

# Military Families Speak Out

July 2020

## Troops Home Now!

### Editorials from MFSO members:

J. Gries

Southern California

July 4, 2020

I am a Gold Star Mother. My son was killed in combat while serving in Iraq. A week after my son's funeral, a letter I had written to him was returned to me with a handwritten notation on the envelope: "Addressee Unknown." In just a few days my son had become an unknown. He had been erased from the reality of the U.S. military he served. He had become unidentified, anonymous, nameless. Secret. This was a stunning reality for me – that someone so beloved could be so quickly removed.

I had the same feeling last week with the revelation that the Afghan Taliban were targeting U.S. personnel at the behest of the Russian government, and that the Russians were paying bounties for the U.S. military killings. The second and equally stunning part of this story has been that our government knew about the bounties, yet there has been no acknowledgement of them by the President.

Along with the finger pointing that accompanied the news reports, there have been several versions of when and if the President was briefed, what he knew, when he knew it, and questions about why the American people weren't told about the bounties, especially in light of the President's close ties with Vladimir Putin. Finally, why hasn't there been a news conference and an explanation from the President by now, July 4, given that the story has been public for a couple of weeks. Why so much secrecy?

My empathy and feeling of betrayal on behalf of the parents is immense and difficult to put aside. Once again our country has been betrayed by an individual who was elected to lead us. Once again grieving Gold Star parents are going to have to seek and chase every available piece of information so that they can have a semblance of truth about what really happened to their children. Knowing the details of our child's final moments is incredibly important.

As we celebrate our country today I must ask, "Why were the actual circumstances of these combat deaths kept secret?" What is being hidden in relation to this latest tragedy? The parents of our military women and men deserve to know, and the American people deserve to know.

### In the News:

#### President Trump backs away from full military withdraw from Afghanistan by November.

Tentatively the White House has approved leaving just over 4,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan beyond November, delaying a full American pullout until after the presidential election. Here we go again- the scramble for excuses, many recycled, are piling up- even the loss of equipment over the lives of our loved ones- really??? [Link](#)

U.S.-led coalition forces in Iraq are reducing personnel, The U.S. lead coalition forces has been shifting its mission focus fighting ISIS to senior leadership .The new Military Advisor

Group from 13 coalition nations will mentor Iraqi security force directorates with a focus on high-level advising. [Link to story](#)

**The Pentagon is facing a hemorrhage of talent as senior officials resign** amid continued efforts by the White House to purge those perceived as political [Link to story](#)

**Russia has for years given the Taliban some amount of small arms and cash**, but what could be behind Russian bounty scandal? Some theories here- [Link to story](#)

**Afghan Pres. Ghani warns of blocks to peace process- again** [Link to story](#)

**The 'Covid Cocktail':** In depth story behind Southeastern Veterans' Center nursing home that gave some veterans hydroxychloroquine. Nurses speak out about being told to give unproven, untried and unmonitored anti-malarial drugs to even viral-free patients. State Attorney General called to investigate [Link to story](#)

### **MFSO Fundraiser**

Lately, due to the COVID crisis and shutdown, some of us have been finding diversion playing Scattergories online, and so we are hoping you might want to join us sometime before the end of summer and play a game or two to benefit MFSO and help continue the important work MFSO members do every day. Scattergories is simple and fun and you will not need to add any apps to your phone or computer. The game itself is more social than other games and anyone can play. Please join us for this year's MFSO fundraiser event and socialize the only safe way we can right now, while doing your part to help put an end to these wars.

To help out, just send some dates and times when you are free to play for about an hour to Pat Alviso at [mfsooc@earthlink.net](mailto:mfsooc@earthlink.net) or text 562-833-8035. Shortly afterwards, you and five others will receive an invitation along with the rules of the game for one of the dates you have chosen to play. For your part, after you have played, we will ask you to send a donation of \$10. [PayPal](#) If you are a winner of any game session, your choice from one of several prizes, will be mailed to you. Some items are one of a kind, so the first round of players will have the most donations from which to choose. And if you would like to donate to MFSO, but don't want to play the game, please send your donation to [PayPal](#)

**From Jeff's desk** DOD has stopped allowing family members moving to the Gulf States, but have not removed the families currently in the area. In my view, this looks like the military is looking into removing a large number of troops from the area. On the other hand, they may be thinking that in the long term it may be **riskier** to keep families there.

**Note:** The opinions reflected above and in future editorials are not a reflection of any official stance approved by the MFSO board, which meets monthly and posts official positions decided by the board on our website. Your responses and opinions are welcome. If you would like to send your own editorial on any MFSO related issue, please send to [mfsooc@earthlink.net](mailto:mfsooc@earthlink.net)

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**4,583 American Troops killed in Iraq; 2,450 American Troops killed in Afghanistan**

