

The murder of Pat Tillman

Two weeks ago, the Pat Tillman incident surfaced again in the mainstream media.

Every broadcast network carried the story; newspapers around the country ran an Associated Press story detailing what happened on and since the day of Tillman's death: April, 22, 2004.

As usual, Americans are being denied the truth.

The lame account we are getting is that Tillman was shot by three U.S. soldiers, one who had bad eyesight, one who shot in the direction of muzzle flashes, and one just shot where the other two had.

But their bullets all found Tillman.

Perhaps the main reason the whored-out media news outlets are forced to cover this story is the distance that another story about the Tillman shooting has received since the beginning of this year.

The article entitled "Who Killed Pat Tillman" was written by Dr. Michael I. Niman, a journalism professor at the Buffalo State College.

The original article was published in *ArtVoice* in November 2005, but another version emerged in the January/February 2006 issue of *The Humanist*.

Niman's article tells a much different story than the ones we are getting from the mainstream.

With the administration more than happy to use the former National Football League player as a poster boy for the military's campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq, it never took into consideration Tillman's well-developed brain and outspokenness.

Niman writes: "There was a lot more depth to Tillman, who was pursuing a Master's degree in history, than one would normally expect of an NFL gladiator. Afghanistan was an easier sell. Tillman never bought into the official line on Iraq, at one point, according to a *San Francisco Chronicle* article published nearly a year and half after his death, telling fellow Rangers fighting in Iraq that the war was, 'so f----- illegal.' A close friend told *The Chronicle*, 'That's who he was—he totally was against Bush.' Tillman's mother clarified, explaining that her son believed the Afghanistan war was justified by the September 11th attacks, but adding, 'Pat was very critical of the whole Iraq War.'"

To make matters worse for the administration, it was clear that Tillman, upon his return to the U.S., was going to make his opinions known.

"Tillman, we now know," Niman writes, "was also in contact with one of his favorite authors—America's leading intellectual dissident, Noam Chomsky. According to *The Chronicle*, Tillman had set up a meeting with Chomsky, to take place when he returned from Afghanistan, where he eventually finally wound up after serving his tour in Iraq . . .

"As both wars droned on, Tillman, the picture perfect recruiting poster boy, evolved into somewhat of a wild card. With a Chomsky meeting on the horizon, there existed a very real possibility that Tillman might go public with his anti-war anti-Bush stance in the weeks leading up to the 2004 presidential election, dealing a fatal blow to the very foundation of the Bush administration's propaganda pyramid. That day, however, never came. On April 22, 2004, Tillman was killed on patrol in Afghanistan by three American bullets to the head."

The administration, however, went about concocting their own version of what had happened, a true-to-life *Wag the Dog* media campaign, which, Niman writes, "spewed forth so many lies as to bury themselves under an obvious pile of b-----."

Nevertheless, the administration, the Pentagon, and the military continued the charade.

“The Army issued Tillman a postmortem Silver Star for bravery, explaining in the process, how, ‘through the firing Tillman’s voice was heard issuing fire commands to take the fight to the enemy on the dominating hill ground.’ And this is the story the media reported to the world. Files from three Army investigations into the killing obtained by Tillman’s mother, however, document a different set of last words. According to testimony issued by a fellow Ranger who was at Tillman’s side when he died, the last words he shouted before being shot in the head were, ‘Cease fire, friendlies, I am Pat F----- Tillman dammit!’

“Two weeks after his death, the Army’s official casualty report stated that he was killed by enemy forces. Six weeks later, however, with the mythic version of Tillman’s killing firmly embedded in the American conscious, and with the Tillman story safely buried in the ashbin of ‘old news,’ the Army finally told Tillman’s family that the official cause of death was ‘fratricide,’ which is the deliberate killing of your own.

Tillman’s mother has requested that she be told “what kind of criminal intent there was.”

To this date she has gotten no straight answers.

Tillman’s father has stated: “The administration clearly was using this case for its own political reasons. This cover-up started within minutes of Pat’s death, and it started at high levels.”

But the most biting remarks regarding the administration’s fabrications came from the Tillmans’ youngest son Rich, who, upon hearing the rhetoric about how his brother was “with God,” snapped: “Pat isn’t with God. He’s f----- dead. He wasn’t religious.”

So the administration continues to wave the flags and tries to maintain their Hollywood presentation of Tillman’s death. But, obviously, the pursuit of the truth is starting to squeeze the spinmeisters.

The Tillman episode isn’t the only *Wag-the-Dog* production that has been perpetrated on the American people in the hopes of maintaining support for a war—the fourth straight undeclared war since Congress apparently got out of the business—that makes little sense but a whole lot of bucks for war profiteers.

The Jessica Lynch story, the discovery of Saddam by U.S. troops, and even the heart-wrenching tale by a Kuwaiti woman about the barbarous actions of Iraqi troops back in Gulf War I are further examples of propaganda campaigns that would make the Kremlin envious.

And these will be examined in subsequent columns.