



# Vietnam Veterans In Canada

## General Meeting (2007-20)

# Agenda 533

27 September 2007

*British Columbia Regiment (DCO), Vancouver, B.C.*



## Moment of Silence

### United States Military Casualty Reports

Received since 12 September 2007

**Cpl. Travis M. Woods, 21, of Redding, Calif.**, died Sept. 9 from wounds suffered while conducting combat operations in Northern Helmand province, Afghanistan. He was assigned to 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, Calif.

**Cpl. Carlos E. Gilorozco, 23, of San Jose, Calif.** Gilorozco died Sept. 10 while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq. He was assigned to 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 9<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, N.C.

**Lance Cpl. Jon T. Hicks Jr., 20, of Atco, N.J.** Hicks died Sept. 10 while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq. He was assigned to 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 9<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, N.C.

**Staff Sgt. Courtney Hollinsworth, 26, of Yonkers, N.Y.**, died Sept. 9 in Baghdad, Iraq, of wounds suffered when insurgents attacked his unit using an improvised explosive device and grenades. He was assigned to the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Fort Riley, Kan.

**Staff Sgt. Yance T. Gray, 26, of Ismay, Mont.** Gray died Sept. 10 in Baghdad, Iraq, of injuries suffered from a non-combat related vehicle rollover. He was assigned to the 1st Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, N.C. The circumstances surrounding the incident are under investigation.

**Staff Sgt. Gregory Rivera-Santiago, 26, of St. Croix, Virgin Islands.** Rivera-Santiago died Sept. 10 in Baghdad, Iraq, of injuries suffered from a non-combat related vehicle rollover. He was assigned to the 1st Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, N.C. The circumstances surrounding the incident are under investigation.

**Sgt. Michael C. Hardegree, 21, of Villa Rica, Ga.** Hardegree died Sept. 10 in Baghdad, Iraq, of injuries suffered from a non-combat related vehicle rollover. He was assigned to the 1st Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, N.C. The circumstances surrounding the incident are under investigation.

**Sgt. Omar L. Mora, 28, of Texas City, Texas.** Mora died Sept. 10 in Baghdad, Iraq, of injuries suffered from a non-combat related vehicle rollover. He was assigned to the 1st Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, N.C. The circumstances surrounding the incident are under investigation.

**Sgt. Nicholas J. Patterson, 24, of Rochester, Ind.** Patterson died Sept. 10 in Baghdad, Iraq, of injuries suffered from a non-combat related vehicle rollover. He was assigned to the 1st Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, N.C. The circumstances surrounding the incident are under investigation.

**Spc. Ari D. Brown-Weeks, 23, of Abingdon, Md.** Brown-Weeks died Sept. 10 in Baghdad, Iraq, of injuries suffered from a non-combat related vehicle rollover. He was assigned to the 1st Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, N.C. The circumstances surrounding the incident are under investigation.

**Spc. Steven R. Elrod, 20, of Hope Mills, N.C.** Elrod died Sept. 10 in Baghdad, Iraq, of injuries suffered from a non-combat related vehicle rollover. He was assigned to the 1st Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, N.C. The circumstances surrounding the incident are under investigation.

**Cpl. Terrence P. Allen, 21, of Pennsauken, N.J.,** died Sept. 15 from a non-hostile incident in Al Anbar province, Iraq. He was assigned to 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Regiment, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, N.C. The incident is under investigation.

**Sgt. John Mele, 25, of Bunnell, Fla.,** died Sept. 14 in Arab Jabour, Iraq, of wounds suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated near his unit during combat operations. He was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Stewart, Ga.

**Staff Sgt. Terry D. Wagoner, 28, of Piedmont, S.C.** Wagoner died Sept. 14 in Baghdad, Iraq, of wounds suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle during combat operations. He was assigned to the 6th Squadron, 9th U.S. Cavalry, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas.

**Spc. Todd A. Motley, 23, of Clare, Mich.** Motley died Sept. 14 in Baghdad, Iraq, of wounds suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle during combat operations. He was assigned to the 6th Squadron, 9th U.S. Cavalry, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas.

**Spc. Jonathan Rivadeneira, 22, of Jackson Heights, N.Y.** Rivadeneira died Sept. 14 in Baghdad, Iraq, of wounds suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle during combat operations. He was assigned to the 6th Squadron, 9th U.S. Cavalry, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas.

**Pvt. Christopher M. McCloud, 24, of Malakoff, Texas.** McCloud died Sept. 14 in Baghdad, Iraq, of wounds suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle during combat operations. He was assigned to the 6th Squadron, 9th U.S. Cavalry, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas.

**Staff Sgt. Michael L. Townes, 29, of Las Vegas, NV** died Sept. 16 in Balad, Iraq, from a non-combat related illness. He was assigned to the 4th Battalion, 227<sup>th</sup> Aviation Regiment, Aviation Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas.

**Pfc. Brandon T. Thorsen, 22, of Trenton, Fla.,** died Sept. 15 in Baghdad, Iraq, of injuries sustained from a non-combat related incident Sept. 14 in Baghdad. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Bliss, Texas. The circumstances surrounding the incident are under investigation.

**Spc. Matthew J. Emerson, 20, of Grandview, Wash.,** died Sept. 18 in Ninewah Province, Iraq, of injuries suffered from a non-combat related incident. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Bliss, Texas. The circumstances surrounding the incident are under investigation.

**Spc. Joseph N. Landry III, 23, of Pensacola, Fla.** Landry died Sept. 18 in Muqdadiyah, Iraq, of wounds sustained when an improvised explosive device detonated near his unit during combat operations. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division (Stryker Brigade Combat Team), Fort Lewis, Wash.

**Spc. Nicholas P. Olson, 22, of Novato, Calif.** Olson died Sept. 18 in Muqdadiyah, Iraq, of wounds sustained when an improvised explosive device detonated near his unit during combat operations. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division (Stryker Brigade Combat Team), Fort Lewis, Wash.

**Spc. Donald E. Valentine III, 21, of Orange Park, Fla.** Valentine died Sept. 18 in Muqdadiyah, Iraq, of wounds sustained when an improvised explosive device detonated near his unit during combat operations. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division (Stryker Brigade Combat Team), Fort Lewis, Wash.

**Spc. Aaron J. Walker, 23, of Harker Heights, Texas,** died Sept. 18 in Baghdad, Iraq, of wounds suffered when insurgents attacked his unit with small arms fire during combat operations. He was assigned to the 3rd Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, 1st Armored Division, Vilseck, Germany.

**Pfc. Christian M. Neff, 19, of Lima, Ohio,** died Sept. 19 in Baghdad, Iraq, of wounds suffered from an improvised explosive device. He was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Stewart, Ga.

**Sgt. Edmund J. Jeffers, 23, of Daleville, Ala.,** died Sept. 19 in Taqqadum, Iraq, of injuries suffered from a non-combat related accident. He was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, Fort Carson, Colo. The circumstances surrounding the death are under investigation.

**Cpl. Graham M. McMahon, 22, of Corvallis, Ore.**, died Sept. 19 in Balad, Iraq, from a non-combat related illness. He was assigned to the 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, Stryker Brigade Combat Team, Fort Lewis, Wash.

**Pfc. Luigi Marciante Jr., 25, of Elizabeth, N.J.**, died Sept. 20 in Muqadiyah, Iraq, of wounds sustained when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, Stryker Brigade Combat Team, Fort Lewis, Wash.

**Spc. John J. Young, 24, of Savannah, Ga.**, died Sept. 21 in Camp Stryker, Iraq, of injuries suffered from a non-combat related incident. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry), Fort Drum, N.Y. The circumstances surrounding the death are under investigation.

**Capt. (Dr.) Roselle M. Hoffmaster, 32, of Cleveland, Ohio**, died Sept. 20 in Kirkuk, Iraq, of injuries sustained from a non-combat related incident. She was assigned to the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team, 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division, Fort Drum, N.Y. The circumstances surrounding the death are under investigation.

**Command Sgt. Maj. Jonathan M. Lankford, 42, of Scottsboro, Ala.**, died Sept. 22, in Baghdad, Iraq, of injuries sustained from a non-combat related incident. He was assigned to the 79th Ordnance Battalion, Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

**Spc. Joshua H. Reeves, 26, of Watkinsville, Ga.**, died Sept. 22 in Baghdad, Iraq, of wounds suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Fort Riley, Kan.

**Spc. David L. Watson, 29, of Newport, Ark.**, died Sept. 22 in Baqubah, Iraq, of injuries suffered from a non-combat related accident. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division (Stryker Brigade Combat Team), Fort Lewis, Wash. The circumstances surrounding the incident are under investigation.

**Sgt. 1st Class Matthew D. Blaskowski, 27, of Levering, Mich.**, died Sept. 23 in Asadabad, Afghanistan, of wounds suffered when insurgents attacked his unit using small arms fire during combat operations. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion (Airborne), 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, Vicenza, Italy.

# Casualty Count is now 4290

Since 10 November 2001

# **VVIC Meeting Business**

## **Guests Present**

## **Announcements and Acknowledgements**

### **President's Remarks**

(D. Sinclair, AUS)

### **1<sup>st</sup> Vice President's Remarks**

(G. Flowers, USMC)

TDY to Hawaii

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President's Remarks**

(T. O'Malley)

### **Chief of Staff's Remarks**

(S. O'Grady, AUS)

### **Master At Arms Remarks**

(K. Payne, USN)

## **General Collection**

## **Minutes of the previous meeting**

## **Finance Officer's Report**

1. Income and Expense Report
2. TD Bank signing authority(s)
3. Timely deposit of checks – specifically Legion checks.

## **Intelligence Officer's Report**

Southern Cross V is underway. Good luck to the VVIC. We bid thee farewell. The entire VVIC operation is now your hands.

## **Service Officer's Report**

1. P. Knauth, AUS – Still trying to obtain medical reports from the Bellingham Vet Center for his service officer located in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania
2. George Robinson, Search for

## **Inspector General's Report**

## **Quartermaster's Report**

## **Legislative matters:**

## **Administrative Items:**

1. Miller, John (Broken Wing). Generous support of Vet-Rant and VVIC operations.
2. Google Aps? (non profit)

## **Old Business:**

1. New VVIC Mailbox
2. New VVIC Vonage Phone number

## **New Business:**

## **New Business from the floor:**

*The next General Meeting is 11 October 2007 at 1930 hours at the British Columbia Regiment.*



# Vietnam Veterans In Canada Minutes 532

## General Meeting held on 13 September 2007 British Columbia Regiment, Vancouver, B.C.

Vietnam Veterans in Canada and American Legion Post #75 minutes of General Meeting #532 held on 13 Sept., 2007 at the British Columbia Regiment in Vancouver, B.C.

This General meeting was called to order at 19:30 hours and was chaired by VVIC President Don Sinclair and American Legion Commander Gerry Flowers.

There were 8 members on the sign-in sheet as well as 6 guests.

Request to stand for a Moment of Silence with thoughts for our fallen comrades and those presently in harms way.

Prayer from our American Legion Chaplin Tom O'Malley.

P.O.W. and M.I.A. Empty Chair Placement.

Reading of the Military Casualties Report.

Review of Prior Meeting Minutes.

Committee Reports:

- 1: Introduction of Guests- Andrew Sorley USMC and Dad Lewis Sorley.
- 2: Finance Report- \$428.96 in the bank.
- 3: Service Officer Report- Member Keith Lang off to the east Coast.
- 4: Membership Report- Gavin Love's dues paid for 2007.
- 5: Administrative Items- For more information on more of B.C.'s collection of Military wannabees we should contact Member Dave Crockett.
- 6: I.G. Report- none.
- 7: Quartermaster's Report- Ron Mella will be taking VVIC T-Shirts to his USMC reunion in Tennessee.
- 8: Veteran's Good and Welfare- Member Ted Snow on the sick-list.
- 9: Collection- Done, barkeep Dave Holwill paid.

Announcements and Acknowledgements- Shawn McSkimmings, wife Gale and beautiful baby Mia Rose happy to be back with the group. If we need to contact Shawn his numbers are 604-433-8325 and 604-644-3640.

Attached Articles

- 1: Army Colonel draws fine from Stress Study- by Alison Young.
- 2: Parents PTSD may boost Stress in Offspring- HealthDay news.
- 3: Letter from Moziek Hirono (Member of U.S. Congress) to Gerry Flowers.
- 4: Navy Vet who lied about rescue guilty of Fraud-Milwaukee Journal Sentinel and Assoc., Press.
- 5: Brass stolen from graves of Warren Veterans- Brian Ferry.
- 6: A long Time to confront an old Demon- Michael Gold.
- 7: Swear him in- Roy McGovern.
- 8: Remembering the Atrocities of 9/11-34 years ago.- N.Y. Transfer.
- 9: Making a will-forwarded by Gerry Flowers.
- 10: The front cover of this agenda- Sgt David W. Drysdale May 1948 - Aug. 2007.
- 11: Power of Attorney Act-Queens Printer.
- 12: Make and register a Representation Agreement.

Old Business - Merging of the VVIC and American Legion meetings.

New Business - a reminder to all members on the importance of making a will.

New Business from the Floor. There was none.

Motion to close the meeting- meeting adjourned 2047.

**Steve O'Grady,**  
**Chief of Staff**



## Unknowns Swirl Around Veterans' Disability Reform

Dole-Shalala: Who's Eligible?

Tom Philpott | September 13, 2007

Jon Hovde lost his left arm, left leg and two fingers of his right hand when his armored personnel carrier struck an antitank mine. The 20-year-old Army private was almost left for dead when a medic, checking for a pulse in the mayhem, found none in Hovde's severed arm.

This occurred almost 40 years ago in South Vietnam. Hovde spent seven-and-a-half months' recuperating in an Army hospital before being medically retired. His initial [VA disability](#) check was \$340 a month. His first prosthetic leg, he recalled, was wooden and weighed "about 30 pounds." He never saw a psychiatrist; post-traumatic stress wasn't a routine concern.

Today Hovde, 59, draws \$3800 a month in VA compensation. His prosthetics use embedded computer chips. When back and foot problems linked to his war wounds cut short a promising business career, he adapted again. The Minnesotan now gives motivational speeches nationwide.

But perhaps like many of the nation's 2.8 million veterans drawing VA disability compensation, Hovde sometimes gets upset at the wave of benefit improvements being targeted at Iraq and [Afghanistan](#) war veterans. Will they touch older veterans or leave them behind?

"It's like a company saying, 'You people who retired in the last five years, you get an increase. But those who have been retired longer than that, you get nothing,'" Hovde said. "How fair is that?"

While recovering from his injuries, Hovde said he was told he would get a \$20,000 payment for his lost limbs. He never did. Yet the severely wounded of Iraq and Afghanistan are getting traumatic injury awards. They deserve it but so did he, Hovde said.

"I've long believed that combat wounded Purple Heart Award recipients ought to be able to draw full [military pay](#), plus full VA compensation. That would add about \$500 a month to my pay."

Details on the many changes being pushed are easier to pin down than answers to two other questions: who will be impacted and when will the changes take effect. Next month the Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission (VDBC) will deliver more than 100 recommendations to the president and [Congress](#). All were voted on in public meetings. Most are favorable to veterans. One would expand "[concurrent receipt](#)" of VA disability benefits and [military retired pay](#) to all disabled retirees, including those forced from service early for medical reasons. But who would qualify?

Congress is expected to hold multiple hearings on the VDBC recommendations starting next year. But this month, [President Bush](#) plans a more immediate and positive signal to Iraq and Afghanistan disabled veterans. He will [propose legislation](#) to implement disability compensation reforms from the report of the President's Commission on Care of America's Returning Wounded Warriors, also known as the Dole-Shalala Commission.

The White House hopes to get this package to [Capitol Hill](#) in time for inclusion in the [2008 defense authorization bill](#), which already includes a another packet of provisions to benefit "wounded warriors." Senate floor debate on the defense bill is scheduled to resume next week.

The administration had intended that its disability reforms for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans apply only to those injured in combat or in combat-related training. That is being reconsidered in light of sharp opposition from veterans groups and, congressional staffers say, key lawmakers. The VDBC also unanimously endorsed Dole-Shalala with two exceptions. One is the report's focus only on fixing the system only for combat-related disabilities.

Dole-Shalala seeks to end dual disability systems run by the departments of defense and veterans affairs. Just like Hovde faced in 1968, current service members who become disabled receive a physical evaluation and disability rating from their service. If found unfit, they are medically separated or retired and then typically go to the VA for another physical and higher disability rating, this one based on any and all service-related conditions. They usually must forfeit DoD compensation to receive VA pay.

Dole-Shalala says veterans separated as unfit because of service-related disabilities should get an immediate military annuity equal to 2.5 percent of [basic pay](#) times years served. The report says only veterans retired early due to combat-related injuries should receive lifetime [TRICARE](#) coverage from the

military health system.

On top of that, their VA compensation for service disabilities would come in two parts with features intended not merely to compensate for lost earnings --the sole goal of current VA disability pay -- but to encourage veterans to restore their working lives to the fullest extent possible.

A “quality of life” disability payment would be based on severity of disability and paid monthly for life. VA is working on payment levels.

A “transition” payment initially would be set high enough to support the veteran and immediate family for up to four years while the veteran receives [vocational training](#), rehabilitation or attends [school](#). Pay incentives would discourage veterans from leaving voc-rehab training too soon.

The initial transition payments would be replaced by compensation to make up for earnings loss in the workplace due to disability. These payments would be comparable to current VA disability compensation.

Veteran groups strongly oppose two features of the Dole-Shalala proposal. One is a requirement that VA review a veteran’s disability and earnings history every three years and adjust transition payments, up or down, using a means test. Another would end transition payments for earning loss when veterans turn 65 and presumably receive social security.

Hovde said it isn’t possible until payment levels are known to judge whether older veterans would want a choice to move under such a plan.

“I’m not sure I want the government telling me what my quality of life is,” he said. “Most of these guys who do evaluations aren’t amputees and haven’t got a clue.”

## **Veteran's Administration Pulls Plug on Major Surgeries**

Sep 16, 2007

Marion, IL

By: Arnold Wyrick

MARION, IL. - An alarming report on in-patient surgeries Thursday put a stop to all major and complex surgeries performed at the Marion, Illinois VA Medical Center.

The VA's National Surgery Quality Improvement Program uncovered the problem while looking over the number of deaths related to complex surgeries at the center.

"When the VA was running data they discovered that some of the operations were out of line. The data showed there were too many deaths," said VA Public Affairs Officer Jim Gleisberg.

The director and chief-of-staff were also reassigned to other areas of the VA system.

And for some veterans news of the shutdown didn't come as such a surprise because they too have had problems with some of their surgical procedures at the Marion VA.

"They tested a spot here on my cheek and it come back malignant. But, when they did the surgery they went in here by my eye and on the nose and ignored this one. So as a result I've been reluctant to go back over there for any surgery," said Chuck Hankins of Marion, Illinois.

The hospital spokesperson wouldn't say exactly what surgical procedures were resulting in the increased death rates at the Marion Va compared to the national average for similar procedures.

"Well, our complex surgeries have been stopped. Our out-patient surgeries will continue. And our daily healthcare to the veterans will continue. So we're still open," Glesiberg said.

That's good news for many local veterans here in the Heartland who rely upon the VA for their health problems.

"My overall care is excellent. I have no qualms at all concerning the care I've received. I've had good care from all the ones I've had any dealings with," said Harry Hammers of Marion, Illinois.

But, for those veterans who were scheduled for a major medical operation, they're now going to have to go somewhere else to have their surgery.

## Vietnam Vets Give What They Never Got

Philadelphia Inquirer | September 17, 2007

For the last year, they saw the [Iraq war](#) up close; some fought gun battles with the enemy, and all were far from home and the comforts of family.

Then, after a marathon flight, the troops were back again yesterday, tired, excited, hungry, and still loaded down with their M-16s and military gear.

They did not expect anyone to notice.

But at the journey's end, Michael Engi and fellow Vietnam veterans were waiting.

They are always there for the troops coming home from Iraq and Afghanistan. At 2, 3, 4 o'clock in the morning -- any time of the day or night -- it does not matter. They drop what they are doing and head to Fort Dix to greet the Soldiers and offer warm handshakes.

As 150 troops piled off buses at the Mobilization and Demobilization Briefing Center, more than a dozen Vietnam veterans formed a receiving line to give a welcome they did not receive decades ago. One veteran played the haunting melody of "The Minstrel Boy" on the bagpipes.

"Welcome home! Welcome back!" a beaming Engi said over and over as the Soldiers moved past him.

Many lit up with smiles. Some teared up. America's newest veterans -- scores of them from Pennsylvania, Delaware and other states -- were surprised and touched by the gesture.

One of them took the American flag patch from his uniform and handed it to a Vietnam-era veteran, Dexter Hawkins of Browns Mills, as a way of saying thanks. "They become overwhelmed with emotion," said Engi, 59, of Bordentown, president of New Jersey Chapter 899 of the Vietnam Veterans of America. "They're just glad to see someone understands. You see handshakes and hugs. They can't thank us enough."

Army Reserve Sgt. Tim Simon, 22, of Franklin, Pa., who just returned from al-Qayyarah, Iraq, and who serves in the 298th Transportation Company, said: "This means a lot because of what they went through. It feels good."

The Vietnam veterans have been going to Fort Dix and McGuire Air Force Base for more than three years to offer encouragement and advice. They said they felt an emotional kinship with the troops forged by the shared experience of war.

But something cathartic happened along the way. Engi and his comrades said they got as much from the meetings as the troops did, maybe more.

"By welcoming them home, we were getting welcomed home, too, and we never had that," said Engi, a former Burlington County sheriff's officer who organized the welcome-home events and recruited other veterans. "Every time we go out there, it's the same thing. We get as much from these guys as we give them. It's better than any parade we could have ever had."

Hawkins, who served in the Air Force from 1966 to 1989, added: "If I had a son who went to war, it would tear me up [if he returned without a greeting]. I came home and was treated badly. It just wasn't right."

Curt Anderson, a Navy veteran of [the Vietnam War](#) who played the bagpipes yesterday, said the welcome-home ceremonies were "a bit like closure for us. "It's good for both sides," Anderson, 53, of Willingboro said. "It's giving something we never got. It helps make you whole."

Tom Jellick, 75, of Wrightstown, the second vice president of Chapter 899 and the group's chaplain, said he recalled "how lonesome it was when I left for Vietnam and how bad the reception was when I got back."

An Air Force tech sergeant, he also recalled loading aircraft with ammunition and unloading bodies. "That bothered me more than anything else," Jellick said. "Some of the bags had only pieces and the blood was leaking out."

"So when I first started coming out here [to welcome the troops home], I was emotional. I cried. They got their welcome, and I didn't get mine. Some folks would get so emotional they'd have to walk around the corner. Now, we're pros at it. It's like having a treatment at the psychiatrist. I feel I'm doing something, and I'm feeling better."

Moments before the buses arrived yesterday, Engi asked his fellow Vietnam veterans "to raise your hands if you want to reenlist. They're looking for a few good men." Then buses began pulling up. "Here they come," he said.

Engi recruited veterans in Chapter 899 for arrival and departure ceremonies at Fort Dix and McGuire. The veterans also spend hours at the medical hold unit, where Soldiers are treated for minor injuries as well as post-traumatic stress disorder. They bring chili and other food and talk and play pool or cards with the troops.

"I wanted them to know someone cares," said Engi, a former sergeant who served with an artillery unit in Vietnam in 1969 and 1970 and who suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder.

Engi said he and other veterans tell the troops what worked for them, especially those affected by trauma disorder. Each group that arrives is different, depending on the role they had, and the levels of combat they experienced.

"We get standing ovations from the troops all the time," he said. "We don't want them to be forgotten. Somebody has to speak up for them."

Army Sgt. Emmanuel Maxwell, 25, a member of the 24th Quartermaster unit from Fort Lewis, Wash., felt buoyed after the reception.

"It's always good to get a welcome home. I wasn't expecting it."

Army Maj. Marla Seeman, 48, of Harrington, Del., a member of the Delaware National Guard 198th Signal Battalion from New Castle, Del., said she was "honored that they [Vietnam veterans] would do this for us. It was wonderful."

One Soldier probably had the best perspective of any. Sgt. Maj. Robert Wilson, 57, of Bear, Del., had fought in Vietnam in 1969 and 1970 and remembered "going over and coming back by myself.

"I turned 20 in Vietnam and 57 in Iraq," he said. "It couldn't be any better than to be welcomed by these guys. I hope they get what they want out of this. There is a different feeling today than there was during Vietnam."

## **WA man pleads guilty to unlawfully collecting Veterans benefits**

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS  
18 September 2007

A 75-year-old man pleaded guilty today in U.S. District Court in Seattle to unlawfully collecting Veterans Affairs benefits that totaled \$120,452.

Stephen C. Bates, of Seattle, is scheduled to be sentenced on December 18 by Judge Marsha J. Pechman.

According to the plea agreement, from 1996 through 2005, Bates cashed monthly Veterans Affairs benefit checks from the U.S. Department of Treasury that were intended solely for the benefit of his mother, who had died. Bates' mother was the widow of a deceased veteran and was entitled to the checks until her death.

The offense is punishable by up to 10 years in federal prison.

(Contact: Emily Langlie, U.S. attorney's office in Seattle, 206-553-4110)

## Military Sued Over Religious Freedom

Associated Press | September 19, 2007

FORT RILEY, Kan. - A soldier whose superior prevented him from holding a meeting for atheists and other non-Christians is suing the Defense Department, claiming it violated his right to religious freedom.

The lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court in Kansas City, Kan., alleges a pattern of practices that discriminate against non-Christians in the military. It was filed Monday to coincide with the 220th anniversary of the signing of the U.S. Constitution.

Poll: Military Atheists Allowed?

The lawsuit names [Defense Secretary Robert Gates](#) and Maj. Paul Welborne as defendants.

According to the filing, Spec. Jeremy Hall, a soldier assigned to Fort Riley's 97th Military Police Battalion, received permission to distribute fliers around his base in Iraq for a meeting of atheists and non-Christians.

When he tried to convene the meeting, Hall claims, Welborne stepped in, threatening to file military charges against Hall and block his reenlistment.

Attempts to reach Welborne through an Army spokesman weren't immediately successful.

Mikey Weinstein, president of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation, which is helping Hall with his lawsuit, said it is the first of many.

"We're going to expose the pernicious practice and pattern of these massive violations of the Constitution," Weinstein said. "That we had to go to this extent is just a heinous disgrace that defies any possible explanation."

Lt. Col. Jonathan Withington, a Defense Department spokesman, said that he wasn't aware of the lawsuit but that the military places a "high value" on the right of military personnel to practice their faith.

"It is DoD policy that requests for accommodation of religious practices should be

approved by commanders when accommodation will not have an adverse impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, standards or discipline," he said.

The lawsuit claims Hall was forced to "submit to a religious test as a qualification to his post as a soldier."

Hall and the foundation are asking the court to block Welborne from establishing "compulsory religious practices" and order Gates to prevent Welborne from interfering with Hall's free speech rights.

Since its founding in 2005, the foundation has received nearly 6,000 calls from men and women in the military raising concerns about violations of religious freedom, Weinstein said.

Most callers, he said, were Christians concerned about coercion from superior officers trying to push their beliefs.

Weinstein this year threatened to sue over what he and others called anti-Semitic Bible studies posted by the Fort Leavenworth Command Chaplain's Web site. The documents, first posted in 1999, were removed after Weinstein's foundation raised complaints.

Separately, seven Army and Air Force officers, including four generals, face possible punishment for violating ethics rules by helping a Christian group in the production of a fundraising video.

A [Pentagon](#) inspector general's report released this month found the officers were interviewed in uniform and "in official and often identifiable Pentagon locations."

The report found that none of the officers received approval from superiors to participate in video interviews in an official capacity or in uniform. Air Force and Army officials are reviewing that report.

## **Prosecutors: Faked military records cost VA, tarnished medals**

By GENE JOHNSON  
AP LEGAL AFFAIRS WRITER

SEATTLE -- Eight people who faked their military service in conflicts dating to World War II have been charged in the Northwest this year, and another four cases are under investigation, federal officials said Friday.

The fraudulent claims not only dishonored those who actually served, but also cost the Veterans Administration and other agencies more than \$1.4 million in benefits, said Doug Carver, with the VA's Office of the Inspector General. There are dozens more cases pending across the country, he said.

"The 'phony war hero' phenomenon ... tarnishes the service of thousands of veterans who have served honorably," Carver said. "It strangles VA resources from providing critical care and benefits from deserving veterans."

Carver spoke at a news conference at U.S. District Court following the sentencing of Jesse Macbeth, a 23-year-old Tacoma resident who tried to position himself as a leader of the antiwar movement by claiming to have participated in war crimes in Iraq. In reality, Macbeth, who also sought medical benefits for post-traumatic stress disorder, was kicked out of the Army after six weeks at Fort Benning, Ga., in 2003 because of his "entry level performance and conduct."

Macbeth, who pleaded guilty, collected more than \$10,000 in benefits to which he was not entitled, and his claims of war crimes were quickly disseminated on the Internet. U.S. District Judge Robert Lasnik sentenced him to five months in prison, followed by three months in a halfway house. At his sentencing Macbeth apologized for defaming veterans, while Lasnik noted that "too many people with a political agenda grabbed Mr. Macbeth's story and ran with it, according to a news release from the U.S. Attorney's office.

Acting U.S. Attorney Jeff Sullivan said he served in Vietnam, and that his father, a B-24 pilot, was shot down and killed while bombing a Hanoi cement plant a week before Sullivan was born in 1943. He said he took the cases of these "phonies, liars and thieves" personally, and added that he hoped publicity about the cases would discourage others from doing it.

Besides Macbeth, the cases include:

-Reggie Buddle, 60, of Puyallup, who was sentenced to 500 hours of community service in July for posing as a decorated Marine Corps Chaplain and presiding over weddings, funerals and baptisms.

-Larry Lewis Porter, 52, of Seattle, who was sentenced to 37 months in April for mail fraud in connection with a scheme to fraudulently obtain \$134,000 in disability benefits. He pretended to have PTSD after serving in the Navy.

-Roy J. Scott, 71, of Port Angeles, pleaded guilty Aug. 31 to using a forged military discharge form to obtain \$22,000 in benefits, as well as unlawful wearing of military medals. He claimed to have been wounded in combat in Korea and to have won several medals, including the Purple Heart. He never served in Korea and was court-martialed out of the Marines.

-Merrick K. Hersey, 64, of Vancouver, was indicted Aug. 1 on charges of using a forged discharge certificate to apply for benefits for post-traumatic stress disorder. A fugitive, Hersey claimed to have won a Bronze Star and two Purple Hearts in Vietnam.

-Michael D. Heit, 58, of Harrington, pleaded guilty Thursday in U.S. District Court in Spokane to using a forged discharge certificate and falsely claiming military medals in posing as a Vietnam vet.

-Elvin J. Swisher, 70, of Idaho, has been charged with taking \$95,000 in unearned benefits and falsely posing as a veteran of the Korean War.

-Carlos Riosvalle, 83, of Portland, Ore., was sentenced in Multnomah County in April for multiple counts of theft by deception. He collected nearly \$23,000 in benefits after claiming to have been shot down during World War II; in fact, he never served.

## **Fake veteran gets 5-month sentence**

### **Man claimed to have helped kill civilians in Iraq**

*September 21, 2007*

**By MIKE BARBER**  
P-I REPORTER

Jesse MacBeth never was an Army Ranger, much less a corporal, never received a Purple Heart for wounds inflicted by a foreign foe, and neither saw nor participated in war crimes with fellow U.S. soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan, claims for which he became a poster boy for the anti-war movement.

So, there was likely no way the 23-year-old Tacoma man suffered post-traumatic stress disorder from the horrors of war and other injuries.

MacBeth was sentenced Friday to five months in jail and three years' probation for falsifying a Department of Veterans Affairs claim and an Army discharge record.

At a sentencing hearing before U.S. District Court Judge Robert Lasnik on Friday, MacBeth's federal public defender, Jay Stansell, said that if MacBeth didn't have PTSD from a war, he had mental health problems and grew up in a harsh environment, homeless on the streets, surviving by seizing whatever angle or positive feedback he could get.

"I know he lived a war as a child," Stansell said.

Lasnik, weighing a standard sentencing range of between two and eight months for falsifying a VA claim and an Army discharge record, also ordered MacBeth to seek help for mental health problems, especially as they related to committing domestic violence.

MacBeth's is the latest case to be sentenced under "Operation Stolen Valor," which uses the new Stolen Valor Act to go after people posing as veterans, who often festoon themselves with awards and invent tales of long-term injuries, often to fraudulently acquire veterans benefits.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Ron Friedman said the sentence is often linked to how much money a fake veteran bilks from the government, and MacBeth was caught before he took any.

Friedman said the government doesn't fully understand what MacBeth's motivations were. His actions included an effort to document PTSD, Friedman said, "but they were also symptomatic of something else."

Under a plea agreement in May, MacBeth admitted guilt to falsifying a claim for veterans compensation benefits and altering his military discharge record, which was issued after he washed out of Army boot camp after 44 days in 2003.

A thin man who sat quietly looking down through most of the hearing, MacBeth apologized for snookering anti-war groups with his claims of killing unarmed, helpless civilians in Iraq -- which were translated into Arabic and posted on the Internet -- and also to U.S. soldiers whom he defamed.

MacBeth said he felt bad for what he did.

"I'm sorry not only for lying about everything and discrediting anti-war groups, but also for defaming the real heroes, the soldiers out there sacrificing for their country," MacBeth said. "I was trying to pull a fast one, to make money to get off the streets."

MacBeth fooled peace groups and alternative media to become something of an anti-war star over the past four years.

He claimed he witnessed and participated in war crimes in Iraq with other Rangers, slaughtering hundreds of unarmed men, women and children.

In a widely distributed Internet video translated into Arabic, Macbeth said. "We would burn their bodies ... hang their bodies from the rafters in the mosque."

Lasnik noted that the case operated in two arenas, one in the courtroom where he was sentenced specifically for the crime of falsifying records, and another "in the blogosphere and elsewhere where he became a symbol."

"Too many people with a political agenda grabbed a hold of Mr. MacBeth's story and ran with it because they wanted to believe it. Any sober look should have lead people to believe it was all a made-up rant," Lasnik said.

"They tried to make him a poster boy for their point of view, and I think that is outrageous," Lasnik said.

Yet, while MacBeth's actions embarrassed the anti-war movement, it cannot be argued, as other quarters of the blogosphere assert, "that all reports of abuse by Americans in Iraq are incorrect," Lasnik cautioned. The military justice system has brought to light and dealt with such reports, he said.

Operation Stolen Valor is a year-old federal law enforcement effort that has resulted in a dozen cases under investigation in the Pacific Northwest, with fraud totals of more than \$1.4 million. Eight cases have been filed and are in various stages of prosecution.

The act allows authorities to pursue phonies they previously could not touch. In the past, authorities rarely could act unless they caught someone wearing an award.

"As a Vietnam veteran and the father of a decorated Army officer currently serving, I feel very keenly the damage done by Jesse Macbeth and these other fakes," U.S. Attorney Jeff Sullivan said.

## **REPORT FRAUD**

The Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General operates a confidential public

hot line to report crimes involving the VA or its programs. Call 800-488-8244 , send a fax to 202-565-7936, e-mail [vaoighotline@va.gov](mailto:vaoighotline@va.gov) or write to VA OIG hot line, P.O. Box 50410, Washington, D.C., 20091-0410.

# TRICARE for Any Vet Found 'Unfit'?

## ***Bush to Seek Lifetime TRICARE for Medically 'Unfit' Vets***

Tom Philpott | September 21, 2007  
Military Times

The Bush administration will ask [Congress](#) to provide lifetime TRICARE coverage to any service member discharged as "unfit" due to service-related physical or mental health conditions, said Donna Shalala, co-chair of the President's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors.

The [TRICARE](#) change will be one of the most expensive initiatives in a legislative package [the White House](#) will send to Congress by the end of September. The package is to implement key recommendations of the wounded warrior panel, also known as the Dole-Shalala Commission.

The [TRICARE proposal](#), if enacted into law, would open military healthcare to a wave of new beneficiaries, potentially as many as 9,000 to 10,000 newly-disabled veterans each year plus their families.

The Dole-Shalala commission report, released in July, said the TRICARE change should only apply to service members separated for combat-related disabilities. But [White House](#) officials, at the urging of Defense officials and service associations, have decided to ask Congress to extend lifetime TRICARE coverage to all medically-discharged veterans.

Shalala said the White House will propose that the TRICARE expansion be applied retroactively to veterans medically separated since 2001. Shalala didn't mention a specific retroactive date but Congress two years ago made eligibility for traumatic injury insurance retroactive to Oct. 7, 2001, the day U.S. forces invaded Afghanistan and began the Global War on Terrorism.

Under current law, members are separated rather than retired if found unfit for duty because of conditions rated below 20 percent disabling. They receive a disability severance award rather than [retired pay](#). Because they are not "retirees," they and their families are ineligible for lifetime TRICARE coverage. They can get VA health care but family members cannot.

From 2000 to 2006, an average of 9,600 service members a year were separated as medically unfit with disability ratings of 20 percent or less, according to statistics gathered by the Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission, which is due to release its report on Oct. 3. Nearly nine of 10 disabled soldiers were separated rather than retired. Sixty-four percent of sailors with disabilities, 73 percent of disabled airmen and 82 percent of disabled Marines also were released with ratings of 20 percent or less.

Shalala and her co-chairman, retired Sen. Robert Dole, said six of 34 "action steps" that their commission recommends requires legislation. They urged lawmakers to enact the White House initiatives this fall if possible.

In addition to expanding TRICARE, they said, Congress should:

-- Authorize the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide lifetime treatment of [Post Traumatic Stress Disorder](#) to any veteran deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan who seeks treatment. This "presumptive eligibility" for PTSD diagnosis and treatment should occur regardless of how much time has passed since exposure to combat, Shalala said. She said 500,000 service members have [deployed](#) to Iraq and Afghanistan multiple times, increasing their odds of experiencing PTSD, which "can be devastating."

-- Strengthen support for military families caring for wounded warriors by making them eligible for TRICARE-provided respite care and aid and attendant benefits. Shalala said many families are caring for loved ones at home who are suffering from complex injuries. The families need help with around the clock care, she said.

-- Amend the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) so that families of combat-injured service members see unpaid leave protection extended from the current limit of 12 weeks up to 6 months. Shalala said two thirds of injured service members have had a family member or close friend stay with them while they were hospitalized and one in five had to give up their job to do so. "That is simply unacceptable," Shalala said. The Senate already has passed this provision in its Support for Injured Service Members Act but the House should "quickly follow suit," she said.

-- End the dual Department of Defense and VA disability systems, by giving DoD responsibility only for finding a members unfit for duty, Dole said. DoD should pay disabled members an immediate lifetime annuity based on rank and years of

service. The revised VA disability pay system should include a monthly transition payment, perhaps equal to final [military basic pay](#). That would be replaced after the veteran settles into civilian life with payment to replace reduced earnings tied to their level of disability and payable until age 65. Veterans also should get a lifetime quality-of-life payment to compensate for life effects of their disabilities.

The commission gave no amounts for these payments, leaving that for the Bush administration and Congress to decide.

The commission, Dole said, recommended lifetime TRICARE coverage for any member found unfit for continued service as a result of injuries "acquired in combat, [while] supporting combat or preparing for combat. That takes [in] about everybody," he said.

"We think the White House is going even further," Shalala said, "to recommend that everyone who is declared unfit for service for health reasons -- that they will cover the individual and their family's healthcare forever."

"The advantage of that is obvious," she said. Disabled veterans who can work only part time still won't have to worry about medical care for themselves or their families. "It's a tremendous step forward," Shalala said.

Congress shouldn't worry about the cost, Dole added.

"My view was if we spent billions and billions and billions of dollars on getting young men and women in harms way, we ought to spend what it takes to get them back to nearly a normal life as possible."

To that remark, veterans in the hearing room broke into applause.

## U.S. Refuses to Extradite Agents to Germany

Associated Press | September 24, 2007

FRANKFURT, Germany - U.S. authorities have informed Germany that they will not extradite 13 suspected CIA agents sought in the alleged kidnapping of a German citizen.

A Justice Ministry spokeswoman, speaking on customary condition of anonymity, on Saturday confirmed a report in the weekly Der Spiegel that the U.S. administration told Berlin it would not hand over the group.

She said the ministry had, as a result, decided against passing on Munich prosecutors' formal request for their arrest to Washington.

The Justice Ministry last month sounded out U.S. authorities' willingness to cooperate with legal proceedings against the suspected agents, sending a legal request that officials say is a common first step in dealing with international arrest warrants.

Munich prosecutors issued warrants for the arrest of the 13 suspected CIA agents at the end of January, accusing the unidentified suspects of wrongfully imprisoning Khaled el-Masri and causing him serious bodily harm.

El-Masri, a German citizen of Lebanese descent, maintains that he was abducted in December 2003 at the Serbian-Macedonian border and flown by the CIA to a detention center in Kabul, Afghanistan, where he was abused.

He says he was released in Albania in May 2004, and that his captors told him he was seized in a case of mistaken identity.

Human rights campaigners have focused on el-Masri's story in pressing the United States to stop flying terrorism suspects to countries other than the U.S. where they could face abuse - a practice known as "extraordinary rendition." In a separate case, Italy also has issued arrest warrants for alleged CIA agents.

U.S. officials have declined to address the case in public. However, German Chancellor [Angela Merkel](#) has said that the United States has acknowledged making a mistake with el-Masri.

CIA spokesman George Little said Saturday that the agency would not comment on the case.

U.S. [Justice Department](#) spokesman Andrew Ames said that, as a matter of longstanding policy, "the department does not discuss whether it has or has not received an extradition request from a given country or our communication with any country with respect to such requests."

"Mr. El-Masri has pursued litigation for civil damages here in the U.S., and this litigation is ongoing," Ames said. "To date, U.S. courts have barred his suit based on the U.S. government's assertion of state secrecy concerns."

## Morning of the Living Dead

Tom Gregory

25 September 2007

As we are protecting our turf overseas, our pundits are reflecting the administration's marriage to the church and disembowelment of the state. Science is pushed aside for faith. The minute-by-minute news channels are brokers of opinion rather than messengers of fact. Twenty-four hours a day, propaganda can be found flooding the small screen. Analysts spew opinion as news, infecting viewers into a mindless state. As our educational system becomes overburdened, Americans are learning less, and believing more.

Television is America's babysitter, psychologist, family, salesman, and friend. Millions of Americans tune into *The View* for a daily dose of insight, enlightenment, and opinion. The influence of the show's panel is exponential to the power of thousands. Pundits' words and viewers' time should be worthy of mutual respect. Opinion is one thing, but an unreasonable opinion that doesn't listen to scientific reason is a serious matter. The belief expressed on *The View* by Sherri Shepherd -- that she was uncertain the world was round -- is as dangerous as the Bush Administration relying on faith, God, and prayers to get the United States out of the mess that is Iraq.

Americans cannot afford to convert into mindless, passive followers. Policymakers have too long led us down a road where we feel compelled to comply rather than question. Americans must not be the living dead. We have to be innovative, always willing to think outside the box. We must question the policies of the government and the intelligence of people like Ms. Shepherd. We owe it to the blood of our past and our country's future to acknowledge folly whenever it tries to infect humanity's minds.

*Night of the Living Dead* is the 1968 low-budget independent masterpiece directed by George Romero. It deals with the dangers of a world overrun by the living dead and fistfuls of fear. The film opens as a zombie, hungry for human flesh, pursues Barbara and her brother through a cemetery. Remarkably, Barbara finds shelter in a farmhouse with six other refugees. The film's famous line, "They're coming to get you, Barbara," rings true as more and more of the living dead gather outside the small home.

This drive-in classic reinvented the horror genre with its edgy writing and lighter lines seriously delivered. A reporter asks a police chief, "Are the ghouls all slow moving?" He responds, "Yeah, they're dead...they're all messed up." The final payoff is one of Hollywood's greatest endings. It's the same horror America will face if we continue to listen to the zombies among us. *Night of the Living Dead* has been dissected over and over for its political undertones and its ability to slyly kick you in the butt. Hidden meanings are present in all great films, including this one. It is simply remarkable movie making with an evolved view.

The View's producer and star, Barbara Walters, has interviewed Fidel Castro, Saddam Hussein, and scores of historic and pop-culture figures. She arranged the first joint interview with Egypt's Anwar Sadat and Israel's Menachem Begin thirty years ago.

Barbara Walters's legacy is our history; her legend is her success. I just hope she steers her program towards more responsible talk and less preaching to the choir. She should not, at this point in her career, be contributing to the further dumbing down of American culture. Barbara Walters knows better than that.

Television's power-players alter opinions and change perspectives of millions of Americans. Responsibility for content worthy of America's evolving intellect lies on the producer's shoulders. The scariest thing about *Night of the Living Dead* is that when the worst monsters finally come, they are us. And no, these monsters aren't just coming to get Barbara -- they are coming for us all.