

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES



THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

February 19, 2008

The Honorable Carl Levin
Chairman
Senate Armed Services Committee
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John McCain
Ranking Member
Senate Armed Services Committee
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Levin and McCain:

As the national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S., I am requesting your committee conduct a full investigation into the recent allegation that the Marine Corps gave priority to a future vehicle acquisition program instead of ordering readily available armored vehicles that could have had an immediate impact on the battlefield.

The accusation was made by Franz Gayl, a civilian science advisor for the Marine Corps, who wrote in an unofficial report that the Corps intentionally delayed the fielding of Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles into Iraq, despite urgent requests from Marine ground commanders in February 2005. Gayl contends the Marine Corps wanted instead to focus its resources on the development of the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle, the 2012 follow-on replacement to the popular Humvee, which offers little protection against improvised explosive devices, or IEDs.

There is no doubt that MRAPs have saved many lives in horrendous IED explosions, but to accuse the Marine Corps of knowingly and intentionally jeopardizing the safety of fellow Marines on the battlefield is a very serious charge. If true, charges should be brought against those military decision makers involved. If false, then the accuser should be held accountable for his actions.

On behalf of the 2.3 million members of the VFW and our Auxiliaries, I thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this matter. Should you require any further assistance, please contact VFW Washington Office Executive Director Bob Wallace at 202-543-2239 or at bwallace@vfw.org.

Respectfully,

GEORGE J. LISICKI
Commander-in-Chief

cc: House Armed Services Committee