

BY Staff

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BY FACSIMILE - 202-456-2461

January 30, 2005

The President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Approximately ten hours ago, a U.S. Army major left my home after telling me that my sister, Barbara Heald, was one of the two Americans killed in the rocket attack on the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad on January 29, the eve of the elections there.

In my family's anguish, I am writing to ask you, to beg you, to not flag for one moment in your efforts to bring democracy to Iraq and have it take root. We must not fail - both for my sister's legacy and because it is right. I do not know what more you or the country can do than we already are, but I am writing to add to your resolve.

I should tell you something of my sister. She was retired as a contracting officer with a non-Defense agency, who saw the need for the help that she could give, and she took action to give it. In September 2003 at age 59, she volunteered and was posted to Baghdad to help effectively spend both the remaining "Oil-for-Food" funds and US government appropriations. Two six month tours were not enough for her, and in early January, she returned to Baghdad for another year. At one point, some here at home were criticizing that the 2003 \$87 billion supplemental was not being spent fast enough, and Barb emailed "I'm spending it as fast as I can, but there's only so much a girl can do!"

Such was my sister: a witty, urbane, cosmopolitan woman who loved her life in Washington. During the tribulations of her time in Baghdad, I learned that my older sister had an inner core of steel of which I had had not an inkling growing up. There was more to her than I knew, or will ever know.

And now her life is forfeit because of an army of darkness. Mr. President, it is said that liberty is paid for in blood. Today, liberty got a lot more expensive for those who knew and loved my sister Barb.

As I wrote to your dad in August 1990, may God give you His counsel in this business, Sir.

Sincerely,

/s/ John L. Geis

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