

THE WIKILEAKS MEDIC'S SOLDIER'S APOLOGY

Two of the guys in the Company depicted in the Wikileaks video—including the medic guy who pulled the girl from the van—recently wrote a letter apologizing for their role in the events depicted in the video. Here's how it starts:

Peace be with you.

To all of those who were injured or lost loved ones during the July 2007 Baghdad shootings depicted in the "Collateral Murder" Wikileaks video:

We write to you, your family, and your community with awareness that our words and actions can never restore your losses.

We are both soldiers who occupied your neighborhood for 14 months. Ethan McCord pulled your daughter and son from the van, and when doing so, saw the faces of his own children back home. Josh Stieber was in the same company but was not there that day, though he contributed to the your pain, and the pain of your community on many other occasions.

There is no bringing back all that was lost. What we seek is to learn from our mistakes and do everything we can to tell others of our experiences and how the people of the United States need to realize we have done and are doing to you and the people of your country. We humbly ask you what we can do to begin to repair the damage we caused.

Danger Room also has a long interview with the medic guy who pulled the girl, Ethan McCord, who first saw the video again after dropping his own kids off to school.

DR: The first thing you saw was the little girl in the van. She had a stomach wound?

EM: She had a stomach wound and she had glass in her eyes and in her hair. She was crying. In fact, that's one of the reasons I went to the van immediately, because I could hear her crying. It wasn't like a cry of pain really. It was more of a child who was frightened out of her mind. And the next thing I saw was the boy. ... He was kind of sitting on the floorboard of the van, but with his head laying on the bench seat in the front. And then the father, who I'm assuming was the father, in the driver's seat slumped over on his side. Just from looking into the van, and the amount of blood that was on the boy and the father, I immediately figured they were dead.

So the first thing I did was grab the girl. I grabbed the medic and we went into the back. There's houses behind where the van was. We took her in there and we're checking to see if there were any other wounds. You can hear the medic saying on the video, "There's nothing I can do here, she needs to be evac'd." He runs the girl to the Bradley. I went back outside to the van, and that's when the boy took, like, a labored, breath ... That's when I started screaming, "The boy's alive! The boy's alive!" And I picked him up and started running with him over to the Bradley. He opened his eyes when I was carrying him. I just kept telling him, "Don't die; don't die." He looked at me, then his eyes rolled back into this head.

Then I got yelled at by my platoon leader that I needed to stop trying to save these mf'n kids and go pull security. ... I was told to go pull

security on a rooftop. When we were on that roof, we were still taking fire. There were some people taking pot shots, sniper shots, at us on the rooftop. We were probably there on the roof for another four to five hours.

Both the letter and the interview are worth reading in full.

Update: Sorry for the error in suggesting McCord was a medic. Some of the early commentary on it—and someone someone said to me subsequently—had made me believe he was.