

Pat Tillman family, Jessica Lynch blow open Bush administration war deceit

By [Larry Chin](#)

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The searing congressional testimonies from [the family of Pat Tillman](#) and [Jessica Lynch](#) may sound the long overdue death knell for mainstream American public support for the Bush administration and its criminal war.

Today, one unwilling and outraged war poster child, and the agonized family members of the other, stood before Congress, looked the Bush administration in the eye, and said, “enough”.

Kevin Tillman, who served with his brother, accused the Bush administration of intentional deceit.

The accounts of the Tillmans, Lynch, and their fellow soldiers lay bare the fact that the Bush administration engaged in an elaborate and deliberate criminal cover-up of Tillman’s [fratricide](#), as well as Lynch’s ordeal, to deceive the American people.

In what can only be described as post-facto rape, the administration hijacked the images of Tillman and Lynch for war propaganda, fabricated elaborate pro-war fantasies around both, and then flooded the media with these pro-Bush, pro-war falsehoods. The violation of Tillman will prove to be even more grotesque and appalling, if investigations determine that Tillman’s disapproval of the war contributed in any way to his death.

An historic turning point has been reached. The American people who embraced the Pat Tillman/Jessica Lynch lie will “get” the Pat Tillman/Jessica Lynch truth, now that it has been honestly and heroically presented.

Now the tidal wave begins.

Piece by piece, the Bush administration’s criminal construct is finally being undone. The Bush administration, and its “war on terrorism” (in its present incarnation), will not recover from this mortal blow.

AP REPORT

Tillman-Lynch Hearing Opens As Drone Footage Question Lingers

By **SCOTT LINDLAW**

The Associated Press, 4/23/2007

WASHINGTON - The federal government invented “sensational details and stories” about

the death of Pat Tillman and the rescue of Jessica Lynch, perhaps the most famous victims of the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, a House chairman charged Tuesday.

“The government violated its most basic responsibility,” said Rep. Henry Waxman, D-Calif., chairman of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, which opened a hearing into the incidents.

Lynch, walking slowly, took her seat at the witness table along with members of Tillman’s family.

Tillman’s brother, Kevin, charged the military with “intentional falsehoods that meet the legal definition for fraud” and “deliberate and careful misrepresentations” of the events surrounding Pat Tillman’s death.

Lynch, then an Army private, was badly injured when her convoy was ambushed in Iraq in 2003. She was subsequently rescued by American troops from an Iraqi hospital but the tale of her ambush was changed into a story of heroism on her part.

“The bottom line is the American people are capable of determining their own ideals of heroes and they don’t need to be told elaborate tales,” Lynch told the committee in prepared testimony.

Lawmakers planned to press the Pentagon with questions still hovering over the shooting of Tillman, a one-time National Football League star: Was a Predator drone flying overhead when Tillman was killed? Did it videotape the incident?

The military says no such videotape exists, but members of Congress hoped to elicit the new information at the hearing. Tillman’s mother and brother, who have continued to raise questions about the incident, were appearing as witnesses.

Investigations have concluded that the Army new quickly that Tillman’s death in Afghanistan three years ago was the result of friendly fire but withheld the news from his family, instead offering up a story of a heroic Tillman facing down the enemy.

“We believe this narrative was intended to deceive the family but more importantly the American public,” said Kevin Tillman, choking up as he testified. “Pat’s death was clearly the result of fratricide.”

“Revealing that Pat’s death was a fratricide would have been yet another political disaster in a month of political disasters ... so the truth needed to be suppressed,” said Tillman, who was in a convoy behind his brother but didn’t see the incident.

For the hearing, the committee issued its first subpoena since Democrats took power and Waxman assumed the chairmanship in January. The target of the subpoena was Dr. Gene Bolles, the neurosurgeon who treated Lynch in Germany after she was rescued in Iraq.

Acting Defense Department Inspector General Thomas Gimble and Gen. Rodney Johnson, the head of the Army’s Criminal Investigation Command who both completed investigations last month on Tillman’s death also were set to appear.

The drone, equipped with a video camera in its nose, had been flown by the CIA over

Afghanistan in search of Osama bin Laden for several years. After Sept. 11, 2001, the little plane also was outfitted with missiles and used to kill al-Qaida leaders.

An Air Force commando attached to Tillman's Army Ranger platoon testified that as the incident unfolded, he heard the unmanned reconnaissance plane's distinctive propellor buzz overhead.

His recollection of the Predator was enough to spark a search for any video the drone might have gathered. That search spanned six months, took investigators close to the highest reaches of the Pentagon and touched upon some of the most sensitive technology the United States possesses.

In September, Army security officials directed that investigators' memos seeking Predator footage be classified "SECRET/NOFORN," meaning no foreigners would be permitted to see the memos.

Special agents for the Army Criminal Investigation Command and the Defense Department inspector general's office spent much of last summer trying to track down the video or determine whether it existed. Among other agencies, the agents reached out to "Psychological Operations, the Pentagon ... regarding the Predator footage which was taken during the Tillman incident."

A former U.S. commander in Afghanistan told investigators that "the chances of footage being taken at the incident location during that time frame is minimal."

Still, the investigators met with Lt. Gen. William G. Boykin, the Pentagon's deputy undersecretary for intelligence, who said "he would coordinate with the Central Intelligence Agency and ensure a review for the requested imagery is conducted."

In October, however, the conclusive results came back from Navy Vice Admiral Eric T. Olson, deputy commander of the Special Operations Command: No video of the friendly fire episode was "known or suspected to exist."

Tillman's death received worldwide attention because he had walked away from a huge contract with the NFL's Arizona Cardinals to enlist in the Army after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

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