



SMALL WARS JOURNAL

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From Canada: A Thank You to U.S. Service Members

Michael Yon



U.S. Air Force Nurse, Lucy Lehker, comforts an “unknown” Canadian soldier after he was badly wounded in Afghanistan.

Dear Michael Yon,

Today we were sent your story of February 14, 2010. The “unknown” Canadian is our son Danny. He is a 23-year-old soldier from Vancouver, Canada.

Your photographs were extraordinary and have impacted so many people here in Canada. There has been an outpouring of affection for the Americans who helped Danny in his moment of need. For that, we thank you for recording these acts of kindness into history.

Danny's injuries were the result of an explosion on February 12, 2010. Four Canadian soldiers were injured and tragically one Canadian soldier was killed. Within 20 minutes of the explosion, Danny was airlifted by helicopter to Kandahar. Upon arrival he received emergency surgery that saved his life and prepared him for the flight to Bagram that you were on.

After landing in Bagram, Danny was again airlifted by a US transport aircraft to the US Army run Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany. There he underwent additional surgery that closed up his wounds. Once stabilized, the Canadian government dispatched a Challenger jet to bring him home. This afternoon in Vancouver, the shrapnel that did all the damage to him was finally removed. Danny is now recovering in hospital.

This was Danny's second tour of duty in Afghanistan and his platoon on this tour has had heavy casualties and injuries. Physically, Danny will overcome his injuries. He also has the support of his family, his friends and his community to deal with the emotional side of this war. Our hearts go out to those families who have had the loss of a soldier or who have had to deal with greater injuries.

Danny and his whole family are very grateful, and are actually overwhelmed, by the support he received while in US care. The Canadian military have also been wonderful. It is our intention to personally thank everyone who worked so hard to save Danny's life. We have already made contact with Major Deborah "Lucy" Lehker to thank her.

Sincerely,

Jim & Holly

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