

December 20, 2018

Dear 504 PIR Troopers, Families and Friends,

I awoke this morning and remembered Operation Just Cause. It must have been the the conversation I had with Ron Rath yesterday that triggered such an early morning memory. As I moved to the coffee pot, I stood a little taller and recalled how very proud I was and still am to have been the 504 PIR Commander. I remembered how our Christmas half-day schedule quickly became a 36 hour load out from Fort Bragg, the sleet on our aircraft and shoulders as we waited to board, and the drop zone confusion that paratrooper initiative turned into successful air assaults.

Of course remembering the exhilaration of successful operations always leads to my memory of the troopers who did not come home. For their families today continues to be a sad day of remembering. You and I know it is the price paid for our freedom and appreciate that our constitution and free society must be protected.

So as Lee Greenwood sings, "where at least I know I'm free and I won't forget the men who died who gave that right to me":

SPC Alejandro Manrique-lozano  
SPC Jerry S. Daves  
PFC Martin D. Denson  
PFC James A. Taber Jr.

In this most Holy Season, we pray for peace and victory in battle, the safety of our serving Troopers and your good health until we rendezvous again at Fort Bragg in 2020.

Strike Hold!

Jack Nix      Ron Rath