

## Army Deserter Bowe Bergdahl to Plead Guilty



***Summary:** Army Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl is expected to plead guilty to desertion and misbehavior before the enemy for his actions in 2009.*

After deserting his post and getting caught by the Taliban in 2009, Army Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl is expected to plead guilty to the charges against him instead of going to trial, according to the Associated Press. The Idaho native will submit his plea sometime in the next few weeks with the sentencing phase to begin October 23.

Bergdahl will plead to desertion and misbehavior before the enemy, which could cost him a maximum of five years behind bars for desertion and a possible life sentence for misbehavior. He had been serving with an Alaska-based infantry regiment in Afghanistan in 2009 when he was 23-years-old. After he left his post, he was captured by the Taliban and held for years. He claims he was caged, kept in the dark, beaten and chained to a bed as a prisoner.

The Taliban posted a video to the internet with Bergdahl saying he was “scared” he would not be able to go back home. Another video in December of 2009 showed him looking healthy while he delivered a long and critical statement about US military operations.

Bergdahl was eventually released in May of 2014 in an exchange for five Taliban detainees held at Guantanamo Bay. The swap of prisoners was seen in a controversial light since it involved negotiating with hostage takers. The exchange then put Bergdahl into the spotlight of either being a hero or a deserter.

President Barack Obama approved of the swap, defending it while standing next to Bergdahl’s father in the White House Rose Garden. Obama said the US does not “leave our men or women in uniform behind.” He said the way that Bergdahl was captured does not matter. “Whatever those circumstances may turn out to be, we still get an American soldier back if he’s held in captivity. Period. Full stop.”

Bergdahl was formally charged in March 2015. He had requested a pardon from Obama before he left office but the pardon was not granted. He claims he was lagging behind a patrol when he was captured. He also claimed he left his post so others would know about the problems he saw within his unit. Investigators believe he was suffering from schizotypal personality disorder when he left his post.

Many of his fellow soldiers hold him responsible for the injuries they received while looking for him. A judge contends that a Navy SEAL and Army National Guard sergeant would not have been in the midst of separate firefights if they hadn’t been out searching for him. US troop members who sustained serious injuries during their search for him in Afghanistan will be allowed to testify during sentencing.

Current President Donald Trump is certainly not going to help Bergdahl out. He called the soldier a “dirty, rotten traitor” during his presidential campaign in August 2015. Trump, of course, took to Twitter to voice his opinion of Bergdahl as well. He tweeted that the deserter should “face the death penalty.”

Should the United States negotiate with terrorists? Share your thoughts with us in the comments below.

**To learn more about Bowe Bergdahl, read these articles:**

- [Obama Calls Out Companies That Switch Addresses for Tax Purposes](#)
- [Why Are Bowe Bergdahl's Lawyers Blasting Donald Trump?](#)

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