[The investigation opened at 1510, 19 November 2009.]

LtGen Natonski: I am Lieutenant General Richard F. Natonski, United States Marine Corps. I have been appointed by the Commander of the U.S. Central Command to conduct an investigation into the facts and circumstances surrounding the combat action at Wanat, Afghanistan during July 2008. Major General David Perkins, United States Army, has been assigned as the deputy investigating officer. Lieutenant Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) Beta and Lieutenant Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) Sigma are the judge advocates assigned to this investigation team.

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

Prior to coming on the record today, you signed a Privacy Act; is that correct?

BG Milley: That is correct, sir.

LtGen Natonski: Your testimony will be made under oath. You will now be sworn.

[The witness was sworn.]

LtCol (b)(3), (b)(6) Beta: Sir, would you please state your name, spelling your last.

BG Milley: My name is Brigadier General Mark Alexander Milley, M-I-L-L-E-Y.

LtCol (b)(3), (b)(6) Beta: And sir, where are you currently stationed?

BG Milley: I am currently the J33, the DDRO, The Deputy Director for Regional Operations, on the Joint Staff in the J3 of the Joint Staff at the Pentagon.

LtCol (b)(3), (b)(6) Beta: Sir, in July of 2008, what was your unit and that unit's location?

BG Milley: I was the Deputy Commanding General for Operations and I was assigned to Headquarters, CJTF-101, also known as the 101st Airborne Division or

Regional Commander East. Our Headquarters was located in Bagram, Afghanistan.

LtCol Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): Sir, before coming on the record today, did you have an opportunity to review a 50-page summary of interview between you and Mr. (b)(3), (b)(6) Garnet at the Combat Studies Institute?

BG Milley: I did. And I did two interviews actually with Mr. Cubbison and I just gave you a copy of the edited or corrected version that I sent back to him for filing in the center for military history.

LtCol Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): And did you have an opportunity to sign this at the bottom?

BG Milley: I did and that interview is still accurate to the best of my recollection.

LtCol Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): And do you adopt that as part of your testimony today?

BG Milley: I do.

LtCol Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): Thank you, sir.

Sir, could you describe the role of a DCG-OPs, please?

BG Milley: We had lots of functions. I actually have a piece of paper that laid out the terms of reference if you are interested in that later.

LtCol Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): Please, sir.

BG Milley: But fundamentally, the Deputy Commanding General for Operations, was responsible for was the security line of operation. We had a campaign plan which we can talk about later, it had multiple lines of operations with security governance and then development and then there was an information piece to it. I was primarily responsible for the security line of operation which gave me responsibility in General Schloesser's name to look over the ground tactical brigades that operated in Regional Command East. I also had responsibility for border operations with Pakistan and doing so, working closely with the Pakistani Military in operations there. One of the

key elements of the security line of operations was partnership and so, I also had responsibility to oversee operations with the ANA Brigades and Corps that were operating in our area. And then aviation operations, I had operational responsibility for that, operations with Special Forces, I supervised that for General Schloesser. Operations with the CI--this is classified, is that correct?

LtCol Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

BG Milley: Operations with the CIA, JSOC, all of those types of things, the normal duties and responsibilities that you associate with a DCGO. In terms of processes, I would take CONOPs, took those every night and we can talk about that process, took them every night and approved them in General Schloesser's name and then he would go ahead and review those after I looked at them. And then I would generally oversee the Ops and Intel functions of the CJTF and now there is a Chief of Staff naturally and he runs the staff, et cetera. But I took an interest obviously by duty position in those particular areas.

LtCol Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): When you reviewed CONOPs, what was that process?

BG Milley: The CONOP process is written out as a directive in ISAF and there is an ISAF rule or regulation that kind of governs it, SOP, and I don't remember the number that governs CONOPs, but there is an ISAF reg or ISAF SOP such and such. Anyway, it lays out levels--CONOP Levels 0, 1, and 2. And then it lays out a specific set of criteria and I think that right here you got a little abbreviated matrix that is lifted out of the ISAF rules, so in this case on this particular operation for example, this is level 1 because there are assets that are requested by the Brigade that are outside of the Brigade's control. That is one of the criteria that constitute a Level 1 operation. Other Level 1 operations, if you are operating within a certain distance at a certain sized force of the border for example, there is a whole set of criteria that raise it to a Level 1. Certain other levels or certain other types of operations raise it to Level 2. So there is a definition of what level.

In terms of the process, what we did, we took the 82d's--we replaced the 82d Airborne Division and Joe

Votell was the DCGO for them and General Rodriguez was the CG and they had a battle rhythm and he took CONOPs every night, it was over a Breeze machine which is a briefing tool that is used in Afghanistan that can reach out to the Brigades and Battalions where you come up and you dial in and it is a briefing from remote locations where the briefer can be on there, slides pop-up, et cetera. And I would take that from the headquarters. So, we would do that every night, and what I did was--and I did pretty much the same thing that Joe did which was set aside about 60 to 90 minutes, sometime it would be 2 hours, sometime it would be less on rare occasions we would have zero, but on most nights we would--in our battle rhythm, we would have at least one or more, typically we would have 2 to 3 that was your average. And then we would run through essentially the five paragraphs of the field order and the briefers would typically be the Battalion Commander or the staff that were executing the particular operation. It could be Special Operations that are briefing you, so it would not be the Battalion Commander, could be DEA, could be CIA, or any of those guys that are briefing you and this would only concern RC East. And then we do that every night, we run through the basic elements of the five paragraph field order, and then I would say, okay, in the name of the CG, I bless off on it. That document would then go from me over to the CG, go into his book, he would review it on his own and then it would be briefed, very briefly, the next morning at a session, if it was being executed the next morning. What we tried to do was brief these--what I liked to do is try to brief these things a minimum of 72 hours prior to execution to make sure that there was time to make adjustments and changes, if necessary. In some cases we did better than 72 hours and other cases were briefing him the night before and in a few cases, just a few hours before, if it was time sensitive. So, these were deliberate CONOPs, deliberately planned, fleshed out through all of the battlefield operating systems, and briefed up on the machine. In the audience, we would have the CJTF staff, if it was Level 1, I would take also Level 2s. But we did not have authority at our level to approve it that had to go up to General McNeal and then General McKiernan to actually Bernie Shampo was the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations for ISAF at the time and that became

then--he was replaced by Major General Tucker, so if it was a Level 2, I would take it, give it like an interim approval, a blessing, and then it would go up to them, we would brief it to them and they would do what I do, which is bless it in the name of the CG and then show it to the CG and then you'd be off and running. The purpose of it is to obviously get that certain level of approval but also to get situational awareness on the CJTF staff, make sure that it is being properly resourced, make sure you are checking the trap lines, and make sure it is making sense, making sure that it is embedded within the Commanding General's intent and that sort of thing. And that is how we did it.

LtCol Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): Was there any particular areas that----

BG Milley: And over a course of a year, you are talking 15 months with I don't know how many total it was, it was over a 1000 of these things that we were approving. That is not including the Level 0's; Level 0's happen every day all over the place, so...

LtCol Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): Were there any particular areas that you tended to focus, sir, as a DCG OPs when a CONOP came up?

BG Milley: I did. Not on the copy that you have, but what I did is that I wrote down, and I don't have the copy any more of this particular mission, but on every mission, I wrote down the staff positions, battlefield operating systems and any kind of particular--I would get a read ahead of this thing and I would write down any kind of questions. Almost everyone, and I am not going to say every single one, but almost everyone I would ask lots of questions and dig down. On this one, I am confident that I did that, I don't remember the specific questions, but I would ask questions about intelligences to make sure that we understood the intel picture, basic scheme of maneuver and then go over pretty rigorously fires, if it involved any aviation, we would go over the aviation piece, the aviation Battalion Commander or his staff would actually brief the aviation piece, the Aviation Brigade Commander would be on the net because he acts as the Commanding General's Senior Aviator, would briefly touch any logistics issues, and then would go over things like medical, Classes of supply, and make sure that they are good there, Comms, Command and

Control and they would always have to brief the risk assessment. And then I would go around the staff and say, okay, J2 - comment, J3, and go right down the staff on all of them and they would get their chance to comment, ask questions, and then I would ask a lot of questions and then again at the end, I would say, okay, approved or disapproved. And that is how it worked. In this particular CONOP, this was a little bit more iterative than most, we did a briefing on the 7th but this had been a plan that had been in the works long before we got there. When this was executed, General Schloesser and CJTF-101 had about 90 days on the ground. The plan to move from Bella to Wanat starts occurring many many months--before that. And then as soon as we get there, there is a whole series of iterative meetings, back briefs, discussions, et cetera and in this document here, I tried to list as many as I could remember between the CG, the Brigade Commander, Battalion Commander, Division staff, et cetera and this was kind of the final brief. So, it was not--that is not true in every case where they are all iterative like that but many of them are and this one was. So, it went through a pretty--what I think was a pretty rigorous and iterative process between the Brigade and the CG and the Division staff and myself and General McConval and others. So, it ends in that and then it gets monitored after that.

LtCo Beta (b)(3), (b)(6) **:** Do you--I know you did a lot of these, sir, but do you recall any concerns that you had with CONOP Rock Move?

BG Milley: Yeah, I mean, the fundamental basis of this operation was an estimate that was--when we got there, General Schloesser went through a 60 to 90 day assessment which most commanders do when they show up. General Schloesser's assessment both from his PDSSs and his initial arrival, his assessment and I am not going to speak for him, but I understood his assessment and I personally thought so, was that this particular Brigade and down here as well, we had 173d up here and we had the 4th Brigade, 101st Curhees down here, that these guys were spread out too far and it was tactically a bit overstretched and we were not getting necessarily the effects on the--the counter-insurgency effects that we would desire from up here

and we needed to reposition the force. General Rodriguez and General Votel both said that to us on the way out, it is a long term process, he had--it was about 120 something, I am not exactly sure how many COPs and FOBs that were throughout RC East, many of these, not just Wanat or Bella or just like Keating a couple weeks ago. Many of these are small Platoon or Platoon plus, co-located with ANA outposts that essentially become fixed by the enemy through their tactics and that these kids have sufficient combat power to secure themselves and maybe run some local security patrols. What you don't get with many of these, you don't get what we want which is a good counter-insurgency effect where you can get off the post, off the little camp that you are on and influence and protect the population. That was the case--when we showed up that was the case with Bella, that was the case with several of these and just recently you may have seen several of these up in Nuristan that General Scaporatti just shut down following the Keating piece. There is a series of outposts that had been put in over there for quite awhile and I was on my second tour that probably had outlived their utility, if they had utility at all and they became extremely vulnerable. Bella was one of them. So, we needed to, in the case of the 173d--and (b)(3), (b)(6) Delta had arrived at this before we got there, he arrived at this conclusion before General Schloesser got there--he had already concluded that he was over stretched. He made that case to General Schloesser. General Schloesser agreed to that and one of--not the only one, but one of the moves was to extract the guys from Bella and put them in Wanat.

Now, why Wanat? Wanat was closer to Blessing, you shortened up your lines of communications, I am sure that you are familiar with the maps and who is where and all of that--put them in Wanat, it is co-located with the district capital, you have--I think there was a police element there and they are embedded with the people. If you go up to Bella and I visited Bella, there is not a lot up in Bella, there are hardly any people up in Bella. You are not influencing a lot and you are exposed and you are at risk. And it just did not pass the common sense test. So, it was important to get the guys out of Bella. It was a concern, there is no doubt about it, there was

intel across the board that there was a general upswing in violence. This was one of lots intelligence indicators throughout RC East at the time and I can go over those also. With respect to this particular operation, there was intel of enemy in and around Bella. They knew that we were going to try to pull out of Bella. And so, we went to great efforts to try to make sure that we--because you were not going to pull out of Bella by ground, you had to come out by air, and that is not an easy operation. I am sure that you are familiar with the risks associated with the helicopter operations in these mountains. These mountains are serious mountains. This is beyond varsity level flying. And putting helicopters in there, extracting infantry is tough stuff. And doing that with the enemy in the area is not easy but we definitely want to get--we want to shut Bella down, get Wanat open, and then bring in the next Brigade. So there was a fair amount of effort, I think, that went on at the Battalion level, Brigade, CJTF level to make sure that we executed that right.

Beta

LtCol (b)(3), (b)(6)**:** Sir, again, how many Brigades are there in the Division?

BG Milley: It depends on when you are talking about. At this time you got the 173d, you got RC East here outlined in blue, and at the time, you got the 173d up here in the northeast of RC East; you got 4th Brigade, 101st which had these areas down in here; and we had at the time, we had a thing called Task Force Cincinatis, which was up here, that is not really a Brigade, it was an ad hoc organization constituting really a Headquarters, right about the time that this is going on, we are bringing in the French, so we bring in a French Battalion and we are reorganizing this Task Force Cincinatis which is operating up here in the North, primarily in the Capica area. Down here you got 4th Brigade, 101st, which had underneath him the Polish--what is called the Polish Battle Group. Also shortly after this time we start breaking out Gauznic Province and handing it to the Polish Battle Group, so that becomes a separate ground brigade. So, for ground Brigades, at the time of this incident you've got technically 3 that then it changes over time. General Schloesser, prior to this ever happening, comes up on the net, makes a call for

additional combat power and we get 3d Brigade, 10th Mountain. So, you end up when we leave, you end up with 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 ground combat brigades and in the middle is Kabul which is not our area of responsibility but there's other friendly forces, so those are the ground forces. And then we had Aviation Brigade, Sustainment Brigade and a bunch of others. He had, in terms of task organization, I counted up one time that Schloesser had about 50 or so maneuver type companies in the task organization and he had, by my math, a 150 or so, plus or minus platoons running around the battle space or platoon like organizations. That does not include the Afghan National Army. We had two Brigades or two Corps of Afghan National Army. You had the 201st Corps which operates up here. It has Kabul proper but it also operates Nuristan, Konar, and Naglahar. And then you have the 203d Corps which operates down here in Aktika, Protika and Gausni and then you got ANP, Afghan National Police and then you got Afghan Border Police and then you got NDS. Now those guys, ANA, NP, ABP and NDS, et cetera are not tasked organized under us, but we are partnered with them and we work very closely with them. And the other piece that is working in our area is both JSOC, you have a string of CIA posts here, and you got--we had two strike forces of JSOC operating one down in Silerna and one up in JBad and then you had CJSOTF, we had a Special Forces Battalion working here with a series, I want to say 12 plus or minus ODAs and that was kind of your maneuver force that was operating in RC East.

LtCo Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): Sir, did your approving the CONOP by, I believe around the 7th of July, and I am assuming, sir, that you are aware that the 173d and Rock were getting ready to do a RIP.

BG Milley: That is correct, absolutely.

LtCo Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): Did you have any concern, sir, when you approved the CONOP about them doing the operation so close to the RIP?

BG Milley: I did, yeah, sure and I asked--specifically asked questions about, you know, do you think that we are--do you think that you are doing too much here? "Nope, we need to get this done"--the answers that I got back and I agree with him, even in hindsight by the way,

that 173d was the right organization, the right unit at the time to execute this mission. The guys coming in behind them, Task Force Duke, (b)(3), (b)(6) Gemini, 3d Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, they were coming in at somewhere around 400 or so less troops than the 173d had. They were a brand new Brigade in the Army. I had seen them train out at the National Training Center in preparation for coming here, they were good, they were solid good guys, great troops and all of that kind of stuff, but they were new. At the time, 173d far and away, there wasn't even a comparison between the skill sets of the 173d and any other Brigade that I have seen in 30 years of service as an infantry man and I have over 40 months of ground combat as an infantryman. This Brigade was clicking on all cylinders, they were good, they were tracking and oh, by the way, if my memory is right, and it doesn't show up in (b)(6) Garnet, if my memory is right, I don't think they took a death or Killed in Action from the January or February timeframe maybe they did one or two up to here. That is pretty significant in this area. That speaks to how tactically proficient they were, they were not just hunkering down, these kids were out doing serious operations and they were setting conditions for the arrival of 3d Brigade, 1st Division. They knew--173d knew, (b)(3), (b)(6) Delta mentioned it several times and so did the other guys, Collenda up here, Fenzal was down in here, this was a cracker-jack group of combat veterans and they were seasoned and they were hitting on all pistons and I only saw them for 90 days, but I saw them at two PDSSs. And I believe that I have enough experience to know that these guys were very very capable and competent infantrymen. Relative to a brand new unit that is coming in, I think the brand new unit would have had real challenges coming out of Bella, there is no doubt in my mind about that.

So, there was a summer RIP that the scheduling of the Brigades is happening, that is not in the control of the CJTF. What we have to do is try to manage that the best that we can and your choice is a new brigade with less combat power, brand new to the Army, transitioned heavy Brigade going into the most serious significant and difficult light infantry terrain that the United States military is fighting in today which is that portion of Afghanistan versus a unit that has

been there for awhile, is seasoned, knows the turf, knows the people, knows the valleys, knows the enemy and knows how to fight and knows counter-insurgency; I think the choice is the 173d. And yes, were we concerned about is it too much, too much to ask? More concerned actually about too much to ask of the helicopters a little bit, but yes, those questions were asked repeatedly, not just by me, but by many others. And I think, in hindsight, I still think that it is the right call to call on the 173d to do that. They were and still are a very good infantry. So that is my take on the RIP piece.

LtCol Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): You said that----

BG Milley: If I was King for a day, I would not do summer RIPs in Afghanistan. But that is not something that you can control there and nor is it something that--I know that (b)(6) Gamma brought it out in a draft report, it is not something that we can necessarily control as an institution either. We are what we are in terms of the number of forces and Brigades, et cetera that we are managing throughout the military. And summer Reliefs in Places in Afghanistan are not optimal, no one argues that, that is when the enemy is the most active. But having said that, it can be done, it has been done, and it has been done in the past and we have to do that. So we have to do Summer RIPs and our estimation at the time was for the 173d to execute this tactical operation as they were conducting a RIP in order to set the conditions for the arrival of the 3d Brigade, 1st Division.

There were a whole series of other operations, I don't know if anyone has talked to you about them either, that both the 503d but also the 173d writ large plus CJSOTF plus JSOC plus CIA were doing in order to set conditions and here is why. The summer before when (b)(3), (b)(6) Delta shows up he got hit hard, now we weren't there, this is--we learned this through our pre-mission training and our PDSSs and talking to people and talking to General Rod and so on. But when (b)(3), (b)(6) Delta shows up or when his Brigade shows up, 173d shows up, again a summer RIP, they get hit hard. The enemy attacks them very significantly and they take some significant casualties, right off the bat. And that has tactical effect, what we, 101st, did not want to see happen is that same event happen.

Unfortunately it did and it happened with the 173d, but that is what we are trying to prevent. So we wanted to tighten up the lines of communication. We want to reposition the COPs and FOBs. We wanted to get more effect regarding the population in order to achieve some counter-insurgency effect. We wanted to prevent the new unit from getting punched right in the face upon arrival. And it was a fair amount of effort that went in to doing that in this area. And at the time this was not General Schloesser's main effort by the way. General Schloesser's main effort was down here in the 4th Brigade, 101st area of operations.

LtCol Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): Sir, you said that it may have been too much to ask of the helicopters for the operations, why is that?

BG Milley: We are just concerned about air hours and that sort of thing, so as you are doing a RIP, you are bringing in troops, you are moving troops here, you are doing ring routes, you are doing supplies, you got a half dozen contacts, significant contacts a day that are going on, so you've got--Afghanistan is very much rotary wing--or it is very aviation dependent. And another reason to readjust these COPs--some of the these COPs, Bella being one of them, are only logistically supported--there is only an air line of communication. You cannot get to it by ground for all intents and purposes. So, you are putting a lot of hours, a lot of blade hours, a lot of stress and strain et cetera on rotary wing aviation. And so, can we do this? Aviation Brigade is up on the net. Aviation Battalion Commander is up on the net. And everyone says "Yep, roger, we can do this." And we did, the aviation piece of this--the aviation did very well and through a lot of rigorous planning on the part of not only the Battalion and Brigade Commander but the aviation guys et cetera. But the aviation piece was a little bit of a concern, the fact that we are in the middle of a summer RIP, absolutely, that is why General Schloesser was paying close attention to it. That is why I was paying close attention to it. That is why the JTF staff was playing close attention to it, you know, so what happened, happened. I don't believe what happened happened because people were not paying attention.

LtCol Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): Sir, switching to ISR, sir, did you chair a board every evening?

BG Milley: Every evening, our battle rhythm, as it relates to something like this, you've got CONOPs--well, let me start in the morning. In the morning, we have a CG session which is like a command group session, he does not review like calendars or anything, he reviews priorities and stuff like that with myself, the deputy commander for support, General McConval, Chief of Staff, Colonel Brewer (b)(3), (b)(6) the POLAD, and a couple key staff guys, you know, 2, 3 that kind of guys. So, a small little group, SGS--a small little group meets. We go from there and we roll down into what we call the CUA, which was in our SCIF. Which was essentially a morning update that you are familiar with from other units where you get an OPs, an intel update--an OPs and Intel update and then significant events, the last 24, what is coming up the next 24, the next 72, that kind of thing. And then at that session, is DIA, CIA, NSA, CJSOTF, JSOC, CG, McConval, Milley (b)(3), (b)(6) the 2, the Brewer 3, you know the primary staff and the battle staff majors, the Iron Majors, are sitting back there, DEA would be there and we review things and it took about 45 minutes to an hour. And you are hitting all of the current operations type stuff and then you do--then the CG wanted to--in also during that and in addition to the overview of current operations and current intel, he would do a deep dive on a specific piece of intel. So, you do that and then you go about your day and there is a whole series of battle rhythm events, I have a copy of our battle rhythm that I can get to you, if you don't already have it, you probably already have that.

Then you go through a series of battle rhythm events and then at night, I would take the CONOPs and then from the CONOPs I would roll right into a thing which we call the OPs and Intel Synch or the ISR Synch, it goes by a couple different names. And that is where we would try to synchronize your ground maneuver, that rotary wing aviation, your fixed wing Air Force close air support, the ISR, we would do some selected route clearance type stuff and those are the big ones. And we would have the battle staff, the CJTF Battle Staff in there, the primaries for Ops and Intel, then you would have the Iron Majors and Captains and then you

would have LNOs from the units, it was a fairly large crowd, we used these slides to kind of walk through. We would review the last 24, the current 24, and then we would go out 96 hours. And we would go day by day. It was a very good drill. We adopted virtually without change the 82d's system and I think that they were using the 10th's system and we handed off ours to the current 82d who is operating it over there and they are doing the same thing right now. So, most Divisions in the Army do this. But we are going out 96 hours. You are lining up all of the assets to make sure that the various pieces parts are getting what they need and there is a conscious decision. So I would go ahead and bless that and say, yep, yep, yep, yep, and then I would--then the next morning, those same slides would go up in front of the CG. So, that is getting reviewed twice a day. You are getting a general officer at the CJTF level looking at that going out twice a day, once in the morning with a CG, General McCoval, me and the battle staff and all of the rest of those guys that I mentioned to you would look at it. And then in the evening, we would have all of the--you would make the sausage in the evening, you would really drill down, get in there and make sure that everything is wired and make sure what these guys, the Brigades are asking for are being allocated. And does that line up with the Commanding General's priorities and then I would review all of that and we would punch through it and it would take--try to do it in about an hour.

LtCol Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): Sir, would you set the ISR priorities?

BG Milley: No, not-- no, the CG did that.

LtCol Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): Okay, sir.

BG Milley: I mean, I could adjust them but that would be a recommendation because the next morning, what would happen is, like I could take--on here you might see ISR priority is X, Y, Z and I would say, okay, that is good and then I would brief to him the next morning. So, yeah, I could change it on the slide that night and then it would be briefed to him the next morning and he would see it and silence is consent sort of thing. So, he would be blessing off on it. In terms of mission priorities and operational priorities, we would try to line those, you know, the ISR stuff up

1 with mission priorities of the CG, but technically,
2 yeah, I guess I could and did but I am doing it in the
3 CG's name and it was shown to him every morning.

4 **LtCol** Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): And sir, just for the record, the last 24 shows
5 what actually flew--the ISR assets that actually flew
6 in support? The last 24 slide?

7 **BG Milley:** Yeah, it should. Yes.

8 **LtCol** Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): And then the 96 out, sir, you are looking 4 days
9 out.

10 **BG Milley:** Right.

11 **LtCol** Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): Was it common, sir, that by the time that you
12 actually got to that 4th day, say it is D+4, that
13 information would have changed, allocations would have
14 changed?

15 **BG Milley:** No doubt, absolutely, that is why we did it like
16 that, I mean, because a lot of things play in there,
17 you know. Is the asset still available? Is there a
18 change in priority? Are there Troops in Contact or
19 some other mission that has come up that is different,
20 is higher headquarters pulling an asset? Is there
21 weather? There is lots of things and no question
22 about it, things would change. I mean, yes, sure.

23 **LtCol** Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): Sir, I got some slides regarding the ISR coverage
24 from the 8th to the 12th of July specifically for
25 Wanat, sir.

26 **BG Milley:** Right.

27 **LtCol** Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): Did you participate on the allocation, sir?

28 **BG Milley:** I did, absolutely, yep.

29 Beta (b)(3), (b)(6)
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(b)(1) 1.4 a, c

(b)(1) 1.4 a, c But anyway, we gave them a substantial amount of ISR. They got over 50% of the available allocated--or 50% of the available ISR and they were not the main effort. The main effort for the CG at that time there were two large operations going on, one was called Round-dubark, which was an operation down here in Khowst on the KG Pass Road in the 4th of the 101st area of operation. The second one was this thing along Highway 1, Tangy Valley. Those are significant as it relates to this because the 4th Brigade, 101st was the CG's main effort and this Tangy Valley piece is adjacent to Highway 1 and Highway 1 was Com-ISAF's main effort and the Tangy Valley, there is an incident that occurs just shortly prior to this event where some National Guard imbedded trainers are traveling from point A to point B and they get ambushed and they lose--and there are four--if I remember right, it is four killed. There are three killed that get identified almost immediately and then there is a fourth one that is a DUSTWUN for a little bit and then he gets found a little bit later and the enemy did some horrible things to him. That was one of multiple operations that were happening in Wardack along Highway 1 in order to cut Highway 1 in order to isolate Kabul which was arguably a center of gravity of the war. And what the enemy was doing in the words of the Afghans is a thing called the gates of Kabul. Kabul is here, you got four lines of communication that go in the four Cardinal directions and the enemy was doing significant activity out in the Chowrez Valley, significant activity down here in the Wardack area adjacent to Tangy Valley and also this parallel road here to the east, you might recall an incident where the French lost 10 Soldiers in Uzben Valley, so they were working to shut this down. And then to the

North, up here in Kapica, there is a place called the Tagab Valley and then you have Salang Tunnel and they were operating in there pretty heavily and they were having success. So, they were creating a psychological perception of isolating Kabul and that was getting lots of attention, rightly so, by COM-ISAF and his main effort was to maintain freedom of friendly movement along Highway 1. So, that then became, as you can see here, see Tangy Valley that is our operational number 1 priority at that time. The CG, within that construct, the CG also has this as an operational priority, all though at the moment of this incident in Wanat, this is not number 1 it is number 2 which is called Round-dubark but it is down in Kowsta and KG pass. This operation, we went ahead and put as Level 3 or Priority 3 up in here which is for assets. Now, having said that, we apportioned or allocated the assets, the ISR assets, we actually gave the 173d, for purposes of this, we gave 173d more than 50% of the ISR that we had available to us at our level to manage. So, to say that I decided that, yeah, I decided that but I am deciding that in the CG's name and he is blessing it the following morning, so really the CG is deciding it.

Beta

LtCol (b)(3), (b)(6): When you apportioned that significant amount of ISR, sir, to them, why was that?

BG Milley: Because this is a--we determined that this was an operation that had a level of risk to it that we knew that there was enemy operating up in here, we knew the enemy picked up the pace along the border, we knew that there was enemy operating in these valleys, we are running an air assault in these valleys and that is dangerous business. So, you are going to put ISR on there in order to pick up what you can pick up, so we had medium altitude SIGINT, we have FMV, they had their own internal assets, you know, LLVI and others, they had the Ravens, they had the Green Darts, I can't remember 100% if they had Warrior, I could probably look through those things and figure that out. But they had--they have the 173d--the Brigade had allocated a fair amount of ISR and that ISR flew, it was not--it is a true statement to say that at the time of this attack, they did not have a Predator Line that is accurate and true. That Predator Line flew away, I think--and I went over this with (b)(6) Garnet

and I checked the records and called back, I just want to be factual correct, and I think that it was 730 or so in the morning on the morning of the 12th. I think the Predator goes away and it gets re-apportioned and re-allocated to the Division's main effort and that was by the plan. So, the time of the infil to the morning of the 12th, you have Predator that is working for that Brigade that is running the valleys and is it laser focused on Wanat, no it is not laser focused on Wanat, that is not how you use it, but it is working that area. Now, having said that, a comment on ISR, a lot of people place a lot of emphasis on technological ISR and it is good, but it is not a silver bullet, it is helpful. It is good in combination with other things, like HUMINT or LLVI and SIGINT and patrolling and other things, it is also, as you know as professional Soldiers, it is looking through a soda straw; ISR is best used--correction, Predator FMV is best used if it is cued to something, so in these mountains, if you have a spot report and you say, I see blank then you cue that Pred there and he can start to confirm or deny and start tracking it. Just trolling with Preds may or may not discover anything, in any event from our level, we apportioned and allocated the appropriate, what we thought was an appropriate amount of ISR that we had available, you only get so much, we gave him the Pred line and we had as much of an ISR soak as we could. In addition to that they had Red Ridge which is worth a comment. Red Ridge is (b)(1) 1.4 a, c

(b)(1) 1.4 a, c

(b)(1) 1.4 a, c We used those other capabilities more down here, so he has, as well, almost exclusive use and the Brigade that followed him, Duke also, on the Red Ridge. So, I thought that in all honesty, I

thought that we apportioned and allocated as much ISR as we could given what we knew of the intelligence at the time and given the situation.

LtGen Natonski: In your 15 months over there, did Predator or Red Ridge ever cue an attack that was on a friendly position?

BG Milley: Not often, sir. There was almost at the same time in this KG Pass there is a place called FOB Wilderness which is a small platoon plus or company minus outpost. That road, the Khost to Gardez road is, and still is today, the Hakony Network's number 1 target, if you will. They are trying to prevent that road and this summer they announced that they were going to stop that road. So, they massed forces up in those hills and signals intelligence in combination with, I think in that case, it might have been a Warrior but it could had been a Pred I'm not sure, we were able to pick up a significant massing of forces----

LtGen Natonski: But that was as a result of several intel sources.

BG Milley: Absolutely, that was lots of INTs.

LtGen Natonski: I mean, flying a Predator over RC East was not going to turn up----

BG Milley: Flying a Predator in and of itself, not in combination with other INTS will typically not get you much. It is not going to get much, you might get lucky, but probably not. Interestingly, just the other night, I want to say that it was four or five days ago, I don't know if you've seen this or not, but I saw it on TV for the first time, I don't know if it was ABC or CBS, playing a captured video or a video that they acquired from somewhere from the Taliban that alleges that it is video from the attack from the enemy's video of the attack on Wanat.

LtGen Natonski: We have it.

BG Milley: You have it.

LtGen Natonski: Yes.

1 **BG Milley:** I don't know, by the way, if that is really
2 Wanat.

3 **LtGen Natonski:** It is.

4 **BG Milley:** Is the whole thing Wanat?

5 **LtGen Natonski:** I am not sure if the whole thing is----

6 **BG Milley:** Because there are some things and cuts in there
7 that I am not sure are Wanat.

8 **MG Perkins:** We have seen it.

9 **BG Milley:** But never the less, it is interesting that one of
10 the things they said was that they had, I want to say,
11 15 or 20 groups or something like that of 5 or 10
12 guys. That technique of dismounted light infantry
13 type infiltration through mountains is extraordinarily
14 difficult to pick up through something like a
15 Predator. But I think that at our level, we
16 apportioned the assets and allocated the assets, and
17 flew the assets a significant amount of ISR relative
18 to the whole and relative to what we had at hand. And
19 I think that the process that led to that was rigorous
20 and it was--it was done before us, it was done for
21 1500 other CONOPs and it was done and it is being done
22 today, so.

Beta
23 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Do you recall, sir, whether or not from the 8th
24 to the 11th, all of that ISR that you had up there,
25 whether it had any hits?

26 **BG Milley:** I don't recall any significant hits. None, and
27 one of the things that (b)(6) Garnet brought out and as
28 you know, I have done a couple interviews with him,
29 you know, there was some information at the lower, I
30 guess at the Platoon Level and maybe up to the
31 Company, and I am not sure how far beyond that, that
32 the Soldiers, and I have seen some of the interviews
33 on TV and I have seen the CBS report, et cetera. That
34 the Soldiers felt that there were significant amount
35 of indicators and warnings of imminent attack and I
36 believe that it is true. I believe that they felt
37 that and that they had some information at that level.

38 **LtGen Natonski:** Did any of that get to you?

BG Milley: Well, that is--there was no indication and warning of imminent attack at Wanat that came to me at all. I can't say if it came to anyone else because I don't have personal knowledge of that. I don't think it came up, I don't think that it went in to [redacted] but I have not point blank asked him since this whole thing started but I don't think it did. I seriously doubt it went into Schloesser because I probably would have known that. If someone would have said to me that was going to be--I got, and this is not to brag by any means, but I have a lot of combat time as an infantryman and I have personally been in a lot of firefights and I have buried an awful lot of Soldiers. If someone had told me that there was a massed attack--an imminent massed attack on an outpost, whether it was Wanat or anywhere else of 200 Soldiers, you can damn well take it to the bank this General would be doing something about it and I am not ashamed to admit it. And that information, this guy here, Mark Milley, did not get information of an imminent attack on Wanat ahead of time from any of the INTs and that is--was it out there? I think it probably was, but it never got to me.

(b)(3), (b)(6) Alpha

Beta

LtCol (b)(3), (b)(6): Sir, then on the 12th, the ISR coverage shifted down to a higher priority for the division.

BG Milley: Yeah, it went--I think at first it actually goes to a TIC, I never could quite figure it out based on these charts because I was looking at them after, after a year later, so it might have gone to a TIC first and then to the main effort, but it was scheduled to go to the main effort. It went to the Curharees, but I cannot remember if it went to Round-dubark or Tangy Valley--actually, I think that it went to Tangy Valley.

MG Perkins: Yes, I think that the Chief said or mentioned that there was a TIC in Tangy Valley.

BG Milley: That might have been what it was.

MG Perkins: That is what threw it off.

BG Milley: And on the TICs, to kind of put in context here a little bit, the TICs were an automatic, that did not require, you know you've got one line, you got a Predator Line and you don't want to use--it is not a

great way--it is not a great TTP to use FMV as kind of a react to contact thing. But if you got nothing else, that is what you use. If you have more FMV, if you had more Predators then you would not necessarily do that, you might take one of them and do that but the others would be dedicated for persistent eye and continue looks over areas. But at the time, our rule for our Battle Captains, for our Battle Majors really, was if there was a TIC, you assess the seriousness of the TIC and how long it is going on and then you have full authority to push that to a TIC at that moment in time, you don't have to get a hold of a General or anybody else. Although, keep us informed, that sort of thing. So, in this particular case, I think that it is a TIC that triggers the move, but it is scheduled to go down there anyway. It was scheduled to go to the main effort. And frankly, you know, as I look back, a lot of things pop up but at the time, there was a consistent, once the Bella Air Assault piece is over there is a consistent, nothing significant to report Gumby that comes out of that operation that is not true elsewhere. There is fighting in a lot of places elsewhere. And it is not anybody takes their eye off the ball that is not what happens, but there is other priorities and the ISR assets shift to those other priorities.

LtCol Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): Sir, on the 12th did Lieutenant Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) Alpha or the Brigade Commander, sir, contact you--regarding needing more ISR back over Wanat?

BG Milley: I don't remember. They might have but I don't recall any one coming to me saying, "I got to have ISR, red flag" that kind of thing, saying I have to have ISR over Wanat. I am not going to say that they didn't, but I don't remember anyone coming to me waiving a flag in my face saying, I got to have ISR to Wanat.

LtCo Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): Sir, after the move--the operation got under way, were you getting regular updates on the status of the COP development in Wanat? Would that come up to the division level?

BG Milley: It would get briefed in the CUBs, I mean, it would be eithe (b)(3), (b)(6) Delta or his deputy would be on the--the CUB was the evening update. It wasn't like, you go back 10 years and if you are a battalion

1 commander and you get a little status of the defense,
2 if you are at NTC or JRTC and they come up and say
3 percent complete and they do that like every 6 hours,
4 it was not that regular at our level but there were
5 reports transmitted and I list some of them in this
6 interview with (b)(6) Garnet: Verbal Reports at the CUBs
7 and the CUAs that were transmitted into the CJTF by
8 the Brigade Commander or his staff, regular update on
9 not just Bella and Wanat but on general status up here
10 with Keating, Nigel, and then down here in the various
11 COPs and FOBs and the operations going on. So, the
12 answer is yes, they did render regular updates, the
13 one that I had in my notes that I mentioned to
14 (b)(6) Garnet was the CUB the evening of the 12th, as it
15 turns out, Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) Delta reported to the CG,
16 nothing significant to report and he happened to
17 report the percentage completion of Wanat which I
18 don't remember what I said in this report right now,
19 but I think it is something like 70 or 80 percent
20 complete, so that report goes into the CG via voice in
21 the evening CUB on the night of the 12th.

22 **LtGen Natonski**: When you said that 70 or 80 percent----

23 **BG Milley**: But it is 70 to 80 percent of what sort of thing
24 and you know----

25 **LtGen Natonski**: Of what, is the real question.

26 **BG Milley**: That kind of report, we did not have a
27 standardized report on the construction level of a COP
28 into the CG--into the CJTF level of platoon COPs
29 because that is just something that we track.

30 **LtGen Natonski**: When you say 70%, you would be referring to
31 70% of the construction is complete, is that what you
32 are alluding to in that?

33 **BG Milley**: Right, the platoon is set, they got their stuff,
34 their defense is in, that kind of thing and so that
35 impression gets planted in the CG's mind. I don't
36 know if the CG even remembers that but I had it
37 written in my notebook at that time, so. Having said
38 that, we now know that, having read th (b)(6) Garnet stuff
39 and 15-6s and some of that--that was not necessarily
40 the case, but the impression at our level, at least
41 for me, was things are going, they are on track,
42 things are going okay. Not a bunch of enemy, we are

not having a mass attack, the sky is not falling up there, elsewhere there are significant events going on.

LtCol Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): Would you have been told, sir, as part of that update if there were issues with supplies or engineer equipment?

BG Milley: I would like to think that I would have been told, not just me, but--or maybe General McConval because he was the General for Logistics or maybe up through our staff channels, I would like to think that if there was issues that required assistance then they should tell us, sure.

LtCol Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): And for other CONOPs would that actually take place if the unit needed some outside support?

BG Milley: Yes, yes, that is part of the reason that we do this, that is why we give them ISR if they need it--now you have to make judgment calls, but we did that every day, me or McConvall or the CG. A Brigade Commander calls me and that is one of the things that Generals do, a Brigade Commander would call up and he would say, I need more of this or I need more of that, typically not right this instant but it would be a few days hence and you would look at that, get with the staff guys, you would weigh it and you would say, does this priority outweigh this priority? And that is fundamentally one of the fundamental key tasks that we do at our level, but it is also done at Brigade and Battalion and that is one of the things that we do as leaders, prioritize assets and apportion and prioritize assets. So, if there was a problem, if they were not having certain assets then it should be raised, and then a considered decision and when a decision is made that is the nature of the business that we are in. We are doing that at the National Level right now that is what I do on a daily basis at the Pentagon that is what we all do, so yes, if there is a problem that they cannot solve internally with their own assets, like to get it raised. It does not have to be a formal thing, it can be done verbally, it can be done in an email, it can be done through CUBs that sort of thing; the mechanism is not as important as the issue.

The other thing that the CG did, too, I don't know that every CG does this, but he did; is almost every night, he would have a Tandburg with almost every Brigade Commander, so there is another opportunity there VFR direct, green tab to green tab, Brigade Commander to Commanding General, he was very much into that, the CG was, making sure that he had open lines of communication with his Brigade Commanders. And (b)(3), (b)(6) Delta or (b)(3), (b)(6) Eagle or any of the others would talk to him every night, talk about all kinds of issues and they would have a little notebook with a list of issues and it is just like any of us would do as Brigade Commanders or what you do as CGs. So, that is another mechanism that I forgot to mention that is out there to raise issues.

Did issues of logistical resupply for Wanat come up to me? No, not to me, Mark Milley, I don't know if they come to someone else through some other mechanism.

LtCol Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): Sir, on the day of the battle, on the 13th, were you at the Headquarters, sir?

BG Milley: I was and the initial reports come into CHOPs who I think was (b)(3), (b)(6) Bronco, he was overall in charge of CHOPs and if you haven't had a chance to talk to him, he would be a good one to talk to as well. He is now a Lieutenant Colonel, Battalion Commander out in 101st. But either he or one of his majors, somebody gives me a call, I throw my stuff on, the CG is down there, I am down there, we are all down there, and we were seeing the reports come in, I don't have precise timings on all of that, I know from the AAR stuff the first rounds happen at such and such time and so on and so forth, but what time we all show up, that was pretty quick, as it--this is--I hate to say it but for 15 months and both the generals and I'm sure you guys have been in combat but for 15 months it is pretty rare that you get four or more hours of sleep consecutively as a senior leader without that sort of thing happening that was a daily occurrence on stuff like this, not the results not the outcome, not the casualties, but the fact that you are responding to things like this. So, we went down there started getting assessments, the CHOPs guys briefed us up and then I looked at the CG and I said, sir, I need to get out there and he said, yep, roger. So, I told my guys to get the helicopters ready and I took off and I flew

out to Jalalabad which is where (b)(3), (b)(6) Delta Headquarters was, went into his Headquarters, (b)(3), (b)(6) was Delta shaken visibly and obviously, he had a personal relationship with Lieutenant Brostrom and had previous career affiliation with Lieutenant Brostrom's (b)(6) and right as I--I would say within a minute or two maybe three that I walked into (b)(3), (b)(6) office, there Delta his Headquarters, the phone rings, the SIPR phone, Lieutenant Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) Diamond is on the line (b)(3), (b)(6) Delta puts him on speaker, (b)(3), (b)(6) says, Sir, Diamond I have bad news, John is killed in action; John Brostrom. At that point (b)(3), (b)(6) Delta is extremely upset and I don't need to describe all of the details of that. So, at that point, I talked with (b)(3), (b)(6) Diamond and he gives me a verbal report over the telephone, I spin dial and call Schloesser give him a report and I tell him that I am flying up to get Diamond (b)(3), (b)(6). He tells me and reiterates don't go forward of the Battalion CP which I didn't, I obeyed his orders, flew up to Blessing, turned my helicopters over to him and I don't remember what time, this is mid to late morning, might even had been noonish, I am not even sure. I said, get up to that scene right now, he did, he loaded up himself and a few others--it was not instantaneous, I showed up, he gave me a report, got with his staff, they let me know what was going on from their perspective, and then turned my birds over to him and they put some supplies in there, they put some troops in there, and my guys flew the Battalion Commander into Wanat. I stayed at Battalion CP at Blessing at that point and was on the phone back and forth with Schloesser. And I found (b)(3), (b)(6) to be Diamond rock steady at that point when I showed up, he was hitting on all pistons, he was articulate, he was lucid, he knew what he was doing and he was capable and he was fighting the fight. And the other things that we did is I called Shawn Mulhullen, who was the CJOSTF Commander, shortly after the thing started before I left my own Headquarters, called him, told him to get a commando unit stood up and be prepared to reinforce, called 3/73 which is JSOC, I told them to give me a Ranger Platoon standing by and put them on strip alert. And then talked to OGA, the CIA guys and said, I am not sure what you can help out here but we may need some blocking positions put in or something like that. So, I started standing up a bunch of other assets, shifted ISRs around, started piling on with

MEDEVAC and started a continuous cycle on the attack helicopter as soon as we get down at the JOC, this was before I left the Headquarters. And of course, General McCoval was down there at that point, Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) Brewer, you know the battle staff. It is just what you would think, the Senior Leadership is down on the JOC floor trying to fight the fight and there was actually a little card that we used that General Rodriguez came up with based on some attacks that they had, it was a very good little TTP card that was a little think piece because again, you are operating off of X amount of hours of sleep, it is always good to have a little thing there and I can clearly remember pulling that out of my pocket when this thing is happening, as I did on many occasions and I just used it as a guide to make sure that things--that resources were being lined up for this thing. So that is what we were doing there and that is what I did. But I never went forward of--I went up to Blessing and then got (b)(3), (b)(6) Diamond up into Wanat.

LtCol Beta (b)(3), (b)(6)**:** Sir, a couple days later a decision was made to withdraw from Wanat, did you participate in that decision making process?

BG Milley: I did and I gave (b)(6) Garnet in here the date time group of that because I happened to write it down. I was an observer controller and I just got in a habit of date time grouping things, so that is why you see date time groups in here and if I remember right off the top of my head, I think I tol (b)(6) Garnet 2215-- whatever I tol (b)(6) Garnet was right because I was reading it right out of the notes that I was taking. So, but it was at night, it was around that time, in that meeting is Schloesser, me, McConval, the G3 piece I think is standing there (b)(3), (b)(6) Bronco, CHOPs, I think is standing there (b)(3), (b)(6), I think is standing there Alpha I maybe wrong on that one, and then--then there is an Intel guy in there and I think, I can't say for sure if Sergeant Major is in there at that point.

LtGen Natonski: How about the 3d BCT, 1st ID?

BG Milley: Yeah, well, they are on Tandberg and I am pretty sure that they are up on Tandberg and I know that (b)(3), (b)(6) Delta is on Tandberg and I think tha (b)(3), (b)(6) is Gemini sitting next to him on the Tandberg. So, Schloesser is getting and this is--the attack is on the 13th,

1 this would be--help me out here, you all read the
2 report, I think it is either the next night or the
3 night after, I think that it is the night of the 14th,
4 is this meeting in Schloesser's office in Bagram. And
5 now he had been--let me back up, this is where he
6 makes the decision and again, I cannot read minds but
7 I am participating in this but I also know that there
8 was a series--the Commanding General of a Division in
9 combat so there is a series of phone calls, I am up at
10 Blessing doing things, he is talking. He is talking
11 to McKiernan, he is talking to, I think, I don't know
12 for sure if he talked to Demsey, I know that I talked
13 to Scaporatti at CENTCOM and I know that I talked to
14 Tucker up at ISAF. And I am almost positive, I know
15 that he talked to McKiernan, I am almost positive that
16 he talked to several other--so as part of his decision
17 making process, he is not just doing this in
18 isolation, kind of winging it, he is a very
19 deliberative guy, General Schloesser is, so he takes
20 these things and takes all of these things into play,
21 and so at night he gets these guys together so he is
22 going to make a decision, so he gets us all together
23 in his office and he says, "Way ahead?" and that is
24 what he is looking for, what is the way ahead here?
25 And essentially we discussed and he gets verbally
26 presented a series of courses of actions which can be
27 summarized as attack, defend, withdraw, and withdraw
28 with battle hand off.

29 So, attack, there was a thought that there should be a
30 counter attack up into the valley with an overwhelming
31 amount of force and that has certain emotional appeal
32 but I don't think at the time, and even in hindsight,
33 it makes good military sense to have done that given
34 the conditions at the time. And given the status of
35 your friendly forces, given wide variety of other
36 things, so. But that was discussed.

37 Then there was the idea of defend which is (b)(3), (b)(6) Oscar
38 and that Company and (b)(3), (b)(6) Diamond and your battalion
39 to continue to hold the position and when we bring in
40 3/1, we will RIP them right in there to Wanat.

41 And then the third was withdrawal. Bring the guys
42 that are there out, bring them back to Blessing and
43 back to J-Bad, et cetera, withdraw and shut that down
44 and contain that valley until such time as an

assessment is made as it whether we want to go back into the valley or not.

And those issues were discussed and as you would think there are advantageous and disadvantageous to each and they were tossed around amongst the group of leaders and then General Schloesser made the final decision to go ahead and withdraw, shut down Wanat, and then bring them out of there which we transmitted that order and that--and I don't recall anyone dissenting from that. I did read somewhere where the new Brigade Commander, I think it was in the (b)(6) Garnet draft thing where the new Brigade Commander heavily impacts that. That is not my recollection at all, I am not even sure that he even said anything, he might have said a few words, but I don't recall him playing heavily in that decision. I do recall that (b)(3), (b)(6) Delta me, McConval and others and the CG himself played heavily on that decision and I don't recall anyone dissenting from the concept of withdrawal.

Today, I would not dissent from that. I personally thought then and think today that there are considerable assets that are mis-positioned in Afghanistan that still need to be repositioned although a lot of work has been done on our watch and a lot work is being done right now, to align ourselves to properly execute a counter-insurgency strategy in order to protect the population and putting troops up in a lot of these valleys that have minimal amounts of people does not particularly make sense and that particular case, Wanat makes sense, Wanat Proper makes sense but in the conditions prevailing at the conclusion of that fight, it made no sense to continue to hold that position and it made no sense to conduct a punitive expedition up into that valley with a large amount of force. So, I supported then and I support now General Schloesser's decision to withdraw from Wanat.

LtCol Beta (b)(3), (b)(6): Thank you, sir. Colonel Sigma (b)(3), (b)(6)?

LTC Sigma (b)(3), (b)(6) Sir, given your experience are there one or two top take aways for you with respect to this incident?

BG Milley: Like lessons learned type things?

LTC Sigma (b)(3), (b)(6) Yes, sir.

BG Milley: Yeah, there are quite a few, before I answer that though, let me go back a little bit here to paint a little larger picture.

You have seen the maps, you got Kabul here, you got the Kabul to Jalalabad to the Khyber Pass to Peshawar road / river. The main line of communication goes back thousands of years and it is the predominant means of economic export / import for Afghanistan to Pakistan and into the subcontinent of India. This is a main artery. Securing this area and doing counter-insurgency in this area absolutely makes sense if you are going to make a difference in the life of Afghanistan. If you go north, you go up into the Konar River Valley, this is high density of population along the Konar River Valley. Doing counter-insurgency up and around the Konar Valley makes sense to a point, there is a point up here that you start running out of people and it is not so significant. But doing it here makes sense, and then this valley here is the Pesh River Valley, there is a fair amount of population there, you can make an argument either way, I support counter-insurgency operations in the Pesh River Valley. The Waygal Valley and the Korengal Valley and these capillary valleys off of the Pesh, there is not a lot in there and it may, I don't necessary support the footprint of forces in there. That is a little bit of hindsight after what I learned over a course of 15 months but that--those valleys up in there, it is hard pressed for me to argue that forces should be up there and when we do put forces up in all of those valleys, they get fixed by the enemy in these little COPs. And so, Konar, Pesh and this Valley that connects Kabul to Jalalabad to Khyber Pass, total sense full spectrum counter-insurgency operations, all lines of operations security, development, governance and protect the people that makes good tactical sense.

Now, we first went up there, and we, the United States first goes up in this area in around the '06 timeframe and at that time, the conditions probably made good sense, we were pushing up into these valleys to try to bring counter-insurgency and try to bring governance and development up into these valleys and I can see the logic that led people to do that. In addition, if you have X amount of forces and you are executing

1 primarily a counter terrorist type strategy there is a
2 general line of drift that comes out of Pakistan
3 through Shetrayal into this network of valleys and if
4 you are hard enough, you can literally walk, from here
5 through these mountains, staying in the Valleys and
6 get into the Tegab where you can then launch terrorist
7 attacks into Kabul. We know that there is a line of
8 drift that goes there and one of the reasons that the
9 footprint originally went up there was to try to
10 interdict that line of communication, to an extent
11 that makes sense but if you are going to do a
12 population-centric counter-insurgency strategy that
13 does not necessarily make sense and General
14 Schloesser's campaign plan and his strategy was
15 population-centric, I mean he adopted U.S. counter-
16 insurgency strategy - no surprise. So, he opted for a
17 population centric counter-insurgency strategy which
18 required a certain adjustment.

19 Back to your question, in terms of kind of lessons
20 learned, yeah, there are a lot of lessons learned,
21 that come out of this and frankly, I am pretty proud
22 of my Army to--there is at least one document that I
23 know that they had already published that many of the
24 lessons learned - and they come out of this fight - is
25 combined with lots of other lessons and it has been
26 out there and I know that a lot of people are coming
27 up with that. (b)(3), (b)(6) Diamond has done several lessons
28 learned sessions and seminars, I know that I did one
29 for the infantry community based on this from
30 Afghanistan when I was over there. So there is a lot
31 of effort in terms of lessons learned that come out of
32 this and I think that is important, I think that is
33 good, I think that is the only way that an Army, that
34 a military can learn and get better and become more
35 efficient against an adaptive enemy. And if we
36 somehow undermine the integrity of that process then
37 we have really done something bad.

38 For me there are a couple lessons, one, I would like
39 to, and I told this to (b)(6) Garnet and I told this to
40 several others, we have the technology--I believe we
41 have the technology today where in this fight in
42 Afghanistan, but it will apply elsewhere, where we can
43 flatten the system of intelligence reporting because
44 you have got to get information that we now know was
45 probably available to Lieutenant Brostrom and the

platoon of things that they were seeing. Reportedly we now know that they were seeing little groups of men in the hills and they were seeing groups of young men in the ville nearby and stuff like that and there was the-- I think there was a meeting there between Oscar Captain (b)(3), (b)(6) and one of the elders and he gives him, he says, "You know that you are going to be attacked" sort of thing, even in hindsight, that little sentence by the way is not definitive, but if you connect all of those things then you have something and that would be in the realm of HUMINT. You don't have to have spies to be HUMINT, HUMINT is patrolling, HUMINT is interaction, key leader engagements, it is the small unit stuff. That is all HUMINT and if somehow they could get those reports into a digital piece that could populate the system where you've got trained analysts out there that are looking at this stuff. Now that would be helpful. That type of system, technologically exists, some of it in the mechanized armored world, some of it you can do in the Blue Force Tracker sort of thing, but I am thinking dismounted light infantry, out there, small handheld type stuff where they can type in the reports and it populates this intelligence based system. That is entirely possible and we need to do something like that and that is a lesson learned that had --. You can never look back and say, if this happened, then that would not have happened. I can't do that. We lost 9 Soldiers, I would give anything to turn the clock back, but you have to learn from it and maybe if that human intelligence that was being processed there at the platoon was populated through whatever mechanism means and there are other ways of doing it, you can always send up voice reports like we did 25 years ago, but there is technologies today that can do this better and if that existed at the time then maybe, just maybe, someone would have pieced this thing together a little bit better than what happened. So, I think that is a lesson learned.

I am an infantryman and I grew up in the light infantry and Special Operations Forces and I believe that you got to patrol and I believe that is so fundamental to light infantry operations. The art of dismounted patrolling, we have got to re-emphasize that throughout our force, throughout the heavy force and the light force in a counter-insurgency environment

1 and we have got to do that and I am not saying that
2 was done or wasn't done in this particular case, but I
3 believe that good active, dismounted patrolling works
4 very well for the last 10,000 years and I believe that
5 it will work well today in this environment and that
6 is so fundamental and regardless of the size of force
7 you are, you got to be out there patrolling out to at
8 least the limits of your small arms range. And, you
9 know, we all learn that at Ranger School, we all learn
10 that at Infantry School and God Bless them, I know
11 that there were some challenges on this one, but we
12 have got to do that. We have got to do dismounted
13 patrolling regardless of wherever you are. You can
14 never take anything for granted.

15 I would, I would-- also in terms of the ISR and technology
16 stuff, it is not so much a lesson learned as it is an
17 observation that there seems to be in my mind a
18 general perception that the technology in and of
19 itself is a silver bullet in order to prevent certain
20 things from happening. And I think that is a false
21 conclusion from what I have personally seen of the
22 technology. The technology in combination with many
23 other things, to include analysis and the reading of
24 the technology can be extremely fruitful. And things
25 like ISR and Preds are very good at putting persistent
26 ISR, persistent look on a static position in
27 preparation for a kinetic or a Special Operations type
28 raid. It is not so great for picking up dismounted
29 infantry guerilla terrorists infiltrating through 7,
30 10, 12, 14,000 foot mountains in the middle of the
31 night. It can be helpful if it is cued to the right
32 place, but in and of itself, it is not a panacea to
33 these sorts of situations. It is a combination of all
34 of those things. I think that the--at a larger level,
35 I think that, more ISR and more Predators is helpful
36 and that is exactly what General Schloesser and I and
37 many others said during our time over there and that
38 is exactly what the institution responded to and that
39 is exactly what is happening today in part because of
40 the efforts of General Schloesser and a whole bunch of
41 others prior to and subsequent to this operation. So
42 there is more ISR going over there and there are more
43 capabilities in terms of intelligence collection going
44 into Afghanistan in part because of the efforts, so,
45 more is better is not really the message that I am
46 sending. But there is clearly a shortage, we

averaged, I checked the data, we averaged in RC East in our time, we averaged anywhere between 19 and 30 percent, call it 20, 20 to 30 percent or so of our requirements, of our across the board intelligence requirements. I don't know if that is unusual elsewhere.

When I was in Iraq with my Brigade and when I was in Afghanistan with my Brigade, I was in Baghdad, it was not as significant of an issue, but here it became -- it's a big deal and that is all types of requirements SIGINT, FMV, and so on. So, at that time there was an paucity of intelligence assets and it still is, it is still not fixed but there has been huge improvement over the last year or so, I would put it--there are others that I could rattle off, I have got notes here, and I gave a few to (b)(6) Garnet but I would say some sort of system to get reporting up that can populate the whole system simultaneously that would be helpful, increase in ISR, and then the fundamentals of light infantry and patrolling and I would also tell you that this Brigade--there wasn't any better light infantry at that time than that Brigade.

Sigma

LTC (b)(3), (b)(6) I understand. Sir?

LtGen Natonski: Vehicle Patrol Base versus COP, Wanat was not a temporary base in your mind was it? Based on the CONOPs?

BG Milley: In my mind, it was to be developed into a full blown COP; that is correct. It was not----

LtGen Natonski: Vehicle Patrol Base is not a doctrinal term, but what in your mind is a Vehicle Patrol Base?

BG Milley: It is not a doctrinal term, sir, but it gets used quite a bit in Afghanistan and there are quite a few Vehicle Patrol Bases over there and they are set up-- some of them turn into big COPs and some of them don't they just become small way-stations as units conduct mounted patrols and they go out and they are for a temporary position of a day or two or three.

LtGen Natonski: And they can pick up and leave it at any time?

1 **BG Milley:** They can, but you will leave and the defensive
2 materials will still be there, you know, the HESCOs
3 and that sort of thing.

4 **LtGen Natonski:** The people will not be left.

5 **BG Milley:** No, no, no.

6 **LtGen Natonski:** They have vehicles to move.

7 **BG Milley:** That is correct. But----

8 **LtGen Natonski:** There has been some discussions----

9 **BG Milley:** There has--there has been some discussion and I
10 always called it a COP, I did not think much of the
11 discussion until it became a thing, was it a Vehicle
12 Patrol Base, was it a COP? In my mind, it was briefed
13 that we were going to establish a Combat Outpost. At
14 the moment of the attack was it a Vehicle Patrol Base?
15 Yeah, I guess it was more along the lines of a Vehicle
16 Patrol Base than a full blown 100% built Combat
17 Outpost. Fair enough.

18 **LtGen Natonski:** However, a Vehicle Patrol Base means that
19 you could pickup all of your people and leave in the
20 vehicles that you came in.

21 **BG Milley:** Right, and you would not be able to do that.

22 **LtGen Natonski:** Right, no.

23 **BG Milley:** No, because he had----

24 **LtGen Natonski:** He flew in a platoon of ANA and additional
25 Soldiers.

26 **BG Milley:** That's right, he had 75--combat power, he had 74
27 or 75 guys total with ANA, US, Marine Advisors, the
28 Company Headquarters minus, TOWs, Mortars, and then
29 the infantry platoon. There was--this was something
30 else that is out there too, this idea that it was "a
31 platoon" and that I seen quite a bit, you know, a
32 single platoon. That is a "sort of", yes, there was a
33 U.S. platoon, but it was more than a U.S. platoon.
34 This is a--in my mind, as briefed to me in that CONOP,
35 it was briefed to me as a Company minus operation with
36 a Company Headquarters, the Mortars, the TOWs, and two
37 platoons----

1 **LtGen Natonski**: But the Company Headquarters was only there
2 on a visit.

3 **BG Milley:** That is correct as it turned out.

4 **LtGen Natonski**: It was not meant to be a company minus.

5 **BG Milley:** It was briefed to me as two platoons and a
6 company headquarters and TOWs and Mortars.

7 **LtGen Natonski**: And that plan there was briefed as a Company
8 Minus?

9 **BG Milley:** Yes, sir, I believe so, yes sir. I mean, I
10 recall that as a Company minus operation.

11 **LtGen Natonski**: So, Captain Oscar (b)(3), (b)(6) was intending to stay
12 there?

13 **BG Milley:** Until it got built up, I think. I mean, that is
14 what I thought.

15 **LtGen Natonski**: Because he only went up there on the 12th.

16 **BG Milley:** Right, he went up there on the 12th.

17 **LtGen Natonski**: That CONOPs was briefed all of the way up to
18 the Division.

19 **BG Milley:** That is correct.

20 **LtGen Natonski**: Primarily because it had--in terms of Wanat
21 it is designating as a Platoon.

22 **BG Milley:** Right, but I am looking as an operation, it is a
23 Company minus operation.

24 **LtGen Natonski**: Right, I got you there but it was never
25 intended to be a Company Outpost?

26 **BG Milley:** No, it was not.

27 **LtGen Natonski**: That CONOPs was required to be briefed
28 because it took external assets from the Brigade and
29 Battalion in order to--primarily aviation assets to
30 pull that off. The CONOPs went into specific detail
31 from the withdrawal of Bella to the establishment of
32 Wanat to the 10th of July. And that covered all of
33 the movements and everything like that and I take it

1 checked all of the blocks in terms of Division Support
2 and it went all of the way through the 12th on ISR.
3 But it really did not mention the actions on the
4 objective, the plan for--the detailed plan for the
5 platoon or the company when they got on to the
6 position. It took them to get there, is it your
7 expectation that----\

8 **BG Milley:** I did not ----

9 **LtGen Natonski:** at Division that the battalion and company
10 commanders and platoon commanders have a
11 responsibility to layout a detailed plan for combat
12 operations?

13 **BG Milley:** Not at our level----

14 **LtGen Natonski:** Not for you to be briefed.

15 **BG Milley:** Right.

16 **LtGen Natonski:** But is there an expectation that platoon
17 commanders and company commanders and battalion
18 commanders?

19 **BG Milley:** Oh, sure. Yes, sir.

20 **LtGen Natonski:** Did you ever see a plan that took it beyond
21 the 10th of July?

22 **BG Milley:** I don't know, I am not sure.

23 **LtGen Natonski:** I would not have thought that it would have
24 been briefed because this is----

25 **BG Milley:** I don't remember seeing, you know, like actions
26 on objective and like I am putting my platoon here, my
27 outpost here, and I am building it up and all of that
28 kind of stuff. I don't remember seeing that and I
29 would not expect that.

30 **LtGen Natonski:** And I am going to engage with the population
31 in Wanat and I am going to do a RIP TOA with the
32 incoming unit at this point----

33 **BG Milley:** Well, we knew it was going to be a RIP TOA sure.

34 **LtGen Natonski:** But did you ever see a plan for that?

1 **BG Milley:** I don't remember seeing it. I am not saying that
2 there wasn't one, I don't recall seeing one.

3 **LtGen Natonski:** Okay.

4 **BG Milley:** I don't recall seeing a detailed briefing that
5 talked about actions on the objective of the platoon
6 at Wanat.

7 **LtGen Natonski:** And I am not sure that I would have expected
8 you to see that.

9 **BG Milley:** No, no, I would not either.

10 **LtGen Natonski:** But your expectation for the Deputy CG for
11 operations is that every unit in the division would
12 conduct a combat operation where there would be
13 detailed planning when you are putting the lives of
14 Soldiers into a combat environment.

15 **BG Milley:** Yes, sir. And I would expect that at the
16 appropriate levels that they would be doing brief
17 backs and rehearsals and all of that stuff.

18 **LtGen Natonski:** Because we have not see any plan or order or
19 in the Marine Corps it might be a confirmation brief,
20 but what was supposed to happen because the
21 expectation was that about two weeks down the road
22 there was going to be a RIP.

23 **BG Milley:** Absolutely.

24 **LtGen Natonski:** And that was not a surprise to anyone but
25 for an incoming unit that was not even on the ground
26 at the time that this operation went down, it would
27 had been nice to have a plan as to what the future
28 portended for that platoon that was going into Wanat.

29 **BG Milley:** Right.

30 **LtGen Natonski:** Okay.

31 **BG Milley:** Now again, I would not expect that to be briefed
32 to me and I don't recall it being briefed, so----

33 **LtGen Natonski:** And I would not have expected it to have
34 been but I do expect units, small units to do that.

1 Just from your observation and 15 months there, I
2 guess your second tour in Afghanistan, did you ever
3 have concerns over the reliability of small arms, M4s,
4 SAWs, M240s?

5 **BG Milley:** I have read that since--I didn't-- I was not
6 aware of a systemic issue with the small arms. I read
7 since that they had some issues and I saw it in (b)(6) Garnet
8 (b)(6) Garnet report that he wanted the technical folks
9 to take a look at it. It is worth taking a look at.

10 **LtGen Natonski:** But you never saw another case where there
11 were some issues with our weapons?

12 **BG Milley:** No, no, sir.

13 **LtGen Natonski:** And if you read through some of the
14 testimony that we have had indicated that a lot of
15 weapons were combat damaged which would cause
16 malfunctions or failures.

17 **BG Milley:** Sure.

18 **LtGen Natonski:** And also thousands of rounds fired through
19 at a cyclic rate----

20 **BG Milley:** In this particular fight, it frankly does not
21 surprise me that there was issues with weapons
22 functioning because of the nature of the fight and the
23 intensity of the fight and the volume of the munitions
24 and the shrapnel and the smoke and there is dirt and
25 there is just the volume of munitions going through
26 the thing. So, I am not particularly surprised of
27 that, having said that though, I do not know if there
28 is a technical issue at stake there and it is worth
29 taking a look at, I suppose, if there is a technical
30 issue, but I don't----

31 **LtGen Natonski:** But you did not noticed a trend over your 15
32 months----

33 **BG Milley:** I had not noticed a trend before or since and I
34 do not recall anyone bringing it to my attention as a
35 trend.

36 **LtGen Natonski:** We ask that just because there has been a
37 lot of press on that and it was indicated in there,
38 but have not heard anyone say that they thought there

was systemic problems. The SAW over its history has had some issues off and on, nothing that would call its immediate pull from combat.

Okay (b)(3), (b)(6) Beta?

MG Perkins: You discussed the process that you went through nightly on the CONOP briefs and briefing and then approvals, so, for instance on this one: They brief you, you ask question that they answer it, I guess, adequately you give them the thumbs up and then does it get sort of briefed to the CG the next day that----

BG Milley: What we do is we take this, the CHOPs, (b)(3), (b)(6) Bronco (b)(3), (b)(6) Taylor or one of his guys, after we are done with the CONOPs, the CG had a book on his desk called "CONOPS book", a black binder, then would punch holes in it, place it in there in the tab and then the CG--like I said, he was a very deliberate, diligent guy, and he read those and I know that he did. He read them every night and then as they come up in the morning-- they would for example, in the morning, the briefer would say something like, "And CONOP Rock Move is going to be executed tomorrow morning" in the next 24 and it involved blank, blank, blank unit, this size force and then go over the intel and just a brief synopsis to remind everyone because this briefing would have occurred at some time prior, it would have gone into his book and he would have reviewed it and would have give it his kind of imprimatur.

MG Perkins: So, at that point it was, for all intents and purposes, approved. So, 173d has the approval to go ahead and do it. Was there, in this case, any further sort of Go or No-Go criteria?

BG Milley: There was.

MG Perkins: That is listed in the briefing there.

BG Milley: Absolutely. If it is an air assault--I am glad you asked that. If it is an air assault, there was definitive by our standard operating procedures in 101st, GO / NO GO criteria and that gets briefed up in preparation for execution. And it is a pretty rigorous set of standards and I think they show some of it in here.

1 **MG Perkins:** There is some in there.

2 **BG Milley:** The one that----

3 **MG Perkins:** I think that is sort of some unique stuff and I
4 would think that you would have your standard for SOP
5 Air Assault stuff.

6 **BG Milley:** That is exactly right. And that gets done at the
7 Battalion, Brigade, et cetera, but it gets done at the
8 CJTF level by our CHOPs guys. And then that got
9 briefed to General Schloesser actually and I can't
10 remember a time. I can't remember if it was in the
11 evening or the morning, but anyway it gets briefed to
12 General Schloesser. It gets briefed to me, too, I
13 mean it got briefed to a lot of people. It is GO/NO
14 GO and then it is tracked. It is not just kind of a
15 onetime thing, the CHOPs is on it and they are
16 watching it and they are checking the thing and they
17 are tracking that entire infil / exfil of the Air
18 Assault, so yes, there was a GO/NO GO brief on this.

19 **MG Perkins:** So again, according to your recollection--
20 obviously it got the go and CHOPs is tracking it and
21 you don't recall anytime throughout up to the 13th
22 when there was ever anything back that would call into
23 question the capability of the unit to execute that
24 whether it is classes of supply or resources or
25 anything like that.

26 **BG Milley:** I do not.

27 **MG Perkins:** And then the staff, this is a routine thing that
28 they track, so there would be a routine way to get
29 that information up, I mean, people knew if they came
30 up short on something that they previously had
31 briefed, I need this and I don't have it, it would be
32 well known how to get that information to you or to
33 somebody else?

34 **BG Milley:** Yes, 15 months there was, the door never closed.
35 I mean if it was a logistical thing, they would
36 typically bring that to McConval and not necessarily
37 to me, but they could bring it to me, I mean, we are
38 two sides of the same coin. I mean, a one-star is
39 one-star is one-star. O, S, pre-law, pre-med sort of
40 thing so. And General Schloesser's standard is that
41 one of us, one of the three generals had to be in the

1 headquarters at all times, so when you do battlefield
2 circulation, you know, the CG had freedom of movement
3 so he could do battlefield circulation any time he
4 wanted and he typically did 4 to 5 days a week. So,
5 that left me or McConval had to be in the Headquarters
6 at any time, so just because an issue was operational
7 does not mean that they would not necessarily bring it
8 to him or just because an issues was logistics would--
9 they could bring it to me.

10 **MG Perkins:** Understand because you are the guy----

11 **BG Milley:** If I am there at the moment in time, so but the
12 short answer to your question is, yes, there were
13 mechanisms in place, I believe the staff knew what
14 they were, they could also bring it to the Chief of
15 Staff, he was always there. So, if there were issues,
16 there were ways to bring it to our attention. And at
17 the end of the day, if you are a Commander, you can
18 always pick the phone up. You can always pick the
19 phone up.

20 **MG Perkins:** The CHOPs were laying out everything that was
21 sort of going on in RC East and you have to be
22 careful, sometimes we can look at these things and get
23 a little pre-occupied with just one piece of it and
24 have to be careful not to critique decisions without
25 understanding the entire context of everything going
26 on. What was ISAF's main effort at that time?

27 **BG Milley:** At that time, ISAF's main effort was highway 1.

28 **MG Perkins:** So that Tangy Valley----

29 **BG Milley:** Which Tangy Valley is adjacent--it is a valley
30 adjacent to Highway 1 from which a particular network
31 of insurgents was sallying forth onto Highway 1 and
32 interdicting Highway 1. There were other places that
33 got interdicted, that was one that was particularly
34 dangerous and we needed to take care of it in addition
35 to the fact that it killed 4 of our guys. And they
36 were interdicting--the Gates of Kabul piece, if you
37 look at the terrain, there are choke points, there are
38 terrain choke points leading into Kabul from all
39 directions. And they literally channelize movement
40 and traffic in all four cardinal directions. And in
41 this particular case, if you would look at this map,
42 you would see kind of how the mountains tighten up in

1 here, that is about where Tangy Valley is. All of
2 Highway 1----

3 **LtGen Natonski**: Is Highway 1 the ring road?

4 **BG Milley:** The Ring Road, yes, sir.

5 **LtGen Natonski**: Okay.

6 **BG Milley:** All of Highway 1, the Ring Road, was COM-ISAF's
7 number 1 priority because if you roll the clock back
8 to the summer of '08, it was a steady drum beat above
9 the fold, Washington Post, CNN, inside the country, et
10 cetera where the enemy is really being very aggressive
11 along Highway 1, they are cutting Highway 1 and they
12 are isolating Kabul so there was a mental picture
13 being portrayed that the enemy was surrounding Kabul--
14 --

15 **MG Perkins:** Sort of under siege for Kabul--putting Kabul
16 under siege.

17 **BG Milley:** And then you had other things, you had the attack
18 on the Karzai Anniversary Parade, you had the Indian
19 Embassy attack, those are significant. So there was a
20 series of very significant attacks inside of Kabul and
21 what the enemy was trying to do, we believe, was
22 create a psychological sense of chaos and fear in the
23 Capital City by conducting operations right on the
24 periphery and surrounding Kabul and the distance from
25 the center of Kabul to this valley is the distance
26 from here down to Woodbridge or, you know, DC to
27 Woodbridge, it is not far. So, the psychological
28 impact on the people was significant. And it was
29 playing, not only in the media, but it was playing,
30 most importantly in the minds of the Afghan people.
31 Traffic, civilian traffic, commercial traffic going up
32 and down the road dramatically dropped. The enemy--
33 there is about 900 culverts that go between here and
34 here, there is several hundred bridges, the enemy was
35 blowing bridges, blowing culverts, many enemy
36 organizations by the way, not just a single one but--a
37 very dramatic attack on about a 40 truck--jingle truck
38 convey where they torched the entire convoy. And the
39 troop to task, the amount of forces that, and I don't
40 mean just infantry, I mean ISR, Helicopter, the whole
41 shooting match was not as significant as it needed to
42 be on Highway 1, so the government of Afghanistan's

1 number 1 priority and Com-ISAF's number one priority
2 became the security of Highway 1 and our piece of it
3 that became where you see Tangy Valley is number one
4 that's Schloesser's translation of that priority.

5 **MG Perkins:** Right, so again, on the ISR priority there, Wanat
6 is number 3, you got Tangy Valley, you got 4th of
7 101st AO and you have----

8 **BG Milley:** Well, Tangy Valley is also 4th AO----

9 **MG Perkins:** Is part of that and you have----

10 **BG Milley:** The 4th of 101st owns all of that.

11 **MG Perkins:** And then you have the area over the East----

12 **BG Milley:** The Khost and KG Pass.

13 **MG Perkins:** So, actually, the fact then that when you
14 actually executed in the beginning of Rock Move, the
15 ISR plan, one could actually make the argument that
16 this CONOP based upon everything else that is going
17 on, could have had a disapportionate--amount of ISR, I
18 mean when you take a look at the big picture, assuming
19 that those are the priorities and if you take a look
20 at General McKiernan's priorities, you guys sort of
21 weighted things even more----

22 **BG Milley:** There was an Air Assault being done at night,
23 moving a force----

24 **MG Perkins:** I understand all of the reasons why, but there is
25 this discussion out there about why decisions were
26 made with ISR and one could be the devil's advocate
27 and actually there was an excess amount of ISR.

28 **BG Milley:** That is the position that I am at. I think that
29 we, at the CJTF level, and again, I am going to speak
30 from only what I know and what is in my heart here. I
31 think that we went over and above the amount of ISR to
32 dedicate to this size operation given the scope of
33 General Schloesser's overall mission set at the time.

34 **MG Perkins:** Right, the opportunity cost.

35 **BG Milley:** So, these allegations of inadequate ISR dedicated
36 to that operation, I take issue with.

1 **MG Perkins:** Understand. It puts it in perspective there. As
2 you--did you ever go up to Wanat after that?

3 **BG Milley:** No. We pulled out and I never went to Wanat. I
4 was up at Bella.

5 **MG Perkins:** But you are quite familiar with Wanat typography
6 and everything like that?

7 **BG Milley:** Yeah.

8 **MG Perkins:** I mean, based on your extensive experience first
9 of all in Afghanistan and then as an infantryman
10 throughout your time in the Army, doctrinally
11 understanding what a U.S. Army infantry platoon should
12 do and understanding this infantry platoon plus, would
13 you say that this exceeded the doctrinal capability of
14 an infantry platoon and this mission?

15 **BG Milley:** I don't think so, no. I think that an infantry
16 platoon, U.S. infantry platoon--now, what I know now,
17 relative to the enemy might be a different question---
18 -

19 **MG Perkins:** No, I mean,

20 **BG Milley:** Given at the time, I think that a U.S. infantry
21 platoon co-located in an area where there was some
22 police and with an ANA platoon with Marine ETTs,
23 reinforced with TOWs and mortars. I have got to tell
24 you 74 or 75 American Soldiers and ANA Soldiers
25 operating in Afghanistan is not a small amount of
26 force against the enemy patterns of operations that I
27 have seen. In this particular case the result was
28 tragic and horrible, no issue and no debate. But that
29 in terms of combat power and force is not a small
30 amount of force, it is not just kind of hanging out
31 there sort of thing. You know, so----

32 **LtGen Natonski**: However, given the task that they had to
33 build a position from the ground up and do all that
34 they would normally do as a platoon, do you think--I
35 mean, you could have also made the argument that they
36 could have been beefed up during the construction ----

37 **BG Milley:** No, question. Looking back at it, I think that
38 more engineers would have been appropriate----

1 **LtGen Natonski**: And also, engineers--you had Soldiers having
2 to dig their own fighting positions and build their
3 security, put the wire out and because there was only
4 an engineer section.

5 **BG Milley:** That is right.

6 **LtGen Natonski**: And also, expected to do force protection at
7 the same time in 120 degree temperatures.

8 **BG Milley:** Right.

9 **LtGen Natonski**: Now, I don't dispute the fact that a platoon
10 could--I think that a good reinforced squad could
11 probably take on most of these with supporting arms.
12 But when you look at the nature of the mission that
13 they had to do in an area that had been a high risk
14 area, the Waygal Valley certainly is one area that
15 there were many contacts. I think it depends on a
16 case by case basis and a mission assessment of the
17 situation and where you're doing your combat operation
18 and detailed planning to determine what size force you
19 need. I mean, do you agree or?

20 **BG Milley:** I still think that 75--combined 75 Soldiers is an
21 adequate amount of force to have to maintain local
22 security and to construct a COP. More engineers would
23 have been helpful, no question about it. The Bobcat
24 breaking and all of that kind of stuff, I find out
25 that after the fact----

26 **LtGen Natonski**: Actually the Bobcat never broke----

27 **BG Milley:** Or ran out of gas, you know those things clearly-
28 -and also, there are only, I want to say 8 kilometers
29 down the road to the Battalion's main base, that was
30 not a long stretch there and that, in fact, is the
31 road, if I remember right, that is the same road that
32 the platoon leader and the platoon infiltrated by
33 ground up there with some vehicles. So the road is
34 usable, there was plenty of opportunity there to bring
35 in addition capability if they thought that they did
36 not have it. But I think that you have to be able to
37 do force protection that is your first principle of
38 patrol is security, you have secure yourself. That is
39 your number 1 task. You cannot do another task if you
40 do not secure yourself.

MG Perkins: Following up on that and I know and try to avoid saying I know for sure that if this would happen then that would happen et cetera like that, but what you knew at the time and what you know about Afghanistan and looking back at things you read and anything and I know that there is no silver bullet. It kind of falls on, I think, a couple things that he said lessons learned, but if there was one or two things that you think might have actually made a difference in the outcome, I mean, some things are just not effectible, what would they be? I know this is in hindsight.

BG Milley: In hindsight, clearly, the entire outcome would have been different if--if Mark Milley had a mental picture of 150 to 200 enemy surrounding a friendly force the outcome would have been different if I knew that ahead of time.

MG Perkins: So, situational awareness, I guess is one.

BG Milley: I am not trying to beat my chest here, I am no George Patton, but----

LtGen Natonski: But you go right back to your defensive measures.

BG Milley: Right. And there would had been attack helicopters rolling in there before they even got off of jump street and aircraft and rescue. But that is easy to say in hindsight, as we all know, and then you get into a different issue, which (b)(6) Garnet in his draft report talks about this a little bit, I thought it was a pretty good point that gets brought out because the Soldiers do pick some of this up. And they don't have to come to me to tell me that kind of stuff, I mean the Battalion Commander has full authority to do things, call in birds and CAS et cetera but then you get into issues, if you see four or five guys on a ridge line, then you start getting into other issues, positive ID, you know, hostile actions, hostile threat, that sort of thing. So you can't just drop bombs, but if I-if the CJTF, if General Schloesser had--and it is not just me, I don't want to say me, if the CJ--if anyone, if General Schloesser, if you, what would you do as commander? Well, that is what he would do, if he had knowledge, that would be the one thing that would have changed the outcome, I think. Now, one lesson learned that I

take from it and I did not mention it when you asked it, but you reminded me of it, is the rotary wing aircraft and having rotary wing aircraft, you know like stand-to, you do stand-to with infantry, although part of stand-to is running security patrols around your position, so, but you do stand-to and depending on the situation, maybe stand-to for rotary wing aviation, having attack helicopters in the air at certain times of day, if there were patterns. I have to tell you too, there is not necessarily a pattern in this stuff. You know that anyway from your own experience. But there is not in Afghanistan, it is not that they always attack at dawn, or they always attack at night, or they always attack from the west with sun near the east or the sun in the back or that kind of thing, there is not a set pattern. Having said that though, you have to analyze each situation and it is not something that we would impose at the CJTF level and the way that we are organized in the 101st is that each of the infantry brigades gets a multi-functional aviation battalion task force as part of their Brigade Combat Team and then we keep a general support aviation battalion task, CJTF-O, so that is something that a Battalion or Brigade, an Aviation Battalion Commander working for the Brigade or the Brigade Commander that is something for them to consider. We talked about that afterwards and depending on METT-T at the moment in time or a specific operation, some of them did that, they put the birds up right at first light. But that is--attack helicopters are probably relative to engagements with the enemy, your attack helicopter is a very effective weapon system in the Apache in Afghanistan. Close Air Support is good, dismounted infantry good, et cetera, indirect fire is good and all of that, but your attack helicopter is an exceptional effective weapon in Afghanistan if it is well employed and we had good pilots and those guys know how to fly.

MG Perkins: You have done a number of interviews, you said with (b)(6) Garnet as you--have you read his draft report of the whole thing?

BG Milley: I read the initial draft report that came out, I want to say that it was on the internet somewhere.

MG Perkins: Would you say that the parts that he attributed to you or things you say would you say was an accurate description of your conversation with him?

BG Milley: He did not attribute anything to me because he did not interview me at that point.

MG Perkins: Oh, you had not done the----

BG Milley: I have only seen that draft, the very first draft, the one that is still on the internet. And he says in the second page, I believe, that I refused to do an interview and that is incorrect, I did not. My guys told him that I would do an interview when I got back and got settled and stuff like that which is what I did, but all of this stuff started coming out, you know, went over to (b)(6) and then ended up on Blog sites, goes out to the father and all of that. And that happens about 2 weeks after I arrive in DC and so, but I called him, you know, as soon as I was coming out, I called him up and said, what is going on here. I am more than happy to do an interview and he said, I know, I know, you were trying--so, I am not going to go there on that whole piece, someone else can figure all of that out, I am interested in the facts of the thing, get the truth out, establish the record professionally and correctly and do that. But so having said that, that was the only part where he says that I did not do something and refused to interview and that was actually incorrect but I am not going to leap over that.

MG Perkins: Okay. Thanks.

LtGen Natonski: You know that is the only report that is out there right now.

BG Milley: That is correct.

LtGen Natonski: So, as one may, takes for gospel everything that is in that report----

BG Milley: Yeah, that report is--I went through it, I read it, and I even talked to him about it, him being (b)(6) Garnet. I did a couple of subsequent interviews with him, I said, Garnet (b)(6), I want to make sure that you have at least my version of this thing, and I may be wrong, but----

Beta

1 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6)**:** Sir, can you just close it out.

2 **LtGen Natonski:** General Milley, you are ordered not to
3 discuss the testimony that you provided today with
4 anyone other than members of the investigation team.
5 You will not allow any witness in this investigation
6 to talk to you about the testimony that he has given
7 or which he intends to give. If anyone should try to
8 influence you testimony or attempt to discuss your
9 testimony, you are instructed to notify Lieutenant
10 Beta Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) or Lieutenant Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) Do you
11 understand that? Sigma

12 **BG Milley:** I absolutely do.

13 **LtGen Natonski:** I would just like to thank you for your
14 service to our country, the Army, and for all that you
15 have done in this war on terrorism during your
16 multiple tours. Thanks for coming down and I
17 appreciate it.

18 **BG Milley:** And to you to, Sir, and you too, General.

19 [The investigation closed at 1705, 19 November 2009.]

CERTIFICATION OF VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT

Subj: TESTIMONY OF BG MARK ALEXANDER MILLEY, USA, GIVEN ON 19 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.

(b)(3), (b)(6) Sigma

Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army
Judge Advocate

4 Dec 09

DATE