

Somalia (1992-1994)

December 1992 – A U.N. peacekeeping force, including 2,000 U.S. Marines, is sent to restore order between warring factions in Somalia. Other international agencies attempt to distribute food and other humanitarian aid. For the first time ever, the United Nations is engaged in an "armed humanitarian intervention" called **Operation Restore Hope**.

U.N. peacekeeping forces eventually become involved in the violence and a number of U.N. soldiers are killed. In **October 1993**, the U.S. ends its five-month search for General Aidid after 18 U.S. soldiers are killed and some of their corpses are dragged through the streets of Mogadishu. International pressure becomes more intense. In **1994** U.N. forces are withdrawn.

I am voting in honor of my brother-in-law, Staff Sergeant Thomas J. Field, who served on a Blackhawk helicopter in the Army. He had just recently re-enlisted and was engaged to be married when he was shot down in Somalia. His body was dragged through the streets as a trophy. He is truly missed.

Shannon R. Voigt, Lisbon Falls

Master Sergeant Gary L. Gordon, of Lincoln, while serving in the U.S. Army in Somalia, "distinguished himself by actions above and beyond the call of duty on 3 October 1993, as Sniper Team Leader, United States Army Special Operations Command with Task Force Ranger in Mogadishu, Somalia. Master Sergeant Gordon's sniper team provided precision fires from the lead helicopter during an assault and at two helicopter crash sites...He and another sniper unhesitatingly volunteered to be inserted to protect the four critically wounded personnel...Equipped with only his sniper rifle and a pistol, Master Sergeant Gordon and his fellow sniper...fought their way through a dense maze of shanties and shacks to reach the critically injured crew members...Then, armed only with his pistol, Master Sergeant Gordon continued to fight until he was fatally wounded. His actions saved the pilot's life. Master Sergeant Gordon's extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest standards of military service and reflect great credit upon his unit and the United States Army."

*from **United States of America's Congressional Medal of Honor Recipients and Their Official Citation**, provided by the Office of the Adjutant General, State of Maine*

In **mid-1994**, the last of the U.S. troops leave Somalia. Somali leaders continue fighting. International relief organizations suspend their operations.

No military, political or economic solutions have yet been found to alleviate the unrest in Somalia.

Additional Tributes Submitted Online

Tribute to my Friend, Gary Gordon:

A different breed. A man all Mainers and Americans can be proud of.

Michael Smith, Peaks Island, Maine