

Witness Name: KEVAN CALLAGHAN

Statement No.: 1

Exhibits:

Dated: 6-01-10

THE BAHA MOUSA PUBLIC INQUIRY

WITNESS STATEMENT OF KEVAN CALLAGHAN

I, KEVAN CALLAGHAN will say as follows: -

1. I make this statement in response to the Inquiry's Rule 9 Request dated 27 November 2009. I have read this Request, and I seek here to cover everything it raises to the best of my ability and recollection. I have also been shown and have read copies of the following witness statements which the Inquiry has specifically asked me to consider: -

(a) Statement of S038 dated 16 September 2009 (BMI04249);

(b) Statement of Sgt Tillotson dated 26 October 2009 (BMI05556);

Career History

2. I joined the Territorial Army in June 1999 and was commissioned in August 2001.
3. I spent my first 2 years of commissioned service in the Lancastrian and Cumbrian Volunteers (LCV). During my time with the LCV I was based in Kimberley Barracks, Preston, as a Platoon Commander.

4. I deployed to Iraq in June 2003 for a 5 month tour. It was initially intended that I should deploy as an Intelligence Officer, and so I attended a course at the Defence Intelligence School at Chicksands, which I think lasted for a week. As I remember, the course was not a normal Intelligence Corps course, but an attempt better to equip individuals who were tasked with running a Company (Coy) level Intelligence Cell. The course was run from the Northern Ireland training school located within Chicksands, and it covered the day to day gathering and processing of information. After completion of this course it was decided that I should change roles and I deployed as a Coy G5 officer, which at the time was the title given to what is now known as CIMIC (Civilian and Military Cooperation).
5. Since my return from Iraq, I have been employed as the SF (Sustained Fire) Platoon Commander of a machine gun platoon and as a Coy 2ic, both with LCV, prior to the amalgamations and formation of the Duke of Lancaster`s Regiment, with whom I currently serve.
6. I am currently serving as OC B (Somme) Coy, 4th Bn The Duke of Lancaster`s Regiment.

Deployment

7. I deployed to Iraq around 23 June 2003. I was based at what was known as "The Old State Buildings" with Burma Company 1QLR ('B Coy').

Rank and role during Op TELIC 2 in 2003

8. On OP TELIC 2, my principal function was as B Coy G5 (CIMIC) Officer. My day to day role involved fostering and maintaining links within the local community. This took many forms including information gathering, reconstruction projects of vital local resources such as schools and police

stations, and Info Ops campaigns where we tried to spread positive messages about the work we and coalition forces in general were carrying out in Iraq. These campaigns mainly involved meeting with influential local people and discussing the progress being made, and also some leaflet/newsletter distribution. This was intended both to improve conditions and promote coalition forces in the eyes of the local population. One of my main roles was to help develop local councils as an interim measure of local government.

9. As at 14 September 2003, my day to day role mainly involved managing one of the many reconstruction projects that were going on. I cannot remember which particular one it was at this time, but it would probably have been either a scheme of 6 schools, or the Police Headquarters for the area west of what I remember as the Green route on our maps. In addition to this I chaired meetings of the fledgling local councils, 2 or 3 times a week. My other roles as a B Coy officer were to carry out `Watch keeper` duties, which involved periods of managing the B Coy Ops room and manning the radio net. This was rotated through the B Coy officers and SNCOs. My watch keeper duties usually involved the period from midnight until 0700.

Search operation

10. I have read the statements of S038 and Sgt Tillotson and in particular the paragraphs in which they describe a search operation and subsequent arrest of three Iraqi males. The Inquiry asks me a number of questions in regards to this episode.
11. In response I cannot recall if I was present at B Coy HQ following this search operation. It is entirely possible that I was but do not remember anything now. There were numerous deliberate operations that involved reasonably large weapons seizures, and I remember detainees being brought in at various times, and fairly quickly being moved to either BG Main or to the Theatre Internment Facility (TIF) at Umm Qasr.

{PAGE }

12. In any case, I am fairly confident that I would remember the Commanding Officer (Lt Col Mendonca) striking a detainee, had I witnessed or heard of it happening, and I have no recollection of such an event.
13. Moreover, I do not recall taking photographs of the Iraqi detainees arrested and/or weapons discovered during the search operation described by SO38 and Sgt Tillotson. It is entirely possible that I may have, it being something that I was asked to do on occasion, to assist the Intelligence cell, but I have no memory of doing so. Any such photographs would have been downloaded onto the B Coy desktop computer (not a laptop), by either Sgt Tillotson or his 2ic. I do not know of any occasion where Sgt Tillotson deleted photographs.
14. Finally, I would note that Sgt Tillotson merely says that he would have expected me to have been in the B Coy Ops room when he returned. He does not have any specific recollection of my being there following this particular operation, and I was certainly not in B Coy Ops room all the time, given the nature of my role as G5 officer.

Prisoner handling during Op TELIC 2

15. I have been asked by the Inquiry to describe my experience of the physical handling of prisoners by 1QLR during Op Telic 2, and the extent to which commanders within the Battlegroup sought to impose and maintain discipline in terms of the standards applied in relation to prisoner handling. In response, I had very little to do with prisoner handling. I was given no specific instructions on prisoner handling whilst with the Battlegroup, but I understood from previous annual training within the TA that mistreating prisoners in any form is unacceptable. This training took the form of a video and was part of the series of annual training tests that qualified people for their bounty payment.

16. I do remember arresting two individuals on two separate occasions, both of which were in respect of the theft of electricity cable that they were caught melting down to sell. On both occasions the individuals were taken directly from the place of arrest (within an area known as the Shia Flats) to the local police station, where they were handed over to the Iraqi police for them to deal with. On both occasions the individuals were plasticuffed to ensure they did not attack or injure anyone whilst being transported by Landrover. The men were not hooded as there would have been little point in doing so, as they knew the area better than we did, and there was no perceived threat to our security by not hooding them.
17. I cannot remember the precise dates of these arrests, but I think that they occurred during the second half of my tour because by this time the Iraqi police were gaining in confidence and effectiveness and more attempts were being made to have them deal with criminals.
18. I remember seeing other callsigns with individuals they had arrested. I cannot remember any specific details because people were being arrested quite frequently due to the high level of criminality in Basra at that time. I am confident, however, that I did not witness any signs of mistreatment by UK forces. I would also say that the vast majority of arrested individuals that I witnessed were not hooded. During my time in the B Coy Ops room I remember on occasions asking what the callsigns on the ground were to do with the people they had arrested. The instructions that I remember coming from BG Main were either to take them directly to the TIF, or hand them over to the Iraqi police. I do not remember B Coy callsigns ever being asked to bring arrested individuals back to BG Main.

Hooding

19. I did see detainees in Iraq with hoods placed over their heads. This was normally a sandbag. As far as I was aware, it was a security measure intended to stop detainees gathering intelligence on our locations when

they were transported into/through them. I was not aware of any other purpose of hooding prisoners.

Stress positions

20. I did not witness stress positions being used on any detainees during my time in Iraq. Had I been made aware that stress positions were being used I would have reported this up through my chain of command.

21. My understanding of a stress position is a position that an individual is forced to stay in for a sustained period of time that causes suffering, with the intent of weakening the individual to make them more compliant for whatever purpose the person putting them in the stress position wants them for. My understanding of a stress position comes from my general knowledge and is not something I have ever received training or specific instruction on. I cannot remember precisely where or when I gained my understanding of what a stress position is.

Abuse / mistreatment

22. I was not made aware of any abuse or mistreatment of detainees during my time in Iraq.

Accounts to Press

23. I have not given an account of matters relevant to the Inquiry to the press or other media.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed _____



Dated _____

6-01-10