

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BLOGGERS ROUNDTABLE WITH TINA HAGER, PHOTOGRAPHER,
TASK FORCE FOR BUSINESS AND STABILITY (TFBSO) DATE: THURSDAY, MARCH 18,
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MC1 BURGESS: Hello, everyone. I'd like to welcome you all to
the Department of Defense's Bloggers Roundtable for Thursday, March 18th,
2010. My name is MC1 Molly Burgess with the Office of the Secretary of
Defense, Public Affairs and I will be moderating our call today.

A note to our bloggers online today, please remember to clearly
state your name and blog or organization in advance of your question and
respect our guests' time, keeping questions succinct and to the point.

Today, our guest is Tina Hager, a photographer for Taskforce for
Business and Stability Operations for the Department of Defense. She
will be discussing her experiences documenting Iraq since the start of
the war in 2003.

So with that, without further ado -- someone just called in.
Can I get your name please?

Q Hi. This is Jen Eldie (ph) from the OSD Public Affairs
Office. MC1 BURGESS: Will you be asking questions?

Q No, ma'am.

MC1 BURGESS: Okay.

So without further ado, I will go ahead and turn it over to Ms.
Hager, so she can start with an opening statement. Go ahead, ma'am.

MS. HAGER: Hi. Thank you. Thank you, Molly, thank you so much
and I appreciate the opportunity to be on this program. I thank you for
having me.

First of all, I'd like to say that I'm a photographer, so I
usually let my photos speak for themselves. I've been a photographer for
20-something years and I've been very fortunate to have had a diverse and
colorful career.

I've worked in countries all over the world, sometimes in less than desirable conditions, a few conflicts, a few coups here and there. I was a photographer from 2001 to 2005 for President George W. Bush and I'd covered conflict before, but was able to witness the historic decisions, which were made at the highest level, which was fascinating and an honor for any photographer to document history in such a manner is an honor.

So I took my first photos from Iraq during the president's 2003 surprise Thanksgiving Day visit.. It's the first photo in the essay and it's Air Force One flying into Iraq and we're spiraling down into Baghdad. And it was all very exciting and I was lucky to be a part of that.

I know that some of you who are listening are also photographers, so you probably can relate. I couldn't stop thinking that as a photographer, I should be there. I should be in Iraq, which was funny considering I had a pretty good job at the time. But I was drawn to Iraq, as many of us were. So after a four-year term at the White House, I felt it was my photographic obligation, after seeing history unfold at the very top, to be able to continue to photograph the same situation, same subject matter at ground level. It was quite a unique opportunity. And I think I've always referred to what I do for a living as crouching in the corner of history.

So Iraq and Afghanistan were definitely on my photographic radar, and Dubai, as it turns out, has non-stop flights to both and it's an easy place for women to live. So it was an easy choice to move there and in 2005, I moved to the Middle East and I worked as a correspondent, a foreign correspondent, for a major European news magazine. Then I based myself out of Dubai and covered the entire region, which included the Middle East and South Asia. And I completed quite a few assignments in Iraq, which included in embeds with the U.S. military and trips with Secretary Rice. And in 2009, I was afforded the opportunity to document Iraq for TFBSO, which is the Task Force for Business and Stability Operations in Iraq. And at the time, many photographers were focused on kinetics and tragedy, and what made this assignment so unique was that I would be working with DOD, but on the civilian economic development side. And the task force afforded me access to everyday Iraqi life. It was quite the opportunity and I'm very grateful and I really got to see Iraq.

So with that introduction, I'd love to take your questions.

MC1 BURGESS: Great. Thank you, ma'am. Let's go straight to the questions. So the first call online was Dale. So go ahead, Dale.

Q Good afternoon, Tina.

MS. HAGER: Hi, Dale.

Q Thank you very much for taking your time.

I'm Dale from MilitaryAvenue.com. And my first question is, on what kind of progress have you seen or documented in Iraq since 2003 that

your photography could tell the Americans of why we went there and what you saw?

MS. HAGER: The progress is staggering. I have -- I think you have the slide show up or I'm looking at it right now. It's -- I arranged it so it's chronological. A lot of it started with, obviously, the trip into Iraq 2003 and then my embeds and then General Petraeus, whom I met actually at Fort Leavenworth the first time, at the Luxembourg School. And then after that, I was embedded again during the surge and then the TFBSO assignment came along and then it was -- just to be able to see the factories or the rebuilding.

The -- there were hundreds of factories that were virtually -- very similar to Eastern Germany, East Germany, where they were untended or nobody was working there. To see these revitalized or in 2006, or 2007, flying over Iraq, it was dusty. It was this -- colorless, and now you fly over and it's just the fertile crescent, beautiful green belt and you see these amazing fields and -- very prosperous.

It's back. It's very successful. And it's definitely a success story. And it's been slow, but it's now, no stopping, and it's pretty impressive.

MC1 BURGESS: Thank you. Go ahead, Andrew.

Q Hi. Andrew Lubin here from Leatherneck Magazine, I appreciate you taking the time today. MS. HAGER: Hi. How are you?

Q Good. Thank you.

A question for you -- going back a few months, we had an incident in Afghanistan where a lady from the AP photographed a Ranger who was dying -- wounded, dying and then died. AP chose to put it up on the Net and all over the world, anyway. Drew Bolt's a reporter and he works for the government. How do you stand on this? On that?

MS. HAGER: Actually, I'm not a reporter, I'm a photographer.

I do make a big -- (laughs) -- that is a big difference for me. So -- you know, I document history and, obviously, if it somehow harmed somebody, I wouldn't -- never do that. But I have -- no, I don't know the situation and I don't know the incident and so I don't think that I have any comment on it.

But I feel very terribly for the soldier's family. That's about all I could possibly say to that say. I mean, what's worse than losing a loved one?

Q Just seeing it on television, would be my best guess.

MS. HAGER: I'm sorry?

Q I said, seeing it on television would be my best guess.

MS. HAGER: Oh, yes, no, I'm sure that would -- I think there are regulations about that. I think there are, I know that you can't --.

Q Well there are, and that's why I asked you, as a photographer, this was the lady who photographed it and then AP decided to run it regardless. I believe, after -- before the young man's parents were notified. Then the parents asked them not to do it.

MS. HAGER: Well, yeah, I can't speak for that situation. I work for TFBSO and I can't speak on behalf of AP. No.

Q Okay.

MS. HAGER: I'm sure it's terrible for everybody.

MC1 BURGESS: Thank you, Andrew and thank you, ma'am. Go ahead, Chuck. You're next.

Q Hi. Chuck Simmins from America's North Shore Journal.

MS. HAGER: Hi, Chuck. How are you?

Q I'm good. How are you doing? MS. HAGER: Fine, thank you.

Q Going to get a little technical on you here. Right now --

MS. HAGER: Okay.

Q Are you using film or digital, and what kind of lenses -- size lenses are you using to show your work? I know glare is probably a problem in Iraq, so what are you working with?

MS. HAGER: It's all digital. I'm actually, unfortunately, because I'm a classical photographer and I just love film. So -- but it's all digital just because, you know, labs out here are scarce -- (laughs) -- and the temperatures and -- I use Mark II and a Mark III and sometimes a D5. I use all Canon and I have a 70 to 200 lens with a stabilizer, which is really handy when it's dark. And then, you just go a wide angle and a mid-range. And I always -- when I work, I travel with sort of a Noah's Ark of photography set up ahead. Pretty much two of everything, because something always breaks and even -- I even have two computers. I -- it's -- I think it's the dust and the vibration that really -- between the dust and the vibration, something always breaks. So -- and if it's electronic, you can't (handle ?) it in any way.

So it's my recommendation just to have two of everything. Just keep the backup back at the camp or the hotel or room and then you'll be fine. But I've never regretted having a double. My Canon seems to serve me well. I hope that answers your question.

Q Yes, it does. Thank you.

MS. HAGER: Thanks.

MC1 BURGESS: Great. Thank you, Chuck. Thank you, ma'am, again. Go ahead, Nick, you're next.

Q Yes. Hi. My name is Nick Mottern, I write for Truthout.org and also ConsumersforPeace.org. I was looking at some pictures that you took for Der Spiegel, and I think that was about maybe three, two and a half years ago?

MS. HAGER: Okay.

Q So I wanted -- go ahead.

Hello?

MS. HAGER: Oh, no, no. I said okay. I'm here.

Q Yes, I had a question about a couple of pictures, and then I've got another question I could ask too, and you can see how you want to sort out the time. But there's one picture with General Petraeus and someone in a tiger suit. Was the tiger representing some military division or what was that?

MS. HAGER: That was, oh gosh, that was in Tallil. That was in Tallil and that's -- those are the Australians. I don't know why Australians and tigers, I have no idea, but it was a presentation and for some reason the tiger -- I'm forgetting what the whole joke about the tiger was, but that was just General Petraeus flying down there to meet with the coalition forces.

Q Okay.

There's another picture of a policeman standing guard at the Mosul police station with detainees on the ground with blindfolds on. And --

MS. HAGER: Yes, okay. That was Mosul. Yes, I think Mosul.

Q Yes, I think it looks like an American, actually, although it's not really clear to me.

MS. HAGER: No, I -- it definitely wasn't an American. No, definitely not.

Q Okay.

MS. HAGER: Definitely not an American.

Q What I noticed in looking through the photos is that I don't see any photographs of casualties either of Iraqis or Americans. I was wondering, have you been a witness to any casualties, Iraqi or American, during the period that you were in Iraq or have been in Iraq?

MS. HAGER: No, not as far as -- .

Q In other words, were you witness to anyone being injured in a bomb explosion? Being shot? Anything?

MS. HAGER: Actually, my husband -- (laughs). But, yes, yes, I -- yes, of course, and actually one of the most moving assignments I've done regarding this whole subject matter is in Landstuhl. I can't praise that hospital enough. I am -- it's obviously a very moving place to go, but I just have never seen a more impressive hospital, with a more impressive procedure. And also reverence for the soldiers, and for each individual. They're greeted when they get off the plane. The first thing that they hear is, even if they're unconscious, the first thing they hear is the pastor's voice and he introduces himself and he says, you know, Peter or Susan or whoever it is, you're all right now. You're in Germany. We're going to take good care of you. And that whole process goes -- continues on through the -- (inaudible) -- through when they go up, they're talking to them the whole time. It's -- it is a sense of reverence for anybody injured and that is very impressive.

And yeah, that's -- obviously it's -- my focus has never been wars or casualties or blood and guts. It's -- I know if it bleeds it leads, that's a very easy well to sell a photo. My practice is to be able to work in difficult situations and tell a story. That's always been my focus. And history doesn't have to be blood and guts, although it exists, there is plenty of photographers that can cover that angle.

And I prefer to cover the other, not that I haven't witnessed it, I just -- like I said this -- there's --.

Q I'm sorry for your husband being injured, you know.

MS. HAGER: Oh, he's fine. You know, he's fine. He just got a little shrapnel. (Laughs.)

But, no, it's fine. So I hope that answers your question.

Q Well, I just wanted to comment, and I -- and you may choose to comment or not, but there has been a huge dearth, shortage, absence, of pictures of the realities of injury and death in this war. And I don't know whether it's been consciously censored by editors in the press here or how that has developed, but there have been things written about that. And so when you say that there are plenty of photographers who are willing to take that -- you know, and those type of pictures, actually those types of pictures have not been appearing here in the United States by and large, since the invasion.

MS. HAGER: Well, first of all, that's not what the previous caller said and then (after all ?), it's -- now anymore. I mean, the kinetic activity is all, on our part, is -- well -- I don't feel comfortable, and this is not my expertise, I'm an observer. That's my job, is -- my job is to be an observer and to try to be as neutral as possible. I photograph my subject matter and I'm sure there are others that photograph theirs.

I concentrate on the stability, the economic stability and obviously there still is some tragedy, but you know, there is everywhere and I would prefer -- I get a great sense of satisfaction to encourage investment and this economic stability in Iraq. That is, for me, the most interesting way where I can help.

And I don't think that my photographing another subject matter would be of any help. So that's why I guess I have the job I do.

Q Thank you.

MS. HAGER: Thank you so much.

MC1 BURGESS: Great. Thank you, ma'am. We're going to go ahead and go back up to the top of the list. So Dale, if you have another question, you can go ahead.

Q Hi. This is Dale again. I do have another question.

What kind of change have you seen in the lives of Iraqi women? Do -- have you seen any change, any progress, in how they're being treated?

MS. HAGER: Yes. Absolutely. Absolutely. From an economic standpoint, I mean, the -- you see a lot of women in charge. You see a lot of women in the factories, working. I would -- I think there is a photo on there of Babylon, where the classes of girls and their teachers went to visit Babylon for the first time.

Now, mind you, they were living in the city below, they're 15 minutes away. They had never been to this incredible historic site. I really am very proud of the progress that they have been able to make. I think that they are definitely moving forward, reaching balance and I think that their economic progress is definitely showing as well. They're a force to be reckoned with, in the economic sector.

In fact, I think that the banks are mostly women. I think the Central Bank and the whole banking industry, that I have witnessed, is predominantly women. So they are definitely are a force to be reckoned with as they hold the money.

Q That's great. Thank you very much.

MS. HAGER: Yeah, it is.

Sure.

Q And you mentioned this slide show, is that on DoDLive?

MS. HAGER: I'm sorry?

Q The -- ?

MS. HAGER: Yes. Yes. I wish you would look at it. It sort of shows what I'm doing. It's -- I think you can click -- I think you can click on the slide show or there's a -- I can't go backwards.

I have a really bad Internet connection where I am. So maybe I'll let somebody else answer that question. If there's anybody on the line who could say how to click onto the slide show, I'd be very grateful.

MC1 BURGESS: Yes, ma'am, I'm trying to get to it, as well, right now to make sure it's up there.

MS. HAGER: Oh, okay. MC1 BURGESS: Yes, if you go -- .

MS. HAGER: They put it together, it's really great.

MC1 BURGESS: Right. If you go on DoDLive -- I'm sorry, this is MC1 Burgess. If you go on DoDLive, right on the front page, we have a photo of Ms. Hager and then right below is a slide show that you just click on it, it says click here, and it'll pop up and just go ahead and start.

Q Okay. I did a search today with her name and it didn't come up. So I -- I'll go to that directly. Thank you.

MC1 BURGESS: Perfect.

MS. HAGER: Perfect.

MC1 BURGESS: Thank you, Dale. Andrew, if you have another question, go ahead.

Q Yeah, I do.

With the expansion of -- and proclivity of digital cameras, and good ones at cheap prices, do you find more competition from the soldiers and Marines who are bringing a lot of equipment over? Or on the corresponding side; do you find less interest in people picking up your stuff because there's more information out there?

MS. HAGER: No. No. I never think that's competition. I encourage it. I think it's great.

I adore the digital age. I think it's great. My mother can send me photos now and it's terrific. It really -- it's progress and it's communication and it certainly helps morale for the families back home and that they can actually see. No, I think it's terrific.

I've been doing my job for 25 years, so I'm fine on the work front. And I have no problems there. I'm very blessed. But, no, I think it's terrific. I just -- I would give everybody a camera if I could.

Q Okay. Great. Thank you.

MC1 BURGESS: Thank you, Andrew. Chuck, if you have another question, go ahead?

Q I do.

You talked about being an observer and --.

MS. HAGER: Yes. Q Over the last 20, 25 years, and -- I've been doing photography. I read that a lot in the trade magazines and papers, you know, I hear photographers say that. And I'm wondering -- there are photographers who have said to my face that no matter what they see through the lens, they're going to take a picture, they're not going to intervene, they're not going to, whatever.

And how many of the really classic, the Pulitzer winning photos are of moments where the photographer chose to take a picture rather than do something?

How do you feel about that kind of divorcing yourself from the moment to capture the moment?

MS. HAGER: Well, that's true and that's -- I think that's for each individual when they come to that moment. What do you do?

I -- there's a great photographer who photographed in Cambodia, who photographed people before they were killed. Maybe that was the only photo ever taken of them. So, you know, I don't know what each individual photographer's goal is in the world or in their own personal, moral, life. But I know that I would always choose the path that I thought was morally correct.

So it is not for me to judge what other people do. I can't -- and I also know that often when I see a really interesting moment, it's very common that photographers forget to press the button. You know, it's really not that uncommon that you just freeze and you forget, you're watching the moment. Or you might be too late.

But I guess I really think in a situation that's morally questionable, I hope that I would always do the right thing.

Q Have you ever had a moment where you dropped the camera to --?

MS. HAGER: Oh, yes. Oh, all the time.

Q Okay.

MS. HAGER: All the time. Yes. I'm not -- yes.

No, I'm not out for -- I think I always make the right choices in that regard. I've dropped it many times and I've -- I've driven people to hospitals and never taken a single picture when they were shot.

I've pulled my side of the line, but I certainly won't judge any other photographer for taking the photo because it's the moments that people remember. And without that moment, somebody would have never known, so that's my own personal reaction, is not anything I would judge anybody else for.

Q Thank you very much.

MS. HAGER: Sure.

MC1 BURGESS: Thank you. Thank you, Chuck. Thank you, ma'am. Nick, if you have another question, go ahead.

Q Yes. I do.

I see that you've taken some pictures that relate to -- or at least on the website, for the economic stability group. There are website pictures of oil refineries and oil pipelines. I know that the U.S. Army had a role in helping with the security of the --?

MS. HAGER: I don't think there were oil pipelines. Are you -- is that on the blog slide show?

Q I'm looking at -- it's not on your blog, it's on the blog for the TFBSO. I don't --.

MS. HAGER: Oh, okay. Is that the gas flaring? The flaring gas? Is that --?

Q Yes, there's a refinery and there's -- then it looks like a terminal. Oil terminal.

MS. HAGER: Okay.

Q: But I don't know, have you visited any of those areas and do you know -- are -- is the US Army still involved in that kind of protection at this point?

MS. HAGER: I do not -- you know, I do not know. I'm so sorry. I'm really not at all qualified to answer that question.

I -- sorry.

Q Okay. Could I ask, do Iraqis react in any different way than we do to getting their pictures taken? Do they -- are they more eager? The same? Less eager? Do you know anything about -- have any sense for how that -- ?

MS. HAGER: Know what? That's a really good question. You know, I think that the -- I'm expecting them to be more suspicious, but they're very similar. I mean, they -- some like having their pictures taken, some don't. But they're very curious.

I'm very tall and I'm a female and, you know, what am I doing there is their first question, and it also, I think that it's -- they're very curious. Q: Yes.

MS. HAGER: But I think very similar. I wouldn't -- I hope that answers your question.

Q Yes. Thank you.

MC1 BURGESS: Great. Thank you, Nick.

We have time for one more run through. So Dale, if you have one last question, you can go ahead.

Q Thank you.

Do you have one story that -- a good news story, that the American people should know about, that you recorded with photography?

MS. HAGER: There are many. The whole -- well, most of the slide show is. And most of the slide show is and we're turning it into a book, hopefully soon. And I hope that people who contributed to this effort can see it, can see the progress that was made.

I think about half the slide show is Iraqis. I -- my Internet is really slow, but I know that I put on there a quadruple bypass operation, you know, which is great. I mean, somebody's being operated on for -- you know, for basically living a little bit too much. And plus, it's advanced surgery.

And the archeological sites are magnificent, and Iraqis are starting to go back and they're able to see their own heritage. This is the cradle of civilization. This is where everything started. This is where the wheel was invented, and I think writing.

I've been able -- fortunate enough to photograph these places and to see Iraqis going back and having full access, and then of course the agricultural advances are huge. It's a big green ocean when you fly over it now compared to the dust bowl.

And then, of course, the factories. All the factories. There are hundreds of factories, state-owned enterprises, that are up and running. Some of my favorites are put up there, Iskandariya, which makes these Case New Holland Tractors. They're blue tractors and it became kind of a game with us to find them. They're all over the country now and they're producing their own equipment for farming, and so it's sort of like "Where's Waldo", to find the blue tractor.

The state-owned carpet factory, I have that on there. It's remarkable. All these women, who have had extreme hardships, are all back to work, are now making carpets that come from an original Mesopotamian design and they basically restructured this carpet. They found a design and they're remaking these old carpets that are now sold in some of the finest stores in New York, in ABC Carpets. So I mean,

there's one after the other. There's -- and they're single success stories about small villages or enterprises and Iraqis are back to work and it's inspiring. It's -- I try to encourage anybody to invest in Iraq. I really think it's worthy and it's -- gives me a great sense of satisfaction. Q Thank you very much.

MS. HAGER: Thank you.

MC1 BURGESS: Great. Thank you.

Andrew? Go ahead.

Q Yes. How do you -- when you're speaking, how do you avoid, or do you avoid getting involved in the politics? Do -- you're talking about the factory in Iskandariya. Women's carpets, things like that, that's nation building, no matter how you want to phrase it. How do you deflect, or do you deflect those kind of questions?

MS. HAGER: Well, normally I just don't answer questions. I have made it for so long in my career, to be -- to try to be a neutral participant and a neutral, historic documenter. And I really mean it when I say that I like to crouch in the corner and document history. And that's basically -- I think it's basically what -- how I wish to operate. I think that if I can manage to document these things and it somehow helps, then that's terrific.

Q Okay.

MC1 BURGESS: Great. Thank you, Andrew. Chuck, go ahead, if you're still on the line and you have a question.

Q Yes.

When you were working with President Bush, is there a group of, quote, "White House Photographers," or is there just the one?

MS. HAGER: Oh, there actually is a group. There was my boss, Eric Baker, there was my other boss, Paul Morse, and --

Q Okay. Because I was to -- I was pretty much seeing one big name and then -- and with all the money shots. So -- okay. So -- and how do they divvy up the assignments in the White House?

MS. HAGER: Well, I think that's up to the head photographer to divvy up assignments. I --. Q: You got the --

MS. HAGER: I got the Iraq. I actually got the Iraq assignment because there was nothing going on on Thanksgiving -- (laughs) -- and so nobody knew about the surprise visit to Iraq. So, you know on any day, you can -- at the end of the day, the president has to show up.

Q Yes.

MS. HAGER: So if the president has to show up, it's pretty important.

Q Right.

MS. HAGER: So, I -- it doesn't bother me if it's -- was signing or some sort of economic meeting. You never know what's going to happen on a given day. Whether it's going to be a boring Thanksgiving in Crawford and we ended up going to Iraq. So I just thought it was an honor all around to be lowest on the totem pole in the highest perch.

Q Yeah.

What office do the photographers work out of at the White House? The press secretary or some other --

MS. HAGER: No, no, it's a White House Photo Office. It's its own office.

At that time, we had a little office in the West Wing, which was actually Reagan's old barber shop.

Simmins: Okay. Well, then the photos that you take, get run them through the Press Office? Or --

MS. HAGER: No, they -- they're -- well. They're part of the -- they belong to the White House and so they belong to the National Archives after -- and whatever the presidential library is after that. So --.

Q Oh, okay.

MS. HAGER: So, yes, that's -- .

Q Okay. Thank you.

MC1 BURGESS: Great.

MS. HAGER: You're welcome.

MC1 BURGESS: Thank you, Chuck. And Nick, if you're still online, go ahead with your question.

Q Yes. I was wondering with your work, you work directly for the Department of Defense right now in this economic task force. Do you feel as though you -- that this is a journalistic activity or a promotional activity? I mean, how do you -- how would you characterize, you know, in your own view, what your work is right now?

MS HAGER: Oh, definitely it's --.

Q Because I know at Der Spiegel, that was a journalistic activity.

MS. HAGER: It's funny, the connection, because actually now I have -- I mean, I have a lot more freedom now to photograph everything. And it is -- for me this is the ultimate journalistic activity, and all the photos are -- they're obviously saved. And if they're published, that's fine, but they are definitely saved and what I -- what my hope is, is just to document history and eventually they are saved and archived.

So like any of you -- like any position that I've had before, I'm just thrilled when I can have an entity behind me that will archive them properly way after I'm gone. Such as the White House or the Department of Defense. So I've got all the freedom.

Q In other words, you have more freedom -- in other words, you have more freedom working for the Department of Defense than you did when you were shooting for -- on the Der Spiegel assignment?

MS. HAGER: I think there's nobody really crouching behind you, telling you what to shoot and what not to shoot. So I don't think any way or the other. I think I've been lucky and fortunate my whole career to be able to photograph whatever I want. I think my clients seem to be happy with their -- with the result and with the product.

Q I see. Okay. Well, I appreciate that. Thank you.

MS. HAGER: Thank you.

MC1 BURGESS: Great. Thank you all. We've had some great questions and comments.

So before we wrap up today's call, I'd like to go ahead and ask Ms. Hager if you would like to say any final comments?

MS. HAGER: Wow.

Okay. Well, I guess I'd prefer to make my closing statement as brief as possible. And please feel free to visit the website, there are photos up there, and hopefully it'll be -- it'll continue to change, and I'll be heading back to Iraq in April and I'm looking forward to it. I'm so happy that I could have been here today, and thank you for joining me. And I'd like to give a quick unprofessional shout-out to my parents and to Sara Steele and everybody else at the task force.

MC1 BURGESS: Great. Thank you, ma'am.

MS. HAGER: Thank you.

MC1 BURGESS: Thank you, gentlemen, also.

Today's program will be available online at the Bloggers link on dod.mil, where you'll be able to access a story based on today's call along with the source documents such as bios and this audio file and print transcripts.

So again, thank you, thank you all and our blogger participants.
This concludes today's event. Feel free to disconnect at this time.

END.