

**QUESTIONS FOR THE 2.27.14  
CONGRESSIONAL HEARING ON EXTORTION 17  
On behalf of Billy and Karen Vaughn**

1) Who in the chain of command or setting policies, allowed the Imam to speak over the American dead in ceremony in Afghanistan? Why has a full translation and interpretation of the Imam's message not been shared with the families? Was this operational command policy or policy created by the white house and state department through MOU and Afghan leadership?

2) Why were, and who allowed foreign flags on possible US Forces caskets without knowing for sure if Afghan Nationals or US service members remains were in the coffins? Why was this not determined before returning the remains home and prior to reception of body's by the families?

3) Why were special operations Afghan forces (Trained by that SEAL team) removed from the aircraft prior to the flight of Extortion 17?

a) Was there intelligence prior to mission lift that their might have been a security breach in mission integrity?

b) Were there known intelligence breaches due to the fact that OCG and federal police had been compromised with infiltrators from the resistance?

c) Who in command or joint command made the last minute decision to remove 7 Special Op's Afghans from Extortion 17 or did the Afghans on the ground make that decision?

4) Who was in direct command of Special Forces for operation Lefty Grove? Are there copies of radio and/or audio with transcripts covering communications from the Army Rangers leading to the planning of the Special Op mission?

5) Was (S2) intelligence aware of what the situation on mission target was concerning the ongoing fire fight and the impact on mission planning? If not, why not? If so, who were the S2 officers and what command did they answer to? Is the situational report and/or the after action report from the ground accessible to the families and this inquiry?

6) Knowing the situation on the ground prior to and during mission planning, why was it thrown together so hastily and why was mission protocol not followed to protect US lives? (This operation was outside normal protocol and the known risk assessment was overlooked to the detriment of the forces.)

7) Prior to mission planning—knowing from eyes on the ground reported back to command by Rangers, that "packs" (Known enemy Targets) were moving out to the North West—why were the AH-64's or C-130 not directed to engage the targets, as has

been done hundreds of times in Iraq and Afghanistan, and who made the decision to withhold engagement?

8) Who was in charge of maintenance control at the time of releasing the aircraft for mission and where are the manifests that belong with flight Extortion 17 prior to leaving the ground? Where are the copies of the original manifest prior to changes of packs on mission?

9) Why, if intelligence had already been established that insurgents were in a tower and on station in the hot landing zone, (reported by both AH-64s and C-130 and other sources on the ground), was the mission given a go? Who gave the GO order to fly directly into harm's way unprotected? Who gave the command to "GO"?

10) If assets of the C-130 and two (2) AH-64 aircraft were sent South of the intended LZ (Landing Zone) knowing that "packs" were moving North West, why would Extortion 17 be directed to enter from the North and not the South, where the cover of all assets was available to protect the number of Special Operations Forces placed on one (1) aircraft?

a) Who is responsible for that decision and planning?

11) Why was the CH47 (Extortion 17) used as the single transport of ALL assets knowing its age and relatively new combat crew of National Guardsmen, which is outside all known operational protocol used on this type of mission?

a) Was the Special Operations equipment not available? If not, why not?

b) Is this due to the uptick in the number of operations now being handled by Special Forces, expressly Navy SEAL Teams?

c) What impact did cuts to military spending have on the mission readiness of Special Operations equipment and flight crews?

d) Is this directly due to command and the mission planner for this operation and the direct dereliction of force protection by leadership?

12) Knowing that Qari Tahir was the primary target and was known to have been on the move and gone; also with the knowledge that the enemy was planning and trying to take down helicopters operating in the Tangi River Valley for some period prior to mission; why would mission planners put so many assets on a single aircraft, an aircraft not built or mission qualified for this type of operation?

13) Knowing full well that the integrity of the OCG had been compromised and infiltration was a known fact, why put the mission up on the TAC OP's computer for all to see prior to the lift off of Extortion 17.....? Again, is this a reason for removing

Afghans from the mission before departure? Is there a record or transcript of enemy chatter that had been captured prior to or during the mission?

14) Where are the maintenance records for Extortion 17 from the Army and National Guard on air frame integrity which stays with an aircraft throughout its entire service? Can they be made available for inspection by investigators?

15) Where are the Avionics records that would show whether or not the data recording boxes were in place on the airframe at time of mission?

16) Where were, and why weren't MH-47s used for this mission? Was it an availability shortage or maintenance problem? Other flights in the valley of MH-47 had already taken ground fire before mission planning. If there is or was a shortage of fully operational aircraft, why?

a) Billions of American tax dollars have been cut by the administration to DoD, while billions in foreign aid was given to the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas through the Palestinian authority. Why has congress not started investigations on the money allowed to go to known terrorist groups, which is forbidden by federal law, at the expense of American lives?

17) Why is the mission planner's deposition not signed by anyone with the legal authority to administer an oath and take that deposition? No JAG, No Paralegal..... No one?

18) Why are there no communication records from the AH-64s or C-130 pilots reporting red or bright trails flying towards Extortion 17 at the time of the incident?

They do mention that they thought they were being shot at. RPG-2 or RPG -7s leaves a distinct red trail from the black powder propellant. They reported seeing burning and flames. However, there is nothing in the report about the initial explosion, which would have occurred with the rotor strike impact, detonating the TNT projectile upon impact for initial explosion? Nor is there any mention of a secondary explosion of aircraft after impact. Why?

We have many more questions. We are here to request a complete investigation. We hope that today's hearing is just the beginning and that a full investigation into many more anomalies that exist, not only in the investigative report, but in statements made by operators themselves, can be answered for all of our families. We would hope and request that this committee work with the families, calling for a special investigator and a special investigative grand jury to hear all evidence for all of the families, to include every military family with a loved one serving today. This is the single largest loss of life in the Afghan conflict and Special Forces history. With all due respect, the total lack of productivity within this particular committee on other critical military and national security related breaches makes it very difficult to place confidence in this committee.

The situation regarding deadly ROE compromising the integrity and conditions of this mission, among others we are aware of, demand a complete in-depth investigation and the families want the truth about what happened here to be made public, for the benefit of all who serve this great nation. All of the facts regarding this incident must be brought by an independent special prosecutor, before a special grand jury. People are accountable when they ask the ultimate sacrifice of us and our loved ones, without doing all they can to assure the safe success of their missions.

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