

Script for Comments by Donald A. Simpson for Public Hearing

For SCR-2, Memorial Resolution for Patrick J. Simpson, 2 March 2021

I AM PATRICK'S BROTHER, DON SIMPSON. LIKE PAT, I AM A RETIRED ARMY LTC. THE ARMY RETIREE MOTTO IS "SOLDIER FOR LIFE" AND PAT, LIKE MANY RETIREEES, DID NOT STOP SERVING JUST BECAUSE HE TOOK OFF THE UNIFORM; AND AS YOU READ THE RESOLUTION, YOU CAN SEE THAT HIS SERVICE BOTH DURING AND AFTER ACTIVE DUTY WAS SIGNIFICANT.

I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE A SHORT VIGNETTE THAT WILL GIVE YOU AN IDEA OF THE TYPE SOLDIER AND LEADER PAT WAS. AS A RIFLE COMPANY COMMANDER IN THE 1ST CAVALRY DIVISION IN VIETNAM, HE ALWAYS RODE THE LEAD HELICOPTER ON COMBAT ASSAULTS. WHEN I WAS A COMPANY CO, I RODE THE FOURTH CHOPPER BACK SO I'D LAND IN THE MIDDLE OF THE FORMATION. I ASKED PAT ABOUT RIDING THE LEAD BIRD, AND HE SAID THAT WAS WHAT HIS PREDECESSOR DID SO HE JUST DECIDED TO CONTINUE DOING THE SAME, AND, BESIDES, NOBODY EVER SHOOTS AT THE LEAD BIRD.

TOWARD THE END OF HIS TOUR, HIS COMPANY WAS ALERTED FOR A TOUGH MISSION. EVERY SOLDIER KNOWS THERE IS A BULLET OUT THERE WITH HIS NAME ON IT AND WHEN YOU GET CLOSE TO THE END OF YOUR TOUR, YOU TEND TO GET APPREHENSIVE.

WHILE THE COMPANY WAS WAITING FOR THE CHOPPERS TO PICK THEM UP, THE BATTALION COMMANDER TALKED TO PAT'S SOLDIERS ABOUT WHAT THEY THOUGHT OF THE MISSION. ONE SOLDIER SAID, 'WE'RE NOT WORRIED, THE OLD MAN IS STILL RIDING THE LEAD SHIP.'" TO ME, THAT REFLECTS THE RESPECT THE SOLDIERS HELD FOR HIM AND ALSO THE RAPPORT HE HAD WITH THEM. THAT WAS THE TYPE OF SOLDIER AND MAN HE WAS.

I KNOW I SPEAK FOR OUR FAMILY AND PAT'S FRIENDS WHEN I THANK YOUR COMMITTEE FOR CONSIDERING THIS RESOLUTION. AND, SPECIFICALLY, I WOULD LIKE TO THANK SENATOR MANNING AND PAT'S COLLEGUES IN THE EMERALD EMPIRE CHAPTER OF THE MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION FOR THEIR FRIENDSHIP TO PAT AND FOR PREPARING AND PRESENTING THIS RESOLUTION. THIS IS A GREAT HONOR AND WE ALL THANK YOU.

