

RECONCILIATION

Note: The devastation, the injuries and the deaths that are being inflicted in Iraq and Afghanistan are not winning friends. On the contrary, they are creating a lot of anger and ill will towards those responsible. In addition to it being morally wrong, all this does not augur well for American security. More and more Americans are realizing this and speaking up. I have no doubt that a vast majority of Americans would be revolted by what is being done in their name, if only they knew the facts.

Josh Stieber and Ethan Mc.Cord , both of them former specialists, US Army, give voice to the feelings of those who feel immensely saddened by what is being done to the Iraqis and Afghanis and their lands.

Please read the following written by Josh Stieber and Ethan McCord. Once you have read it, I am sure you will want to pass the message along.

Gulamhusein Abba.

PS. To read the message at the original site and see Wikileaks 'Collateral Murder' video) please go to: <http://www.michaelmoore.com/words/mike-friends-blog/open-letter-reconciliation-and-responsibility-iraqi-people>

Iraq veteran Josh Stieber was deployed to Baghdad with Bravo Company 2-16

April 17th, 2010 11:36 AM

An Open Letter of Reconciliation and Responsibility to the Iraqi People

From Current and Former Members of the U.S. Military

By **Josh Stieber**

(Written with Ethan McCord, who pulled injured children from van in Wikileaks 'Collateral Murder' video)

Peace be with you.

To all of those who were injured or lost loved ones during the July 2007 Baghdad shootings depicted in the "Collateral Murder" Wikileaks video:

We write to you, your family, and your community with awareness that our words and actions can never restore your losses.

We are both soldiers who occupied your neighborhood for 14 months. Ethan McCord pulled your daughter and son from the van, and when doing so, saw the faces of his own children back home. Josh Stieber was in the same company but was not there that day, though he contributed to the your pain, and the pain of your community on many other occasions.

There is no bringing back all that was lost. What we seek is to learn from our mistakes and do everything we can to tell others of our experiences and how the people of the United States need to realize what have done and are doing to you and the people of your country. We humbly ask you what we can do to begin to repair the damage we caused.

We have been speaking to whoever will listen, telling them that what was shown in the Wikileaks video only begins to depict the suffering we have created. From our own experiences, and the experiences of other veterans we have talked to, we know that the acts depicted in this video are everyday occurrences of this war: this is the nature of how U.S.-led wars are carried out in this region.

We acknowledge our part in the deaths and injuries of your loved ones as we tell Americans what we were trained to do and carried out in the name of "god and country". The soldier in video said that your husband shouldn't have brought your children to battle, but we are acknowledging our responsibility for bringing the battle to your neighborhood, and to your family. We did unto you what we would not want done to us.

More and more Americans are taking responsibility for what was done in our name. Though we have acted with cold hearts far too many times, we have not forgotten our actions towards you. Our heavy hearts still hold hope that we can restore inside our country the acknowledgment of your humanity, that we were taught to deny.

Our government may ignore you, concerned more with its public image. It has also ignored many veterans who have returned physically injured or mentally troubled by what they saw and did in your country. But the time is long overdue that we say that the value of our nation's leaders no longer represent us. Our secretary of defense may say the U.S. won't lose its reputation over this, but we stand and say that our reputation's importance pales in comparison to our common humanity.

With such pain, friendship might be too much to ask. Please accept our apology, our sorrow, our care, and our dedication to change from

the inside out. We are doing what we can to speak out against the wars and military policies responsible for what happened to you and your loved ones. Our hearts are open to hearing how we can take any steps to support you through the pain that we have caused.

Solemnly and Sincerely,

Josh Stieber, former specialist, U.S. Army
Ethan McCord, former specialist, U.S. Army

Sign the petition [here](#).

For the following related stories go to:

<http://www.michaelmoore.com/words/mike-friends-blog/open-letter-reconciliation-and-responsibility-iraqi-people>

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Cost-of-war display planned in Binghamton

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