



Lieutenant General Charles Cleveland  
United States Army, Retired

Hi. My name is Charlie Cleveland.

Tomorrow is Veterans Day and, as a veteran, I'd like to thank you for supporting Spirit of America.

During my career as a Soldier and a Green Beret I worked in many of the world's toughest places: Iraq, Afghanistan and Yemen to name a few. In July, after 37 years of service to our great nation, I retired as the Commanding General of the US Army Special Operations Command.

I had very mixed feelings about retiring. The problems and threats in the world are growing, getting more complex and more difficult. I know our military is going to be asked to do more with less, and our troops need the best support our nation has to offer. Even though it was time for me to hang up my uniform, I didn't want to leave the fight.

A few days after my retirement, I agreed to join Spirit of America's Advisory Board. With SoA I haven't left the fight at all. I continue to serve the nation.

Spirit of America is a unique organization that gives our troops a real advantage. It combines the skills and mindset of an entrepreneur with the toughness and commitment to serve of an all-veteran field team. Spirit of America makes our troops safer and more successful. It saves lives and helps them win.

SoA has worked side by side with our troops in war zones like Afghanistan and Iraq. But it is Spirit of America's role in conflict prevention that I'm especially excited about. SoA's work with Special Operations Forces in West Africa is a great example. It is preventing small problems from becoming big ones.

It may surprise you that a Green Beret who spent the last 37 years fighting wars would be so interested in preventing them. No one wishes for peace more than a Soldier. Be sure that I have no hesitation to fight if that is what we need to do, but it is much better if we can win without war. And, the less our troops need to fight, the fewer the sacrifices our veterans and their families need to bear. An ounce of prevention is much better than a pound of cure, and that's how I see SoA.

I am proud to have joined Spirit of America. Thank you for being part of the team with me. Tomorrow, let's come together to honor and support our veterans.

Very respectfully,

Charlie Cleveland  
Lieutenant General (Retired), US Army