

1 [The testimony began at 1005 hours, 28 October 2009]

[White]

2 **LtGen Natonski:** Sergeant Major (b)(3), (b)(6), I am Lieutenant  
3 General Richard F. Natonski, United States Marine  
4 Corps. I have been appointed by the commander of US  
5 Central Command to conduct an investigation into the  
6 facts and circumstances surrounding the combat action  
7 in Wanat, Afghanistan during July 2008. Major General  
8 David Perkins, United States Army, has been assigned as  
9 the deputy investigating officer. Lieutenant Colonel  
10 **Beta** (b)(3), (b)(6) and Lieutenant Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) are **Sigma**  
11 judge advocates assigned to the investigation team.

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

17 Prior to coming on the record today you signed a  
18 privacy act statement. Is that correct?

**White** 19 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): [Positive response.]

20 **LtGen Natonski:** Your testimony will be made under oath and  
21 you will now be sworn.

22 [The witness was sworn.]

**Beta** 23 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Please, state your name, spelling your last?

**White** 24 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): (b)(3), (b)(6). **White**

**Beta** 25 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): What is your current unit, and that unit's  
26 location?

**White** 27 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): My current Unit is HHC, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ranger Battalion, 3<sup>rd</sup>  
28 of the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment.

**Beta** 29 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Fort Benning, Georgia?

**White** 30 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Fort Benning, yes, sir.

**Beta** 31 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): And you are currently a Command Sergeant Major in  
32 the US Army?

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**White** 1 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

**Beta** 2 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): In July 2008, what was your unit and that unit's  
3 location?

**White** 4 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): It was 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion 503<sup>rd</sup> of the 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne  
5 Brigade.

**Beta** 6 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): And were you the Battalion's Command Sergeant  
7 Major?

**White** 8 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, I was, sir.

**Beta** 9 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): And what is your occupation field?

**White** 10 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Infantry, sir.

**Beta** 11 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): And in July of 2008, how long had you been with  
12 the battalion?

**White** 13 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Since 11 August 2005.

**Beta** 14 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): So you went through the train up before going--  
15 before deploying?

**White** 16 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, I did, sir.

**Beta** 17 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): When was the first time that you had heard of  
18 possibly establishing an emplacement at Wanat?

**White** 19 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): As I can remember, we wanted to move--soon after  
20 we got into Afghanistan we wanted to move the Ranch  
21 House. We wanted it to go away. It was an OP or a  
22 FOB, COP that was north of Bella which was north of  
23 Wanat. Once we disbanded the FOB at Ranch House after  
24 it was attacked we consolidated most of that Company  
25 down-- two platoons of the Company down on Blessing.  
26 Subsequently one platoon went up to the Chowkay valley.  
27 One platoon stayed at Blessing. And then we still had  
28 a platoon at FOB Bella, which was north of Wanat. I  
29 want to say to the best of my recollection, before the  
30 winter of 2007 we had decided that we wanted to move  
31 Bella down to Wanat.

**Beta** 32 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Had you visited Wanat at all prior to that?

**White** 1 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

**Beta** 2 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): And what for?

**White** 3 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): The first couple of times we went there to do an  
4 engagement it was part of our battle space because it  
5 was north of Blessing. It was Charlie Company's Battle  
6 Space. I went there a couple of times for leader  
7 engagement. And then we started talking to them, the  
8 elders shortly after, I want to say in the Spring. I  
9 went up there to do a leader engagement directly  
10 talking about moving Bella to Wanat, Spring or Summer.

**Beta** 11 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): How was that received by the leaders?

**White** 12 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): You mean the elders?

**Beta** 13 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): The elders, yes.

**White** 14 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): The elders were caught in between us and the  
15 Taliban, basically. We wanted to move there-- They  
16 wanted to know what we will provide when we do move  
17 into an area, the small projects and that kind of  
18 thing. But, at the same time they were dealing with  
19 the Taliban and there--that is Nuristan, and a Nuristan  
20 are just different. The Ranch House is an indicator,  
21 they find out we were going to move it and they allowed  
22 the Taliban to hit it. And then when we went up  
23 to--when we sent a patrol up to Aranus, the village of  
24 Aranus, to get their needs for the winter they invited  
25 them up and they should have been responsible for  
26 security and they allowed them to get hit when they  
27 were coming back. And I think we lost 6 guys in that  
28 ambush. They are Nuristani.

**Beta** 29 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): That was in November, '07?

**White** 30 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

**Beta** 31 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): During your visits to Wanat and meeting with the  
32 elders, did you discuss a particular site for the  
33 emplacement?

**White** 34 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, right there next to the Bazaar.

**Beta** 1 LtCol (b)(3), (b)(6): And as an infantryman what were your thoughts  
2 about that position?

**White** 3 CSM (b)(3), (b)(6): As an infantryman, I didn't like it.

**Beta** 4 LtCol (b)(3), (b)(6): Why is that?

**White** 5 CSM (b)(3), (b)(6): Because it was surrounded by high ground. It is  
6 the same situation we were in at Chowkay, same  
7 situation we were in--then again you have to keep in  
8 mind you are in a Kunar. And it is the mountains. So  
9 you can keep pushing up and pushing up but they are  
10 going to be farther and farther away from the  
11 population. In order to have the high ground you are  
12 going to be farther away from the population. That is  
13 what happened with the Ranch House in Aranus. Aranus  
14 was in the Valley and the Ranch House was up in the  
15 military crest of the mountain. It was out of  
16 position. It did not affect the population. We wanted  
17 to move it and it got hit. And that was even though it  
18 was up on the military crest. The same thing with  
19 Wanat, it was down in low ground and the same thing  
20 with Bella next to the Bazaar because by COIN you want  
21 to be close to the population. And you would think  
22 they wouldn't hit their own Bazaar, or take a chance of  
23 their Bazaar being destroyed.

**Beta** 24 LtCol (b)(3), (b)(6): Was there anywhere else----

**White** 25 CSM (b)(3), (b)(6): The bad guys, they being the bad guys.

**Beta** 26 LtCol (b)(3), (b)(6): When you looked around was there anywhere that  
27 you may have wanted to put the emplacement versus right  
28 there next to the Bazaar?

**White** 29 CSM (b)(3), (b)(6): There is where the OP was on the east of the  
30 Bazaar--there is a compound up there, which is on  
31 defensible ground. It is on the high ground, it is not  
32 up on the mountain so it is still close to--but it was  
33 already occupied. So we couldn't have that.

**Beta** 34 LtCol (b)(3), (b)(6): And when you were dealing with the elders----

**White** 35 CSM (b)(3), (b)(6): And the elders initially were reluctant to allow  
36 us to even move down here. And that took a few months  
37 of negotiation.

**Beta** 1 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Was it a money issue or was it something else?

**White** 2 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): They are Nuristani and they had their own  
3 reasons. It is hard for us to fathom what they are.  
4 They are not the average Afghan they are Nuristani.  
5 When they invite you in, they hit you going out. So  
6 they don't abide by their own customs.

**Beta** 7 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): In July of 2008, the Battalion was getting ready  
8 to rotate back to Italy. As a Command Sergeant Major  
9 what were some of your duties regarding the rotation  
10 back if any?

**White** 11 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Making sure the platoon FOBs Company FOBs were  
12 ready to receive the incoming units and the incoming  
13 platoons and Companies from the Battalion that was  
14 taking over the battle space. And then making sure  
15 that we left people in place so that we could do 1 on  
16 1, you know, a 203 gunner talking to a couple of 203  
17 gunners, a team leader talking to a few team leaders on  
18 the unit coming in. And then the Platoon Sergeants  
19 stayed in place. And the First Sergeants the same  
20 thing they would stay in place and do the left seat  
21 right seat ride with the incoming units. Down on that  
22 Skill level 1 level making sure we had guys that we  
23 could represent. Because privates talk to privates  
24 better than NCOs do. They speak the same language.  
25 And then making sure they were dependable. We kept  
26 them policed up and then what we could get done as far  
27 as improving, because it is a continuous process.  
28 Maintaining and then improving the FOB.

**Beta** 29 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Improving, how so?

**White** 30 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Well, your MWR assets because when we first got  
31 into our FOBs like in the Korengal they were still in  
32 dug-in bunkers. They had no computer communication  
33 other than what was in the TOC, the company TOC. We  
34 were able to get computer sets sent out there so they  
35 had a MWR, phones, that type of thing. The same type  
36 of thing was going on, on the other FOBS. Chowkay, I  
37 think was minimally resourced. We were still getting  
38 the MWR stuff in and getting the engineer built sand  
39 filled walls type thing for barracks to give them, at

1 least, a feeling of security when they slept at night.  
2 That is what I am talking about with improving.

**Beta** 3 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Did 2<sup>nd</sup> of the 503<sup>rd</sup>, I know you closed down two  
4 COPS but did you establish, other than Wanat, did you  
5 establish any during your tour?

**White** 6 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): We took over Monte. When we first got to  
7 Chowkay, there were no bunkers built to defend out of,  
8 it was vehicle positions. So we built those up. Able  
9 Main was already in position. Honaker-Miracle we built  
10 and put it in place, built it.

**Beta** 11 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): From scratch, from nothing?

**White** 12 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

**Beta** 13 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): And when did that take place?

**White** 14 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): That took place shortly after the Sangar fight.  
15 I want to say that was in June of '07. And that  
16 process that took place I think in July. And we  
17 collapsed Florida, which were vehicle patrol bases  
18 along Pech River Road. And I mean they were right  
19 along the road. They were just asking to be a VBIED or  
20 something to go off next to it.

**Beta** 21 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): What is a vehicle patrol base?

**White** 22 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): When the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain came into the Pech River  
23 Valley initially where they were getting the most IEDs  
24 they--It is conjecture because I was not there. I  
25 think they put in a Vehicle Patrol Bases--they were  
26 supposed to be temporary. That was places where they  
27 would have them stop and make them defensible. Their  
28 vehicles would be in position. And then they would  
29 oversee that position, I guess to reduce the IED  
30 threat. Those became, by the time we got in there,  
31 those had become COPS I guess.

**Beta** 32 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Why, what is the difference?

33 **LtGen Natonski:** What had changed?

**White** 34 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): They continued to build them up. And the Hescos  
35 went in. Those were right against the road. They

1 started talking to the population around their area.  
2 It was a platoon position. And they just made it  
3 defensible to a certain degree. And when we got in  
4 there it was less than I wanted. So we continued to  
5 build them up until we could finally close them down.  
6 But it was Florida, which was east of Honaker-Miracle  
7 which was right at the top of the Wathar Pour Valley.  
8 So east and then south of that along Pech River Road  
9 was California. We closed those two FOBs down. And  
10 those were vehicle Patrol Bases that became COPs,  
11 platoon COPs.

**Beta** 12 LtCol (b)(3), (b)(6): When you built Honaker-Miracle was it from  
13 scratch?

**White** 14 CSM (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes.

**Beta** 15 LtCol (b)(3), (b)(6): Was that-- what did it take to do that?

**White** 16 CSM (b)(3), (b)(6): Well we--initially the first time I saw it, it  
17 was-- as we drove by and planned it, it was in the open  
18 ground. It had stood off from the high ground. It was  
19 in the open. The Watah Pur Valley, the village started  
20 across the road and up. And they were just on this  
21 side of the road and they had open fields and stuff.  
22 The district center was right next to it, which was  
23 when we first started building up Honaker-Miracle. The  
24 district center was just a compound. And then we built  
25 it up into what is now their district center. The MP  
26 station was across the road from it. I guess that  
27 would be north of Honaker-Miracle. It started out as  
28 four vehicles and an open field with Concertina wire.  
29 And we started throwing resources at it and in the  
30 first two weeks we had the Hescos up and started  
31 filling in the Hescos using local nationals. And the  
32 Taliban waited too long to hit it and by the time they  
33 finally did hit it they paid a heavy price for it. By  
34 the time it was defensible it had a Hesco wall around  
35 it, and probably about 400 by 400 meters. And then had  
36 an HLZ that we built onto it, and then Hesco walls  
37 around that. And right now I think it is up to a stone  
38 wall. By the time I left there the stone wall was all  
39 the way around it. The concertina wire was going  
40 around the stone wall.

**Sigma** 1 **LTC** (b)(3), (b)(6): Sergeant Major, what was the name of that one?

**White** 2 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Honaker-Miracle, named after the two guys that  
3 were killed--

**Sigma** 4 **LTC** (b)(3), (b)(6): Okay.

**Beta** 5 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): At the end of the 14 days when you fill in  
6 Honaker-Miracle what did the COP look like? It had  
7 Hesco wall around. Did it have towers?

**White** 8 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes. In any or any of our FOBs, when you talk  
9 about towers you talk about rudimentary towers before  
10 they started building the stone wall. Rudimentary  
11 meaning it is built out of Hescos and then sand bags  
12 give it over head cover and that kind of thing.  
13 Camouflage netting over that, but it was off the  
14 ground.

**Beta** 15 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Do you recall the engineering assets required to  
16 do that? You mentioned there were local nationals. Do  
17 you recall any US Army engineers for this?

**White** 18 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): I don't recall the engineers getting involved in  
19 that. It was mostly local national contracting that  
20 the Company worked out through the district governor.

**Beta** 21 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): And was Honaker-Miracle a platoon-size COP?

**White** 22 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes.

**Beta** 23 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): And when they went out to build it was it a  
24 Battalion focus of effort? Was it a Company focus of  
25 effort?

**White** 26 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): It was a company focus of effort because it was a  
27 Company battle space, but the battalion had oversight  
28 on it.

**Beta** 29 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Okay.

**White** 30 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): As I remember the Battalion had oversight on it.  
31 The Battalion Commander and I would go over there, and  
32 I ended up changing out the platoon sergeants that were  
33 out there because the platoon sergeant that was there,  
34 I don't remember his name now. I changed him out with

1 **Raider** SFC (b)(3), (b)(6) just because the platoon, the FOB was not  
2 coming along fast enough, the security aspect of it.  
3 So the platoon sergeant was just not making it happen.  
4 **Raider** So when SFC (b)(3), (b)(6) went out there and took over that FOB  
5 and the construction of that FOB he was doing such a  
6 good job they started coming up in the Taliban GS on  
7 ICOM. Because the FOB was growing faster than they  
8 could figure out how to attack it.

**Beta** 9 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): What do you mean by a security aspect?

**White** 10 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): He is the one who started getting the local  
11 contracts in there. He got the local contracts for the  
12 walls. He was able to fix the drainage because it was  
13 built in these fields like this. These are more  
14 terrorist than anything else, but with those fields the  
15 farmers still had to build on water. So you can't just  
16 cut off their reservoirs or systems I guess is what  
17 they called them. So he was able to figure that out  
18 without leaving a whole in the perimeter for bad guys  
19 to get in there. And it left the drainage open. And  
20 it was also able to keep the water out of the FOB. I  
21 think an engineer platoon sergeant stopped by there  
22 to--when he stopped by they were pulling off a clip and  
23 he said, come in here and check this out. Figure out  
24 how I can fix this. And they fixed the drainage. And  
25 then he got the ASG through the ANP and through the  
26 governor, and was able to get ASG for that FOB to  
27 provide and supplement the security. It just grew it  
28 faster than the Taliban was able to react to it.

**Beta** 29 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): For the establishment and emplacement of Wanat it  
30 was operation Rock Move, did you participate in the  
31 planning at all?

**White** 32 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): I did not, sir.

**Beta** 33 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Do you recall being present for briefs?

**White** 34 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): I got the memo for this and I saw the names. I  
35 kind of knew what the investigation was all about, but  
36 nobody was able to tell me. I just kind of had to  
37 guess at it. I cannot remember receiving briefs on it.  
38 Like I said we were getting ready to leave, so I may  
39 have been focusing on other things.

**Beta** 1 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): As a Command Sergeant Major, had you received a  
2 Con Op brief? What routinely would you provide for  
3 that?

**White** 4 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Any shortcomings I saw in the plan.

**Beta** 5 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Such as?

**White** 6 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): I am the senior enlisted in the Battalion, so if  
7 I saw an issue or I had a concern I would address it.  
8 Whether it was getting logistics in there or getting  
9 the engineer support or whatever. What I asked for I  
10 would have got. Or the Intel part of it. I read every  
11 Intel update that came down. Every SIGINT, everything  
12 that came down was sent to me by the S2. And these  
13 guys, the Taliban are creatures of habit. If there are  
14 going to be IED in a place, they are going to ambush  
15 you in the same place on the road. So I made sure I  
16 had SA on all that stuff. It was on a map in my  
17 office.

**Beta** 18 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): And what was your understanding of the--from  
19 early July of 2008, what was your understanding of the  
20 enemy situation in the Waygal?

**White** 21 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): For one, the Battle Space was huge. We had the  
22 Korengal. We had the Chowkay. We had a platoon up in  
23 Monte, when it starts to get up into Array, we had  
24 Honaker-Miracle, and Michigan was in the mountain of  
25 the Korengal Valley. All the OPs and COPs in the  
26 Korengal Valley and then in Wanat we had the Ranch  
27 House--this is within a 15 month period. We had the  
28 Ranch House engagement. We had that ambush coming out  
29 of Aranus and then the engagements leading up to us  
30 leaving Bella, and then, the two ambushes going up  
31 there to see the elders when the battalion TOC went up  
32 there and coming out. Which I think was in May and  
33 then again in June. The biggest one I think was 18  
34 May, but I am not sure of the date, but it was in May.  
35 In an overall spectrum, Chowkay was being hit  
36 regularly, the Chowkay Vehicle Patrol Base or Surray  
37 Vehicle Patrol Base in the Valley. The Korengal was  
38 hit multiple times during the day over a 15 month  
39 period. The Korengal was being hit all of the time.

1 And then you have Michigan, Honaker-Miracle along Pech  
2 River Road. They were being hit pretty regularly too.

3 So, to just focus on the Wanat you would have to  
4 have Intel to pull you in that direction. And when we  
5 first got to the Pech in the summer from June until  
6 November you would get these Intel reports of 180  
7 Taliban that were going to roll up the Florida Vehicle  
8 Patrol Base, Able Main, and then California, and then  
9 hit Michigan. Kind of like the Taliban Tsunami coming  
10 up the Pech River Road. But it never came out,  
11 because the population cannot support that kind of a  
12 growth in the enemy. They cannot support it  
13 logistically. And so for them to just--the only  
14 places we had a large body hit a FOB at one time was  
15 Aranus up to that point. And they tried to overrun it  
16 and they got pretty close. They got within 10 meters  
17 of the company CP.

**Beta** 18 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): From your review of the S2 reports were you aware  
19 of a possible attack on Bella, a large scale attack?

**White** 20 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yeah, but they had been saying that all summer  
21 long. It never came. They would hit it from multiple  
22 positions. It was stand off from the high ground.  
23 They would hit either the OP that overlooked it, the  
24 two over looked it, and one was Speed Bump. Or they  
25 would hit the one that was South of Bella and the  
26 Bazaar. And then every now and then we would get  
27 rocketed when they shot the logistics helicopter down  
28 that the Russian Pilot was flying with a rocket. That  
29 hit the HLZ. That was a lucky shot. But they did  
30 bring that thing down.

**Beta** 31 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): You said you weren't present for a Con Op brief  
32 for operation Rock Move?

**White** 33 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Not that I can remember.

**Beta** 34 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): And were you aware that the platoon was moving up  
35 to Wanat?

**White** 36 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes.

**Beta** 1 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): And what was your--did you have any concerns  
2 based on your reading the S2 reports?

**White** 3 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yeah, you always have concerns, especially when  
4 you initially shut down a FOB because the defense was  
5 going too. It had been weak in that position they  
6 were sitting in. If you look at it, it is in a bowl.  
7 So, yeah I had concerns. I talked to the Company  
8 Commander about it and just talked about him having  
9 TRPs and one of those predominate pieces of terrain  
10 that I told him was the Bazaar. If they hit you it is  
11 going to be from the Bazaar. It is a built up area  
12 and they don't think we will shoot back at them.

**Beta** 13 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): You mentioned TRPs, for the record,--

**White** 14 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Target Reference Points.

**Beta** 15 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): And what was his response when you were pointing  
16 that out to him.

**White** 17 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): He said, they weren't even looking at that, not  
18 the Bazaar portion of it, but the TRPs.

**Beta** 19 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Do you recall when that conversation took place,  
20 between the time of the execution of the move?

**White** 21 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Probably two days before they moved out. But we  
22 had had that same conversation when he went up to  
23 Bella when they were being hit and we were getting all  
24 the Intel they were going to try to overrun the FOB.  
25 He went up there because he thought that was his place  
26 to be as a Company Commander. The only high speed  
27 avenue of approach is through that Bazaar to Bella.  
28 Everything else is either cut by a river or has an OP  
29 on the high ground sitting across from it. I asked  
30 him if he had a TRP for that Bazaar. And he said no.  
31 And I said if I were you I would, because if I was the  
32 enemy that is where I would come at you from.

**Beta** 33 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Prior to the execution of the Operation Rock  
34 Move, did you discuss the operation with the Battalion  
35 Commander?

**White** 1 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Operation Rock Move, I can't remember he and I  
2 talked all of the time. I can't remember if we talked  
3 about that specifically.

**Beta** 4 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Once Operation Rock Move was underway and the  
5 platoon arrived up in Wanat, were you ever aware of  
6 any logistical shortages they were experiencing?

**White** 7 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir. And a lot of it went back to the  
8 construction company that we had contracted for that.  
9 I don't know if they refused to go out there, or just  
10 couldn't get there. I don't know what the problem was.  
11 But they didn't make it out there. We sent what we  
12 could out there. Which I think was three or two  
13 engineers and some miniature bulldozers, a Bobcat I  
14 guess to help them build the Hescos up to that point.  
15 I think they were filing them, which is the same way  
16 we built FOBs around the Korengal outpost, the FOBs,  
17 and COPs around the Korengal outpost.

**Beta** 18 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): You actually used E-tools to fill the Hesco?

**White** 19 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): E-tools, pick axes, shovels, whatever we got.  
20 You got to build up your own construction. And as far  
21 as I know the construction didn't go out there. The  
22 platoon is going to start improving their position,  
23 because they are infantry. And that is what they  
24 started doing, started setting up their Hesco barriers  
25 and filling them the best way they could. The local  
26 national weren't going to help them.

**Beta** 27 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Were you aware of any shortages with water?

**White** 28 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes. I read that in one of the reports coming  
29 out of one of the commanders updates. And we got  
30 water out there as quickly as we could. I think we  
31 sent out CLP out there. Either that or we sent a  
32 Chinook out there with water.

**Beta** 33 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Was there shortages of anything else that you  
34 were aware of? Did they have enough sand bags, or  
35 wire, or stakes?

**White** 36 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): I don't know, sir. And the thing is when we  
37 started building these COPs they wanted us to start

1 out--we thought it was going to be permanent to start  
2 building those things with stone walls. Honaker  
3 Miracle has stone walls; Blessing has stone walls  
4 around it. Because it was going to be permanent and  
5 then handed over to ANA, I don't know what the reasons  
6 were, but they wanted us to start building less Hescos  
7 because the Hescos don't last. And they last only a  
8 couple of years before they start falling apart. The  
9 wire will be in place, but the weaving around it will  
10 be gone in two to three years. What the reason for  
11 that is with the construction company, I don't know.

**Beta** 12 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): You understood that the plan would be to have a  
13 permanent stone structure?

**White** 14 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): That was directed.

**Beta** 15 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Do you know who directed that?

**White** 16 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): I don't know, sir. I would only be assuming. I  
17 think the Brigade Commander would make that decision.

**Beta** 18 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): How about did the move itself to Wanat, was that  
19 something that chosen wanted to do? Was that  
20 something that Task Force Rock wanted to do?

**White** 21 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Task Force Rock is Chosen Company.

**Beta** 22 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Did the CO of Chosen or your boss, or the Brigade  
23 Commander say they wanted to get this move done?

**White** 24 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): We as a Battalion Command group wanted--as a  
25 battalion, it just made sense to have something in the  
26 Wanat Valley. But Bella you could not reinforce it  
27 because the roads didn't support the vehicles. Once  
28 you got past Wanat the only thing that could get up in  
29 there is the little Ford vehicles that the ANA used.  
30 They said that they did get up in there, but it would  
31 not support the CLPs to re-supply. Because the roads  
32 were built off of the mountain instead of cut into the  
33 mountain.

**Beta** 34 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): When did you----

**White** 35 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): And not to get off your question, sir. We as a  
36 command group were running out of Bella and the next

1 best option we could see, and still have connection to  
2 the population in the Wanat valley was to be in Wanat.  
3 And there was a District Center there. That is where  
4 the District Governor was. That is where the ANP  
5 chief was, where the MP station was.

**Beta** 6 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): When you all set up Honaker-Miracle, was there a  
7 land negotiation involved?

**White** 8 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

**Beta** 9 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): And had there been some concern expressed  
10 regarding moving Wanat after having lengthy land  
11 negotiation as far as tipping the enemy?

**White** 12 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): It wasn't a matter of tipping the enemy. When  
13 you are talking to the elders you are talking to the  
14 enemy. Any elders in Afghanistan--when you are  
15 talking to the elders you are talking to the enemy.  
16 You can't separate that from--they are part of the  
17 population. All of those guys are home grown. The  
18 Taliban are home grown, so they are part of the whole.  
19 And then they are going to be part of the tribe. When  
20 you tell the elders you are telling the whole tribe.

**Beta** 21 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): So was that a consideration or a risk that the  
22 battalion command group understood?

**White** 23 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir. Yeah there is no getting away from  
24 that. When we moved out of Honaker-Miracle we knew.  
25 When we moved out of the Ranch House we knew that and  
26 today I think that is the reason it was hit. We were  
27 moving. And it was their last opportunity so they hit  
28 it before we could leave.

**Beta** 29 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): When 2<sup>nd</sup> platoon Chosen was up there for a couple  
30 of days did you regularly attend the commanders  
31 update?

**White** 32 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir, in the evenings, yes.

**Beta** 33 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Did you hear any discussion regarding ISR assets,  
34 a need for more ISR?

**White** 35 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Anytime we pulled ISR, sir, it was pulling ISR.  
36 The Brigade wasn't allocated--other than the Shadow

1 but when the Shadow got up in there it was limited to  
2 what we could see, just because it was a smaller  
3 aircraft and you are talking about a valley that has  
4 mountains around it up to 10 to 14 thousand feet.

**Beta** 5 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Did you recall any discussions about planned ISR  
6 support that had been pulled away for Wanat, planned  
7 for Wanat that had been pulled away?

**White** 8 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): No. I think it was pulled away for an operation  
9 that was north of Monte, called Mountain Highway. It  
10 was another brigade allocated resources--were very  
11 spread so.

**Beta** 12 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Were you aware of any actions trying to get the  
13 ISR asset back to cover Wanat?

**White** 14 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): No, I don't, sir, not before the attack.

**Beta** 15 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): At the Battalion level during the commanders  
16 update brief did you receive any information regarding  
17 threat indicators from the time the platoon arrived to  
18 when the attack was? Was there a change in the  
19 landscape at all or the town that was reported up to  
20 the Battalion?

**White** 1 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): I don't know if it was a commanders update or  
22 not. I went out there right afterwards and talked to  
23 the First Sergeant and he told me that leading up to  
24 it they were basically being recon'd from the Bazaar.  
25 A guy was standing outside one of the shops staring at  
26 him, but what are you going to do? He is a local  
27 national. He is probably Taliban but he doesn't have  
28 a weapon so now he is a local national.

**Beta** 29 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): And you think you learned that when you went up  
30 to Wanat and talked to the First Sergeant?

**White** 31 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

**Beta** 32 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): How about before? Do you recall hearing anything  
33 at all whether commanders update, or S2 update?

**White** 4 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): With the S2, like I said, sir, that night you  
35 could have pulled Intel from any one of our reports  
36 and you would have been hearing that one of the FOBs

1 was going to get hit. So whether it was Wanat, or  
2 Chowkay, or the Korengal, something was going to be  
3 hit that night. Whether it was hit or not, I can't  
4 remember. But the next morning it was hit. The Intel  
5 brief will always say something was going to be hit.

**Beta** 6 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Were you present after the battle for any  
7 discussions of withdrawing from Wanat?

**White** 8 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): After the Battle the-- I can't remember what time  
9 I took off. After we got word the Battle had lulled  
10 we knew we were going to have KIA and they were going  
11 back to BAF and we would have to do a ramp ceremony.  
12 The commander wanted me to attend every single one of  
13 the ramp ceremonies. So I did. And in doing that I  
14 jumped on a helicopter--the last CASEVAC bird going in  
15 there--I didn't know they were throwing a casualty on.  
16 I thought we were just getting weapons and sensitive  
17 items that had been burnt and destroyed. We landed  
18 threw that on and we flew out and there was a casualty  
19 wrapped in a poncho. The KIA flew back to JAF.  
20 Shortly after getting there to JAF I flew back out to  
21 Blessing to pick up the commander, the Brigade  
22 commander flew there from JAF with me. And the  
23 General, I cannot recall his name right now. We flew  
24 out there and landed. We grabbed the First Sergeant  
25 and he spoke to me. We went up to that house, that  
26 compound that overlooks the OP that I talked about  
27 earlier. And on the way down--walking up there and  
28 going back down was continuous discussion whether we  
29 should stay or not stay.

30 And the thing with not staying-- we are the last  
31 super power in the world and we get pushed out by the  
32 Taliban. So that is the kind of stuff that you are  
33 weighing when those decisions are being made. It is  
34 not just the tactical decision, but you also look at  
35 the IO and everything that feeds into maintaining the  
36 offensive.

**Beta** 37 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): And when you are walking up to that house, who  
38 was walking and talking?

**White** 39 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): With me it was the platoon sergeant, Sergeant  
40 **Shark** (b)(3), (b)(6), he was out of reinforced with a platoon

1 out of Battle Company. He was up there on that  
2 position and First Sergeant (b)(3), (b)(6) was with him. When **Ranger**  
3 **Diamond** I got up there Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6), Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6), and **Delta**  
4 **Oscar** Captain (b)(3), (b)(6) was up there.

**Beta** 5 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): And the conversation was related to whether or  
6 not you were going to stay?

**White** 7 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Well, initially, when I got up there I got on the  
8 tail end of Captain (b)(3), (b)(6) explaining where all he had **Oscar**  
9 been attacked from. His perspective from being down  
10 on the FOB and then up on the OP and then back down on  
11 the FOB, which wasn't a FOB yet. It was still Vehicle  
12 Patrol Base. And then it went into Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6), **Delta**  
13 **Diamond** Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6), and I kind of discussed that. But I  
14 got the impression that a decision was not being made  
15 up on that hill, it was after the fight and after the  
16 casualties and it was discussed do we stay here or do  
17 we not.

**Beta** 18 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Was there a proponent in that group for staying  
19 or for going?

**White** 20 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): I was for staying. I was either for staying or  
21 moving down and I wish I could point at the-- Where we  
22 got ambushed in May. Atmospherics was-- we had just  
23 got done with this big fight and as you drove down a  
24 road all of a sudden you run into the population and  
25 they are waiving at you, you know? And probably it is  
26 about four clicks south of Wanat--is probably where  
27 that line starts. Because they can feel the-- because  
28 of Blessing, they can feel the prosperity of being  
29 tied into the collision. And then once you get past  
30 that you start getting up into the Nuristani feel of  
31 things. And it is palpable when you get past that  
32 line. The waiving stops and you see the local Mula  
33 beating a woman. I saw that one time when I was  
34 driving up that way as soon as we got passed. It was  
35 a school and it was right there in the drawer where we  
36 got ambushed. It was just north of that draw. He is  
37 putting the wood to a women and a couple of children  
38 just for looking at the soldiers. So, it is different  
39 from that line north--you start running into a  
40 different population.

**Beta** 1 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Do you recall if Captain (b)(3), (b)(6) had a position **Oscar**  
2 about staying or leaving?

**White** 3 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): I do not, sir.

**Beta** 4 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): How about your commander?

**White** 5 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Like I said he and I--when you make a decision  
6 like that you are not just taking into account the  
7 tactical or hey I got to safe guard my guys. The  
8 Generals have been commanders here, I don't know if  
9 you have, sir. But you are making hard decisions and  
10 when you are making those decisions you have to look  
11 at what the IO impact and the blow back is going to be  
12 on the population. You still have to stay tied into  
13 the population. That is going to feed into your  
14 tactical play.

**Beta** 15 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Was Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) up on the hill too? **Delta**

**White** 16 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): He was when I got up there.

**Beta** 17 **LtCol Bligh**: Do you recall his comments at all?

**White** 18 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): I do not, sir.

**Beta** 19 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): And was the General up there as well?

**White** 20 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): I think he stayed down on the Vehicle Patrol Base  
21 but he may have been up there and then walked back  
22 down. I don't know.

**Beta** 23 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): This is on the--later on the day of the battle?

**White** 24 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

**Beta** 25 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Several days later the decision was made to  
26 withdraw. Do you recall how you learned of the  
27 decision?

**White** 28 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): I do not.

**Beta** 29 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): What were your thoughts when you learned of the  
30 decision?

**White** 1 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): I was torn. You don't want to give ground, but  
2 at the same time I don't think that population  
3 deserves collision to be near it. Because with us  
4 does come benefits. They are Nuristan and they don't  
5 appreciate it. They will use it to their benefit. So  
6 I was torn. I wanted my guys out of Wanat. I wanted  
7 them out of that position. We were getting ready to  
8 go home. We had already-- we had just taken fricken  
9 nine casualties.

**Beta** 10 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Thank you, Lieutenant Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) **Sigma**

**Sigma** 11 **LTC** (b)(3), (b)(6): Sergeant Major, were you surprised by the size of  
12 the enemy force and the number of casualties -- we  
13 took at Wanat?

**White** 14 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): The-- when the Ranch House got hit, sir, there  
15 was 22 Americans involved, 11 of them were wounded.  
16 When that Ambush kicked off in November we lost six  
17 guys out of that patrol, and I think KIA one Marine.  
18 When this happened with the casualties, was I  
19 surprised by it? Yes. Was I affected by it? Yes.  
20 The Nuristanis take their time to plan and make sure  
21 they got all their ducks in a row and when they hit  
22 you they hit you hard I mean; there are probably 80  
23 RPGs that went into the Ranch House. No telling how  
24 many RPGs--you would have to read some statements.  
25 That HMMWV that had the TOW system on it was reduced.  
26 They planned. They resourced. And then they  
27 executed. And they get the effects they are looking  
28 for. They get big casualties. They took a lot of  
29 casualties. Was I surprised by the number of  
30 casualties? Not afterwards, now that I am thinking  
31 back on it.

**Sigma** 32 **LTC** (b)(3), (b)(6): Do you have an opinion about the NCO leadership  
33 in the Chosen Company?

**White** 34 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): It is outstanding.

**Sigma** 35 **LTC** (b)(3), (b)(6): Sergeant Major, you have pretty regular contact  
36 with the companies. Did you know the platoon sergeant  
37 at all?

**White** 1 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes I do. Sergeant **Yankee** (b)(3), (b)(6) yes. He replaced  
2 Sergeant (b)(3), (b)(6) and he was good. **Predator**

**Sigma** 3 **LTC** (b)(3), (b)(6): Do you have an opinion on Sergeant (b)(3), (b)(6)? **Yankee**

**White** 4 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): He was outstanding. He was in that fight and he  
5 was doing a good job with the resources he had and  
6 putting that FOB together.

**Sigma** 7 **LTC** (b)(3), (b)(6): That has been our impression so far, I just was  
8 curious if you had the same impression as the Command  
9 Sergeant Major.

**White** 10 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Across the Battalion the NCO Corps leadership was  
11 great; the guys that didn't pan out, well that was a  
12 hard fight. And for some of them that was their 3<sup>rd</sup>  
13 tour. And we had NCOs and one officer that  
14 psychologically and emotionally couldn't take any  
15 more. One of them was in the Korengal. When you are  
16 being hit every single day from the time you get in  
17 there until about October, November time frame after  
18 Rock Avalanche. I had one Soldier that had 78 fire  
19 fights in those first four months. That is a lot of  
20 pressure. What I was doing with them is if an NCO  
21 fails because of that, I mean, I did have a squad  
22 leader in a fire fight from a FOB run into a bunker  
23 and wouldn't come out. He was on his 3<sup>rd</sup> tour. He  
24 wanted out of the fight and I put him on Blessing and  
25 he became my HLZ NCO. It kept him where he needed to  
26 be, which was with battalion. And it got him out of  
27 the situation he was trying to escape.

28 **LtGen Natonski:** Sergeant Major, this was about the time of  
29 the RIP TOA going on. I mean 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon had already  
30 sent back their personal things. Do you know when the  
31 Battalion was scheduled to be out of Afghanistan?

**White** 32 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

33 **LtGen Natonski:** What was the TOA date?

**White** 34 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): I want to say the actual TOA date was 2 August, I  
35 think because, I got back on 4 August. So I am  
36 thinking 2 August, sir.

1 LtGen Natonski: So shortly after that date, you were gone.  
2 The whole battalion would have been gone?

White 3 CSM (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir. The last guys there were the FSO, the  
4 2, The Ops Sergeant Major, the Commander, and me.

5 LtGen Natonski: So the command group was the last to leave.  
6 What about Chosen Company?

White 7 CSM (b)(3), (b)(6): Well, you had the different company C2s. They do  
8 left seat right seat rides and we all married up----

9 LtGen Natonski: And that would have been in place back in  
10 July.

White 11 CSM (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir, July or August, end of July.

12 LtGen Natonski: 2 August was what you thought was the TOA  
13 date?

White 14 CSM (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, as far as I can remember.

15 LtGen Natonski: When the decision was made to establish COP  
16 Wanat, was it the battalion's main effort or was the  
17 RIP TOA the main effort? Or was there some other  
18 effort in the Battalion?

White 19 CSM (b)(3), (b)(6): I want to say for the battalion it was the main  
20 effort, sir.

21 LtGen Natonski: We had an OP order that was published; were  
22 there other CONOPs that were going out at the same  
23 time?

White 24 CSM (b)(3), (b)(6): Other than the dismounted patrol doing the left  
25 seat right seat rides----

26 LtGen Natonski: The RIP TOA was ongoing, but in terms of  
27 combat operations this was the main effort in the  
28 battalion?

White 29 CSM (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

30 LtGen Natonski: The Con Ops here and I know you weren't  
31 involved, but it covers the period of 8 to 10 July.  
32 It is pretty comprehensive moving the force up to

1                   Wanat, but on 10 July it stops. What was supposed to  
2                   happen after the 10<sup>th</sup> of July?

**White** 3   **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6):        I don't know, sir, construction.

4   **LtGen Natonski:**        It would continue to build.

**White** 5   **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6):        Yes, sir. I mean, continue to build and then  
6                   when the other platoon came in behind them it was a  
7                   continued process.

8   **LtGen Natonski:**        Do you know when that other platoon was  
9                   scheduled to come in?

**White** 10   **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6):        I do not, sir.

11   **LtGen Natonski:**        Going back to Vehicle Patrol Base and a COP.  
12                   There is no doctrine definition of a Vehicle Patrol  
13                   Base. You did mention that several had been  
14                   established along the road--vehicles pull in and  
15                   then--

**White** 16   **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6):        Like I said, sir. Not to interrupt, sir, but we  
17                   didn't do Vehicle Patrol Bases. We assumed  
18                   responsibility of what were identified on a map as  
19                   Vehicle Patrol Base California, Vehicle Patrol Base  
20                   Florida. And then Surray was a Vehicle Patrol Base  
21                   until we renamed it to COP.

22   **LtGen Natonski:**        As COPs, okay. Now, a Vehicle Patrol Base  
23                   when you renamed it a COP--at some point in time it  
24                   goes from being a Vehicle Patrol Base to a COP and I  
25                   am sure as you fortified those positions the  
26                   transition was taking place. In your mind a Vehicle  
27                   Patrol Base has a capability of picking up and  
28                   leaving, is that correct?

**White** 9   **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6):        Yes, sir.

30   **LtGen Natonski:**        Stop, set up a perimeter, set up a defense,  
31                   but at some point in time if they have to leave they  
32                   can leave?

**White** 3   **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6):        Yes, sir. In my mind a Vehicle Patrol Base like  
34                   any patrol base is temporary.

1 **LtGen Natonski:** Now, you referred to the Vehicle Patrol Base  
2 here at Wanat. They did go up at night on the 8<sup>th</sup> of  
3 July in vehicles?

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

5 **LtGen Natonski:** It was a five vehicle convoy up there and  
6 they had a surprise at that location. However, the  
7 next day they flew in CH-47s with additional assets,  
8 engineers, an ANA platoon, a Bobcat, and at that point  
9 they started fortifying the positions. Did you  
10 consider that a Vehicle Patrol Base at that point?

**White** 11 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): No, that is when you start building the COP, sir.

12 **LtGen Natonski:** So now it becomes a COP when under  
13 construction?

**White** 14 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

15 **LtGen Natonski:** There have been discussions about the  
16 terminology because once those CH-47s came in you  
17 could no longer evacuate the position and the vehicles  
18 that you had because now, you had all of these  
19 additional forces on board. You traveled through the  
20 battle field with your commander?

**White** 21 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Hang on just a second, sir.

22 **LtGen Natonski:** You traveled through the battle field with  
23 your commander?

**White** 24 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

25 **LtGen Natonski:** And you visited other COPs?

**White** 26 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir, all of my COPs.

27 **LtGen Natonski:** This was the main effort at that time?

**White** 28 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

29 **LtGen Natonski:** Had you intended to go to Wanat?

**White** 30 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): It would have been later.

1 LtGen Natonski: Later?

White 2 CSM (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

3 LtGen Natonski: So you kind of waited, I mean this was the  
4 main effort in the battalion but you were going to  
5 wait until later to visit?

White 6 CSM (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

7 LtGen Natonski: Any particular reason?

White 8 CSM (b)(3), (b)(6): We were doing a RIP, sir. I had other priorities  
9 and I had a First Sergeant--well our Company First  
10 Sergeant didn't go up until the day of the attack,  
11 sir.

12 LtGen Natonski: He went up on the 12<sup>th</sup> with the Company  
13 Commander, didn't he?

White 14 CSM (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir. The Company Commander was already  
15 there. The First Sergeant went up there when we sent  
16 up the QRF. He was a part of the QRF.

17 LtGen Natonski: That was on the 13<sup>th</sup>?

White 18 CSM (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

19 LtGen Natonski: The Company Commander went up on the 12<sup>th</sup>?

White 20 CSM (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir. I thought he went in there initially.

21 LtGen Natonski: The Company Commander?

White 22 CSM (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir. I thought he had gone up there--

23 LtGen Natonski: He flew up with a supply run.

White 24 CSM (b)(3), (b)(6): I don't know. I did not go up there initially,  
25 sir.

26 LtGen Natonski: On Honaker-Miracle, I guess, that is the  
27 right name. That was one of the COPs that you  
28 established in the battalion?

White 29 CSM (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

1 **LtGen Natonski:** When you established it, was it in a bowl  
2 too?

**White** 3 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): No, sir. It is in the mountain of Watah Pur and  
4 the mountain stops. The mountain is what made up the  
5 Watah Pur Valley which was flat, and then you hit the  
6 Pech River and then across the Pech River are the  
7 mountains again. And they had a lot of standoff. So  
8 it was kind of----

9 **LtGen Natonski:** It was kind of in a plane surrounded in the  
10 distance by mountains?

**White** 11 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir. But they had about 1,000 meters to  
12 further standoff.

13 **LtGen Natonski:** Okay. And that was in the November  
14 timeframe? I think that is when it was.

**White** 15 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): I thought it was earlier after that, sir. I  
16 thought it was shortly after the Sandgar.

17 **LtGen Natonski:** So what timeframe would that have been?

**White** 18 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Sandgar was in June or early July. So, it was  
19 August or September, because the corn grew.

20 **LtGen Natonski:** Do you know how many people were involved in  
21 that establishment of that COP? You mentioned it was a  
22 platoon COP. It was the company's main effort?

**White** 23 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): In terms of Honaker-Miracle, sir?

24 **LtGen Natonski:** Yeah. How many engineers? How many troops  
25 on the position?

**White** 26 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): I don't know, sir. As it grew then more resources--  
27 you have to support the population there as well.

28 **LtGen Natonski:** I am more concerned about construction,  
29 what kind of effort was it to establish the base  
30 itself before you started engaging the people and  
31 started pulling out forces?

**White** 32 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): That was an ongoing process, sir. It would have  
33 been going on hand in hand.

1 **LtGen Natonski:** So as they were building they would also be  
2 engaging. They would also be doing security?

**White** 3 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

4 **LtGen Natonski:** So was there more than just a platoon?

**White** 5 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): It was a company area, whether the platoon was  
6 mainly on the FOB and conducting security and another  
7 platoon was doing the engagement. It was a company  
8 battle space.

9 **LtGen Natonski:** So it was more than what was at Wanat? If  
10 you just had a platoon reinforced by---

**White** 11 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir. It was a company battle space and at  
12 any given time they weren't right there at--it was on  
13 a high speed avenue of approach that was paved.

14 **LtGen Natonski:** There was enough troops there to be doing  
15 the construction of the COP as well as doing the  
16 engagement with the locals?

**White** 17 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes. When we say the locals, sir, the district  
18 center was right next to the FOB I mean you could  
19 throw a stone and hit the district center. So you can  
20 go and talk to the governor and the elders they  
21 would--well they wouldn't come on the FOB but they  
22 would go to the district center.

23 **LtGen Natonski:** And a question based on all of your  
24 experience, experiences in Afghanistan and  
25 elsewhere--did performance of small arms, M4s M16s  
26 Saws--

**White** 27 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Sir. Sir, I read the historian's view.

28 **LtGen Natonski:** Mr. (b)(3), (b)(6) review on the combat studies? **Garnet**

**White** 29 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir. And before that, before the Wanat  
30 fight there was a question that came down about the  
31 M4. Because I guess we were looking to replace it and  
32 or replace the ammo. But I asked all the first  
33 sergeants, and especially First Sergeant (b)(3), (b)(6) who **Bruin**  
34 was up in the Korengal and up until October, November  
35 timeframe when that question came up, had been in a

1 significant number of fights. And I asked are your  
2 weapons jamming? And he said no. I said are they  
3 failing to feed. And he said, "No." And all of the  
4 First Sergeants gave me back the same feedback. The  
5 M4 was performing fine.

6 **LtGen Natonski:** How about the SAW?

**White** 7 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Sir?

8 **LtGen Natonski:** SAW?

**White** 9 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir. It was the same. No one was saying  
10 that their stuff was breaking. Now, with Wanat I saw  
11 a lot of weapons come out of that helicopter that was  
12 burnt up.

13 **LtGen Natonski:** Battle damage?

**White** 14 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir. And some of them probably did. You  
15 could only put so many rounds through that weapon  
16 system in a minute. It has got a max rate of fire.  
17 And if you surpass that then yeah, you are going to  
18 start damaging the weapons system.

19 **LtGen Natonski:** That seems to be what we have observed as  
20 well, however, out there, there is a lot of questions  
21 in the press about the reliability of our weapons.

**White** 22 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Sir, I have never had any complaints about that  
23 weapon system. The complaints, in the unit I am in  
24 now, the only complaints I get are on the type of  
25 magazine. Some magazines perform better than others.  
26 The older aluminum performs well. The new one out  
27 there--it is a heavy magazine--when it is empty it  
28 feels like it is full. But it has never been about  
29 the weapon system. It has been about the ammo travels  
30 too fast and goes right through a guy. And I have  
31 seen bad guys shot seven times in the chest and he is  
32 still trying to shoot people. It doesn't have the  
33 knock down power you are looking for unless you hit a  
34 bone or a main organ.

35 **LtGen Natonski:** Thanks.

1 **MG Perkins:** Sergeant Major, how many other COPs did you set up  
2 during your tenure there? You talked about Honaker-  
3 Miracle.

**White** 4 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): The only COP I can remember actually setting up  
5 from the ground was Honaker-Miracle. We constructed  
6 or built up all of the--well, actually Strepo in the  
7 Korengal, Strepo and Dallas and Bromoto. Those three  
8 FOBs we also set up in the Korengal Valley. They are  
9 on dependable terrain and you could see some of our  
10 OPs.

11 **MG Perkins:** So you inherited Ranch House and Bella from the  
12 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain, correct?

**White** 13 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

14 **MG Perkins:** Once you inherited them did you continue to  
15 improve those?

**White** 16 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

17 **MG Perkins:** What kind of things, I mean more--what were  
18 typical things you would do that consist of Ranch  
19 House and Bella?

**White** 20 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): At the Ranch House they continued to improve the  
21 wire, changed the Claymores every night. They changed  
22 some of the SOPs they improved or built if you would  
23 call them towers----

24 **MG Perkins:** Observation platform?

**White** 25 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): And then they continuously worked on their battle  
26 drills. Their reaction team, indirect fire, things  
27 like that.

28 **MG Perkins:** Do you know in discussions in your TOA with 10<sup>th</sup>  
29 mountain when they built Ranch House or Bella, or was  
30 that basically an Infantry Platoon that did it up  
31 there. Did you have that discussion?

**White** 32 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Sir, I did not. The Colonel did the PDSS and  
33 when I got up there the Sergeant Major was not there.  
34 He had rotated back early in the RIP process because  
35 they were having problems in the Rear-D. They were

1           having a lot of fricken issues was what I was later  
2           informed.

3 **MG Perkins:**     Did you know of them in any of the areas you  
4           operated in or in discussion with previous units of a  
5           COP or FOB sort of being built ahead of time before it  
6           is occupied, and you contract it out or something and  
7           then you occupy all ready completely built, or were the  
8           cases such that you would go in as you said Honaker  
9           Miracle or you start out with maybe a Vehicle Patrol  
10          Base and you add to those, or what?

White

11 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6):     Sir, every FOB as we had gone in, as a Sergeant  
12          Major, the two Battalions or the two rotations were the  
13          2<sup>nd</sup> of the 503<sup>rd</sup>, and then the 1<sup>st</sup> four months of OEF VI,  
14          with the 1<sup>st</sup> of the 508th. When we set up FOBs, they  
15          were either already occupied or they already had FOBs  
16          set up; or we would go talk to the district governor,  
17          or wherever we wanted to be, and ended up leasing a  
18          compound. And then from that compound, start building  
19          up. An example of that is Fortune in the Korengal  
20          Valley, it was Cockren, FOB Cockren and Playludge. And  
21          then, the one at--one and two Mezan, just north and  
22          west of Lahgman. Those started out as compounds.

23 **MG Perkins:**     You went up to Wanat on the 13<sup>th</sup>, correct? Later  
24          in the day after being attacked, so you were there and  
25          got to see the status of construction and force  
26          protection and things like that. As you recall looking  
27          at Wanat on the 13<sup>th</sup> after the attack the status of the  
28          force protection, concertina wire, Hesco stuff, like  
29          that, on that day how did it compare to other COPs that  
30          you had been to, let's say a Ranch House or a Bella?

White

31 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6):     It reminded me of the first four days of Honaker  
32          Miracle was being set up. Where it was four vehicles  
33          in a field with two strands of concertina wire around  
34          the position and then you start seeing Hescos going up.  
35          And every time you went past it or you stopped there  
36          was something new.

37 **MG Perkins:**     Then the previous COP really that you all built  
38          from scratch was Honaker-Miracle--

**White** 1 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): It was Honaker-Miracle with four COPs, Dallas,  
2 Strepo and Bromoto.

3 **MG Perkins:** So sort of the process and the life cycle of  
4 putting in Wanat was similar to the other ones. It was  
5 not uniquely different?

**White** 6 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): The only ones I would think would be different  
7 would be Dallas. It was a CONOP because we were in the  
8 Korengal and we knew that when the first helicopter  
9 went down there we were going to be in a fight. And  
10 that thing was built under fire.

11 **MG Perkins:** So it was built under fire, in other words you  
12 were fighting the same time you were building?

**White** 13 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

14 **MG Perkins:** We talked earlier and you had heard with regards  
15 to supply problems you had heard of a water issue.

**White** 16 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

17 **MG Perkins:** Any other issue with regards to concertina, sand  
18 bags, and pickets?

**White** 19 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Well, the construction company wasn't out there  
20 the second--and I don't know if that was brigade driven  
21 or local contractor or what.

22 **MG Perkins:** And so when these supply spot reports came back  
23 into battalion TOC what was the battle drill then to  
24 resupply Bella? When you would get a spot report where  
25 you know we don't have adequate water or engineers  
26 aren't there, what was the battle drill or the response  
27 in the battalion TOC to that?

**White** 28 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): The engineers, we could only do so much because  
29 it was contracted. And it is done--it is not a  
30 subcontract it is too large to be a subcontract. I  
31 think that was a brigade issue. But I am not sure. As  
32 far as the water and that kind of thing it was a matter  
33 of trying to push the CLP up there, which I don't think  
34 we did that--I think we used CH-47.

35 **MG Perkins:** CH47?

**White** 1 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

2 **MG Perkins:** So, your recollection is when the report came,  
3 specifically, let's say on water, the report came into  
4 the TOC, there was sort of a battle drill taken to  
5 mediate that problem?

**White** 6 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): And I think that the platoon went black before  
7 they were anticipated to go black on water is what I  
8 believe.

9 **MG Perkins:** So your recollection is there was a rate of re-  
10 supply planned and that possibly the rate of usage  
11 exceeded the planned rate of re-supply. Not that the  
12 original rate of re-supply was all through?

**White** 13 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Either the rate of usage was too fast and I don't  
14 know, or we didn't anticipate that rate. Or the  
15 weather or the Chinooks didn't get there.

16 **MG Perkins:** Do you remember as you started to--as you  
17 said--early on there were discussions about the  
18 problems with Ranch House, Bella, and no ability really  
19 to supply them? And taking a look at Wanat was there  
20 discussions as they went along and they were  
21 negotiating for land and all of that as you were  
22 approaching the RIP TOA with 1-26 about the timing of  
23 this being a challenge now that you were getting at the  
24 end of your tour? And with discussions with whether or  
25 not we should just let 1-26 do it, or maybe we should  
26 do it. Was that ever a topic of conversation?

**White** 27 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir. It was. And it was a concern because  
28 you are in the middle of the RIP and we got two weeks  
29 left, but this was the enemy's answer--if we sat on our  
30 FOBs, because we did for Christmas--we wouldn't let  
31 anyone go out because we didn't want a family member  
32 having a memory of Christmas--was the time a guy being  
33 shot or killed. Easter, New Years, those big holidays  
34 and then for two days after that we paid the price.  
35 Because we actively patrolled, dismounted and mounted  
36 our battle space. So when we went back out there if  
37 you gave him any space they would fill it and they  
38 would fill it quick. And we would pay the price for  
39 it. So, it wasn't a matter that we are in the RIP

1 process so we are going to sit back here and be safe on  
2 the FOB because, if we did that, the unit coming in  
3 behind us would have paid the price.

4 **MG Perkins:** So it was a conscious understanding that you were  
5 balancing a lot of balls that the greater risk would be  
6 to not go forth with this then to go forth with this?

**White** 7 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): We didn't want to hand it over--we didn't want to  
8 hand Bella over to the incoming unit, because it was  
9 untenable terrain. And it was very untenable. So if  
10 we handed that over to the new unit, getting used to  
11 patrolling out in the altitude and the enemy was  
12 already hitting it pretty regular. The--so the new  
13 unit would have paid the price.

14 **MG Perkins:** So there was a deliberate cost benefit analysis  
15 to the decision understanding all of the complexities  
16 with regard to timing?

**White** 17 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): We wanted out of Bella because it was untenable.  
18 It was untenable for us and we had been there 15  
19 months. With all that experience and knowledge of the  
20 land and stuff you gain over a 15 month period to hand  
21 that over to another unit they would have paid a cost.  
22 If we just pulled back to Blessing then you would have  
23 lost population up in--you would have lost a lot of  
24 population. And probably then you would even start to  
25 see the attitude in Nuristan starting getting closer  
26 and closer to Blessing and the Pech River Road. And  
27 then it would start affecting the larger populations.  
28

29 **MG Perkins:** It has been discussions about location,  
30 geography, proximity, to the town district center. As  
31 you said at Ranch House--or Ranch House was on a more  
32 prominent piece of terrain?

**White** 33 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): It was at 9,500 feet, sir.

34 **MG Perkins:** So one could say one more military--however your  
35 assessment was it was not having any affect on the  
36 population because it was disconnected from it?

**White** 1 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir. The only thing that they gained from  
2 it was they would be able to suck off the tit of the  
3 coalition forces.

4 **MG Perkins:** And, you said, it also was attacked. So there is  
5 no sort of invulnerable place where geographically you  
6 can build something. Where there other examples while  
7 you were there and in any of your rotations where  
8 building a COP next to a population center-- the  
9 district center had proved beneficial?

**White** 10 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): In 2005 to 2006 I was down in Zabul Province.  
11 The FOB was right in the Bazaar. When you come off the  
12 HLZ, which was on the high ground and moved down to the  
13 Bazaar, you went two buildings into it and there was  
14 the FOB. And it was a compound.

15 **MG Perkins:** And how did that work?

**White** 16 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): It worked well, sir.

17 **MG Perkins:** And did it have its intended effect with the  
18 population?

**White** 19 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir. It did. I mean, the first couple of  
20 months there were daily fights. That went away.

21 **MG Perkins:** So, there are recent historical examples where  
22 positioning a COP adjacent to a population center-- In  
23 the end accomplished its task and purpose?

**White** 24 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): FOB Michigan in the mouth of the Korengal, when  
25 you go right across the river and you are in the Bazaar  
26 right there.

27 **MG Perkins:** So again, to sort of recap again we have examples  
28 when we put a COP on a predominate piece of terrain  
29 militarily and it did not have its affect with the  
30 population and in fact it was attacked as well. And  
31 then we also have examples where we put a COP in and  
32 amongst the population and it did have its intended  
33 affects. So again, taking all that into account if you  
34 take a look and then we all agree there is many  
35 problems with putting it there, you can also say it is  
36 not--well I don't want to put words in your mouth. But  
37 would I be correct in saying that it is not obviously a

1 bad place to do it because there are examples where  
2 this has worked previously?

**White** 3 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir. And if you look at it, sir, the  
4 backstop for most of the directions of fire are either  
5 the Bazaar who had a hotel in it, a Mosque, which is  
6 this building here, and the people live in these  
7 compounds, and in this compound. They live there. So  
8 they are the back stop for enemy fire and that FOB was  
9 hit and it was hit hard with no consideration to that  
10 Mosque. It was being used to be fired out of, or the  
11 Bazaar. Which was being used, and it had two story  
12 buildings. The hotel may have been a two story  
13 building, but it may have been a three story building.

14 **MG Perkins:** You mentioned another location----

**White** 15 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Sir, nobody looked at that. What I mentioned  
16 that for was that when we got ambushed in the draw I  
17 was looking for that area photograph there. We  
18 literally our engagement I think was in May of 2007 in  
19 Wanat. And this was the same day. There was a school  
20 right on the other side on this piece of ground here on  
21 the west side of the draw was a school. And those kids  
22 were coming out of it. And the guys started putting  
23 the wood to the kids and then a female that was just  
24 walking by I guess he assumed that she was looking at  
25 us. And the kids had been looking at us. We went up  
26 to Wanat, but when we came out of--we are in the middle  
27 of the engagement and we started getting Intel feeds  
28 that the Taliban were moving into position. And then  
29 we were getting it on the ICOM and the Turbs were  
30 hearing it. And then we also get a call from the  
31 battalion TOC saying hey S2 just had a HUMINT report  
32 that you are going to be hit when you drive out of  
33 there by a school, in the draw by the school. So we--  
34 Again I mean you have to take all the Intel with a  
35 grain of salt.

36 **MG Perkins:** That population wasn't friendly?

**White** 37 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): No, sir. From here that is where you start to  
38 get into Nuristan tribe's population. When--and the  
39 other thing was that the elders invited Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) **Diamond**  
40 **Oscar** and Captain (b)(3), (b)(6) FSO to a lunch which they had never

1 done. When they went over to the lunch the only guy  
2 there at the lunch was the police chief. All the other  
3 elders went to another building. And that is an  
4 indicator.

5 **MG Perkins:** Was that at Wanat or was that?

**White** 6 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): That was in Wanat, sir.

7 **LtGen Natonski:** When was that?

**White** 8 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): This was in May, sir.

9 **LtGen Natonski:** This is when they started to negotiate the  
10 site?

**White** 11 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir, when the Battalion Commander got  
12 involved in those negotiations. The Company Commander  
13 had been doing that prior and missed his battle space.  
14 But the commander got involved in May I think. We got  
15 ready to drive out of there and we had a previous  
16 suspicion that we were going to get hit. And when we  
17 hit this draw, I want to say it is right there, the IED  
18 **Oscar** went off before Captain (b)(3), (b)(6) Vehicle it was 2 behind  
19 mine and then all hell broke loose. Out of the Draw  
20 there is this big fricken rock with these trees growing  
21 behind it and I caught it in my side mirror that this  
22 dude was--because there is just an elevation that you  
23 can't see. And we were getting shot at from across  
24 here, over here and down on the low ground out here up  
25 into us, and then from all around. But mainly in the  
26 draw-- Immediately following that we started to drive--  
27 Started to pull away and I sent it over the radio. I  
28 said, "When we start running into population I want you  
29 to waive at all of them. We won this fight." And yeah  
30 we are driving around on flat tires and the commanders  
31 AC got blown out but didn't get hit by any RPGs and  
32 flew--and for me, three of them flew over my hood and  
33 **Oscar** hit the wall. We had Captain (b)(3), (b)(6) gunner had a  
34 scratch on his hand. That was the biggest thing they  
35 got. That was an IED that missed his vehicle by 2  
36 meters.

1 **LtGen Natonski:** When Colonel Ostlund went up to meet with  
2 the Afghans and it was just the Police Chief, no one  
3 else showed up?

**White** 4 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Well for that dinner, yes, sir, which was unheard  
5 of for the afghan culture. Yes, sir. It was a means  
6 of upholding while all this speculation from all the  
7 ANP came off their security positions around the  
8 district center and pulled back into the district  
9 center itself before we pulled out.

10 **LtGen Natonski:** There were indications back in May that this  
11 was a contentious area?

**White** 12 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): No there was indications that--Well yeah I mean  
13 there were indications with Ranch House, Bella, that  
14 ambush; it is Nuristan.

15 **LtGen Natonski:** What about Blessing, is Blessing considered  
16 Nuristan?

**White** 17 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): No, sir.

18 **LtGen Natonski:** It is part of the Rupvat Valley where  
19 Nuristan as the----

**White** 20 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir, Konar goes up into the valley.

21 **LtGen Natonski:** Was there anything associated with the  
22 security of Blessing with something up the Valley?

**White** 23 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): The reason you want to do that, sir, is Blessing,  
24 well it is not on here, but Blessing is South and is on  
25 the Wanat Valley comes out like this and meets right  
26 into the Pech River and then the Chowkay Valley-- Or  
27 Chape Darreh Valley starts after that. Blessing is in  
28 that left or that west Chape Darreh north Wanat  
29 mountain right there that makes up that left turn I  
30 guess the valley. But Blessing is right there next to  
31 the district center. We had OPs, OP Avalanche--

32 **LtGen Natonski:** Around Blessing?

**White** 33 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

34 **LtGen Natonski:** Okay.

**White** 1 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): We made OP Command Chief and then there was  
2 another one that I can't remember the name of. The--  
3 we had OP Runner. And you could see up into the Wanat  
4 Valley, but only about--You couldn't see it to where  
5 this ambush took place. Only about four or five clicks  
6 because of the predominate terrain of the mountains,  
7 they would just cut your view, you could not see up in  
8 there.

9 **LtGen Natonski:** Thanks.

**White** 10 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

**Owl** 11 **Maj** (b)(3), (b)(6): Just a few things, Sergeant Major, when you are  
12 referring to the water status level and you said that  
13 the platoon approached status black. Could you just  
14 define the term black status? Who decides that and  
15 what that actually means?

**White** 16 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Black means you are down to one magazine. And  
17 Black I guess for them would be a half day supply of  
18 water left. I had never heard that term referred to in  
19 chow or water.

**Owl** 20 **Maj** (b)(3), (b)(6): Is that how it was reported to you from the  
21 platoon or the company?

**White** 22 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): I got an informal, I got it from the guy at the  
23 HL2 or I got it from the S4 NCO.

**Owl** 24 **Maj** (b)(3), (b)(6): And then for the court reporters you had  
25 mentioned RAMP ceremonies?

**White** 26 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Ramp.

**Owl** 27 **Maj** (b)(3), (b)(6): And that stands for?

**White** 28 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): That means the ramp of the plane.

**Owl** 29 **Maj** (b)(3), (b)(6): And just one last thing, you had mentioned that  
30 during the negotiations that the Wanat land that the  
31 elders didn't seem complacent, did they just seem kind  
32 of neutral?

**White** 33 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

**Owl** 1 **Maj** (b)(3), (b)(6): Do you know if the battalion or the company did  
2 any type of command carry assistance SIGIT engagement  
3 with the population before the Wanat move?

**White** 4 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): I don't know, sir. I don't know what Captain  
5 (b)(3), (b)(6) negotiated. **Oscar**

**Owl** 6 **Maj** (b)(3), (b)(6): Thank you, Sergeant Major.

7 **LtGen Natonski:** Okay, Sergeant Major (b)(3), (b)(6), I got to read **White**  
8 something to you before we are done. You are ordered  
9 not to discuss the testimony you provided today with  
10 anyone other than members of the investigation team.

**White** 11 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

12 **LtGen Natonski:** You will not allow any witness in this  
13 investigation to talk to you about the testimony he has  
14 given or what he intends to give. If anyone should try  
15 and influence your testimony or try to discuss your  
16 testimony you are instructed to notify Lieutenant  
17 **Beta** Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) or Lieutenant Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) Do you **Sigma**  
18 understand that?

**White** 19 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Yes, sir.

20 **LtGen Natonski:** I just want to thank you for your service to  
21 our country, to the US Army, for your performance on  
22 your multiple tours in harm's way. Thank you for all  
23 you do.

**White** 24 **CSM** (b)(3), (b)(6): Thank you, sir.

25 [The testimony closed at 1132 hours, 28 October 2009.]

CERTIFICATION OF VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT

Subj: TESTIMONY OF CSM White (b)(3), (b)(6), USA, GIVEN ON  
28 OCTOBER 2009, AT FT. BENNING, GEORGIA

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

25 NOV 09  
DATE