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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
UNITED STATES NATIONAL COMMAND ELEMENT, REGIONAL COMMAND-SOUTH
KANDAHAR, AFGHANISTAN
APO AE 09355-9998

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17 Apr 2006

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: OBSERVATIONS FROM FOB ROBINSON TRIPS

1. On 1 April 2006, I visited FOB Robinson. During this visit I went to several locations on the FOB to gather situational awareness.
2. I was initially met by LTC (7)(c) (RCAG) and MAJ [REDACTED] (ETT) who provided me a general orientation of the site. We went directly to the ETT TOC area where LTC (7)(c) briefed me and the other members of the investigation team on what evidence he had collected. This team included the personnel from the CID and the NIS. He showed me some photographs on his lap top computer at this point and discussed what he had discovered in his time on the FOB. It was clear that he had collected a good bit of information. We discussed this evidence for about five minutes. Having only about four hours on the ground at due to air availability, knowing that we could discuss his evidence at KAF as he was departing with me to go there in a few hours and wanting to focus my efforts on actually "seeing the ground" of the FOB, I cut our discussion short to provide me as much time on the ground looking around as possible. We had discussed his evidence for about five minutes. Following this discussion, I asked him to ensure that he wrote out a detailed statement indicating what he had observed, which he did a day or so later.
3. Prior to arriving, I'd already developed a tentative plan for what I wanted to see to help prioritize my effort on site. I asked MAJ [REDACTED] to take me to the location where the Canadians had been engaged, which he did. After gaining some orientation there, I asked him to leave me so that I could form my own opinion as to what happened there and to ensure evidence collection was made before the site was disturbed. NIS and later CID joined me there and began evidence collection consistent with their plan to do so. CID had been involved in evidence collection at the ETT compound and arrived at this location after NIS. I satisfying myself that I had a reasonable sense of what might be possible and left, leaving them to complete their evidence collection work.
4. The dirt berm where the Canadian's were purported to have been fired upon was located on the NE side of the FOB complex. In addition to MAJ [REDACTED] CPT (b)(6); (Canadian QRF) later identified this same location to me as the one where the Canadian casualties had occurred. At this location I noticed a small dirt berm approximately 10 meters to the south of the perimeter concertina fence; this location was about 15 meters west of the ditch at the North Gate. There was a blood stain on the east side of the berm and some medical debris about two feet to the right (NE) of this blood. This berm appeared to have been formed by a blade bulldozer that may have scraped dirt from east to west in order to form a pile. This pile was oriented on the ground

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running in a SW to NE direction and was likely no more than about 5 feet high. The east of the berm was a little lower than the surface of the ground around it and it appeared to have been where the blade of the bulldozer had dug into the earth in order to create the dirt to form the berm itself by pushing to the west. It was my impression that this pile of dirt was being pre-positioned to serve as fill for the row of empty HESCO barriers just to the west of the berm. This belief was reinforced by the fact that I observed, only about 75 meters away to the northwest, a bulldozer with a backhoe filling empty HESCO barriers with other fill dirt at the time. The row of HESCO barriers by the berm ran generally in a SW to NE orientation for about 100 meters. The HESCO barriers and the berm were parallel structures, although the berm was not as long as the empty HESCO wall. The berm was higher than the HESCO barriers and one could clearly see over the HESCOs from the berm without any obstruction to observation.

5. The HESCO wall formed a right (west) turn at the northeast end of the compound and continued on to the west down in front of the ETT compound. The HESCO wall that traveled to the west was in the process of being filled with dirt, but had not been completely filled at this time. Some of the HESCOs along this wall were being "double stacked" and filled. We stopped the backhoe to take photographs of the HESCO barriers to preserve the site against modification at that time.

6. All HESCO barriers along the SW-to-NE axis were unfilled at the time. They consisted of the external wire screening to form the outside of the barrier and the interior felt-like material. The empty HESCOs that were positioned directly west of the dirt berm had numerous bullet holes in them which appeared to have come from fire originating to the SW and moving to the NE. This direction was determined based on the nature of the damage which indicated generally clean, unobstructed holes in the felt material that had been pushed in from the SW with frays of the material trailing to the NE side that indicated this direction of fire. There was no indication of bullet holes from any other direction. The greatest concentration of holes was in the HESCOs nearest the berm.

7. To the northeast of the berm there appeared to be bullet holes in the wall of a mud walled compound. This compound is approximately 120 meters outside the perimeter wire of the compound to the northeast of the berm. The holes appeared to have followed the same direction of fire as those created by the fire that entered the HESCO barriers directly to the west of the berm where the Canadian casualties occurred. I informed the NIS and CID personnel of this observation for possible evidence collection. When I later inquired about damage to the wall, MAJ [b7, b(7)] informed me that this damage was pre-existing from a mortar attack that had occurred there days prior to the TIC. I informed CID and NIS of this. (I later found out that neither CID nor NIS investigated this actual site that day due to the lack of security for their effort. We all agreed later while back at Kandahar Army Airfield that it warranted a closer look given the direction of fire and alignment with the holes in the HESCOs near the berm sight. NIS investigated this location later, on 5 April, and determined that the wall did have bullet holes a few feet to the right of the pre-existing mortar damage and subsequently withdrew them as evidence.)

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8. I noticed from the location of the berm that the affects of any fires from the mud walled compound approximately 1100 meters to the northeast (the one commonly referred to as "the fortress") would have been masked by the mud wall compound to the northeast that was approximately 150 meters away (the one with the pre-existing mortar damage). I noted that it might be possible for the affects of fire from "the fortress" location to occur on the Canadian position at the berm if it was plunging fire.

9. While in the vicinity of the berm, I met 1SG (b)(6); and CW2 (b)(6); [REDACTED]. They showed me the location of their vehicle position on the night of the TIC. They indicated that they had been in a HMMWV to the southeast of the berm near the inside of the perimeter wire between the north and east gates. They indicated that this was their normal battle position. They stated that they had witnessed that the gun on the NE corner of the SF compound had fired in the direction of the Canadians at the berm and that they had both heard the call by the Canadians to stop firing as they were receiving friendly fire. The 1SG indicated that he had also reported that the Canadians were receiving this fire. Both 1SG (b)(6); and CW2 (b)(6); [REDACTED] indicated to me that they believe there was two or three burst of fire in this direction. They also stated that they subsequently observed that the same gun position on the SF compound corner had shifted its fire in the direction of the ETT compound following its fire on the Canadian position. Aware of the potential seriousness of their statements, I asked "are you positive" to which they both said they were.

10. Next I traveled to the ETT Compound. On the way, LTC (7)(c) [REDACTED] pointed out a number of bullet holes in the small white generator, various CONEXs, the tent, the south side of the exterior wall to the ETT compound and later to the wall near where CPT (b)(6); [REDACTED] was injured. I looked at these holes in greater detail later without him and noticed how they appeared to be lower to the ground the further they were to the south and higher from the ground the more they were to the north. I also noticed that these holes were indicative of fire that generally impacted in what seemed to be a fairly concentrated area along the same general directly and appeared to be from a very long burst of fire. I noticed that there were a fair number of them, about 30.

11. Once inside the ETT compound and oriented to the sight, I met COL (b)(6); [REDACTED] the senior man on the sight at the time of the TIC. I quickly went to the roof of the larger building on the sight. There MAJ (7)(c) [REDACTED] and occasionally one of the ETT Soldiers, talked me through the situation on the night of the TIC as he understood it. He discussed where he believed enemy fire came from indicating that he believed it was from multiple directions, but that the majority of it came from the vicinity of the dominate hill complex commonly referred to as "the Castle." He pointed out the locations of key personnel on the top of the roof, including the position of CPT (b)(6); [REDACTED] SFC Stone and others. He indicated that CPT (b)(6); [REDACTED] was located by the small mud wall on the NW of the roof that was by the location where the northern ladder came to the roof. (The following day when I met with CPT (b)(6); [REDACTED] he confirmed that he was at this location when he received fire and was wounded.) I was informed by MAJ [REDACTED] and the other Soldier there that SFC Stone's position was to the right of CPT (b)(6); [REDACTED] by the sand bag wall. I was told that SFC

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Stone was found dead in a crouching position behind the sand bag wall on the NW corner of the ETT roof. MAJ (b)(6) informed me that SFC Stone was facing to the north when he was found dead there. It was described how no one knew where SFC Stone was located initially during the TIC as it was dark when CPT (b)(6) became injured and the call for a medic went out. SFC Stone could not be found and did not respond when the call for "medic" went out. SFC Stone was the medic. After discovering that SFC Stone was dead, the Navy Corpsman on sight was called and came up to treat the casualties. MAJ (b)(6) discussed with me briefly the fire plan he had during the attack, indicating that the newly arrived HMMWVs had been positioned to the north of the ETT compound, while others (those that normally moved to the outside of the ETT compound to their location) did not do so on the night of the attack. He indicated that he made this decision to not reposition these vehicles as there was no tactical need for them since ample vehicles already occupied their positions already. Sufficient firepower from these positions was already in place.

12. I moved to the vicinity of the east gate. From this vicinity, the QRF Commander, CPT (b)(6) indicated to me that he had observed sporadic enemy fire when he exited the SF compound and moved up the HESCO line to the northeast to the position the Canadian gun team later took up on the berm. He indicated that he observed a lot of tracer fire during this movement. The impression I got from him was that this fire came from some distance away likely from the lower valley area to the north-north east. He stated that he knew of this fire because he had observed tracers as he moved to the berm area, but could not describe anything more specific about this fire, its direction or source. He did indicate that it was non-effectual. I had the opinion at this time that it was not well concentrated.

13. From the Northeast corner of the SF compound, I observed in the direction of the location where the Canadian casualties occurred at the berm. I also observed in the direction of the American casualties on the roof of the ETT compound. The potential for a direct line of fire to either of these locations from this position was very noticeable and evident. I recognized that more investigation was still required in this regard, but that the possibility existed that the casualties at both of these locations could have occurred from this gun position. I also observed from this position that the walled compound commonly referred to as "the fortress" approximately 1300 meters to the north east of the FOB was in alignment with the gun position where I stood. I noticed that "the fortress" was on higher ground than this SF gun position and if enemy fire had come from that location that, assuming it could range, it could have a direct bead on the position where I stood.

14. I asked a young Canadian Soldier who was on duty at this location where he was located on the FOB when the attack occurred and he indicated that he had been in the ditch by the East Gate. Although I did not get his name because we were almost out of time, he did state that his position observed fires from what he believed to be bullets that overshot the FOB from the NW. He informed me that he and the Soldiers he was with had agreed on the night of the TIC to remain in their position and to lay low so as not to become a casualty. He stated that none of the Soldiers at his position fired their weapons. He also indicated that he did not see any enemy

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firing to the east nor did he have any idea of where enemy fire came from, except to say that he thought rounds were coming from the north overshooting the FOB.

15. Within the SF compound, I met CPT (b)(6); the Company Commander. We discussed briefly the firefight. He indicated that when the attack occurred that he and his USAF personnel had moved to the lookout tower within the SF compound. He stated that he had observed a high volume of fire coming from the direction of "the castle." He indicated that he later moved to this TOC CONEX and that he really hadn't seen much of the battle because he was involved with radio traffic to report the situation and assist in coordinating CAS. We discussed briefly his previous operation, the intelligence situation, his OPSEC concerns regarding the ETT activities, and the morale disposition of his forces.

16. Other events on this sight at the time included CID, NIS and my investigators collecting evidence and statements. Many of the Soldiers on the site were in the process of improving the level of force protection on the site. Other non-investigation events on the sight included my discussing the intelligence situation with MAJ (b)(6); and one of his officers and separately with CPT (b)(6); the conduct of a memorial service for those on sight (this occurred in the ETT compound with a Chaplain that I allowed to travel with me as the sight had no such support and it occurred while the investigators were gathering evidence), a conversation with CPT (b)(6); and I regarding some of his concerns about a lack of support for QRF activation and activities, and my asking MAJ (b)(6); and CPT (b)(6); if they or their respective teams needed anything. MAJ (b)(6); provided me a list of a few items he desired, which were provided for upon my return to KAF. MAJ (b)(6); and I discussed the role of the ANA Soldiers during the night of the TIC. He indicated that he had only seen the ANA machine gunner fire and that he did believe that most ANA Soldiers had engaged the enemy during the attack. He indicated his frustration with the ANA as it had not been getting paid, did not have adequate support, and had not fought well in the last three TICs. He was concerned about the lack of support they had received and how it was affecting the will and ability of the ANA Soldiers to fight. LTC (7)(c) returned with our investigation team that day. The Canadian QRF flew out at the same time as well.

17. On 5 April 2006, I again traveled to FOB Robinson following the study of information that was obtained from the investigative team and refinement of the investigative plan over the proceeding days. Selected members of my investigation team, CID, NIS and the Canadian and US lawyers joined me. These teams were largely involved in their own evidence collection which, prior to arrival, had been deconflicted to make best use of our time on the ground. I escorted BG Rahim, ANA investigator, who had joined us to visit the FOB that day. Together we investigated the possibilities of the wounding of the ANA Soldier that occurred on the FOB. During this visit I oriented him to the sight and explained what had changed on the sight from my original visit and the time LTC (7)(c) was on the sight. We visited the various compounds and the locations where contact had occurred. We visited and talked with several ANA Soldiers and their leadership regarding the direction and composition of the enemy attack and the response of the ANA during it. The majority of this discussion was captured that day, along with numerous pictures, from MAJ (b)(6); (7)(c) from my investigation team, in a separate statement

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that summaries the results. In general the ANA indicated that the majority of the fire on the ANA compound came from the area of the "Castle" with minor attacks-by-fire occurring from a couple of the mud-walled compounds to the north and/or northeast of the FOB, approximately 100-150 meters outside the wire. A few ANA Soldiers indicated that small arms and some RPG fire came from the direction of the spur and/or the mud walled compounds to the north center of the ANA compound; they pointed out these areas on the ground. They also noted that they observed fire in the vicinity of the prominent hill mass to the west of the FOB with a small enemy element firing just south of that location.

18. It was ascertained that the ANA Soldier was likely wounded from enemy fire that was coming from the vicinity of the spur near the large wadi system north of the ANA compound. Based on the comments of other ANA Soldiers and leadership, this Soldier was likely wounded when he was running from the truck in which he was sleeping to the ANA "masque" compound. The position of the truck was approximately 75 meters south of the "masque" compound.

19. As BG Rahim and I conducted our investigation about the activities of the ANA during the TIC, it became evident that the ANA there had not been receiving adequate support including pay, food and materials. MAJ (b)(6); (7)(c) discussed his observations with BG Rahim on this and we all met and discussed it briefly with the ANA leadership on sight. BG Rahim indicated that he intended to meet with the higher leadership of this ANA unit the following day in Kandahar to address this lack of support.

(b)(6); (7)(c)

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(b)(6); (7)(c)

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