

RELEASE IN PART B6

Update 4

From: Jill Iscol [redacted]

B6

To: Hillary Clinton hr15@att.blackberry.net

Subject: Update 4

Thought you might be interested in the bolded part of this update from Zach.

From: zachiscol [redacted]

Sent: Friday, January 23, 2009 11:34 AM

To: Jill Iscol

Subject: Update 4

Hey all,

This is my last email from Eagle Base and G Co 2/9. Tomorrow we head back to Ramadi. We've got a number of options on the table and are t Ramadi before heading to Fallujah Saturday night. It has been a great trip with the Marines and incredibly special catching up with Gunny Fox. sometime in the spring together. He's got a [redacted] just after he comes home so it may be hard to pull off. I have to say, I'm exhausted after today. We started off early and ended late today. In the morning we headed out with one of Gunny Fox's sc through dusty farm roads along the banks of the Euphrates. A beautiful and cold morning. The Marines hung back as the police officers led the and work alongside Iraqi forces. Along the patrol we took the opportunity to speak to many of the Marines. They are tremendous young kids - when things were going terribly in Iraq and yet they signed up to serve their country knowing full well they were headed into harms way. Man have served here in combat are grateful. It is astonishing, but the last two infantry battalions in this area saw little to no combat. Marines rece participating in combat operations. Only a handful of Marines have received one while serving in Al Anbar over the last year. It is certainly a di I am still puzzled as to why it has changed so drastically and during interviews throughout the rest of the day I pressed two sheiks and the2/9 brother of Abu Risha, the father of the Awakening movement. Sometime in 2006, Abu Risha approached a number of other tribal leaders. The "enough" of the insurgency. Brutal fighting resulted and Abu Risha was killed, but Al Qaeda was eventually pushed out of Al Anbar. Abu Risha! province. His brother told me about how brutal Al Qaeda was and that it took time for the tribes and the coalition to learn to trust each other. \ Awakening apparently began late one night. Photos of him with Obama, President Bush, and many Marine officers lined the walls. We then headed out to meet Sheik Heiss at his house. Two giant mansions, one made of marble that cost an estimated \$1.2m. We met in an i meetings. At least a hundred people could sit in the chairs lining the room. It was HUGE. We drank turkish coffee and tea and talked about the the upcoming provincial elections. Sheik Heiss was one of the first Sheiks to work with the coalition in 2004. He feels that the wrong people ar out depending on the results of the election. He also said, that violence, like that experienced in 2004-2007 will not return to the province. The

but he is quick to say it was mistaken. Other family members, too many to count, were killed by Al Qaeda. He was even kidnapped and beaten during the Awakening. Sheik Heiss was also very proud to show me a photo of him with President Bush in the Oval Office.

Apparently his house was destroyed by AQI sometime in the last few years and I asked him how he could afford such a beautiful and expensive house. He said he had a lot of money and I asked him something to do with the different types of Sheiks in Iraq. There are Sheiks put in power by the Ottomans, Sheiks put in power by the British, Sheiks put in power by Saddam, and finally, the American Sheiks -- namely leaders, often lower leaders who remained in Iraq when more senior tribal leaders were killed because of it. The counterinsurgency manual states that money is a weapon. As far as I am concerned, better to shed treasure than blood in order to return to living their lives in peace.

Finally, we went back to Camp Ramadi for dinner and to interview the Battalion Commander. We spoke for an hour about the operations he had led as an infantry officer during the bloodiest months in Ramadi in 2005, but before you think he was engaged in combat he was braving ambushes and leading the governance and economic development of the province. Fascinating conversation about how and why someone trained to close with a combat zone is granted it is a combat zone.

Much more to write, but it is my last night with Gunny Fox and we want to catch up some more, more to follow....

Keep those emails coming and can't wait to see you all when I get home...

Love and best,

Zach