

Quebec

SWORN STATEMENT

My name is (b)(3), (b)(6) . I am assigned to HHC, 173<sup>rd</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion, located in Vincenza, Italy. I am currently a Captain in the United States Army and my current occupational field is Military Intelligence.

In July 2008, I was with the 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, Chosen Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 503<sup>rd</sup> Infantry, Camp Blessing, Afghanistan. At this time my rank was First Lieutenant, and I was the platoon leader for 1<sup>st</sup> platoon and my occupational field was Infantry Officer. I arrived at Chosen Company on 13 November 2007. I arrived in country on 14 September 2007 and was at brigade until they transferred me to the battalion. I came from HHC and was working in the S-4 as a contracting officer.

I received my platoon after the previous platoon leader, Captain Matt Ferrara, had been killed during the 9 November 2007 ambush. The platoon returned to Camp Blessing from COP Bella. I left Camp Blessing with the platoon and returned to COP Bella in April 2008. We remained at COP Bella until they closed it down in July 2008. When I first arrived at the battalion, Captain (b)(3), (b)(6) said he wanted to close down and consolidate COPs Bella and the Ranch House. This was in October 2007 before I had arrived to the company. Captain (b)(3), (b)(6) knew I was coming and he mentioned it off-hand to me. The official word to close COP Bella came around June 2008 timeframe. We had a few weeks' notice prior to the closing of COP Bella.

At COP Bella, we would use the Afghan Security Guards (ASG) to send out invitations to the local shura. There was not a lot of interaction with the locals from April through July. I had a shura with the village of Aranas that lasted about an hour and a half. I went to inform them I was the platoon's new leader, that my platoon had been there before, and they probably recognized Sergeant First Class (b)(3), (b)(6) . Even though my platoon was ambushed last November, this was a chance to build a new relationship. The shura turned into a shouting match after they denied responsibility for an IED that killed Major Sloan a year and a half prior and also denied responsibility for the 9 November ambush. I ended up cutting the meeting off and

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leaving. We also conducted several smaller shuras with other villages. Nothing significant came from these meetings.

For the move from COP Bella we conducted our planning over the SIPR net. We used the Pech Resupply to start moving non mission essential items to Camp Blessing before the CONOP started. I saw the CONOP a couple weeks prior to closing COP Bella. While we were breaking down Camp Bella we were aware of the establishment of an outpost at Wanat.

My platoon had regularly patrolled Wanat while we were at Camp Blessing. The Governor at Wanat knew me on a first name basis, and actually stopped by COP Bella when making his rounds around the district. I also knew the police chief there pretty well. I tried to patrol to Wanat at least once a week. For a shura in Wanat, we would take a minimum of four HUMMVS with 20 pax; the ANA would usually go on these patrols with us. The ANA secured the meeting site and my guys stayed at the trucks.

We had Chosen Company forward at COP Bella, Ranch House, and Camp Blessing. To me, it made perfect sense to put a camp at Wanat. However, to do that we would have to close down COP Bella because we did not have enough people to secure COP Bella and Wanat.

At COP Bella there was no population nearby, and we were not doing anything except getting shot at. At Wanat, at least if we were attacked we could talk to the Governor to try and find a solution.

I thought the layout of the COP at Wanat increased the difficulty of defending it. The land they did occupy was in a less defensible location than the land they could have taken over. However, COP Bella was established in similar circumstances and it had never been overrun. For the purpose of engaging the populace at Wanat there was no better place for the COP.

The task and purpose at Wanat was to partner with the district governor to increase his force protection posture and also allow the ANA and ANP to spread their influence.

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I was responsible for conducting a RIP with two platoon leaders and escorting the incoming commander with Captain (b)(3), (b)(6) around the company battle space. This started sometime after 13 July 2008. Oscar

1st Platoon was the QRF for Wanat. On the morning of the attack at Wanat, Chosen base called us over the EF Johnson radios. We went to the TOC and they told us about the attack. We asked if they needed a QRF and Captain (b)(3), (b)(6) said not at that point. Papa was told a couple of minutes later that it was a Ranch House style attack. We had already started prepping the trucks and we sent up a couple of guys, with the trucks, to the ASP and continued to draw as much ammunition as we could.

My platoon had already started to re-deploy so we did not have any sort of manifest or vehicle load plan. We just threw guys in the trucks and since everyone knew how to operate the weapon systems. At this point my platoon was down two squads and only had around 25 soldiers at most.

It took us about 45 minutes to depart after receiving word we needed to go. 1<sup>st</sup> platoon stayed at Wanat until the enemy withdrew from the area. I received word of the withdrawal from Captain (b)(3), (b)(6). On an emotional and personal level, I thought we should have stayed at Wanat. Nine guys were killed holding that terrain. It looks like we were cowards and we just closed it down and ran away. This was the third COP we closed after taking casualties in that district. Oscar

Prior to 13 July 08, I remember hearing about 2<sup>nd</sup> platoons supply issues. I heard the issues at the Commanders update briefs (CUBS). Both Captain (b)(3), (b)(6) and Captain (b)(3), (b)(6), the XO, were giving these briefs. If Captain (b)(3), (b)(6) was not there, then Oscar Papa Captain (b)(3), (b)(6) would give the brief.

While we were at COP Bella, the XO never came out because his job was to stay in the TOC. The Company Commander came out once when I was at COP Bella and after we requested re-enforcements for the COP prior to closing it. He also went there for CONOPS, after the November ambush, and would try to get there every once in a while to visit the guys and see the situation on the ground. When we requested re-enforcements at COP Bella we

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requested whatever we could get from battalion. We requested the re-enforcements due to the closing of the base and increased threat reporting.

I had a malfunction with my M-4 but I was able to correct it quickly and got it back in action. This was the first time we have not had any problems with the heavy weapons systems. We had problems with MK-19s going down during previous TICs. The gunner would have a 249 as a secondary weapon.

My platoon did not have a water purification system. We did not carry iodine tablets, but could get them from the medics at the battalion aid station. While at Blessing, we carried three to four days' supply of water in the trucks. All dismounted patrols at Bella stayed within 1500 meters of the camp. To clarify my testimony: I was not allowed to travel beyond 2,000 meters of COP Bella

**AFFIDAVIT**

**Quebec**

I, (b)(3), (b)(6) **Quebec** HAVE READ OR HAVE HAD READ TO ME THIS STATEMENT WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 1 AND ENDS ON PAGE 4. 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.

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

**Quebec**

(Signature of Affiant) \_\_\_\_\_

Subscribed and sworn to before me, a person authorized by law to administer oaths, this 16 day of OCTOBER 2009 at Caserta Ederle, Italy

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

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

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

(Typed Name of Person Administering Oath) \_\_\_\_\_

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

Judge M. L. ...  
(Authority To Administer Oaths)

M.A. F. ...  
ORGANIZATION OR ADDRESS

INITIALS OF PERSON MAKING STATEMENT (b)(3), (b)(6) **Quebec**