

To: Lieutenant General Cone, Commanding General, III Corps And Fort Hood

Sir,

My name is David Travis Bishop, former Sergeant, currently confined at the Northwestern Joint Regional Correctional Facility at Ft. Lewis, Washington.

On August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2009, I was court-martialed for my refusal to deploy to Afghanistan. Please allow me to briefly explain myself.

All my life, I have considered myself a "lazy Christian." This attitude followed me through my entire Army career, including my first deployment to Camp Victory, Iraq, from 2006-07. When my unit, 57<sup>th</sup> Signal Battalion, first announced our coming deployment to Afghanistan, I decided that, due to the much more aggressive nature of the combat in Afghanistan, I would begin to read my Bible, studying the teachings of Jesus Christ, in an effort to prepare myself spiritually for the coming deployment.

However, once I began these studies, I realized that, in my interpretation of His teachings, a career in a combat-oriented field conflicted with my growing Christian belief structure. Believing that I had no other choice, though, I still prepared myself and my Soldiers for war. As soon as I discovered what Conscientious Objection, (C.O.), was, I decided that a C.O.'s belief structure mirrored my own. Regrettably, the next day was my scheduled deployment day. I made the toughest decision I've ever made in my entire life, and went AWOL, missing my deployment date. After 7 days had passed, I turned myself in to my unit, accompanied by my attorney and my completed C.O. application, and awaited judgment. The rest of my time prior to my court-martial consisted of preparing my C.O. packet, and still operating as a Sergeant on rear-detachment.

Sir, the sentence of my court-martial was this: Reduction from E-5 to E-1, deduction of 2/3 pay, a Bad Conduct Discharge,