

ROBERT BALES ALLEGEDLY STARTED DOING STEROIDS JANUARY 1, ACCUSED OF ASSAULT ON AFGHAN IN FEBRUARY

As I reported here, DOD released a new charge sheet for Robert Bales. I'm going to start by laying out the chronology it portrays, then talk about the identities of the victims at the end. Here's his original charge sheet for comparison.

The Charges

November 1, 2011-March 10, 2012: Bales is accused (Charge VI) of violating a general order prohibiting the consumption of alcohol in Afghanistan going back to November 1, 2011. Significantly, however, he is not accused of drinking on March 11; the endpoint on this charge is March 10, 2012.

January 1, 2012-March 11, 2012: Bales is accused (Charge V) of possessing and using stanozolol while receiving special pay. Update: Let me correct this. Bales was charged with using steroids starting on January 1. He was charged with possessing steroids starting on February 1. Both because of the assault and the claims by Bales' lawyers that he got steroids from the special ops guys, that may be significant.

February 1, 2012-February 29, 2012: Bales is accused (Charge III Specification 7) of "unlawfully strik[ing] a male of apparent Afghan descent whose name is unknown on the face and body with his hands and knees."

March 11, 2012: Bales is accused of 16 counts of premeditated murder (this is one fewer female victim than his prior charge sheet); the charge sheet says that in addition to shooting all the

victims, he burned 10 of them (which as I'll show below is clearly Mohammed Wazir's family). He is also charged with attempted murder and assault against 6 more people (two girls, two boys, a man, and a woman); these charges appear to line up with the previous charges. In addition, the new charge sheet adds two charges of impeding an investigation, one by "damaging a laptop" and another by "wrongfully burn[ing] bodies."

The Identities

As I said above, the murders described in Specifications 7 through 16 must be Mohammed Wazir's family, because we know they were all burned (see this WSJ article for his description of him; see this post for the last time I tried this trick). That section lists 6 females and 4 males. Wazir says he lost 7 females and 4 males, though that includes his daughter Palwasha who, he described, had no bullet wounds. The last 10 or 11 names listed on the first charge sheet don't line up perfectly—they include 8 females and 3 males, though I did wonder whether DOD had gotten the sex of one of Wazir's family members wrong in the first count, so if Palwasha were not listed and they had corrected the sex of one of his sons, then the last 16 on the new charge sheet would correlate to the last 17 of the old one.

The redacted name in Specification 6 in the original charge sheet appears to match the redacted name in Specification 5 in the new one. For the moment, I'll suggest that's Mohammad Dawood, who like Wazir's family was in Najiban. That might mean Specification 6 in the new charge sheet is just another of Wazir's family members, but one whose body wasn't dragged into the fire.

The sexes of the first four Specifications match (though not some of the redactions). This would mean they've since named the female victim in Specification 4, who was unnamed in the original.

And if all that's right, then the victim originally listed in Specification 4 would be the one now absent from the charge sheet.

But all this means there's still a discrepancy between who Afghans say got killed—which consist of 8 male and 8 female victims, and who DOD says got killed—which consist of 7 male and 9 female victims. In a scenario in which Mohammad Dawood got killed by JSOC guys on an official night raid, that would then mean there's one more female who Bales is charged with killing—probably at Alkozai—whom the Afghans haven't identified.

In other words, there's still something funky.

Update: powwow did her own version of a list of victims back in April here (read comments for updates). I'm going to try to match up my list to this.