don't think it ever will be irreversible, the progress that's been made, particularly in Helmand Province. The biggest threat is the corruption which I identify at two levels. One was what I called the parasitic corruption that I think exists when you look at people like Sher Mohammad Akhundzada who is a senator in the Afghan government, and he's a bad influence. He's a bad influencer in the south of Afghanistan. He's connected to the drug industry and his influence is to keep that alive. So, just like

any parasite, he needs sort of a weak host in order to survive. As long as the central government allows people like that to operate, it keeps it weak.

The other corruption that I think is more along the lines of what I can deal with, or what the regional commanders can deal with is what most of us know as predatory corruption, which really is the threat to the Afghan National Security forces and taking their power and abusing it. While I was in Helmand Province there were indications that predatory corruption was occurring. What we tried very hard to do was identify it quickly. I had the total support of Governor Mangal and the regional chief of police, provincial chief of police, to go after these folks and we really started making some great headway.

It was the first time where we were able to get in there and actually hold people accountable. We were only able to do that because the rule of law is starting to work its way up. So we would put people through the whole process of doing criminal investigation, evidence collection, put them to trial. We had legitimate prosecutors and judges there, and we put some people in jail. That's major success, but it's going to take time.

Predatory corruption gets a lot of different people. Afghanistan security leadership is no different. So that's what we need to do, is really work hard at strengthening the central government to eliminate the parasitic corruption and maintaining a close watch in cooperation with the government officials to identify predatory corruption and get after it that way.

**DWG:** Can you clarify what you meant by predatory corruption? You're talking about within the armed forces?

**MG Toolan:** Within any of the Afghan Security Forces. So yeah — the army, the police, the border patrol — all of them are susceptible. It's happening as we speak. But the good thing is that people are being held accountable, and as rule of law continues to develop in Afghanistan, particularly in Helmand Province, people will be put into jail. People will not be able to just walk away freely like they have in the past.

**DWG:** And the border with Pakistan?

**MG Toolan:** And the border with Pakistan is something that's not really in my capabilities to change, but it's just been a source of frustration for my commanders, for me, for my partner in the south, Regional Command South, the 82nd Airborne. Because he has to deal with Chaman, which is a major port of entry. It's free-flowing, and just on the other side of the Pakistani border. They've got huge caches of IED-making materials, et cetera.

My problem was Baramcha, and right across Baramcha in Pakistan. Lethal aids coming in, drugs are going out. We saw it. We interdicted a lot. To be exact I mean, it looks like probably about \$78 million worth of drugs we interdicted between October and March of this year. But it's a pittance. It's a really small percentage. I'm told by DEA probably

that's less than 12 percent of the total amount of opium that's moving across, in and out of the border.

The other thing is that the 12th Corps of the Pakistani Army is right there, and they're not doing anything. And I haven't even had the opportunity to sit down with 12th Corps commanders and say, here's what we're doing on our side of the border. If you could do this on your side of the border we could really take care of this problem.

But I know, and most people know at higher levels, that Pakistan is concerned about the Baluchi freedom efforts. They really don't want to get too deep into the problem, and particularly in Baramcha because they know that if they start doing things that could stir up the beehive, the Baluchistan beehive down there. And they don't want to do that. It's frustrating.

**DWG:** So is there anything that the U.S. or NATO can do over the next 18 months to improve that situation? Or is it essentially a lost cause?

**MG Toolan:** I think that's a tough question that I really can't answer. I think that keeping the diplomatic pressure on Pakistan is important, but I also realize that we don't want to break that government either. Because that's not in our best interest either. That's a diplomacy effort that requires a great deal of skill, and I realize that. But from my perspective as a military commander having to deal with the problem, it's like I can't shut the water off. I just keep mopping the floor, but I can't turn the water off. If I could turn the water off, then Pakistan would be a lot better.

**DWG:** Sir, just going back to the Afghan National Security Forces. Everybody talks about them being the endgame — the improvements that are made, both in quality and in quantity. What's it really like on the ground? When we spoke to you that time we came through with Secretary Gates you said the jury was still out. You finished your tour. How are the Afghan National Security Forces doing? What's their desertion rates? Are they actually fighting? Are they leaving?

**MG Toolan:** It's really been a work in progress during our year there. When we were first there we didn't have the capacity. In other words, we didn't have the numbers. They weren't fleshed out. We also didn't have the representation from the Pashtun tribal confederation. We would like to have seen increased number of Pashtuns into the army. Over the year the recruiting has picked up, and I think that was a positive indication that the people in Helmand Province and the Pashtuns in Kandahar saw some potential maybe for serving in the army. So they're joining. I think when I left we had probably 15 percent, which was a lot better than it was at the beginning of the year. In the beginning of the year it was miniscule. A couple of —

**DWG:** Which corps was affiliated with you? Was that 203?

**MG Toolan:** 215

**DWG:** 215 corps. So --

**MG Toolan:** So, and then of course the police force and the Afghan National Police, which comprises cop and uniform police. The [cache [inaudible]] were really low. We really weren't able to bring in a whole lot of police officers during the beginning stages of the year. So we relied heavily on the Afghan local police. Afghan local police were the key to success in places like Marjah, and they have helped greatly in places like Sanguin. But what we don't want to do is we don't want to continue to work with ALP through the next couple of years. We want the APL to morph into the Afghan uniformed police.

The challenge is that many of the people who join ALP are individuals who don't want to leave their districts, who don't want to leave their villages. It's amazing for many of us Americans that are working in Afghanistan to see that some of these people have never been to the next village in their whole lifetime. It's just amazing. So it's a challenge because when you put them in the police there's no guarantee they'll stay in their hometown. But we're working through that.

The capacity of the uniform police is picking up. Some of it's been transferring ALP into the police and other elements of it is just the recruiting, having the district governors more engaged and more involved in finding people to join the police. The capacity is picking up.

Capability wise, we have put on a major literacy effort. In the ANA, they have some good credibility among the people, and we're starting to move them away from the population centers. We're trying to move them out. What we realize is that we need to understand that the Afghans have a design on the future. They have a force lay-down in their mind. What we were trying to do earlier on is we were trying to use them in places based on our ideas about what was an important district or whatever, to seize, clear and hold and build kind of thing. Now we realize as we work more closely with the army, that really they want to be on the borders -- the army. They want to keep Pakistan. They want to protect the Iranian border. They want to limit the amount of movement back and forth, and that's a good thing.

**DWG:** So act like a regular army --

**MG Toolan:** So act like a regular army.

**DWG:** Okay.

**MG Toolan:** But we have to be careful because I don't think the police is entirely ready yet to take full responsibility for the populations in the population centers along the Helmand River Valley. That's where they belong. The police are without doubt the key to success in bringing stability to the province and ultimately to Afghanistan as a whole. But they haven't gotten past being paramilitary. There's a time-distance factor here in order to train these police officers to be good police officers, to establish rule of law. To be a part of it rather than still conducting combat operations. So, it's going to take some time, and the challenge will be for us to be able to put the training programs into place

for the police.

We have taken it really, from a military perspective, pretty far, but we need to start handing it off to the law enforcement professionals. Very similar to what we did back in Bosnia, back in '98-99, '97-98 timeframe. I think that's a model that people are looking at as we go into the Chicago summit. We talk about what's that next step for the police force. We have done, I think in cooperation with the provincial reconstruction team and the regional platform and ourselves, we have done a good job of building the rule of law side of the house when it comes to courts, prosecutors and detention facilities. It's the whole issue of criminal evidence building and criminal investigations that still needs kind of work.

So the police force is not there yet. They are the key to success, and we need to invest in training more, but it's going to take some time.

I don't know where the border patrol is going. To be honest, I think that as the army transitions out to the borders and away from the population centers, they may subsume their border patrol mission. I'm not certain, but I think --

**DWG:** Sort of on the line of the Pakistani frontier, or something like that?

**MG Toolan:** Yes, yes. I mean I just think that that could be an army mission. As we look to reducing the size of the security forces that might be a good way of helping reduce it from the 350 down to 230, which I think are the numbers they're talking about. We know that one of the most important things that is being factored into everything we're doing is sustainment of the Afghan Security Forces. We're doing things now like we're showing them how to use solar panels rather than batteries and stuff like that. How to maintain it so they can sustain power to their district communication centers, et cetera.

But anyway, the border patrol, I'm not sure exactly where they're going, but I see some potential maybe for savings there as we do a surge recovery with Afghan Security Forces. I would say that from a capacity perspective the security forces are moving along fine. I think from a capability perspective we're good with the army, and there's still some things we need to do particularly when dealing with counter IED. The police probably need the most work. So we need to work on their capabilities, but the last and most important thing is the will.

The greatest challenge that my successor is going to have -- easier for me, it's going to be harder for him and the next guy -- is going to be maintaining some leverage with the Afghan Security Forces. If we're going to teach them, we need their attention. We get their attention by being able to give them something, provide something for them. Education, training, those are all positive things. But we've also provided for them things like water, batteries, fuel. These are all things that they need to provide for themselves.

Yes, we'll fund it. We'll fund it though the government to make the system work. But

what we have been doing in the past is, as the regional commander I've been providing for the locals. It has to come through the system, and that's going to be a challenge.

The distributing logistics across the battlefield, the distributing logistics of the police, and there's our leverage. We're going to lose that leverage at the local level because the government will provide it through the system, and they're going to have to work through their system. As we lose that leverage we lose their attention. If we lose their attention, a good thing will come out of that. The Afghans are really rushing for, they're really very aggressive about going after their own sovereignty. They want to take the lead. They are not backing away from the fight. In fact, if there's a fight they're running to the guns, so that's not an issue, but it's just the fact they're saying if you're not providing me anything, you know, talk to the hand. I got it. That works in my system.

**DWG:** Talking about will, General, you had a pretty good partner with the provincial governor. Did that work out?

**MG Toolan:** Yes, I mean I --

**DWG:** I mean when he leaves what happens?

**MG Toolan:** You know, certainly any success that we have had has really been attributed to the fact that Helmand Province, we empowered the right people -- guys like Governor Mangal, Corps Commander General Luke, the Provincial Chief of Police. The problem is in many cases they are only one deep. That worries me. Governor Mangal has been placed now for three and a half years.

As I mentioned when I first started that this whole parasitic corruption issue was SMA. They were going after them on a regular basis. Mangal was making life difficult for guys who were profiting from the drug industry there in Helmand. So I have to remind him that he's a very valuable person. He drives everywhere through the province. I say to him, don't forget I've got helicopters. We can fly you back and forth. No I need to drive. So we're very lucky. We have good leaders, but we're only one deep in some cases.

The impact, just to give you a quick story. There's a guy named [Abdul] Wali [Khan] "Koka" who was a warlord that operated up in Musa Qala and he's a renowned fighter. This guy is a big 6 feet, 4 inch guy, 270 pounds, a big guy. And he has controlled Musa Qala and now owns that area. Last week three suicide bombers went to his headquarters. They saw Coca come out of the building. One guy in the middle ran to him and detonated himself, and Coca is now currently in bad shape. He's in a vegetative state. It's a big, big loss for us up in Helmand Province. I don't know who's going to replace him. We'll find somebody but those are the kinds of things we need to protect-- those kind of people. We need to really work hard to keep them safe because that's the only thing the Taliban have to throw at us in Helmand Province, is suicide bombers. That's it. They can't fight us. They can't fight the Afghans, the security forces. They know they can go after the leadership. So I think my successor is working hard at protecting those guys.

**DWG:** Sir, this is sort of a structural organizational question. Given the very broad range of missions that you've had in Afghanistan, from the kinetic side to civil projects, is there anything structurally or organizationally or materiel wise that you would, if you had your 'druthers would like to see differently in the division or the MEP when you're over there? For example, the Army I think is considering adding a maneuver battalion to their combat team. Is there anything like this that you've identified?

**MG Toolan:** We would like to be able to have operational maneuvering capability to respond quickly to any crisis in the region. As we change our method of operating, which is really what we're doing — we're not changing the mission, we're changing the method of operations -- we're going to security force assistance. We have to have that operational maneuver capability because it is going to be a confidence builder for the Afghans for the next couple of years.

I already experienced one time where Afghans were involved in a fight and we didn't respond quick enough, and they really felt we left them in the lurch. We can't do that. We've got to make sure we're Johnny on the spot when they need us. So that operational maneuver capability is important.

The way we're looking at the structure as we go from 19,000 Marines down to 6,000, 7,000, is how we use those guys. We would like to be able to have enough security force assistance teams to mentor every [inaudible], but the reality is we're not going to be able to do that in order to retain the operational maneuver capability. So we're sacrificing some of that eyeball visibility on Afghan security forces at the [inaudible] level in order to retain that maneuver.

I think that there's some potential to do some greater integration with Special Operations Forces. There's several tribes of Special Operations Forces there. I think what you'll see here in the future is probably sort of a joining of all those Special Operations Forces to provide a theater-wide operational maneuver capability, which I think will be very helpful in supporting the regional commands and be able to get assets quickly from one place to another.

I'm not sure how it's going to transpire, but I know that there's some discussion about combining the regional commands. As the main effort shifts from the south to the east, there's a potential that the regional commands in the south and southwest will merge into one. That could be a good thing because it may allow additional forces to move to the east, which as we know they are having some challenges there with the Haqqani Network being able to move across Nuristan into Kabul. So I can see a structural change there.

I would like to be able to keep relationships the same. It's very important. If you start shifting forces from, for example in my case to the 215th Corps, which we've been working with for a long time. Now all of a sudden the Marines, because we merged the headquarters, are now going to Gazni because there's a problem up there and we have the capability to move. The U.K. does not, so the U.K. will stay in central Helmand regardless of the merger. If we go to Gazni, we lose that relationship of mentoring the

215th Corps, and that could be a big loss.

Getting back to your question, I think operational maneuver is important, and we're willing to sacrifice some of the security force assistance teams in order to have that because it's important. I hope that answers your question.

**DWG:** General you just touched on the question I was going to ask you about, which is the security force assistance teams which you set up before you left, I believe. More than 40 I think is what I last heard.

**MG Toolan:** Yes.

**DWG:** How is that developing and are Marines in some cases actually engaging in combat with Afghans or is it all from behind? How's that being worked?

**MG Toolan:** As you know, really security force assistance teams is kind of one of the final phases of the COIN operation. As we work our way through counter-insurgency we've prepared our guys to take on that advisory mission. A lot of the Marines have had a couple of tours in Afghanistan, and they're used to taking the lead, bringing the Afghans along with them. It's going to be harder for them to step back and watch them do it. It requires a lot of patience. So that's going to be something that we need to prepare our guys for as they take on the advisor role.

Of course we've already been doing some of the advising. In reality, when I was there we had 44 teams and because of the reduction we'll have 28 teams come September. So we'll have less teams, but the difference will be the Afghans will have complete control of the operations. They'll be the ones planning the operations and we'll be stepping back from that perspective and they'll be driving the plan.

**DWG:** That's not the yet the case.

**MG Toolan:** It is the case to some degree, but not entirely. We're still, particularly in the upper Helmand River Valley, we're still pretty much engaged and controlling the operations up there. In the southern Helmand they're in charge. They're running things. So I think from a security force assistance perspective, we've got some work to do in order to temper ourselves and step back and allow them to do that work. As I mentioned earlier, they want to do it. They're jumping for it. They're very aggressive. The Afghans are suffering more casualties than we are, by double.

The one thing that I have tried to bring to the attention of ATMA is that, and this goes back to the police force actually, is that they don't have the capability to counter IEDs. They don't have the equipment, they don't have the ECM equipment. They know it, and so we're trying to get them the equipment, get them the training. There are some issues about giving them ECM. The Taliban know that if they do remote control of the IEDs that the Afghans don't have the countering capability. So we need to set them up for success. So we have some work to do there. So the advisors are going to focus there.

Especially right now, because right now there are government led eradications going on. The Governor is, it's a very aggressive program, going after the poppies being grown out in the Tabari deserts. The Taliban have laid IED belts, and we've got to have the ability to work their way through there. So we're having some challenges. The Army is in better shape to do it. Right now they are assisting the police. I don't know if that answered your question.

**DWG:** Yes, thank you very much.

**DWG:** So about how many ground vehicles were there coming in Afghanistan and about how much will you rely on OCO funding to reset those vehicles coming out?

**MG Toolan:** That's a good question. I don't know how many —

**DWG:** Or ballpark —

**MG Toolan:** — how many vehicles that we have there. It's a lot. [Laughter].

**DWG:** Will you rely heavily on OCO funding or is there some baseline funding for that?

**MG Toolan:** I think the question is important because we have so much equipment out there. If you look at what the Marine Corps owns, half of what the Marine Corps owns is in Afghanistan. Over a period of the past 4-5 years we've been bringing stuff into Afghanistan. The equipment, the maintenance, the readiness levels of all that equipment has been sustained at levels far above what we're able to sustain here in the States. We've had sustainment rates, readiness rates as high as 80-95% steady. That's tremendous.

But you know, there's advantages when people are working 24/7. Things stay up. And OCO funding has been tremendous. We have not been for want of parts or equipment. It has been a very efficient process.

What we have to do now, as we reduce from when I started at 19,500 Marines and all that equipment down to about 6,500 Marines, is we've got to get that equipment out of there. What we have been doing for the past seven months is bringing equipment from all over Afghanistan and bringing it into Leatherneck and Camp Dwyer, doing the limited technical inspections and then using OCO money to fix it and then get it out of the country and back here for whatever the next event is going to be.

We have a lot of MRAPs and armored vehicles. We can't put them on ships, and we're looking at what are we going to do with them? You may know, we've put stuff in the caves over in Norway for eventual deployments and kept them in good shape and ready to go. We need to figure out how we're going to store these things and take them out when we need them again. We are in the process of moving all that stuff back to the States or to places where they'll be stored for a while. In top shape. Everything will be sent out of Afghanistan ready to go back home. We're doing all the modifications on all

the vehicles there under OCO funding and then sending it back.

That's going to put us in good shape and it will be a heck of a lot better than it was when we came back from Iraq. Iraq was a little messy, but this one will be a lot more organized because we've learned our lesson. In fact, we used to have three lines of operation — one was ANSEF development, one was governance, one was economics. We've added a fourth. It's called R4, which is reconstitution, refit, retrograde and something else. But it's very important, and so we're working hard. That has become another line of operation. It's something that we're going to have to watch very closely because we have two years to get stuff out of there. And oh by the way, we're having some challenges because the only way that we've been able to move stuff out of the country is either by air, which is extremely expensive, or the Northern Distribution Network, which there's pilferage going on. There's all kinds of things. It takes forever to get across. So we need to work to get the Pakistani lines back open, back up so that we can get equipment out. You know if they want us out of there by 2014, Pakistan's going to have to open up their lines or we just can't get out of there by then.

**DWG:** Could you talk a little bit about what you mean by operational maneuver capability. Is that primarily guys on the ground who can direct attack aviation or what sorts of capabilities are embedded in that?

**MG Toolan:** Very simply it's really the ability to respond to aggression by the insurgents. When Afghans are overwhelmed or whatever, having the capability to come in there and reinforce the Afghan efforts. I need to go further in that. We also need to be able to provide quickly and accurately fires -- both aviation fires and ground fires.

**DWG:** Thank you.

**MG Toolan:** And that's going to be critically important. The challenge is that when we put those munitions down range, we have to be sure that those munitions are going after legitimate targets. We've spent years now refining the PID process and making sure we've got good positive identification of the target before — And also, we've gone through deep machinations about collateral damage. So the Afghans, when they call for fire, they haven't been able to apply those same standards. But we're not going to be able to shoot for them unless we have the capability to make sure that they've done all that. That's changing sort of how we provide fire support for the Afghans. As I mentioned, if the fires don't come on time, we lose credibility with the Afghans. So we need to build into our system the process to make that quick and efficient. So providing fires is essential.

**DWG:** Does that mean you need to have people on the ground or can the Afghans provide that?

**DWG:** That's interesting because, to tell the truth, what my com guy, my C6 guy, he was 6'4" back in December he's about 5'9" now, I was pounding on him to get full motion video up and running in Helmand Province. The only thing that's going to really going to replace the eyeball of a U.S. soldier or Marine is full motion video tied to all the

PGSS systems and G-BOSS systems that we have in place right now in Afghanistan. We want to keep them there. We want to keep them tethered. We want to provide advisor teams or support teams with the Afghans to keep them running, use the internet and be able to see what's going on on the battlefield by just, you know.

If I'm down in Leatherneck and the Afghans call for fire in Sanguin, in the district center and they call a grid, I can go immediately to that location, look at it, get the PID, get the collateral damage estimate and run down range. So we've got to get that functional. It's not totally tied together yet.

And there's some challenges because coalition warfare is really hard. It's a pain in the neck. As we know, it's harder without it, so you've got to work with it. And with the U.K., they have a different system that's tied not through our com systems, but through the Centrix program. We need to get that, and then we need to get the Afghans. This is a challenge.

These are the little things that kind of bite your ankles. They get approval that the Afghans can use that classified system to have access. So we need to work through these things, but that's the way we'll be able to get efficient fire support, operational maneuver support, whatever. We want to see where we're going when we come in to that location and support the Afghans too. So FMV. I think you'll hear more about it. I just opened up the Expo last week and that was one of the things I harped on. We really need to get that technology moving.

**DWG:** Is it reasonable to think, the Marines have pushed so far into Helmand that the Afghans can inherit the distributed footprint that you have and that you'll be able to provide them that fire support, that they'll be able to logistically resupply themselves in some of these remote bases? Or by necessity are they going to have to give up some territory that you guys have taken?

**MG Toolan:** I think they're not going to support themselves the same way that we supported ourselves. They are really getting more proficient at living off the land. You know, living in the community, buying food, doing that stuff. We have created some challenges for ourselves in that over the past couple of years, because that leverage I was speaking of, where we provided them fuel, we provided them bottled water, some of the Afghans now they're very snooty. They don't want to drink anything if it's not bottled. So we're trying to draw them back to, hey, remember when you used to drink right out of that well? [Laughter].

So that's going to be some work in store for us. That's really where that security force assistance teams need to be very diplomatic and say okay, I can't be drinking bottled water if these guys — They're going to have to live just like they're living. I may be an old timer now because I've been around for a while, but I remember when we used to put iodine tablets in our water.

**DWG:** Yeah, you would know about that.

**MG Toolan:** So we need to sort of do some work there, but the Afghans are getting

better at being able to live off the land that they're operating in. We need to do the same. We need to come down from some of the logistical capabilities that we have and fine dining. We've done okay. Maybe gone, I'll probably get shot by my troops but, I mean I think sometimes we have to live like the Afghans do. I think that's the key.

**MG Toolan:** Did I get myself in trouble there? Alright good.

**DWG:** General, your metaphor earlier was interesting about Pakistan and the mopping of the floors and the spigot that you can't turn off. For some of us this sounds awful familiar going back 40 years. We got the 12th Corps, you've got North Vietnam, you've got the insurgents, you've got the Vietcong. Convince us this isn't going to turn into Vietnam.

**MG Toolan:** Actually I think I got that metaphor from something I read about Vietnam and the challenges that were associated in being able to reach out and suppress the North Vietnamese and Vietcong. I had this question yesterday in regards to Vietnam and making a comparison. I think if you take a short term view of Afghanistan or Vietnam for example, I think people might say we didn't do very well. We were very frustrated by the whole issue of Communists having freedom of movement just outside the borders.

If you take the long term view, and I heard this from Lee Kuan Yew, who is the president of Singapore, Minister Medsa Lee Kuan Yew. He was talking to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. It was several years ago when I was working in OSD and I happened to hear him say, you know look, Secretary, you need to stay the course in Iraq because I'm telling you the only reason why Singapore and Malaysia and Indonesia and all those tigers are doing well today is because you stayed the course 40 years ago. So you may not see the benefits of what occurred in Vietnam back in the '60s and '70s, but certainly people recognize it today.

So I don't know. I think Pakistan is in a very tenuous situation. I remind some people that there is a lot of nuclear weapons pretty close around Afghanistan, and that maintaining stability in the region is as important as establishing stability in Afghanistan. And so that chess game is, part of it is military, but a large percentage of it as you all know is diplomatic and political.

So I think that what we've established in Afghanistan is a recognition I believe, certainly the people see that the United States in particular, the U.K. and others, are committed to Afghanistan. They're committed to their development. So when we went up to Kajaki, that was the last piece of real estate we seized. We did that in October. It was a very good operation. It required minimal destruction of property. Hardly any civilian casualties, and we secured Kajaki Dam and turned it back over to the government of Afghanistan and they're now collecting revenues for power.

But more importantly is that the dam was really a representation of what America did in Afghanistan 40 years ago. If we can now get this thing back in operation and support the people of Helmand Province and Kandahar with power and water out of that dam, those

who remember us back in the '60s when we came there will see that we are committed. We've come back and we've helped them.

I don't know. I guess I'm talking big pie in the sky, but that was a big pie in the sky question. I think in the long term we'll see that as long as the regional stability is sustained, and we don't have nuclear conflagration and all that kind of stuff, what we did will pay off.

**DWG:** Let me understand your parallel. Are you saying we stayed the course in Vietnam, even though we left in '73 and it fell in '75?

**MG Toolan:** No, we stayed the course in Vietnam for 10 years. I think those 10 years were tough 10 years, but because of that we wore down the threat to the rest of Southeast Asia and those countries were allowed to then -- you know, Lee Kuan Yew, I think he was 60 when he took over and built Singapore into a powerhouse -- couldn't have done that if he'd gotten threats from a communist move throughout Southeast Asia. He had the freedom to build that country.

So I think there's a parallel that we may not see in the short term a highly successful Afghanistan, but what we will see is some stability in the region. Pakistan being an important one. That's a tough question but it is frustrating for us now, and it's tough to understand how important it is to keep the Pakistan government in the game.

**DWG:** General, when you started talking a little bit about corruption and lack of Pakistan cooperation, and clearly as we draw down forces there we'll lose some level of influence and leverage. The question becomes, can U.S. strategy after 2014 be successful if there's not some resolution of those issues, fairly significant resolution of to the issue of lack of Pakistani cooperation and corruption within Afghanistan?

**MG Toolan:** You know Jim, it's a policy issue I think I shouldn't dabble in too much because it's outside my lane. But I can tell you that I'm pretty convinced that by 2014 the Taliban leadership, the senior Taliban leadership in Quetta, is no longer conducting day to day business in Afghanistan. They can't. They're being targeted, and they're losing influence in an exponential fashion.

I think that right now we're the home team in Afghanistan. When we first got there, Taliban were controlling the district leadership and the provincial governments. The shadow governments were in charge. The legitimate governments were not in charge. Today, the legitimate governments are in charge and the shadow governments are disappearing. They're still there. I mean there's some remnants of it, but the senior leadership of the Taliban are living in Quetta and they're dismissed from the people. That's going to continue to get harder and harder for them to influence the action in Afghanistan. That's going to allow, this next two years, allow the Afghan government, governance that's been established, the Afghan Security Forces to get their job done and win the support of the local people.

When 2014 rolls around and the security force assistance mission changes again, which

really will, at that stage we're looking at, and of course the strategic framework was agreed upon, strategic partnership excuse me, was agreed upon yesterday. I think we will be committed to certain things. We will be committed to Special Operations Forces will stay there because we're still going to have to mentor the Afghan Special Operations Forces.

I think also too, one of the most important capabilities that the Afghans are concerned about is their medical capability and their ability to medevac them. That will stay. We're going to have to work hard to build that capability in the Afghan government.

Three is that we'll still have to continue to provide fires, fire support. And lastly the intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance assets will still need to be available to the Afghans.

So I see post-2014, despite the fact that we may not have Pakistan working the borders that we need them to work to prevent the easy flow and facilitation routes across borders, even with 12th Corps, the one that's in the south, not doing that, I still believe that by 2014 we'll be able to reduce those capabilities to those issues I just mentioned from a military perspective. The local government will be in charge. The shadow governments and the influence that the Quetta Shura has will be diminished greatly.

Then it's just a matter of time as the Afghanistan government starts to work with Pakistan and its neighbors on a variety of different issues that maybe they might be able to come to an agreement between the two countries. I just don't see Pakistan at this stage being able to be effective down in the southern portion of the border, to be honest. Really, with the Haqqani Network causing problems on the eastern border. So that will still be a challenge.

And the Iranian border is also another issue. Right now there's freedom of movement across that border and drug facilitation and lethal aid movement is a constant.

I know I didn't answer your question because I try and stay away from the policy issue. I don't see the Pakistan issue being resolved. I know our diplomats are working hard at it, but I also know it's a lot more complicated than just providing patrolling on the borders for our needs.

**DWG:** Thank you General. As [inaudible] starts to draw down its forces in Afghanistan, I imagine you're going to have less convoys on the ground. Are you starting to rely more on air drops? What kind of impact is that really going to have in two years?

**MG Toolan:** When we start draw down, I didn't get that we were lose something?

**DWG:** The reason why convoys [inaudible]. So are you going to have to start relying more on air drops?

**MG Toolan:** Of course, as our footprint diminishes, so does our need for resupply,

putting convoys on the roads. In fact, we're trying to have a concerted effort to put more and more of the movement of supplies on the ground into the Afghan trucking network. We realize that the safety and security of those convoys is better placed into the hands of some of the Afghans who own some of those businesses. They're able to move an awful lot of stuff.

In Helmand Province there's pretty good freedom of movement to move things back and forth, and so if we can put the money into the economy in Helmand Province in some of the trucking networks there, we're doing a good thing. We will probably have some capability to move convoys on the ground. We will not have a plethora of helicopters. We don't have enough helicopters now to be honest. And we're going to be sending more and more home. So helicopters will be retained for things like operational maneuver capabilities and those kinds of things. So the reliance on the Afghans will grow over the next couple of years, which is a good thing because we're putting the money into the economy.

We have some interesting technology though. We just brought in about six months ago two UAV helicopters that can move 100 miles. So remote control lifts up and has the capability to carry 10,000 pounds. So we're putting several of those into the theater and see how those work. But right now they're working great.

**DWG:** Is that the A-130?

**MG Toolan:** What's the name of it?

**DWG:** KMAX.

**DWG:** When did that get to theater?

**MG Toolan:** I'm sorry?

**DWG:** The UAV helicopter. When did that get to the theater?

**MG Toolan:** In November.

**DWG:** Okay.

**MG Toolan:** It's a great piece of gear. It's operating out of Dwyer right now. They're operating it at Dwyer. We just brought another one in. We're even training the Afghans how to use them.

**DWG:** Do you even know if it will stay beyond 2014?

**MG Toolan:** I think they will.

**DWG:** I'm sorry. You think they will?

**MG Toolan:** I do, yeah. I know that the Marine Corps bought those two. They're being tested, and they're proving to be worthy.

**DWG:** Is that a DARPA project?

**MG Toolan:** I don't know if it's a DARPA project or not. I don't think it is. There was a requirement that was put out there for an unmanned helicopter, and several companies offered a version, and we bought the KMAX.

**DWG:** What's the advantage of the unmanned helicopter?

**MG Toolan:** Well, I think obviously the helicopters coming in and out of zone were pretty susceptible to ground fire. I fortunately didn't lose any helicopters to ground fire. I did have helicopters get shot at and individuals inside were wounded. So you can shoot at this thing all you want -- [Laughter].

**MG Toolan:** — and nobody will get hurt.

**DWG:** Can you give more sense about what Pakistan's role is going to be post-2014, and what they're plans are going to be post-2014? And also about, can you give us more of the Baluchistan angle, why they are not taking [inaudible]?

**MG Toolan:** I'll answer the last part of your question first. The first part's a little bit harder.

I had Nimroz Province, which as you may know is a heavily lead by Baluchistan tribal elders. They have been moving things across their desert for 2,000 years. They can hide in the wide open desert. You have to walk right up on them. They know that desert like the back of their hand.

They have established networks, insurgent Taliban networks that were pretty efficient at moving things across from Pakistan through Afghanistan and into Iran. I mean, they're very good at it. There was a network that we targeted. We worked very closely with the U.K. special operations forces we had in Helmand Province. We eliminated that network. It was a highly successful operation.

They had complete freedom of movement in the southern Pakistan region. It's Baluch territory. Their efforts at trying to separate the Baluchi separatists operations that are going on down in the south is growing stronger and stronger. So the Pakistanis really don't want to rustle up that problem, make it worse by having 12th Corps conduct operations against what was that Baluchistan network.

So we learned a lot through our operations against that network. Operating out of southern Pakistan going into Iran back and forth through Afghanistan, we learned a lot about how they operate. We wanted to pass that information through the Pakistan 12th Corps. If we had gotten their support, we would have taken care of that network a long time ago. It took us a long time to do it, but we eventually got it done.

The Pakistanis just have no appetite for creating any more challenges to the separatist movement down there right now, so I believe that's the reason why they're staying pretty static. Truth be known, the Baluchi separatist movement is impacting on Iran as well because they have concerns. So basically giving them freedom of movement in Nimroz Province in the southwest corner of Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iranian border.

As far as what Pakistan can do to support Afghanistan. I don't know, that's a tough one because there isn't an Afghan leader that I speak to that doesn't blame Pakistan for all their problems. I mean it's constant. Of course we know the story behind the Duran Line and the Pashtun tribal nation, back and forth with freedom. I think there are some irreconcilable differences that the people of Afghanistan have with the Pakistan people. I'm not sure that anything is going to happen anytime soon. I do know though that Afghanistan and Pakistan governments have got to be able to work together, so there could be some accommodations.

With the threat to the Pakistani government of the Baluchi separatist movements, not to mention the issues they have up in the FATA, maybe they can work together.

**DWG:** Have they given up on the routes that will close up November 26?

**MG Toolan:** Have we given up on the routes?

**DWG:** Yeah.

**MG Toolan:** Which routes?

**DWG:** The supply routes.

**MG Toolan:** The ones that we're using to move equipment out?

**DWG:** Yeah.

**MG Toolan:** We're not giving up. I think that there's some very aggressive activities going on at the policy levels with the Pakistani government to get those things opened up. I think, and again one of the arguments is that if you want us out by 2014 you'd better open those things up because we can't get out of here by then. So yes, we're trying to get those opened back up.

The Northern Distribution Network is very costly. Like I've mentioned too, we're also using air to move things out, and that's extremely costly. We're renting a lot of other nations' airplanes. We're using the AN-24s --

**DWG:** Right, that big thing from Ukraine.

**MG Toolan:** I didn't like those things landing on my airfield in [inaudible], to be honest you know. No, not this runway, this runway. [Laughter].

So we really need to kind of get back to the Pakistani routes and get out through the Karachi. That's the best way to go.

**DWG:** So do you use those tanks. Remember, I guess you got those tanks over there. Did you ever use them?

**MG Toolan:** Oh yeah.

**DWG:** Did they work out for you?

**MG Toolan:** They did. We actually did operations where we did tank sniper ops. So the tanks would observe and they'd move snipers into position. You know, because the tanks have great thermal sights --

**DWG:** Right, right, right.

**MG Toolan:** -- so it worked out great. And then I had the Danes bringing out their tanks. It took a little coaxing to get them out, but those tanks that the Danes had were great.

**DWG:** So you used the tanks as spotters for snipers?

**MG Toolan:** Spotters, right.

**DWG:** Really?

**MG Toolan:** Yeah. It was very effective.

**DWG:** General, you were talking about the two KMAX unmanned helicopters. They're scheduled to actually come out of Afghanistan once the demonstration deployment's over with in June. Do you think there's a need for them beyond that?

**MG Toolan:** Are they coming out in June?

**DWG:** Yeah, in the summer.

**MG Toolan:** I don't think they'll let them come out. I think the commander there is going to want to keep them. Because they're using them, as far as I know when I was there, we were using them every day. And I know they brought the second one in just recently. So they should keep it out there.

**DWG:** Thank you.

**MG Toolan:** Just a quick story, I had a Danish tanker who, Sergeant Jacobsen, Jacob Christensen his name was, this guy, I went to see him in the hospital. He had gotten shot. They had actually gone in and fired their main gun and killed some insurgents,

and he got shot. So I saw him in the hospital, and I gave him a coin and talked to him. Then like three weeks later I heard he got wounded again. This time there was a wire under the tread of his tank, so he had to jump out from the turret. He went down to fix it, and he was bent down by the tread, and he said he had a sixth sense. He turned around and there was an insurgent firing an RPG. It hit the front end of the tank. So he got a little shrapnel, so he dove under the tank and got to the other side. He said okay, I've got to get back into the thing. His crew was inside. So he crawls up on the tank, and as he crawls up there was an Afghan with a sniper rifle dragging off him. He took a shot at him, and hit him in the leg --

**DWG:** Didn't take his leg off?

**MG Toolan:** No. So now he's got shrapnel, he's got shot in the leg, and now he's really pissed off. [Laughter].

So he then comes around the other side of the tank, and he crawls up. Now the turret and he's right behind it, and he's got to get into the turret. So he dives into the turret, and as he dives into the turret he gets shot one more time. So now he's hit three times. Anyway, he gets the tank up, gets it running. He takes some shots at the insurgent. Doesn't get them. They wind up medevac-ing him. It was a big story when he went home. I said to him, you are truly a Viking. You are truly a warrior. So the Danes did a great job for us, but it took a little coaxing to get their tanks out there in the beginning, but once they got them out it was great.

**DWG:** And they're staying.

**MG Toolan:** Yeah. I personally, my theory is I don't go anywhere without a tank.

**DWG:** That's one way to cope with Washington traffic.

**MG Toolan:** Alright, thanks very much. I appreciate it. Alright.

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