

Statement of James R. Moriarty
Houston, Texas
Father of Staff Sergeant James F. Moriarty
National Press Club
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“Thank you. Before I begin my remarks, please let me say how much my family and I respect the Lewellen and McEnroe families. We may live in different geographical and political places, but our families were brought together by this terrible incident. We all share an intense love for our sons – and we miss them beyond words. Our families agree that honoring our sons’ service and lives must include finding the truth about what happened to them in al-Jafr, Jordan and why.

“My son was doing exactly what he wanted to do. He loved being a Green Beret, he loved his teammates and he loved his country. He did not deserve to die at the hands of a so-called American ally.

“Because of the work of the United States government, we now know what happened to our sons. Like the Lewellens and McEnroes, my family very much appreciates what the Army and FBI have done to help us understand what happened. What we do not know is why it happened or when Jordan will be held accountable.

“Because of a surveillance video, we know that Kevin’s and Matt’s survival chances were almost zero. Caught completely by surprise attack by Jordanian soldier Muarek (Ma har ik) Abu Tayeh, they died mercifully quickly in a hail of gunfire. My son, Staff Sergeant James Moriarty, met a different fate.

“The surveillance video now in the possession of the FBI shows the McEnroe truck cautiously pulling up to the slide gate – just like any other day. This was the base on which our sons lived. My son used this gate almost every day, and this was his second tour on this base.

“Abu Tayeh, encased in body armor, and just out of view of the surveillance camera, opens fire with an M-16 assault rifle on Kevin and Matt. He is no more than five feet away. He is in a concrete building, hidden behind a camouflaged shade. Bullet holes appear in the view of the camera. Shattered glass flies.

“My son Jimmy and a fellow Special Forces soldier I’ll call ‘Mike’ exit their trucks just in time to avoid being killed in cold blood, then spend the remaining

six-and-a-half minutes of my son's life communicating with Abu Tayeh in English and in Arabic, waving and motioning to the five other nearby Jordanian soldiers who had worked with them that morning, without success.

“Six more Jordanian gate guards then choose to do nothing to stop the assault.

“Jimmy calls out in Arabic, ‘We are Americans. We are friends.’ Abu Tayeh makes a last assault on Jimmy and Mike. Mike is caught by surprise and Jimmy stands up in full view of the shooter and engages him at a distance no more than 10 feet. Jimmy is shot twice in the chest. Mike moves around Abu Tayeh's blind side and empties his pistol into the space between the armor plates, finally taking Abu Tayeh down.

“The government of Jordan lied to the world, immediately claiming that our sons failed to stop at the gate. When the FBI confirmed that the video showed that as a lie, the Jordanians then claimed there had been an ‘accidental discharge’ by one of the Americans. That was also proven to be a lie. Now the Jordanians claim there was a loud noise. Again, the video refutes that.

“Finally, our government gives Jordan more than a billion dollars each year in foreign aid. The American public is told that the government of Jordan is our ‘ally.’ This incident raises some troubling questions about that relationship – especially when you consider that no Jordanian has accepted any responsibility for these murders – for four months. Nor has any Jordanian stated, officially or otherwise, what truly happened. As for the foreign aid for Jordan, I say, ‘No more.’ Enough is enough.”

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