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SNIPER IN

TERROR AT THE DOOR

AFGHANISTAN

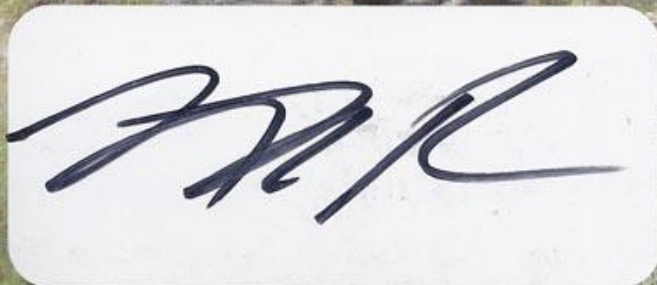
OPERATION TYRUNA

A.R.M.S., STINGERS, AND CHARLIE'S WAR

GLOBEMASTER III

KEL-TEC's RFB

WORLD TERROR UPDATE



SECRET WAR IN LAOS

JUNE 2010



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SNIPER in AFGHANISTAN

TWO-KILOMETER SHOT WASTES BAD GUY

By Joseph DeBergalis

A brief description of the events of 2 January, 2008, in the Hindu Kush mountains of Kunar Province, Afghanistan, in the words of Sergeant Nicholas M. Ranstad, U.S. Army. At the time, he was assigned as a sniper to Recon Platoon "Hatchet," Task Force Saber, 1-91st Cavalry, 173rd Airborne Brigade.

FOUR POSSIBLE ACM, 2 CLICKS OUT

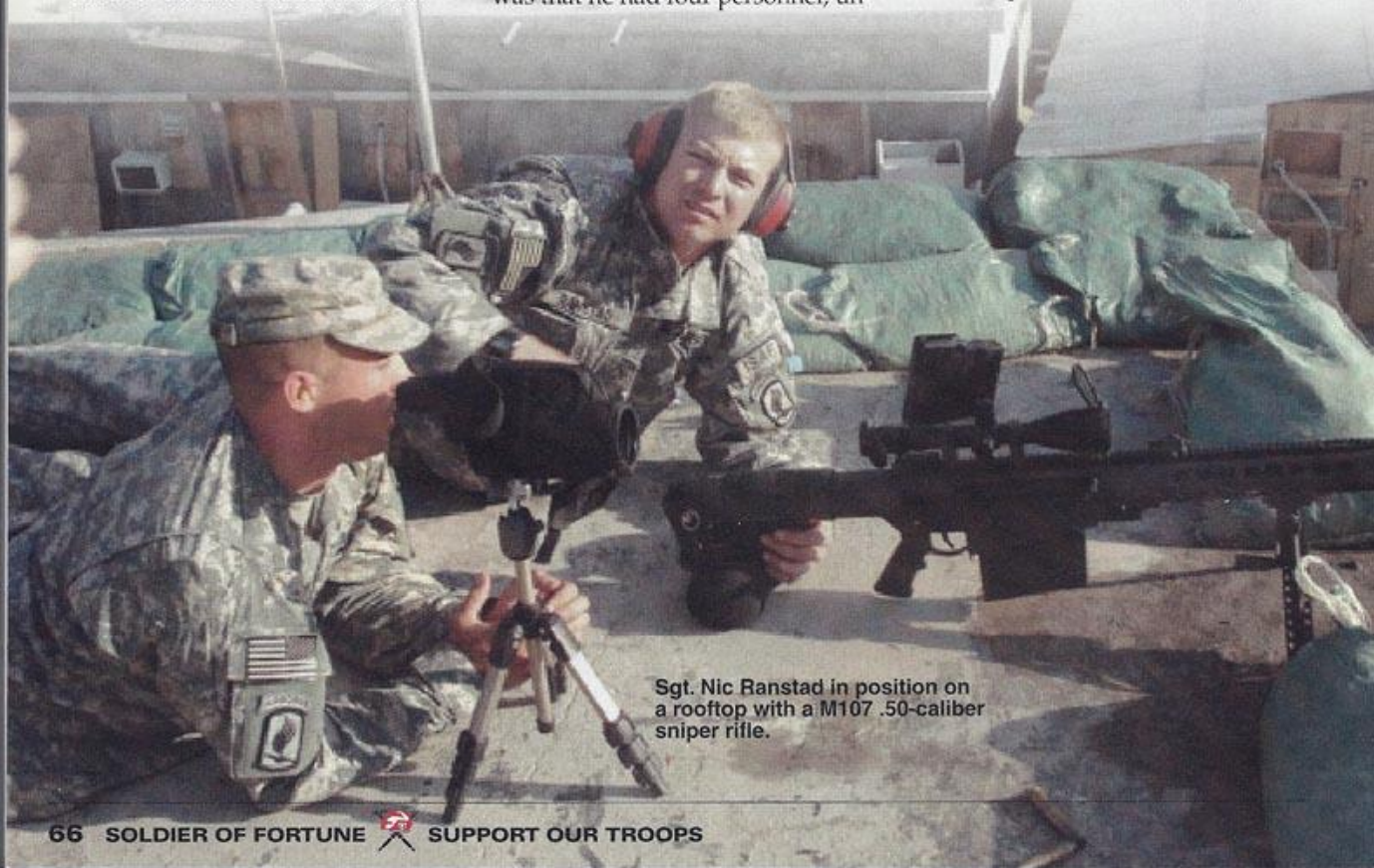
"My platoon was manning Checkpoint Delta, a traffic control point (TCP) preventing supplies going north to the anti-Coalition militia

(ACM) on the border with Pakistan. I had just come off of guard duty around midday and was about twenty minutes into my nap when SPC Simpson (my spotter) came running into our hooch. He informed me that SGT Lovett, who had relieved me, had just spotted four possible ACM about 2 kilometers (klicks) out. I jumped out of my cot, threw on my boots, grabbed my Barrett and equipment bag and ran toward the guard post. As I approached I hollered at SGT Lovett, asking him what we had. His reply was that he had four personnel, un-

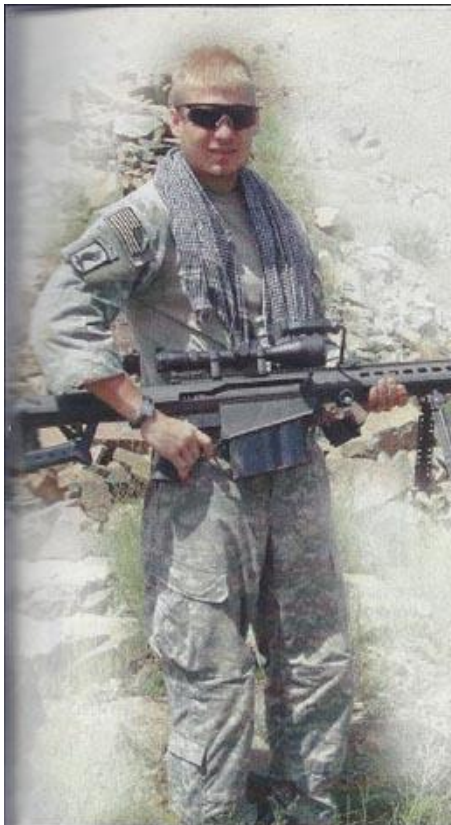
known if they were armed, but it was obvious that they were reconnoitering and they didn't know or realize that he had spotted them.

DIALED IN

SPC Simpson and I took a position on top of the Afghan National Police (ANP) hooch. Fellow snipers SPC White and SPC Schuch joined us to provide suppressive fire if needed and we all started to set up. All the while I could hear my platoon sergeant, SFC Condra, and SSG Morrow on the radios squawking to the tactical operations center (TOC). As I



Sgt. Nic Ranstad in position on a rooftop with a M107 .50-caliber sniper rifle.



Sgt. Nicholas Ranstad in Afghanistan with a Barrett M107 .50-caliber sniper rifle, the system used in making a 2100-meter shot. The Barrett's magazine holds ten rounds.

MISSED LOW

I pulled short, missing the initial target low, and immediately switched to the secondary as they began to scatter, not knowing where the shot had come from. The secondary hid in front of a boulder, not realizing that he had exposed himself to me. SPC

Simpson, with no calculations, did an on-the-spot correction through his spotting scope. Without taking my eye from the scope or off the target, I adjusted my mildots to 7 up and 3 left, and fired. Four seconds later, plus or minus, the second target began rolling down the mountain. Then, even though their targets were pretty much out of range, the others opened up trying to provide suppressive fire. SGT Lovett was firing the M240 from his gun truck, with SPC White and SPC

Schuch adding to that with the M14 and M110 Semi-Automatic Sniper System (SASS), respectively. The re-

maining three ACM then took cover together behind a massive boulder. I knew we had an Apache attack helicopter (call sign "Gunmetal") on station, so I kept firing at the boulder to force their heads down and keep them from running.

ACM WAXED BY AN APACHE

When the Apache responded and arrived overhead, the pilot radioed in requesting target locations. SFC Condra informed the pilot that I was firing armor piercing incendiary (API) rounds at the boulder and they were deflecting off of it (the API rounds were creating a lot of sparks on impact). The pilot then radioed back that she could see the rounds hitting the boulder. She swung around, targeted the enemy, rolled in and went black on ammo, firing all of her 30mm cannon rounds and Hellfire missiles. The end result was four dead bad guys. SPC Hill (our grill man) did up a bunch of steaks on our homemade 55-gallon drum BBQ that evening. All in all, a productive day." 

got set up and looked through my scope, I spotted the four possible ACM. SPC Simpson had my data on previous engagements (DOPE) book and dialed me in. We knew the area very well and used their exact location to gather DOPE all the time. Our initial estimate showed the ACM were 2100 meters down the lock, a river valley between two of the mountains that marked the Afghan-Pakistani border, a reference point known as a 60-inch shot group. Our Long Range Advanced Scout Surveillance System (LRAS) truck verified the distance and we waited. As I observed the four unknowns, I confirmed that they were all carrying AK47s and yelled back to SFC Condra and SSG Morrow that they were armed. SFC Condra relayed that information up to TOC and while he was doing that, I targeted the first one and continued to observe him. As we waited, SPC Simpson and I also established DOPE on our secondary target. Seconds later SFC Condra gave the order for weapon release. I started my breathing and [trigger] pull. SPC Simpson said "send it."