

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 8, 2015

The Honorable Ray Mabus
Secretary of the Navy
1000 Navy Pentagon
Washington, DC 20350-1000

General Joseph F. Dunford Jr.
Commandant of the Marine Corps
3000 Marine Corps, Pentagon
Washington, DC 20350-3000

Dear Secretary Mabus and General Dunford,

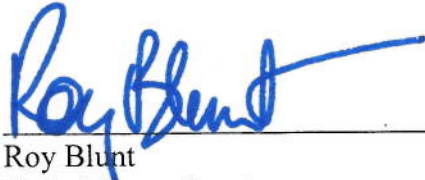
As we approach fourteen years of military operations in Afghanistan, we have become painfully aware of the dangers present at the hands of Al Qaeda and the Taliban. Enemies of peace in Afghanistan have exploited our military to the greatest extent possible. The specific exploitation we write to you is with regard to the false allegations made by Afghan “civilians” on March 4, 2007, accusing members of U.S. Marine Special Operations Command-Foxtrot (MSOC-F), commanded by Major (Ret.) Fred Galvin, of massacring Afghan civilians following the detonation of a Suicide Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Device (SVBIED).

As we are sure you are aware, the Court of Inquiry (COI) into the event found the following: 1) MSOC-F was subject to a complex ambush on March 4, 2007 and the team’s response to the attack was proportionate and consistent with the Rules of Engagement and Law of Armed Conflict, and reflected sound military judgement; and 2) The enemy in MSOC-F’s area of operations had significant information operations [and propaganda] capabilities. Unfortunately, due to press and other factors, Major Fred Galvin and the Marines of MSOC-F still continue to carry the weight of that March day, as if they were found guilty of manslaughter. These Marines served honorably and should be treated as such.

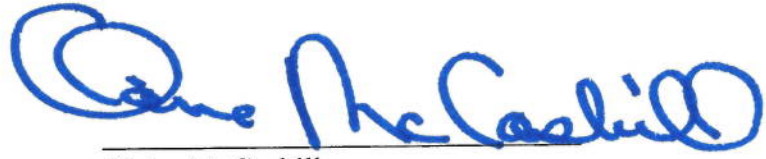
We ask for your help in the restoration of the reputation of the first members of MSOC-F. We ask that you provide us a response, recognizing the findings of the COI, specifically the fact that MSOC-F acted with proportional force and did not kill innocent civilians. Second, the investigation was met by numerous exacerbating factors. The COI found the investigating officer, “...may have been negatively influenced by the command discussions.” Further, there is reason to believe the two Marine lawyers who questioned members of MSOC-F while wearing civilian clothes used questionable methods, including threatening one Marine with the deportation of his family. We ask you to review the investigative procedures within the Marine Corps and the Uniform Code of Military Justice, with a particular focus on the initiation of high profile investigations. Command influence, the media, and the enemy have the potential to play a role in these high profile cases and the investigations should be deliberately initiated in such a manner as to not send the wrong message to the investigator potentially tainting his or her objectivity. Finally, most of the court proceedings from the COI remain classified. We ask that you make the full court proceedings available to the Marines who were members of MSOC-F at the time of the incident.

We appreciate your timely attention and response on this issue. It is time for these Marines to be afforded the ability to honorably move on with their lives. Please contact Bo Prosch at Bo_Prosch@blunt.senate.gov or 202-224-5721 with any questions.

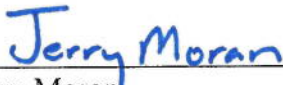
Sincere regards,



Roy Blunt
United States Senator



Claire McCaskill
United States Senator



Jerry Moran
United States Senator



Pat Roberts
United States Senator