

Our greatest credentials on fighting the war on terrorism are our junior leaders and Soldiers.

Combat experience is the greatest combat multiplier in a combat environment. Our junior leaders and soldiers who are fighting this war on terrorism have that combat experience. They gained the experience from executing doctrines, exercising policies and integrating modern technologies in combat. Their actions in the combat environment determine the validity of our doctrines and policies and as well as all the modern technologies we have. The changes and updates are base on what works and does not work mainly for the soldier on the ground.

The Strategic, Operational and higher Tactical level leaders have great contribution on the war on terrorism. However, I want to turn the spot light to our junior leaders and our soldiers. They are the ones who turn the script into action. The actions of our junior leaders and soldiers have a positive or a negative impact on our effort on this war on terrorism.

Our junior leaders and soldiers are doing a phenomenal job in the type of warfare that a few or only our elite forces were exposed to. The battle ground and the type of warfare that our soldiers are expose to now is even more danger and harder to fight in. Our soldiers are facing an enemy that is decentralized to the point that you can almost trust no one. Some of the tactics and techniques that the enemy is using are based on their mood of the day or the million ways of how to kill scenario. I admire the ability of our soldiers to adapt to this ever changing battlefield. Doctrines and Policies are being written and changing as we are fighting this war. The flexibility and adaptability of our soldiers is the key to success in defeating the enemy. Even though the enemy are constantly changes their tactics and techniques; our soldiers are always a step ahead.

Gathering lessons learned and keeping up to date with the latest tactics, technique and procedures (TTP) both ours and the enemy is my mission here in Iraq. I participated in all different types of mission; from convoy escort missions to convoy/foot patrol missions. One thing that all those missions have in common is that all were led by junior leaders (Staff Sergeants/Sergeants). Some of the missions had some of the higher chain of command leaders involve but still led by the junior leaders. I credit our success here in Iraq to our junior leaders and our soldiers.

About two years ago as a platoon sergeant, I helped train my old unit (A-Battery 2/15 FA, Ft Drum NY) on convoy procedures and how to react to ambush and other collective tasks. Interestingly I met up with them here in combat. They were one of the units that I went out on a convoy/foot patrol with. Now this time they trained me. One of the sergeants taught me all the new techniques on how to set up a traffic control point (TCP) and a staff sergeant showed me how to hunt for an improvised explosive device (IED). I learned a lot from them through their combat experience. The training they received from me two years ago is way outdated and never been used. These soldiers are expert on finding IEDs and setting up TCPs.

I went out with C Co 1/18IN (QRF team) on a mission in the city of Tikrit. The Staff Sergeant that was in charge of the group was very knowledgeable on his mission and his team's responsibilities. His soldiers were very precise on the execution of their mission. They know the area and the community real well and that is the key to their success of keeping that place secure. I went with a National Guard Military Police platoon on a convoy escort mission and encounter the same qualities. They were very proficient on their duties and responsibilities. As a matter of fact, the Specialist who gave the convoy briefing was very thorough. Even though they were escorting a two star General around, they did not change the way they operate. They were very professional. I can go on with more stories to justify the important of our junior leaders and soldiers and the great job that they are doing. The bottom line is that they are the most important asset that we have on fighting this war on terrorism.

It requires the involvement of the soldiers in any type of military operation no matter what. To re-emphasize the important of our soldiers on this war on terrorism is the aftermath of the "Shock and Awe" operation. There were a lot of great weapon system been used from the Air Force and the Navy during that campaign ("Shock and Awe"). And as you know, our soldiers are still here fighting the war. Modern technologies are great but the ultimate weapon to win this war is the soldiers on the ground. We have superiority with our technologies and equipments because of our taxpayer's money, but we have a powerful military because of our soldiers. Our junior leaders and soldiers are our greatest credentials on fighting this war on terrorism.

To our soldiers; keep up the good fight. This fight needed to be fought. It is for a great cause. It is not just for the sake of our safety but also for the sake of humanity. For the soldiers who fought in the past, the soldiers who are fighting now and the soldiers who are about to join this fight, thank you for your service. And for the soldiers who gave the ultimate sacrifice, thank you for your service and your name will be remember forever. May God bless all of you, our coalition forces and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

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