

© 2010, CBS Broadcasting Inc. All Rights Reserved.
PLEASE CREDIT ANY QUOTES OR EXCERPTS FROM THIS CBS
TELEVISION PROGRAM TO "CBS NEWS' FACE THE NATION."



August 22, 2010

Transcript

GUESTS: **General Ray Odierno**
 Commander of U.S. Forces in Iraq

Senator Lindsey Graham
 R-South Carolina

Greg Mortenson
 Author of Three Cups of Tea and
 Stones into Schools

General David Petraeus
 Commander of U.S. Forces in
 Afghanistan

MODERATOR/PANELIST: Bob Schieffer

Transcript

BOB SCHIEFFER: Today on FACE THE NATION, one war winds down as we build up for another. There is still a formidable American force there, but the last American combat brigade is out of Iraq. Now what? We'll talk with our top military man there, General Ray Odierno.

Then, we'll switch to Afghanistan for three views. Our top general there David Petraeus gives Katie Couric his evaluation of Afghan President Hamid Karzai.

We'll hear from Republican Senator Lindsey Graham just back from Afghanistan.

And Greg Mortenson, the unlikely American hero and author of *Three Cups Of Tea*, who has built more than a hundred and fifty schools for Afghan children. He'll tell us what he's telling our military people.

I'll have some final thoughts on the downside of the internet.

But first, Iraq and Afghanistan on FACE THE NATION.

ANNOUNCER: FACE THE NATION with CBS News chief Washington correspondent Bob Schieffer, and now from CBS News in Washington, Bob Schieffer.

BOB SCHIEFFER: And good morning, again.

Well, it made for a dramatic picture, hundreds of armored vehicles in the dead of night crossing the border into Kuwait. The last American combat brigade was leaving Iraq after seven and a half years. Fifty thousand American soldiers, thousands of American diplomats and contractors are still there as teachers and trainers, but the fighting units are gone.

To talk about it, we are joined by our top general in Iraq Ray Odierno who is at command headquarters in Baghdad. General, thank you so much for joining us. I start with a serious question. Have we won the war in Iraq, General?

GENERAL RAY ODIERNO (Commander, U.S. Forces in Iraq): Well, again, I would say that we've made lots of progress here. I would say to determine whether we've won the war or not, well-- well-- we can see that in-- in three to five years, as we see how Iraq turns out.

A strong democratic Iraq will bring stability to the Middle East and if-- we see Iraq that's moving towards that two, three, five years from now, I think we can call our operations a success.

In terms of winning the war, I would just say that we've had-- we've seen some great bravery. We'll continue to see some great bravery from our soldiers, sailors, and my marines who served here and how they've been able to prosecute this very difficult operation here has been magnificent. I'm very proud of what they've done.

BOB SCHIEFFER: Saddam Hussein is dead. We don't hear much about al Qaeda there anymore. What is the biggest threat now that you see, General?

GENERAL RAY ODIERNO: Well, we still have a little bit of terrorism that operates here but it has to do with political development. It has to do with unity of vision. It has to do with the government now starting to move forward, move forward economically, politically, diploma-- diplomatically, integrate itself back into the region. We are seeing movement towards that. But that's the most important things now-- political, economic development.

BOB SCHIEFFER: Well, some people are saying that this stalemate that the government is in now--after all it's been five months since they've had the election. They still have not been able to organize a government. Some people are worried that this country might again slide into some sort of military dictatorship as was there when Saddam Hussein reigned. Is that a concern to you?

GENERAL RAY ODIERNO: It is not. In fact, the reason it's taking so long is because of the democratic process. You had the people choose. Twelve million people showed up to vote here. And it was a very close election. And that's why it's taking long to form the government because it was so close.

People want to be involved in a democratic process. They want to select their leaders and the political leaders here understand and realize that. And they understand the importance of forming this government and the impact it will have on Iraq for the next four or five years. And they want to make sure they do it right. They want to make sure that they have a government that can move Iraq forward into the future and-- and make Iraq a strong democratic country. And I think that's why we're seeing it take so long.

We all would like to see it completed as soon as possible. I think the quicker the better. It's important they-- they get moving forward with their continued development. And it's also important to not allow terrorists to try to exploit this-- this time now we have while we're forming this government. I think everybody realizes that. And they're trying to move forward as quickly as possible.

BOB SCHIEFFER: General, how confident are you that you're going to hand this military task over to the Iraqi military people now? And I bring that up because the chief of staff of the Iraqi Joint Forces was quoted in the Wall Street Journal this week as saying the U.S. Army may have to stay in Iraq until 2020 because he said he doesn't think the Iraqi Army will be ready to take over until then.

As I understand it our plan is to be out of there by the end of next year. So, how confident are you of these folks being able to handle this?

GENERAL RAY ODIERNO: Well-- well, first, they-- they really-- we've been slowly turning it over for them now for over a year. And for the last four or five months they've had the lead. And they have been conducting security operations and they've been able to sustain it at-- at a level that I think is acceptable. I think there's two issues we're

talking about here. I think they're now capable of dealing with the internal security. Although, we still have some terrorism, they're able to take care of-- of protecting the people for the most part so the government can move forward.

The second issue though is building-- developing their capacity to protect them their sovereign-- the sovereign Iraq and protect themselves from external threats. I think that's probably what General Bob McClure is-- was-- is referring to. And what happens there it's-- it's-- it's about them technically developing, purchasing equipment, learning how to use it, learning how to redo operations. It's about protecting their air space, their-- their sea, their territorial waters and-- and their land-- land borders. And I think they've-- they would like to see us to be technically involved. And I think his assessment is it might be have to be beyond 2011.

My answer to that is is we can-- we have arrangements with that with other countries in the region--Saudi Arabia, Egypt and others--where we continue to provide technical support. So, if the government of Iraq requests that from us, we would certainly consider that and do all we can to continue to build their capacity.

BOB SCHIEFFER: So if they ask us to stay longer, if they ask for more U.S. combat troops, are you saying we-- we would give that consideration that we might actually do that?

GENERAL RAY ODIERNO: I-- I-- I think again I would say if they ask us that they might want us to stay longer, we certainly would consider that. And we would do an assessment. That would obviously be a policy decision that would be made by the National Security Team and the President over time, and certainly we-- if they ask us, we would consider it. That's part of us developing a long-term strategic partnership with them. That-- that includes a security relationship.

So we certainly would consider that. But again, they have not asked us. We'll wait to see what happens. I would tell you they're capable of providing their internal security, they're capable of some foundational external capability. I think if they did ask us, Bob, it would be for something really just technical support and not necessarily combat forces by the way.

BOB SCHIEFFER: All right. Well, General, I want to thank you for joining us this morning. I want to thank all of the people who have served there, including you, for your service. Thank you so much.

GENERAL RAY ODIERNO: Well, thank you very much for having me today.

BOB SCHIEFFER: And from the war in Iraq to the war in Afghanistan. We are joined now by Senator Lindsey Graham a key Republican on the Senate Armed Services Committee. He is just back from Afghanistan. He's in Clemson, South Carolina, this morning.

And I want to talk about Afghanistan, Senator. But you just heard what-- what the General just said.

SENATOR LINDSEY GRAHAM (R-South Carolina/Armed Services Committee): Mm-Hm.

BOB SCHIEFFER: If we get to the end of next year and the Iraqis want us to stay longer, we would-- we would consider that. I think it would be very, very far fetched to think that the Congress would authorize sending more troops to Iraq at this point. What's your take?

SENATOR LINDSEY GRAHAM: Well, I hope they do ask us to have an enduring relationship politically, military-- militarily, and economically. We have troops in Germany and Japan since World War II. I don't think most Americans would care if we had troops in Iraq as long as they were safe and secure.

What's happened in Iraq is transformative, a democracy in the heart of the Mideast between Syria and Iran. We're all safer if they can continue to make progress. So, I hope we will have an enduring relationship of having some military presence in Iraq. I think that would be smart not to let things unwind over the next three or five years.

BOB SCHIEFFER: All right. Let's-- let's shift now to Afghanistan. You're just back, another of many trips there. You're in the Army Reserve. You were doing your reserve duty there this time.

Senator Graham, as most people know you were one of those who encouraged the surge there. You thought it was necessary. You were totally behind it. But you also were very much against the President setting a deadline of pulling our troops out next year.

SENATOR LINDSEY GRAHAM (overlapping): Right.

BOB SCHIEFFER: Number one, because you thought it was signaling the enemy when we're leaving but the other part was--

SENATOR LINDSEY GRAHAM (overlapping): Right.

BOB SCHIEFFER: --you were not sure if we'd have the job done by then. After this trip, what's your assessment now?

SENATOR LINDSEY GRAHAM: Well, after this trip I think we can transition next summer some areas of Afghanistan to Afghan control. I see progress I had not seen before.

So, it's-- I see a scenario, if things continue to develop the way they are, that certain areas of Afghanistan can be transitioned to Afghan control and we could remove some troops safely without undermining the overall war mission. But at the end of the day the President has to let the Afghan people, the regional players know, the American people know that we're not going to leave until we're successful. But I do see a path forward next summer to transition in certain areas of Afghanistan but we will need substantial troops well past July of 2011 to get this right.

BOB SCHIEFFER: This is a change in position for you.

SENATOR LINDSEY GRAHAM: Yeah.

BOB SCHIEFFER: Six weeks ago you were not saying you thought we could safely begin to withdraw. You are now saying things have changed and you think that's possible.

SENATOR LINDSEY GRAHAM: Yeah. It's due to progress I've seen on the ground. It has to continue. It will always be conditions-based.

But there are areas of Afghanistan that this new commitment of troops without the news-- without the surge of troops we couldn't hold it together much longer. If we had no troops it'd go back into civil war but this additional military capacity is beginning to show some effects in certain parts of Afghanistan.

By next summer, hopefully, we're-- we're on offense now. We got the ball back. For years we've been playing defense. By next summer I think we can cross midfield and some of our troops can come home. But having said that, there will be a substantial need for many troops there well past July 2011. And the Afghan government has to do its part on governance for us to be successful. There's a lot yet to be done. It needs to be conditions-based.

BOB SCHIEFFER (overlapping): Yeah.

SENATOR LINDSEY GRAHAM: The President needs to speak more openly about why we can't lose in Afghanistan to get the American people behind staying and being successful.

BOB SCHIEFFER: The unknown component here is Hamid Karzai, the president of Afghanis-- of Afghanistan. One of your colleagues--

SENATOR LINDSEY GRAHAM (overlapping): Yes.

BOB SCHIEFFER: --on the Armed Services Committee said to me just this week, this is a man who is still had a tribal outlook. He has no talent for governing. And he has no strategic outlook. He said, basically, we're stuck with him. What's your assessment of Karzai right now?

SENATOR LINDSEY GRAHAM: Well, he's an elected leader of Afghanistan. We've recognized the results. Some people are saying they're stuck with Lindsey Graham. That's the way democracy is. I think he has the capability to rally his people. He's an articulate leader. He's got to be all into win. His government's not at war with the insurgency. They need to change their laws to allow us to detain people that are security threats. He needs to fight corruption.

We have three major cases brewing from the Major Crimes Task Force, kind of, the untouchables in our-- in Afghanistan. He cannot interfere with those cases. We need corruption trials going forward. We need to show that we're at war with the insurgency. And he needs to rally his people. I think he's capable of doing that. But I'm going to make sure, from a Congress's point of view that we have benchmarks and measurements. It's now time to put him to the test. It's now time to put ourselves to the test because we're running out of time here at home.

BOB SCHIEFFER: All right. Senator Graham, thank you so much for being with us this morning.

Katie Couric talked to General Petraeus, our top military man in Afghanistan, about this very thing: President Karzai. The interesting thing about this interview and watch this is how the General goes to great lengths not to criticize Hamid Karzai. Take a look.

(Begin VT)

BOB SCHIEFFER: For sure, in his interview with our Katie Couric, our top military man in Afghanistan, General Petraeus was particularly careful not to criticize him.

KATIE COURIC: Let's talk about Hamid Karzai for a minute, if we could, General Petraeus, because he's such an important component of this effort. Parliamentary elections are less than a month away. And few believe they will be free and fair. Will this be an important test for Hamid Karzai?

GENERAL DAVID PETRAEUS (Commander, U.S. Forces in Afghanistan): Well, it'll be important test for the Afghan government and really for the country, overall. The planning is well ahead of where the planning was for the presidential elections last year. But clearly, a lot of work to be done still in the security arena and then in a variety of other significant details that have to be ironed out prior to the conduct of those elections.

KATIE COURIC: Do you think Hamid Karzai has gotten an unfair rap?

GENERAL DAVID PETRAEUS: Well, I think he's in a very, very difficult position. Again, this is Afghanistan and this is a country that is not a developed country. It has a checkered past when it comes to issues such as corruption. I don't think that anyone again, has alleged that he is-- is party to any of that. He has, in fact, just announced, of course, the ending of the private security contractor roles here in Afghanistan.

At least it's incumbent on us to help with this to ensure that our money is not undermining our very efforts by ending up in the pockets of those who are not inclusive. They are exclusive when it comes to the way that they're carrying out their activities in various communities.

But we are fully supportive of that. We're going to do everything that we can to-- to help the Ministry of Interior to deal with that and to figure the-- out the way ahead. And in some cases, we're going to have to take on some of those tasks as will the Afghan forces have to do more as well.

KATIE COURIC: Which is going to be hard, given the fact that you're stretched pretty thin as is?

GENERAL DAVID PETRAEUS: It will be hard. Again, there's nothing easy about anything in Afghanistan. That's a-- that's rule number one if you will or observation number one. It's all hard and it's hard all the time.

(End VT)

BOB SCHIEFFER: General Petraeus.

Well, when we come back, we're going to get a whole different take on all this from Greg Mortenson, the American who's built a hundred and fifty schools for Afghanistan's children and whose book, *Three Cups of Tea* is now required reading for our military officers there. Greg Mortenson, when we come back in one minute.

(ANNOUNCEMENTS)

BOB SCHIEFFER: And we're back now with Greg Mortenson.

And for those of you, who have not read his book, *Three Cups of Tea*, this man went to Afghanistan seventeen years ago to climb a mountain. He was coming off the mountain, he became disoriented. Some villagers in Afghanistan found him, took to their village, helped him to recover, probably saved his life.

Once he was fully back to good health he said to them, "What can I do to help you?" And they said, "Help us build a school."

He went back home, raised some money, had no idea, no background in how you do that sort of thing. To make a long story short, that was seventeen years ago. Since then, Greg Mortenson has built seven-- a hundred and fifty schools in Afghanistan. Twenty more are in the pipeline now. And he's put thousands upon thousands of Afghan children in school, most of them girls. Greg, your story is just miraculous and you tell it so well in your two books. First, *Three Cups of Tea*, and now your new one, *Stones into Schools*. Tell us first, what is this *Three Cups of Tea*, what does that mean?

GREG MORTENSON (Author, *Three Cups of Tea*): Well, thanks, Bob, and great to see you this morning.

An-- an old village chief in Pakistan, when I first was struggling to build the first school it took me three years, and he sat me down once after three years I was very frustrated. He said if you want to build a school, you need three cups of tea. The first cup, you're a stranger; the second cup, a friend; and third cup, you become family. What he was talking about is relationships. And that-- before we do anything we-- it's imperative that we have relationships.

BOB SCHIEFFER: Now you, since then, have become an advisor to both General Petraeus and to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs Mike Mullen. How did that come about?

GREG MORTENSON: Well, I'm-- I'm a military veteran. I was in the-- in the Army. I-- what I saw, in my original book *Three Cups of Tea*, I was actually critical of the military after 9/11. I said they're all laptop warriors, no boots on the ground. But about four years ago I started getting contacted by military commanders to ask to help the troops understand about cultural nuances and working in tribal societies. So, I-- I voluntarily do this. I don't receive any federal money or DOD money. And Mike-- and really happened the Generals' wives read the book first. Like Marlyn--

BOB SCHIEFFER: Admiral Mullen's wife?

GREG MORTENSON: Like Holo-- Holly Petraeus and now-- and Deborah Mullen. And said, "Honey, you ought to check this out." And-- so, General Petraeus said there are three important points in Three Cups of Tea. And that is number one, that we need to have respect, meaning humility--we're there to serve the people; number two, we need to listen more; and number three, we have to build relationships. So the book now is required reading for senior military commanders and many divisions of the military.

BOB SCHIEFFER: Well, what-- why do you think you've succeeded? What is it that you were able to do because not only are you able to get these-- these schools built in schools that are controlled by people who are friendly to our side, you're getting them built in Taliban areas. And you actually deal with the Taliban. How do you do that?

GREG MORTENSON: Well, there's two key ingredients. The first is it's not about helping people but empowering people. And that means involving them in the process. I grew up in Tanzania. My father started a hospital and he insisted that Africans be in charge. And-- and he actually got, later on, fired for having them asking them to believe that Africans could run the hospital.

But today the hospital's totally run by Africans. We also insist that the community gives free land, free labor, sweat equity. We provide the teacher training materials and skill labor but there has to be local buy-in. That-- that sometime is a problem, the U.S. we-- we tend to throw money at problems but we have to have get buy-in from the people themselves.

BOB SCHIEFFER: These schools most of your students or many of the students are girls. And this is almost unheard of in-- in some of these very remote Muslim countries. How have you convinced them to let girls go to school?

GREG MORTENSON: Well, lots of cups of tea, Bob. But it's-- it's our-- our key is we get the elders involved. In Afghanistan they're called the shura and every province has fifty to two hundred shura. And we have them in meetings. And most of the Shura are very-- they're advocates for girls' education. We also, you know, you can ask any woman in Afghanistan or Pakistan what do you want? They'll say we don't want our babies to die, and we want our children to go to school.

BOB SCHIEFFER: What do you tell our military people to succeed? I mean, do you think-- do you think we're making any progress there?

GREG MORTENSON: Oh, I definitely see progress. I think but it's not because of the surge, it's because of the-- the way things are done. And it actually started with General McChrystal, when he first was appointed commander last June, he asked me and a couple of other people to set up-- facilitate meetings with the elders from various rural provinces. And-- and the elders were very firm about, "Please do not bomb and kill civilians." "Please involve us in discussions."

And so, recently there was an operation plan from Kandahar to Chaman, Pakistan to sweep out the Southern Afghanistan. General McChrystal called off the operation because the elders told him you don't have the

relationships. And I'm-- I'm-- I'm glad, now that General Petraeus has also decided to wait until there's more relationship building and capacity building.

BOB SCHIEFFER: So how much progress do you think? You're getting these girls into schools-- in these schools, what are-- what do you-- about sixty-four thousand students, I think have gone through your schools. But actually there's some pretty encouraging statistics about schools in general, in Afghanistan we sometimes overlook.

GREG MORTENSON: Oh, there's tremendous progress. The number of children in school ten years ago was eight hundred thousand. Today, there's eight million children in school, including 2.8 million females. The-- also, land ownership is skyrocketing. If you go into the district courts, more and more women are filing titles for land ownership.

Recently, the Minister of Education Farooq Wardak he asked for two hundred forty-seven million dollars to fund the entire higher education in Afghanistan. He's probably going to get-- get about fifty million. But my-- my thinking was, maybe, we could pull two hundred forty-seven troops, you know, that's a million dollars per troop and we could fund the entire higher education system for Afghanistan.

BOB SCHIEFFER: Greg, we have a lot of politicians on this broadcast and a lot of great people. We don't often have people that I consider a hero. To me, you are a hero to the American people. We want to thank you for what you've done and-- and wish you Godspeed in-- in your continuing work.

GREG MORTENSON: Well, thank you, Bob. Thank you.

BOB SCHIEFFER: Thank you so much.

Back in a moment with some final thoughts.

(ANNOUNCEMENTS)

BOB SCHIEFFER: Finally, today on another subject. The greatest advances in the store of human knowledge have always taken place when great minds found themselves in the same place at the same time, as when the Greeks gathered on the hillsides of Athens, when the political geniuses who founded this country came together.

The great promise of the internet was that for the first time great minds no longer had to be in close proximity. But what we have also learned now is that in the internet age, ignorance travels as rapidly as great ideas. Now, not only great minds can find one another and compare notes, so too can the nuts and the perverts and those who are simply looking to validate their prejudices.

So despite a mountain of evidence to the contrary, a new poll tells us a growing number of Americans, most of them on the right, believe Barack Obama is a Muslim. No doubt, due in part to the fact that stories to that effect have gone viral on the internet.

Disagreeing with our leaders is our right. And in truth, part of the fun of being an American. But to suggest the President is a Muslim is

absurd. No matter how fervently some who dislike him may wish it so. The purpose here, though, is not to argue politics but just to underscore how this illustrates the downside of the internet, the only news delivery system we've ever had that has no editor. We must always remember that that what we read there may not always be true.

Back in a minute.

(ANNOUNCEMENTS)

BOB SCHIEFFER: We note this morning with sadness the passing of long-time CBS News correspondent Harold Dow. He was sixty-two and one of the best.

We'll see you next week, right here on FACE THE NATION.