

Steel

SWORN STATEMENT

I am MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6). In July 2008, I was the Executive Officer for 1-26 Infantry Regiment at Camp Blessing, Afghanistan.

I arrived at Camp Blessing with our advance party on 20 June 2008 to conduct turn-over with 2-503.

When I arrived at Camp Blessing, 2-503 was focused on combat operations despite the pending RIP/TOA on 30 July. In addition, 2-503 was cleaning up battlefield, reorganizing the companies, and getting their equipment out.

I was aware of planning for Operation Rock Move before I arrived. Although 1-26 had been tracking 2-503 operations going back to Ranch House, we didn't know about the actual Wanat mission until I arrived there. I became more familiar with the Wanat as we supported 2-503 by moving some of our gear to Bella so they could displace some of their equipment out. For example, we sent some of some 120mm mortars and an ITAS launcher to Bella to assist in Operation Rock Move with the understanding that we would get the items back when we took over at Wanat.

As I understood, the reason for the move to Wanat was to reduce the supply line. Bella sucked up resources, had a small operational reach with the local populace, and was subject to daily attack. A COP at Wanat would build combat power and generate headway in the Waygal valley by maintaining a FOB 7 km north of Blessing.

Prior to Op Rock Move, I did not have any substantive conversations with COL (b)(3), (b)(6) regarding the move to Wanat. Col (b)(3), (b)(6) generally passed information to me regarding Wanat. I do not believe there were any consultations between 1-26 or 3-1 about Wanat.

COL (b)(3), (b)(6) did not want 1-26 in the position to take over Bella, close it and then move to Wanat within our first 30-90 days in country with 75-100 soldiers less than 2-503. The idea was for 1-26 set in Wanat before 2-503 left. The RIP was scheduled for 30 July. COL (b)(3), (b)(6) was scheduled to arrive at

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Blessing on 14-15 July 2008 and we would have started sending people to Wanat soon after the move.

Leading up to Operation Rock Move, I attended daily battalion meetings. I am sure I attended the Operation Rock Move CONOP brief, but I do not specifically remember. During those briefs, there were no significant issues that stood out regarding the move to Wanat. There were general concerns of an attack at during the COP Bella closure, but not an attack during the occupation at Wanat. This concern was consistent with the attack on Ranch house during that closure process.

I did not have substantive discussions with my commander regarding the move to Wanat. Due to the history of Ranch house and Bella as a battalion, we did not want to occupy Bella because of the daily attacks. Even in hindsight, Wanat was probably the right place because of location, its proximity to Blessing; and its future ground transportation access after contract road work. We believed we could generate momentum there, and crack code with the Nuristanis.

For the Wanat move, I remember being in the meeting for flying the supplies staged at Blessing to Wanat. There was a sling load schedule regarding what was going out, by load, and when. There was also a plan to ensure that maximum amount of combat power was available at Bella until the last lift.

Prior to the Battle of Wanat I was not aware of any shortages on supplies, general equipment, Afghan heavy equipment or water.

After the battle, I was not part of conversation regarding the withdrawal of troops from Wanat and I was not aware that COL (b)(3), (b)(6) was consulted either. Initially COL (b)(3), (b)(6) wanted to stay Wanat because Wanat was the northern-most base before Blessing, however the decision to leave was made barely 48 hours after the battle

Citrus

Diamond

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

Steel

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AFFIDAVIT

Steel

I, MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) , HAVE READ OR HAVE HAD READ TO ME THIS STATEMENT WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 1 AND ENDS ON PAGE 2. 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 INFLUEN

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

Steel

(Signature of Person Making Statement)

Subscribed and sworn to before me, a person authorized by law to administer oaths, this 5 day of November 2009 at MARFORCOM NORFOLK, VA

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

MARFORCOM NORFOLK VA

ORGANIZATION OR ADDRESS

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

TJAGLCS Charlottesville VA

ORGANIZATION OR ADDRESS

(b)(6)

(Typed Name of Person Administering Oath)

Judge H. Moore

(Authority To Administer Oaths)

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

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