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## Political Debate -- It's O.K.

Posted by tmv - 2007/06/14 18:13

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Much has been written in the TP regarding the U.S. role in the Iraq War. Some applaud the gallant fight, while others grow increasingly frustrated and angry. It goes without saying, we ALL support our fighting men and women. One criticism is that if we cut off funding this war we are NOT supporting the troops. Some would argue that by cutting off the funding, we are most definitely getting our soldiers out of a wrong and unwinnable situation. Most disturbing is the criticism that our discussions are demoralizing the troops and empowering the enemy! We're told not to trust the media and that only the military knows the real truth because they are the ones over there. (Understand that without the media, we would not have known about the appalling conditions at Walter Reed Hospital.) Here is what Bush's War Czar says about political debate and troop morale.

Bush's War Czar, 3-Star Lt. General Douglas Lute: "I don't believe it undercuts morale." The troops "understand the democratic process," he said, "and, in fact, that's what we've sworn to protect and defend."

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## Re:Political Debate -- It's O.K.

Posted by mikiehorn - 2007/08/09 10:59

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Post edited by: mikiehorn, at: 2007/08/09 12:01

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## Re:Political Debate -- It's O.K.

Posted by mikiehorn - 2007/08/09 10:59

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As one who works with "the troops" every day as a defense contractor - they really don't follow the daily ups and downs that the political policy wonks publish.

As 80% of the military and military households tend to be conservative (read that as Republican because they have no place else to go) in their thinking and voting habits (2006 Harris Poll) - the debate on who is "for" the troops is a specious argument.

Professional soldiers and their families do tend to remember who has voted for or against pay increases over the last 35 years - for improved housing and schools on military installations - OR NOT... and the Republicans have won this battle by default.

As Reserve and National Guard soldiers tend to be prior active service members and on average 7 years older than their active duty counterparts... the "johnny come lately" slogans of supporting the troops but not their mission leaves many of us with either a foul taste in the mouth or outright expressions of "bulls\_\_t". Since the Vietnam war - the political left leaves a lot to be desired when it comes to support of the troops... having an almost 100% voting record against modern weapon systems now in use, pay raises and quality of life issues for military families.

To those who point out the disgrace of Walter Reid and other treatment of combat wounded - I can only tell you that this is a warning shot across the bow for those who believe single payer government health care is superior to our current system. The Republicans, fat dumb, happy and now out of office for the most part are living on their past records on military appropriations - nothing of what they have done over the period 2000-2007. Many deserved defeat for ignoring the most loyal segment of their voting base... the military.

The vast majority of military professional people listen in amazement as both parties trot out draft dodgers and military cynics who are peeing on the legs of our people in uniform and telling them its only raining...

The politicalization of the military is a dangerous development in American politics. The Democratic party is trying to whistle past the graveyard of 35 years of anti-military rhetoric and a sorry record of voting against needed weapon systems, pay and quality of life issues... the Republicans taking their votes and service for granted and making the "support" for the military something they wrap themselves in during the election campaigns.

Our country exists - not because of what any of us write here - but because we have magnificent men and women who do the unthinkable every day and do jobs the majority of American won't do - serve and sacrifice on a daily basis. I, having served in uniform for 27 years and the last ten training officers to "bring 'em home alive" and who lost a 52 year

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old sister-in-law in Afghanistan last September understand full well what's going on in the world.

Want to keep your head on your shoulders? Don't think the burka is a fashion statement - then please go out of your way to tell our troops how much you appreciate their service - they will probably say they're just doing their job - but it will thrill them non-the-less... count on it!

Mike Horn, LTC, USA, ret  
Database Manager, Combat Simulations  
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## Re:Political Debate -- It's O.K.

Posted by shalaina - 2007/08/09 19:04

Mike is consistent in his incoherence, if nothing else:

(1) "..This is a warning shot across the bow for those who believe single payer government health care is superior to our current system" Actually, no, it bears no comparison. A single payer system is an insurance program with a single payer, the government, not an institutional medical system like the VA. The VA has actually achieved some remarkable economies, including a system-wide informatics platform that enables tracking of patients in a way incomprehensible to the civilian system.

(2) "The politicalization of the military is a dangerous development in American politics." Well, no more dangerous than the Vietnam debate, the World War II isolationism prior to Pearl, the problem of colonialism in the Philippines, etc., etc. If politicians begin wars in a democracy they darn well better be able to moderate and end them.

(3)"the political left leaves a lot to be desired when it comes to support of the troops... having an almost 100% voting record against modern weapon systems now in use" Quite irrelevant since we are all fully aware that Cold War weapons systems are largely irrelevant in the modern battlespace. Ramping down Russian linguists and analysts did nothing to impact or pitiful prediction of current events, as you well know, nor did modernizing Tridents when we could have spent more on loitering drones. If you claim the threats are fluid, you can't claim the military was robbed of a chance to address those unforeseen possibilities. They try their best, and politicians listen to them, to outside analysts, and to their constituents looking for work.

In the end, Mike's arguments don't do justice to reality in their rhetorical zeal, but dilute the true spirit of the troops which is that they serve at the behest of an imperfect system that is still better than anything else yet devised.

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## Re:Political Debate -- It's O.K.

Posted by Ian Stewart - 2007/08/28 09:02

mikiehorn wrote:

As one who works with "the troops" every day as a defense contractor -

That says it all. You have a vested financial interest in perpetual war and the permanent funding of the military-industrial complex. Like it or not, everything you write on the subject is compromised by that.

The Democratic party is trying to whistle past the graveyard of 35 years of anti-military rhetoric and a sorry record of voting against needed weapon systems

The guerilla insurgency in Iraq has done significant damage to our military using little more than AK-47s and cheaply-constructed roadside bombs. If we ever needed to defend America... well, let's just say that there are millions upon millions of better-quality guns in private hands, and a highly-trained military that has a deep understanding of guerilla tactics. Hypothetical invaders wouldn't stand a ghost of a chance, and we wouldn't need multi-million-dollar science-fiction wet dreams to repel them. The vast majority of these "needed" weapons systems are overpriced boondoggles created to funnel money to defense contractors and create pork-barrel jobs to keep congressmen in office. If you really want American troops to be safe, don't send them on pointless foreign adventures into countries who don't want us there. Remember, military men joined up to defend their country, not to offend against others.

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To those who point out the disgrace of Walter Reid and other treatment of combat wounded - I can only tell you that this is a warning shot across the bow for those who believe single payer government health care is superior to our current system

So, uh, how do you suggest that combat wounded should be treated? By a "private-sector" (really government leech) contractor who will be even more bloated and inefficient than the VA system? The government sent those men over there without any direct input from the people, and with a completely fabricated justification. Thus, it has a responsibility to take care of those injured in service to it. But here you are, using the Walter Reed tragedy to make a political statement against single-payer healthcare. Not that I don't agree that it's a bad idea, but Walter Reed and socialized medicine have practically zilch to do with each other. Who's politicizing the military, again?

Oh, and can you explain to me why Ron Paul had more donations from active-duty military than all other presidential candidates in the second quarter? I already know why, but I just want to be entertained by whatever BS you come up with to explain it away.

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### Re:Political Debate -- It's O.K.

Posted by Kathy - 2007/09/07 04:14

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Way to go Mike. As one who has both retired and active military in my family and among my friends I can only say you are right and well said. Our military cares about who is looking out for them and giving them the tools they need to do their job and stay safe and also giving their families what they need while they are serving our country. That is why virtually all of my family and friends in the military voted Republican. They knew who was listening to them and it wasn't anyone on the liberal side of the congressional aisle.

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### Re:Political Debate -- It's O.K.

Posted by my2sense - 2007/10/31 06:47

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Wouldn't it be funny if our troops and forces went on a strike? Sometime I wish that would happen just to point out how important our military is? I am a minority and so grateful of our military. It's what keeps this country, states, county's, town's safe. Could you imagine of all the chaos that it would bring. The violence that we would face? Then and only then we will have the naysayer's that complained about the wars, the guns, the troops blah blah blah! crying, running around with their heads chops off, what will you do then? I know! They'll complain about how we don't have troops, we don't have guns, we don't have..blah blah blah! go figure

I give respect to those who dedicated their lives on serving our forces. Those who tear down the military and objectives are really the ones who says I don't need them but calls on them when issues arises within them.

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### Re:Political Debate -- It's O.K.

Posted by richard7285 - 2007/12/11 05:20

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as a military member who's currently wrapping up a 1 year tour to iraq i thank all of your for your support. i personally leave the politics to the professionals and do what i do best regardless of what reason i was ordered to come here.

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