

(*Small Wars Journal* Note: This timeline, undated, was authored by COL Joseph Buche, former Chief of Staff at NTM-A, based on a series of e-mails covering the 15-6 investigation concerning LTC Michael Holmes)

TIMELINE:

- **Mid-Mar 10:** LTC Holmes expressed concern that COL Breazile's direction was illegal when Breazile told Holmes to assess the results of our engagements to inform and educate visitors. When the concern was brought to me, I (COL Buche) directed the preparation of a legal opinion. (Still looking through electronic files on my end to find this opinion, but remember that the SJA opined that the direction was legal.)
- **30 Mar 10:** MAJ Mitchell, a lawyer in our SJA, wrote to Col Breazile saying that, in the course of looking into the legality of Breazile's directive to Holmes, they received information suggesting that:
 - LTC Holmes and MAJ Levine may have been engaged in an inappropriate relationship
 - They have gone off post in civilian clothes to restaurants and they drank alcohol.

She indicated to Breazile that, based on the seriousness of the allegations, the issue needed to be addressed quickly

- **30 Mar 10:** Col Breazile recommended to MAJ Mitchell that we conduct an investigation. Breazile indicated that Holmes told Breazile that Holmes was authorized to go out into town for dinner by the previous CoS, COL Symons, to meet with an Info Opns team from the Pentagon.
- **31 Mar 10:** COL Carrell, Dep. SJA, recommended to Buche that the command initiate a 15-6 investigation.
- **06 Apr 10:** COL Buche informed COL Carrel that Buche would direct an investigation of potential violations of GO #1, but would not direct investigation of an inappropriate relationship. Buche said that he did not want to create any perception of a witch hunt. If the investigating officer came up with evidence of an inappropriate relationship, Buche would consider expanding the IO's charter to include that.
- **07 Apr 10:** LTC Santiago was identified to conduct the investigation.
- **28 Apr 10:** LTC Santiago submitted his completed investigation to our SJA for review.
- **O/A 9 May 10:** COL Rouseau, SJA, briefed COL Buche on results of investigation and the SJA recommendations.
- **O/A 19 May 10:** COL Buche forwarded the investigation with the approved findings and recommendations to (then) BG Patton for action. Based on SJA advice, Buche approved the

findings and most of the recommendations of the IO, and directed that a copy of the report be forwarded to the officers' respective National Guard chains of command to consider initiation of proceedings to revoke their federal recognition. (Important to note that findings generated a series of improper acts by Holmes and Levine, not merely eating off post.)

- **O/A 22 May 10:** (then) BG Patton signed reprimands for both officers and directed COL Buche to serve the reprimands on the officers. Buche did so O/A 22 May 10.
- **O/A 23 May 10:** LTC Holmes went on his scheduled R&R leave. (Then) BG Patton agreed to a longer than usual time period for LTC Holmes to submit a rebuttal in order for Holmes to complete his scheduled R&R. (Levine later completed her R&R as scheduled.)

Soon thereafter (haven't found precise dates in my electronic files) COL Buche served Col Geller with a reprimand for him eating off post with LTC Holmes and MAJ Levine. (The IO found evidence that Col Geller went to a restaurant off post with Holmes and Levine. (Then) BG Patton relinquished authority to dispose of this report of misconduct to COL Buche after Buche informed Patton that he intended to reprimand Geller.)

- **18 JUN 10: BG PATTON DECIDED TO FILE MAJ LEVINE'S GOMOR IN HER OMPF**
- **O/A 5 Jul 10:** LTC Holmes rebuttal matters submitted to BG Patton for his consideration. LTC Holmes has submitted a lengthy rebuttal and (then) BG Patton met with him to discuss it in person.

LTC Holmes indicated in his rebuttal that:

- --"I was never given the opportunity to answer the specific allegations that were made against me.....I have not been offered any opportunity to provide exculpatory evidence or alibis, or to call any witnesses or provide testimony in my defense."
- --"I have been tried and convicted by a "Kangaroo Court" and now only the severity of my sentence is in question."

(During the investigation, Holmes invoked his right to counsel when questioned by the IO, so all questioning ceased at that point.)

- **9 July 10: BG PATTON MET LTC HOLMES TO DISCUSS HOLMES' REBUTTAL. BG PATTON MADE A CHANGE TO THE GOMOR (DELETING A PORTION) AND DETERMINED IT WOULD FILED IN HIS OMPF.**
- **15 JUL 10: BG PATTON SIGNED A MEMO ASKING ARMY EVALUATION SUITABILITY BOARD TO SUBSTITUTE A REVISED GOMOR FOR MAJ LEVINE BASED ON THE CHANGE MADE TO LTC HOLMES' GOMOR.**

- **O/A 28 Sep 10:** LTC Holmes and MAJ Levine departed AFG on schedule. Levine's and Holmes' OERs were completed and submitted before they departed. (In an attempt to avoid any perception of malice and ensure impartiality, Dr Kem senior rated LTC Holmes instead of COL Buche.)