



The Focused Fire Newsletter - Copyright © Affinity Systems LLC, July, 2014 Issue 13



OUR TURN

The 4th of July is a time to celebrate America, and the values it stands for, with flags flying, bands blaring out the National Anthem and fireworks exploding in the night sky.



Sorrow

Joy is elusive this year. This week, I attended the funeral for a veteran from the Vietnam era. Following the Catholic burial service, he received military recognition. The honor guard was impeccable in pressed Navy whites, with properly worn chrome helmets. Every action was precise, salutes sharp, arms straight. The barks of the M1 Garand's in the 21-gun salute were as one. The bugle player for Taps was older, and the music wavered slightly, but still reminiscent of the nights in the barracks and field. The music sadly floated over this warrior, as it has millions of others, a final farewell to arms. The honor guard folded the flag carefully and correctly into a triangle, and then reverently presented the symbol to his widow.



The ceremony recognized this veteran for deeds, not words, serving America honorably to preserve our values and system, as men and women have done since the American Revolution.

The funeral was a reminder of how our military is under attack. The bomb blasts are political and unheard or ignored by the media. Further, there is complicity by the American people, who vote clueless people into office, often ignorant or uncaring about the responsibilities of the military. Combined, these paradigms are degrading the most powerful force ever assembled for freedom, both politically and economically, in the history of humankind. Following is a summarization of key issues affecting our military. For these reasons, although citizens first and military second, they are unable to stand up and fight for their rights.

For those not privileged to serve, there are a few fundamental concepts to understand.

The Chain of Command

The military is a tightly organized hierarchy, titled the chain of command. To preserve order and focus on the battlefield, it is essential that all military personnel precisely follow orders communicated through this chain. Obviously, without controlled actions, chaos would ensue with every battle lost. The concept is programmed into every recruit until it is totally accepted, or the individual is discharged. Disobedience is unacceptable.

The President of the United States of America is the Commander-In-Chief of the military per the Constitution of the United States. There is no requirement for a president to have experience with, or knowledge about how the military functions.

Article II Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution, the Commander in Chief clause, states that "[t]he President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the

United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual Service of the United States."

The oath taken by military officers is:

I, _____, having been appointed an officer in the Army of the United States, as indicated above in the grade of _____ do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic, that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservations or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office upon which I am about to enter; So help me God."

The oath taken by military enlisted personnel is:

I, (NAME), do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. So help me God.

In the military, what the President wants, the president gets. He/she is god, and has the power to make or break anyone in the service, or working for the government after discharge. Following are some of the measures instituted by the Obama Administration.

Purging the Military

Embroiled in the controversies of Benghazi, Fast and Furious, and misuse of the IRS, the Obama administration moved strongly to remove all sources they felt were unreliable to their message. First, Gen. David Petraeus, caught up in scandal, resigned as head of the CIA. A year later, President Obama fired nine senior commanding officers. Speculation is that he feared a strong military and purged any potential opposition to strategy, policy, or actions.

Major General Michael Carey
Vice Admiral Tim Giardina
Lieutenant General David Holmes Huntoon, Jr.
Major General C.M.M. Gurganus
Major General Gregg A. Sturdevant
Brigadier General Bryan Roberts
Major General Ralph Baker
Rear Admiral Charles Gaouette
General Carter F. Ham

Three of these men were involved, directly or peripherally, during the Benghazi attack, Gen. Ham, Major General Baker, and Rear Admiral Gaouette. The reports on their reactions to on-going events vary, whether they supported attempting armed intervention, believed that we

had response capability, or if a response was even possible. In Gen Ham's case, reports go in both directions. Some reports state he was in the process of over-riding the stand-down order and was subsequently relieved. In his testimony, he indicated that poorly positioned assets prevented a reaction. Remember, however, the military serves the Commander In Chief.

Altogether, the administration purged hundreds of officers, for a variety of reasons, real or implied. It has become obvious that if a military person speaks out, the response will be fast and harsh. The mainstream media essentially ignored these unprecedented events.

The purging of the military by the administration stands in stark contrast to the non-response taken on civilian issues. These include Fast and Furious, Benghazi, and political activism by governmental agencies like the IRS. In addition, the corruption in the Veterans Hospital systems, while not ignored, was softly addressed when it was time to take names, kick ass and take care of the veterans. The President and media ignored or minimized every controversial issue.

Rules of Engagement

The Rules of Engagement for Afghanistan, reestablished by President Obama, put our military in far greater danger than necessary. Our military is not comprised of killers and mercenaries, and our government must not put troops in indefensible positions.

Allen West, US Army Lt Colonel (Ret) and former member of the House of Representatives, on February 13, 2014, tweeted about the Rules of Engagement.

"As a former combat commander, I can tell you that fear is difficult to avoid on the battlefield. But on today's battlefields, a new fear haunts our troops; the fear of persecution by their own government. That fear leads to hesitation, and that leads to death."

No man left behind

Benghazi - Our government did nothing, leaving four people, including an Ambassador, to die during a preventable attack, which took place on a predictable date, 9-11. The President went to bed, requiring a good night's rest for his political fundraiser in Las Vegas on the following day. He left four people behind. Regardless, all involved violated the protocol demanding action, even if it fails, to save Americans under attack.

Ignoring all lessons learned, President Obama exchanged five terrorist leaders for Sgt. Bergdahl, an alleged deserter, thereby making him a hero. While done in the name of "leaving no man behind," a political stunt that immediately backfired.

Here are the names of the five Taliban commanders, the "Gitmo Five," released in exchange for Bergdahl. Classified as "high risk," all were collectively responsible for thousands of deaths, including Americans.

Abdul Haq Wasiq
Mullah Norullah Noori
Mullah Mohammad Fazi
Mullah Khairullah Khairkhwa
Mohammad Nabi Omara.

Remember these names. They may well become the new Osama Bin Ladens, doing everything in their power to punish the evil enemy – the United States of America. The probability is high that Americans, both military and civilian, will die as a direct result of this trade. The irony is that politicians and press members chastise and condemn members of Bergdahl's unit, the same brothers in arms that tried to find and rescue him, some dying in the process.

Sgt. Andrew Tahmooressi has been in a Mexican jail since March 31, when he accidentally drove across a poorly marked U.S.-Mexico border. He had weapons and ammunition in the car, and reportedly suffers from PTSD. The President, at least outwardly, has done little or nothing to free this American left behind. In the meantime, thousands of illegal immigrants have crossed the border into the United States, some carrying guns, other smuggling drugs, and/or people.

The Veterans Administration

On this very day, our wounded comrades across the country are still fighting for medical care from our bloated, bureaucratic Veterans Administration. Every citizen in the United States, by virtue of having military protection, commits to providing them quality health care. Some of our military were put on lists to receive medical care, and those lists later destroyed. Our government, of both parties, seems unwilling to mount the effort to search out each person with deferred treatment or appointments, and then break every speed record to provide medical attention. Of all the failures, the VA debacle is one of the most preventable and tragic. It is unconscionable that veterans die or suffer, while Congress dawdles and the President plays another round of golf, both protected by fabulous health care systems.

Join Navy and Marine Corps veteran Montel Williams in his intense, angry, social media campaign to get President Obama, and Congress to act immediately to fix the VA. Simply appointing a new administrator will not get the job done.

The Long List

This newsletter only touches the surface of issues affecting our military, but the ones covered make the point. Our military is in a tough position, and nothing on the horizon appears to improve the situation. Certainly, no one wants a reason, like war, to improve conditions. The reality is, we are currently at war in Afghanistan, and radical Islam is at war with us, even if our government chooses to ignore it. We still live in a dangerous world and need an active and energized military to protect the homeland and sometimes-undeserving citizenry.

Our military is the protector from tyranny, the powerful force of men and women standing against dangers both domestic and foreign, which are hell-bent on reducing us to third world

status, then slitting our throats. Recognized or not, our freedoms and military are under attack, and have been for nearly six years.

This is for my brothers and sisters in arms, all in lockstep though the march of time, from the Continental Army to present. We pay tribute to those still living who served in the World Wars, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm, Iraq, and Afghanistan and in between. Not all served on the firing line, but each made a difference, and none is diminished. All stood ready to fight for the equal rights and freedoms of all Americans, even those who would deny those very rights.

Say a prayer for all of our comrades, who are broken in body or mind. They paid a high price for our right to practice the religion of our choice, and criticize our leaders without fear of consequences. Pray for all of our brothers and sisters still in harm's way. All have paid the price in blood and treasure for the freedoms that make America the land of opportunity, a unique place where dreams can come true, no matter how humble our origins. Pray for the safety and well-being of all those who stand in defense of this great nation, still the world's greatest land of opportunity.

In the old Western movies, just as the enemy starts to win, the Cavalry rides in to save the day. Our job as citizens and veterans is to be the Cavalry for our active military, unable for many reasons to speak up and fight for themselves. It is our turn to defend them. Honor and duty bind us to that moral purpose.

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