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

(USA)

432<sup>nd</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion

20 September 2008

CG's Conference Room, Al Faw Palace, Victory Base Camp

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

MNFI Historian

### Abstract

~~(S//NF)~~ The PL Gold battle was to separate haves from have nots, control Jamila market, and revitalize it. 2/82 surrounded SC with barriers. There were no non-kinetic ops happening when I arrived in late March. I built a TF for the mission. 1.4a The IAC helped us engage Iraqis. The Jamila market was in bad shape. MG Hammond correctly emphasized non-lethal operations, and he deserves more credit for that. I put the Jamila Market plan together on short notice on 21 May. We had a struggle getting lights put up on Rt Delta. We had to control the traffic flow in Jamilla market. I'm a Norwich graduate. I experienced an IRAM attack on 28 April 2008. Gol needs to get better spending its money. I'm amazed how the situation has changed for the better, and we can win this war. Too many battalion commanders still think this is all about killing the enemy.

### Interview

*I prepared a list of questions for the interview, but (b)(3), (b)(6) arrived with a prepared briefing: 432<sup>nd</sup> CA BN Sadr City CMO Concept Briefing March – Aug 2008. Most of the interview was Curtis talking through the slides. I interjected some questions to clarify points or to gather more information. (b)(3), (b)(6) and Shen sat in the interview. It should help them with their collection visit to 304<sup>th</sup> CA Brigade later. There are two recordings in the interview. One approximately 1:30 and one about 0:03 in length. These notes are pretty complete, but the recording is worth listening to. Do not use these notes for quotes; listen to the recording to get it verbatim.*

(U) The intent of our operations was to separate the haves from the have nots, with the separation on PL Gold, ensure the haves prospered, and use that as the big carrot for the have nots, on the other side of PL Gold, to turn against JAM and join the coalition in order to prosper like the haves.

(U) I arrived in February 2008. The 2/82 was responsible for Sadr City before turning it over to 3/4 ID. They began by surrounding Sadr City with T-walls. They were TF 1.4a which later became TF 1.4a. They built the barriers to control access and egress routes. Sadr City has long suffered terrible deprivation.

(U) When I took over in late March, there were no non-kinetic operations going on. That was a serious mistake. Commanders must conduct kinetic and non-kinetic operations concurrently, and commanders must understand Psychological Operations and civil affairs and how to integrate them into the

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operation. There had been no civil recon north of PL Florida. When we took over, there was not a civil affairs company operating in Sadr City. I stripped soldiers from all over my battalion, from across MND-B, in order to make a non-lethal Task Force.

(U) The CA units in Baghdad that I took over from were B/450<sup>th</sup> CA and B/422<sup>nd</sup> CA.

(U) 1/2 SCR under the command of (b)(3), (b)(6) had moved into Sadr City and his guys were kicking ass in lethal operations.

(U) 17:22. There were no civil affairs operations going on. The guys I took over from couldn't get out of there soon enough. As I said, I had to assemble a task force and took guys from division to help support 3/4 ID in the fight.

(U) (b)(3), (b)(6) [briefly tries to describe the Amanat and the beladiya in response to a question]

(C/FOUO) [redacted] 1.4a  
[redacted] 1.4a They played the most popular music in Iraq, Iraqi hip hop. They broadcast out of the JSS. When [redacted] 1.4a [redacted] 1.4a When we needed a message out there on compensation or reconstruction, the [redacted] 1.4a folks would print a handbill leaflet and would distribute it quickly. They did the civil reconnaissance and local engagement.

(C/FOUO) We set up an Iraqi Assistance Center in the TOC and brought in personnel from the Department of State, from USAID and NGOs. Before this, nobody was going into Sadr City.

(C/FOUO) A CA company has 32 personnel. I stripped everything I could elsewhere in order to gather 23 people for this mission.

(U) Our object was always to control the Jamila Market.

***How did you break through people's fear and hostility in order to engage them?***

[Slide 11 of the briefing, labeled CMOC Tharwa I Responsibilities, described all the engagements with locals and local officials. I figured fear and hostility stood in the way of any engagement]

(C/FOUO) One key was the Iraqi Assistance Center. Anytime our guys did damage, like hitting a wall, soldiers would get out and give the Iraqi family a claims card. They could bring that to the IAC and we'd pay compensation. That provided positive contacts.

(U) One of the problems we had was setting up the Sol, or a neighborhood watch program. We had to find someone to step up and take responsibility for it. The key was the local mukhtar, an important community figure who everybody would recognize and respond to. We found a mukhtar, but he refused to help, fearing that he would be killed. Then, a CA and [redacted] 1.4a patrol was driving down \_\_\_\_\_ when they

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say a sheik's funeral going by. They stopped their vehicles, joined the procession, and attended the funeral. The sheiks were shocked. A week later, the sheiks contacted us and said they wanted to meet. They wound up setting up the Sol. This was in early April, and the heroes of that effort were (b)(3), (b)(6) and (b)(3), (b)(6) (SP?). It was them attending a sheiks funeral that led to a meeting to set up the Sol.

(U) The Iraqi Army also works with us in the CMOC.

(U) In the Jamila market, vendors had to pay about \$20,000 a year for a market stall, but they received no essential services. We figured that came to two to two and a half million a year to the beladiyah, then the Amanant, and the Jamilla market council, but we had no idea where that money was actually going. We figured it as a major source of income for JAM. Where was the money going?

(U) MG Hammond has not gotten enough credit for what he did. He announced to everyone that his focus was non-lethal operations. He had not gotten the recognition he deserves for that, and it was his decisions that reshaped MND-B.

(U) Cooperative Medical Engagements. We worked with MiTT teams, the 6<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and the 11<sup>th</sup>.

#### ***What was the Jamila Market Revitalization Plan?***

(U) One day, the CG said what is the plan for revitalizing Jamila market? Suddenly, everyone got real quiet. I got a phone call and was told I had 6 hours to come up with something, and we'd brief the CG the next day. I called my E7 and said "I'm f\_\_\_\_\_." He took this stuff and put it together. It broke revitalization down into four phases: 1) Security, 2) Microgrant/Microloan, 3) Rebuild/Refurbish, and 4) Open Supply chain. This was on May 21. The CG liked it, and the people immediately started touting how it was al their idea to begin with (laughter).

(U) When Iraqis saw the coalition make a commitment to Jamila market, the trucks full of goods started showing up. We had no appreciated how critical Jamila market was to the Iraqi economy and to Iraqi food distribution.

(U) 1:00. The CG wanted lights put up on Rt. Delta. We needed contractors to do it, but we couldn't find one. Everybody thought it was too dangerous. We finally found one. He went out and put up lights. Overnight, snipers shot them out. The next day, he put them up again, and someone shot the out again. That continued, until gradually the people saw we were there to stay. We took a lot of humanitarian assistance supplies out. We stopped someplace, and the place was deserted. I thought there was no point, but an NCO told me to wait a minute. He then offloaded the boxes from the trucks and started opening them up. As soon as the people saw we were there with supplies, they came from everywhere, hundreds of them. I've never seen such a mob descend on me

(U) 1:08. In Jamilla market, we had to control the traffic flow. We also set up solar lights. On 1 June, we did the transition to TF 1.4a I've kept my 23 people there dedicated to that mission. Engineers came in for QA/QC.

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(U) So far, we have funded \$60 million in reconstruction. The Iraqi Assistance Center has paid out \$600K in claims.

***What is your background?***

(b)(6)

[wss] (b)(3), (b)(6) and I have a mutual friend (b)(3), (b)(6) who knew (b)(3), (b)(6) at Norwich University and last saw him in 1983. I knew (b)(3), (b)(6) at the Aviation Officers Advanced Course in 1990. (b)(3), (b)(6) recently joined MNC-I, and it was (b)(3), (b)(6) who recommended I talk to (b)(3), (b)(6)

(U) Other Norwich grads here include BG Spano [MNFI CJ6], (b)(3), (b)(6) and (b)(3), (b)(6)

***I understand you were in an IRAM attack. What happened?***

~~(C/FOUO)~~ I was at the JSS. It was on 28 April, about 1300. The IPs were on the first floor of the JSS and the Americans were on the second floor. I never really felt comfortable with the IPs. I had just stepped outside the building. I had a Kevlar on but no body armor. Suddenly, I heard . . [huge explosion]. I turned and a second one went off. The first explosion sucks all the air in, and the second one then forces it all out again. It's like the waves of the ocean, with huge force. It threw me up against a T-Wall and knocked me out. I came to and I was being medivaced to the aid station. I passed out again, and was moved again to the CASH. I kept coming around and then passing out. The effect on me was like having a stroke. I could not talk at first. I couldn't form words or think clearly.

***How did recovery go, and are you still suffering some after effects?***

~~(C/FOUO)~~ I recovered steadily, but I have balance problems. Sometimes I have to catch myself to keep from falling down.

***What were the other casualties?***

(U) A little girl was killed by the blast, the backblast of the rockets. In the JSS, we had fourteen WIA. There was a mixture of a lot of units there, including 1/2 SCR, 4ID, 3/4 BCT. My S3 was also banged up. I was laid out for seven days. My unit kept functioning.

***What is the situation today?***

(U) 1:27. The primary problem now is the GoI spending their money. The problem is getting I-CERP functioning. Iraq has come a long way, but it has a long way to go yet.

***What have you learned from this?***

(U) This is a whole different war. This is winnable. I have seen us go from Iraqis loving us, to hating us, to liking us. I've seen Iraqis Americanized. I went to Adhamiyah on a Thursday night. I expected to see several hundred people. I saw several thousand people. Thursday nights is the traditional wedding night. It was like Mardi Gras. There were females in jeans and talking on cell phones, there were a

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couple of pool halls. There was happiness and joy. An Sol soldier came up to me and spoke English. I asked where he learned English, and he told me from CNN. He gestured around himself, at all the life and celebration going on, and he told me that in ten years, all of Iraq would be like this.

***What is the lesson learned for the Army?***

~~(S/NF)~~ Too many commanders don't know how to do non-lethal operations. They get COIN, but they need to incorporate it much better at all levels. I can't tell you how many battalion commanders have told me they "kill people for a living." They have to learn how to incorporate COIN; they have to understand the large components of non-kinetic operations. They are poor at incorporating civil affairs and psychological operations, and I say this as an infantryman. I saw one company commander who got it. Of his three platoons, he took one, combined it with a CA cell, and he devoted that platoon to non-lethal operations. That is how it has to be done.

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