

Aug. 18, 2003

Dear Senator Dole,

My name is Janet Tosto. My son, Sgt. Michael Tosto, died June 17, 2003, in Kuwait. He was assigned to Co. A, 1st Battalion, 35th Armored Brigade, 1st Armored Division. He was stationed in Iraq. His SS # is 242-55-3650.

I am requesting your office do a full investigation of his death. There are a lot of unanswered questions that I would like answered.

1. Why did it take more than 24 hours to notify his wife, Stephanie Tosto of his death?
2. We were told that his belongings cannot be released because of possible contamination, but we were not told what he was exposed to.
3. He was dressed in his Class A uniform for burial. He had on white gloves, which is not part of the uniform. Why? Were his hands damaged and the military didn't want us to see them?
4. We were not told a cause of death and have not received any autopsy results.
5. The death certificate had a list of things that suggest heart failure. Michael did not have any heart disease.
6. He was told he had pneumonia and was going to be shipped to Germany. He was "bumped" from the first plane because of "more critical" patients, and died before the second plane left. He died less than 48 hours after arrival at the Aid Station.
7. A coworker said before he went to the Aid Station he was pale, had blue lips, and had been vomiting blood. Bloody vomit is not part of pneumonia.
8. Why did his wife's casualty officer request his medical records from her? They were with him in Iraq.
9. Why is his wife's casualty officer not being more efficient in his dealings with her? He said he is almost ready for retirement. He knows what he is supposed to do. She feels like he is stalling.
10. The same coworker who saw him vomit blood said he had not seen him for the three days prior to him getting sick. Where was he?
11. His wife received his "dog tags" but she could tell they were a different set from the ones he left home with. If his tags were with his contaminated belongings, why bother giving any at all?

Maybe I'm just a Mom who has lost her son, but if you can help answer these questions, maybe another Mom and Dad will not have to go through the pain and heartache my husband and I are going through. Michael left a young wife and 19-month-old son who are also hurting. Cameron will not remember his Dad, and Michael will never watch his son grow up.

Any assistance you can be in this matter will be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Janet Tosto

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