



**ADMIRAL ERIC OLSON, U.S. NAVY, RETIRED**

November 30, 2018

Dear Friend,

I had the privilege of serving with our nation's special operations forces for 38 years. In my final assignment, I was the 4-star commander of the US Special Operations Command where I had responsibility for training, equipping and deploying some of the top military units in the world: Army Green Berets, Rangers and Night Stalkers; Navy SEALs and Combatant Craft Crewmen; Air Force Air Commandos and Para-Rescue Jumpers; Marine Raiders and all of their supporting Logistics and Intelligence capabilities.

Special Operations Forces are often referred to as the "tip of the spear" because they are the leading edge of military engagement. Things at the tip of the spear are dynamic and difficult -- and are often dangerous and sensitive. Every situation is different. Our special operators must be courageous fighters, knowledgeable partners and exceptional problem solvers. In situations that require speed and audacity, Spirit of America (SoA) has proven over and over again that it can and will help our forces answer an emerging need in order to help prevent a crisis. Spirit of America's agility and ingenuity fit perfectly with the mission requirements and mindset of special operations forces.

Special Operations Forces' leaders are relentlessly and intensely focused on mission success. If something won't help them succeed, they want no part of it. When an operational leader chooses to put a Spirit of America team member in one of his vehicles or helicopters, it means the SoA person is deemed essential to mission success. In places like Afghanistan, Syria, the Philippines, and Somalia, Spirit of America is a trusted and valued partner of US special operations forces.

This validation of Spirit of America from Special Operations leaders is why I am proud to serve on SoA's Advisory Board. It's also why I supported Spirit of America's successful efforts to have Congress recognize SoA's work in law with the signing of the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act.

Special Operations teams are now training or operating in 75 or more countries and Spirit of America is ready to support anywhere, anytime. Whether the mission is to prevent conflict or end it, Spirit of America's all-veteran field team is on the ground alongside our Special Operators to understand what is needed and help to get it done.

I'd like to thank you for supporting Spirit of America. I hope you will continue to do so because the need for SoA will continue to grow as our Special Operations Forces take on more missions to safeguard our great nation.

Regards,

Eric Olson

Admiral, United States Navy (Retired)