

MEDIA RELEASE

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Ever since the Beirut Stamp Initiative's Web site was first launched on Thanksgiving 2003 to honor those lives lost to the first act of terrorism toward Americans, and to honor the Peacekeepers of the Multi-National Peacekeeping Force, Beirut, Lebanon, they have received thousands of visitors and gained support on their online stamp petition.

On April 8th, 2004, National Security Advisor, Dr. Condoleezza Rice's testimony to the 9-11 Commission clearly states:

"The terrorist threat to our nation did not emerge on Sept. 11, 2001. Long before that day, radical, freedom-hating terrorists declared war on America and on the civilized world. **The attack on the Marine barracks in Lebanon in 1983**, the hijacking of the Achille Lauro in 1985, the rise of al-Qaida and the bombing of the World Trade Center in 1993, the attacks on American installations in Saudi Arabia in 1995 and 1996, the East Africa embassy bombings of 1998, the attack on the USS Cole in 2000, these and other atrocities were part of a sustained, systematic campaign to spread devastation and chaos and to murder innocent Americans."

These fallen comrades were on a peacekeeping mission when this terrorist activity occurred. We have been requesting a stamp, to no avail from the Postmaster General and the Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee in Washington, D.C. for the past 17 years. Some comments for not honoring our fallen heroes in the past with a postage stamp include

- "We try hard to honor positive things"
- "People want non-controversial pretty stamps"
- "Beirut lacked significance in American history and not enough people were killed"

Apparently, cartoon characters, insects, flowers, etc. still outrank our Nations Veterans.

The United States has made a distinct impact on the "War on Terror" since 9/11, notably so because of the experience gained and the blood lost in Beirut, Lebanon 1982-1984.

On Sunday October 23rd, 1983 at approximately 6:20am Lebanese time over 241 U.S. Marines, Sailors and Soldiers were killed, hundreds were wounded or disabled. The first act of "today's" terrorism against the United States was carried out. This was the result of a suicide driven truck laden with over 2,500 pounds of explosives that detonated in the BLT 1/8 24th MAU headquarters barracks in Beirut, Lebanon. Other servicemen from

1982-1984 perished from sniper fire and other atrocities. Others have died years later from the results of their service. This makes a total of over 273 (and counting) Marines, Sailors and Soldiers that died.

The Beirut Stamp Initiative states the following:

WHEREAS in August 1982 the United States government entered into a multinational peacekeeping force agreement in Beirut, Lebanon.

WHEREAS in February 1984 the United States government withdrew its personnel and equipment from the multinational peacekeeping force agreement in Beirut, Lebanon.

WHEREAS from September 29th 1982 through January 31st 1984 the United States had 270 Marines, sailors and soldiers killed in action from 33 of her states, her capitol: District of Columbia, a territory: Puerto, Rico and an allied country: United Kingdom. Approximately 151 United States servicemen were wounded in action or permanently disabled while serving in Beirut, Lebanon in 1982-1984 on a peacekeeping mission.

WHEREAS for over 18 years family, friends, comrades and United States citizens have asked the United States Postal Service to issue a commemorative postage stamp to honor the victims and peacekeepers of Beirut, Lebanon 1982-1984.

WHEREAS the United States Postal Service and the Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee have refused to issue a stamp commemorating the peacekeeping mission in Beirut, Lebanon 1982-1984

WHEREAS the United States Postal Service and Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee cite guidelines to issue stamps.

WHEREAS the United States Postal Service and the Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee are an independent agency of the United States government with guidelines to follow which they have broken at their discretion and at will.

WHEREAS the Postmaster General relies heavily on the recommendation of the Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee, the Postmaster general has the final authority to determine both subject matter and designs for the U.S.postal stamps and stationery.

WHEREAS the Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee is to meet quarterly each year as set forth by their guideline to decide on stamps to be issued.

WHEREAS the Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee has already decided the stamps to be issued for years 2004 and 2005.

WHEREAS a stamp has not been unveiled and issued for the 1982-1984 peacekeeping mission in Beirut, Lebanon.

WHEREAS the peacekeeping mission in Beirut, Lebanon has widespread national appeal.

WHEREAS the Gulf war and the terrorist attacks on September 11th are of historical significance and the criteria for issuing the stamp was waived, and commemorative stamps were issued in less than a year.

THEREFORE meeting the basic criteria for a commemorative postage stamp for service in Beirut, Lebanon a commemorative postage stamp should be issued.

Please visit the Web site, use the resources available on the stamp portal to contact your local Congressional Representative and urge them to sign on to House Resolution 45 (2003), and sign our petition, and *please* do what you can to help us get this stamp commissioned. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Semper Fidelis,

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2nd Recon, 2nd MAR DIV - KIA Beirut Oct. 23, 1983

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"Some people spend an entire lifetime wondering if they made a difference.
The Marines don't have that problem."
-President Ronald Reagan, 1985

Once a Marine, always a Marine.
Semper Fi.

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