



**U.S. Army  
I Corps & Fort Lewis  
Fort Lewis  
Washington  
*NEWS RELEASE***



---

News Release no. 16--06

June 7, 2006

## Fort Lewis statement regarding 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Ehren Watada

**FORT LEWIS, Wash** — A Fort Lewis Soldier, 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Ehren Watada has made public statements indicating his intention to refuse to deploy with his unit – 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division – to Iraq in the next several weeks.

For a commissioned officer to publicly declare an apparent intent to violate military law by refusing to obey orders is a serious matter and could subject him to adverse action. No decision regarding personnel actions involving 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Watada will be made until a thorough review by his commander occurs in accordance with military law.

1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Watada has an active duty service obligation through December 2006 (which the Department of Defense extended until the Stryker Brigade's redeployment in early 2007). He wrote a letter to his brigade commander in January 2006 stating his reasons against the war. However, in January he did not officially request resignation.

On April 19, 2006, 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Watada submitted a request to the Department of the Army requesting unqualified resignation [of his commission]. 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Watada's request to resign was disapproved by the Department of the Army on May 18, 2006, because his current unit is in a stop-loss category, and he has not fulfilled his service obligation. 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Watada has yet to exercise an option to submit a request for exception to this policy to U.S. Forces Command headquartered at Fort McPherson, Georgia.

Since the beginning of the Global War on Terror, hundreds of thousands of U.S. service men and women – Active, National Guard and Reserve – have deployed into harm's way at great personal sacrifice and inconvenience. Although 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Watada has yet to deploy, his unit, 3-2 Stryker Brigade Combat Team has already served a one year combat tour in Iraq from 2003-2004 where they served with great distinction. Army leadership is convinced that the brigade is even better prepared for this upcoming second tour of combat duty.

The U.S. Armed Forces are well trained and well prepared to prosecute the Global War on Terror. Many have made the ultimate sacrifice – to those fallen men and women, our country owes a great debt of gratitude. The U.S. Armed Forces will continue to serve honorably in accordance with the sworn oath every officer and enlisted member takes upon entering service.

--end--

***For more information contact:***  
**Public Affairs Office MEDIA RELATIONS**  
**I Corps and Fort Lewis**  
**Fort Lewis, WA 98433-9500**  
**Phone (253) 967-0152 or 967-0147**  
**Fax (253) 967-0612**  
**<http://www.lewis.army.mil/pao1/media.htm>**