

# NONE SO BRAVE

Why is a Green Beret who confronted a violent child sex predator involuntarily discharged from the military?

February 11, 2016 Elizabeth Yore



*“De Oppresso Liber”*

*(To Liberate the Oppressed)*

*~~Motto of the U.S. Army Special Forces.*

A poignant Afghan proverb declares, *“Cowards cause harm to brave men.”*

This ancient Pashtun adage reflects the shocking true life story of U.S. Special Forces Sgt. Charles Martland.

Five years ago, Sgt. Martland saved the life of an Afghan boy who was abducted from his mother, imprisoned as a sex slave, and repeatedly raped by an Afghan police chief, Abdul Rahman. Martland’s heroic actions to rescue a defenseless child cost him dearly. The Army punished not Rahman, but Martland, and relieved him from his duty post in Afghanistan, and is now seeking to involuntarily discharge him from military service.

What was the dreadful and dischargeable infraction by the highly decorated Green Beret Charles Martland?

In 2011, Martland and his Special Forces Captain Dan Quinn (who has since resigned from the military) physically assaulted Abdul Rahman, after learning that Rahman had abducted an Afghan boy, chained him to a bed, repeatedly abused him as a sex slave and beat up the boy's mother when she sought to find and rescue her son. The Green Berets intervened when they discovered that the boy was being raped and held by Rahman. According to the Martland and Quinn, the Afghan villagers were pleading with them to do something about repeated sexual assaults against children by the Afghan police.

Here is the dirty, not so little secret of Afghanistan: The sexual abuse of children is widespread and embedded into the Afghan Pashtun culture. There is scant prosecution of child sex exploitation in Afghanistan. American military have long been saddled with the knowledge of the Afghan practice of "bacha bazi," translated as dancing boys. Bacha Bazi is the ancient and widespread practice of Afghan men who abduct and lure poor boys into the grisly world of child sex slavery where they are raped and exploited by Afghan men. Frontline exposed this lurid child sex trafficking trade. (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/dancingboys/>)

U.S. military stationed in Afghanistan experience the hideous reality that children are expendable in the worthless Afghan criminal justice system. Cultural mores trump human rights among the tribesman of Afghanistan. Incredibly, our military is warned to turn a blind eye to this insidious abuse of children. See no evil.

This wasn't the first time that Martland and Quinn experienced inaction from the Afghan government for serious child sexual exploitation crimes committed by the Afghan police force. Martland and Quinn knew that two Afghan commanders were not prosecuted nor punished for the rape of a 15-year-old girl and the honor killing of an Afghan commander's 12 year old daughter who kissed a boy.

Martland, who was disgusted and fed up with the ongoing sexual exploitation of children by Afghan officials said, "I felt that morally we could no longer stand by and allow our Afghan commanders to commit these atrocities."

Since when is a highly decorated Green Beret who confronts a violent child sex predator and trafficker and woman beater, punished and involuntarily discharge from the military? Is this the new

politically correct ethic dominating deployments in foreign lands.

What happened to the greatest military and force for moral good on the face of the planet? Isn't Martland carrying out the very anti human trafficking policies promulgated by the Obama Administration?

Obama's administration, including his Pentagon, endlessly promotes and spends millions on sexual assault and human trafficking programs, policies and media messaging.

The very human rights violations perpetrated upon innocent Afghan children are the ones which this Administration is demanding international action to enforce zero tolerance:

### **1. U.S. Department of Defense Policy Against Human Trafficking.**

(<http://www.defense.gov/News-Article-View/Article/603878>)

In the press release praising the ongoing military awareness training of human trafficking, the Army media alert highlights the annual training and progress for DoD's military as "driving home the department's 'zero tolerance' for slavery and human trafficking."

Apparently, that DoD zero tolerance policy doesn't apply to Captain Quinn and Sgt. Martland. Is it simply *awareness*, but no *action* to stop human trafficking and sex slavery? Zero tolerance means *stopping* the cultural and systemic abduction and sex slavery of young Afghan boys. Is the DoD training report mere lip service and media hype to convince Americans that the U.S. military fights human trafficking and sex slavery?

The DoD press release ends with the ironic caveat that "military leadership also plays a critical awareness role in preventing such crimes."

Sgt. Martland and Captain Dan Quinn are military leaders who 'prevented' further human trafficking crimes and are now paying for it with their military careers.

### **2. President Obama's Speech to the Clinton Global Initiative. (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/09/25/remarks-president-clinton-global-initiative>)**

President Obama reiterated his administration's zero tolerance policy for human trafficking during a

speech at the Clinton Global Initiative. “[i]t ought to concern every nation, because it endangers public health and fuels violence and organized crime. I’m talking about the injustice, the outrage, of human trafficking, which must be called by its true name--modern slavery...We’re shining a spotlight on the dark corners where it persists...We will have zero tolerance. We mean what we say. We will enforce it...” “Our fight against human trafficking is one of the great human rights causes of our time, and the United States will continue to lead it.”

Contrary to President Obama, ‘we don’t mean what we say’ when it comes to zero tolerance for human trafficking, if the U.S. Military punishes its soldiers for trying to stop modern sex slavery of children.

3. U.S. Department of State Human Trafficking Report on Afghanistan-2013.  
(<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/210738.pdf>)

Secretary of State John Kerry’s Statement about Human Trafficking:

***"When we bring victims out of exploitation, we are helping to create more stable and productive communities. When we stop this crime from happening in the first place, we are preventing the abuse of those who are victimized as well as the ripple effect that caused damage throughout communities into our broader environment and which corrupt our global supply chains. We all have an interest in stopping this crime. And that's why, as Secretary of State, I will continue to make the fight against modern-day slavery a priority for this Department and for the country."***

Sgt. Martland confronted a powerful child predator who fostered and perpetuated child sex trafficking. Martland rescued an Afghan child who was abducted and kept as a sex slave. His brave actions saved a life and prevented further child molestation. By exposing the perpetrator, Martland’s heroic action fostered to use Kerry’s words ‘*a more stable and productive community and brought a victim out of exploitation.*’

4. **U.S. State Department’s Afghanistan Country Report:**  
(<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/210738.pdf>) **2013 Tier Two Watch list.**

The U.S. State Department highly criticized the cultural practices of child sex slavery and the inability of the Afghan government to prosecute these crimes. It described the lawlessness in Afghanistan and the utter failure to stem human trafficking and the systematic abuse of children.

“The Government of Afghanistan does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. Government officials’ complicity in trafficking remained a serious problem. The level of understanding of human trafficking among Afghan government officials remained very low.”

The State Department Trafficking Report condemned in very strong terms the total breakdown of Afghan legal authority to end child sex slavery. Yet, Martland is punished for taking action to protect children from Afghan predators in the police force?

*“The majority of Afghan victims are children subjected to human trafficking in carpet-making and brick kiln factories and domestic servitude, and in commercial sexual exploitation, begging, and transnational drug smuggling within Afghanistan and in Pakistan, Iran, and Saudi Arabia. Some Afghan families knowingly sell their children for forced prostitution, including for bacha bazi— where wealthy or influential men, including government officials and security forces, use young boys for social and sexual entertainment.” “Government officials, including law enforcement and judicial officials, continued to have a limited understanding of human trafficking.”*

Despite the State Department’s Afghanistan country report which paints a very dismal and highly dangerous environment for vulnerable children, our military must acquiesce in the face of brutality of women and children, but remain powerless to stop the ongoing exploitation?

Due to the advocacy of Congressmen Mac Thornberry and Duncan Hunter, the Army has delayed the discharge of Special Forces Charles Martland for another 60 days to file an appeal. Representative Hunter wrote to Defense Secretary Ash Carter, “Martland stood up to a child rapist. I trust that you will give this case the attention it demands.”

The dirty secret is now out. The widespread pederasty and sex slavery of Afghan boys can no longer be ignored. The motto of the Special Forces is to free the oppressed. None are more oppressed than innocent Afghan boys who are abducted from their homes, chained to beds and sexually brutalized at the cruel hands of powerful Afghan officials. Quinn and Martland freed that little boy from oppressive brutality and a childhood of unspeakable horror.

Captain Quinn and Sgt. Martland should be awarded Army medals commendations, not discharge papers for freeing the oppressed and exhibiting heroism and standing up for zero tolerance for the violation of greatest of human rights, the protection of the innocent.

**Please consider signing this petition in support of Sgt. Martland and send a strong message to the U.S. Army that Sgt. Martland is a hero for rescuing children from sex slavery: Here.**

(<https://www.frc.org/get.cfm?c=CHECKOUT&dmy=55ED8459-EF55-DEB9-8A8F73623DAFFE6D&srcItem=PT15I02&fromItem=&CFID=75591538&CFTOKEN=ea466b4e749170c9-0E28E66E-9537-0BFD-5E1361ABE0650166>)

📌 **Tags:** Afghanistan, sexual assault, U.S. Army

## ABOUT ELIZABETH YORE

Elizabeth Yore is an international child rights attorney who rescued missing and abducted children around the world. She has served as General Counsel and Director of the International Division of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Recently, she served as Oprah Winfrey's Special Counsel and Child Advocate at Harpo and also at the South African Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls.