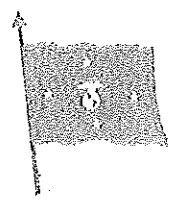


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Dear Chairman Levin,

Thank you for your recent letter asking whether I personally support the Secretary's decision to exchange five Taliban detainees for Sgt Bergdahl's release. Given your years of selfless service to the country and dedicated support to the Armed Services, I know you can appreciate how complex an issue of this nature is. As Commandant of the Marine Corps and member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I am charged with providing my best professional advice to both military and civilian leadership when my advice is requested, or when I am compelled by duty to do so. As the President and Secretary of Defense have already stated, the mission to rescue Sergeant Bergdahl from captivity was very closely held, known only to a very small inner circle, and thus I was not consulted beforehand, nor was I aware that the mission was underway until after it was completed.

As you know Mr. Chairman, it's a fundamental principle of Marine combat leadership that we do not leave our people behind on the battlefield; it is our warrior code, and simply what we do as Marines and as a nation. As such, I fully support the repatriation of Sgt Bergdahl. I am confident that the exigency of Sgt Bergdahl's release was balanced against an assessment of the dangers posed by the release of the Taliban detainees. That said, absent the context of the deliberations and discussions surrounding this decision, I am simply not in a position to provide an informed response. With deepest gratitude for your service to our nation, I remain....

Semper Fidelis,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James F. Amos", written over a large, stylized flourish that loops around the text.

JAMES F. AMOS  
General, U.S. Marine Corps  
Commandant of the Marine Corps