



(U) Having the (SIGINT) Time of My Life!

FROM: SMSgt [REDACTED]
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What's it like to work as an NSA representative in Afghanistan? (C)

(U//FOUO) On Wednesday, 30 March 05, **First Lady Laura Bush** made a trip to Afghanistan to help celebrate and foster the advancement for women in Afghanistan. I was extremely fortunate to be a part of the VIP escort team that would assist the First Lady and other Cabinet Officials and Staff Officers when they arrived to Bagram Air Base for a special celebration dinner. During the dinner, Ms. Connie Duckworth, First Lady Laura Bush's Staff Officer for Afghanistan Women's Affairs, asked me a question on how I was enjoying my time here at Bagram AB (Afghanistan). My answer came without hesitation, "I have never in my entire life felt so honored to be an American, so proud to be in the military...and Ma'am, the work of the United States military, along with our coalition partners IS MAKING AMERICA SAFER...truly Ma'am, ***I am having the time of my life!***"

[REDACTED]

(U) First Lady Laura Bush and SMSgt [REDACTED] (CSG Bagram) during a celebration dinner held at Bagram AB, Afghanistan

(C) I'm a 40 year old, Senior Master Sergeant, with 18+ years in the service. I am the single parent of twin 6-year-old girls, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] who are my entire world...so what am I doing in Afghanistan? I'll tell you what I am doing; I am fighting a "**SIGINT**" war in support of OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM where 80% of the actionable intelligence for CJTF-76 Forces comes out of the Cryptologic Support Groups (CSG). When CJTF-76 "actions" a target, they head straight to the CSG and ask for information that almost always is the deciding factor on whether or not a "target" is actioned...and CSG analysts are "Johnny-on-the-Spot" every time. My OIC (Officer in Charge), Army MAJ Eric Toler, and I literally comment to one another on a daily basis how tremendous this experience is...and how incredibly exciting our mission. Our daily saying to each other... ***"Isn't it awesome to be relevant!"***

(S//SI) I truly had no idea how this opportunity to serve in the SIGINT enterprise was going to manifest itself in a CSG...so I kept my eyes wide-open. Within hours of touching ground at Bagram I was in the office meeting my troops and learning the mission...and I quickly found out I was in for the ride of my life! Over the course of several days and subsequent weeks, I was involved with a myriad of real-time situations where most of the INTs (HUMINT, IMINT, MASINT, SIGINT) were brought to bear on capturing or killing substantiated "bad guys". ***But what was most striking was no matter what INT they had on a target, the decision makers almost always held out for SIGINT corroboration before giving the go-ahead to action a target.*** For the first time in this old-SIGINTer's life did I really grasp the impact SIGINT had on theater operations.

(S) CSG Bagram has benefited immensely from the OIC, MAJ Toler. MAJ Toler is an Army tactical guy with a tremendous wealth of SIGINT experience...thus, has a unique ability to facilitate National-level SIGINT assets to the forward-most tactical elements located at Forward Operating Bases (FOBs). Another one of his "talents" is securing transportation on rotary-wing aircraft...and the Office of Target Reconnaissance and Survey (OTRS) were one of many beneficiaries of MAJ Toler's "connections" with flight operations.

[REDACTED]

(U) SMSgt [REDACTED] with Afghanistan National Army soldiers at Lwara Forward Operating Base

(Camp Tillman) after a successful OTRS mission.

(TS//SI) On 21 March 05, I had the great privilege of deploying forward with the OTRS team to FOB Lawara (renamed Camp Tillman), located on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border in the province of Paktika. On this mission OTRS personnel were responsible for the installation of collection "leave-behind" assets that directly support forward SIGINT teams by providing collection capability for VHF/UHF signals in denied access terrain. For this mission our objective was to install three systems and recover one. One of these systems to be installed was on the top of a mountain ridge, approximately 8,100 feet above sea level, and an estimated 1,200 meters from the Pakistan border (and a host of nefarious miscreants). The installation of this system was critical to the FOB SIGINT team because it denied Anti-Coalition Militants (ACMs) unrestricted access to a tactically advantageous ridge used as a staging location to rocket and mortar Coalition Forces. The mission was a complete success, as the OTRS systems installed provided **82 Klieglights**

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