

**STATEMENT OF  
LIEUTENANT GENERAL WILLIAM B. CALDWELL, IV  
UNITED STATES ARMY  
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY, HOMELAND DEFENSE,  
AND FOREIGN OPERATIONS**

**SEPTEMBER 12, 2012**

## Testimony of Lieutenant General William B. Caldwell, IV

I'm here before the Committee today to discuss the challenges I and my Command Team faced during the two years I served as the Commander of NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan – as you know our focus was to help the Afghans develop their security forces and all of their associated support systems.

It has been a true honor to serve this Nation in uniform for the past thirty-six years—in both peace and conflict. The privilege of being a member our Armed Forces and having served in military operations in places such as: Panama, Kuwait, Haiti, Iraq and Afghanistan has left me with an incredibly deep appreciation of the dedication, courage and ingenuity of the men and women who serve our Nation. I am proud to continue the legacy of my father and grandfather before me of service to our Army and Nation. Our overlapping periods of service reach back more than 100 years. It is my distinct pleasure to be able to be a part of the finest Army and military the world has ever known.

### NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan

On 21 November 2009, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization established a new command, NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A). The purpose of this new command was to coordinate and synchronize the multi-national efforts to raise, equip, train and sustain an Afghan National Security Force. NTM-A was a subordinate command to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) also established by NATO. I assumed duties as the first NTM-A Commander and also assumed duty as the Commander of the United States Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A) which is the authority responsible for oversight of U.S. funding, training, and ministerial development efforts. The span of my command included nearly 7500 military, civilian and contract trainers, advisors and support personnel in 6 Regional Support Commands and 70 training sites in 21 provinces across Afghanistan. The scope of our combined NTM-A/CSTC-A command's mission (hereafter referred to as NTM-A) was unprecedented. This was a unique challenge as we had three simultaneous tasks. **First**, we had to establish a new multi-national command from scratch. **Second**, we had to train, generate and sustain an enduring Afghan National Security Force that included the Afghan Army, Afghan Police and Afghan Air Force and create all associated support systems. **Third**, we had to develop, advise and mentor all levels of the Ministries of Defense and Interior in order to establish civilian leadership and oversight of their security forces. We had to do this while the Afghans and Coalition forces were in constant contact – very much like “building an aircraft while in flight.” Even training sites and Ministry headquarters were not immune to enemy attacks—either by ground or rocket—heightening a sense of urgency we all felt to develop and transition capabilities to the Afghans.

### Establishment of NTM-A

There were some solid programs underway at the establishment of NTM-A, however there were urgent issues and challenges due to lack of sufficient resourcing. One such challenge we faced was securing the necessary trainers. We often repeated, “No Trainers, No Transition.” We worked hard to increase the number of trainers and the specialized skill sets required for the range of missions we were undertaking, but it was a continuous effort for the entire two years I was there, and we never did get all that were required—either in numbers or skill sets. In areas where our numbers and skill sets did increase, so did the quality of the Afghan recruit and leader. In addition our visibility as to what needed to be improved also increased. Our work in securing additional trainers was of strategic importance to supporting the Afghan Security Force and key to setting the conditions for an effective transition.

### **Generation of the Afghan National Security Force**

NTM-A’s focus areas were to: recruit and grow the force, increase the quality of the force, and build the foundation to professionalize the force, while developing the systems to sustain it so that it would become an enduring and a self sustaining force. In order to do this we had to design, contract and oversee construction of all the facilities and bases for the Afghan National Security Force across the country. These collective efforts included, but were not limited to building, organizing and developing a military education system, a complete logistics system including all types of supplies from uniforms, food, maintenance, billeting, and the associated administrative systems. In addition, we had to develop a supporting military medical system. All of this plus more was required to generate a self sustaining and enduring force.

Some of the things that complicated this mission and required immediate attention included:

- 86% illiteracy rate – required teaching recruits and officers basic reading skills
- 18 years of conflict – led to a hoarding and survival mentality
- Focus on quantity over quality in recruiting and training – resulted in retraining
- Afghan National Army negative growth – resulted in creating a recruiting command
- Leadership shortfalls and challenges – led to creation of multiple schools and courses (Officer/NCO schools)
- Minimal oversight and accountability - required top to bottom review of inventory processes and the inculcation of an ethos of stewardship
- Struggling sustainment – required creation of a logistics system from the national level to local/unit level distribution
- High attrition – required extensive improvements to all soldier support systems, including the recruiting system
- Lack of a manufacturing base – had to create and develop local suppliers; created the Afghan First program to build indigenous manufacturing for ANSF uniforms, boots, etc.
- Substandard pay – required constant dialogue with Afghan leadership to increase pay in all ranks to become a “living wage” to reduce opportunities for corrupt behavior
- Endemic corruption – mandated leadership changes, review of ethical standards

- Tribal tensions – presented unique assignment challenges
- Substandard equipment – required immediate procurement, acquisition, and maintenance efforts; to include a mindset change of replacement to one of repair
- Inadequate standards to evaluate training and operations, (35% Weapons Qualification Rate) – required creation and enforcement of standards
- Numerous language barriers among themselves and NATO – complicated training

As we worked to address the challenges in the security forces, NTM-A was simultaneously addressing the development of the Ministries of Defense and Interior to provide civilian leadership and oversight of the Army, Air Force and Police forces.

### **Ministry Development**

NTM-A's ministerial development programs assisted the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior in building systems required to grow and professionalize these two ministries and their leaders. The development spanned from teaching basic literacy to the creation of the manning documents that would provide a functional leadership and staff, to development of systems necessary to plan, program and execute budgetary functions not only for basic pay procedures but also to anticipate future force and resource requirements. Once we had organizations formed we had to develop and train the systems necessary to enable the organizations to work together in unison. These systems included establishing day-to-day operational standards and creating their first operation centers. One of our biggest challenges was to obtain the required number of advisors with the appropriate skill set.

### **Tenets of Command – The Three T's**

As you can see the work and scope of NTM-A's responsibilities and challenges were extraordinary. In order to keep a focus of effort within our organization, from the first day in command, I approached the challenge by enacting tenets that we named the Three T's. The Three Ts were Teaming with the Afghans, Transparency in all we do, and setting the conditions for Transition. I reinforced this continuously with all NTM-A staff, trainers, instructors and advisors during my tenure.

I would like to briefly cover each of these tenets so you can begin to understand the climate we worked to create within the organization and among our command team;

### **Teaming**

In order to enable the Afghans to transition to the security lead when NATO reduced its presence, it was imperative the Afghans start owning their challenges and attempt to solve them on their own. Therefore, to change the dynamics in Afghanistan, we needed to Team closely with the Afghan Ministries and their security forces to develop their capabilities and systems. My Command embraced this in everything we did. In fact, within the first two months of my

command, NTM-A's motto became "Shohna ba Shohna -- Ooga-pa-Ooga -- Shoulder to Shoulder." I wholeheartedly concurred with and embraced the thought that Afghans must own their challenges and as a Team we must work shoulder to shoulder with the Afghans towards achieving Afghan solutions. Failure to Team with the Afghans in building their security force and enduring systems would result in mission failure.

This philosophy of enabling the Afghans to own their challenges was also held by the ISAF Commanders. General Petraeus in his 4 July 2010 letter to ISAF troops, reinforced this point, "This endeavor has to be a team effort. We must strive to contribute to the 'Team of Teams' at work in Afghanistan to achieve unity of effort." He again wrote in a January 2011 letter to ISAF troops, "All of our operations must be conducted in complete partnership with, and in full support of, our Afghan counterparts. This is, after all, their country."

### **Transparency**

From my very first day in command, I held a firm belief that NTM-A must be Transparent in all that we did. I continually emphasized and re-emphasized this point with my deputy commanders and staff and also required them to be Transparent. We moved from doing most of our work on the secure computer system to the non-secure system so as to be able to provide the greatest access of our information and intent to others. No area was off limits to outside agencies. If someone wanted to see a specific area, they saw it. In early July 2010, the DoD IG was embedded into the NTM-A. They had access to all of our individuals, files and meetings. We were 100% transparent with them. The only thing we asked for was constructive feedback and helpful criticism.

I would like to note that my Deputy Commander, Brigadier General John Ferrari, Colonel at the time, received the DoD IG Joseph H. Sherick award. This award is the highest DoD IG honor bestowed on non-Office of Inspector General employees. It is granted to an individual who distinguished himself or herself by exceptional service or contributions of the broadest scope to the OIG. This was for his efforts in support of the work being done within NTM-A, and exemplified what we expected of our entire team.

### **Transition**

NTM-A's endstate was to be able to Transition the security responsibility for Afghanistan to their Ministries and Afghan security forces. We would only achieve Transition by effectively Teaming with the Afghans. Everything we did in my command was part of the effort to meet the Transition goal.

It is with these three tenets, Team-Transparency-Transition in mind that I made the majority of my command decisions.

It is important to note, that Afghanistan is a remarkable and sovereign country that has endured conflict for decades. At this point in history we fight alongside of the Afghan National Security forces in seeking to bring peace and stability to this sovereign nation. I have had the opportunity to visit them, work with them, assist in training them, and was able to participate as many of the systems to support them became functional. There continue to be challenges but the men and women in Afghanistan continue the effort. We want them to do well. We want them to succeed.

We are here today to talk about the Afghan Military Medical System. A system that was ranked in the bottom ten percent globally by the World Health Organization. This system presented issues that were complex and required a high degree of coordination with our Afghan partners. Coordination that was necessary and critical in order to have any chance of enduring success.

I supported all audits and assessments into any aspect of our command. In fact, at one time during my tenure we had in excess of 27 simultaneous audits or assessments by multiple government agencies external to the command. All of this was done so we could remain as transparent as possible—and demonstrate sound stewardship of the resources entrusted to us. At all times, I/The Command Team addressed issues aggressively and immediately as they were presented to us. I welcome a discussion about those challenges and how we addressed them.

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WILLIAM B. CALDWELL, IV

Lieutenant General, U.S. Army

**LIEUTENANT GENERAL WILLIAM B. CALDWELL, IV  
Commander, United States Army North (Fifth Army)  
and Senior Commander,  
Fort Sam Houston and Camp Bullis**



Lieutenant General William B. Caldwell, IV assumed command of United States Army North (Fifth Army) on 30 December 2011. He recently served as the Commander, North Atlantic Treaty Organization Training Mission-Afghanistan and Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan from November 2009 to November 2011. His responsibilities entailed the oversight of establishing a legitimate, sustainable and effective Afghan National Security Force comprised of the Afghan National Army, the Afghan Air Force, and the Afghan National Police. Prior to his deployment to Afghanistan, he served as the Commanding General for the US Army Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth responsible for the training and education of the Army's 18 schools, centers and training programs throughout the United States.

His prior deployments and assignments include serving as Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Effects and spokesperson for the Multi-National Force – Iraq during OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM; Commanding General of the 82nd Airborne Division, that included commanding the federal response in New Orleans during Hurricanes Katrina and Rita; Senior Military Assistant to the Deputy Secretary of Defense; Deputy Director for Operations for the United States Pacific Command; Assistant Division Commander, 25th Infantry Division; Executive Assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Commander, 1st Brigade, 10th Mountain Division; a White House Fellow, the White House; Politico-Military Officer in Haiti during OPERATION RESTORE/UPHOLD DEMOCRACY; Brigade Operations Officer, 3rd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division during OPERATIONS DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM; and Chief of Plans for the 82nd Airborne Division during OPERATION JUST CAUSE in Panama.

Lieutenant General Caldwell's decorations include the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, Distinguished Service Medal (with Oak Leaf Cluster), the Defense Superior Service Medal (with two Oak Leaf Clusters), the Legion of Merit (with one Oak Leaf Cluster), the Bronze Star Medal (with two Oak Leaf Clusters), Humanitarian Service Medal (with four Bronze Stars), Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, Presidential Service Identification Badge, Office of the Secretary of Defense Identification Badge, Joint Chiefs of Staff Identification Badge, the Combat Infantryman Badge, the Combat Action Badge, and Master Parachutist Badge. Other awards include: the Louisiana Cross of Merit, NATO Meritorious Service Medal (with Oak Leaf Cluster), Ghazi Mir Bacha Khan Medal-Afghanistan, European Union Police Mission-Afghanistan Medal, Polish Armed Forces Gold Medal, Afghanistan National Police Symbol of Honor Medal, several foreign parachutist awards, and the 2008 Honorary ROCK of the Year. He is also a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Lieutenant General Caldwell was commissioned as an Infantry Officer from the United States Military Academy at West Point in June 1976 with a Bachelor of Science in Engineering. He also earned Master's Degrees from the United States Naval Postgraduate School and from the School for Advanced Military Studies at the United States Army Command and General Staff College. He also attended the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, as a Senior Service College Fellow.

He and his wife, Stephanie, are both originally from Columbus, GA. They have five children.

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