



Written by [Luis Miguel](#) on December 27, 2021

## Lt. Col. Scheller Discharged Over Criticism of Biden Afghanistan Pullout

Lieutenant Colonel Stuart Scheller, the Marine officer who criticized Joe Biden's withdrawal from Afghanistan in a viral video over the summer, has been discharged and stripped of his retirement benefits.

In a [Facebook post](#), Scheller expressed mixed emotions at being released, stating that the Marine Corps was responsible for "forging me into a man." He also thanked those who "served, led, bled and suffered alongside me" during his 17 years of service.

But the former infantry officer also had words of rebuke, accusing the Marine Corps of slandering him and of delivering a "series of defeats" after he demanded accountability for Afghanistan.

Wrote Scheller:

I was relieved of command, slandered as homicidal/suicidal by the USMC's public affairs team, ordered to get a mental health evaluation, lied about in the investigation by my "friends", denied my legal right to prefer charges against another service member beholden to the UCMJ, imprisoned under the false pretense of 'flight risk', left without basic items in prison for five days, offered a legal deal while held illegally in jail (you can't be placed in pre-trial for a special court martial), slandered again when my medical records and investigation were released to the media, fined 5K dollars, called a narcissist in my letter of reprimand, kept under a gag order for over four months, denied the ability to request mast twice, given the lowest characterization (General under Honorable Conditions) allowed by the plea deal, and lost my retirement. Was it worth it? Well ... unfortunately for them ... the war isn't over. I think we just arrived at a turning point. The old system underestimated US then... and they underestimate US now.

Scheller was given a general discharge under honorable conditions, the lowest characterization allowed under a plea deal reached during his October court-martial.

In an emailed statement Saturday, a Marine Corps spokesperson said Scheller was no longer on active duty and was separated Friday.

After his initial video criticizing the Afghanistan pullout, Scheller followed up with additional videos and posts that led to him being jailed and eventually court-martialed. The first video got him promptly fired from command of the Advanced Infantry Training Battalion at Camp Lejeune. He later pledged to resign his commission and refuse any benefits in a video he recorded from a school bus in the North Carolina woods.



Lt. Col. Stuart Scheller (U.S. Marine Corp)



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Soon thereafter, the Corps issued a gag order. Scheller defied it, prompting his placement in confinement before facing a special court martial in October on six charges of violating the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Scheller eventually pleaded guilty to charges of contempt toward officials, disrespect and willful disobedience of commissioned officers above him, dereliction in performance of his duties, failure to obey an order or regulation, and conduct unbecoming of an officer and a gentleman.

Scheller said Thursday he had refrained from giving a single media interview out of respect for senior leaders. Now, however, he plans to go on a media blitz, beginning with an upcoming January 4 appearance on Fox News' *Tucker Carlson Tonight*.

Ahead of his trial, 27 Republican lawmakers called for Scheller to be released from the brig. Representatives Louie Gohmert (R-Texas) and Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-Georgia) testified at his trial.

Scheller was supported by over \$2.5 million in donations through the Pipe Hitter Foundation, run by former Navy SEAL Eddie Gallagher and his wife. Gallagher was tried on war crimes accusations in 2019 and acquitted of most of the charges.

*Stars and Stripes* notes of Scheller's sentencing:

Scheller eventually pleaded guilty under an agreement that allowed the military judge to sentence him to no more than a letter of reprimand and seizure of two-thirds of his pay for up to a year — a sum that would total in the tens of thousands of dollars.

He was ultimately sentenced to a letter of reprimand and \$5,000 in forfeited pay, though the Corps had sought to have more of his pay docked. Scheller agreed to resign his commission.

The Marine judge who oversaw the trial, Col. Glenn Hines, rejected the service's call for further punishment and blasted the service over its handling of the situation, *Marine Corps Times* reported.

Though Scheller went through a fierce ordeal following his criticism of Afghanistan's handling, the government officials responsible for the withdrawal — which resulted in 13 American service members killed in the Kabul attack — have skirted by without any consequences.



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