

WITNESS STATEMENT

(CJ Act 1967, S.9; MC Act 1980, SS 5A(3a) and 5B; MC Rules 1981 r70)

Statement of: Major General Graeme Cameron Maxwell Lamb CMG DSO OBE

Age if under 18: Over 18
(if over 18 insert "Over 18")

Occupation: HM Forces (Army)

This statement (consisting of [6] pages each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything, which I know to be false or do not believe to be true.

Dated the *first* day of *September* 2006

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BACKGROUND / OPERATIONAL EXPERIENCE

1. I received my commission in 1973. I have commanded troops on operations as a Second Lieutenant, Lieutenant, Captain, Major, Lieutenant Colonel, Brigadier and Major General. I have had extensive operational experience being awarded an MiD, QCVS, MBE, OBE, CMG and DSO for operational duty.
2. In September 2006 I am due to deploy to Baghdad, in the rank of Lieutenant General, as the Senior British Military Representative in Iraq.

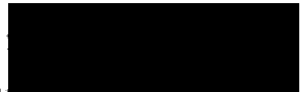
OP TELIC

3. I was extensively involved from the outset in Op TELIC 1 and on Op TELIC II. Between 11th July and 28th December 2003 I, as General Officer Commanding 3 (UK) Division, was the senior operational commander for British forces in Iraq. I was based at Basra Airport and was responsible for the districts of Maysan, Basra, Al Mathana and Dhi Qar. I commanded a Headquarters of some 200 personnel together with a Coalition Force of 2

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operational Brigades and a reinforced Battle Group comprising some 14,500 troops.

4. 1 QLR, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Jorge Mendonça, was one of the Battle Groups within 19 Mechanised Brigade. 19 Mechanised Brigade was commanded by Brigadier Bill Moore.

CONDITIONS IN IRAQ

5. I have seen and handled a fair amount of danger in my time, and can assess what I am comfortable with and what I am not. I would rate Iraq in 2003 as being clearly dangerous. What was difficult in Iraq was the unpredictability of the local population. A situation which appears at face value as benign could suddenly and quite unexpectedly change to being confrontational, rapidly moving to a combat operation within minutes.
6. There were a host of reasons for the anger and frustration, and many sources of violence. We had failed to meet the expectations of the local Iraqi people, in relation to power, water and fuel to Basra. Their view was that they could not understand how we could put a man on the moon and yet not deal with these issues. Another potentially and more dangerous source of anger was the objection of some people to what they perceived as the occupation of Iraq. Others were engaged in inter-tribal warfare or widespread (armed) crime, while others took part in a sort of occasional terrorism being paid to attack the coalition forces. One could simply pay someone in cash to create a violent situation. This was a straightforward commercial transaction – political beliefs, rights or wrongs, did not enter into the negotiations. By violent, I mean not just small arms, but rocket propelled grenades (RPG), AK 47s, mortars, etc. This was then added to by the Former Regime Loyalists and so-called Foreign Freedom Fighters who used suicide tactics and modern advanced terrorist methods to kill our soldiers. Any show of vulnerability or weakness could be fatally exploited. We often found ourselves conducting our negotiations with local tribal chiefs with our own Challenger II main battle tanks quietly but very visibly sitting in the background.

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7. The violence escalated dramatically after our arrival. In Basra alone, the statistics (Operational Analysis) showed that in June there were some 26 recorded lethal attacks, in July these had escalated to 40 and by August had increased to 116. By lethal attack I mean that heavy armaments were used, RPGs, mortars, drive-by shootings using automatic weapons, etc.
8. It would not be an exaggeration for me to say that by August we were on the edge of the abyss in losing the trust of the Shias, and if we lost them I assessed we faced the very real danger of losing Iraq.
9. In addition to the frustrations and anger of the local Iraqi people and the security situation we were also trying to deal with a collapsing circuit in that there was an absence of law and order, there was no justice system, the civil administration was rife with corruption and we had to deal not only with death and casualties caused by the fighting but also with executions of tribal or previous Ba'ath party members while managing daily armed attacks within the community. Our troops were working in adverse physical conditions, such as intense heat (mid to high 40s) and extreme high humidity, lack of power, virtually no air conditioning and exhaustion from heat and overwork.
10. Everyone worked flat out in Iraq. There was no such thing as a day off and the most one could hope for was to snatch a few very rare moments of respite. The workload and conditions were such that when people eventually climbed on the aircraft to leave for home they were physically and mentally wasted.
11. Everything which occurred in Iraq has to be viewed in the context of the total operational circumstances we faced from mid 2003.
12. In August 2003 I wrote a note concerning the problems confronting us in Iraq. I have re-read that note which accurately summarises the position. I paraphrase: *We were attempting to anticipate the next crisis, from a wide range of candidates: inadequate clean water distribution; the effects of the*

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WFP 'food for oil' programme ceasing in November; the exponential increase in demand for LPG as winter approached; the irrigation programme and new seeds for the September planting; sewage outflow and associated disease risk with the onset of the winter rains; unemployment; and economic imperatives including the start up of industrial infrastructure. The key thread across all of these is that they are outside the skill set of the Division. If we fail to maintain the consent of the people in the south, and we are close to that threshold, all the military gains of the conflict will be lost in the political turmoil that will ensue from the Coalition sliding from liberators to an Army of occupation.

However, I would not want to be anywhere else but here right now. Our soldiers, sailors, airmen and the civilian staff are delivering real progress and in a manner that should make people proud of them. The overall outcome of the campaign is finely balanced and has reached a point of causing enduring damage.

13. Technically the Army, as trained professionals, would expect to be responsible for the security situation but as I have described there were countless areas in which we were required to become involved where we were operating as gifted amateurs.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL JORGE MENDONÇA AND 1 QLR

14. 1 QLR held a difficult and important area of operation. The Battle Group was very stretched but managed not only to prosecute operations in order to reduce incidents of attacks but also to pursue their main effort which was to achieve a better life for the Iraqis. Under Lt Col Mendonça's leadership, 1 QLR was very active in the CIMIC area, established and trained a Police Support Unit, created a Neighbourhood Watch scheme that was subsequently adopted across the Divisional area, provided training for the local Police as well as being instrumental in quelling the serious riots of 9th / 10th August. 1 QLR followed explicitly and implicitly the overall campaign at the time.

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15. It is very important to understand the volume of Lt Col Mendonça's responsibilities and how he managed that workload in the circumstances of Iraq at the time. The lines of operations upon which he had to deliver would have broken many people. He managed to achieve his results by successful practise of Mission Command. Mission Command is about trust amongst close friends and responsible delegated authority. In order for a unit to function effectively, particularly in circumstances such as those which existed in Iraq, once a superior commander has confidence in his subordinate's ability to deal with a particular area, the superior commander will then move on to concentrate on another area. This involves assessment of risk, responsible delegation and trust.
16. Brigadier Moore informed me immediately of the death of Baha Musa after he had been notified of the event by Lt Col Mendonça. If Brigadier Moore, in whom I had absolute trust, had had any significant concerns about 1 QLR as a result of this incident he would have brought them to my attention. This incident did not break the trust that Brigadier Moore and I had in Lt Col Mendonça as a Commanding Officer.
17. In October 2003 I supported Brigadier Moore's recommendation that Lt Col Mendonça should be awarded the Distinguished Service Order in respect of the work he had undertaken in Iraq during the period from June to September 2003.
18. In November 2003 I prepared a yearly appraisal report on Lt Col Mendonça. In regard to his performance I wrote as follows *"An exceptional tour of duty here in Iraq. Dynamic leadership from the front, nice balance of being forward in the thick of it and still stood back and able to see the wood for the trees; as good a performance of a regular commanding officer as I have seen on operations. He identified a number of local initiatives that have been so successful that they have been pushed across the Division. The Battle Group ran at an extremely high tempo; he was faced almost daily with difficult*

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operational judgements which he handled both with style and grim determination. High octane performance; impressive".

In regard to potential I wrote: "I have seen Lieutenant Colonel Mendonça operate in dangerous and difficult operational circumstances, most of which were outside standard PSO or war fighting criteria; he had to deal with complexity squared. He always placed his part of the operation into the wider context of Brigade, Divisional and Theatre. His feel for the political dynamics was of a high order, his ability to consume work impressive. I would strongly support his aspiration towards a deployable Divisional COS; a must, based on his performance and potential. A strong runner for a regular all arms Brigade. Accordingly, to meet the demanding criteria of selection for HCSC, I have raised his potential for two rank promotion to EXCEPTIONAL. I have absolutely no doubt that, from what I have seen, Lieutenant Colonel Mendonça would command a Brigade in barracks or on operations, however difficult or dangerous, with style and the sort of leadership we still seek in the British Army. To that end, it is my judgement that he is a must for HCSC".

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