

Subj: Fwd: Congressman's POW Charade
Date: 98-09-21 19:51:05 EDT
From: [REDACTED] (MacAlan Thompson)
To: [REDACTED]

>
>
>—— FORWARD, Original message follows ——
>

>Date: Friday, 18-Sep-98 04:16 PM
>

>Subject: Congressman's POW Charade
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>Please read, disseminate or reprint as appropriate
>

>CONGRESSMAN BUYER'S POW CHARADE
>Are POW/MIA "Hearings" A Campaign Gimmick?

>by
>CDR Chip Beck, USNR (ret)
>

> On October 2, 1998 Congressman Steve Buyer (R-IL) will convene the
>House Subcommittee on Military Personnel to hold what is billed as
>"POW/MIA Hearings." The standard emphasis will be on MIAs, not POWs.
>

> Based on experience with the Congressman's office dating back 18 months
>, and following recent conversations with House Staffers setting up the
>hearings, as well as with other Congressional sources, it appears that
>Mr. Buyer is simply using the POW stage to "secure" veteran and military
>votes in his district for the upcoming November election. There is no
>serious interest, or intention, on the Congressman's part, as far as I
>can tell, to substantially illuminate the deception, and deceptive
>practices, that surround the POW topic and pertinent issues.
>

> My analysis of the situation is based on a series of meetings and
>events that cover the time span in which Congressman Buyer has been
>Chairman of the House Subcommittee charged with POW oversight. He asked
>for the job, but has done nothing remarkable with his responsibilities.
>

> In late winter/early spring 1997, Carol Hrdlicka (wife of POW David
>Hrdlicka) and I visited the Congressman in his office, shortly after he

>assumed control of the Subcommittee following Congressman Bob Dornan's
>departure. We briefed the Congressman on the families' concerns
>(Carol's bailiwick) and my own experiences as a POW investigator who
>uncovered improprieties within the Defense POW/MIA Office and testified
>about them.

>
> Throughout the 30 minute meeting, Mr. Buyer sat impassively, letting a
>Staffer do the talking for him. In the 18 months since that meeting,
>Congressman Buyer never re-contacted Mrs. Hrdlicka or myself, nor did he
>engage in any substantive activity that demonstrates a serious, leading
>role in executing his POW responsibilities. Granted, he met with family
>groups at various, infrequent settings, but none of these were little
>more than rote observations of protocol.

>
> When I learned of the upcoming POW hearings, originally set for mid-
>September, I called Mr. Buyer's office and volunteered to testify, or
>speak, before the committee, stating that I had new information that the
>families, and his Subcommittee, had not heard before. The information I
>offered to share is derived from investigations pursued since I left
>DPMO. It does however, also include unclassified information I and 5
>others provided Congressman Dornan's Subcommittee in 8 hours of Closed-
>hearing testimony on October 1, 1996 - the last POW Hearing Mr. Dornan
>ever held, a meeting which was not open to the public, but was of
>interest to it.

>
> That unclassified information, which should be released, and which I
>authorized to be disclosed prior to providing the testimony, was not
>made available to the POW/MIA families, the press, or the public. It is
>their right to know that information, and the upcoming Buyer POW
>Hearings could have provided a new opportunity for open disclosure of
>that data.

>
> I also expressed my willingness to share information that I obtained
>this year from travels to a former Warsaw Pact country, which
>contradicts standard official statements about our POWs, statements
>issued by both DPMO and the Vietnamese Government.

>
> Mr. Buyer's office directed me to speak with Staffer Tom Hawley, whom I
>had met before. I explained to Mr. Hawley, in more detail than is
>provided here, what I was prepared to offer and talk about. Mr. Hawley
>declined to accept my offer to testify, but invited me to "write down
>some questions that the Congressman could ask" of the usual government

>officials who will parade before the Subcommittee with their canned
>presentations.
>
> I expressed my dissatisfaction and disappointment to Mr. Hawley, but
>initially said I would provide some questions. In retrospect, and after
>talking with other Congressional sources in his own party, former POWs,
>and selected family members, I have decided not to assist Mr. Buyer in
>what I now perceive to be an election period charade to win votes, not
>uncover facts.
>
> The reason for my decision is that I had information to impart, not
>seek. Posing questions to people from offices where I uncovered
>deception and untruths before, is not the way to expose the mendacity
>surrounding their work or enlighten the families.
>
> Through intermediaries, a few POW family members sought to give Mr.
>Buyer's Subcommittee an opportunity to reverse its decision and invite
>me to testify. The word that I just received, on POW/MIA Recognition Day
>, is that the Congressman and his Staffers are of the opinion that I
>have nothing "new" to offer, and they are not inviting people who
>testified before, to testify again.
>
> In fact, at least two persons scheduled to appear before the
>Subcommittee, and who adhere to the "party line," are "reappearing" to
>testify, again.
>
> If Congressman Buyer can instruct Committee Staffer Mr. John Chapla to
>release the unclassified testimony that I, Norm Kass, Al Graham, Joe
>Douglass, John Quirk, and even General James Wold (reluctantly in his
>case) provided during 8 hours on October 1, 1996, then Mr. Hawley's
>statement that my information is "not new" will at least be "half-true."
>
> If that information, which deals with the specifics of data and files
>that DPMO officials improperly concealed, and the legitimate
>investigations they subverted, is not released, then what I could say in
>public would be completely new, at least to the families.
>
> Subsequent information that I obtained in Europe, which includes never-
>before published photos of Warsaw Pact intelligence operatives
>manipulating our POWs in Hanoi (without the presence of the Vietnamese),
>is also new to the families and the public.
>

> The information I offered to provide via the Buyer Subcommittee is of
>interest to those who count most - the POW families. I was assured of
>this by three respected family members with whom I have confided and
>worked to obtain parts of the data in hand. By declining to provide a
>forum from which to disseminate the new information, Congressman Buyer
>signals to me that his priorities are focused on obtaining votes, not
>facts.

>
> For the veterans and military voters who will go to the polls in
>Indiana, they might consider that the limelight of a POW Hearing can
>cast a shadow as well as a light. They can decide whether this
>representative is a serious advocate for the rights of Unrepatriated
>POWs, or whether his concern is a standard-politician's charade.

>
> Those not voting in Indiana, but who share a unified distaste for the
>political glad-handing that the upcoming POW Hearings are poised to
>promote, might simply register their dissatisfaction to the Congressman
>in general.

>
> I have requested the assistance of Mr. Reed Irvine, of Accuracy In
>Media (AIM), as well as Mr. Bob Brown of SOF Magazine, in finding
>appropriate platforms by which this information can be shared, before
>and after the Subcommittee meets. If Mr. Buyer is uninterested in
>helping, there are others who will.

> (End)

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>Reprint of the above is authorized as is.

>Publications wishing additional details, interviews, or exclusive
>article on

>the topic can contact the author at [REDACTED]

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>—— FORWARD, End of original message ——
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Say, big boy

To go
Thru life
How'd you like
A whiskered wife?
Burma-Shave 1938

----- Headers -----

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