

# The End of a Shameful Saga

Every presidency has some awful, cringe-inducing moments:

“Mission Accomplished”

“It depends upon what the meaning of the word ‘is’ is”

“If you like your plan, you can keep your plan.”

Very high on that list is what took place on May 31, 2014, when President Obama held a celebratory event at the White House.

He was flanked by Bob and Jani Bergdahl, whose son Bowe had just been swapped for five top Taliban warriors.

Whatever you think of him or his policies, Barack Obama is usually an astute politician who knows which way the wind is blowing. But in this case he was absolutely tone deaf. President Obama fully expected that Bowe Bergdahl’s return after five years in Taliban captivity would be cheered by the media, the military, and the entire nation.

But at that very moment the Obama administration already knew that Private First Class Bergdahl, who was promoted during captivity, left his post in Afghanistan without authorization.

He was a deserter, one of the most heinous crimes in the military code of justice.

President Obama could have skipped the celebration and the hugs to the Bergdahls, but he decided to go all in. Even worse, the very next day National Security Adviser Susan Rice made one of the more outrageous statements in recent memory:

“He served the United States,” she said of Bergdahl, “with honor and distinction.”

Keep in mind that Bergdahl had written this to his parents just prior to deserting:

“I am ashamed to be an American ... the US Army is the biggest joke the world has to laugh at.” And before he walked away from his post on June 30, 2009, Bergdahl left a note indicating that he was about to start a new life.

So the prevaricating Susan Rice knew, just as she had known that Benghazi was not caused by some Internet video, that Bowe Bergdahl had served with anything but “honor and distinction.”

Immediately after Rice’s television appearance, military analyst Lt. Col Ralph Peters, with his customary pithiness, wrote this:

“Ms. Rice is aggressively stupid, immaculately clueless, and a disgrace to our system of government.”

He added that, by Rice’s definition, Benedict Arnold also served with “honor and distinction.”

This sordid chapter is about to finally come to an end.

Bergdahl has pleaded guilty to desertion and misbehavior before the enemy, and a military judge at Fort Bragg in North Carolina will soon hand down a sentence.

One important aspect to the sentencing is that the judge will hear testimony from men who were wounded when they went out to search for Bergdahl in the wilds of Afghanistan. These are the people we should be remembering and celebrating, not Bowe Bergdahl or Susan Rice.

One of the injured soldiers is confined to a wheelchair and unable to speak. Another cannot use his right hand, while a third suffered a leg wound. There were also rumors, but absolutely no hard evidence, that other soldiers actually died in the search.

Bergdahl's lawyers argue that they can't get a fair shake because Donald Trump, prior to being elected, referred to their client as a "dirty, rotten traitor." Well, Mr. Trump was never one for understatement.

But whatever was said by the candidate-turned-commander-in-chief, the facts in the case are beyond dispute. Bowe Bergdahl willfully deserted his post and put his fellow soldiers in harm's way.

And what about the Taliban Five, the terrorists who were freed from Guantanamo Bay so that President Obama could bask in his photo op and boast that the USA "does not ever leave our men and women in uniform behind?"

Those terrorists were sent to Qatar, where they apparently remain. According to reporting by Fox News' Catherine Herridge, who has impeccable sources, at least three of them have tried to re-engage with their former terror networks. Heckuva job, Barack!

We'll give the final word to Army Captain Chase Spears, who interviewed many of Bergdahl's platoon mates. "It was common knowledge inside the unit," Spears wrote this week in the Baltimore Sun, "that Sergeant Bergdahl had deserted." He added, "Soldiers who knew the truth were afraid to speak up, out of fear that they would be punished." That is simply a grotesque statement about the atmosphere in the military during the Obama years.

This entire episode has left no one draped in glory, least of all Bowe Bergdahl. He caused great pain to his fellow soldiers and to the nation he finds so embarrassing. We will soon learn his sentence, after which we all hope to not hear from or about Bowe Bergdahl ever again.