

Military Families Speak Out

August 2020

Troops Home Now!

Editorials from MFSO members:

Shelda Maier

New Jersey

I Can't Do It Any More

In 2014, my son Jake decided to become a conscientious objector while serving in the Marines. As a parent, I was very concerned about what would happen to him in taking that step. My poem describes some of the conversations that we had about his decision.

PART I

"Mom," he said, "I can't do it anymore."

"What? What do you mean?" I said.

"I can't do it anymore. I can't be a part of this anymore. I saw a picture of Osama bin Laden as a teenager, Mom – he was just a kid, with his family. He wasn't evil."

"OK. OK, so what do you think you're going to do?"

"I'm thinking about filing for C.O., Mom."

"But what are they going to do to you? What's going to happen to you?"

"I don't know. I just can't do it anymore."

"Well, just think about it, just think about it."

PART II

"Mom," he said, "I can't do it anymore. Did you see the picture of the little girl whose house was bombed? And the men in her family, they dug at the rubble with their bare hands until they could uncover her. Her brother picked her up and the connection they had... Mom, I just cried and cried... I see her in my dreams. She's sending me a message."

"OK. OK, so what are you going to do?"

"I'm going to file the papers, Mom."

"What's going to happen? What are they going to do to you?"

"I don't know. I don't know. I just can't do it anymore."

Shelda Maier



Shelda first presented this poem at the August Veterans for Peace Convention during the Poetry and Song Soirée!

In the News:

Defense Secretary Mark Esper admits he underestimated the depth of sentiment out there among our service members of color, particularly Black Americans, about how much the killing of George Floyd — and the other incidents that preceded it and succeeded it — had on them and what they were experiencing in the ranks as well," [Link to Article](#)

Vanessa Guillen's mom and family speaks out for first time in emotional interview Vanessa Guillén U.S. Army specialist was only 20 then she was murdered. [Link to Article](#)

Will we have fewer than 5,000 American troops in Afghanistan by Election Day? Will the United States continue to withdraw troops from the country despite limited progress toward the start of peace negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban? With the Taliban continuing to attack Afghan troops, but not United States troops will Trump get his way and remove additional troops before November? [Link to Article](#)

It becomes clear why U.S. Troops have been safeguarding the oil in Eastern Syria. Little-known U.S. firm secures deal for Syrian oil. Delta Crescent Energy LLC, was incorporated in Delaware in February 2019. Its partners include former U.S. ambassador to Denmark James Cain; former army elite Delta Force officer James Reese; and former Gulf Sand Petroleum executive John P. Dorrier Jr., a UK-based oil firm with offices and exploration experience in Syria. [Link to Article](#)

No surprise that the US still doesn't know how many Afghan security forces actually exist/ no Taliban peace talks with Afghan government yet and attacks up- Last year Afghanistan's security forces lost 42,000 troops overnight in a crackdown on 'ghost soldiers'. [Link to Article](#)

Time to End the War in Afghanistan We bring back British MP Rory Stewart's speech in July 2011. What he said in 2011 still fits today. Some great talking points for MFSO members like "it's extremely unlikely the Taliban would invite back Al-Qaeda. From the Taliban's point of view, that was their #1 mistake last time. If they hadn't invited back Al-Qaeda, they would still be in power today." [Link to Article](#)

Pompeo Warned Russia Against Bounties on U.S. Troops in Afghanistan It's been reported that senior American officials, including some on the White House National Security Council, had debated for months over what to do about the Russian effort. Russian officials have denounced the reports on the bounties as lies. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo is said to have sternly discussed payouts and red lines in a telephone call with Sergey V. Lavrov, Russia's foreign minister. [Link to Article](#)

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 or text 562-833-8035. 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. Donations may be sent to [PayPal](#). Join the fun and camaraderie.

From Jeff's desk This month 75 years ago the United States dropped "The Bomb" on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As part of my technical training in the Air Force I studied what happened to these two cities and the nuclear weapons testing afterwards. I would like to share these 2 articles with you. Why do we still have The Bomb? [Link to Article](#) and some of the Manhattan Project's leading scientists tried to stop the bombings. [Link to Article](#)

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

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4,584 American Troops killed in Iraq; 2,451 American Troops killed in Afghanistan