

That's all the family and the non-involved public need to know.

The whole truth, we know now, is that Pat was accidentally killed in a firefight by one of his Ranger brothers who in other circumstances might have thrown himself on a grenade to save Pat or his brother, Kevin.

The Army does take care of its own. It's not perfect, but trying to take care of its own is probably the root cause of the Pat Tillman controversy.

In this case, "taking care of its own" has turned the Tillman family against the Army, ruined the careers of a number of officers and enlisted men, cost millions that could have, as everyone keeps saying, been spent on body armor or better marksmanship training, and would have let the family bury Pat as an honorable casualty of war — not a regrettable friendly fire casualty.

Trying to help a family feel their loss was not in vain is part of taking care of our own.

In this information age, we have become overly focused on knowing every detail.

I have been a chaplain in Special Forces and special operations for more than 20 years. Would it have helped the soldier's family for me to have written that their son was killed during a rocket attack or that he actually drowned in his vomit after a night of drinking when he died during the attack? Would it have helped the soldier's family to have said that their son died when his vehicle went off the road or that he drove it off the road into a tree to commit suicide?

We always need to tell the truth, but we don't always need to give all the details.

Chaplain (Col.) Vahan Sipartzi
Wilder, Idaho

NO NEED FOR WHOLE TRUTH

The political cartoon "It's time to level with the American people" [Different views, May 14], i.e., it's time to tell the family of Cpl. Pat Tillman and the American people the truth, was right on — but not all of the truth.

The truth is that Pat Tillman was killed on a combat operation.