

Interviewer: [REDACTED]

Hi. So let's begin by just asking you about the "well we have a paper unemployment I think that you've read and have some reactions to it. And I just am going to ask you very generally to tell me what your thoughts are about it and we'll get to some specifics afterwards.

LTG T. Bostick:

[REDACTED] Well, in general I think the whole concept of talent management is a good one for our Army. I think it's been very challenging for the Army during this period of time where we're fighting two wars to really look at the professional development of our officers across a broad range of skillsets while also meeting the demands of our war fighting force. So it's really time for the senior leaders of the Army and all of those that we lead to think through where it is we want to take the leaders of the 21st Century and what types of skills "what types of talents" are going to be required for them to be successful in the years ahead.

Interviewer: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The paper makes a number of recommendations specifically to look more to a kind of free market approach to having officers choose in a sense their own assignments and those in need of the Army show where those needs are "matching them up. Does that sound like a productive use of a strategic approach? Before you answer that let me ask Sergeant Cookie "just move the microphone over a tad so it's closer. I will let you know if it's not in the frame. That's good. Make sure it doesn't have to get a balance. We're fine. That's good. Good, terrific.

Sergeant Cookie:

This is fine up there?

0:01:51

Interviewer: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] No. As long as second voice it's fine.

LTG T. Bostick:

[REDACTED]

I think the concept of young officers identifying their special talents and skills and being able to express those in a medium where supervisors could then match those skills and talents with the jobs that are directly related to them. I think that idea is a good concept and it's executing that in this environment that we need to sort out how do we do that? How do we slow the tempo of the Army down enough and give opportunities to our young officers to really move into those jobs that are really suited to them. But I think the concept is a good one.

Interviewer: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The concept is built of course around the whole notion of strategy and looking forward and I'm curious how you feel about this notion of a talent base strategy. This was defined in the paper "I suppose I could define it again for you if you want. But whatever your reactions to a talent-based officer core strategy.

LTG T. Bostick:

[REDACTED]

Well, I think in some areas and with some leaders the notion of talent has a negative connotations. If you look at "I was reading one of the articles on Enron and they talked about talent management in McKinsey's involvement in that. And I don't know that that's the issue with some of the officers but there's also a concern of treating people in a way that's special for one group and not for the masses. And we're often in the military feeling that we should treat everyone equally. But at the end of the day each officer has special talents and they come to the table with different skills that they've developed growing up. They have different experiences through education and assignments and we all have values that we've developed throughout the Army. So when you combine that into the talent of the individual, it's very different for each officer. So fundamentally I would agree that we ought to look for that talent and that officers who have that have not been able to express the specific talents that they have. It would be useful for us to have a medium in which we could identify that and frankly I think it would be a win-win situation for both the organization "to identify the right person for the right job at the right time" and for the individual "to feel that they're contributing to the team in a very special way that they uniquely have capabilities.

Interviewer: A A A

So it sounds like generally you're endorsing the paper and the thrust of its argument. Is that right?

LTG T. Bostick:

I'm not sure I would say that I was endorsing the entire paper. What I want to ensure is that for those that are involved in the management of careers and officers at this time, the demands on the Army are significant. And I would say that for the Army Human Resources Command for our leaders that are managing officers in very short supply that they are doing a wonderful job in trying to do that. And if you then try to ask, "Are they managing talent in a way that they should be?" In this environment the answer would be, "Probably not." Because the demands are so great that just meeting the demands in an environment where we're short significantly for example in Majors we're probably short just under 3000 Majors. And given that, the ability of those that are in the career assignment business are doing miraculous work just to try to get the job done.

I think the argument is not that they're not doing miraculous work. I think that in general the authors believe that the work that is being done by HRC is very strong. The question is whether the strategic leadership has been adequate to the task, whether we are now looking at the kinds of shortages and the shortage of kinds of talent that we may need going forward. I take your point that the past 10 years have been an anomaly really. We've been involved in a perpetual war, really, from 2001 forward. That skews our understanding of how the assignment of officers may proceed from that. But I'm wondering if you have thoughts looking forward not with respect to a critique of HRC but with respect to how a strategy might be employed to get the best things down the road "the best officers down the road."

Interviewer: A A A

I'm a firm believer that officers should have a wide breadth of assignments and experiences because that adds to their talent and their ability to serve at the very senior levels. And what that might include are assignments outside the army "in Department of Defense, Joint Interagency, working in Congress, engagement with media, education. I believe all those types of assignments make a better officer. I also believe that officers should be in the trenches working in operational assignments. And they should be here in the Pentagon. It's that the strategic level and everywhere in between are challenged now "rightly so " the focus is on the fight. And those that are in the fight tend to stay engaged in the fight and what we as senior leaders need to determine is when is it appropriate and right for the individual to pull that officer out, put them into another environment which in the long run is going to help that individual and it's going to help the Army. *{:.time} 0:07:40

LTG T. Bostick:

I'm a firm believer that officers should have a wide breadth of assignments and experiences because that adds to their talent and their ability to serve at the very senior levels. And what that might include are assignments outside the army "in Department of Defense, Joint Interagency, working in Congress, engagement with media, education. I believe all those types of assignments make a better officer. I also believe that officers should be in the trenches working in operational assignments. And they should be here in the Pentagon. It's that the strategic level and everywhere in between are challenged now "rightly so " the focus is on the fight. And those that are in the fight tend to stay engaged in the fight and what we as senior leaders need to determine is when is it appropriate and right for the individual to pull that officer out, put them into another environment which in the long run is going to help that individual and it's going to help the Army. *{:.time} 0:07:40

Interviewer: A A A

So I guess your argument in some ways is with the practicality of the strategy. Whether it can be employed given the nature of our world. Is that right?

LTG T. Bostick:

I think we have to employ. We have to find a strategy that allows us to broaden our officers and that's going to involve some short term pain probably in the near term in order to develop very broadened officers in the future And I'm dealing with that every day where I work with different subordinate commanders and different functional areas and branches where we identify officers which we believe it's time for them to come out of the operational fight and go into an assignment that may be very different than what they're currently involved in. But in the long term it's going to pay big dividends. The leader in the fight is looking at taking that officer and bumping him up to the next operational assignment that would help them in the current fight. And we have to have a near term focus but we " even more importantly " need a longer term focus. And from an Army view I'm concerned that we're not focused enough on the longer term broadening and developing of our officers.

Interviewer: A A A

So it's a balancing act essentially.

LTG T. Bostick:

I think we have to employ. We have to find a strategy that allows us to broaden our officers and that's going to involve some short term pain probably in the near term in order to develop very broadened officers in the future And I'm dealing with that every day where I work with different subordinate commanders and different functional areas and branches where we identify officers which we believe it's time for them to come out of the operational fight and go into an assignment that may be very different than what they're currently involved in. But in the long term it's going to pay big dividends. The leader in the fight is looking at taking that officer and bumping him up to the next operational assignment that would help them in the current fight. And we have to have a near term focus but we " even more importantly " need a longer term focus. And from an Army view I'm concerned that we're not focused enough on the longer term broadening and developing of our officers.

So it's a balancing act essentially.

LTG T. Bostick:

I think we have to employ.

Absolutely.

Interviewer: Tell us a little bit about your own development and employment I know you were a White House fellow so you were " you had some experience as you alluded to before. Can you tell us a little bit about your background?

LTG T. Bostick: I was at a conference the other day and I joked that I have been in Washington for every rank in the Army. Lieutenant, Captain, Major, Lieutenant Colonel, Colonel, one-star, two-star, now three-star. And I haven't volunteered for any of them but I have learned greatly from each of my assignments here. Truth be known, the first two assignments was because the engineer, basic, and advanced course were located here in Washington D.C. But I was constantly pulled to work at strategic levels and I didn't know all the reasons why but for me it was a great understanding of the challenges that our senior leaders wrestle with. And it was training and mentoring for me from officers that were the chief of engineers, chief staff of the Army and when I worked in Veterans Affairs for Secretary Derwinski. The first cabinet secretary of veterans affairs. So it taught me a lot about how to interact with the American public, engage in the media, with congress, and with the Department of Defense. So those skills operating at junior levels and then going back into the fight in those days which may be Fulda or Bosnia or support for Kosovo and later Iraq and Afghanistan supporting those fights and then deploying in some of them. I think the skillsets that I was able to develop, the mentoring that I received from great leaders, was very helpful in my own development throughout the years.

Interviewer: Speak a little bit about this mentoring notion because I think part of what we've proposed in these papers is that by in a sense having a larger role in choosing their own aids, commanders can be in a situation where they actually are able to mentor much more closely. How important is that to an officer's development mentoring?

LTG T. Bostick: The mentoring or you had mentioned whether the officer chooses

Interviewer: Yes where he has more of a choice in whom he is going to employ.

LTG T. Bostick:

I think

Interviewer:

As opposed to being given someone who fills a slot and is a part for a whole.

Sergeant Cookie: So maybe as commanders are able to select their talent a little bit more, does that then create a little bit greater bond between the commander and the selected S3 or XO and improve the ability to mentor how important is mentoring then as we think about employing our talent?

LTG T. Bostick: I've always looked at jobs in the outer office as fellowships and opportunities to grow junior leaders. I have probably had more aids than most general officers. So I think the number is up to 17 now. And my current military assistant thought that I just run them out as soon as I get tired of them for about three or four months or they trip over. And the reality is I see those as opportunities and you learn a certain amount in those jobs and then when you've learned enough and another opportunity opens then I think it's time to move on. And frankly that's hard on the general officer because it would obviously be a little easier on the general officer in the team to have stability for long periods of time. And there are aids that have been aids for three years. I've never really bought into that. I think that we as senior leaders have a responsibility to train and mentor and there's a certain amount of time that you're going to learn things in that current job and other opportunities will open up and there are other young officers that need that opportunity. So I view those as somewhat of a fellowship to come in and learn. Now it's still hard work. And every one of the aids and XO's that I have had executive officers that I have had have done a fabulous job. And some have stayed in the military and some have moved on.

Interviewer: A A A

À Á Â Ã Ä Å Æ Ç È É Ê Ë Ì Í Î Ï Ñ Ò Ó Ô Õ Ö × Ø Ù Ú Û Ü Ý Þ à á â ã

You choose your own aids, is that right?

LTG T. Bostick:

À Á Â Ã Ä Å Æ Ç È É Ê Ë Ì Í Î Ï Ñ Ò Ó Ô Õ Ö × Ø Ù Ú Û Ü Ý Þ à á â ã

À I do.

Interviewer: Á Â Ã

À Á Â Ã Ä Å Æ Ç È É Ê Ë Ì Í Î Ï Ñ Ò Ó Ô Õ Ö × Ø Ù Ú Û Ü Ý Þ à á â ã

And what basis do you make those choices? Á What things kind of do you look for in an officer?

LTG T. Bostick: À Á Â Ã Ä Å Æ Ç È É Ê Ë Ì Í Î Ï Ñ Ò Ó Ô Õ Ö × Ø Ù Ú Û Ü Ý Þ à á â ã

Well a lot of times they are nominated from the subordinates but I look at someone who can think quickly on their feet. Á Someone who is excited about life and their job and the ability to contribute. Á An officer that is the member of a team. Á Depending on where youâ€™re at you may need some technical knowledge but most times that is not been a significant factor. Itâ€™s really the character, the values, the work ethic and how well they can work as a member of the team. Á I do look at potential and I believe that the officers that serve in those jobs are selected based on their potential to serve at the next level. So many of these young officers â€œ although young â€œ have a much broader view and understanding of the next level of command or even strategically theyâ€™re well read and they understand the issues of the Army and the nation. Á And I think one of the obligations for senior leaders is to pick the next leaders who will come behind us. Á And some of these positions are those positions where we can develop those leaders the best.

Interviewer: Á Â Ã

À Á Â Ã Ä Å Æ Ç È É Ê Ë Ì Í Î Ï Ñ Ò Ó Ô Õ Ö × Ø Ù Ú Û Ü Ý Þ à á â ã

Did you get that part of the discussion or are you â€œ do you have any questions?

Sergeant Cookie: Á Â Ã Ä Å Æ

À Á Â Ã Ä Å Æ Ç È É Ê Ë Ì Í Î Ï Ñ Ò Ó Ô Õ Ö × Ø Ù Ú Û Ü Ý Þ à á â ã

I have a couple. Á Is there a few â€œ if you look at your time through the Army â€œ or your time in the Army over the years â€œ and youâ€™ve seen sort of a change in the way the world works. Youâ€™ve maybe gone â€œ grown up where there was no email when you were a cadet all the way till now your life is driven by technology and a lot of information flow. Á As you think about those changes over time and the economy and just the way the world works, how has that placed different demands on our officers? Á What are officers required to do today that maybe they werenâ€™t required to do five, six, seven, eight, ten years ago?

LTG T. Bostick:

À Á Â Ã Ä Å Æ Ç È É Ê Ë Ì Í Î Ï Ñ Ò Ó Ô Õ Ö × Ø Ù Ú Û Ü Ý Þ à á â ã

Well I remember when I was the executive officer to the chief of engineers and I went out and my secretary â€œ chief secretary â€œ had a pile of things on her desk and many of those I did not give to her. Á And ii realized that a lot of the folks that were working actions for the chief of engineers couldnâ€™t type and they couldnâ€™t put charts together. Á And she was doing a lot of that work. Á And I remember taking a stack of things to lieutenant colonels and saying, â€œYou need to get into the 21st Century and you need to learn how to do your own work.â€ And I think more and more there is a higher expectation and a need frankly for officers to be able to roll up their sleeves and do the work. Á And it doesnâ€™t matter at what level youâ€™re operating. Thereâ€™s certain skills that you have to have and if you donâ€™t have them then you learn and you develop those skills and you get better. Á But I think everything from â€œ we didnâ€™t have Facebook and we didnâ€™t have Twitter and we didnâ€™t have a lot of the Google and many folks can operate in that medium now. Á But the individual skills of the leader â€œ to be able to move quickly and operate and think along a wide variety of different concepts and ideas and to be able to do that individually and to lead in that kind of environment I think is much more demanding today than it might have been when that information was not available.

Interviewer: Á Â Ã

À Á Â Ã Ä Å Æ Ç È É Ê Ë Ì Í Î Ï Ñ Ò Ó Ô Õ Ö × Ø Ù Ú Û Ü Ý Þ à á â ã

À Let me ask you whether these new social media you believe constitute an opportunity for the Army. Á As you probably know from the paper one of the arguments we make is that these new social media now contain terrific amount of ability to communicate â€œ a terrific amount of information about anybody to give a more concrete picture of their strengths, their skills, what theyâ€™ve done in their lives, what they would like to do in their lives.

AA

Well I think this can be very difficult for a young officer to think about where they might be in 20, 25 years and what skills they may need to develop early on. So if they're in an operational setting they're going to focus on those skills that they need to develop and they're going to see how operational leaders several grades their senior and they may seek to develop some of those skills. I think by assignments we will help them see the other skills that they need to develop that will help them as senior leaders many of which are not going to be in our operational force. I wrote a paper recently for the recruiter journal talking about that assignment for a young company commander or a second company command being a true broadening assignment because here you have a young captain working in middle America or New York City with no installation around them They're dealing with Congress, the media, universities, high schools, education, health care " a wide variety of challenges and issues that are placed on a young officer early in their career " a clear broadening assignment that many run away from or don't want to be assigned to. So the purpose of the article I wrote was to say, "We need to look across the Army at some of the non-operational assignments and recognize that those are developmental assignments for future leaders." And I really believe that those young officers that are engaged with radio and television, marketing and advertising, recruiting, manning our Army, out in recruiting, cadet command, that those are skills that will help them in the years ahead.

Interviewer:

Which of your many assignments would you say best prepared you to be a G1?

LTG T. Bostick:

That's a difficult question. I think each assignment that I've had is prepared me to be a senior leader in one way, shape, or fashion. In terms of preparation for the G1 I'd say I did a lot of work in recruiting and I thought that when I went to recruiting command they had me confused with someone else. Some other Bostick must have experience in recruiting command to be getting assigned there because I've never been there before. And the more I thought about it, all of the officers in the Army " and the non-commissioned officers in the Army " were all in the people business and were all recruiting in one way shape or form every day. When we tell our Army story, when we engage with the American public, when we go to universities and high schools and speak, we " whether we know it or not " are recruiting for the Army So it was more of a natural transition for me once I got there. What was different was the heavy engagement with the American public through media " both television and radio " in both very cordial settings and not so cordial settings. Engagement on a fairly regular basis with the Congress and then working marketing and advertising in a way that I have no experience. So it was truly a broadening assignment for me and probably the assignment that helped me the best for some of the duties and responsibilities that I have here. But that's only from the manning perspective. I think anyone that's on the Army staff needs to understand how to work as a member of a team and how to lead and how to work through very, very challenging issues. And that you learn from a very young age and I think what's benefitted me on the Army staff is my time in D.C. and really having the opportunity to work in a very strategic level for senior leaders like General Williams " who was the chief engineer " and General Shinseki " the chief of staff of the Army.

Sergeant Cookie:

So if you as the G1 and you're " you had something to say to junior officers out there, what would you tell them are the biggest challenges that the G1 sees in the future and is looking to work on?

LTG T. Bostick:

It's interesting. When I look at some of the biggest challenges for the Army from a G1 perspective, I have a unique opportunity to travel around the Army, visit most divisions and many of the installations throughout the United States and then spend time in Korea and in Germany talking with our leaders and our soldiers and our civilians And there are a number of things that I think are important for us as we move forward. One of them is what we've talked about here is our leader development and I think it's incumbent upon our leaders to ensure that in this fast operational pace that we live in that we take time to educate our force, to put them in environments where they continue their education both academically and form different assignments. And that we continue to broaden our leaders in assignments that are strategic in Washington or major commands in the joint staff and OSD on the hill and in various locations throughout our Army. I think our leader

development which I think General Dempsey is helping the chief to lead and I'm working General Dempsey and Mr. Lamont that that's a big part of the future of our Army. We need to focus on it and we need to do that now. The other thing I would say is we're taking a hard look at how we support the Army Force Generation model. Which is a different model that doesn't align well with graduations from high school, graduations from college, and our own military education system like the Intermediate Level Education, our company commander's course in the Senior Service College. So that's a major change in how we fight and how we prepare for the fight but it's essential to the future of the Army that we look at how do we adjust the policies and the procedures so that soldiers coming out of the training base and coming out of the schools and into the Army Force Generation model can deploy, fight, win, redeploy and still go back to my earlier point with education, broaden their education and have the opportunities that they need to.

Interviewer: [Redacted]

Sir, when the earthquake happened in Haiti I understand you had a story of wanting to step forward and being an engineer yourself and offer your own assistance. Is that right?

Can you speak to that story?

LTG T. Bostick:

[Redacted]

I think any leader that is in our military, when there's a tragedy that strikes is going to want to be there to help, to do the best that they can as a soldier, to be a part of ongoing operations to help. My best buddies are deployed right now and they're serving and we're back here and we're doing very important work to ensure that they have the forces that they need. And when the earthquake struck, being an engineer and having operated in Bosnia and pushing troops like our engineers to Kosovo and deploying into Iraq and having worked with the Corps of Engineers in an assignment there, there were certainly skills that I have that I thought I could offer. But there were other requirements back here in the building that were equally important. So I worked on those. And the troops down there did a really great job and I'm proud of them.

Interviewer: [Redacted]

[Redacted]

Could you repeat that one more time only using the word Haiti in your answer because listening to your answer I realize we never referenced the actual location. I was just hoping that you could say that again.

LTG T. Bostick:

[Redacted]

Yeah. What I was saying when I saw what was happening in Haiti, I did immediately offer my assistance to go down and see because of my background in those kind of operations. When you go to a place like Bosnia or Iraq during and after a conflict, it is somewhat of a disaster situation. And engineers among other different branches have skillsets that they can offer and make a difference and I certainly like any soldier, I think, when there's a difficult time in the nation or in our army, you want to be answering the sounds of the guns so to speak. And that's what I offered to do. I had other pressing matters here in the Pentagon that I had to attend to and we have great soldiers that were down in Haiti that did a wonderful job.

Sergeant Cookie: [Redacted]

[Redacted]

So you talked to make a really strong connection between development and employment in discussion, you know how we employ our officers and the jobs we give them in assignments we give them broadening opportunities and really develop them as well so that linkage is really strong. Could you maybe talk a little bit to a linkage between our assignments and retention? Our assignments and accessions and the importance of how we bring people into the Army, how we sort of maybe set the marketing or the value of being an Army officer and what that really does for their development and their ability to stay with the Army retention. How they attract that talent as well through good employment opportunities

LTG T. Bostick:

[Redacted]

Yeah. Well first I would say that I have throughout my career I have never asked for a job and I would joke with my wife because I've been assigned to a number of jobs and I've gone there wondering why I was being assigned to this and then it turned out to be great. So my point is someone was looking out for me and I was very, very fortunate.

And maybe they weren't looking out for me and I was just lucky. But I never asked for a job except in battalion and brigade command where the HRC said, "Tell us what

What would you see this “ handling some of these issues that we discussed today with respect to the officer corps “ as a hallmark of your time here and if so what would you like to see accomplished under your term?

LTG T. Bostick:

Okay, let me think. You mean long term?

Interviewer:

Long term, yes. What is success to you in this position? What does it look like?

LTG T. Bostick:

You know, I was having a conversation with an officer “ another general officer “ about this topic of broadening officers and developing them. And having been in Washington for a number of years, it is very difficult to move large concepts over a short period of time. But you can make a lot of progress in different areas. And we happened to be speaking about Olmsted Scholars. And I said, “Don’t wait for us to develop an overarching program that’s going to work for the whole Army. We’re going to do that and we will work on that. But it’s going to take years to develop. But if we can find areas where we can make success and make progress in certain key areas that we know we can by example show the importance of broadened officers with this particular skillset, then we’ve made some success.”

So part of what I would like to see us do is take a look at how we’ve invested in certain officers and how do we track that talent in the Army and how do we further develop it? I think we do a pretty good job in an area “ I’ll give you an example “ the School of Advanced Military Studies. So for the SAMS or the Jedi Knights, we know who those graduates are. We know what their first assignment is and then we track them pretty well throughout their career in terms of the assignments that we need them working. But they’re generally operational type assignments from the tactical to the strategic. But we have other programs where we have invested “ whether in public affairs, legislative liaison, scholarships and fellowships and education “ where those officers also have very unique talents that can contribute in a significant way. Some have a Master’s in business administration for example. In this town, money is king. In just about everything we do there is a money and a people component to it. How do we manage those with that special skill in education that we have invested? Where do we assign them? And where do we see that several years down the roads that we can build the future budget officers of the Army because we’ve broadened enough officers with the tactical, the operational, and the strategic capabilities to serve in that position. So I would like to take a look at it in small groups “ in key areas we can make some progress in. And then I think an umbrella strategy that says, “This is where the Army needs to be in five or ten years to develop the officers that are going to sit in this chair years from now.”

Interviewer:

Thank you very much. I appreciate your time.

LTG T. Bostick:

Thank you. End of Audio