

JOHN MCCAIN BATTLES THE VETERANS

I'm not a veteran, so it's not my place to question McCain's claims on both his own service and his work for other veterans.

But I wanted to put up this YouTube and this post by Michigander djtyg—an Iraqi veteran—because I think the two, together, say a lot of what needs to be said. Plus, djtyg does the fact-checking that this YouTube just begs.

There's been a lot of hoopla over the past few weeks about John McCain's military service.

[snip]

So now the discussion is on about the values of military service. Does it have any value in politics? Could you learn those values in the civilian world instead? Does being a veteran make you an expert in military affairs?

Being a veteran does have its benefits in building character. While in the military I learned the value of looking out for other people, even at your own expense. I learned how to have the courage to do things even when I was sure I was going to die. I learned that talking about doing something and actually doing it are two different things (you'd be surprised how many grown adults don't realize this). Being a Soldier changed who I was, and I'm better for it.

[snip]

... most Soldiers would tell you that they're better people for having served.

Moving on to John McCain....

As for John McCain, the question that no

one wants to answer is how being a POW and a veteran have given him the qualifications to become President. This would be considered a fair question if McCain had an answer. If he said that being a Navy officer gave him leadership experience (and challenged Gen. Clark's assesment of his leadership experience), if his policies for respecting the Geneva Conventions came from his being tortured as a POW (which he initially did, before he buckled to his right-wing base and decided to support waterboarding), and that being a veteran made him want to look out for the new veterans coming home from places like Iraq and Afghanistan, the question wouldn't be asked anymore. But because McCain has refused to answer the question now being asked, it's become clear that he is using his service not as an example of why he would be a good President, but as a shield from criticism.

When McCain was attacked by Obama for not supporting the expanded GI Bill, McCain said:

"I will not accept from Senator Obama, who did not feel it was his responsibility to serve our country in uniform, any lectures on my regard for those who did,"

In other words: McCain was saying he's going to screw over veterans, and you don't get any say in the matter.

McCain's record on veteran's affairs has been horrible. Here's a list from VA Watchdog.

2006 Senator McCain supported the interests of the Disabled American Veterans 20 percent in 2006.

2006 In 2006 Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America gave Senator McCain a grade of D.

2006 Senator McCain sponsored or co-sponsored 18 percent of the legislation favored by the The Retired Enlisted Association in 2006.

[click through for more details]

Date	Bill	Title	Vote
10/01/2007	National Defense	Authorization Act for Fiscal	
	Year 2008	NV	
02/02/2006	Tax Rate Extension	Amendment N	
11/17/2005	Additional Funding	For Veterans Amendment N	
10/05/2005	Health Care for	Veterans Amendment N	

McCain has served his country honorably. No one disputes that. There will be no "Vietnam POWs For Truth" putting out commercials saying "John McCain never served at the Hanoi Hilton. I know. I was there." And unlike George W. Bush, no one on the left is going to accuse him of being a manchurian candidate. Anyone who does will get my boot up their butt.

But if McCain has gotten anything out of his military experience other than a shield for criticism, he should let us know. So far he has refused to do so.
[my emphasis]

djtyg is running for office this year—County Commissioner in MI's second biggest county. I'll put up a link in once I find one...

Update: Here's a link to djtyg's campaign site.