

1 [The Investigation opened at 1047, 3 November 2009.]

2
3 **LtGen Natonski:** Major **Gray** **(b)(6)(b)(3)**, I am Lieutenant General Richard
4 F. Natonski, United States Marine Corps. I have been
5 appointed by the Commander of U.S. Central Command to
6 conduct an investigation into the facts and
7 circumstances surrounding the combat action at Wanat,
8 Afghanistan, during July of 2008. Major General David
9 Perkins, United States Army, has been assigned as the
10 Deputy Investigating Officer. Lieutenant Colonel
11 **Beta** **(b)(6)(b)(3)** and Lieutenant Colonel **(b)(6)(b)(3)** are **Sigma**
12 Judge Advocates assigned to the investigation team.

13
14 The testimony you provide today will be recorded,
15 transcribed, and included in a report of the
16 investigation. Based on your testimony, we may also
17 prepare a separate written statement for your review
18 and signature.

19
20 Prior to coming on the record today, you signed a
21 privacy act statement. Is that correct?

22 **Gray**
23 **MAJ** **(b)(6)(b)(3)**: That's correct, sir.

24
25 **LtGen Natonski:** Okay. Your testimony will be made under
26 oath and you will now be sworn in.

27
28 [The witness was sworn.]

29 **Beta**
30 **LtCol** **(b)(6)(b)(3)**: Could you please state your name, spelling your
31 last?

32 **Gray**
33 **MAJ** **(b)(6)(b)(3)**: My name is Major **Gray** **(b)(6)(b)(3)**. **Gray** **(b)(6)(b)(3)**.

34 **Beta**
35 **LtCol** **(b)(6)(b)(3)**: And you are currently a Major in the U.S. Army?

36 **Gray**
37 **MAJ** **(b)(6)(b)(3)**: I am, sir.

38 **Beta**
39 **LtCol** **(b)(6)(b)(3)**: What is your current unit and that unit's
40 location?

41 **Gray**
42 **MAJ** **(b)(6)(b)(3)**: Headquarters, First Division, Australian Defense
43 Force, Brizabane, Australia.

44 **Beta**
45 **LtCol** **(b)(6)(b)(3)**: And in July 2008, what was your unit and that
46 unit's location?

1 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Reg Airborne and it
2 was in Konar Province, specifically Camp Blessing.
3
4 **LtCol** Beta (b)(6)(b)(3): And what were your duties with 2nd of the 503rd?
5
6 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): I was the Operations Officer.
7
8 **LtCol** Beta (b)(6)(b)(3): The S-3?
9
10 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Correct.
11
12 **LtCol** Beta (b)(6)(b)(3): And you are an Infantry Officer?
13
14 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): That's correct.
15
16 **LtCol** Beta (b)(6)(b)(3): When did you first get to the 2nd of the 503rd?
17
18 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): July of 2006.
19
20 **LtCol** Beta (b)(6)(b)(3): So you went through the work up--the pre-
21 deployment work up and the deployment?
22
23 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): That is correct, sir.
24
25 **LtCol** Beta (b)(6)(b)(3): Prior to coming on the record today, did you have
26 an opportunity to review a sworn statement you made as
27 part of an AR 15-6 investigation dated 16 July 2008,
28 as well as a 13--excuse me, 14-page transcript of an
29 interview between you and Mr. (b)(6)(b)(3) from the Garnet
30 Combat Studies Institute?
31
32 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir, I reviewed both of them.
33
34 **LtCol** Beta (b)(6)(b)(3): And did you have an opportunity to make changes?
35
36 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): I did on the telephone interview. I made a few
37 changes. Yes, sir.
38
39 **LtCol** Beta (b)(6)(b)(3): And then did you have an opportunity to sign both
40 of these documents on the bottom of the first page and
41 date it for today?
42
43 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): I did, sir.
44
45 **LtCol** Beta (b)(6)(b)(3): And do you adopt these documents as part of your
46 sworn testimony today?
47

1 MAJ **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): I do, sir.

2
3 LtCol **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Major **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3), could you describe during your tour
4 in Afghanistan with 2nd of the 503rd, before Wanat, did
5 the Battalion establish any new COPs?

6
7 MAJ **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir, we established Honaker-Miracle at the
8 mouth of the Watapur and the Pech adjacent to the
9 Shiriak Valley. And then we established OP Dallas in
10 the Korengal Valley.

11
12 LtCol **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): And could you describe what it took from a
13 Battalion's perspective to establish those two
14 positions?

15
16 MAJ **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): For Honaker-Miracle, it was early. And it did
17 not take air assets, but it took extensive
18 coordination with the local Governor. There was a
19 District Governor that was adjacent to where we built
20 Honaker-Miracle, but because it was along the ground
21 line of communication, which is the Pesh River Road,
22 it did not require a deliberate CONOP process and the
23 movement of supplies and personnel. Because Able
24 Company, which was the unit responsible for that, had
25 2 Vehicle Patrol Bases, one in Florida and one in
26 California. Both of those were de-established and
27 then those forces and that initial Class IV was used
28 to establish the original Vehicle Patrol Base at
29 Honaker-Miracle. Honaker-Miracle--the term Vehicle
30 Patrol Base is something that we adapted from the
31 previous unit that we RIP'd with. I know it's not a
32 doctrinal term and it's essentially just using Up-
33 Armored HMMWVS in a 360 degree security with heavy
34 weapons systems. Just establishing security while the
35 Platoon interfaces with the locals and conducts
36 counter ID patrols.

37
38 LtCol **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): What was the Battalion's role in the Honaker-
39 Miracle planning process? You said there wasn't a
40 deliberate CONOP that didn't require---

41
42 MAJ **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): It didn't require us to forecast extensive
43 supplies and rotary wing assets to move the material
44 and the personnel because everything could be--could
45 be moved by truck. So, Able Company had what we
46 called Jingle trucks, the big 5 or 10 ton Local
47 National trucks and the use of Up Armored HMMWVS with

1 trailers to move everything they needed into place.
2 For the most part, from the Battalion perspective, it
3 was the Battalion Commander, on a few instances
4 myself, going to the District Governor and holding
5 Shuras and getting permission to establish that Combat
6 Outpost in that area.

7
8 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): At the Battalion level would there be
9 coordination regarding supplies needed for--to build
10 Honaker-Miracle?

11 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes. And it was the barrier material and Class
12 IV that went from the Company Commander, or his XO,
13 going through our Battalion S-4. And then he would
14 interface with the Brigade S-4 and the Class IV yard
15 to get their material used. The Force Protection
16 models were built by Local Nationals and that was
17 between the Company Commander and the Local National
18 Contractor, but vetted through the Contracting Officer
19 and, I assume, paid by CERP, but I never really
20 checked into that level of detail for payment----

21
22 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): And Honaker-Miracle, was that HESCO barriers or
23 was that a stone wall?

24
25 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Initially, it was--well initially it was just
26 HMMWVS with concertina wire and then as they
27 established and as worked progressed and they went
28 through their priorities of work it was HESCO barriers
29 and then eventually it was the Local National Stone
30 Walls that were built, so it blended in with the local
31 infrastructure and architecture. So, it didn't stand
32 out as an ugly American Base with HESCOs and
33 concertina Wire.

34
35 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): How long--how did you monitor the building of
36 Honaker-Miracle?

37
38 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): It was driving by and stopping and visiting and
39 looking at the progress being made and SITREPs from
40 the Company Commander during our nightly BUB to the
41 Battalion Commander.

42
43 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): And how long would you say it took from the first
44 Soldiers arriving at that site until the HESCOs were
45 up at Honaker-Miracle?
46
47

Gray

1 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): I really have--I mean I can just guesstimate and
2 say probably a month process to get good solid HESC--I
3 mean it was a huge base that had HLZs, had barracks,
4 so it wasn't just a little COP, so I would guess
5 probably a month to fill all those HESCOs with Local
6 National heavy equipment.

Beta

7
8 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): And during that time between, before the HESCOs
9 were up, what was the Platoon's Force Protection
10 measures? You mentioned initially you had vehicles
11 with wire. What else?

Gray

12
13 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): They actually built and had contractors dig
14 fighting positions and bunkers for them with thick
15 overhead cover timbers with sandbags. And then they'd
16 cover it with tarps and plywood; very rudimentary, but
17 the same process used by 1-32 when they established
18 Vehicle Patrol Bases California and Florida.

Beta

19
20 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): And for the Class IV material for the overhead,
21 would that be worked through the Battalion 4?

Gray

22
23 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, but a lot of it was just scavenged from what
24 they tore down from Florida and California. So, it
25 was moved from two other smaller bases and immediately
26 used to build that Honaker-Miracle initially. And
27 then when the Local National Contractors came full
28 force, they eventually built and improved those
29 positions. And then when we left they were still
30 improving Honaker-Miracle, you know, a year later and
31 actually building brick and mortar barracks and the
32 appropriate Force Protection.

Beta

33
34 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): If you recall, what was the threat in the area
35 around where Honaker-Miracle was built?

Gray

36
37 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): It was a contentious--I mean it was at the mouth
38 of the Watapur, which was a bad valley, but there was
39 standoff between the actual location of the COP and
40 the high ground on both sides. So, the majority of
41 the threat was indirect fire or if they used plunging
42 fire from a PKM, but as far as a threat of being
43 overrun, it was not very high.

Beta

44
45 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): As the Battalion 3, did you direct that any
46 additional Battalion Forces or request outside forces

1 to assist when that position was initially established
2 there at Honaker-Miracle?

3 **Gray**

4 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir.

5 **Beta**

6 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): So, was it just the Company----

7 **Gray**

8 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): It was Able Company internal. That's correct,
9 sir.

10 **Beta**

11 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Do you recall what size force they had there?

12 **Gray**

13 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): I want to say at least a Platoon, if not two. I
14 know it was at least a Platoon. I cannot remember off
15 the top of my head how many ANA were with them. So,
16 one U.S. Platoon because that's who was split between
17 Florida and California.

18 **Beta**

19 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Would your--how was the ANA split amongst the
20 Companies in the Battalion?

21 **Gray**

22 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): If I remember, it was a one for one match. So, I
23 am pretty sure it was an ANA Company with a Rifle
24 Company because it was a Battalion KANDAC--ANA KANDAC
25 with our Battalion; so one for one. But we went
26 through KANDACS in the time we were there.

27 **Beta**

28 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): What was your assessment of the ANA as far as a
29 fighting force?

30 **Gray**

31 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Initially they were inexperienced; so not very
32 good. But, we didn't--with all the KANDACS that came
33 and partnered with us, we did go through basic troop
34 leading procedures. They had ETTs with them that
35 helped train them. So initially, not very good. But
36 as we progressed through our deliberate operations and
37 actual--I don't want to say force--but incorporated
38 them into our planning process and we actually briefed
39 CONOPS using them you know sitting in the same room
40 much like we are now briefing over the Breeze, and
41 their competency grew after some experience.

42 **Beta**

43 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): If you were doing a deliberate OP and you had a
44 U.S. Platoon and you had an Afghan Platoon that was
45 going to be with them, would you consider that a two
46 Platoon OP or was that a lesser fraction----

47

Gray

1 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Boots on the ground, a two Platoon Operation.
2 But, the effectiveness of their tactical ability was
3 not the same as a U.S. Platoon. So, we would say we
4 definitely had the firepower--they knew how to shoot
5 and they knew some basic fire maneuver because they
6 were trained by the ETTs. So, definitely an
7 additional asset, but not quite as competent as a U.S.
8 Force.

Beta

9
10 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): And were there differences amongst your Companies
11 as how they used or employed those ANA?

Gray

12
13 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): For the most part it was partnered so there
14 wasn't a significant difference. From what I
15 remember, a Company went out on a Patrol, you know
16 they would take a partner ANA force with them and it
17 was up to the Company Commander what size force they
18 would take with them.

Beta

19
20 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): You mentioned you established another COP as
21 well?

Gray

22
23 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Well, an OP. OP Dallas, which was in the
24 Korengal, south of the main Korengal Outpost. That
25 was under--I mean not constant fire, but definitely
26 the worst out of Wanat, Honaker-Miracle, and OP
27 Dallas, Dallas was definitely the worst as far as
28 enemy activity.

Beta

29
30 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): And you called it an OP. What was it an OP for?

Gray

31
32 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): It was to watch the valley approaches south of
33 the main combat outpost and what we were doing is
34 establishing a position with LRASSs, which was our
35 ground based surveillance system that could see fairly
36 far into the Valley. And then if we could PID them as
37 positively identify them as enemy and a Company
38 Commander could verify hostile intent, then he would
39 engage them and prevent them from getting in position
40 to attack the main COP.

Beta

41
42 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): What was OP Dallas? How big a Force?

Gray

43
44 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): I want to say a squad plus, so not quite a
45 platoon and they would rotate from the main COP that
46 squad to that location and man the OP, man the LRASSs,
47 and the heavy weapons systems there.

1 Beta
2 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): The main COP for that OP was?
3 Gray
4 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Was the Korengal Outpost, so it was the KOP COP.
5 Beta
6 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): And do you recall what effort that the Battalion
7 level input was provided for the establishment----
8 Gray
9 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): We actually went through the--a deliberate CONOP
10 process like we did for Wanat. The heavy equipment
11 operator and Local National labor was coordinated by
12 the Company Commander and paid for by the Battalion
13 CERP money. But, we actually went through the
14 deliberate CONOP process for OP Dallas because it was
15 fast-in required aviation assets for CCA and for CAS
16 and non-standard ISR as the Apaches were flying
17 around. So, it was a definite you know deliberate
18 process.
19 Beta
20 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): And was that OP, was that overhead cover, HESCOs?
21 Gray
22 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): It was what we called C-Barriers and that was
23 immediate overhead cover and then we had pre-made
24 sandbags palletized that were delivered up there, or
25 delivered down there I should say. So, it was within
26 48 hours we had a good OP established with overhead
27 cover and good Force Protection.
28 Beta
29 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): What's a C-Barrier?
30 Gray
31 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): C-Barrier is a concrete shaped--I guess you could
32 call it a U-Barrier, but it's on its side it looks
33 like a C, so when you put it down, it's thick
34 concrete. Probably 6 or 8 inches thick concrete with
35 you know initial overhead cover that you can put sand
36 bags on top of and provide better Force Protection.
37 Beta
38 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): And that could be brought in by a 47?
39 Gray
40 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes.
41 Beta
42 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): And how tall would that stand when it was?
43 Gray
44 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Five feet.
45

1 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): And when was the first time you learned or you
2 may have even raised the idea of establishing an
3 emplacement at Wanat? Do you recall?
4

5 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): As early as July of 07 when we got there. And it
6 **Diamond** was really Colonel (b)(6)(b)(3) talking to the Company
7 Commander because we had Chosen Company based out of
8 Blessing. They had a Platoon at Bella and a Platoon
9 at Aranus also called the Ranch House. Bella and
10 Aranus were air centric, Wanat we could drive to. So,
11 because there was a district center there, the unit
12 before us, 132 Infantry, initiated the building of a
13 District Center, so the idea was raised as early as
14 July of 07 to put a--you know to establish a base
15 there. And what the Company Commander proposed, and I
16 agreed with, was to move that Platoon from Blessing
17 and establish it at Wanat. That way we'd have three
18 Platoons in the Valley, in the Waygal Valley to
19 connect with the population because Bella and Aranus
20 were still relatively remote--I mean they were remote.
21 And there wasn't a lot of connection with population.
22 Whereas Wanat, there was interaction on a more regular
23 basis because the Platoon could drive to it and we
24 didn't need air assets to get there.
25

26 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): What was your mission in the Waygal Valley for
27 the Battalion?
28

29 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Initially, it was Economy of Force. We didn't
30 have a whole lot of CONOPS based around the
31 surrounding area other than going to Aranus, between
32 Bella and Aranus, so it was the same of everywhere
33 else. The three lines of operation, you know continue
34 to maintain security in the sector, help develop the
35 local governance, and then improve infrastructure.
36 The way I understood it, when we first RIP with 132 is
37 both of those locations were built to pull the road
38 north from Camp Blessing up to Bella and eventually
39 Aranus if we ever got the funding for it. 132 proved
40 successful in getting the Pesh River Road paved and
41 that provided some stability in the area and kind of
42 pushed the insurgents into irrelevancy. So, we
43 figured we could do the same thing in the Waygal, but
44 we just didn't have--it was not a priority like the
45 Watapur and the Korengal because it was initially
46 quiet when we first occupied, so that's why it was
47 kind of an Economy of Force for our Battalion.

1 [Beta]
2 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): What else was going on around--in your area?
3 [Gray]
4 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): At what time?
5 [Beta]
6 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): In the Spring of 2008. As far as your other
7 Companies, if you could describe what was taking place
8 in Task Force Rock AO?
9 [Gray]
10 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): The Battle Space was the size of Connecticut.
11 The Konar River Valley and the Pesh River Valley
12 intersected and formed the base of Asadabad, so we had
13 forces along the Konar River and we had forces along
14 the Pesh River, which were the two main artery
15 valleys. And then we had all the capillary that we
16 were trying to again extend those hardball roads and
17 you know as we moved the roads and got them hard
18 paved, we would, in theory, bring you know stability
19 by securing the population, connecting with them, and
20 then you know bringing in CERP money and building and
21 making their life better. So, all the Companies had
22 those lines of operations incorporated into their
23 deliberate CONOPS, but we knew without security being
24 established first then it was futile to think that
25 we'd be able to provide any kind of better way of life
26 if we couldn't secure them.
27 [Beta]
28 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): Was one particular Company's sector given a
29 priority or a focus over others?
30 [Gray]
31 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): The Korengal initially was very much the focus
32 and that is--I think because it received a lot of
33 media attention and initially that's where we took the
34 majority of our casualties. And then Wanat kind of
35 took over--I am sorry the Watapur took over the focus
36 of our efforts for a while because it was the main RAT
37 line that came in from Pakistan that led up into
38 Nuristan, so for the most part during the first four
39 or five months, it was the Valley of Watapur--excuse
40 me the Korengal and then switched to Watapur.
41 [Beta]
42 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): You mentioned in early as 2007 the talk of moving
43 to Wanat had been undertaken at the battalion level.
44 Could you take us through the next year to when the
45 idea resurfaced or was it a constant push to move to
46 Wanat?
47

1 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): No. It was mentioned initially. And then the
2 Class IV material, and this is me talking to the Task
3 Force Engineer at Brigade Level, he basically said we
4 have a finite amount of Class IV and we need it for
5 winterization. So, there's no way we will divert that
6 Class IV to build a Combat Outpost just because you
7 guys think it's a good idea unless you really want to
8 push the issue, which we didn't. So it was never
9 discussed again until I guess, March--March or April.
10 The Brigade S-3 called and said hey I want you to
11 think about establishing a Base at Wanat.

12 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): So that conversation pre-winter, pre-Christmas 07
13 you had a discussion with the Task Force Engineer----

14 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Right----

15 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Or excuse me, Brigade Engineer----

16 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Brigade Engineer, yeah sorry, Brigade Engineer.

17 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): He said, the supplies we have are designed for
18 winterization----

19 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): The winterization of all the COPs because it was
20 such an austere, kind of immature area of operation.
21 There was guys living in HESCO with timbers and
22 sandbags with plastic and obviously that wouldn't be
23 good for the winter, so the priority was using that
24 material for winterization versus establishing new
25 Combat Outposts.

26 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): And then in March of 08, the idea came--the
27 concept came up again.

28 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Right. And I don't know what--I never asked the
29 Brigade 3 what caused him to initiate that, but I
30 assume it was battlefield circulation and you know the
31 Brigade Commander perhaps seeing it was a good idea to
32 continue to make progress.

33 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): So in March of 08, the Brigade 3 came to you and
34 brought up the idea----

35 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Called me on the telephone and said hey I want
36 you to think about it. I am going to send an engineer
37 and some CREST guys and they can do the survey and
38
39
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47

1 initiate the process with dealing with the locals and
2 getting permission to establish the base. There were
3 weather delays, aircraft availability, and I know the
4 original scheduled arrival was not met by that team
5 coming from the Brigade Headquarters at Jalalabad, but
6 eventually they did make it up and they flew to
7 Blessing and actually went up with the Battalion
8 Commander, the Sergeant Major, the Company Commander
9 and the TAC. They drove to Wanat and had a meeting
10 with the elders and then got ambushed on the way back
11 to Blessing and that happened twice.

12 **Beta**
13 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Did you ever go to Wanat?

14 **Gray**
15 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Not until about eight hours after the fight.

16 **Beta**
17 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): The time frame from when the team arrived, the
18 CREST Team and the Battalion Commander went up, until-
19 -when they came back from their initial meeting with
20 the elders, you mentioned there was a second meeting.

21 **Gray**
22 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, because they initially--the elders were very
23 reluctant. They would not openly in a Shura say you
24 could come and build a base at Wanat because there
25 were Taliban or Al Qaeda guys in the Shura and they
26 knew that if they were--if the bad guys, so to speak,
27 saw them collaborating with the U.S. Forces it would
28 obviously be bad for them when we left. So, they
29 would never openly say yeah you can come establish a
30 base at Wanat.

31 **Beta**
32 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Did you use the CREST Team with the OP at Dallas
33 or----

34 **Gray**
35 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir. It was a lot more contentious and there
36 was no village to co-locate that owned the land. I
37 mean it was high ground driving down to another remote
38 but populated area, but it wasn't owned by anyone for
39 us to--we just occupied by force.

40 **Beta**
41 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): And you said there was a second trip up to Wanat
42 to meet with the elders?

43 **Gray** **Diamond**
44 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. Colonel (b)(6)(b)(3) basically said you
45 have this amount of time and we'll be back and you
46 know we'll go over the process again and we'd really
47 like to establish the base. It's for your own

1 prosperity and to partner with us, we'll provide the
2 security. We'll provide you jobs so you have some
3 income. And then we'll get projects initiated you
4 know building a road, building a school, building an
5 aid station, whatever. And it will make life better
6 for everyone in your village.

7 **Beta**
8 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): So as the 3, what are you doing at this point
9 when the Colonel is going up and he's meeting with the
10 elders? What kind of planning are you doing?

11 **Gray**
12 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Initially, it's going through the assessment or
13 mission analysis to figure out okay how many aircraft
14 do we need? What's going to be the scheme of
15 maneuver? Because it wasn't just the establishment of
16 Wanat, it was the disestablishment of Bella prior to
17 occupying Wanat. So, in my mind, the most riskiest
18 part of that of CONOP Rock Move was the
19 disestablishment of Bella and not the initial
20 occupation of Wanat.

21 **Beta**
22 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Why is that?

23 **Gray**
24 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): There was a lot of enemy activity up around Bella
25 for the previous months in April, May, June. And we
26 were having limited success in the Korengal. We were
27 having limited success in the Watapur. And, based on
28 the S-2's INTSUM every day, there was a lot of
29 suspected insurgents that were moving from those other
30 two Valleys and congregating up around Bella because
31 they knew it was a remote outpost. Then, we had a
32 local national or a Russian Contracted Helicopter shot
33 as it was delivering fresh fruits and vegetables. And
34 then there was a U.S. Soldier shot through the chest,
35 **Kite** (b)(6)(b)(3), Specialist (b)(6)(b)(3). Not killed, but obviously
36 seriously wounded. So, just the amount of enemy
37 activity increased significantly in those last couple
38 of months.

39 **Beta**
40 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Do you recall the distance between Wanat and
41 Bella?

42 **Gray**
43 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): I want to say eight kilometers.

44 **Beta**
45 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): And you said you did not think the risk was as
46 high at Wanat. Why is that?
47

Gray

1 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3):

2 Because there were major valley systems and a lot
3 of rough terrain that isolated Wanat from Bella. And
4 most of the enemy activity was up around Bella, not
5 closer to Wanat. So, just based on that isolation and
6 what we historically experienced during the previous
7 15 months, I personally and based on reading INTSUMS,
8 did not think that the risk was that great based on
9 that distance and how the enemy was dispersed.
10 Because they were actually over another set of ridges,
11 Kalego, I think is one of the names of the little
12 villages on the other side of the ridge from Bella.
13 So because of that dispersion and the distance, I
14 honestly thought that you know as long as we left
15 Bella, then they could--they would use that as a
16 victory to say yeah we pushed the U.S. or the
17 Coalition Forces out of this area and then they would
18 not come further down based on the fact that we had a
19 ground line of communication and a QRF by helicopter
20 that could usually arrive within 45 minutes of
21 notification. So, I didn't that the threat was this
22 great.

Beta

23 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3):

24 What in the S-3 shop or Battalion-wide as far as
25 the planning, you take us through that what efforts
26 were made to actually plan Operation Rock Move? And I
27 have a copy of the CONOPs.

Gray

28 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3):

29 Everything was air helicopter centric based on
30 rotary wing assets, the illumination cycle. So, if I
31 remember correctly, we had to use our Pesh resupply
32 helicopters, so we actually staggered instead of just
33 massing helicopter assets at one time you know during
34 a six hour period, we did it using the Pesh resupply
35 and we did it at night to lower the risk of flying up
36 the Waygal Valley based on that presidential air
37 Russian contracted helicopter getting shot. So,
38 initially it was looking at the enemy situation,
39 figuring out where the high ground was that they could
40 effectively shoot down helicopters that were going in
41 to disestablish Bella, then figuring out the troop
42 movement, the amount of equipment that would be needed
43 to be moved from Bella, either back to Blessing or to
44 the new base at Wanat. And then the scheme of
45 maneuver, how are we going to disestablish Bella,
46 while maintaining key weapons systems: the mortar, the
50 cal, the Mark 19s and then building our scheme of

1 maneuver based on the amount of helicopters and
2 keeping those facts in mind.

3 **Beta**
4 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): For the establishment of the position at Wanat,
5 who on the staff was working the actual building of
6 the COP?

7 **Gray**
8 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): From a logistics--from a Class IV standpoint it
9 was the S-4 and the Brigade--or the Battalion XO,
10 along with the Company XO. So, there was not
11 deliberate CONOP for the building of the COP. It was--
12 the end state for the CONOP was initial occupation
13 and Force Protection measures. Now we were supposed
14 to have Local National contractors come up and build
15 initial Force Protection walls with HESCOs and then
16 rock masons come and build force protection walls like
17 we did at Honaker-Miracle.

18 **Beta**
19 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): You said there was no deliberate CONOP for the
20 actual building----

21 **Gray**
22 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): For the actual engineer effort, we did not have a
23 CONOP for the actual building--we never said okay at
24 this point in time we're going to have this force
25 protection built at Wanat, we're going to have this
26 bunker built because it was all mostly Local National
27 Contractors and it was what we referred to as kind of
28 steady state operations and you know we didn't do it
29 like--we didn't have an initial hey let's plop down
30 and build like we did at--for OP Dallas because it was
31 a much bigger scale. Wanat was similar to Honaker-
32 Miracle--well it was continue to improve your position
33 as time went on.

34 **Beta**
35 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): So no one on the staff was then tracking you know
36 on Day 3 this is the level of building of the COP we
37 should have. Or Day 5 we should have this, Day 7----

38 **Gray**
39 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, I mean--I can't answer that. I know I was
40 not. The Battalion XO, I know was a lot more involved
41 in it than I was. The initial occupation, honestly,
42 was what I was worried about and I really thought the
43 force protection they had was sufficient.

44 **Beta**
45 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): So the taskings as a Battalion you gave to--what
46 were the taskings you gave to Chosen Company?
47

1 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Establish force protection--well, obviously
2 disestablish Bella, initially occupy Wanat and get the
3 force protection measures adequate to withstand
4 indirect fire or direct fire attacks, which is what we
5 thought would be the course of action for the enemy.
6 So, it was the initial occupation and the start of
7 force protection.

8 **LtCol** Beta (b)(6)(b)(3): In your mind, what was that--the Force
9 Protection?
10

11 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): I thought if they could go up there and get
12 fighting positions dug, get HESCO barriers around the
13 main part of the COP, then that would be sufficient to
14 hand over to 1-26. The Local National Contractors
15 were scheduled to arrive on the 13th with their heavy
16 equipment and they would progress from that point. So
17 it was HESCO barriers, fighting positions dug, and
18 starting to the point of getting overhead cover
19 established.
20

21 **LtCol** Beta (b)(6)(b)(3): So you say the local nationals were scheduled to
22 arrive on the 13th?
23

24 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Well, originally they were scheduled sooner, but
25 because of intimidation and their heavy equipment
26 getting delivered--or moved to Bagram it got delayed.
27 So, when I say the 13th that was the next scheduled
28 time for them to come.
29

30 **LtCol** Beta (b)(6)(b)(3): As you had originally envisioned the Wanat
31 establishment, how did you see that phasing in, as far
32 as the initial force went up on the--late on the 8th or
33 early on the 9th, how did you see that phasing?
34

35 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): I saw them obviously going in and using their Up
36 Armored HMMWVS as a Vehicle Patrol Base, getting their
37 triple standard concertina wire set out, and then
38 establishing their fighting positions. But, I mean it
39 was in the middle of a village, so unlike OP Dallas,
40 it wasn't just hey we're going to plop this C-Barrier
41 fortification down and surround it with sandbags and
42 concertina wire. I think it had to be a much more
43 deliberate process?
44

45 **LtCol** Beta (b)(6)(b)(3): What do you mean by deliberate?
46
47

1 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Well, if we went in and had the force protection
2 walls put up first, while at the same time the
3 infantry guys were digging in their fighting
4 positions, I think it would have been a lot more
5 slower process and deliberate than hey we're going to
6 helicopter in the C-Barrier, we're going to use pre-
7 made sandbags and Air Assault that in. And then
8 within 48 hours you have basically the finished
9 product.

10 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Why didn't you go that route?

11 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Well, we initially asked for the C-Barriers, but
12 they just were--we could not get the assets to move
13 them, or whoever was supposed to deliver them didn't
14 have the capability to deliver those C-Barriers. And
15 then based on the Class IV that we did have on hand
16 and the mobility from Blessing, which was about 7
17 kilometers to the south, we thought it would be
18 adequate based on the enemy situation and how we
19 thought they'd initially probe us with indirect fire
20 and direct fire versus the mass attack that happened.

21 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Was there a stock of the C-Barriers some place?

22 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): There was and I believe it was Bagram or
23 Jalalabad. We did not have them at Blessing or
24 Asadabad and that's what the issue was as far as
25 getting them moved. And along with that is the heavy
26 equipment that it required to lift them and put them
27 into place.

28 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): What would be required to----

29 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Some type of backhoe or earth moving equipment.
30 I mean you couldn't just--a Chinook could deliver them
31 to the general area, but then you needed some heavy
32 equipment to actually move them into place. You
33 couldn't just use a Chinook to lift them and drop them
34 where you wanted them. So it would take the heavy
35 equipment to deliberately place them and get it to a
36 point where it would--you could adjust the fields of
37 fire, or establish the field of fire.

38 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Did you ask for the C-Barriers and heavy
39 equipment and were told no, or did you just decide
40 that you wouldn't go that route?

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1 **Gray**
2 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): I never personally asked for them. I know the
3 request was sent through the Company and this was just
4 by word of mouth from Captain (b)(3), (b)(4) so, I don't know a **Oscar**
5 lot of the details as far as who asked for them and
6 when.
7 **Beta**
8 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): So, the Company to the S-4--Battalion S-4?
9 **Gray**
10 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Right--requesting the C-Barrier.
11 **Beta**
12 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): You mentioned using also the Pesh Resupply,
13 focusing your movement--the Bella extract and the
14 Wanat establishment to the Pesh Resupply. Did you
15 request any additional air assets to----
16 **Gray**
17 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): For the move? Or for CCA?
18 **Beta**
19 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): For the move.
20 **Gray**
21 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir.
22 **Beta**
23 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): And why is that?
24 **Gray**
25 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): We just knew after being there for 15 months, it
26 wasn't available.
27 **Beta**
28 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Was this--so you were disestablishing one
29 position and establishing a new one, moving equipment
30 and personnel, but you did not ask the Brigade if you
31 could get more Air?
32 **Gray**
33 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, I mean we were--No. I mean I never called up
34 the Brigade 3 and said hey I need more Air because it
35 was a given, I mean it was--if we wanted to use
36 helicopters, even for deliberate CONOPS throughout
37 that entire 15 month process, it usually came at a
38 cost and sometimes it was okay your Pesh resupply,
39 which was our rotary wing chinook resupply, those
40 blade hours were used for that CONOP and then we'd go
41 you know without resupply and it was always a process
42 of hey can you skip your next Pesh resupply so we can
43 do this CONOP. So, it was always a finite number of
44 aircraft and we just knew that it was kind of futile
45 to ask for additional assets that we wouldn't get.
46

1 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): What--you mentioned initially in March that the
2 Brigade 3 saying "Hey, take a look at Wanat". What
3 drove 8 July as the time you executed? Why not
4 earlier?

5 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): I am trying--I don't recollect off the top of my
6 head why it was moved to the right.

7 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): As you were--was 8 July the initial date that you
8 had planned to execute?

9 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, we actually planned earlier. I believe we
10 planned on the 3rd or 4th.

11 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Of July?

12 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Right. And I can't--I know there was an attack
13 at Bella, but I can't remember the specific date of
14 the attack and I don't remember the circumstances for
15 pushing it off to the right. But there was--when the
16 Russian contracted helicopter was shot down, I don't
17 know if that pushed it to the right or it was weather
18 or aircraft availability. I just don't remember.

19 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Would an Apache striking a civilian vehicle that
20 may have had medical personnel on, does that sound
21 familiar at all?

22 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes. Yes.

23 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Was that possibly the event that caused the
24 pushing to the right?

25 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Certainly. Yes. And the 15-6 that followed.
26 Yes.

27 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): And why is that? If you could explain why that
28 was put off?

29 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Well, I mean it tied up the whole of Chain of
30 Command for the Investigation for one. And it made
31 the--it made it a lot more contentious to go up into
32 the valley with the District Governor for Waygal.
33 Upset that we fired on a--what he thought was a
34 civilian vehicle. So, that's the only thing that I
35 could think of off the top of my head. I don't--it
36 certainly didn't consume Apaches or Chinooks after the
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1 fact, but I think the investigation was probably the
2 main reason if I remember correctly.

3 **Beta**
4 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): And why is that? Why did the investigation push
5 OPs to the right?

6 **Gray**
7 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Key leaders being involved in the investigation
8 is really the only thing I can think of without taking
9 more time to go through the thought process.

10 **Beta**
11 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Who in the Chain was involved in the
12 Investigation?

13 **Gray**
14 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Mainly the Company Commander, but certainly the
15 Battalion Commander based on the clearance of fires
16 and the Apaches. And the questioning of the Platoon
17 that was up at Bella that witnessed all that would--
18 obviously them being tied up in the investigation.

19 **Beta**
20 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Before July, had you ever planned to execute this
21 mission prior to July?

22 **Gray**
23 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): I think we wanted to--as soon as we got our
24 directive from the Brigade S-3, I don't think we ever
25 had a hard date because the way it was forecasted as
26 far as deliberate operations was the beginning of each
27 illum cycle, we'd look at the Green Illum and that
28 was depending on how bright the moon was and the moon
29 angle off the horizon. So we would know, in advance,
30 hey in this month we would like to do this operation.
31 And we'd send a kind of bottom up planning. We'd do a
32 targeting meeting and say we want to conduct this
33 CONOP. We'd do the concept sketch and ask for the
34 number of aircraft and send that about 30 days before
35 we wanted to conduct it. And Brigade would use that
36 to kind of forecast what we wanted to do the following
37 month. So, I cannot remember the specifics of June
38 and what the CONOP--what CONOPs were--because we had
39 five other companies and we very rarely were--I can't
40 really remember us doing anything other than a
41 Company--bigger than a Company CONOP. So, depending
42 on who had priority and what the urgency was based on
43 the enemy situation or what was going on in the
44 Province, kind of determined who had--you know who we
45 were going to fight for, for assets, specifically,
46 helicopters and ISR and medium altitude SIGINT. So, I
47 cannot--to answer your original question, I remember

1 the initial thought was to get it done in June, but I
2 just don't remember the specifics of why it got pushed
3 to the right and then the helicopter incident with the
4 pick-up truck.

5 **Beta**
6 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): You were getting--the Battalion was getting ready
7 to RIP in July, July-August time frame. What efforts
8 were being undertaken as far as the RIP?

9 **Gray**
10 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): By that time, we went through about a week and a
11 half of RIP planning and we initially identified the
12 key leaders and the key positions that needed to stay
13 to conduct a good left seat right seat ride. So, we
14 actually went by number of boots leaving-number of
15 boots coming in with the 1-26 Infantry guys that were
16 doing the RIP with us. And went through that detailed
17 planning and then build our execution checklist and
18 our Sync Matrix. So, by that time, it was really just
19 a matter of monitoring helicopters as they came in and
20 then every day we held kind of a RIP sync meeting over
21 Breeze with the Brigade. And we'd really just watch
22 and make sure that you know we're supposed to have 5
23 Chinook loads of guys being brought in and guys taken
24 out, then that happened according to plan so we
25 weren't stuck with either more or less people hitting
26 the ground. But, it did not take a key leader sitting
27 in the TOC monitoring a radio to do the RIP at that
28 point. It was, hey, are we getting the 5 helicopters
29 we're supposed to have? Are they bringing in X
30 amount? Are we taking out X amount? Are the key
31 leaders remaining on the ground to do the Left Seat
32 Right Seat Ride? Are we still doing the Pesh
33 Resupply? You know in addition to still reacting to
34 troops in contact throughout that process.

35 **Beta**
36 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): What was the Battalion's focus of effort then in
37 early July? Was it the RIP?

38 **Gray**
39 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Initially--well the RIP was already planned, so
40 of course it was the focus, but the main effort for us
41 was Wanat. Disestablishing Bella, establishing Wanat,
42 and handing off a better situation for 1-26. For them
43 to be a brand new force and to be isolated in a combat
44 outpost that was receiving an increased amount of
45 enemy activity that was air-centric, in my mind and
46 everyone else's--my Battalion Commander and XO and
47 Sergeant Major, you know we did not want to leave that

1 kind of shit-sandwich for 1-26 to have to deal with as
2 they were getting established and figuring out how to
3 gear up for the remainder of that fighting season.

4 **Beta**
5 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Had they come over on a site survey--1-26?

6 **Gray**
7 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): They did.

8 **Beta**
9 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): And did you discuss with them the coming out of
10 Bella and moving down to Wanat?

11 **Gray**
12 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): I don't remember if we discussed it or not. I
13 know Colonel (b)(6)(b)(3), Lieutenant Colonel (b)(6)(b)(3) **Citrus**
14 I know he went up to Bella. I can't say for sure
15 whether that Colonel (b)(6)(b)(3) talked to Colonel **Diamond**
16 **Citrus** (b)(6)(b)(3) about disestablishing Bella.

17 **Beta**
18 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Do you recall when the last of the Task Force
19 Rock Soldiers were going to be out of Afghanistan?

20 **Gray**
21 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Do I recall. Yeah it was on August 4th was the
22 last flight that I was part of.

23 **Beta**
24 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): What was your understanding of the state of the
25 COP--what state the COP would be in when you handed it
26 over to 1-26? As far as, was is it going to be a
27 three week project and done? Was it going to be a
28 multi-month----

29 **Gray**
30 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, it was much longer than that. I mean I want
31 to say 3 or 4 months, but I can't say. I know it was
32 a long process. We're talking months versus weeks for
33 that to be at a finished state.

34 **Beta**
35 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): So when you went to execute Operation Rock Move,
36 it is your understanding that you would be several
37 weeks into a potentially multi-month long COP-building
38 process?

39 **Gray**
40 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Certainly, and that's why--if I can look at this
41 real quick, the end state. I want to say our end
42 state was Coalition Forces and equipment removed from
43 Bella, Wanat initial occupation complete for the
44 friendly forces. Enemy disrupted in the Waygal, C2
45 and first, unable to prevent establishment of COP
46 Wanat. That is what I had in mind as our end state

1 with initial Force Protection, which was HESCOs and
2 dug-in fighting positions.

3
4 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Was consideration ever given to simply leaving
5 Bella? Just abandoning Bella and coming back to
6 Blessing?

7
8 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): It was discussed, but knowing that we would leave
9 that Valley completely to the enemy, obviously it was
10 not an IO win for us and showed--it would show the
11 locals that we're being forced out of a Valley. And
12 it was basically leaving that entire Valley open to
13 Camp Blessing, which was the Battalion Headquarters.
14 So, giving that Valley to the enemy, not being able to
15 continue to push the road north up to a point at least
16 to Wanat, was a loss. Disconnecting from the
17 Government in Wanat was a huge loss. So all those
18 factors were considered and the decision was made to
19 continue the occupation.

20
21 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): In your opinion, or your assessment of the
22 situation between Bella and Wanat, would it be fair to
23 characterize that you felt it was--while Bella was an
24 established COP with overhead protection and barriers,
25 a better situation to move to Wanat just several weeks
26 into a long-term building project?

27
28 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Certainly.

29
30 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): And why is that?

31
32 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Because of the amount of enemy and the amount of
33 kinetic activity and the fact that we had a
34 helicopter--a civilian helicopter that delivered FFV,
35 shot and hard landed at the COP. The Specialist
36 **Kite** (b)(3), (b)(6), I believe his name--is the one that got shot
37 sitting in an OP, the fact that we had that incident,
38 now that you mention the truck getting shot up and
39 the--just the feel in the Valley that far north. It
40 was--the positioning of the COP was terrible. I mean
41 it was worse than Wanat. The high ground--it was
42 sitting in a bowl. I mean everywhere is a bowl really
43 in those valleys. But, tactically, the position in
44 Bella is much worse and the amount of enemy
45 activities, why in my mind, it was better to establish
46 Wanat and leave Bella.

1 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): On the actual site in Wanat, the field that was
2 determined the COP would be built on, was there any
3 discussions about other potential locations within
4 that Valley, around Wanat, to possibly put the COP?
5

6 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): There was a--when the 101st Pathfinders came in,
7 there was a house on higher ground but away from the
8 village. So, I don't know if it was discussed earlier
9 with the Company Commander and the Battalion
10 Commander. It was not discussed with me and I didn't
11 really look at that as a tactically better place to
12 put the COP until I was on the ground 8 hours after
13 the fight. But, that would have continue--that would
14 have kept us separate from the village and whereas--
15 the success we had in Honaker-Miracle by being up
16 close to the District Center in a little village
17 there. By being up at that higher position, we would
18 not have had that closeness with the population to
19 develop the rapport and you know establish that
20 relationship.
21

22 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): That higher position, you are referring to kind
23 of the southeast a couple hundred meters up the spur?
24

25 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): That's correct.
26

27 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): From a tactical perspective, when you arrived a
28 couple hours after the fight, what were your thoughts
29 of the location that was actually chosen?
30

31 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): I did not like it.
32

33 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Why is that?
34

35 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Because it--of course, it was hind sight. I mean
36 after being in the TOC and monitoring the fires and
37 the fight during the attack, it became very clear that
38 by being close to the buildup area and relying on the
39 word of the local elders that we could occupy and they
40 would warn of us of enemy fighters coming in, which
41 they didn't, we just made ourselves very exposed to
42 exactly what happened. So, initially, again based on
43 our experience in Honaker-Miracle and being close,
44 it's a tossup. Do you take the, you know, the
45 conventional tactical approach and have maximum
46 standoff and fields of fire? Or do you nestle up
47 close to the village like the COIN kind of doctrine

1 now says it's the right thing to do and David Gelulah
2 and his book says it is the right thing to do. So,
3 from a tactical standpoint, certainly not a good place
4 to be, but, from kind of a COIN--developing rapport
5 with the population, it was the right place to be.
6

7 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): What was comparing and based on your
8 understanding, I know you said you didn't get up to
9 Wanat until afterwards, the relationship with the
10 elders near Honaker-Miracle? And then----

11 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): It was much better at Honaker-Miracle. But, that
12 wasn't until later. Initially, we, by all accounts,
13 every Shura that I sat in, the--I can't remember the
14 name of the elder from Wanat, but he was engaging and
15 seemed very pro-Coalition and just the same as the
16 guy, as the Sub-Governor in--by Watapur at Honaker-
17 Miracle. So, initially, they were--I think it was
18 permissive or semi-permissive, if you want to think of
19 it in those terms. But, then as time went on and
20 increased enemy activity, you know, occurred up around
21 Bella, it seemed that the locals were getting
22 intimidated and that certainly had an effect on their
23 relationship with us.
24

25 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): On 8 July when Rock Move starts, what was your
26 assessment of the enemy threat in Wanat?
27

28 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): I didn't think it was high. I didn't think it
29 was high.
30

31 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Why is that?
32

33 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Just based on Intel reports.
34

35 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): How about after the Platoon arrived up in Wanat?
36 Did you get any reports back of any indications and
37 warnings?
38

39 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): We didn't and it wasn't until after I was on the
40 ground.
41

42 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): What did you learn when you were on the ground?
43

44 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): The, excuse me--talking with some of the guys
45 that survived the fight. They said that during the
46 almost three days after initial occupation, there were
47

1 lots of enemy--or military-age males hanging out at
2 the Bazaar, guys walking up and down the road. We
3 didn't get that. I didn't get that.

4 **Beta**
5 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): At the Battalion level?

6 **Gray**
7 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): At the Battalion Level. So, you know, that we
8 usually we got and the SIGINT platforms we usually had
9 some type of medium-altitude SIGINT, and in this case
10 Shadow was not capable of flying, so we had Predator.
11 So we would usually get the full-motion video two
12 hours before an Air Assault or a deliberate OP and
13 then two hours after and then it would kind of go into
14 our again steady state. You know our allocation of
15 full motion video. So, there was no indication
16 whatsoever that there was a mass amount of enemy
17 fighters congregating and planning an attack. Look at
18 this most likely or most dangerous course of action,
19 you can see and we're talking about in some cases
20 squad, but usually it's one or two fighters, which is
21 what we were accustomed to. And we really thought it
22 would be fighters up on the high ground doing their
23 initial probing attacks like they always do and
24 shooting indirect fire or direct fire weapons to gauge
25 our response--to identify our key weapons and our
26 mortars. And that's what we thought it would be.

27 **Beta**
28 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): And so assessing that risk, what steps did you
29 take to mitigate those risks?

30 **Gray**
31 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): During the CONOP?

32 **Beta**
33 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): During the planning process.

34 **Gray**
35 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): It was making sure that we had the enablers, the
36 assets, the--you know we had I think Red Ridge as our
37 medium altitude SIGINT platform and we had LLVI teams
38 on ground. And after 15 months we became, you know,
39 experienced at cross-queuing those assets and we could
40 usually pinpoint the location on a ridgeline where
41 enemy fighters were using their ICOMS and we were able
42 to watch and then, you know, wait to pit and engage if
43 we could. So, the medium-altitude SIGINT, the full-
44 motion video, having the 155s, the triple 7s at
45 Blessing, giving priority fire to the ground force
46 moving up and the Air Assault Force, in my mind, was
47 enough to mitigate the risk.

1
2 **LtCol** Beta (b)(6)(b)(3): Were any other assets, additional personnel,
3 weapons systems provided?
4
5 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): We had the LRASS, we had the TOW from Destined
6 Company with the ITAS system. So----
7
8 **LtCol** Beta (b)(6)(b)(3): Did you specifically task that, was that part of
9 the----
10
11 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir, that was part of the CONOP process to
12 give them that level of being able to see that greater
13 distances and engage with the TOW, which we were very
14 successful with using the previous 15 months.
15
16 **LtCol** Beta (b)(6)(b)(3): How about indirect fire assets? Any mortars?
17
18 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): They had the 120s and they had one 120 that they
19 brought down from Bella and that was one of the
20 initial conditions for occupying is to have that 120
21 and the ammo and to get the mortar pit established and
22 then the 60s that the Company had.
23
24 **LtCol** Beta (b)(6)(b)(3): Did the--Close Air Support, what was the norm as
25 far as Close Air Support? If you had a unit in
26 combat, would you----
27
28 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): The norm as far as response time?
29
30 **LtCol** Beta (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, response time?
31
32 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): If we requested--I mean if it was during the
33 CONOP, it was there very quick response because it
34 was--that's the whole purpose was to provide CAS and
35 non-standardized ISR. So, you're talking minutes.
36 But, if it was after a CONOP was over and the end
37 state was reached, then if it was ground CAS or X CAS-
38 -or there was another CAS platform flying in another
39 AO that was diverted because we were in a TIC. I mean
40 it was always different, but it was never more than a
41 half an hour or 45 minutes.
42
43 **LtCol** Beta (b)(6)(b)(3): For Rock Move, you had the two escort Apaches
44 that would fly with the Pesh resupply. Was there any
45 other CAS type platform that you'd plan?
46

1 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Well, the (b)(2)High, and I'm pretty sure there was
2 CAS, but I don't remember off the top of my head if
3 there was CAS. But we always asked for CAS and we
4 always ask for CCA and we always ask for full motion
5 video with our medium altitude SIGINT.

6 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Do you recall what the actual plan was for ISR
7 coverage during Rock Move?
8

9 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Two hours before and two hours after initial
10 occupation and then it was again, okay, we go into
11 steady state and then we submit our request and the
12 allocations are given to each specific Battalion Task
13 Force. And that was usually made the first CJTF 82
14 and then 101. So, it was common throughout the 15
15 months to get you know full motion video pulled
16 during--you know if there was nothing going on in our
17 AO--sometimes we could even be in a TIC, and something
18 will be pulled for a higher priority TIC down south.
19 So, it was fairly common to have assets pulled from
20 us. And initially it was you know I'd phone the CHOPS
21 who went from (b)(3), (b)(6) to (b)(6)(b)(3). And (b)(6)(b)(3) **Kilo**
22 (b)(6)(b)(3) was a Lieutenant Colonel, so dealing with
23 (b)(3), (b)(6) it was pure Major to Major and it was--he was a
24 good guy and could kind of fight for us to get the
25 assets we needed, but it was always an uphill battle.
26 And it usually came to the Battalion Commander talking
27 to the Brigade Commander saying hey I need this asset
28 or guys are going to die. So, that sounds kind of
29 melodramatic, but it got to be that crying wolf type
30 syndrome and if we couldn't justify it by saying hey
31 we have a credible threat, then it usually fell on
32 deaf ears and it was come on dude you know I can't
33 give you more CAS or more CCA or more full motion
34 video because we don't have it.
35

36 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Your understanding then when Rock Move--for
37 Wanat, the ISR for Wanat was going to be two hours
38 before----
39

40 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): And two hours after and then it would go into
41 steady state, so I know we had it scheduled as not
42 part of the CONOP, which would have raised their
43 priority and that was the whole reason for the CONOP
44 process. If we had a Level 2, we'd have priority of
45 the assets and it would ours. When the end state was
46 reached, it was back to Steady State, and there was
47

1 another--there would always be another Battalion Task
2 Force in the AO that was doing their CONOP or there
3 was an IED strike or whatever, but someone else would
4 always take priority once our Level 2 was over; just
5 like we pull that asset for our Level Two from them
6 when we needed it. So, I don't remember the actual
7 schedule or what we were apportioned, but I do
8 remember it was supposed to be on station, again not
9 part of the CONOP but just as steady state, to keep an
10 eye on the guys at Wanat and then it was pulled
11 because we didn't have a credible threat and no one
12 had any Intel or HUMINT to say otherwise.

13 **Beta**
14 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): When you say two hours before and two hours
15 after, that's like two hours before the Platoon
16 arrives at the site and then two hours after they are
17 there?

18 **Gray**
19 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Correct; Right.

20 **Beta**
21 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): And then after that you are--you just drop back
22 to the norm where----

23 **Gray**
24 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): And we usually had Shadow the majority of the
25 time, but because Shadow could not operate due to the
26 altitude and freezing, we had to rely on the (b)(2)High
27 which was needed at those altitudes.

28 **Beta**
29 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): So while--after the Platoon arrived up there, do
30 you recall any discussions at the Battalion Level
31 regarding the need for more ISR at Wanat?

32 **Gray**
33 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir.

34 **Beta**
35 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Did Captain (b)(6)(b)(3) ever come to you and say we have **Magenta**
36 a threat at Wanat that requires more ISR?

37 **Gray**
38 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir.

39 **Beta**
40 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): So, did----

41 **Gray**
42 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): I mean well--no, he never came. But, we
43 throughout the whole time we became conditioned to the
44 enemy's IO machine, which was effective. And they
45 would say, you know, they'd put out the message
46 through their channels that on such and such a date
47 there would be a huge attack on one of our COPS. And

1 then, you know, it never materialized. I mean it was
2 maybe one or two times there was some sporadic
3 fighting, but just never materialized. So, it was our
4 own kind of conditioning that we'd hear okay yeah here
5 another mass attack, okay got it. So, yeah I'm not
6 saying that Ben probably heard that or was told that
7 by anyone, but that was--I just want to make sure that
8 that's understood by everyone in this room that that's
9 kind of how we were conditioned. Right or wrong,
10 that's what happened.

11 **Beta**

12 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): So, when the Platoon--while the Platoon was up in
13 Wanat and before the attack, did you have occasion to
14 call Lieutenant Colonel (b)(6)(b)(3) specifically for ISR **Kilo**
15 for Wanat?

16 **Gray**

17 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): You mean after the initial occupation?

18 **Beta**

19 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): After the initial occupation but before the
20 attack, did you personally ever call Colonel (b)(6)(b)(3) **Kilo**
21 and say I need----

22 **Gray**

23 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir. I never did.

24 **Beta**

25 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Are you aware of whether or not the Battalion
26 Commander had called the Brigade Commander and sought
27 additional ISR?

28 **Gray**

29 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): I am not aware, but usually I would know that
30 because I was in the TOC often and--or he would call
31 and he'd say hey justify why we need this. And then
32 we'd have a meeting with the 2 and the Battle Captain
33 and Company Commander would be on the radio and we'd
34 justify why we needed it.

35 **Beta**

36 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): And on previous occasions, the Battalion
37 Commander had specifically called the Brigade
38 Commander seeking additional ISR?

39 **Gray**

40 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Certainly, and we all did. And (b)(6)(b)(3) would **Magenta**
41 often argue with the 2 at the time, (b)(6)(b)(3) **Peach**
42 Colonel (b)(6)(b)(3), and there was often, you know, me
43 with the CHOPS and him with the 2. You know he was a
44 Captain going up against a Lieutenant Colonel and I
45 was a Major going up against a Lieutenant Colonel.
46 So, there was that level of obviously protocol and
47 respect, but there was always hey we need this we need

1 this. Well, why do you need it? Because we think
2 there's going to be an attack. Well, someone down
3 south is getting attacked. So, what do you think the
4 answer is? That type of.

5 **Beta**
6 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): In those previous occasions, when the Battalion
7 Commander would call the Brigade Commander and seek--
8 request ISR, would you get the ISR?
9

10 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Sometimes we would. Sometimes we wouldn't.
11 Because even if--even if we convinced the Brigade
12 Commander that we needed, we have to convince the
13 CJTF, either 82 or 101, that we needed it. So, it
14 wasn't always, even if they agreed and they would make
15 the call and it would either get to us or not. And
16 I'm not saying it never did, but more often not then
17 yes.

18 **Beta**
19 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Reviewing the CONOP, we'd spoken to your S-3 Air
20 Officer earlier; the 3 shop was focused on working the
21 aircraft for Operation Rock Move, who in the planning
22 was saying that we've got the Engineer Assets we need.
23 We've got the Engineer--Class IV we need. We've got
24 everything ready to go. If not the 3 shop, who is
25 saying that----

26 **Gray**
27 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): It was the Company XO and the Company Commander
28 saying, hey, based on the terrain and knowing where we
29 are going, we have everything we need. I know the
30 Battalion XO was monitoring that, but it was not me.
31 And no one ever--and I never put it as part of our go-
32 no to criteria. Again, hind sight, you know valuable
33 lesson learned, that it was never included and I never
34 made it part of the CONOP process to--as a conditions
35 check, so to speak.

36 **Beta**
37 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): There was an Engineer squad up at Wanat. Did you
38 task them specifically to go with 2nd Platoon?

39 **Gray**
40 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Right. Exactly.

41 **Beta**
42 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): And then they were out of which Engineer?

43 **Gray**
44 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): 66th--62nd.

45 **Beta**
46 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Was that an asset you owned as the Battalion that
47 you could task directly?

1 [Gray]
2 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): No. They were not. They belonged to Brigade and
3 they were allocated by Brigade.
4 [Beta]
5 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): You sent a request up saying we need this
6 capability?
7 [Gray]
8 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Right. Exactly, sir, and that--they were supposed
9 to be in conjunction with the Local Nationals because
10 they were Construction Engineers, not Combat
11 Engineers.
12 [Beta]
13 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): At some point, I am assuming that at the
14 Battalion Level, you as the 3, and the CO, and the XO,
15 and the other staff officers sat down on Rock Move,
16 who said boss we're good to go. We're ready to go.
17 We've got everything we need to execute?
18 [Gray]
19 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): As far as--who is the boss you are referring to?
20 [Beta]
21 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): The Battalion Commander.
22 [Gray]
23 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): The Company Commander. It was a deliberate
24 briefing process, so we'd--the Company Commander would
25 say yeah we're good to go, we finalized the CONOP, and
26 then brief it to the Brigade for the their approval.
27 If it was a Level one or Level two, it would have to
28 get briefed up to the CJTF, so it was essentially
29 briefed twice after the thumbs up was given. And that
30 was really Company Commander, Battalion Commander
31 doing their part of the troop leading procedures and
32 the supervision process to go out and make sure that
33 we were in fact ready to go.
34 [Beta]
35 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): Do you recall, did you attend an in-person brief
36 with the Company Commander and the Battalion Commander
37 where the Company Commander said you know sir we've
38 got the engineer assets we need, we've got the Class
39 IV we need, we've got everything lined up?
40 [Gray]
41 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): I don't remember. I do not remember there being
42 a distinct meeting where he said those exact words or
43 anything close to that--those exact words. I know
44 that the Company Commander pushed for it because while
45 [Diamond] we were in Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) office, myself. (b)(3), (b)(6) [Oscar]
46 [Diamond] and Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6), I do know that it was discussed
47 that local national contractors would not be there,

1 **Oscar** but I believe (b)(6)(b)(3) was comfortable going up. And
2 I know no one forced him and said hey you must go
3 build this COP. It was his desire to do it as the
4 Company Commander understanding the enemy situation
5 and what would have been left for 1-26 up at Bella.
6 **Beta**
7 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): So in the CO's office, you are there with the
8 Company Commander?
9 **Gray**
10 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): And the Battalion Commander.
11 **Beta**
12 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): And the Battalion Commander. And he, at that
13 point, you knew that the civilian engineer--the Heavy
14 Equipment----
15 **Gray**
16 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Right. It was the local national, correct, the
17 heavy equipment, the C-Barrier, and the operators to
18 build--to move the equipment and then the stone masons
19 and the contractors that would actually do the manual
20 labor.
21 **Beta**
22 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): You said you were aware that they wouldn't go up-
23 -or they----
24 **Gray**
25 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): I was aware that they were not--I mean they were
26 supposed to be there already building it and you know
27 **Oscar** (b)(6)(b)(3) came in and said hey these guys did not show up
28 and there was a discussion with, hey, are we going to
29 proceed with this or not. And the decision was yes,
30 we are going to proceed with it.
31 **Beta**
32 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): And whose decision was that?
33 **Gray**
34 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): It was Colonel (b)(6)(b)(3), ultimately. But, **Diamond**
35 obviously endorsed by Captain (b)(3), (b)(4) and then when I say **Oscar**
36 his decision ultimately, it was obviously at the
37 Battalion Level his decision to push forward and ask--
38 do the CONOP, ask Brigade and Division to do the
39 CONOP----
40 **Beta**
41 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): I am sorry what date was that? Do you remember?
42 **Gray**
43 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): I don't remember. I know----
44 **Beta**
45 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Sometime after the Platoon went up to Wanat?
46

1 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): No, I don't--I mean it was in the early stages.
2 Like we're talking the beginning of July, so--I don't
3 remember the exact date, sir. But I know it was early
4 July.
5
6 **LtCol** Beta (b)(6)(b)(3): So, before the Platoon went up, you were aware
7 that the engineer--there was going to be issues with
8 the engineers?
9
10 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Certainly. Yes, sir. And then that's when he
11 also said, hey, they are going to be here on the 13th
12 is what they're saying. So we can go up, do the
13 initial occupation, but the conditions were we need
14 the bobcat and you know these heavy equipment
15 engineers will be there to establish initial force
16 protection and then on the 13th, the heavy equipment
17 will come up and we'll just continue to improve our
18 position.
19
20 **LtCol** Beta (b)(6)(b)(3): Whose idea was the Bobcat?
21
22 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): It was either the Company Commander, the Company
23 XO, or the Engineers--the Construction Engineers that
24 were there with them.
25
26 **LtCol** Beta (b)(6)(b)(3): Was that decided upon at some point after the
27 Battalion realized that the heavy equipment and the
28 local national engineers wouldn't be up there?
29
30 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. It was a mitigation factor after the
31 fact to basically to say, hey, if we can't get the
32 heavy equipment, we need something to fill HESCOs.
33 So, the decision was--it was--I know that was part of
34 the no-go criteria. Do we have the Bobcat and do we
35 have the engineers to supervise the initial
36 construction.
37
38 **LtCol** Beta (b)(6)(b)(3): And do you have any idea why the 13th--why it was
39 understanding that they would be up there on the 13th?
40
41 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): That's how long it would take for the local
42 national firm that was doing the construction to get
43 all their stuff moved from Bagram, or wherever it was.
44 Either Jafe or Bagram to Konar to Wanat.
45
46 **LtCol** Beta (b)(6)(b)(3): So when 2nd Platoon left on the 8th, the
47 understanding at that point was between the 8th and the

1 13th the engineer assets to support the initial
2 establishment would be the Bobcat and then the
3 engineer squad?

4 **Gray**
5 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Right. And infantry labor with old fashioned,
6 you know, E-tools and whatever other pioneer tools
7 they had, which the stuff on the back of the HMMWVS
8 for recovery would be used to initially, right up
9 inside the courtyard of the village.

10 **Beta**
11 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): And when you initially developed CONOP Rock Move,
12 did you envision the infantry labor aspect of that or
13 did you envision that the Heavy Equipment would be
14 there?

15 **Gray**
16 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): I envisioned the heavy equipment would be there
17 and all those infantry guys would do is pull security
18 because that seemed to be what the local national
19 force--labor force wanted before they would start
20 work--is say I am not going to go up there and start
21 working until I am secure, obviously speaking as if I
22 am the Afghan labor guy.

23 **Beta**
24 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): When you are having the discussion in the
25 Battalion Commander's office with the Company
26 Commander, you know there is going to be delay in the
27 local national engineer equipment getting up and now
28 the infantry labor aspect has been added. Was there
29 any discussion given to adding additional forces for
30 security purposes while the infantry Labor was being
31 utilized?

32 **Gray**
33 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir. There was not. With the Afghan Platoon
34 and the U.S. Platoon, I never asked the question and
35 it was never raised.

36 **Beta**
37 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): The Company Commander didn't request additional--
38 additional forces from you?

39 **Gray**
40 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir.

41 **Beta**
42 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Could you have sent, based on everything you had
43 going on in the Task Force Rock AO, could you have
44 sent an additional U.S. Platoon or other size force up
45 there?

46 **Gray**
47 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. We could have.

1
2 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): How would you have done that?
3
4 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): We would have put them in HMMWVS and moved them
5 up as part of the initial ground assault.
6
7 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Would you--Did you have extra Platoons in your AO
8 or would you have had to of pulled them off of
9 something----
10
11 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Well, we would have to pull them off their own
12 COPs and their own left seat / right seat ride process
13 of which we had to do for the QRF any way so. I
14 suppose we could have done that earlier and you know
15 had we thought it necessary.
16
17 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): At some point, Captain (b)(6)(b)(3) went up to Bella for **Oscar**
18 the--to supervise the final portion, so the
19 conversation we're talking about took place before he
20 went up to Bella?
21
22 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. And that was the main effort of the
23 CONOP is disestablishing Bella and we figured that
24 would be the most dangerous.
25
26 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Once Bella was disestablished, what was your
27 understanding? Was Captain (b)(6)(b)(3) going to come back to **Oscar**
28 Blessing or was he originally going to go to Wanat.
29
30 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): It was my understanding that he was going to go
31 to Wanat and be there on the 8th or 9th. And then I saw
32 him at Blessing and he said I have all this stuff to
33 do for this investigation, now that I think of it, and
34 you know I will be going up, you know, in the next day
35 or two which he went up the night before the attack.
36
37 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Did you have any--at the nightly meetings or any
38 other time, did you hear any issues regarding supplies
39 up at Wanat for the unit?
40
41 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir. It was a huge a surprise to me--given
42 the fact that we rolled jingle trucks with Up-Armored
43 HMMWVS with a Platoon for the initial occupation to go
44 up there the--five hours after the fight and hear guys
45 say, yeah, we were low on water as we were digging.
46 Then my first question was why the--why didn't you
47 bring more water with you in your five gallon cans.

1 Why didn't you radio back and say, hey, we need more
2 water. I mean that could have been something--that is
3 something we could have easily fought with the Brigade
4 for and said we need a helicopter now because we're on
5 our ass logistically--I am not saying I know we were
6 because I didn't put any effort into planning the
7 logistics, bad move on my part, but you know----

8 **Beta**
9 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): The Brigade 4 never came to you and said, hey--
10 excuse me the Battalion 4----

11 **Gray**
12 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Battalion 4----

13 **Beta**
14 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Never came to you and said these guys are out of
15 X, Y, or Z?

16 **Gray**
17 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir.

18 **Beta**
19 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): And had he come to you saying----

20 **Gray**
21 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): We always had--we had a ground platoon that was
22 QRF for the entire battle space, whether by air by Up-
23 Armored HMWWV that worst case--or we could have paid
24 the local national jingle truck drivers to go up
25 there, you know, and drive the seven kilometers on
26 good roads and delivered more stuff, had we known.

27 **Beta**
28 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): You said, you went up there ground convoy with
29 jingle trucks?

30 **Gray**
31 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): I went up by helicopter 5 hours----

32 **Beta**
33 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): But you mentioned something about a ground convoy
34 with jingle trucks and Up-Armored HMMWVS----

35 **Gray**
36 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Well, the--Yes, sir. As part of the initial
37 occupation force, that's how they got all their Class
38 IV up there; the sandbags and concertina wire and
39 pickets and limited timbers for overhead cover. Their
40 water, MREs, extra ammunition, the ANA, so I mean
41 there was a GAC as part of the CONOP, Ground Assault
42 Convoy that left out at--during the cover of darkness.

43 **Beta**
44 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): So all those supplies and personnel moved up via
45 ground?
46

1 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. There was some as part of the move
2 from Bella. There was a lot of stuff that was moved
3 from Bella instead of bringing it back to Wanat, I
4 understood it to be delivered into Wanat--instead of
5 moving back to Blessing, it moved to Wanat.
6

7 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Were you aware--were there any issues with that
8 Ground Convoy getting up into Wanat with the supplies
9 and personnel? Or did it go up when it was supposed
10 to?
11

12 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): I don't remember if it was delayed or not. I
13 don't remember. If it was delayed, it was probably
14 because of--RCP or Air or some other enabler or asset
15 that wasn't there to function as part of the route
16 clearance package or to provide ISR.
17

18 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): If it had been delayed--if the ground movement
19 had been delayed, would you have been notified of
20 that?
21

22 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes--because it was part of the execution
23 checklist. I just don't remember--I mean it was 13
24 about--whatever 1345 the day of the attack and then my
25 focus was getting up to Wanat and trying to establish
26 a hasty defense that they were postured for a
27 counterattack, so I don't remember--I don't remember
28 the ground assault convoy on the 8th or 9th going up and
29 I don't remember a delay--or the specifics if there
30 was.
31

32 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): You said the ground assault convoy was part of
33 the CONOP?
34

35 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes.
36

37 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Is that in here?
38

39 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): I believe so [pause] Main effort 2nd Platoon,
40 during the timeline here and concept of the operation
41 it talks about the GAC and Phase 2 of the Wanat
42 buildup.
43

44 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): So you put that in the CONOP, now who is on the--
45 who puts that together, the convoy together, and
46 actually gets it up there? Is that a Battalion? Is
47 that a Company?

1 [Gray]
2 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): If it's a Company-sized Operation, it's the
3 Company.
4 [Beta]
5 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): So, the Company XO traditionally is marshalling
6 the civilian vehicles----
7 [Gray]
8 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): And the Platoon leader and the Platoon Sergeant
9 and they're using their ANA counterparts to do that.
10 [Beta]
11 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): If they have issues with that that gets reported
12 up to the Battalion and then----
13 [Gray]
14 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes.
15 [Beta]
16 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): What would you do if somebody had reported up
17 saying, hey, the Ground Convoy didn't go and hasn't
18 gone for a day or two? What kind of steps could you
19 take at the Battalion?
20 [Gray]
21 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Making sure that we still had the route clearance
22 package to go ahead of them, to clear the route, and
23 mitigate the risk, the route burns by the Navy, you
24 know, electronic warfare guys that would do our route
25 burns to try to blow the remote controlled IEDs.
26 Obviously having the CCA CAS and all the coverage that
27 we would need during the originally scheduled time
28 would need to be on station again to continue to
29 mitigate that risk for the move.
30 [Beta]
31 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): While that ground convoy was moving?
32 [Gray]
33 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Correct, sir.
34 [Beta]
35 LtCol (b)(6)(b)(3): When you got up on the 13th, when you arrived in
36 Wanat, and you saw the position itself, what was your
37 impression, based on the status of the defenses when
38 you arrived that day?
39 [Gray]
40 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Honestly, I was impressed because I knew it was
41 manual labor at that point. And after the fight, and
42 obviously knowing how many were killed, I expected
43 some half ass fighting positions, but I was impressed
44 with the amount of build up that they did up at OP Top
45 Side. The triple standard concertina wire which was
46 really staked in well and thought out around the main
47 COP area, the HESCO barriers that they had half-filled

1 around the mortar pit and then the fighting position
2 that the TCP had on the south of the road going up
3 through the bazaar so, and the crow's nest up top,
4 which was the little higher elevation position where
5 the machine gun was placed was very well sandbagged,
6 you know, about four or five feet high. So I was
7 impressed.

8
9 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Was it in better shape than you had expected when
10 you arrived?

11
12 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): It was, sir. Again, based on manual labor,
13 knowing what they did to build it.

14
15 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Is there anything you expected to see that you
16 didn't see, as far as protective measures?

17
18 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): I expected to see some initial overhead cover,
19 you know up on the OP. But, having gone up there,
20 after the fact, the way it was built up on the
21 plateau, it would have taken some serious earth moving
22 to get it high enough that would still afford fields
23 of fire to be able to put overhead cover sufficiently
24 on the fighting position.

25
26 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Before you went up, you were aware that the
27 status of the HESCO barriers being half full. Were
28 you aware of that when you were back at Blessing? Or
29 were you aware of any issues with the Bobcat?

30
31 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Not until I got up there and they said, hey, we
32 can't max elevate--the first question I asked is why
33 would the HESCOs at the mortar pit not completely fit
34 and he said--HESCO--first we couldn't fill the HESCOs
35 all the way and second we ran out of fuel.

36
37 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): And you didn't know about the fuel issue?

38
39 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir.

40
41 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): And who was telling you that? Captain (b)(6)(b)(3) or **Oscar**
42 someone else?

43
44 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): I don't remember. I don't know who it was. I
45 don't know if it was his RTO or--I mean we were still--
46 --I mean this was after initial walking around the
47 perimeter and there was still Apache firing at

1 supposed AAF that I never saw, but, there was still
2 some activity, but it was relatively safe. So, I
3 don't remember who it was.

4 **Beta**
5 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): From the time the Platoon arrived up on the 8th to
6 before the battle, did you, at the Battalion, send
7 forward any additional assets based on a request from
8 the Company? Whether it would be additional
9 personnel, additional ISR, any additional equipment?

10 **Gray**
11 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Not that I can recollect. And--I don't remember.

12 **Beta**
13 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): At some point after the Battle, the decision was
14 made to withdraw from Wanat and you were up there on
15 the 13th. Were up at Wanat when the Battalion
16 Commander was up and Brigade Commander was up at
17 Wanat?

18 **Gray**
19 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): They never came up to Wanat after the Battle.

20 **Beta**
21 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): How long were at Wanat?

22 **Gray**
23 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Two days--until the 15th I was--until the
24 withdrawal. I was there from the afternoon of the 13th
25 after the fight all the way to the 15th for the
26 withdrawal.

27 **Beta**
28 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): And the Battalion and Brigade Commander didn't
29 come up during the time you were there?

30 **Gray**
31 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir.

32 **Beta**
33 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Had they been there before you were there?

34 **Gray**
35 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. I know the Battalion was multiple
36 times. But, I don't know about the Brigade Commander.
37 I think he was there for a Shura at some point in our
38 15 month by helicopter and then you know quickly
39 departed. During any CONOP--I mean we did go out with
40 attack initially because we wanted to be far up over
41 watching the Company as they fought. But after one or
42 two CONOPS, we quickly realized that the place for the
43 Battalion Commander was to be in the TOC where he had
44 access to the full motion video, he had access to the
45 telephone to fight for assets if we needed them and it
46 was much easier for him to see to--from the TOC with
47 all that Gee-wiz gear, for lack of a better term, so

1 he could monitor what was going on and had better
2 understanding. And that he could immediately
3 interface sometimes with the Brigade Commander,
4 sometimes directly with General Votel or General
5 Milley. So, having him up at Wanat would not have
6 been much good. He just would have been another guy
7 talking on a TACSAT at that point.

8
9 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): And the decision for you to go, how was that
10 made?

11
12 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): We were in--I was in the TOC and the Battalion
13 Commander that said I got off the phone with Colonel
14 **Delta** (b)(6)(b)(3) and I need you to go up there and see to
15 **Oscar** because (b)(6)(b)(3) has been up all this time and he is
16 probably pretty smoked obviously after the fight and
17 being up those consecutive hours after disestablishing
18 Bella. There were the Company Commander from Able
19 Company with his QRF was up there, so they had two
20 Captains, then the Pathfinder Detachment and then the
21 SF guy with his Afghan Commandos came. So, he
22 basically said I want you to go up there and see to,
23 you know, whether we stay and continue to build or
24 tear down. I just need a fresh guy up there to see to
25 the assets and you know be the guy in charge if a
26 bunch of captains start saying they want to do things
27 that are opposing.

28
29 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): So, you had that conversation before you went up
30 to Wanat on the 13th?

31
32 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. That's why he sent me up.

33
34 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): And then later on the--between the 13th and the
35 15th, did you have any other discussions regarding
36 withdrawing from the position or remaining in that
37 position?

38
39 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): He called me over the radio and said that, you
40 know, it was up at Brigade and CJTF level whether we
41 were staying or going, but continue to drive on as if
42 we are staying. So, we immediately picked that high
43 ground where the Pathfinder were positioned that I
44 talked about and we started clearing fields of fire
45 and the earth moving equipment that showed up that
46 afternoon, there was just one big backhoe started

1 building--or scraping out a road through the plateau,
2 so-----
3
4 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): That was on the 13th--on the afternoon of the 13th
5 that backhoe showed up?
6
7 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): It was there when I got there. So I am assuming
8 it was the 13th or if it arrived early morning on the
9 14th without me knowing. But it was around that time.
10
11 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): I am going to break out a map here real quick.
12 If you could just show these gentlemen that once you
13 arrived--where the area you were looking at and that
14 you were having them clear out with a backhoe.
15
16 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): This--all this fields of fire here and then they
17 were clearing out a road that went up from the main
18 area hear--actually it was closer, probably following
19 this draw here, that went up to these buildings here
20 where we were going to establish--if we need to
21 occupy, would have established the Combat Outpost
22 here.
23
24 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Had anyone gone up and actually seized that land?
25
26 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. The 101st Pathfinders were here and
27 they were the ones who were providing security and
28 clearing the trees.
29
30 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): And the security situation at that point up in
31 the area to east--southeast?
32
33 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Well we had--that night, I had the Afghan
34 Commandos clear these buildings here, clear the
35 buildings here, clear the buildings here and then
36 establish OPs on the high ground on both sides so we
37 could see if--you know if the enemy was in fact going
38 to come back for a counterattack. So, I just used
39 them as additional security forces until we figured
40 out the way ahead. Initially when the SF guys and the
41 Commandos landed, they wanted to--to pursue the enemy
42 down the draw they were a good 5 or 6 hours ahead and
43 the ANP guy came over and said you know these guys are
44 long gone. So, I just told this SF guy that you're
45 not going to just go on foot and try to chase these
46 guys and create yet another--a rescue effort on our
47 part considering it took days to get HLZs approved

1 based on the elevation and the slope, Brown out
2 conditions and all that. I just concentrated on
3 securing the Base and preventing a counterattack if it
4 happened.

5 **Beta**
6 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): So, at some point between the 13th and the 15th,
7 you had decided or someone had decided that if the COP
8 were going to be built, it would be built up on the
9 east-southeast on the higher ground.

10 **Gray**
11 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): That's correct. I just talked to (b)(6)(b)(3), the **Oscar**
12 Company Commander, and I don't remember even if we
13 **Diamond** told Colonel (b)(6)(b)(3), but this was a much--tactically
14 a much better position to occupy and defend against.
15 But, again we would be cut off from the town and
16 really not building any kind of rapport with the local
17 nationals.

18
19 **LtGen Natonski:** The OPs that you established when you got
20 there, you said one over here and one over here, was
21 that on--overlooking the riverbed?----

22 **Gray**
23 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): It was----

24
25 **LtGen Natonski:** Or was it on the opposite?

26 **Gray**
27 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yeah it was actually--if this is the river, it
28 was up here. The ANA commanders actually crossed the
29 river and actually established OP on this high ground
30 and on----

31
32 **LtGen Natonski:** And on the----

33 **Gray**
34 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yeah, and over here so they could look down the
35 draw that the enemy infiltrated through.

36 **Beta**
37 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): That is across the Valley to the west-northwest
38 and then also to the east-northeast or northeast--
39 excuse me?

40 **Gray**
41 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. Right. And then they went through and
42 cleared all these homes and just a search----

43 **Beta**
44 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): To the south and southeast?

45 **Gray**
46 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.

47

1 **LtCol** ^{Beta} (b)(6)(b)(3): There's been some discussion regarding the use of
2 the term Vehicle Patrol Base. You mentioned up front
3 that you know it's not a doctrinal term and it's
4 something that you picked from----

5 **MAJ** ^{Gray} (b)(6)(b)(3): From 1-32. Yes, sir.

7 **LtCol** ^{Beta} (b)(6)(b)(3): What is a Vehicle Patrol Base?

9 **MAJ** ^{Gray} (b)(6)(b)(3): It's a hasty position that you occupy by force
10 with Up-Armored HMMWVS establishing 360 degree
11 security and obviously placing your key weapons
12 systems along the high speed avenues of approach and
13 it's really just a lager site, I guess for another
14 term. And then if you were going to use it to
15 actually occupy on a regular basis, you eventually
16 improve the fighting positions. So, you are not just
17 sitting in your HMMWV pulling security the whole time.
18 You actually have a place to build a bunker with
19 overhead cover for guys to rotate out of and initiate
20 a rest plan. The way I understood 1-32--and I don't
21 know that they developed it or took it from someone
22 else, but as the road was being paved along the Pesh
23 River, they would set up these Vehicle Patrol Bases to
24 secure the local national workers. So they would--it
25 was called pulling the road to a VPB. So, they'd set
26 up further out from where the paved road was being
27 built, and then they would eventually pull the road to
28 that point and then leap frog forward. Pull the road
29 to that point, while securing that stretch as it was
30 being paved. So it was initially a hasty position
31 that you would continue to improve to eventually
32 occupy or abandon, like we did with Florida and
33 California. Those were two Vehicle Patrol Bases that
34 had Bunkers, overhead cover that we tore down to build
35 and occupy Honaker-Miracle.

37 **LtCol** ^{Beta} (b)(6)(b)(3): At what point does a Vehicle Patrol Base become a
38 COP?

40 **MAJ** ^{Gray} (b)(6)(b)(3): There is no clear condition that I am aware of.

42 **LtCol** ^{Beta} (b)(6)(b)(3): In your mind, when would that happen?

44 **MAJ** ^{Gray} (b)(6)(b)(3): I think that first you have to make the decision,
45 hey, we are going to stay here permanently and we are
46 going to build a fixed position and use it as a long-
47

1 term base and build the force protection walls. So, I
2 would say if you are going to put HESCOs in and put
3 triple standard concertina wire and build bunkers, you
4 could still call it a Vehicle Patrol Base if it is
5 still only for a couple of months. But, if it goes
6 past that point and you are going to stay and continue
7 to pull money into building infrastructure, then it
8 transfers from VPB to a COP.
9

10 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Based on--when you arrived on the 13th and once
11 you saw up there at Wanat. What was Wanat? Was it a
12 Vehicle Patrol Base? Was it a COP?
13

14 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): It was still a Vehicle Patrol Base.
15

16 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Why is that?
17

18 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Because it did not have the fortified bunkers
19 built and it didn't have the fixed fighting positions
20 that were complete yet. So, it wasn't a Combat
21 Outpost yet, in my mind. But, we knew it would and
22 when the force protection was finished and the
23 permanent, you know, barracks and fighting positions
24 were established, then I would say it's a bona fide
25 COP. But, I don't know the doctrinal definition of a
26 Combat Outpost to say, hey, here at this point, if you
27 have so many fixed positions and the priorities at
28 work are established to a point where you're
29 continuing that improvement that it becomes a Combat
30 Outpost versus a Vehicle Patrol Base.
31

32 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): At some point after the attack, did anyone----
33

34 **LtGen Natonski**: Before you--on a Vehicle Patrol Base. Can a
35 Vehicle Patrol Base pick up and leave?
36

37 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
38

39 **LtGen Natonski**: Okay. So it has to have vehicle
40 transportation for everyone on that base?
41

42 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir----
43

44 **LtGen Natonski**: With a Platoon of Afghans and engineer
45 squad, a 120 section, did that position at Wanat, in
46 your mind; remain a Vehicle Patrol Base with just five
47 vehicles for over 45 personnel?

1 **Gray**
2 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Not by the definition, no, sir.
3
4 **LtGen Natonski:** Here's the issue. There's been some
5 discussion whether it was a Vehicle Patrol Base or a
6 COP. You've explained a Vehicle Patrol Base can sit
7 down, put up their 360, watch over main avenues of
8 approach and continue to improve their position and
9 that's what they did when they initially got up there.
10 But then, additional forces came up by Helo and they
11 started the construction of the COP, in your mind, do
12 you think that Wanat on the 13th of July was a Vehicle
13 Patrol Base, or a COP that was under construction?
14 **Gray**
15 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): In my mind, it was still a Vehicle Patrol Base,
16 sir. We would have needed additional assets to get
17 those extra PAX that didn't have a seat in a vehicle,
18 but it was still a Vehicle Patrol Base that was being
19 established for----
20
21 **LtGen Natonski:** So, if they had to leave on short notice,
22 they would have abandoned half of the position of
23 people----
24 **Gray**
25 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes----
26
27 **LtGen Natonski:** The Vehicle Patrol Base would have abandoned
28 half of the Soldiers then----
29 **Gray**
30 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): They couldn't have left until aircraft came in to
31 extract.
32
33 **LtGen Natonski:** So then it--but you are still calling it a
34 Vehicle Patrol Base?
35 **Gray**
36 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
37
38 **LtGen Natonski:** Even though not everyone could fit in the
39 five vehicles that were there?
40 **Gray**
41 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): I am, sir. I mean it's----
42
43 **LtGen Natonski:** Vehicle Patrol Base, there is not doctrinal
44 definition----
45 **Gray**
46 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Right, sir. Sir, I understand your point, but I
47 still think it was not to a point where you could call

1 it a bona fide COP. I mean it was still--I mean we
2 could and I think of it in terms of what am I going to
3 be leaving the enemy if I--If I have to quickly leave.
4 Whether I have----
5

6 **LtGen Natonski:** Did you put the intent together in this
7 CONOP?

8 **Gray**
9 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. Well, I put it together and it was
10 approved by the Brig--or Battalion Commander as his
11 Commander's intent, but I certainly wrote it. Yes,
12 sir.
13

14 **LtGen Natonski:** Establish COP Wanat. Did it have OPs?

15 **Gray**
16 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): It had OP Top Side. That's it, sir.
17

18 **LtGen Natonski:** Fighting positions?

19 **Gray**
20 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
21

22 **LtGen Natonski:** Force protection walls?

23 **Gray**
24 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Not yet--I mean it had HESCOs around the mortar
25 position.
26

27 **LtGen Natonski:** And there were some stone walls that were
28 existing in the position?

29 **Gray**
30 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Just the local national stone walls.
31

32 **LtGen Natonski:** And bunkers?

33 **Gray**
34 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
35

36 **LtGen Natonski:** I mean--I am trying to figure out what--and
37 all I'm doing is Vehicle Patrol Base versus--was it a
38 full up bona fide COP? I would agree that it wasn't.
39

40 **Gray**
41 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
42

43 **LtGen Natonski:** But, I certainly would have a problem that
44 it was a Vehicle Patrol Base as well. I think it was
45 a COP under construction.

46 **Gray**
47 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.

1 **LtGen Natonski:** To me, a Vehicle Patrol Base is something
2 that you can, on short notice, pick up and leave. I
3 don't think you could have done that after the flow in
4 of those additional forces.
5 **Gray**
6 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): You are right, sir, without additional assets.
7
8 **LtGen Natonski:** I think it was a Vehicle Patrol Base on the
9 8th. I mean there were five vehicles there and they
10 set up their hasty perimeter. But--and once again, it
11 comes back to some discussion over what the proper
12 terminology and it seems a bit nit-noid, but there
13 have been questions asked about it. That's why I'm
14 delving into this. I want to make sure I understand
15 where you're coming from.
16 **Gray**
17 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
18
19 **LtGen Natonski:** With respect to defining what this thing was
20 when it was attacked.
21 **Gray**
22 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. I think if--the way I was thinking of
23 it is if we had to extract, I mean we certainly had
24 enough combat power where we could extract either with
25 additional air or wheeled vehicles, and we would not
26 leave a significant amount of ammunition, food, water,
27 or Class IV for the enemy if we had to leave in a
28 hurry.
29
30 **LtGen Natonski:** But, it's a--a Vehicle Patrol Base doesn't
31 include aircraft, does it?
32 **Gray**
33 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir. It doesn't
34
35 **LtGen Natonski:** And that's what you just said, that in order
36 to extract, you would need aircraft.
37 **Gray**
38 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Or additional wheeled vehicles. Yes, sir. Your
39 point is valid, sir.
40 **Beta**
41 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): How did you actually extract out of that
42 position?
43 **Gray**
44 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): By air and by ground assault convoy, or wheeled
45 vehicle convoy. The RCP came up, CH47s flew, and we
46 started pulling out while still manning our key
47 fighting positions and weapons systems. And then the

1 RCP cleared the route back down so it was the same way
2 we went up by air and by ground.

3
4 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): After the Battle, did anyone, either your
5 Battalion Commander or anyone from Brigade say we are
6 going to call this a Vehicle Patrol Base henceforth?
7 I mean did anyone come in and say that's the
8 terminology we will use when addressing the
9 emplacement at Wanat.

10 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir. The only thing I remember distinctly is
11 I was calling it COP Kahler because of the Platoon
12 Sergeant that was killed in January up at Bella and I
13 was told in no uncertain terms do not call it Kahler.
14 Just call it COP or Vehicle Patrol Base Wanat. But,
15 no one ever said officially do not call it this or do
16 not call it that. So----

17
18 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Who said that to you?

19 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): I believe it was Colonel (b)(6)(b)(3) over the radio **Delta**
20 or it came through either Colonel (b)(6)(b)(3) from Colonel **Diamond**
21 **Delta** (b)(6)(b)(3). I believe it came from the Brigade
22 Commander and I don't--I never really thought about
23 why until now. I am still not really catching on what
24 the significance, other than to use the correct
25 terminology and--I mean there are valid points, but I
26 don't know the right answer to say okay now it's
27 official. It has transferred from being called a
28 Vehicle Patrol Base to a COP based on these specific
29 conditions.
30
31

32 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Okay. So you were on--getting back to that
33 conversation, you were on the radio with Colonel
34 **Delta** (b)(6)(b)(3) himself or--regarding the don't use the term-
35 ----
36

37 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, it wasn't until after the fact and we were
38 going through all these 15-6 investigations and that
39 process that I was told, and again, I don't remember
40 who said it. And it was--I took it as it was never
41 called--to call something by a specific name, it had
42 to be approved all the way through CJTF, so all the
43 Air guys had the correct name and the grid coordinates
44 which obviously makes sense. So, I thought it was
45 more in don't call it COP Kahler because there is not
46 COP Kahler, or you know just call it COP or Vehicle
47

1 Patrol Base Wanat because it never was officially COP
2 Kahler. And I never made the distinction between COP
3 or VPB.

4 **Beta**
5 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): And on that conversation it was you could call it
6 COP or VPB?

7 **Gray**
8 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.

9 **Beta**
10 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Just don't call it COP Kahler.

11 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): **Gray** Just don't use the name of the deceased for, like
12 the KIA because it hasn't officially been approved to
13 call it that yet. I just used them interchangeably
14 because I just really didn't think about it other than
15 that.

16 **Beta**
17 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): If I can take you back to when you arrived at
18 Wanat on the 13th. On you mentioned you kind of
19 expected you might see some overhead cover. You said
20 at OP Top Side it would be a little difficult because
21 of the earth moving equipment required. How about at
22 the other positions around the emplacement?

23 **Gray**
24 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): They had some--They didn't have overhead cover.

25 **Beta**
26 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Would you--you said you would have expected to
27 have seen some?

28 **Gray**
29 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): I would have expected for at least at the C2
30 node, the Company CP to--I mean they had fighting
31 positions dug probably 2 or 3 feet and then they had
32 camo-net with their Up-Armored HMMWV blocking the main
33 road along the river to the west and then it was the
34 other side was back up against the bazaar wall so they
35 had--they certainly had some force protection, but
36 they just didn't have the overhead cover in.

37 **Beta**
38 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): How could they have had--what would they have
39 needed to put that----

40 **Gray**
41 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): They would have needed to bring some pre--either
42 filled sandbags and made it a priority or bring the
43 pre-made filled sandbags that we would have the local
44 nationals--we'd pay them to fill sandbags aboard a
45 pallet, and that would be on the back of a jingle
46 truck with all the other Class IV that they had to
47

1 have brought up to just do that, the concertina wire
2 and the sandbag positions that did have built.

3 **Beta**
4 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): For the record, can you explain how you hold the
5 roof up on the overhead?

6 **Gray**
7 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): By building sandbags high enough where you have
8 the stable--stable structure that can support the
9 weight of the 4 by 4 or if you have Afghan Timbers,
10 they're, you know, they're huge. One foot by one foot
11 timbers that would go across. And then the layers of
12 sandbags and plywood to on top of that for the 18
13 inches of overhead cover and the protective wire out
14 of hand grenade range.

15 **Beta**
16 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Then to summarize. CONOP Rock Move was 8 to 10
17 July. So you were planning the extraction from Bella
18 and the initial move up to Wanat.

19 **Gray**
20 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.

21 **Beta**
22 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): And then the building beyond that point was to
23 be, you said, steady state?

24 **Gray**
25 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. Just improvement however long it took
26 the engineers and the local national labor to do it.
27 I can't say for certain because I never laid my eyes
28 on a specific plan that outlined that. But, I know
29 that Brigade--or Battalion XO was working with the
30 Company and the Task Force Engineer to have plans for
31 a deliberate build up. I just don't know it to even
32 remember it.

33 **Beta**
34 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Thank you. Colonel (b)(6)(b)(3) **Sigma**

35 **Sigma**
36 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): Do we need to take a break?

37 **Beta**
38 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Would you like to take a break?

39 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3) **Gray** I am good, sir, unless you Gentlemen want to take
40 a break.

41 **Sigma**
42 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): Kind of taking you back through some of the earlier
43 testimony, you talked about how the riskiest part of
44 Rock Move was the Bella disestablishment, vice the
45 actual occupation of Wanat. Why was that?
46
47

Gray

1 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3):

2 Well, any kind of retrograde operation as you are
3 trying to pull forces out in a contentious area that
4 has the ability to shoot indirect or direct fire at
5 you as you are bringing in helicopters is very
6 vulnerable. And just moving helicopters at night in
7 those conditions in that terrain was high risk enough
8 and then you throw the enemy situation on top of that.
9 And then just previous we had the, again, the Russian
10 aircraft hard landed, shot by RPGs, hard landed, and
11 then destroyed.

Sigma

12 LTC (b)(6)(b)(3):

13 Do you remember what your sense was with regard to the
14 size of the enemy force that was in the vicinity of
15 Bella?

Gray

16 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3):

17 I heard so many conflicting reports, but again
18 based on the enemy SITTEMP, when I looked at the
19 villages surrounding the Valley and I see little ICONS
20 that have nothing bigger than a two man team, I think
21 there was one that had a squad as the largest, there
22 was no hard INTEL, either from the HUMINT or SIGINT,
23 to say we had a much larger force.

Sigma

24 LTC (b)(6)(b)(3):

25 Right. So your sense was just based on the SITTEMP
26 and your experience that it was not a very
27 sophisticated.

Gray

28 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3):

29 It was not large. To say not sophisticated. I
30 don't think--I don't think it was sophisticated. It
31 was probably complex, but very basic with ICOM radios
32 and there coordination. I mean these guys are
33 experienced hard-core fighters so I am not going to
34 slight them that capability, but they certainly didn't
35 have the ISR assets that we have and the TACSAT
36 obviously that we have.

Sigma

37 LTC (b)(6)(b)(3):

38 I understand, you know, it's probably more the 2's
39 lane. But, was it your sense that these were guys
40 from the local area or were they people that had come
41 in from outside.

Gray

42 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3):

43 I think both. I mean based on the Konar, the
44 Korengal, and then the Waygal being here and then the
45 Watapur shooting off the Pesh, I think based on the
46 success we were having in the Watapur and the Korengal
47 they were fighters that congregated. They saw that
Combat Outpost Bella as a very good opportunity for

1 them to mass combat power because they knew we were
2 air-centric and they knew we had limited forces up
3 there because we were there for 15 months and 132 was
4 there before us. So, I think it was just an
5 opportunity, but there was no way to validate it.
6 Based on all the previous reports of, hey, you are
7 going to get mass attacked. There is going to be a
8 mass attack at whatever Vehicle--or COP. Then, you
9 know it was kind of a condition.

10 **Sigma**

11 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): Was there any discussion as to what if--if some of the
12 enemy forces were not from the local area, what they
13 were going to do? Was there sense that they would
14 eventually filter back out or--after Bella was closed?
15 Did you have any thoughts about where they might go
16 next?

17 **Gray**

18 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Well, I think eventually they would have made
19 their way down to Wanat, but I thought it was based on
20 historic information and being there for 15 months,
21 Honaker-Miracle and OP Dallas, and it would, okay,
22 they established this new base. We're going to probe
23 it. We are going to figure out where their heavy
24 weapons. But, you know, I never thought at that point
25 it would be a heavy response.

26 **Sigma**

27 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): The planning process for Rock Move, was it--do you
28 remember was it Operation Planning Group? Did you do
29 MDMP as a staff or was it or more just kind of
30 everybody identify your constraints, limitations, etc.
31 More along those lines, as opposed to----

32 **Gray**

33 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): It was more along those lines, but we didn't go
34 through a full up MDMP process for Rock Move.

35 **Sigma**

36 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): Had you guys ever gone through MDMP while you were
37 there for other operations? Or was it more hasty and
38 immune for staff?

39 **Gray**

40 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): It was more hasty because--I mean we would go
41 through the initial process, but it was time-consuming
42 and by the time it was--we were ready to execute, the
43 opportunity would have been lost and it would have
44 been just doing a CONOP for the sake of a CONOP. And
45 it was--a lot of it was bottom-driven as far as the
46 enemy situation and the scheme of maneuver. You know,
47 Company Commander would come to me as part of our

1 planning group and say, hey, this is my basic scheme
2 of maneuver. It was I know the terrain. I've been up
3 there. Or I, personally, was not. And then for us,
4 it was building the CONOP based on input from the
5 bottom-up and then we'd provide that to the Brigade
6 and then Brigade would bless off on it and would brief
7 it up to the CJTF.

8 **Sigma**

9 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): During the CONOP brief to Brigade, obviously you were
10 probably present for that?

11 **Gray**

12 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Sir, yes, sir.

13 **Sigma**

14 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): Were you there for the one to General Milley at
15 Division, as well?

16 **Gray**

17 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, Sir.

18 **Sigma**

19 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): And during both of those CONOP briefs, nobody
20 discussed the building piece, it was all just the
21 what's in the CONOP itself. The movement----

22 **Gray**

23 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): It was what is in the CONOP and the
24 disestablishment of Bella and the focus for the CONOP
25 briefings for Air-Centric Operations was the
26 helicopters and rightfully so. When General Milley
27 first came with the 101st after they relieved the 82nd,
28 he did initially ask, hey what's your relative combat
29 power analysis? How many enemy fighters do you think
30 are in that area? And that's when the S2 would go
31 through the details and say, hey, we think this cell
32 has this many, we think this cell has this many. And
33 then he would just make sure we were going through the
34 thought process and saying, hey, if you are going to
35 go up there, you at least need to have the kind of the
36 conventional three to one ratio, but the effort was
37 always put on the Air Assault Operation, the HLZ
38 Security, the HLZ selection, How we are going to
39 secure the high ground around the HLZ because the
40 helicopters were so vulnerable coming in and leaving.
41 And that was usually the focus based on the previous
42 experience.

43 **Sigma**

44 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): Turning a little bit to the heavy equipment, I mean
45 the heavy equipment piece of this plan was not
46 obviously, you say it wasn't part of the EXCHECK or
47 anything like that. It was contracted for and it was

1 going to show up at a certain point. But you guys--I
2 just want to make sure I am tracking. You guys were
3 clear on the fact that it wasn't going to be there
4 when we originally expected it to be there. That was
5 not a surprise to anybody that

6 **Gray**

7 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): That's correct.

8 **Sigma**

9 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): It wasn't: Holy Shit this stuff isn't going to show
10 up.

11 **Gray**

12 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): That's correct, sir.

13 **Sigma**

14 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): If you recall, what was your sense of what was the
15 task and purpose for that heavy equipment?

16 **Gray**

17 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): To facilitate--or build the force protection
18 walls first. And then once the force protection walls
19 were built, it would be to build--or improve the
20 fighting positions that were started by hand.

21 **Sigma**

22 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): Was there any discussion--if you recall, what the
23 effect of having to do that stuff with Soldier labor
24 would be on the Soldiers themselves? In others words--
25 ---

26 **Gray**

27 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Because of the heat?

28 **Sigma**

29 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): Because of the heat. It's going to take more water?
30 I mean anything like that?

31 **Gray**

32 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir. There was not.

33 **Sigma**

34 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): One of the things that everybody talks about is the
35 importance of Wanat was a ground LOC between Bella and
36 Wanat. What was your sense of the security of that
37 ground LOC? Was it----

38 **Gray**

39 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): There wasn't a ground LOC between Bella and Wanat
40 there was between----

41 **Sigma**

42 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): Blessing. I'm sorry.

43 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): **Gray** The security of it. Up until that point, it was
44 relatively easy to drive on that road without attack--
45 I mean I could--can't recollect ever having a
46 significant enemy attack on that ground line of
47

1 communication. The biggest--the threat we were
2 concerned about because they knew we were moving to
3 Wanat that they would either place command wire or
4 remote controlled IEDs or setup a far ambush with RPGs
5 or heavy weapons.

6 **Sigma**
7 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): The conditions of the road, they were not so good
8 though; is that what were you were saying?
9

10 **Gray**
11 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Well it was very good up until probably 2
12 kilometers south of Wanat because the pavers were
13 there actually improving road during the last couple
14 of months we were there. So, I think it's 7
15 kilometers between Blessing and Wanat and I think the
16 first 5 were fairly easy and smooth and then the last
17 2 were still restricted. But you could easily get the
18 Up-Armored HMMWVS and the big local national jingle
19 trucks through over that road and through the gaps.

20 **Sigma**
21 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): Would it support--but it wouldn't support like MRAPs
22 or anything or would it?

23 **Gray**
24 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): It would. I think it would. I mean I say that
25 not knowing definitely. But if the (b)(2)High
26 (b)(2)High made it up their (b)(2)High and their other big
27 engineer equipment, then I would assume it would
28 support an MRAP.

29 **Sigma**
30 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): Turning to the, you mentioned the change in
31 atmospheric after the July 4th Apache strike, could
32 you talk just a little bit about how the atmospheric
33 changed, you mentioned the elders in Wanat. Were a
34 little reticent to have us come in there?

35 **Gray**
36 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. And this was just second hand
37 information from the Company Commander, but they--
38 because the way I understand that the insurgents
39 jumped in the vehicles with the local nationals. We
40 engaged and destroyed everyone in the pick-up truck
41 and they were upset because they were aid workers
42 that, you know, in the past were helpful to coalition.
43 I have no way of validating; I don't know if anyone
44 does whether they were neutral or aiding the enemy and
45 also aiding us. But, because of that, they looked at
46 us as killing innocent civilians and they just don't
47 tolerate injustice, even if it is perceived or real
injustice. They don't tolerate it.

1 **Sigma**

2 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): So, I guess what I'm trying to say, it didn't--that
3 didn't in particular affect your assessment of the
4 enemy situation in and around Wanat, or did it? In
5 other words, did we need to do more to mitigate the
6 risk to these guys that were going to Wanat based on
7 that or is it just kind of apples and oranges?

8 **Gray**

9 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): I didn't think that would increase the risk to
10 Wanat. I think they--the enemy would have seen--or
11 would have claimed the victory up at Bella, 8
12 kilometers to the north. It was very restrictive
13 terrain, so they were still you know high ground in
14 between Bella and Wanat, so it was isolated and they
15 would not have come down as far south as fast as they
16 did and as massed as they were.

17 **Sigma**

18 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): Turning to the ISR piece, there has been a lot of talk
19 about whether or not full motion video would have
20 been--was important. What is your sense as to whether
21 or not FMV would have, I mean, given what you know
22 about the enemy and their ability to hide from the
23 (b)(2)High et cetera, what do you think full motion
24 video would have done?

25 **Gray**

26 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): I think it would have detected them moving into
27 position in the draw and the support by fire that they
28 established on the high ground opposite the ravine
29 from OP Top Side and it would have seen the guys
30 moving northwest because we were--had been doing it
31 for 15 month and we are pretty good about picking up
32 the movement on the Ridge Line, sir.

33 **Sigma**

34 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): Given the SIGINT that was available, or SIGINT
35 collection platforms that were available, had the
36 enemy, to your knowledge, were they sophisticated
37 enough to go (b)(1)1.4a, (b)(1)1.4c, if you will, or did they
38 generally still tend to talk over the (b)(1)1.4a, (b)(1)

39 **Gray**

40 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): They'd tend--we'd never experienced them not
41 talking on the (b)(1)1.4a, (b)(1)1.4c

42 (b)(1)1.4a, (b)(1)1.4c
43 (b)(1)1.4a, (b)(1)1.4c
44
45

Sigma

1 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): Okay. I am presuming from talking to other witnesses,
2 there wasn't any kind of a Combined Arms Rehearsal or
3 a ROC Drill or anything for this?

Gray

4 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): There was not--There was not at the Battalion
5 Level like we did for previous CONOPS.
6

Sigma

7 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): I guess that's my next question. Is that unusual or
8 is it kind of business as usual to do something at
9 this level with or without a ROC Drill or----
10

Gray

11 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): I think the--I mean, again hind sight and the
12 mistake on our part was because considered it more of
13 a move versus an Air Assault Raid, which is what we
14 did for 15 months, you know it was getting on
15 helicopters and moving and disestablishing and getting
16 into vehicles and moving and hitting the ground and
17 doing construction. It wasn't a deliberate attack and
18 did not require a Combined Arms Rehearsal. I still
19 don't think it would have made a difference at this
20 point because the Combined Arms Rehearsal would have
21 only covered the initial move and occupation and
22 certainly nothing goes flawless. But, it went well
23 just because there's great NCOs and officers at that
24 level that executed like they were doing for the
25 previous 15 months.
26

Sigma

27 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): Did you see any issues with regard to some of the
28 things you would have talked about at the CAR,
29 obviously, or the ROC Drill? They would have been the
30 enablers, QRF, Apaches, Joint Fires, etc. Given your
31 vantage point in the TOC, did you see any issues with
32 regard to Apache support, CAS, etc? Any delays in any
33 of that stuff?
34

Gray

35 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Not that I can recollect or we would have--that
36 was part of our abort criteria--so if there were
37 issues, it would have been aborted by the Battalion
38 Commander through the Brigade Commander. And I don't
39 recollect there being any significant issues with the
40 C2, the fires, the MEDEVAC, emergency resupply, COMO,
41 CCA, CAS, ISR.
42

Sigma

43 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): The kind of the systems, or the weapons systems that
44 were provided as risk mitigators would have been the
45 mortars, the TOW vehicle, the LRAS, etc.----
46
47

1 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.

2
3 **LTC** Sigma (b)(6)(b)(3): Was that----

4
5 (b)(6)(b)(3) Gray
6 Sigma
7 (b)(6)(b)(3)
8
9 (b)(6)(b)(3) Gray
10
11
12
13 Gray
14 (b)(6)(b)(3)
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16 Gray
17 (b)(6)(b)(3)
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19 (b)(1) 1.4 a, c
20 Gray
21 (b)(6)(b)(3)
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34

35 **LtGen Natonski**: And there was one of those at Wanat?

36 Gray
37 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.

38
39 **LtGen Natonski**: Was there an interpreter at Wanat?

40 Gray
41 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.

42 Sigma
43 **LTC** (b)(6)(b)(3): Kind of looking at the suite of risk mitigators that
44 they had at Wanat. Was that, understanding all COPS
45 are different, was that pretty standard? Were they
46 beefed up there you think?
47

Gray

1 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): That was standard, sir. Every time we did a

(b)(1)1.4a, (b)(1)1.4c, (b)(2)High (b)(1)1.4a, (b)(1)1.4c, (b)(2)H (b)(1)1.4a, (b)(1)1.4c, (b)(2)High

Sigma

8 LTC (b)(6)(b)(3): Based on your experience, given the size of the enemy
9 force, any sense as to why there wasn't more enemy
10 BDA? They found one body in the wire.
11

Gray

12 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): I saw that--I don't know the answer to that, sir.
13 I mean, whether they drug their dead away--that night
14 going--after I, you know, occupied we had the Apaches
15 engaging and AC130 engaging that the guys up at that
16 higher position were spotting and then the Commandos
17 that came in with the SF guys, so whether they drug
18 them away or whether the enemy--enemy strength was
19 exaggerated, I have no way to know that. Most of the
20

(b)(1)1.4a, (b)(1)1.4c

Sigma

21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32 LTC (b)(6)(b)(3): Just kind of a personal opinion, given some of the
33 stuff that has been reported from the Platoon level
34 that you were unaware of, any thoughts as to where you
35 think the communication breakdown would have been? In
36 other words the Platoon has said we were low on water,
37 we saw indicators and warnings that said X, Y, and Z,
38 some of the things that obviously you are aware of at
39 this point in time. Any thoughts on where the
40 disconnect was?
41

Gray

42 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. Either from the Platoon Leader calling
43 back to the TOC and saying, "Hey, we screwed up and
44 didn't do our pre-combat checks and then we didn't
45 ensure that we had X amount of canteens of water per--
46 or quarts of water per man." That never happened. Or
47

1 it would have come into the RTO, the Battle Captain,
2 the Battle Sergeant. Someone would have known, the XO
3 back at Camp Blessing who was co-located, his Company
4 CP was co-located with our Battalion TOC. He could
5 have got the radio call and then said, hey, we need to
6 organize resupply. It certainly is not something that
7 would have been ignored. You know Major (b)(6)(b)(3), we Red
8 called him super XO because the guy was on it. And he
9 certainly would not have done nothing had that report
10 been received in the TOC.
11

12 **LtGen Natonski:** You talked about illumination, running your
13 OPS with illumination. That's primarily for the
14 benefit of the aircraft?
15

16 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): It's mandatory, sir.
17

18 **LtGen Natonski:** Were you looking for the darkest periods of
19 the month to fly or the lightest with moon lunar?
20

21 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): The lightest, sir. And that because it was----
22

23 **LtGen Natonski:** They were on goggles?
24

25 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
26

27 **LtGen Natonski:** Okay.
28

29 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): That was the only time the aviators would fly, so
30 looking at this--the enemy or the S-2's estimate, this
31 is exactly what our light charts looked like. And
32 these highlighted boxes here show green, amber, and
33 red. And here's the timeline.
34

35 **LtGen Natonski:** So, these are the most optimum period for--
36 and they would drive, for example, in the month of
37 July, that helped drive the window that you selected
38 to make the move.
39

40 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. That's how we had to conduct our
41 operations.
42

43 **LtGen Natonski:** I guess they didn't fly in low light
44 illumination because of the Valley--afraid of the----
45

46 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir, the height of the mountain ranges and
47 the angle of the illumination from the moon. If it

1 was not 28 degrees off the horizon, it would not make
2 it light enough in the Valley for them to adequately
3 fly with the goggles. So, we had to find that--
4 percent illumination with moon angle is what
5 determined the green illumination. (b)(1)1.4a, (b)(1)1.4c
6 from the 82nd flew during amber illumination. (b)(1)1.4a, (b)(1)1.4c
7 (b)(1)1.4a, (b)(1)1.4c with the 101st would not fly during
8 amber. So, really, we were restricted to the green
9 illumination, versus the amber, sir.
10

11 **LtGen Natonski:** How about MEDEVACs, just out of curiosity.
12 They go anytime?

13 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): MEDEVACs, when we did deliberate CONOPS, we would
14 ask to have MEDEVAC aircraft pre-staged at Asadabad,
15 which was the, and they would be within 20 minutes of
16 getting to any point of injury in AO Rock----
17
18

19 **LtGen Natonski:** At any point of the month?

20 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir. Only during deliberate CONOPS, we asked
21 to pre-stage them.
22
23

24 **LtGen Natonski:** But, what happens to a MEDEVAC when it's
25 during a red window?

26 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): They still fly under goggles and they are
27 authorized to do it, sir. But it takes----
28
29

30 **LtGen Natonski:** They are the only----

31 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): And it takes 2-Star level approval.
32
33

34 **LtGen Natonski:** I was just curious on that.

35 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
36
37

38 **LtGen Natonski:** The COP--the Operation here Rock Move that
39 was the Battalion's main effort at the time?

40 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
41
42

43 **LtGen Natonski:** Okay. You had mentioned that the Brigade S-
44 3 had initiated this COP establishment in March of
45 about 08 and then it got picked up again, I guess,
46 later and that's when the Battalion said okay, let's
47 start doing the deliberate planning for that?

1 **Gray**
2 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Sir, what happened, he said initiate in March.
3 So we took the steps, but we had to--we were trying to
4 go through the process using the CREST team to make
5 the locals happy----
6
7 **LtGen Natonski:** To procure the land?
8 **Gray**
9 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Exactly, sir. And the amount of time it took
10 between March, April, May, was that process where the
11 Battalion Commander and the TAC went up twice. Got
12 ambushed both times coming back trying to get the
13 locals to agree to----
14
15 **LtGen Natonski:** So that dragged it out until June, I guess.
16 When did the deliberate planning start on the
17 Operation?
18 **Gray**
19 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): The end of June. We sent our initial--our
20 concept slide up to Brigade requesting the Air Assets.
21 Got a given task and purpose, general scheme of
22 maneuver, but I would say--I don't remember exactly,
23 but you know it would always, usually two weeks prior,
24 we'd go through the detailed planning and have our,
25 you know OPS planning.
26
27 **LtGen Natonski:** And then you had to look for the light
28 window in order to determine?
29 **Gray**
30 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. We looked at that up front because
31 that's what would drive our request to Brigade.
32 Because Brigade would have to use that information and
33 say, okay, 1-91 can have the other Battalion Task
34 Forces, you know what are your planned CONOPs. And
35 then Brigade would have to make the decision on who
36 would be the priority to get the very finite amount of
37 aircraft, ISR and CCU----
38
39 **LtGen Natonski:** This was (b)(1)1.4a, (b)(1)1.4c main effort. Was
40 it also the Brigade's? Do you know?
41 **Gray**
42 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): I don't know for sure, sir. But, the way--every
43 other CONOP, Brigade would focus on the initial air
44 assault. So, if we went through an execution
45 checklist, Brigade was monitoring whether that--during
46 that. So, every CONOP it was the same. So, because
47 they did that during this deliberate Rock CONOP, I

1 would say it was. But they were certainly focused on
2 RPiPng with their counterparts at the same time.
3

4 **LtGen Natonski:** During your fifteen months in Afghanistan,
5 your Battalion's focus of effort was interdiction,
6 COIN, Governance, where did you focus your efforts?
7

8 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3):
9 It was along the security sector securing the
10 population. It was governance and it was economic
11 development. So, we had a partnered PRT in AO Rock
12 that was commanded by a Navy O-5; they kind of work
13 from the government down to the population and we work
14 from the population up to the governance. So our main
15 focus was security. And we knew because we couldn't
16 hold terrain because of the amount of forces, we would
17 never be able to into a place and just stay there and
18 occupy. So we could focus our attention on their C-2
19 and logistics nodes based on what the Company
20 Commanders were telling us by being out in the battle
21 space, what the human teams were telling us. And we
22 would direct our deliberate CONOPs to disrupt, knowing
23 we'd never be able to really defeat them or destroy.
24 And then that would create the white space for us to
25 continue to build the road, which really was the main
26 venue--or vehicle for us to bring development and the
27 economic prosperity. Because as the roads went
28 through, they would--little shops would spring up
29 along the road and there would be stability. The
30 locals would actually start telling the Taliban to go
31 away. They were making money. They were happy they
32 were secure. And then the Taliban would move up into
33 the high ground. And then it became going--shifting
34 from artery valley of Pesh and the artery valley of
35 Konar and going into the smaller capillary valleys and
36 using the same approach; 1-32 called it--used the
37 clear hold build and engage. We were certainly
38 following that initial--you know those techniques, but
39 it was more, I think of it along the lines of
40 Operation versus, you know the clear hold build.

41 **LtGen Natonski:** 1-32 is who you relieved?
42

43 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
44

45 **LtGen Natonski:** And they established Bella and Aranus?
46

47 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.

1
2 **LtGen Natonski:** Now under their strategy, Bella and Aranus,
3 I think Bella was in the crossroads of a couple roads.
4 There wasn't a lot of population. I think there was a
5 bazaar nearby.
6 **Gray**
7 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
8
9 **LtGen Natonski:** Did that fit their philosophy? You
10 ultimately abandoned those positions because it was
11 air-centric and you were leaving Soldiers out and they
12 weren't doing any real interface?
13 **Gray**
14 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): They weren't, sir. And we never got the road--we
15 never had the road approved and it was not progressing
16 fast enough because when we first got there, we had
17 the impression that the road would quickly be built
18 and it would join the Pesh River Valley to the Waygal
19 Valley and then eventually go into Nuristan. And it
20 was a way to connect----
21
22 **LtGen Natonski:** So that road would have gone all the way the
23 Waygal Valley?
24 **Gray**
25 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. And that--the reason for Bella was
26 again to pull the road from Pesh, up the Waygal
27 Valley, connect to Bella and then eventually go all
28 the way up into Perunes.
29
30 **LtGen Natonski:** And that's where the Wazuristan governance
31 is?
32 **Gray**
33 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Nuristan, sir.
34
35 **LtGen Natonski:** Nuristan.
36 **Gray**
37 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
38
39 **LtGen Natonski:** The Go-no--I think you were referencing that
40 a little while----
41 **Gray**
42 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): The go-no-go criteria, sir.
43
44 **LtGen Natonski:** For the Operation here, you didn't trip any
45 of that in terms of executing what----
46 **Gray**
47 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir. But, again hind sight--better----

1
2 **LtGen Natonski:** No, I'm just--I mean, but there was no go--
3 it was go and no-go criteria----
4 **Gray**
5 **MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3):** Yes, sir. Any kind of air assault has a standard
6 go-no-go criteria.
7
8 **LtGen Natonski:** I mean weather. It could have probably been
9 a no go----
10 **Gray**
11 **MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3):** Certainly, sir.
12
13 **LtGen Natonski:** Okay.
14 **Gray**
15 **MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3):** And then there is also the abort criteria that
16 goes along with that and then President Karzai's--
17 these CONOP conditions, if any of these are red, then
18 obviously it's an indicator. And if there was
19 something that came up as red, we'd have to brief it
20 to the----
21
22 **LtGen Natonski:** And then determine whether to go proceed or
23 not proceed?
24 **Gray**
25 **MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3):** The ADC--the Deputy Commanding General for
26 Operations would say, yeah okay, you still can do it
27 or no, not until its green or amber are you allowed to
28 proceed.
29
30 **LtGen Natonski:** As you were doing the planning for COP Wanat
31 or for the establish--actually task this Rock Move----
32 **Gray**
33 **MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3):** Yes, sir.
34
35 **LtGen Natonski:** I am used to--excuse me--planning phases.
36 You know there's a page 1 which might be the planning
37 or setting the conditions. A page 2, you know,
38 movement to the objective. And then actions on the
39 objective and what happens after if there is an
40 assault. On this one, this is a pretty deliberate
41 plan for the extraction of Soldiers at Bella and the
42 establishment of the position at Wanat.
43 **Gray**
44 **MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3):** Yes, sir.
45
46 **LtGen Natonski:** It takes you through getting all of the
47 Soldiers, not just by vehicle, but those that were

1 airlifted in, including the ANA and the Engineers and
2 120 up through the 10th of July. I don't see in this
3 plan what happens next in terms of actions on the
4 objective. Okay you establish positions, but there is
5 no detail what was supposed to take place in terms of
6 building the fortification, what the plan was, there
7 is no schematic of what the COP was supposed to look
8 like. There was nothing that directed the Platoon to
9 do engagement with the local Afghan people. And
10 there's nothing that addresses the RIP/TOA, which I
11 think was to have happened within less than 2 weeks
12 after they got up there. Was that going to be done by
13 FRAG order or what? I mean, you knew this--your
14 Battalion and this Platoon, in particular, were going
15 to be relieved by I think its 1-26----

16 **Gray**
17 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): 1-26

18
19 **LtGen Natonski:** In the very near future, but the planning
20 only stopped--it only went up through the 10th of July.
21 What----

22 **Gray**
23 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): It went through initial occupation, sir----

24
25 **LtGen Natonski:** But----

26 **Gray**
27 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): And we didn't make a deliberate plan for the
28 build up--the actions on the objective was the actual
29 initial occupation and then it was continue to build
30 force protection with the local nationals, get the
31 force protection walls built, get the initial fighting
32 positions built, and then hand it over to 1-26 and
33 they would continue to improve their position. Which
34 you were correct, sir, there was no--at the Battalion
35 Task Force operational level on my part, there was no
36 buildup plan that I made----

37
38 **LtGen Natonski:** Well should there have been an Annex or
39 something from the Company?

40 **Gray**
41 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): They did have the CREST team schematics; they had
42 some basic plans that I remember seeing, but not part
43 of a CONOP. I mean it was a----

44
45 **LtGen Natonski:** Okay. This was briefed up at the Brigade
46 level, and ultimately the Division, did not anyone ask
47 what happens after the 10th of July?

1 [Gray]
2 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. And the quick answer was we will
3 continue to improve positions and build our force
4 protection and make Wanat a combat outpost. There was
5 not deliberate plan or Annex to this CONOP to say,
6 hey, at--you know we're going to build these specific
7 things at this time.
8
9 LtGen Natonski: Do you think the RIP/TOA had any impact on
10 diverting attention from what was going on with Wanat
11 while other units were doing their Left Seat-Right
12 Seat?
13 [Gray]
14 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): At the Battalion level, I don't think so, sir.
15 And I don't--there is nothing to lead me to believe
16 that it was at the Brigade level either. But, I can
17 only answer at the Battalion level and---
18
19 LtGen Natonski: Do you recall when you were briefing this at
20 the Brigade and Division level whether there were any
21 members of 1-26 there?
22 [Gray]
23 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
24
25 LtGen Natonski: Who were they?
26 [Gray]
27 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): I believe it was the 3 and the----
28
29 LtGen Natonski: The 3 of the Battalion?
30 [Gray]
31 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): The 3 of 1-26 and the Battalion Commander.
32
33 LtGen Natonski: But you don't think people were distracted
34 because of the RIP/TOA?
35 [Gray]
36 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): We were not at the Battalion staff level. No,
37 sir.
38
39 LtGen Natonski: How often did the Battalion Commander get
40 out and about battlefield circulation?
41 [Gray]
42 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Every week for a couple of days at a time and he
43 would just go with the TAC. Him and the Sergeant
44 Major would go visit all the combat outposts. Towards
45 the end of our rotation we had a lot of activity in
46 Gaki Pass and Nawa Pass on the Pakistan-Afghan border.
47 And he spent a lot of time at Camp Joyce and Siray

1 Vehicle Patrol Base and a place called the Fortress.
2 And would usually, overnight with the Company, or go
3 to Asadabad. If he went into the Korengal, he did
4 drive a few times, but mostly by air. When he visited
5 Bella, it was by air, but that was very infrequent.
6 So, he was out often, but it was along the Pesh, along
7 the Konar, and up----

8
9 **LtGen Natonski:** Did he get to Bella during the
10 disestablishment of the position?

11 **Gray**
12 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir. Only (b)(6)(b)(3) was up there. **Oscar**

13
14 **LtGen Natonski:** And he didn't get to Wanat before the
15 position was attacked?

16 **Gray**
17 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Not since he did the initial CREST Team--or visit
18 with the elders to get permission. He was not up
19 there. But, again his--being in the TOC was the most
20 valuable place for him, controlling the assets and
21 relaying information to the Deputy Commander and the
22 Brigade Commander.

23
24 **LtGen Natonski:** So it was more important--but you did
25 mention, he got out and circulated?

26 **Gray**
27 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Oh yes, sir. I mean he was----

28
29 **LtGen Natonski:** I understand being in the TOC during an
30 attack when you can----

31 **Gray**
32 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): He did--he frequently--he frequently circulated
33 because when he did, it was myself and the XO, you
34 know, clearing fires.

35
36 **LtGen Natonski:** Did you go with him?

37 **Gray**
38 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Sometimes I went with him, sometimes not but, you
39 know, if we had a heavy CONOP, you know, planning,
40 then myself and the XO would stay back because we were
41 also had to stay back to clear 155 and you know
42 deliver--aerial delivery of bombs, if needed. There
43 needed to be a field grade there at all times to----

44
45 **LtGen Natonski:** But this was a Battalion main effort and he
46 didn't get to either position during the Operation?
47

1 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir. Not during the actual operation. He
2 was in the TOC.
3
4 **LtGen Natonski:** Was that because the RIP/TOA was going?
5 That is kind of what ----
6
7 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir. It was because he was more valuable in
8 the TOC monitoring the EXCHECK, watching full motion
9 video, and updating the Brigade Commander and Deputy
10 Commanding General over the phone or radio.
11
12 **LtGen Natonski:** So that was more important than going out on
13 to the position and finding out if they were short of
14 any supplies or whether there was any intel coming in
15 through that?
16
17 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): It was, sir. Because he relied on--I mean
18 essentially it was a two Platoon CONOP and he had
19 another 5 Companies plus a whole Battalion of ANA and
20 all the other enablers that are the C-2, as well. So
21 we were relying on the information coming from the
22 Company level leadership, which historically was spot
23 on.
24
25 **LtGen Natonski:** Captain Magenta (6)(b) was your S-2.
26
27 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
28
29 **LtGen Natonski:** And he was getting fed some intel through
30 the Company, I guess, ultimately the Platoon that was
31 in position, some indication and warning. But, you
32 never heard of any of that intel. Things like small
33 groups in the hills--males?
34
35 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): No, I didn't know that he was getting that INTEL,
36 sir.
37
38 **LtGen Natonski:** So, there was no reason for you to have
39 called the Brigade and said, hey, I need some ISR?
40
41 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Correct, sir.
42
43 **LtGen Natonski:** Okay. Once again, trying to figure where is
44 the Breakdown in communication here.
45
46 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
47

1 **LtGen Natonski:** Because I believe he did go to Colonel
2 **Foxtrot** (b)(6)(b)(3) on some of his concerns?
3
4 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): **Gray** Yeah, after the CONOP was over and again we put
5 our request in for ISR. We were apportioned a certain
6 amount of full motion video coverage. And then it was
7 pulled early, you know, he went to Colonel (b)(6)(b)(3) and **Foxtrot**
8 said, hey, why are you pulling the ISR. And at that
9 point he did come to me and say, hey, they are pulling
10 **Foxtrot** our ISR and Colonel (b)(6)(b)(3) is saying there is a higher
11 priority somewhere else, so we can't justify it
12 because we don't see anything. We can't verify a
13 heavy concentration of enemy to be able to keep the
14 ISR on station versus giving it to someone else who
15 was possibly in an attack----
16
17 **LtGen Natonski:** So, you were aware that it was being pulled
18 off, but you were not aware of any of the indications
19 and warning coming out of the position----
20 **Gray**
21 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): That's correct.
22
23 **LtGen Natonski:** That there were----
24 **Gray**
25 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): That's correct, because that would have been a
26 key bit of knowledge to go back to Brigade and CJTF
27 and saying, hey you know, we need to keep the ISR
28 because we see these small pockets maneuvering and we
29 think they are massing for an attack.
30
31 **LtGen Natonski:** Yeah that--sometimes it happens when it
32 comes through multiple channels. From the 2, the 3,
33 the CO----
34 **Gray**
35 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. And the fact that we didn't get any
36 (b)(1)1.4a, (b)(1)1.4c that I was
37 aware of that would have certainly raised the red
38 flag.
39
40 **LtGen Natonski:** On the closing of COP Wanat, or the position
41 at Wanat, you were there from the 13th to the 15th, you
42 said?
43 **Gray**
44 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
45
46 **LtGen Natonski:** Okay. Did you make the recommendation that
47 hey maybe we should close the position or----

1 [Gray]
2 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Certainly not, sir.
3
4 LtGen Natonski: Did they ask you?
5 [Gray]
6 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir.
7
8 LtGen Natonski: So, you were just providing the C-2 at the
9 position and those decisions were being discussed at
10 the Battalion and higher Level?
11 [Gray]
12 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. I think at the Battalion--higher than
13 the Battalion Level. I am not sure who was discussing
14 it or why. But, it was well above myself and--I know
15 it was made above Battalion level because of that's
16 what we were waiting on through Colonel (b)(6)(b)(3) to get [Diamond]
17 word from higher, whether it was Brigade or Division.
18 I am assuming it was CJTF level.
19
20 LtGen Natonski: What were your thoughts on leaving?
21 [Gray]
22 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): We should have stayed, sir. We should have
23 stayed.
24
25 LtGen Natonski: That's what a lot of the Soldiers that were
26 there felt as well. What were the reasons given that
27 you had heard for leaving the position?
28 [Gray]
29 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Once I got back, it had to do with not
30 reinforcing failure on the part of connecting with the
31 government. So, if the locals at Wanat did not want
32 to help us help themselves, then we weren't going to
33 give them the advantage of economic development or
34 Road, you know, whatever other CERP Projects we wanted
35 to initiate. So, in a way, it was almost like a
36 punishment to keep them disconnected and to either
37 force them to get on board or remain isolated and kind
38 of irrelevant and not progressing.
39
40 LtGen Natonski: Did you see any of the locals from the 13th
41 through the 15th?
42 [Gray]
43 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. The Police Chief----
44
45 LtGen Natonski: I mean families?
46

1 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir. I didn't see one civilian family, girl,
2 boy, wife----
3
4 **LtGen Natonski**: So they had obviously----
5 Gray
6 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): They were gone, sir. They were gone.
7
8 **LtGen Natonski**: Okay, thanks.
9
10 [The testimony broke at 1320]
11
12 [The testimony continued at 1324]
13
14 **MG Perkins**: You said you guys had inherited Ranch House and
15 Bella from 10th Mountain, correct?
16 Gray
17 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
18
19 **MG Perkins**: Did you, in the period between when you inherited
20 them and you closed out each one, were there a series
21 of constant improvements done to them? Force
22 protection? Quality of life, et cetera like that?
23 Gray
24 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
25
26 **MG Perkins**: As probably was the case with Blessing and every
27 other COP?
28 Gray
29 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. It was--yes, sir.
30
31 **MG Perkins**: Was there any sort of master plan or any tracking
32 mechanism that would track sort of throughout the 1.4a, (b)(1)
33 (b)(1)1.4a, (b)(1)1.4c ongoing engineer work, you know, position
34 and placement, et cetera like that?
35 Gray
36 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): At the Brigade Level, there was a tracker, sir,
37 but as far as naming it and a location, that's the
38 only thing that I am aware of just from our OP-SYNC
39 meetings.
40
41 **MG Perkins**: How about within the Task Force then? Like
42 who'd--how would you guys decide priority? Yeah we're
43 going to send more of this to Ranch House or more of
44 this to Bella, or you know use this at Blessing?
45 Gray
46 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. The Battalion Task Force Engineer did
47 have a deliberate plan that he worked with the S-4 and

1 the XO on and then reported back through the Brigade
2 Engineer to get the Class IV. And then we'd--most of
3 the time, we'd use the Pesh Resupply Aircraft to
4 deliver that Class IV.
5

6 **MG Perkins:** So was that sort of, when you talk about steady
7 state OPS, was that sort of the steady state OPS? In
8 other words, this sort of continual improvement of
9 COPs and FOBs and everything being done-----

10 **Gray**
11 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): That's correct, sir. Yes, sir.
12

13 **MG Perkins:** And so was that the same process then considered
14 for Wanat? It would just sort of go into the mix with
15 all the other COPs and FOBs?
16

17 **Gray**
18 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. And that's what we did for Honaker-
19 Miracle. It was get the initial Vehicle Patrol Base,
20 build the force protection walls, and then, including
21 guard towers, and then once the force protection was
22 established, the internal construction would begin.
23 And then it was a steady state process over time.

24 **MG Perkins:** When you guys did Honaker-Miracle, was there a
25 CONOP at all for it?
26

27 **Gray**
28 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir. There was not a CONOP for Honaker-
29 Miracle. It was--It was really the Company Commander
30 working with the Sub-Governor that was in charge of
31 the Watapur District, and he just did the coordination
32 and then the Battalion Commander would go sit in on
33 Shura and be the overarching voice of authority. And
34 a few occasions, I was there as well. And then the
35 contractors showed up through the process dealing with
36 the SERB manager, the S-4, and the Battalion XO. And
37 then it just kind of very slowly, you know, blossomed
38 into a COP.

39 **MG Perkins:** So, would you--the establishment of Honaker-
40 Miracle then was considered a steady state operation
41 versus a specific CONOP?
42

43 **Gray**
44 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
45

46 **MG Perkins:** And then if we take a look at this one, I guess
by the nature first of all the dates--the 8th through

1 the 10th was the time period when we talk about CONOP
2 Rock Move that was the period----

3 **Gray**

4 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.

5
6 **MG Perkins:** And so when you'd talk to Brigade when you talked
7 to Division, when you talked about asset allocation,
8 et cetera like that, if they were--if you were putting
9 it under the overhead or under the outline of a CONOP
10 as far as sort of if there was an SOP as far as
11 priorities for ISR or things like that, which were
12 aligned with a CONOP. From Brigade and Division's
13 point of view, was that okay then we are going to give
14 you that priority, air movement, et cetera like that
15 from 8 to 10 July.

16 **Gray**

17 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): That is 100 percent correct, sir.

18
19 **MG Perkins:** And therefore, in here, I am looking at key tasks
20 as getting the SIGINT up, ISR, Air Assault, movement
21 of personnel, establishment of COP, et cetera like
22 that, that is all the intent that we want. Those are
23 the key tasks to be done between 8 and 10 July?

24 **Gray**

25 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.

26
27 **MG Perkins:** And then the end state here, and of course this
28 is the end state for the CONOP, not necessarily the
29 end state for Wanat----

30 **Gray**

31 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir----

32
33 **MG Perkins:** There are two different, I think, definitions of
34 those things, correct?

35 **Gray**

36 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): That's correct, sir. The end state for the
37 CONOP--and really what that was doing was locking in
38 Aviation assets, ISR, and all the enablers that we
39 needed to conduct an Air Assault Operation. So it was
40 securing the rotary wing aircraft and securing the ISR
41 for us during that time period.

42
43 **MG Perkins:** So when I look at end state here, one of them is
44 equipment removed from Bella, sort of check; Wanat
45 initial occupation, complete.

46 **Gray**

47 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.

1
2 **MG Perkins:** Initial Occupation being defined as what, would
3 you say?
4 **Gray**
5 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Being defined as the HESCO barriers in place, the
6 beginnings of battle positions formed, but it was
7 never clearly defined to say Chosen Company, 2nd
8 Platoon here is your specific criteria for this being
9 the end state. But it was the force protection walls,
10 HESCOs built around the main COP area and fighting
11 positions dug and ready for 1-26 to move in.
12
13 **MG Perkins:** So at, well at least at the Task Force Level and
14 then I guess being your perspective at the Brigade and
15 Division Level, close of business on the 10th are they
16 saying CONOP complete, to use a bad term previously in
17 GWOT, mission accomplished? I mean----
18 **Gray**
19 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. And that's exactly whatever everyone
20 had in their mind, including the Battalion staff. And
21 two hours after the guys landed on the ground, the GAC
22 was established, there was no enemy contact. Every
23 other CONOP that we did that was--that became kinetic,
24 there was that golden couple of hours where the enemy
25 would come out fighting full force and we had a big
26 fight and we were engaging with every asset we had.
27 After the initial fight, it would usually just taper
28 off. They would go away and it would be business as
29 usual. Would either air assault--or get extracted out
30 by air if it was an air assault raid, or we'd stay in
31 the area for a while and deal with the locals and do
32 engagement and then leave. And then CONOP over and
33 assets would be pulled from us because the CONOP was
34 officially over.
35
36 **MG Perkins:** So your expectation from an enemy point of view,
37 based on your experience and your read of the intel,
38 was that if you were going to get hit, it would either
39 be during the extraction of Bella or on this--what
40 we're defining as initial occupation of Wanat?
41 **Gray**
42 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Exactly, sir.
43
44 **MG Perkins:** So sort of from the 11th on, for the lack of a
45 better term, we're in steady state operations at
46 Wanat----
47

1 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): That's correct, sir.
2
3 **MG Perkins:** It is no longer a CONOP.
4 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): It is no longer a CONOP. We're steady state OPS.
5 The local contractors will come and the security will
6 be provided by the Platoon, first 2-503 then 1-26.
7 And eventually that Force Protection will be at a
8 state where it is suitable for living outside the
9 HMMWVS; living out of the fighting positions. That
10 they have brick and mortar buildings built. And that
11 was the school of thought, sir.
12
13
14 **LtGen Natonski:** Was that laid out on the Battalion SOP?
15 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): It wasn't an official SOP, it is just how we were
16 conducting business for the previous 15 months, sir.
17
18
19 **LtGen Natonski:** And the 1-26, how would they have picked up
20 on how you were doing business?
21 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): They would have come in and occupied the fighting
22 positions, pulled security, conducted the left seat-
23 right seat ride, engaging the locals, going on
24 counter-IED patrols. Occupy the fighting positions.
25 Monitor the construction workers, the Afghan Local
26 Nationals. And then, make their decisions on that. If
27 they felt comfortable with the state and they could,
28 you know, officially move in and establish it as a
29 permanent COP, then that would be entirely up to them.
30 But, it was really just a matter of occupying the
31 positions, pulling security, and continuing to engage
32 with the locals and then doing Counter-IED patrols
33 between Wanat and Camp Blessing, sir.
34
35
36 **MG Perkins:** How many COPs, FOBs, OPs, et cetera, about did
37 you guys have in the Task Force? I know it sort of
38 went up and down, but what would you say?
39 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): I think twenty. Twenty was the highest we had,
40 sir. If I remember correctly, which I cannot 100
41 percent say with certainty, but 18 or 20. No more
42 than 20, though.
43
44
45 **MG Perkins:** The Battalion probably didn't --at least maybe at
46 the Brigade level, I assume there was a campaign plan
47 that covered your time there with lines of effort,

1 lines of operation. You know security, governance, et
2 cetera, economic?

3 [Gray]

4 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Sir, they had--we had a deployment OP order that
5 outlined that. But once we hit the ground, we had
6 what were called 90 day letters and based on--I don't
7 know, I am not privy to why they were not put exactly
8 at the 90 day mark, but I can only remember 2 distinct
9 90 day letters in 15 months and then our redeployment
10 OP order. So, we came up with our own campaign plan
11 and we called it our----

12
13 MG Perkins: Okay, whatever. So you had a--let's use the term
14 campaign plan----

15 [Gray]

16 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. And it was----

17
18 MG Perkins: Did you have, sort of, lines of operation, lines
19 of effort, et cetera like that?

20 [Gray]

21 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. We did, sir, over a time period by
22 location.

23
24 MG Perkins: So that was sort of the outline that you were,
25 again we used the term steady state operations or
26 whatever, but it was in accordance with this campaign
27 plan that you had laid out?

28 [Gray]

29 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir----

30
31 MG Perkins: But, go ahead----

32 [Gray]

33 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): It was not set in stone, sir. I mean it was
34 conditions based.

35
36 MG Perkins: No, I understand.

37 [Gray]

38 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Okay, sir.

39
40 MG Perkins: Again, so on the 11th of July of your 20 COPs and
41 FOBs, or whatever, that were in the execution of your
42 campaign plan, or your steady state, at that time
43 Wanat was sort of, in some aspects, now in the same
44 bin as Honaker-Miracle and everything else?

45 [Gray]

46 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.

1 **MG Perkins:** After the Ranch House Assault--[cough] excuse me-
2 -were there any sort of particular lessons learned,
3 TTPs, or anything like that, that you picked up on and
4 then you incorporated either into your operations or
5 took into account when you did other CONOPS?
6

7 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): The breach in security for Aranus was the ASG
8 foreman who basically gave intel out to the fighters,
9 so they knew exactly where our vulnerabilities were,
10 so you know it was kind of a caution for us not to
11 fully trust the Afghan Security Forces and then when
12 Sergeant Kahler was shot in the head by an ASG guy as
13 he was trying to conduct a Passage of Lines going out
14 on a patrol to over watch the road, where the Taliban
15 were setting up TCPs between Wanat and Bella, so the
16 Local National trucks that were delivering water up to
17 Bella could not get through. We certainly had that in
18 mind as far as you know not fully trusting and
19 divulging every bit of information to the Afghan
20 Security Guards. We also had a better appreciation of
21 the terrain after the Aranus ambush on 9 November
22 where the Platoon Leader was killed. It certainly
23 gave us an appreciation of the Line of Sight, what
24 Ridge Lines we could operate on, how we'd occupy high
25 ground, or set conditions with ISR or non-standard ISR
26 before we'd actually move. So we certainly learned
27 some TTPs from those. But as far as the attack on
28 Aranus, the protective wire and the efforts of the
29 Platoon Leader and the mortar Platoon Sergeant, or
30 Squad Leader at the time, Sergeant (b)(3), (b)(6) were
31 really the ones who saved the day. But other than
32 that, there were no specific enemy TTPs that come to
33 mind, sir.
34

35 **MG Perkins:** Regards to the enemy situation on the CONOP here,
36 we have most likely, most dangerous, and again based
37 on previous discussion and I guess by the CONOP
38 itself, again we're focusing the 8th through the 10th.
39 Once we had completed the move out of Bella, had done
40 the initial occupation of Wanat, and the 10th had come
41 and gone, what was your assessment then of--did you
42 think the most likely, most dangerous now had changed?
43 Or what was your assessment of the enemy situation in
44 general, based upon what happened between the 8th and
45 the 10th? Because obviously this is written for the 8th
46 and the 10th and the 8th and the 10th have now come and

1 gone. What is your personal assessment of the enemy
2 situation?

3 **Gray**
4 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3):

5 My personal assessment is exactly what that said
6 and that is based on being there for 15 months and
7 understanding, or thinking I understood, how the enemy
8 operated for those 15 months. And I really thought
9 that they would continue to--IO--IOS, sort to speak,
10 and say yeah, we are going to conduct an elaborate
11 attack on such and such a date and when in reality
12 they would probably infiltrate up on the high ground
13 and either use timed rockets, fire mortars and run, or
14 shoot a couple bursts of PKM and then run, just to
15 find out what our response was, where our key weapons
16 systems were located and to probe us and test us, but
17 still stay up north of Bella and kind of enjoy what
18 they considered their success because we closed two
19 bases on their watch, or our watch in that time
20 period.

21 **MG Perkins:** So, would your assessment then be that since the
22 initial concern was an attack on Bella during as you
23 were closing down, et cetera, that didn't occur. We
24 are now establishing Wanat. We are now in the 11th or
25 the 12th. Was your assessment that immediate attack
26 was less likely or more likely now?

27 **Gray**
28 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3):

29 Less likely because usually it would happen
30 within that first 24 hours doing deliberate CONOPS and
31 when they'd see helicopters go in there it would be
32 that 24 hours period where we'd expect, and usually
33 encountered, an attack. If it didn't happen in that
34 24 hours, up until that point, there was very really--
35 there was never a massed attack. It was always the---
36 -

37 **MG Perkins:** So as we are going into the 12th and 13th, your
38 assessment is that an attack is probably less now than
39 it was say on the 8th or the 9th?

40 **Gray**
41 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3):

42 A deliberate massed attack on the COP, yes sir.
43 But I just thought that they would do the command wire
44 IEDs----

45 **MG Perkins:** Which you had seen sort of throughout your entire
46 tour there?
47

Gray

1 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.

2
3 MG Perkins: Had there been any discussions with you, the 2 or
4 anyone else, about the possibility of the folks that
5 we were concerned about here attacking us at Bella
6 were moving south to Wanat?

Gray

7
8 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): He did mention that eventually it would occur,
9 but it was never on any kind of a timeline. And using
10 hope as a method, which I know is not the right thing,
11 we would hope to have some better force protection
12 built and, you know, we thought okay the contractors
13 are coming up on the 13th. We are going to get these
14 concrete C-Barriers and have immediate overhead
15 protection on the OPs and whatever other high ground
16 we occupy and we'll be able to at least have better
17 force protection developed by after the 13th. Their
18 timeline was never fast or responsive and they were
19 very patient and deliberate. And they made sure their
20 conditions were set 100 percent. I thought with all
21 that fire power, all those assets, all the enablers
22 that we could call within 45 minutes that they would
23 not attack like they did, when they did.

24
25 MG Perkins: In part of the go-no go criteria, there was the--
26 one of them was the ISR, and you did have the (b)(2)High
27 initially during the CONOP, in fact do you remember
28 how long you were told you would have the Predator?

Gray

29
30 MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Two hours after the CONOP was complete. So in
31 everyone's mind, based on how we operated for 15
32 months, when we did an initial CONOP and helicopter
33 assets were used and the helicopters went away and
34 then things kind of cleared, settled down so to speak,
35 that we would have ISR on station for, you know, 4
36 hours-6 hours, and I knew this original plan was for 2
37 hours. After execution checklist, mission complete,
38 pilots go home, occupation force in, sectors of fire--
39 hasty sectors of fire with the crew serve weapons.
40 Okay CONOP is over. End State is met. Initial
41 occupation made. Another 2 hours, assets will be
42 gone.

43
44 MG Perkins: So, if you had had (b)(2)High through middle of the
45 day on the 11th, that would have been within your
46 expectation of how long you would have expected it?

47

1 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Certainly, sir.
2
3 **MG Perkins:** And then if you were informed that in the middle
4 of the 11th it went away, you would have said that's
5 the way----
6 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): It's par for the course.
7
8
9 **MG Perkins:** In other words, it wouldn't have been a change to
10 any of your expectations or anything like that?
11 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): It would not for me personally, no sir. And I
12 don't know what the ISR request was for after that 2
13 hour window, you know after the initial occupation.
14
15
16 **MG Perkins:** I assume everyday you--whether you were doing a
17 CONOP or not, you sent up ISR requests, right?
18 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. We requested CAS, ISR every day.
19
20
21 **MG Perkins:** And some days you got it and some days you
22 didn't----
23 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Correct, sir----
24
25
26 **MG Perkins:** Just depending upon what else was going on in the
27 CJTF area?
28 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. Some days we got it and then it was
29 pulled before our allotted time was up because of a
30 TIC somewhere else. Sometimes we could keep it and
31 we'd ask for it and we'd have it and we'd continue to-
32 ---
33
34
35 **MG Perkins:** So what would have been unusual is if you were
36 doing a CONOP and then in the middle of the CONOP you
37 lost your ISR?
38 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. It would have been a potential----
39
40
41 **MG Perkins:** That's a big deal.
42 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
43
44
45 **MG Perkins:** But if you are in a steady state operation and
46 you've requested ISR and you didn't get it----
47

1 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): That was usual and by that 15 month mark--and
2 it's not my brigade's fault. It's not Division's
3 fault. We just didn't have it----
4
5 **MG Perkins:** I know. Somebody had set the priority and you
6 wouldn't have been it.
7
8 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
9
10 **MG Perkins:** Do you remember as you were going through
11 planning here, and you talked about QRF and things
12 like that, what the planning figure would have been
13 for time on station for QRF, either Apaches or Ground,
14 for Wanat?
15
16 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. If it was a mission ready bird
17 stationed out of Jafe, it was anywhere from 45 minutes
18 to an hour. So, if we made the call and said we are
19 in a TIC, we request CCA, Brigade would have to make
20 the determination are we going to burn up our Blade
21 time for the mission ready bird. If so, it would be
22 45 minutes from time of Brigade saying yes you can
23 have it to the time of those helicopter pilots being
24 on station talking to our FSO.
25
26 **MG Perkins:** Were you in the TOC at the time of the attack at
27 Wanat?
28
29 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): I was woken up at four twenty in the morning----
30
31 **MG Perkins:** Do you remember how long it took the Apaches to
32 get there?
33
34 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): I want to say 45 minutes to an hour, sir.
35
36 **MG Perkins:** So, from your recollection it was within
37 standard. In other words----
38
39 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Certainly, yes, sir. Based on--yes, sir.
40
41 **MG Perkins:** Do you remember in the process of them either
42 coming onto station or throughout their time in the
43 air, any issues with them being held back or de-
44 conflications with gun target lines or artillery or
45 anything like that?
46

1 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir. I mean the initial helicopter pilot
2 actually came and landed at Blessing and called up to
3 the TOC and said could you come talk to me just to
4 give me a better feel for what is going on as he got
5 refueled. And I just went down and met him halfway---
6 -
7
8 **MG Perkins:** So you personally went down----
9 Gray
10 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): I personally went down and he--you know he was
11 halfway down the trail to the HLZ--or he was halfway
12 up, I was halfway down. And I just gave him a quick
13 update on what was going on. He got in the helicopter
14 and flew out. Either the Battalion Commander or the
15 XO was on the radio talking to the Company and talking
16 to the pilots and then de-conflicting the move out
17 from lifting off the ground at Blessing and heading up
18 the Waygal Valley.
19
20 **MG Perkins:** And you don't remember any issues with--
21 conflicts or de-conflictions----
22 Gray
23 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): I don't sir. I know there was no de-confliction
24 issues that I'm aware of. I know there was concern
25 being danger close to friendlies. But, that was
26 mentioned. But I don't think anything other than
27 that.
28
29 **MG Perkins:** So again, to clarify, until you went up there
30 after the Battle on the 13th, you were unaware of any
31 shortages of any Class of Supply?
32 Gray
33 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): That's correct, sir. Other than the C-Barriers
34 that we know we didn't get. The Heavy Engineer asset-
35 -or Class IV, other than that, I had no clue that they
36 were short on water, or I don't even know if they were
37 short on ammunition honestly at this point, sir.
38
39 **MG Perkins:** And again sometime before they went up and
40 occupied, you knew the Engineers were not going to get
41 there until the 13th?
42 Gray
43 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. Everyone knew that. Yes, sir.
44
45 **MG Perkins:** Okay, so that was a----
46 Gray
47 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Deliberate decision. Yes, sir.

1
2 **MG Perkins:** What level do you think that was--did Captain
3 **Oscar** (b)(6)(b)(3) know that?
4
5 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): **Gray** Yes, sir. He was the one that pushed to still go
6 up with the assets that he had, as far as I remember.
7
8 **MG Perkins:** Okay. So he knew when the initial ground
9 movement went up on the 8th, I believe. That the
10 Engineers were not going to be there until the 13th,
11 the contracting engineers?
12 **Gray**
13 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
14
15 **MG Perkins:** Was the Bobcat, then, not part of the original
16 plan? Was that a mitigation plan----
17 **Gray**
18 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): It was a mitigation----
19
20 **MG Perkins:** Plan for the fact that the contractors weren't
21 going--and where'd the Bobcat come from?
22 **Gray**
23 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): I don't know the answer to that, sir.
24
25 **MG Perkins:** Is it a U.S. Army Bobcat?
26 **Gray**
27 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. It's an Engineer asset.
28
29 **MG Perkins:** It's a U.S. Army Engineer?
30 **Gray**
31 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
32
33 **MG Perkins:** It's not a contract?
34 **Gray**
35 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): It's not a contract, local national engineer. I
36 am pretty sure it's a U.S. Army Engineer asset that
37 was co-located at Bella, probably doing work on the
38 HLZ. I am not sure where it came from. It may have
39 been sling-loaded, or belly-loaded from Jafe, sir.
40
41 **MG Perkins:** But it's a green Bobcat, it's not a contracted
42 one?
43 **Gray**
44 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): I don't know the answer for sure, sir.
45
46 **MG Perkins:** But I mean it was operated by Soldiers?
47

1 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. Exactly, sir, it was not a local
2 national asset.
3

4 **MG Perkins:** Right, right, right. In your discussions with
5 Oscar Captain (b)(6)(b)(3), before the CONOP or even after it was in
6 place and from the 8th on, did he ever request any
7 additional resources? Force protection? Additional
8 Platoon? Anything like that?
9

10 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir. Not to myself. Not that I know of to
11 the XO. I mean I really sat next to the XO and next
12 to the OPS Sergeant Major. I never heard him. He
13 didn't come in and usually I would pick up when the XO
14 was talking on the phone. I was not aware of any
15 shortcoming unless it was in person outside of the
16 office. But, it was never raised or never brought up.
17

18 **MG Perkins:** Now, if he had done analysis and said well I need
19 another U.S. Platoon for security, even if he was
20 going to take a Chosen One, would he have to come to
21 you to clear it?
22

23 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Certainly, sir.
24

25 **MG Perkins:** Since it would get relief for some mission or
26 something like that?
27

28 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. Because we still had to maintain force
29 protection Blessing which that Platoon participated
30 in. We had QRF missions that each Company was
31 responsible for maintaining for---
32

33 **MG Perkins:** So you would have to relieve him of some ongoing
34 mission. You didn't have actual Platoons hanging out
35 at the barracks?
36

37 **MAJ** Gray (b)(6)(b)(3): Exactly, sir. We always paid the price, so to
38 speak. What was the opportunity cost to give up this
39 Platoon? And we actually started using the RCP and
40 our Fusion Company supply guys to occupy static
41 positions if we needed combat maneuver, you know,
42 infantry paratroopers---
43

44 **MG Perkins:** Do you know in the MDMP leading up to the CONOP
45 or in any of the briefings, was there ever discussion
46 about is one Platoon enough or anything of that? Do
47 you ever remember that coming up as an issue?

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Gray
MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir. Part of the CONOP process was saying, hey, what is the enemy--contemplated enemy, you know, situation. How many guys are we talking about as far as enemy boots on the ground? And we would make sure that we met that three to one ratio, because the General Milley was asking about that. Because he wanted to make sure that we were going through the mental process and saying, yeah, we know we have, based on the enemy situation, have superiority of numbers. But, there was no way to really validate that enemy situation.

MG Perkins: Did you ever talk with Captain (b)(6)(b)(3) once you got **Oscar** up there on the 12th?

Gray
MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Before the attack, sir?

MG Perkins: Yeah before the attack.

Gray
MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir. I didn't.

MG Perkins: Did you ever speak with him after he had pulled out from Bella--or guess you did. You said you saw him----

Gray
MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): I saw him at Blessing----

MG Perkins: Did he sort of give you an overall SITREP about how Bella went, how Wanat was going, et cetera.

Gray
MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): Oh I mean, we were high-fiving so to speak because we thought it was a success. We tore down an outpost in contentious terrain, very difficult terrain, without any significant either mishap with aircraft or enemy contacts. You know, no injuries. We got all the critical equipment. The ammunition. Didn't leave anything for the locals to film and further their IO cause by saying look, we've attacked this base and not it's an IO win for us. So we were pretty happy with the disestablishment of Bella and the initial occupation of Wanat. And then having two full days go by, a lot of TICs happened. It was--we considered it a successful mission at that time.

1 **MG Perkins:** So, as you two discussed, then the perspective
2 was you had sort of accomplished the most difficult
3 part of this CONOP?

4 **Gray**
5 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Correct, sir.
6

7 **MG Perkins:** And you had done it in there where you thought it
8 was the most dangerous, which was an attack on Bella,
9 et cetera like that. And you had done it with the
10 forces available, the Chosen Platoon or something. So
11 as you went into now the steady state portion of
12 **Oscar** Wanat, he--Captain (b)(6)(b)(3) had no additional concerns to
13 you about--as he was back at Blessing getting ready to
14 head up Wanat, your characterization, and I don't want
15 to put words in your mouth, is that things have gone
16 fairly well, so far. And there's no foreseeable--or
17 problems other than I mean just you're in Afghanistan
18 I understand. But----

19 **Gray**
20 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. That is correct. We didn't see--there
21 was no red flag or, you know, impending doom that we
22 were saying, oh well I think that this is going to
23 turn into a really bad situation. Every CONOP we did,
24 when walking through Blessing, you know just being
25 there with that Chosen Platoon, hearing those guys
26 talk, it was always you know we are going to go in and
27 it's going to be tough and a lot of that is bravado.
28 But, there was no clear indicator, you know, that
29 there was going to be a mass attack and there was
30 nothing voiced to me, or no proof, that there was
31 going to be a big attack other than hey we're going to
32 go home soon, so now we are going to go up and do this
33 operation. This is bad.
34

35 **MG Perkins:** When you arrived at Wanat on the 13th and then you
36 started to hear about the water issue or fuel issue or
37 some of these things, who did you hear that from?
38

39 **Gray**
MAJ (b)(6)(b)(3): The--I don't remember if it was Captain (b)(6)(b)(3), **Oscar**
40 sir, but it was definitely someone from Chosen
41 Platoon--the Platoon that was up there, may have been
42 its RTO, but it was surprising to me. The First
43 Sergeant was up there at the time. He came in before
44 I did. He came in with the initial QRF when there
45 were still bullets flying. So----
46

1 **MG Perkins:** Did you--once you heard about some of the
2 challenges from folks that were there, did you talk to
3 the Company Commander or Platoon Sergeant about that.
4 Saying, hey, did you know about the water? Did you
5 know about the fuel?
6 **Gray**
7 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): The Platoon Sergeant was gone, sir. I mean he
8 was injured----
9
10 **MG Perkins:** I meant First Sergeant.
11 **Gray**
12 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir. I don't remember talking in detail
13 about it. Other than to say, well how do we stand
14 now? Okay, obviously we brought stuff with us, so
15 we're good.
16
17 **MG Perkins:** Did they ever sort of re-engage you and say hey,
18 sir, you know we're trying to get the stuff. We
19 couldn't get it. You know, I mean, did they have the
20 sort of----
21 **Gray**
22 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir. I think it was their screw up by not
23 conducting PCIs and it, you know, should have
24 Battalion S-3 and XO walk through a convoy and PCI. I
25 am not saying we shouldn't have, but we didn't. But
26 it is certainly something a Platoon Leader, a First
27 Sergeant, a Platoon Sergeant, a Company Commander, an
28 XO should do at the Company level. So, it was never
29 raised and, you know, it is easy to sit here and point
30 fingers now, but----
31
32 **MG Perkins:** I am not trying to point fingers, make judgment.
33 I am just trying to clarify sort of who knew what
34 when. So, at no time did at the Battalion level, from
35 your knowledge, was--were you aware of any of this?
36 It never was brought up and even after the fact it was
37 not brought up to you that it had been brought up to
38 Battalion Level?
39 **Gray**
40 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): That's correct, sir. There was--and throughout
41 the entire--those two days after the initial
42 occupation and going up there after the attack. You
43 know, in the TOC off and on all day for other TICs or
44 just going to the briefing, RTO there full time,
45 Battle Captain full-time MERC Chat. All that stuff
46 that would have passed that information and raised it
47 as a red flag, it is just very difficult for me to

1 believe that that was raised up and ignored because we
2 wouldn't ignore that.
3

4 **MG Perkins:** Alright thanks.

5 **Gray**
6 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.

7 **Beta**
8 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): The conversation with Captain (b)(6)(b)(3), CO, and you **Oscar**
9 were present, regarding Captain (b)(6)(b)(3) pushing to **Oscar**
10 continue on with the Bella extract. Why was he
11 pushing for the extract after you found out the
12 engineers wouldn't be at Wanat until the 13th? Why was
13 he continuing to push?

14 **Gray**
15 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): I speculate because he knows that it was a bad
16 situation and only getting worse and sending a brand
17 new Platoon from 1-26 into that type of fight without
18 the benefit of 15 months of experience, just, you
19 know, that his Platoon, Captain (b)(6)(b)(3) platoons had
20 the benefit of 15 months of relative calm up front. I
21 mean it was--you know, hey let's go--we need a break.
22 Let's go to Bella and take a break. I mean that's
23 kind of the mentality initially. So, we had the
24 luxury of having that gradual build up and
25 understanding how the enemy was operating in the TTPs.
26 Whereas, putting 1-26 in there, doing a 48 hour left
27 seat right seat ride and then, okay, here's your
28 battle space and good luck because you really can't
29 drive up here to reinforce. It was just bad and
30 putting another U.S. or Coalition Force in that
31 position was not the right thing to do.

32 **Beta**
33 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): So, the delay of engineer assets getting to Wanat
34 was not an abort criteria?

35 **Gray**
36 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir.

37 **Beta**
38 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Could you have, if you had wanted to, decoupled
39 the disestablishment of Bella with the establishment
40 of Wanat? What I mean by that is, you know, get out
41 of Bella when you did, and then perhaps ground convoy
42 up once the engineers were ready, that the civilian
43 contracted engineer support was ready, on the 13th?

44 **Gray**
45 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir. We could have. It just--we would not
46 have had the air--rotary wing to do it. And we would
47 not have had the enablers to do it. Or we would have

1 had to wait a whole another illumination cycle to do
2 that.

3 **Beta**
4 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Could you have done it ground based?

5 **Gray**
6 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): But we would have had the--yes, to answer your
7 question, we would have, we just would have needed
8 more wheeled assets to do it and it would have been
9 not as fast dropping Class IV by helicopter and
10 dropping the key weapons systems by helicopter. So,
11 we could have waited and done that, had that course of
12 action been explored and discussed. We did not want
13 to leave--we didn't want Wanat to be empty without
14 Coalition presence for any period of time. And that
15 would have just--the enemy knew we want to go up
16 there. That would have given them more preparation
17 time. More time to implant IEDs. More time to
18 stockpile weapons. And we just wanted to maintain the
19 momentum by using rotary wing assets to mass our
20 combat power, so to speak, at Wanat, sooner rather
21 than later.

22 **Beta**
23 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): The Pesh Resupply, would there be 4 days? Is
24 that when it would come?

25 **Gray**
26 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.

27 **Beta**
28 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): So, could you have delayed the Wanat move by 4
29 days and used the Pesh Resupply four days later to
30 move up?

31 **Gray**
32 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): But, then we would have gone a whole another
33 cycle without resupply because we would have used the
34 disestablishment aircraft and then the next cycle used
35 to establish Wanat and we would have lost two
36 consecutive Pesh Resupplies. Which is not ideal for
37 ammunition, water, food, going up to----

38 **Beta**
39 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): The other COPS?

40 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): **Gray** The other COPS.

41 **Beta**
42 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Prior to the execution, did you receive any
43 communication from the Lieutenant Colonel (b)(6)(b)(3), **Echo**
44 the Brigade XO, regarding the experiences he had had
45 with 1st of the 503rd as the S-3, establishing a COP at
46 Malikashay and at margal?
47

1 **Gray**
2 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): I did not, sir. On completely different terrain,
3 again we were using Honaker-Miracle as our template.
4 Didn't even think to use Colonel (b)(6)(b)(3) experience **Echo**
5 establishing--as a matter of fact I didn't even know
6 they were establishing a COP. They were attached to
7 the 82nd. That Battalion was attached to the 82nd and I
8 didn't really track what they were doing.
9

10 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): To finish up, I am going to read a fairly lengthy
11 paragraph out of your CSI statement, just to allow you
12 to further explain it if you could?
13

14 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
15

16 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Using hindsight, I think the important piece is
17 what you briefly asked about and that was setting the
18 conditions for a deliberate occupation in a
19 contentious environment. We didn't set the conditions
20 as best we could. That has to be part of the go or
21 no-go criteria to execute. Because we were successful
22 in establishing Honaker-Miracle, we kind of had that
23 false sense of security.
24

25 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): Yes, sir.
26

27 **LtCol** **Beta** (b)(6)(b)(3): Could you explain that?
28

29 **MAJ** **Gray** (b)(6)(b)(3): We certainly could have set the conditions better
30 by making the engineer, the local national engineer
31 contractors and the Class IV, specifically the C-
32 Barriers, as go no-go criteria. So if the conditions
33 weren't met, we didn't go up there and establish it.
34 Instead, we thought that the limited Class IV and
35 manpower with a few Army Engineers and a Bobcat would
36 be enough until the 13th arrived and the local national
37 force came up to do the heavy lifting, so to speak,
38 and build the force protection walls. Never again
39 would I ever, whether it's 2 years or 5 years,
40 whatever, I would never try to occupy any kind of--or
41 establish any type of Combat Outpost with Heavy
42 Engineer Condition setting in addition to all the
43 enablers and never fully trust, no matter how well I
44 get along with the local national government, or
45 (b)(2)High, (b)(6) never ever trust, you know to a point
46 where some force protection issues could be
47 disregarded or compromised. And that was, again, this

1 was a phone conversation between Mr. (b)(6)(b)(3) and I in Garnet
2 April when I was the Brigade XO in Italy. So, it is
3 not fresh in my mind and obviously the months of
4 reliving it and thinking about it and the lessons
5 learned, certainly something that will stick with me.

6 **Beta**
7 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): Thank you.

8
9 **LtGen Natonski:** Anyone else?

10 **Beta**
11 **LtCol** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir.

12 **Gray**
13 **LtGen Natonski:** Okay. Major (b)(6)(b)(3), you are ordered not to
14 discuss the testimony you provided today with anyone
15 other than members of the Investigation Team. You
16 will not allow any witness in this Investigation to
17 talk to you about the testimony he has given or which
18 he intends to give. If anyone should try to influence
19 your testimony or attempt to discuss your testimony,
20 you are instructed to notify Lieutenant Colonel (b)(6)(b)(3) **Beta**
21 or Lieutenant Colonel (b)(6)(b)(3). Do you understand that?

22 **Gray**
23 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): I do, sir.

24
25 **LtGen Natonski:** Okay. Just want to thank you for your
26 service to our country, to the Army, and what you have
27 done and what you continue to do this time in
28 Australia. Good luck in that tour. How long a tour
29 is that?

30 **Gray**
31 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Two years, sir.

32
33 **LtGen Natonski:** Not too bad a two years.

34 **Gray**
35 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): No, sir. I appreciate it. Thank you, sir.

36
37 **LtGen Natonski:** Good luck to you.

38 **Gray**
39 **MAJ** (b)(6)(b)(3): Airborne, sir.

40
41 [The testimony closed at 1404, 3 November 2009.]

CERTIFICATION OF VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT

Gray

Subj: TESTIMONY OF MAJOR (b)(6)(b)(3), USA, GIVEN ON
3 NOVEMBER 2009, AT NORFOLK, VIRGINIA

In accordance with section 0214 of JAGINST 5800.7E, I certify
that the subject transcript is an accurate verbatim
transcript.

Sigma

(b)(6)(b)(3)

Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army
Judge Advocate

17 NOV 09
DATE