

Of Honor and Horror

May 25, 2020

Last year, when the public relations wing of the U.S. Army asked, on Twitter, “How has serving impacted you?” the bulk of the responses were not what was hoped for.

What came like tear drops and bursts of rage were thousands of horrific tales, expressions of sorrow, bitterness and despair.

No doubt the intention was to elicit, if not patriotic uplift, at least stories of learning, moral growth, centeredness, and personal victory out of sacrifice and suffering. Almost certainly the Army wanted what the



How has serving impacted you?

4:34 PM · May 23, 2019 · [Twitter for iPhone](#)

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the ‘writing on the wall’— er, Twitterfeed: “Some say this thread back-fired but this is just the thread that is needed each [M]emorial [D]ay so we remember the sacrifices military members and their families make and how we as a country need to understand the true cost of service and improve our support.”

Most of the tweets I read were decidedly not upbeat. The anger and pain over battle deaths, wounds, PTSD, mental illness, suicides, and so much indifference to it — it was deep and wide . . . and heartbreaking.

And needs to change NOW.

‘War is hell.’ In the defense of freedom, in self-defense, the brave soldier and general are honorable. But that honor is informed by the reticence that comes from actual knowledge of war’s true costs.

Maybe this Memorial Day President Trump and the Congress can also agree to review the use of military manpower around the world, looking to need to memorialize as few Americans as possible in the future.

In fact, that sort of public policy debate is for all of us holding the hot dogs.

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.

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promoters of “national service” now want. The outcome was far messier.

Now, the Army handled the Twitterflak very well, with a tweet thanking people for their expressions. But a response by Mike Schmidt (@MikeSchmidt69) was probably as upbeat as could be expected, given