

SWORN STATEMENT

Sierra

My name is [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6) I am assigned to 2nd battalion, 503rd Infantry, located in Vicenza, Italy. I am currently a Captain in the United States Army and my current occupational field is Infantry Officer.

In July 2008, I was with Able Company, 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry, stationed at FOB Able Main, Pech Valley, Afghanistan. At that time my rank was 1LT, and I was the platoon leader for 3rd platoon, Able Company. I joined the battalion in July 2007. I got to Afghanistan at the end of July and was with 2nd Battalion by the first week of August 2007, and have been with them since. When I first arrived in Afghanistan I was assigned to a staff position working out of Camp Blessing for three months and then moved to Able Company which was at FOB Honaker Miracle in the Pech Valley. I was there for about six months, and then the last six months I spent with Able Company at FOB Able Main.

In July 2007, we were packing up our containers and mailing stuff back home. We were beginning to rotate guys back and at that point we had sent the first one or two soldiers from our platoon back to our home station. During this time we were also conducting steady state operations, which consisted of continuing to go to our weekly meetings with the elders and locals, as well as localized enemy interdiction missions. I was aware of the battalion undertaking a battalion level operation during this time. I was told by my commander and also heard about it through rumors that a large scale OP was about to take place. From what I had heard about the operation through talk with my commander was that they were going to send Chosen Company up into the Waygul valley and close down FOB Bella and then send them to a village called Wanat. I had never been to this village or ever heard of the village. I saw a PowerPoint slide show, that I believe was a CONOPS Brief, from the commander that depicted how the move was going to go and how the operation was to be done.

I was alerted to some of the operation through a friendly conversation with 1LT Brostrom and then I went and pulled information regarding the operation. I had heard about it but did not know all the details. Our platoon was on Bn QRF cycle

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no more than four times during my time in Afghanistan, and I never got passed down CONOPS that were planned for execution during my QRF cycle. In this particular case, I went and pulled the information from my commander, Cpt (b)(3), (b)(6) after my conversation with Lt Brostrom.

Around 7 July 2008, I spoke with 1LT Brostrom and he had obvious reservations about the upcoming operation. He did not think he had a big enough force or enough guys going to Wanat, he didn't think the timing was right due to the RIP. He stated that they were supposed to have overhead coverage later in the establishment, which made him feel better, but was still concerned with the amount of fire power he was taking with them. He stated that Wanat would not be much better than FOB Bella; it would have a more accessible road, but they would have no OP's established like they did at Bella. His concern was that he could not push OP's out without leaving a small force behind, and would just hastily establish them. I asked him if he had spoken to anyone about his concerns and he said he spoke to his commander, Cpt (b)(3), (b)(6) Jon's exact words to me on his thoughts about the mission: "we are going to get fucked up."

I was told that the drive to Wanat from Blessing normally takes 35 to 45 minutes. It is an unimproved road, so there is no pavement or gravel, just dirt and rock, there were turns, washouts, and switchbacks, and could not be negotiated quickly. For me, out at Able Main, the drive would have been about an hour and 20 minutes to an hour and a half to get to Wanat.

When we received word of contact at Wanat I went up to the Company HQ and spoke with the commander and then started to get my guys and the trucks ready. We sent six vehicles to Wanat. By the time we arrived, almost all the enemy fire had stopped and there were Apache's overhead. Captain (b)(3), (b)(6) platoon was already on the ground. It took us about two hours to get to Wanat from Able Main, because we were ordered to dismount and clear certain parts of the route due to high IED threat, that order came from the BN HQ.

My platoon sergeant and I talked about the location and terrain at Wanat after we got everything under control. We both agreed that we did not think it was in a good spot. The biggest INITIALS OF PERSON MAKING STATEMENT (b)(3), (b)(6) Sierra Page 2 of 4

problem was that it was in the low ground. We were struggling to try and understand why they tried to build there when there was elevated terrain less than 100 meters to the East and West of that spot.

I left Wanat late on the night of 13 July 2008 to begin my escort duties with Lt Brostrom's remains. My platoon stayed in Wanat for two or three days, and somewhere on the way out of Afghanistan I had gotten word that everybody had pulled out of Wanat. After hearing this I was partly relieved that my guys were not out there anymore. I was partly angry that we were leaving. I was disappointed that everything happened like that, with all the soldiers fighting for their lives and now we are giving the ground up. From a leader stand point, I thought it was a loss, and did not see it as a victory in any way. We had given up the ground that these guys initially tried to take and defend. From a personal stand point, I thought it was not such a bad idea to leave Wanat because the BN was almost already out the door, and there was no means to hold that ground and build it up to a defensible COP without extending the platoons for another month or so to bring the new company there.

During my time at Able Main, the battalion commander would frequently drive past our FOB on his way to his various engagements and then stop in and see how things were. We saw the battalion commander about once every two weeks.

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AFFIDAVIT

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I (b)(3), (b)(6) HAVE READ OR HAVE HAD READ TO ME THIS STATEMENT WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 1 AND ENDS ON PAGE 3. I FULLY UNDERSTAND THE CONTENTS OF THE ENTIRE STATEMENT MADE BY ME. THE STATEMENT IS TRUE. I HAVE INITIALED ALL CORRECTIONS AND HAVE INITIALED THE BOTTOM OF EACH PAGE CONTAINING THE STATEMENT. I HAVE MADE THIS STATEMENT FREELY WITHOUT HOPE OF BENEFIT OR REWARD, WITHOUT THREAT OF PUNISHMENT, AND WITHOUT COERCION, UNLAWFUL INFLUENCE OR UNLAWFUL INDUCEMENT

Sierra

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

(Signature of Person Making Statement)

Subscribed and sworn to before me, a person authorized by law to administer oaths, this 16 day of OCT 2009 at Laserna Elide, Guly

WITNESSES:

Lemon

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ORGANIZATION OR ADDRESS

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(Typed Name of Person Administering Oath)

Judge Adreede

(Authority To Administer Oaths)