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Hillary uses story Vilsack had told

The former governor's account tells of the loss of an Iowan in combat.

By THOMAS BEAUMONT REGISTER STAFF WRITER

July 11, 2007

STORYCHAT: 5 Comments

Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton has borrowed an anecdote about the war in Iraq from former Iowa Gov. Tom Vilsack.

Clinton told an audience of more than 300 people in Des Moines Tuesday about Bruce Smith, the West Liberty man killed in Iraq in 2003 when his helicopter was shot down.

Smith and his widow, Oliva Smith, were fixtures in Vilsack's standard speech during his brief campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination this year.

"Bruce chose to save his crew. And while Bruce and his co-pilot were killed, 17 of his crew members survived," Clinton said, even borrowing Vilsack's phrasing, during her speech in Des Moines about ending the war. "His wife, Oliva, has said, in those few seconds those 17 men needed Bruce more than she and her children would need him for the rest of their lives."

Clinton said Vilsack had told her the story, one he often used to end his remarks. Vilsack, as governor, called to convey condolences to Oliva Smith, who told him witnesses said her husband maneuvered the helicopter to protect the passengers after it had been hit. Smith and his co-pilot were among 15 aboard who died in the crash.

Vilsack endorsed Clinton in late March, a month after abandoning his own campaign.

In the weeks before Vilsack quit the race, he encouraged Congress to end the war by cutting off funding for combat, and predicted other candidates would gravitate toward the position.

"As more and more of our young people die, as more helicopters are shot down ... I think more and more Americans are going to see the wisdom of this position," he said during a Feb. 21 campaign stop. "And I will guarantee you, six months from now, virtually everybody on that stage today will be where I am today."

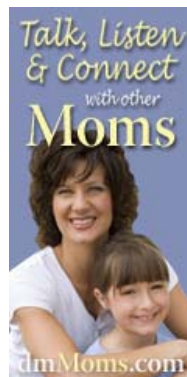
Clinton had dismissed for months the idea of interrupting the war's financing as a way to force President Bush to develop an alternative to his plan to add thousands of U.S. troops to try to stabilize Iraq.

But in May, she voted against a \$120 billion supplemental measure to pay for combat

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operations in an attempt to "send a message" to Bush.

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## STORYCHAT


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<b>Reader Comment</b>	Posted by: <b>JMom</b> on Wed Jul 11, 2007 8:16 am
wonder what else old Tommy V is lending that hag	
<b>Reader Comment</b>	Posted by: <b>Mr. French</b> on Wed Jul 11, 2007 8:07 am
Hillary Clintler is the phoniest person on the planet. Anyone who would vote for her has got to be mentally ill.	
<b>Reader Comment</b>	Posted by: <b>tpb</b> on Wed Jul 11, 2007 7:59 am
I am surprised that she did not say SHE called the widow in this story to express her condolences as well. She is evil and anyone who would vote for her is blindly following a bandwagon. C'mon speedy, state some tangible reasons why you would possibly give this evil machine your vote	
<b>Reader Comment</b>	Posted by: <b>vamb</b> on Wed Jul 11, 2007 7:47 am
She stole this idea because she can't think of anything on her own 	
<b>Reader Comment</b>	Posted by: <b>speedy</b> on Wed Jul 11, 2007 7:25 am
go hillary. vote yes to hillary	

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