



Mustang News



Vol. 28 No. 2

Quarterly Newsletter of the National Order of Battlefield Commissions

Summer 2007

Fellow Mustangs and Ladies:

I hope this message finds all who are reading in good health and spirits. Spring has sprung in your Nation's Capitol with the cherry blossoms now gone, but beautiful when they were at their peak. We now have the ubiquitous yellow pollen covering our automobiles, windowsills and walkways. Part of the spring rights of passage to summer, so we can begin to carp about the high temperatures and humidity.

My tenure as the 16th National Commander is winding down. This is my next-to-the-last Commander's Message. I have had the honor of being your commander for three years, which have literally flown by. I guess it is true, as one grows older time does begin to fly. Looking back, I can remember it seemed like an eternity between Thanksgiving and Christmas. This was when I still believed in Santa Claus. Now I hardly have time to finish reading my 2006 Christmas cards when it is time to write the 2007 versions. By the way, I still do believe in Santa Claus.

I was chatting with my barber a couple weeks ago. Seems he received a battlefield commission in Italy after the Anzio invasion. He is

Commander's Message

by *Robert Evans*



a first generation American of Italian-born parents. He speaks Italian and was very valuable to the allies as they moved north through Italy. At any rate, he does not want to join NOBC. He says he is not a joiner and prefers to let his past stay his past. I write this only because it makes me wonder how many more WWII and Korean veterans there are who have not come forward and responded to the several notices NOBC has included in military-related publications.

October is essentially just around the corner. Do look for the information, in this Mustang News, on the venue for our October convention/reunion. Our Administration and Finance Officer, Stan Schmucker has been in contact with the folks at Myrtle Beach and

he says it is a winning location and proves to be a classic convention/reunion if we have a good turn out. So let us turn out this October 22 through 25 and make the 2007 convention/reunion one for the record books.

Our keynote speaker for our convention/reunion banquet will be the president of Soldiers For The Truth (SFTT) Roger Charles. Roger has an extensive military background and is an award winning investigative journalist. As you may know, Roger worked very closely with Colonel Hackworth, the person who founded SFTT. Colonel Hackworth and his wife Eilhys England appointed Roger as president. Since Colonel Hackworth's passing, Roger and Eilhys strive to carry on the Colonel's mission to promote military reform and provide America's Grunts with the best possible leadership and training, and the best-available equipment.

I'm running out of room, so I'll sign off here. One final note, if you are physically well and can spare the time; do plan to attend the October convention/reunion. I would very much like to see you all in the Foxhole to share old war stories.

Until October, have an enjoyable and safe summer.

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We Aren't Shocked Anymore

Let's continue to look at our society as we note the moral decline. Movies, TV and society in general now accept things that once shocked us. Now it seems they often amuse us. Lucille Ball once said, "I'm shocked that I'm not shocked anymore." People used to blush when they were ashamed. Now they are ashamed when they blush!



Warren Schilling

So let's also look at ourselves and God. God is a God of absolutes. He doesn't grade on the curve. No above average goodness will do. The Bible says "all have sinned and fall short of the Glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Sin is not just a mistake, it's lawlessness—we have violated God's law. It has consequences just as when police catch you breaking the law. You'll pay for it based on the judge's decision. But you can be pardoned. So with God. He has a pardon system also.

God's pardon system is not based on our doing good deeds to try to work our way into heaven. We can't put God in debt so that He owes us forgiveness. God never changes the standards of righteousness. "The only salvation for the individual or the nation is obedience to the revealed Word of God" (Thomas Marshall). As noted above, many in our nation are en-

slaved by things that used to shock us. "It is impossible to mentally or socially enslave a Bible reading people. Its principles are the groundwork of human freedom" (Horace Greeley). To the influence of the Bible we are indebted for progress made in true civiliza-

tion. It is impossible to rightly govern without God and the Bible. So if we are Bible readers and believers let's use these concepts to influence our leaders at all levels to get our nation back on track so that our society's moral activities don't continue to make us blush. It certainly won't change by itself.

But let's also look again at ourselves. I mentioned God's pardon system. Many people, even Bible readers, have not embraced it yet. Many others don't even know about it. We all need it but we must claim it. Someone said "You can't go back and make a new start, but you can start today and make a brand new ending." God's pardon system is the famous Bible passage in John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son so that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."

Spring 2001

From the Hawaii Editor's Desk

by Bill "Scotty" Wynn



Mustang News

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TAPS

for Mustangs answering
their final muster:

461-James Bobbett-UT
018-Ford N. Keyes-TN
632L-Jack L. Williamson-TN

Note: We depend on family members, friends and members to inform us of the deaths of our members. Please provide Stan Schmucker, Admin. & Fin. Officer, with pertinent information and details as soon as possible. Thank you.

Taps

There will be a great encampment
In the land of clouds today.
A mingling and a merging
Of our boys who've gone away.
Though on earth they are disbanding,
They are very close and near,
For those brave and honored heroes
Show no sorrow, shed no tear.
They have lived a life of glory,
History pins their medals high,
Listen to the thunder rolling,
They are marching in the sky!

--Artus Nottingham Chappus



A distraught senior citizen phoned her doctor's office. "Is it true that the medication you prescribed has to be taken for the rest of my life?"

"Yes, I'm afraid so," the doctor said.

There was a moment of silence before the senior lady replied, "I'm wondering, then, just how serious my condition is because the prescription is marked "NO REFILLS."

Aging: Eventually you will reach the point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it.

The older we get, the fewer things seem worth standing in line for.

You know you are getting old when everything dries up or leaks.

First you forget names, then you forget faces. Then you forget to pull up your zipper. It's worse when you forget to pull it down.

Letters from NOBC Next of Kin

NOBC widows or next of kin receive a plaque and citation honoring their late husbands from Gib Bolton

From Anne T. McLeod:

Thank you and all of the NOBC members for the beautiful plaque sent to me in memory of my husband Stanley McLeod.

He is greatly missed by my family and me. We were married for 59+ years. So he left my family and me with wonderful memories. He is now buried in Arlington Cemetery and was buried with full military honors. Again thank you so much for the wonderful gift.

Private to 2d Lieutenant?

Lloyd "Buck" Newsom #1097 asked how many Mustangs received their commissions while a Private.

Send your response to:

Stan Schmucker
1490 Independence Avenue,
Melbourne, FL 32940
or e-mail: stanobc@webtv.net.

Results will be published in the next issue.



Long ago when men cursed and beat the ground with sticks, it was called witchcraft. Today, it's called golf.

Some people try to turn back their odometers. Not me, I want people to know "why" I look this way. I've traveled a long way and some of the roads weren't paved.

I don't know how I got over the hill without getting to the top.

One of the things no one tells you about aging is that it is such a nice change from being young.

When you are dissatisfied and would like to go back to youth, think of Algebra.

Ah, being young is beautiful, but being old is comfortable.

"Be not afraid of greatness: Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them."

From Twelfth Night by William Shakespeare

Between two groups of men that want to make inconsistent kinds of worlds, I see no remedy but force...It seems to me that every society rests on the death of men.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

AWOL: The Unexcused Absence of the Upper Classes from Military Service — and How It Hurts Our Country *by Kathy Roth-Douquet and Frank Schaeffer*

Our book explores the disconnect between the leadership class and the military. Our experience opened our eyes to the problem. We come from privileged backgrounds. When Frank's son graduated from an exclusive Boston-area prep school and enlisted in the Marine Corps, his friends and neighbors wanted to know, "What went wrong?" Similarly demeaning questions were asked about Kathy's Marine officer husband: "Why would someone so smart want to be in the military?"

The misunderstanding of our loved ones' choice to serve made us think about how the military is perceived by the most privileged Americans. *AWOL* is about the schism between deciders and doers in America — between the leadership class and those who serve.

A Duke University study shows that the more veterans in staff and elected positions in the House, the Senate, and the executive branch, the less likely the U.S. is to get into aggressive wars. The study also shows that if the country is forced to go to war, the more veterans who are in leadership, the more likely we are to use greater force and stay longer to finish the job.

Another study by Northwestern University sociologist Dr. Charles Moskos, shows that democracies are unwilling to sustain military engagements over time if the children of all classes, including the elites, are not serving. Absent a fair representation of all classes, including the elites, the engagement seems less than serious, and long-term support evaporates. A disconnect between the military and the leadership class results in using the military unwisely and in a way the population won't support.

Right now we have a military that is called "all-volunteer." In fact it is a recruited military. It is being recruited mainly from "legacy families" — those with a family tradition of service — and the middle and working class from neighborhoods where a high proportion already serve. America's elites on our Ivy League campuses are not even asked to consider

service these days. And our military, our government, and the upper classes are satisfied with this situation. But is it fair? Will it work for the long term? Is it good for the country?

We honor our current military, but we believe the privileges of serving should extend to alumni of the Ivy League schools and to the children of the leaders of society too. We only need about 5 percent of these young people to serve to make their numbers proportionate — instead of the roughly 0.3 percent who currently do.

There are three options for our nation: 1) Have a mercenary of paid professionals; 2) allow the military to evolve as a separate class, recruiting mostly within its own family; or 3) return to the idea of a citizen military that is proportionately representative of all classes in a way that mirrors our democratic ideals (while retaining standards of professionalism). The dangers of options one and two have been well-discussed by military historians. In *AWOL*, we argue it is imperative to America's future that we reinvigorate the notion of national defense as a widely shared duty.

Kathy Roth-Douquet went to Princeton and served in the White House during the Clinton administration. Frank Schaeffer is a novelist and filmmaker. Together, they are the authors of AWOL. (Collins, 2006) From the Military Officer - March 2007.



A very gentle Southern lady was driving across the Savannah River Bridge in Georgia one day. As she neared the top of the bridge, she noticed a young man fixin' (ready) to jump. She stopped her car, rolled down the window and said, "Please don't jump, think of your dear mother and father." He replied, "Mom and dad are both dead; I'm going to jump." She said, "Well, think of your wife and children." He replied, "I'm not married and I don't have any kids." She said, "Well, think of Robert E. Lee." He replied, "Who's Robert E. Lee?" She replied, "Well bless your heart, just go ahead and jump, you dumb ass Yankee."

from Jim Plate

A Unique Gathering

by Robert C. Hunt, Jr.

Bob Hunt was a Combat Engineer in WWII, at 18 years old, he landed on Omaha Beach on D-Day. He fought throughout the European Theater and was awarded five battle stars. He is the Post Historian.

Without a call to do so, they come together at 10 o'clock in the morning every Thursday as they have for numberless Thursdays past, in the rear of a restaurant in a Connecticut municipality. Fifteen to twenty in number usually. None related by blood or marriage. Usually all male but not always. Many retired but some still working. It is not the meeting of any



organization. There is no agenda, no assigned seating at the table, no attendance taken, no one presides, no dues exacted and no prohibition on addressing the assemblage if one is so inclined, with the respectful attention if one does.

They converse in changing small enclaves principally about family, doings of governments, world events, daily regimens, friends and concerns for friends ailing, about travel and hobbies, etc. but rarely about the common denominator that draws these individuals together week after week.

They are not of a single high school and of equally diverse secondary institutions. There is no commonality in life's vocations that accounts for their presence on Thursday mornings.

These are persons who mostly never met until well into their adult or even senior years and did not know the heritage they possessed in common. There is no noticeable sign or aura proclaiming a mutual bond amongst them. Those possessing the heritage do not broadcast it. Nor do they regard it uncommon. It is quite possible a stranger would surmise those gathered were ordinary persons, just as those gathered regard themselves. The stranger would be right in the assumption and would never know these ordinary people had performed extraordinary - perhaps heroic - deeds in younger years, thereby gaining admission to the group's membership.

The first step toward acquiring that heritage

consisted of raising their right hands, swearing to protect and defend their country and the Constitution and, as they uttered the last word of that oath, becoming members of the Armed Forces of the United States. Subsequently, when called upon to walk in harm's way in the observance of that pledge, they did so with honor and distinction

despite the great trepidation and uncertainties then besetting them. Some suffered harm, others escaped physical harm - some by the slimmest of margins. All spent months or years in unknown, unanticipated and highly inhospitable places.

That they survived all they encountered was the final step in completing the molding of the legacy that brings them together. They are quietly proud of that heritage. Understandably, it is a heritage that few can fully fathom and appreciate. Try as they might, it doesn't seem to them they are able to imbue a broad spectrum of succeeding generations with the importance they place on each citizen being willing to protect the freedoms unique to America whenever those freedoms are endangered by despots or worse - to include going into harm's way.

While they do not seek any tribute, the best tribute would be the exhibition by each succeeding generation of a sincere and enduring commitment to maintain all that was achieved by members of the military from 1775 down to each day in the life of each member of these successive generations - coupled with a vow to preserve unaltered the hard-won freedoms these generations have been gifted with, have enjoyed and are then enjoying!

Editor: This excellent article was sent in by my good buddy and fellow Mustang John J. Higgins, Col. USA (ret). He is noted by an X in the picture.



Monday October 22

Noon to 2300 Hospitality Room open
Registration
(Palmetto Room)

Tuesday October 23

0900 to 1100 Board of Directors' Meeting

1000 to 1500 Hospitality Room open
Registration

1300 Carolina Safari Tour
Open time

1800 Cocktails *(casual dress)*

1900 Buffet
Introductions
Awards
50/50 lottery drawing

Hospitality room open after buffet

Wednesday October 24

0900 to 1000 Memorial Service
(All encouraged to attend)

1000 to 1200 Business meeting
(Ladies shopping time)

1200 to 1700 Hospitality room open
Open time

1800 Cocktails
*Uniform, tuxedo, coat/tie
Ladies as appropriate*

1900 Formal banquet
Introductions
Keynote speaker

Hospitality room open after banquet

Thursday October 25

0700 to 1000 Getaway breakfast

Have a safe trip to Home Station

Carolina Safari Tour

This is a wonderful way to experience the history, nature and folklore of the famed Grand Strand area of Myrtle Beach. Smell the salt air, surround your senses in the legenday lands! The 3-1/2 hour tour goes in 14 passenger jeeps with tops and sides at that time of year. While some of the destinations are off the beaten path...the jeep does not go off road so the trip is physically easy. Any fitness level will work, very little walking. Narrated trip includes a tour of a moorish castle (all one level), birds and alligators a "haunted" graveyard on the banks of a river with moss draped oaks, the rice plantation region, ghostlore and pirate areas, a barrier island and much, much more. Restroom stops and plenty of time for pictures. Featured in Southern Living, Discovery Channel, Frommers Guide and numerous books and magazine articles. Price is \$31 dollars per person, payable at time of the event. Website: carolinasafari.com.

Ladies shopping time during Business Meeting

For the ladies interested, there is a Steinmart Mall within two blocks of the Ocean Dunes. Access would be within walking distance or by private auto. The hotel cannot provide transportation.

Keynote Speaker - Roger Charles, LTC USMC (ret.)



Graduating in 1963 from Williamson High School in Mingo county, WV, he attended the U.S. Naval Academy and was commissioned a 2d Lt of Marines four years later. Served in RVN from February 1968 to October 1969, initially with 1st Battalion, 27th Marines as an infantry platoon leader and as an operations officer, and subsequently as an intelligence officer on the 1st Marine Division Staff. Returning to CONUS, he served two years with 1st Battalion, 2d Marines at Camp Lejeune, commanding two rifle companies and deploying twice to the Caribbean. Three years as an Officer Selection Officer in Fargo, ND preceded attendance at Amphibious Warfare School at Quantico, followed by one year in the Western Pacific with 2d Battalion, 4th Marines with deployments to the Philippines and South Korea. In October 1976 he returned to Quantico, teaching tactics at The Basic School and commanding a training company. He next attended Command and General Staff College before beginning a two-year tour with the Joint Staff in the National Command Center. Following this assignment in 1982, he served three years in the Training Department at Headquarters, Marine Corps before returning to Quantico for a two-year tour in research and development for intelligence systems. His final tour of active duty was with the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Command, Control, Communications and Intelligence where he was an analyst for tactical intelligence programs, including Unmanned Aerial Vehicles. Retiring on February 1, 1990, he began a second career as an investigative journalist. He has worked with all major domestic television networks, and with the BBC and Norwegian national television. The Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE) awarded him a Gold Medal for Excellence for his 1992 Newsweek cover story, "Sea of Lies," about the true circumstances surrounding the July 1998 shoot down of an Iranian commercial airlines by an American Aegis cruiser, the USS Vincennes. His 2004 work with 60 Minutes II received a Peabody Award for the Abu Ghraib story. Since December 2005, he has served as President of Soldiers For The Truth (SFTT), a non-profit educational group founded by Col. David Hackworth and his wife Eilhys England to promote military reform and give America's Grunts the best possible leadership and training, and the best-available equipment. He is a graduate of the Naval War College and earned an MA degree in National Security Studies from Georgetown University.

Soldiers For The Truth

The organization was founded by Col. David Hackworth and is continuing under the capable auspices of Roger Charles, (LTC USMC Ret.), President. Roger has agreed to continue our access to the SFTT website to select articles for the Mustang News. We will continue to head this as Hack's Page in his honor.

A Sad Reality - Four West Pointers at the Heart of the Body Armor Scandal

By Roger Charles

Those readers of *DefenseWatch* who have followed SFTT's efforts over the past year and a half to get honest and completely transparent comparative testing of all available both armor, including, but not necessarily restricted to both Dragon Skin and the currently issued Interceptor Body Armor system, know that from time to time there's been a tad — okay, maybe more than a tad — of anger in my writings on this subject. After all, it's truly an issue of life or death importance to America's grunts.

This column is however, written much more in sadness and sorrow than in anger.

West Point graduates have contributed so much, for so many years, to the defense of our great nation, and in other areas as well. Two have been presidents.

But, it is on our country's many battlefields over the last two centuries that The Long Gray Line has earned the respect and gratitude that distinguishes West Point from all other institutions in our nation.

Two of the warriors that Hack respected most are West Point grads who continue to serve their country by being members of the SFTT Advisory Board: Lt. Gen. Henry E. "Hank" Emerson USA (Ret.), Class of 1947, and Lt. Gen. Harold G. "Hal" Moore, USA (Ret.), Class of 1945. Their records of distinguished and heroic performance as combat leaders speak for themselves, and need no repeating here.

Consequently, to have discovered that several West Pointers have played key roles in ensuring that inferior body armor continues to be issued to our great troops is a particular and sharp disappointment to this writer.

Before I get into the specifics of who are these



Roger Charles

"disappointments," and what just what were their roles in continuing the status quo when undeniable evidence proves a better body armor is available, I want to quote from an email received this morning.

Like the combat leadership achievements of Hank Emerson and Hal Moore, this email speaks for itself.

I will identify the sender as a father of a sergeant of infantry, with one combat tour in Iraq behind him, and another tour coming up later this year. (Due to this father's diligence, SFTT has recently obtained some amazing information that will be shared with our readers in the next few weeks.

Mr. Charles,

It amazes me that I could get this information and nobody else could!

I am nobody from nowhere, except I will fight doggedly for what I deem to be right! This is a fight that I am willing to take as far as I can!

If any of my actions help rectify this injustice and help our troops get better and safer equipment I am deeply gratified!

The sad fact as we both know is that Soldiers die in war, but we have Soldiers dying needlessly because we have the technology to better protect them!

I am so proud of my Son and his service to our country, I can hardly put into words! The military experience and his time he served in Iraq, (with all of the negative experiences he had while there), I believe have made him a better man and a true leader!

It is an indescribable feeling to be able to say that your Son is your hero! And mine is! He is a true Patriot!

A Justifiably Proud Father

Now, back to the sad spectacle of four West Pointers who have failed to live up to the transcendent motto of their famous alma mater, "Duty-Honor-Country."

The following is a list of the four “ring-knockers” who have contributed to this sad and scandalous state of affairs wherein inferior body armor is issued to our warfighters. They’ve made their contributions either by their active obstructionism, making them knaves, or by their permitting the abuses and corruption by others to continue, which makes them at best, incompetent fools.

- Major General Jeffrey A. Sorenson, West Point Class of 1973, who has been exposed for his bald-faced lies by *DefenseWatch*. Here’s the official DOD announcement of his recent nomination for promotion to Lieutenant General and assignment as Chief Information Officer/Deputy Chief of Staff, G-6, U.S. Army: Maj. Gen. Jeffrey A. Sorenson, U.S. Army, for appointment to the rank of lieutenant general and assignment as Chief Information Officer/Deputy Chief of Staff, G-6, U.S. Army, Washington, D.C. He is currently serving as Deputy for Acquisition and Systems Management, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Acquisition, Logistics and Technology), Washington, D.C.

- Brigadier General (Retired) James R. Moran, West Point Class of 1979, Program Executive for Program Executive Office-SOLDIER from its inception on June 7, 2002, until his retirement in the summer of 2006.

- Brigadier General R. Mark Brown, West Point Class of 1977, Program Executive for Program Executive Office-SOLDIER from the summer of 2006 through the present.

- Colonel (Retired) John D. Norwood, West Point Class of 1980, former Project Manager for Soldier Equipment under PEO-SOLDIER, from 2003 until his retirement in the summer of 2006. He is currently a new Vice President of the Aerospace & Defense Group of Armor Holdings, one of the principal manufacturers of Interceptor Body Armor. The products listed under the Aerospace & Defense Group includes a listing for “Individual Equipment,” and under that is “Body Armor”.

Note that the key roles played by these four West Pointers during the period that *DefenseWatch* has identified and brought to public attention the unconscionable situation of our troops wearing clearly inferior body armor, when substantially better body armor in the form of Dragon Skin was, and is, available.

It’s also worth pointing out that three of the four are General Officers, signifying that the institution of the U.S.

Army finds them to be its “best and brightest.” That may have some relation to the lack of success we’ve seen in Iraq when it comes to dealing with IED’s, suicide bombers, shortage of up-armored Humvees, shortage of “V”-hulled vehicles etc.

Hack and I talked often about West Point, and the split-personality nature of its graduates — either the best, or the worst (with a fair share of mediocre thrown in). But, given the sacred responsibility granted these graduates — the defense of our nation and the stewardship of its most precious resources, young soldiers — much should be expected.

And those who care more about self-promotion than selfless service to our country must be identified and purged from positions where their actions result in the needless death and maiming of the best among us, of those young Americans who stand guard on the ramparts of freedom.

Hack identified to his wife (and now CEO of SFTT, Eilhys England Hackworth), two particularly pernicious characteristics that West Point seemed to imbue — a sense of elitism, and a reluctance to speak out against another ring-knocker, regardless of the issue.

It is this omerta-like reluctance to speak truth when it might harm a fellow graduate that caused me to write this piece. I’m hopeful that somewhere out there is at least one West Point graduate who will contact me at SFTT — and it can be off the record — with an explanation of why our Army continues to foist inferior body armor on our great troops when better is available.

For those in the know to remain silent in the face of such corruption will only prolong the day of reckoning, and lengthen the casualty lists grown far too long already.

SFTT President Roger Charles is an Annapolis graduate, a retired USMC Lt. Col. who commanded an infantry platoon in I Corps during the Vietnam War, is the winner of the prestigious Peabody Award for news coverage, and was a protégée’s of the late Col. David H. Hackworth. Rog can be contacted at sfttpres@aol.com. Please send comments to DWfeedback@yahoo.com.

Honor Our Troops, Corrupt Our Language

The front cover of Newsweek's March 5 issue featured a woman with amputated legs and a sweatshirt that said "ARMY" across the front. Inside there were pages and pages of other pictures of badly wounded and disfigured military veterans, in a long article that began under the big headline "Forgotten Heroes."

The utter hypocrisy of all this can be seen in the word "heroes." There have been many acts of heroism among our troops in Iraq — but those heroes didn't make the front cover of Newsweek.

One man fell on a grenade to protect his buddies, smothering the fatal blast with his body so that those around him might live when he died. But that never made the cover of Newsweek. It was barely mentioned anywhere in the liberal media.

They are not interested in heroes. They are interested in depicting victims — in the military as in civilian society.

The Newsweek hypocrisy is not unique. It has been the rule, not the exception, as much of the mainstream media has devoted itself to filtering and spinning the news out of Iraq.

Parading casualties is called "honoring our troops." But what does it mean to honor someone? When we gather at a memorial service to honor someone in death or at a ceremony to award prizes to them while they are alive, what do we do?

We talk about the good things they have done, their endeavors and their achievements. We don't call simply pointing out that someone is dead "honoring" them. Nor is simply pointing out that someone is dismembered or disfigured "honoring" them.

Talk about "supporting the troops" or "honoring the dead" is part of the general corruption of language for political purposes. It is like saying, "I take full responsibility," when all that phrase means is "You have caught me red-handed, and there is no way to deny it so I will just use these words to try to dissipate your anger and escape punishment."

After generations of dumbed-down education in our schools, perhaps it is inevitable that there would be large numbers of people who have no way of separating rhetoric from reality.

The reality is that many of those in the media and in politics who are constantly talking about "supporting our troops" or "honoring our troops" have for years been in the forefront of those criticizing or underfunding the military, long before the Iraq war.

During the early stages of that war, men fighting for their lives were criticized for not protecting the contents of the Iraqi museum.

Unsubstantiated charges against American military personnel create instant front-page stories in the New York Times. But innumerable things that our troops have done that would make us proud are not likely to be reported at all.

It was front-page news in the March 4 New York Times when a young soldier said goodbye to her father before heading off to Iraq.

It was front-page news in the New York Times when some reservists had financial problems when they had to leave their civilian jobs after being called to active duty in Iraq.

Anything negative, no matter how commonplace, can make the front page of the New York Times, while even remarkable acts of bravery or compassion are passed over in silence.

Activists are creating displays in which a small American flag is planted for every death in Iraq. For some of these activists, it might be the first time they have ever touched an American flag, unless they were burning it.

Perhaps the most irresponsible act of all has been Congress's promotion of a non-binding resolution against the recent increase in American troop strength in Iraq.

People's opinions can differ on troop deployment, even if — like House Speaker Nancy Pelosi — they have never deployed troops in their lives and have no military experience whatsoever.

But if anyone in Congress is serious about stopping the war, they can simply cut off the money — and take responsibility for the consequences that follow.

Instead, they want to have it both ways, passing a resolution whose only effect is to embolden our enemies and undermine the morale of our troops whom they keep saying they are "supporting."

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at Stanford University's Hoover Institution
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Bob Evans

This report will be the stingiest since my tenure began as your military coalition delegate. It will be stingy because there is virtually nothing new under the sun to report. With our global war on terror and our fighting on two fronts (Afghanistan and Iraq), the preponderance of work within the coalition is in making

sure the war fighters have the very best equipment and support both on the battlefield and at home. To this end, the focus continues to be on how to keep our war fighters and their families safe and healthy. As a matter of fact, there have been commissions charged with the responsibility to examine the impact of high operational tempo on Guard and Reserve readiness, employer and family relations.

The high operational tempo of the military over the past four years has significantly increased stress on resources that support the readiness of the National Guard and Reserves to carry out missions at home and abroad, as well as on Guard and Reserve personnel, their employers, and their families. These two areas of concern – the low levels of readiness of reserve components and the impact of frequent and lengthy deployments on employers and families – are the subjects of two full days of hearings to be conducted by the independent Commission on the National Guard and Reserves.

On the first day of the hearings the Commission will hear from DOD officials responsible for development of overall national defense resourcing strategy, and for policymaking, planning, programming, and budgeting for individual services. A panel of civilian subject matter experts will address the impact of reserve component resourcing, equipping, and current deployments on readiness to perform both overseas and domestic missions. This testimony will help the Commission to understand the extent to which current problems are caused by ongoing combat operations, or preexisting policies or conditions, or both.

The second day of the hearings will focus on how employers and families cope with the effects of continuing high operational tempo and lengthy deployments of Guard members and reservists. Three panels of witnesses – including business owners and family support program coordinators – will describe whether current approaches to address employer and family concerns are effective, whether a breaking point is approaching in employer support for reserve component members, how personnel responsible for family readiness deal with the unique problems of reserve component families living at considerable distance from military installations and programs, and whether the current family support programs are too “stovepiped” by component or service.

The Military Coalition is following the appropriations by both the House and Senate for FY-08. In particular both the House and Senate are proposing a 3.5% pay-raise that is .5 % above the President’s budget request and one-half of one percent above the private sector raises measured by the Employment Cost Index (ECI). This is the ninth consecutive year of pay raises above ECI and will further reduce the gap between military and private sector raises from 3.9% to 3.4% from a high of 13.5% during FY ’99.

The Coalition is following the end strength plus up proposals as well. There is a proposed end strength increase of 525,400 for the Army that is 36,000 above the President’s request. The Navy increase proposal is 329,098, an increase over the President’s request of 698, and a proposed increase for the Marine Corps of 189,00 representing an increase of 9,000 above the President’s request. The Air Force proposed plus up totals 329,563 which represents 963 above the President’s request.

Last, but not least, the Military Coalition is following closely the House and Senate Bills that essentially will prohibit fee increases in the TRICARE program (care and pharmacy) that were included in the President’s budget request for another year. The concern within the two houses is simply that without a careful, comprehensive, unbiased review of the cost of military health care, premature proposals that put the burden on military retirees may not really address systematic cost drivers within the system.

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☺ NOBC Convention/Reunion Registration ☺



Myrtle Beach, SC - 22 - 25 October 2007

Hotel Reservations:

(1-800-599-9872) Rate is \$76.00 per night based on single or double occupancy.

Deadline: 22 Sept 2007*. After this date, rooms will be available on a space available basis.

Be sure to identify yourself as an NOBC member when making your reservation.

***Please note:** For those desiring to come early or stay late, the above rate is good for 3 days prior to the convention (19 October) and 3 days after the convention (28 October).



NOBC Convention/Reunion Registration

\$95.00 per person (For Buffet, Banquet, Hospitality Room and Getaway breakfast)

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