

05 MARCH 2015

STATE OF CT VETERANS HOME HEARING

ROCKY HILL, CT

COMMENTS BY LT COL ED WENNERS USA (RET)

CONGRATULATIONS TO LT COL SEAN CONNOLLY, A VETERAN OF OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM FOR HIS APPOINTMENT AS COMMISSIONER OF CONNECTICUT'S DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS. THIS IS A WELCOME CHANGE FOR THE VETERAN'S HOME.

A LITTLE BIT ABOUT ME TO JUSTIFY MY COMMENTS: I WAS TRAINED BY WW11 VETERANS IN THE 50'S AND EARLY 60'S IN JUNIOR ROTC AND SENIOR ROTC. I SERVED 24 YEARS ON ACTIVE DUTY FROM 1963 TO 1987 INCLUDING TWO YEARS IN VIETNAM WHERE I COMMANDED A COMBAT ENGINEERING COMPANY (B/39). WE HAD 150 MEN MINESWEEPING EVERY DAY AND REPAIRING ROADS AND BRIDGES WHILE REACTING TO SNIPERS AND AMBUSHES. MY NCO'S WERE KOREAN VETS AND THE ENLISTED WERE MOSTLY DRAFTEES WHO DID AN AMAZING JOB.

IN THE 70'S AND 80'S I AND MANY OTHERS HELPED TRANSFORM THE ARMY TO AN ALL VOLUNTEER FORCE THAT FOUGHT SO SUCCESSFULLY IN IRAQ IN OPERATION DESERT STORM.

RECENTLY I WAS COMMANDER OF THE ROCKY HILL VFW POST 2138 FOR TWO YEARS (2012 – 2014).

I KNOW SOLDIERS AND I KNOW VETERANS. VETERANS AT THE ROCKY HILL HOME ARE NOT HAPPY.

THERE ARE TWO SIMPLE RULES WHEN WORKING WITH VETERANS: THERE ARE MORALE BREAKERS AND THERE ARE MORALE ENHANCERS. THESE APPLY TO VETERANS IN GENERAL WHETHER IN A MILITARY UNIT OR ANY OTHER PARAMILITARY ORGANIZATION.

MORALE BREAKERS ARE:

- 1. A SENSE OF UNFAIR TREATMENT AND BEING DIS-RESPECTED**
- 2. A SENSE OF BEING USED OR BEING TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF**
- 3. FINANCIAL PROBLEMS UNRESOLVED**
- 4. HOUSING PROBLEMS**
- 5. POOR FOOD**