

# JD Vance Drops Bomb on Tim Walz, Completely Dismantles Him Over Military Betrayal - 'When Were You Ever in War?'

By Randy DeSoto  
August 7, 2024

The wisdom of Donald Trump picking Sen. J.D. Vance as his 2024 running mate was on full display Wednesday. The former president could never have known when he tapped the Marine Corps combat veteran back in mid-July that prior military service would become such an important issue.

On Tuesday, Vice President Kamala Harris announced that Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz is her running mate, and a significant element of his resume is that he is a National Guard veteran. So, in theory, he should have the ability to draw patriotic swing voters to the ticket. Harris placed Walz's military service front and center at their first rally together in Philadelphia on Tuesday, saying, "To his fellow veterans, he is Sgt. Maj. Walz."

However, retired Minnesota Guard Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Behrends told Alpha News in 2022, as Walz was seeking re-election, that the governor left military service in 2005 after receiving a warning order that his unit, the 1-125th Field Artillery Battalion, was to be deployed to Iraq. "He abandoned us. ... As soon as the shots were fired in Iraq, he turned and ran the other way, hung his hat up and quit," Behrends recalled.

The veteran explained that he was next in line behind Walz in the unit to take the command sergeant major's slot. Behrends stepped up and deployed to Iraq for nearly two years in Walz's absence.

Vance responded to Walz's decision to leave the military, saying at a campaign event in Michigan, "You know what really bothers me about Tim Walz as a Marine who served his country in uniform? When the United States Marine Corps, when the United State of America asked me to go to Iraq to serve my country, I did it. I did it when they asked me to do it, and I did it honorably and I'm very proud of that service.

“When Tim Walz was asked to go to Iraq by his country, you know what he did? He dropped out of the Army and allowed his unit to go without him,” Vance noted. The senator also highlighted Walz’s stolen valor.

“He said we shouldn’t allow weapons that I used in war to be [used] on America’s streets,” Vance said. “Well, I wonder, Tim Walz, when were you ever in war? What was this weapon that you carried into war, given that you abandoned your unit right before they went to Iraq, and he has not spent a day in a combat zone?” “What bothers me about Tim Walz is the stolen valor garbage,” he concluded. “I’d be ashamed if I was him and I lied about my military service like he did.”

Florida GOP Congressman Michael Waltz, a combat veteran who served in the U.S. Army Special Forces, also said he believes Walz’s conduct was shameful. “It’s kind of like the quarterback of a big team walking away from their team right before they go to the Super Bowl. I’ve never heard anything like it, especially the fact that he was a command sergeant major. I’ve never heard of a commander or a sergeant major stepping away from their unit before they go down range,” he said.

Walz responded to the Iraq deployment controversy when it first arose in 2006 as he was running for Congress, writing in a letter, “After completing 20 years of service in 2001, I re-enlisted to serve our country for an additional four years following Sept. 11 and retired the year before my battalion was deployed to Iraq in order to run for Congress.

“I’m proud of the 24 years I served our country in the Army National Guard. There’s a code of honor among those who’ve served, and normally this type of partisan political attack comes only from one who’s never worn a uniform,” he added.

But Behrends and fellow retired Command Sgt. Maj. Paul Herr argued in a 2018 joint paid letter in the West Central Tribune, when Walz was first running for governor, that he was not being truthful about his military service. “According to his official Report of Separation and Record of Service, he re-enlisted for six years on September 18th, 2001. However, in his response he says that he re-enlisted for four years, conveniently retiring a year before his battalion was deployed to Iraq,” they wrote. Further, if he had in fact re-enlisted for four years, that would have made his retirement date Sept. 18, 2005, rather than when he did retire on May 16, 2005.

“And he makes it sound like he ‘retired’ a year before his battalion deployed to

Iraq; when in reality he knew when he ‘retired’ that the battalion would be deployed to Iraq,” Behrends and Herr pointed out. Vance, who did serve in combat, is the perfect messenger to highlight Walz’s tarnished military record.

Instead of the governor’s prior service being an asset to the Democratic ticket, it will quickly become a liability.