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## U.S. soldier held by Taliban, was "ashamed to be American," emails show

Bowe Bergdahl  
6/8/2012

Emails an American soldier reportedly sent to his parents before he was captured by the Taliban three years ago suggest he was disillusioned and considering deserting.

Bowe Bergdahl told his parents he was "ashamed to even be American" and was disgusted with the U.S. mission in Afghanistan and with the Army, according to emails quoted in Rolling Stone magazine.

Bergdahl, a 26-year-old Army sergeant from Hailey, Idaho, was taken prisoner on June 30, 2009, in Afghanistan.

The military has never detailed circumstances of his disappearance or capture, and he is not classified as a deserter. He was initially listed as "duty status unknown" and is now considered "missing-captured." He is the only U.S. prisoner of war from the Afghanistan conflict, and U.S. officials say they are actively trying to free him.

Bergdahl's dad vows POW son will come home  
Bowe Bergdahl: Prisoner of war, politics and diplomacy  
Pentagon: We're doing "everything" to find POW

The White House declined comment on the emails or Bergdahl's possible motivation for leaving his base in eastern Afghanistan in 2009.

Bergdahl is the subject of a proposed prisoner swap in which he would be traded for five Taliban adherents imprisoned by the United States at the military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The Taliban have walked away from the deal and larger negotiations with the United States, but the Obama administration is still pushing a negotiated settlement between the Taliban and the U.S.-backed government in Afghanistan.

The Rolling Stone article, to be published Friday, also quotes other soldiers and associates of Bergdahl's as saying that he had talked about walking to Pakistan if his deployment was "lame" and that shortly before his disappearance he had asked whether he should take his weapon if he left the base. Friends and other soldiers describe a survivalist mentality, and Bergdahl's father, Bob, told the magazine that his son was "living in a novel."

"The future is too good to waste on lies," one email reads. "And life is way too short to care for the damnation of others, as well as to spend it helping fools with their ideas that are wrong."

The emails were provided to the magazine by Bergdahl's family in Idaho, which has gone public with its own discontent with U.S. efforts to free their son. There is no way to authenticate the emails.

Some of Bergdahl's reported words read like a suicide note.

"I am sorry for everything," he wrote. "The horror that is America is disgusting."

He mailed home boxes containing his uniform and books.