



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

Sentencing Hearing after Court Martial for refusing to take the Anthrax Vaccine

LANCE CORPORAL JARED SCHWARTZ

Sworn Statement

June 1999

Your Honor, having been found guilty of the offense of Disobeying a Lawful Order to take the Anthrax Vaccine, I stand before you willing to accept my Punishment. Before I do, I believe it is important that you find out who I am and why I chose to refuse what I still consider an Unlawful Order.

I am now 20 years old and I grew up in Henderson, Kentucky. I chose to join the Marine Corps because it was the hardest challenge I knew of. And I thought it would help develop myself into a better person for the future. I enlisted when I was 18 years old for a 5 Year Tour. I never thought I would not complete my full Tour. I was trained to be a Ground Radio Repairman, and first came to 29 Palms on January 30, 1998.

After school, I was assigned to Combat Service Support Group-1, where I am still today. I have never had any Disciplinary Problems while I have been a Marine. Nor had I ever been in trouble before that. I was a Good Marine and the experiences were great. I have learned a lot while I have proudly and willingly served my Country. How then did I get into this situation?

I first found out that we were to receive the Anthrax Vaccine when I read a newspaper at home in December 1998. I was then involved in an NBC Course and started asking questions about the vaccine. I turned to the Internet as an initial source of information. I read about the problems of Gulf War Syndrome GWS and how the origin of the disease was a mystery. Eventually, I also learned that the Anthrax Vaccine was thought by some, including a Congressional Committee, to be a contributing cause of GWS.

I started to ask more questions. I was counseled by Master Chief Fernandez, but he was only able to tell me the little that he had been told. I was then sent to a Lt. Commander at the Regimental Aids Station. He could not guarantee that the vaccine would not have long-term health effects. I asked my XO to obtain information for me concerning the vaccine. He provided me with FDA Documents.

Later, I learned of the many problems with the manufacturing process of the vaccine that were discovered at Michigan Biologic Products Institute. I was shocked to find that the Government's own Studies revealed that the Adverse Reaction Rates were far greater than what the Manufacturer and the FDA had stated it should be. And no one seemed to care. I was troubled to learn that few Studies existed showing the Safety of the vaccine.

No Studies at all examined the Long-Term Effects and absolutely no proof existed that it would even work against Inhalation Anthrax; the very threat we were allegedly facing. I also learned that the Pentagon was providing us with Misleading Information concerning the past uses of the vaccine. It was never used routinely or regularly by anyone. These facts created a sense of distrust in me. It did not help that I was aware of the Military's history of conducting Medical Experiments on People without their Consent.

I soon came to think that perhaps the Anthrax Vaccine could also be part of an Experiment. And I had no desire to become an Unwilling Participant. In my opinion, the Pentagon has turned its backs on the Service Members it is supposed to protect. If the government was so concerned about Individual's Concerns, as it says, it would have examined many of the Concerns my Attorneys have expressed in my Court-Martial Proceedings.

I do not believe there was any reason to set in place such a Massive Vaccine Program with so little Data to support it. This Trial has only led me to believe that Barriers to the Truth have been erected. I am proud to have served as a Marine. It was never my intention to leave the Marines until my full Tour of Duty had been served. If necessary, I would gladly Die for My Country. At the same time I have been taught to stand by my beliefs, no matter the consequences. In my opinion, there is something significantly wrong with the vaccine.

The many problems surrounding the vaccine's Safety and Efficacy, as well as issues surrounding its necessity, led me to refuse the vaccine. I know that many Service Members, despite their beliefs, have decided not to refuse the vaccine because of their Seniority or Family Situations. I know my concerns are shared throughout the U.S. Military. In many ways, My Challenge was Their Challenge. Your Honor, I stand before you today as an example, though perhaps not the one the Government wanted to create through an Anthrax Court-Martial.

The Government wants to break our Morale, but it has not. I remain Defiant and firm in my Beliefs. While I respect the Authority of this Court, I still believe the Order to take the vaccine is Unlawful. I also believe that the Pentagon has placed Service Members who can offer positive contributions to the Security of the United States in a terrible situation. On the one hand, it says, 'the vaccine is for our own protection' despite the many significant Safety Issues. On the other hand, we are not permitted to exercise our Constitutional and Individual Rights to control the Substances placed in our bodies.

And when we try, we find ourselves being prosecuted alongside Drug Users, Thieves and Rapists. Thus, I find myself before you facing a Federal Criminal Prosecution for a Military Offense that, in my mind, is highly questionable. This Court-Martial placed me in a terrible situation. Every defense we attempted to use in Court has been rejected. If I agreed to a Conditional Plea or received anything less than a Bad Conduct Discharge, I would be placed right back into the same situation as before this whole ordeal started several months ago.

I would still be facing the prospects of taking the vaccine again when the next Shot Series started. And I will refuse again. No matter what, I will refuse. Yet, when that time comes about, I will have already suffered the stigma of a Court-Martial, Brig Time and Reduction in Rank. I will have to face my Friends, Peers and Superior Officers knowing that I will again refuse the vaccine when ordered.

I am not willing to wait for that time to come. I am not looking for sympathy, your Honor, nor am I looking to gain the Court's approval for my decision. I made this choice, and I will make it again. I will under no circumstances take the vaccine. That is why I respectfully request you grant me a Bad Conduct Discharge so that I may separate from the Marines forever. The issues that my Attorneys argued before this Court are ones that must be heard. The Safety, Efficacy and Necessity of this vaccine must be challenged.

And Evidence concerning the Possible Illegal Modification of the vaccine with Squalene must be heard in a Public forum. While I respect the Court's decisions, I disagree with them. Although it has been an honor to serve with the Marines in CSSG-1 and at 29 Palms, I have lost respect for the Armed Services. More importantly, I believe the arguments that have been raised during the last week must go forward to a Higher Court as soon as possible.

By my requesting a Bad Conduct Discharge, an Appeal is guaranteed. The Record that has been created in my case must be preserved. This case is bigger than just myself. I stand here today representing every Member of the Service who wishes to challenge the Anthrax Vaccine Program, and if my actions may lead to a change in what has been deemed, a Decision of Policy then my Personal Sacrifice will have been worth it.

I want to thank GOD, my Family and my Friends for the strength and support they provided to me throughout this ordeal.

Thank you.

Lance Corporal Jared Schwartz
United States Marine Corps
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