



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LT. EHREN WATADA REFERRED TO COURT MARTIAL

Today, Lt. Ehren Watada learned he would be tried before a U.S. Army Court Martial at Fort Lewis, Washington, where he is stationed. The 28-year-old who was born and raised in Hawaii, faces the possibility of six (6) years of confinement in a military prison.

PRESS CONFERENCE: Thursday, November 9, 2006

***3:00 p.m. Haseko Building, 820 Mililani Street, Suite 714
Downtown Honolulu (behind HGEA Building) Law Offices of Eric Seitz***

Attorney Eric Seitz, Karen Nakasone (JACL), John Heidel (Interfaith Alliance) & supporters will be present

In June, Lt. Watada refused to deploy to Iraq with his Stryker Brigade unit on the grounds that this war is illegal and unconstitutional. From January until June, Watada attempted to be reassigned, including being deployed to Afghanistan or discharged. When he had exhausted all alternatives, Watada made the decision not to deploy with his unit.

Upon hearing the charges, Watada remains steadfast. "I move forward with resolve. Every day, civilians and service members thank me for standing up for them. Their encouragement reaffirms my decision. As an officer and a citizen, my duty is to the Constitution. My actions mirror the conscience of America."

Watada's mother, Carolyn Ho, has been overseeing a national public education campaign about her son's case. "The court of public opinion is the best way to affect his case. With all the revelations in the news for the past several weeks, it is astounding that there is no effort by the military to shift gears."

Watada's father, Bob Watada, has been gaining public support on a whirlwind national tour with his wife, Rosa Sakanishi. "People come up and tell us that Ehren is a true American hero. Of course, we are concerned about the outcome, but we are very gratified with the enormous support from a broad sector of the American people."

Lt. Watada, a magna cum laude graduate of Pacific University, enlisted on the heels of September 11, 2001, as a way to serve his country. After completing Officers Candidate School, he was deployed to South Korea and served with distinction. Knowing he would eventually be deployed to Iraq, he began reading and came to the conclusion that this war is both illegal and unconstitutional. Lt. Watada remains on desk duty at Ft. Lewis and is confined to the state of Washington until his court martial is scheduled.

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