

The Battle of the Black Sea
Bravo Company, 3rd Ranger Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment
3-4 October 1993

by

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On 3 October 1993, Bravo Company, 3-75th Ranger Regiment, prevented fallen comrades from falling into the hands of the enemy by defeating a numerically superior force with its initiative, audacity, comradery, and perseverance.

On 26 August 1993, Bravo Company (B Co.), 3-75th RGR, Special Mission Units, and aviation assets from Task Force 1-160th AVN RGT, were deployed to Mogadishu, Somalia, in support of the United Nations in Somalia II (UNOSOM II). Major General (MG) Garrison was the Task Force Commander. Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Danny Mcknight, Battalion Commander of 3-75th, was the senior commander from the Ranger Regiment in Somalia. Captain (CPT) Mike Steele was the Bravo Company Commander. LTC Tom Matthews was the Commander of Task Force 1-160. There were also some Special Forces officers (names classified) that deserve more credit than they have received for the leadership they provided and the decisions they made. These commanders and their soldiers comprised Task Force Ranger.

At the time B Co. was alerted, it was participating in a Joint Readiness Training Exercise at Ft. Bliss, Texas. I was the Second Platoon Leader, and SFC Hardy was my platoon sergeant. Around the 10th of August, CPT Steele called all the platoon leaders and platoon sergeants into the company planning tent. We were told that we were deploying to Ft. Bragg to rehearse with Special Mission Units in preparation for a real world mission. The mission was classified, and the cover story would be an Emergency Deployment Readiness Exercise (EDRE). We were not to discuss anything about the exercise until we reached Ft. Bragg. 1

Once established at Ft. Bragg, we immediately started rehearsals. The mission of Task Force Ranger was to increase the security in Mogadishu by dismantling the high infrastructure of the Somali National Alliance. The Special Mission Units had already developed a plan on how they would take down the target(s). The Rangers were to insert with, or just prior to, the assault elements, and isolate the objective. The objective was defined as the building complex or vehicle that a specific target (person) was in. Specifically, we would isolate it by preventing the crowds from influencing the assault, the targets from escaping the objective area, and any militia or armed civilians from reinforcing the objective area.

Rehearsals were long and tiring, but we were all excited about the chance of executing a real mission. This excitement was a new feeling, mixed with both adrenalin and fear. As a platoon leader, I often wondered what it would be like to take my platoon into combat, to do something real. Later, I would learn to be more careful of what I wished for.

The Rules of Engagement were published and studied by every Ranger. Yet, there was still confusion as to who would be regarded as a noncombatant. Some Somalis were allowed to carry weapons as part of their job. The Red Cross and other humanitarian agencies hired locals to provide security against looting gangs and militia.

Task Force Ranger rehearsed several different techniques prior to deployment and eventually developed two "templates" for actions on the objective. These two templates, the strongpoint

and the convoy, would be applied to any situation on the ground.

The strongpoint technique would be applied to any structure or building where there were targets. Four elements (chalks) from First and Second platoons, consisting of fifteen men each, would isolate the objective block. Assault teams would clear the buildings within the block, searching specifically for certain people. Third Platoon, prepositioned on vehicles, would be prepared to come forward to exfiltrate the POWs and the U.S. forces.

Primarily, the force would insert by helicopter, either landing or fast-roping. If a suitable landing zone (LZ) was found close to the objective, we would also exfiltrate by helicopter. If no LZs were found, we would plan for a ground extraction with the vehicles. Not wanting to set a pattern by primarily using helicopters, the Task Force also planned for vehicular ground insertions. At times, the helicopters would launch as a deception just prior to the force inserting by vehicle.

The convoy technique used the same load plan as the strongpoint. It was designed to track, stop, and capture personnel moving by foot or vehicle. Attack helicopters would stop the vehicle by deterrence or fire. Instantly, assault forces would fast-rope directly in front of and behind the target vehicle. Blocking positions would insert 100 to 200 meters ahead and behind the target to isolate it. This technique usually started out as a strongpoint and then developed into a convoy if the target fled the objective prior to the assault.

On 24 August 1993, the first elements of Task Force Ranger

departed Ft. Bragg for Mogadishu. We had been deployed from home since 2 August and regretted not having the chance to say goodbye to our families. Telephones and mail were off limits, and when the rest of the battalion redeployed to Ft. Benning from Ft. Bliss, rumors had already started as to the mission of Bravo Company. "The first time I heard about Rangers being sent to Somalia was on TV," stated one wife. Babies were being born, and their fathers wondered if they would ever see them. The men in the platoon were concerned about back home, but they were focused on what they had to do and why. They were Rangers and knew operational security was critical to the mission's success.

Prior to loading the aircraft at Ft. Bragg, I gathered the platoon together. I told the men that they would be tested and that all the training they have ever done needed to come together now. I told them that not everyone may come home alive, but they all would come home. I stressed the importance of each soldier keeping track of his Ranger buddy, to prevent capture, and to always stay alert. I told them that their families would be taken care of; the only thing that mattered when they hit the ground was mission accomplishment and each other. One Ranger said a prayer.

At Ft. Bragg, we studied the culture and environment of Mogadishu, Somalia, as much as possible. The enemy was a combination of trained militia (urban guerrillas) and local civilians who fought for food, water, money, power, and their homes. According to the United Nations, The Somali National Alliance (SNA) militia was estimated at 1000 "regulars." The SNA

officials claimed they had 12,000. The SNA divided Mogadishu into 18 military sectors linked by radio, each with a duty officer on alert at all times.² They had no doctrine; however, during our missions, we discovered Chinese and Vietnamese manuals on guerilla warfighting.

For the next three months, the home of Task Force Ranger would be an old aircraft hanger on the western edge of the Mogadishu Airfield. The rats inside the hanger were as big as some small dogs, and the hawks, nesting up in the rafters, provided interesting nightly entertainment as they consumed their daily meal.

The Rangers quickly began fortifying the hanger by emplacing sniper positions, guard towers, and fighting positions around the immediate area. The Joint Operations Center (JOC) was erected in a nearby building, and resembled a porcupine because of all the antennas protruding from it. Shower points and a makeshift mess hall were opened within days of our arrival.

Seven missions were conducted in the city of Mogadishu. This was the enemy's backyard. Task Force Ranger trained extensively on Military Operations in Urban Terrain, and this is what it was made for. Although we learned a lot about this type of warfare in Somalia, techniques and theories we had been using in training were validated.

The first night we were in Mogadishu, we were welcomed with three mortar rounds that wounded a few helicopter crew chiefs. There was not a thing that we could do against the indirect fire, except turn the hanger lights off. The next night we sent patrols

into the city to discourage anyone from firing at the hanger. While the patrols were out, no fire came into the hanger.

Second Platoon was the first unit to conduct these patrols in the city. This was our first look at the city up close. I felt safer there than in the hangar. Normally, the streets were vacant from 2200 hrs to 0430 hrs. However, once the local Somalis realized we were patrolling at night, they took more interest and stayed up to greet us.³ Most of them were happy to see us. The elders wore long beards, which they dyed red along with the rest of their hair. Among the villagers, these men were honored as the tribal chiefs and they were the ones who talked with us.

We continued to rehearse our tasks and hone our marksmanship skills. Daily we would fly down the coast, away from the city, where it was a barren desert. We set up targets and shooting houses to practice in. We tried to train on every possible contingency. We were also able to train with actual demolition charges that we would carry on the missions. This training proved its worth during the Battle of the Black Sea, just days later.

The templates worked well after being tested under fire on seven actual missions. Between 35 and 40 missions were planned, reaching various degrees of planning before being aborted due to unconfirmed intelligence.⁴ MG Garrison established a strict launch criteria, which he followed for every mission.

Six missions were executed prior to 3 October, three during the day and three at night. Two were convoy hits that turned into strongpoint missions. During one mission, we infiltrated by vehicle rather than helicopter. Another mission involved

exfiltrating by foot, trying not to establish a pattern. Both sides took some casualties, but no one from Task Force Ranger had been killed, yet. Several militia and key leaders of the SNA were captured. The most significant was Osmond Ato, captured on 21 September. Mohamed Farrah Aideed was quoted as saying, "Those people (Task Force Ranger) are horrible and dangerous."⁵

On 3 October 1993, we received intelligence that two primary leaders of the clan's infrastructure were going to meet in a building near the Olympic Hotel, a known SNA headquarters. The gathering would include two Tier-One targets: Osmar Salad Elmi and Mohamed Hassan Awale. Further study of the area determined that the target was right in the middle of "bad guy" country.⁶ The Baccarra Market, one mile west of the target, a known militia gathering area, provided a concealed area for the distribution of weapons and munitions that were smuggled into the country. The Sheke Adere Compound, another known militia area, was one mile to the east. Intelligence reports, days prior, indicated that two hundred new militia from a foreign country had just arrived in Mogadishu, adding to the existing enemy force.

The chalk leaders were called into the JOC, and plans were discussed on how we would attack this strongpoint. As intelligence reports came in to the JOC confirming the targets, the Task Force, as a whole, was brought to a higher state of alert. At approximately 1523, the Commander gave the order to execute the mission. The chalk leaders quickly briefed their team leaders as they loaded the helicopters. Everyone was very sharp by this time and knew exactly what he had to do on the ground. As

I passed around my diagram of the objective for the Rangers to study. I discussed with the pilots exactly where we needed to be inserted.

At 1533, we launched.⁷ We approached the objective from the north. As we got closer, I was again amazed at how the pilots could navigate and avoid obstacles as they "flared hard" to stop on a dime. They put us exactly where they said they would. I could hear explosions that sounded rather close and I fought to swallow my heart again. Small arms fire cracked overhead as the helicopter, Super 65, pulled away.

Thankfully, the blocking position was established quickly, as crowds massed to its north and east. In addition to the militia, scores of Somalis sprinted through the streets in a confused melee. Every Somali in south Mogadishu who could put his hands on a weapon seemed to press toward the battle.⁸ SSG Yurek's team was oriented east and SSG Lycopulus's oriented north with SPC Nelson and his M60 crew. Both elements of Chalk 2 emplaced their chase teams, consisting of two rifleman, on the inside corners of the intersection facing the objective.
(Diagram)

SPC Coleman reported to me that he heard Chalk 4, SSG Eversmann, report a litter urgent casualty. At the same time, I noticed that I could not see SSG Eversmann's team from my position. This was a standard visual link up that all the chalk leaders conducted to ensure that we had mutually supporting blocking positions. SSG Eversmann reported that due to obstacles he inserted 100 meters short of his planned position.

I immediately moved my northern team further north to attempt visual recognition with Chalk 4 and possibly assist in casualty evacuation. Here was where we got our first look at the crowd that was forming to the north. We could also see SSG Eversmann's team moving the casualty and manning its blocking position.

Abandoned vehicles in the street provided good cover for my men. This was critical as several grenades came over a wall on the eastern side of the street. Some exploded; some did not. SPC Nelson, who was looking back in my direction when the grenades came over the wall, screamed to me and pointed to the wall. Both primary teams were in contact. The only men that were available to take action were SPC Coleman, SPC Struzik, and SSG Lycopulus, and me. We moved across the street and stacked near the half-open gate. It all happened very fast. I took out a fragmentation grenade; pulled the pin; let the spoon go; counted 1000, 2000; and threw it through the gate. As soon as it exploded, we moved through the gate and scanned our sectors. We cleared the lot and captured four POWs. During this action, the code word for "targets secure" was sent over the radio. The assault force had captured Awale, Salad Elmi, and others. All we had to do now was move to the extraction site. We had planned to move by foot and link up with the vehicles approximately 200 hundred meters away.

At this point, the whole operation changed. SPC Thomas, my forward observer, was calling Super 61 to help disperse the large crowd to our north. Super 61 was a MH-60 (Blackhawk) that provided a sniper platform to aid in aerial security and surveillance. The blackhawk was coming in from our northeast when

a rocket propelled grenade (RPG) hit it. The aircraft spiraled down and crashed approximately four hundred meters away. SPC Thomas, seeing the whole thing, yelled to SPC Coleman, who, in turn, told me that a "bird had gone down."

By this time, SSG Yurek had come over to my position. I told him to keep his team at the blocking position. I took SPC Nelson's M60 team and SSG Lycopolus's team, a total of eight men, and started moving towards the crash site. As we started running, I noticed that the crowd to our north had also seen the crash. They were paralleling our movement with the same intent: to get to the crash site first. SPC Coleman called the company commander during the movement and told him what we were doing.

It seemed like every window and door had a weapon firing from it. As we made the last turn, I was shocked to see that a AH-6, Little Bird, had landed in the street just behind the downed helicopter. Bullets were popping off the walls and ground from every direction. As I stumbled over two dead bodies, I could see one pilot firing his weapon from inside the cockpit, while steadying the aircraft with one hand on the joystick. He looked right at me as I tapped the top of my head, questioning the headcount. He shook his head no. I then knew there were more casualties. Simultaneously, the other pilot, was trying to load two friendly casualties into the rear compartment of the AH-6 helicopter. As I ran around the tail, the little bird strained to lift off in a hail of gunfire and RPG explosions. One of those casualties died enroute to the hospital.

Through the concealment of the rotorwash, I moved across the

street to the downed helicopter. SPC Nelson immediately positioned his team facing north to keep the crowd that had rounded the corner from overwhelming the crash site. I told SSG Lycopulus to secure the northeastern side, at the same time directing SSG Yurek to come to the crash site. There was constant firing going on. I could not hear myself scream. There were several Somalis already climbing on the helicopter. Once they saw us, they decided to leave. Kneeling beside me, SPC Coleman was struck in the left ear flap of his helmet with an AK-47 round. It knocked him flat on his back. I thought he was dead. Luckily, he jumped back up after a few seconds and assured me that he was O.K. SPC Coleman continued to demonstrate exceptional physical stamina and mental courage, never removing the 27 pound radio from his back.

A crew chief was stumbling around with his hands over his face. SPC Coleman tackled him and tried to keep him out of the line of fire. I moved to a corner to position SSG Yurek's team as it came around the corner. All of a sudden, I could not breathe or see anything due to intense rotorwash and brownout. The Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) helicopter, Super 68, hovered just overhead, inserting its teams, consisting of Special Forces medics and Ranger security elements. This CSAR team was developed for such a contingency, and I was very happy to see them. However, as the teams fast roped to the ground, an RPG hit the tail of the helicopter. The pilot naturally lurched the bird up and away but instantly remembered that there were men still on the rope. He miraculously settled the aircraft down to hover

again until the last soldier was off the rope. The crew chiefs cut the ropes and the chopper limped back to the airfield. Machine gun fire strafed Super 68 constantly until it left the area.

As the CSAR teams started treating the casualties from the crash, I linked up and positioned SSG Yurek's team on the southwestern side of the crash. I also sent SPC Gould's M60 crew, that traveled with SSG Yurek, to the northeast with SSG Lycopulus.

For the ninety U.S. soldiers consolidating near the helicopter, Freedom Road and the adjoining alley had become a killing zone. AK-47 bullets flew overhead with a loud pop, punctuated by the shriek of RPGs. As the teams fought to keep the crowds back, target identification was becoming a problem. There were combatants mixed in the crowds of non-combatants. Women and children were screaming and running at us from all directions. Some of them had weapons, and some did not. The weapons ranged from machine guns to small knives and machetes. Some men were standing near the corners of the buildings; they looked like they were non-combatants, just observing the action. Unknown to us, another man, hiding around the corner, would reload a weapon and hand it to the man that was in sight. The man at the corner would fire the weapon as fast as he could, hand it back to the loader, and just smile and wave his hands at us.

Women would walk in front of the men, acting as human shields. The man would fire his weapon from behind and under the armpits of the woman as they both walked towards us. The soldiers

did not know what to do at first. Some soldiers yelled across the streets at me, asking what to do. Small children had weapons. Sometimes, they were more of a threat because they had no fear.

The CSAR team was trying to stabilize the casualties and protect them from further injury by the gunfire. SGT John Bellman was using the Kevlar floor boards from inside the helicopters as makeshift walls to protect the medics and casualties; however the 7.62 bullets were passing right through them. The CSAR Team Commander informed me that one of the pilots, killed during the crash, was trapped inside the helicopter.

When the helicopter crashed, it made a large hole in the side of the building directly southeast of where it landed. The decision was made to try to move the casualties inside the building for better protection. Both SPC Coleman and the radioman from the CSAR element were trying to get vehicles from the ground force up to the crash site for evacuation, but the vehicles never made it. Some were ambushed enroute, and others just could not make their way through the maze of streets. The lightly armored HMMWV was not that well protected against several volleys of RPG hits.

Every time someone tried to pick up a litter, he drew fire. It was as if the enemy could see our every move. One soldier and I tried to pick up one end of a litter when a bullet pierced through the soldier's right rear hip, knocking him over. The decision was made that we would wait until dark to move the casualties inside the building.

It felt like hours just lying there, waiting for the

darkness. The teams had settled into good positions and were successfully keeping the crowds away from us. It was during this time that SPC Coleman told me Super 64, CW3 Durant's helicopter, had gone down. I wondered to myself if the rest of the Task Force could get to Super 64. All of us knew exactly who Super 64 was. I realized we would be here a while.

Directly northwest of the downed helicopter, on the other side of the wall, people were throwing hand grenades onto the helicopter. Some exploded; some did not. The RPG shots never seemed to slow down. The enemy knew that we were around the craft, and if they shot at the craft, they would hit us. They were right; all of us around the immediate area of the crash received shrapnel wounds.

When darkness fell, we immediately started moving the casualties into the building. The litter patients went first, then the walking wounded, and then the dead. Once we were inside the building, the next problem was finding a way out that would not expose us to fire. SFC Lamb and some of my team members cleared the rest of the building in reconnaissance of a safe evacuation route. The compound we were in was actually two different homesteads separated by a wall within the compound. With the recommendation of SFC Lamb, I directed SSG Yurek's team to blow a hole through the wall to create our own route. We believed if we could get into this next building there would be an exit on the other side. We were right. The demolition charges made a perfect hole to carry the casualties through, and there was a gate on the far side of the building where we could pull up

vehicles. All we had to do now was wait for the vehicles.

We still had to provide security for the aircraft, while two-man teams continued to saw through the fuselage to free the pilot. The squadron commander and the other officers, virtually without debate and with universal acquiescence, decided that this comrade would not fall into enemy hands.¹⁰ At the crash site, that decision had already been made, to the very last man.

The Attack Helicopters (AH-6) executed continuous fire missions to provide aerial security around the crash site. They were our eyes and ears. Throughout the night, the pilots would call my forward observer with reports of "10 or 15 gunman, running toward your position from the north, stand by." ¹¹ These brave pilots logged a record of 18 hours of flight. In teams of two, they would rotate to the airfield, rearm/refuel, and return to continue the mission. As they flew overhead, firing, the hot brass would burn our necks as it rained down from above. While the AH-6s worked, a Black Hawk dropped medical supplies, ammunition, and cans of water to the men below. Most of the 100 task force soldiers had been wounded. ¹²

As my RTO tried to keep track of 3rd Platoon, the vehicle convoy, the medics continued to sustain the wounded. We ran out of morphine and decided to save our last intravenous solution bag (IV) for the first casualty that slipped into shock. We had given all our water to the casualties or had consumed it, and the men were showing signs of severe dehydration.

SFC Lamb found a water spicket in the courtyard (See diagram). We used our purification tablets and passed around the

canteen. I was unsure about drinking it, fearing the risk of disease, but we all critically needed water.

The firing had calmed down to just sporadic skirmishes. Once in a while, a few gunmen would attempt to run down the street at us, but we were ready and had the AH-6s on call. I could hear in the distance the sound of 50. caliber machine gun fire. This was the rest of the ground force trying to break through the road blocks to get to us. I wondered how long it would take them.

The casualties were very brave, refraining from crying out in pain or making too much noise. It was very dark inside the rooms. If any of us used any type of light, he would be shot at. After the first couple of times, we learned that we were still being observed by gunmen. Total non-mission capable casualties at the site were 13: two KIA, three litter urgent, and eight walking wounded. Between the CSAR element and Chalk 2 we did not have enough men to carry the casualties and secure the crash site at the same time. We were not going to leave the crash site without the trapped pilot.

At around 040200 Oct, two Malasian APCs drove by the intersection that we were observing. I ran out after the vehicles with SGT Bellman and backed them up as close to the gate as we could get them. I had never seen these vehicles up close before and had to search for the door. Once we found the door, it would not open, it was locked from the inside to prevent unwanted passengers from entering the vehicle. The Malasian driver and track commander were the only soldiers aboard, and they were not about to leave their stations to open the hatch. After some

yelling and banging on the windshield with my rifle butt, they understood that we could not get the doors open.

The vehicles were a welcome sight; however, they also attracted gunfire. The worst part was that the seats were still in place, and there was no room for three litters. We could only fit one litter casualty in the APC at a time. The walking wounded had to stand around the litter, hanging onto whatever they could on the inside. We also put one of the KIA up on top of the APC.

The second APC carried the next most critical litter casualty and the rest of the walking wounded. We still had one litter casualty and the one trapped KIA pilot. I looked out across the intersection and saw a HMMWV pulling security to the west. I ran over and told the crew that we had a litter casualty that needed to be evacuated. They drove the HMMWV over to the gate and jettisoned everything that they had in the back to fit the casualty. They also gave us some lifesaving water.

With all of the casualties evacuated, we could now concentrate on the trapped pilot. At one point, a 10th Mountain Division HMMWV was used to try to pull the aircraft away from the body. At around 040500, the sun started to come up, and it was time to make a decision as to how much longer we could stay in position and survive.

Finally, the medics freed the pilot, and he was put on a HMMWV to be brought back to the airfield. It was now time to exfiltrate. We placed demolition charges and incendiary grenades on the helicopter to destroy any remaining equipment that we could not take with us. As we moved across the street to link up

with the rest of the company, I could hear the explosions and see the black smoke rising above the helicopter where friends had died.

It was good to see familiar faces. Larry Perino, 1st Platoon Leader, was a close friend, and I had listened on the radio as he reported the status of one of his team leaders who was mortally wounded. CPT Steele briefed us that we would have to move by foot to National Street, approximately two miles away. From there we would link up with Malasian and Pakistan armored vehicles, HMMWVs from the 10th Mountain Division and our ground force, Third Platoon.

Everyone was exhausted. Lt. Perino's platoon, Chalks 1 and 3, would lead the run out; my Chalk 2 would pull rear security. Chalk 4, the other element of my platoon, had exfiltrated back to the airfield on HMMWVs, after numerous attempts to link up with me, at the crash site.

Chalks 1 and 3 (First Platoon) split their forces on either side of the road. I did not have enough men, so we all stayed close together and on the same side. I can remember how tired everyone looked and how I felt. As we came to major intersections, I watched Rangers summon all their energy to sprint across the intersection. Bullets strafed the streets, kicking dirt up around their feet. When it was my turn to cross, I backed up two or three paces to get a running start. The man in front of me, SPC Strous, our Company medic, had just been hit in the ammo pouch of his pistol belt. The bullet ignited a smoke grenade, ultimately burning his leg. He was able to recover the

bullet that lodged in his pistol belt and now wears it around his neck for good luck. Another bullet passed through the empty canteen and canteen cup of another Ranger.

Luckily, my Rangers and I made the run relatively uninjured and now awaited our turn to load a Malaysian APC or U.S. HMMWV at the link up point on National Street. After a seemingly endless cramped ride in the back of a HMMWV, we arrived at the Pakistani Stadium. The Pakistanis had converted an old athletic stadium into their headquarters. When I looked around, I could see bodies lying everywhere. Wounded comrades--from Pakistan--and Malaysia; but mostly American friends. It was here that I learned of the death of one of my team leaders, SGT Casey Joyce. He was killed moving with Chalk 4, trying to get to the crash site after the team had evacuated PFC Blackburn. Blackburn had been severely injured during the insertion. All my emotions and fatigue came together in a slap of reality.

As I continued to walk around the stadium, visiting with the other wounded, I saw several foreign soldiers filming the dead and wounded with a home video camera. I can remember getting very angry and trying to take the cameras away. I thought it very unprofessional and indecent to film what was going on. They eventually stopped filming.

I eventually returned to the airfield where another medical team was working on lots of casualties. It was a MASH unit. It seemed to be doing a great job prepping the wounded for the flight to a German hospital. 2nd Platoon sustained 9 wounded in action that were evacuated to hospitals in Germany and 1 killed

in action. All returned home to the United States.

There have been many After Action Reports and "armchair quarterbacking" about the mission. Task Force Ranger had accomplished what it had set out to do, snaring two dozen key members of Aideed's staff. ¹³ We learned many lessons about urban warfare, and leaders are already incorporating them into future training. I learned more than I can express about the human dimension of warfare. The training that we are conducting today, in our Army, works. As an Army officer, I am fortunate to have witnessed the essence of Infantry training: shoot, move, and communicate. I am also one of the most unfortunate Army officers; having felt the weight of a dead American warrior in my arms.

Eighteen U.S. soldiers were killed and 84 wounded. Somali leaders say they had 312 killed and 814 wounded. ¹⁴

When the President or Congress tells a soldier to go and do a mission, the soldier accepts it and will do everything in his power to accomplish that mission. ¹⁵

The hours of fighting contained the most intense combat by U.S. Infantrymen since Vietnam, with consequences that immediately altered U.S. policy toward Somalia and are likely to shape American involvement in future foreign entanglements. ¹⁶

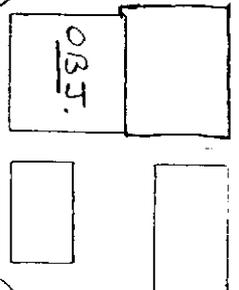
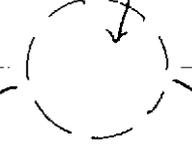
On January 18, 1994, the last eight Somali prisoners in U.N. custody were released. This included three of Aideed's lieutenants; Osmar Salad Elmi and Mohamed Hassan Awale, captured by Task Force Ranger on 3 October 1993 and Osman Ato, captured in mid-September. On 20 January, these men gathered with hundreds of other Somalis at the parade ground on Via Lenin in a boisterous

rally to celebrate their new found freedom.

LARGE CROWD RACED US TO DOWNED HELICOPTER.



MARK 4
USITED
ERE DUE
DEBRIS
OBTACLES
EAR OBT.



3

OLYMPIC HOTEL

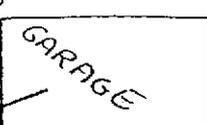
CHALK # 1

1

CHALK # 2

2

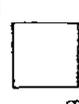
Enemy throws H. Grenades AT BP # 2.



CROWD



TREE



GREEN FIAT CAR



LITTLE BIRD LANDED



ENEMY HAND TURBOS GRANDES OVER WALL



H2O SPICKETT

Blow Hole IN WALL TO MAKE EVAC. ROUTE.

wounded ARE CARRIED TO THIS EVAC. POINT. (GATE)

0200 ON 4 OCT. MAJASIN APC'S EVAC. WOUNDED. EVERYONE ELSE XFILS BY FOOT, ONCE PILOT IS FREED FROM HELICOPTER AT 0500.

CHK 1, 3 + ASSLT FORCE TRY TO LINK UP W/ CHALK 2 AT HELICOPTER.

CHALK # 3

LESSONS LEARNED

It is important for the reader to understand that this monograph is of only one point of view. Other men saw the Battle from different points on the battlefield, specifically the Third Platoon Leader Lt. Larry Moores. His platoon tried three different times to reach the downed helicopters, meeting heavy resistance each time. This monograph is a fraction of events that occurred on 3-4 October. It does not do justice to the acts of bravery and mental/physical endurance exhibited by members of Task Force Ranger. Actions of 2-14 IN BN; 10th MTN Division and the Malasian and Pakistan Units were critical in the ultimate evacuation of the wounded.

Lessons Learned included:

1. Advanced Medical Training must be continuously taught and practiced in all aspects of training.
2. Physical Training can not be emphasized enough. Physical endurance will play a major role in your force being able to continue the fight.
3. Great marksmanship is critical. Also, all soldiers should cross train with all the weapon systems in their unit.
4. Units should cross train with communications, vehicles and any other equipment found in their own units and units from other countries that are involved with the operation.
5. A Combat Search and Rescue Helicopter should be designated for air assault operations; peacetime or combat. The skills of recovering crew members from inside an aircraft and the process

of securing the crash site should be rehearsed as a special team mission at platoon level.

6. Whenever possible train with the true soldiers load weight.

7. Carry live ammunition whenever possible. even if you are just doing a road march. The soldiers need to become intimately familiar with what their equipment feels and looks like.

8. I believe that if you have great squads that can shoot, move and communicate well; you will have good platoons. And good platoons make a great company. Train as decentralized as possible. This will breed initiative and trust among your junior leaders.

9. Train like you are going to fight.

10. You will fight as you trained.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Inouye. "Rangers Lead the Way". Senate Congressional Record in Washington. November 10, 1993.

This record will show the reader the Congressional point of view concerning Ranger operations in Somalia.

Joyce, Larry, E. "Unfortunate Losses Have Names". Newsweek, April 11, 1994.

This source adds a human dimension to the story. The article was written by Larry E. Joyce, the father of one of those "unfortunate losses". SGT. James C. Joyce, was a member of Bravo Company, and a team leader in my platoon.

Atkinson, Rick. "Firefight in Mogadishu, The Last Mission of Task Force Ranger". The Washington Post, January 30 and 31, 1994. (Two Parts)

This article narrates the battle from both sides of the street. The author actually interviewed commanders from the Somalia Militia, who fought against American Soldiers. It also shows aspects of the human factor; when a Somali commander speaks about why he didn't use mortar fire on the crash site. This is the most detailed and accurate source I have read on the Battle.

McConnel, Malcolm. "Betrayal in Somalia". Reader's Digest, April 1994.

This article will help in the narration of the battle. It shows the sequence in which each event occurred. It sharply explains how the U.S. was seeking a diplomatic approach, while the U.N. demanded Aidid and his high command captured.

Di Tomasso, Thomas, R. Personal journal, maps and notes.

FOOTNOTES

1. Di Tomasso, Thomas, R. Personal Journal.
2. Atkinson, Rick. "Firefight in Mogadishu, The Last Mission of Task Force Ranger". The Washington Post, January 30 and 31, 1994. (Two Parts), Part 1, A27.
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6. McConnel, Malcolm. "Betrayal in Somalia". Reader's Digest, April 1994, p. 65
7. Ibid. p. 66.
8. Atkinson, Rick. "Firefight in Mogadishu, The Last Mission of Task Force Ranger". The Washington Post, January 30 and 31, 1994. (Two Parts), Part 2, A1.
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16. Atkinson, Rick. "Firefight in Mogadishu, The Last Mission of Task Force Ranger". The Washington Post, January 30 and 31, 1994. (Two Parts), Part 2, A4.