

The Issue of Homeless US Veterans

About 400, 000 homeless US Veterans

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Last night on The O'Reilly Factor, Bill O'Reilly repeated his ridiculous assertion that there are few, if any, homeless veterans in America: [click here to view [video](#)]

O'Reilly raised an important topic: the plight of homeless veterans. Too bad he got the facts wrong.

There are almost 200,000 homeless veterans in America. Let me introduce you to one:

Less than a year after serving with the 3rd Infantry Division in Iraq, twenty-five year old Herold Noel found himself unemployed, homeless, and unable to provide for his wife and four children.

As a homeless Iraq veteran suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and living out of his car in Brooklyn, Herold was not greeted by a support system for veterans. Instead, he met resistance from the Housing Authority, the VA, and New York's city shelter for families, filling out form after form and added to waiting list after waiting list.

According to Herold, "I thought New York was going to look out for me, I just got back from war. I felt like I'd been stabbed in the back."

Herald is not alone. Already, an estimated 1,500 Iraq and Afghanistan veterans are homeless or at risk for homelessness. They are joining the increasing ranks of veterans who are homeless.

Bill, here are the facts. Veterans represent one-third of the adult homeless population in this country, and that number is rising. While almost 200,000 homeless veterans line the nation's streets every night, almost twice as many experience homelessness at some point throughout the course of a year. Essentially, we have the population of Des Moines, Iowa or Montgomery, Alabama "sleeping under bridges."

This is a national disgrace. As Americans we should be ashamed and outraged that the brave men and women of our Armed Forces are being abandoned under bridges, not denying their existence. As one of the most watched cable news hosts on television, Bill O'Reilly has a great opportunity to help homeless veterans by bringing more attention to the issue. Join IAVA in urging him to be part of the solution (www.BillwasWrong.com).

Click here to sign an open letter to Bill O'Reilly, telling him to set the record straight about

the very real problem of homeless veterans in America. We also have a resource center where people can learn more, and find ways they can help.

Paul Rieckhoff is the Executive Director and Founder of IAVA (Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of America), the country's first and largest Iraq Veterans group.

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