

REMARKS PREPARED BY 1STLT JOE LOGAN, USMC  
SAN DIMAS CITY COUNCIL  
H.E.R.O.E.S. BANNER ISSUE  
MARCH 14, 2006

Mr. Mayor, members of the city council, my fellow friends and neighbors of San Dimas, good evening. My name is Joe Logan. I want to thank all of you for being here tonight to discuss an issue that is very important to our community. I believe the recognition of local service members through the display of patriotic banners is a wonderful idea and in my opinion one that is long overdue. I wanted to thank in particular the efforts of Gary Enderle and Janie Graef for pushing this issue forward and to the city council for allowing us to discuss the specifics here this evening. I am deeply appreciative of all your efforts.

My family and I moved to San Dimas in 1984. For many years my brothers and I grew up in the Via Verde area playing in the parks, attending school, and witnessing the growth of this new community. Since then, I have moved on from the area attending college and progressing through life as we all do. I have been to many parts of our country and the world. I always have and will continue to call San Dimas my home.

I am currently serving as a First Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps. I am stationed at MCAS Camp Pendleton and fulfilling my duties as a squadron pilot. I fly the AH-1W Supercobra Attack Helicopter, and am currently assigned to HMLA-267. I have recently returned home from a seven-month deployment with the 13<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit in February. We completed a wide range of missions during our time overseas which included: humanitarian assistance to the people in the southern Philippine

island of Tawi-Tawi, participating in the world's largest multi-national military training exercise, Operation Bright Star, in Alexandria, Egypt, and spending nearly 3 months as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom - securing the Sunni-dominated area west of Baghdad during the country's constitutional referendum and December 15th parliamentary elections. I accrued nearly 180 hours of combat flight time during our stay in Iraq.

Since the start of the Global War on Terrorism nearly four and a half years ago, this country has pulled together to support its service members in a manner reminiscent during the second world war. This support has continued to remain strong through two major campaigns. Locally, we have seen other communities near us adopt patriotic display banners as a means of expressing thanks to the men and women who wear the uniform of the US military. I was delighted to hear that our city was considering doing the same. Although the concept is relatively simple, and the effort to establish these banners is minimal, the message remains strong – that our community realizes the sacrifices being made from its military personnel and is grateful for their efforts. In fact, knowing such support can be critical for maintaining high morale not only for those serving, but also for our friends and families back home. I believe that their sons and daughters are indeed 'pillars' of the community and are serving at a pivotal time, one might even say a 'crossroads', in our nation's history.

As we have recently seen, today's military is not necessarily based solely on waging war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Instead, it continues to provide vital assistance to those in need throughout the world, and even sometimes here at home. Naval elements

from my own expeditionary strike group participated in the relief efforts immediately following the devastating earthquake that occurred last October in Pakistan. They provided invaluable command and control functions during the same time in which our Marine detachments were flying into Iraq. More recently, the 31<sup>st</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit has been providing recovery assistance to the Philippine island of Leyte after a major mudslide engulfed some of its remote villages. Finally, who can forget the images of devastation that occurred in our own country last year with Hurricane Katrina? Active military personnel, alongside National Guard and Reserve units, provided the necessary emergency services when the citizens of the Gulf Coast needed it the most. The point I want to emphasize is that these service members did not need to be deployed to a combat zone in order to be in a potentially dangerous situation or to provide much needed assistance. This is precisely why I believe it is equally important to display those names of all active military personnel who continue to carry out the nation's work on a daily basis and not just limited to those who have recently fought in the Iraq and Afghanistan campaigns.

Indeed, the mission of today's armed forces is vast and all encompassing. The demands placed on our military are high, and a high level of commitment and performance are in turn expected from those who serve. It is a volunteer force; however it is not only those serving who end up volunteering for such a lifestyle that today's military requires. The strain of overseas duty has an enormous impact on all aspects of military families' lives. Sacrifices are made daily by people who haven't themselves necessarily signed on the 'dotted line' for such a career, but they continue to hold strong

nevertheless and remain committed to a cause that is greater than themselves. Nowhere is this more evident than when we must leave behind our friends and families when called upon to carry out our mission. Strong support from the community is most important for keeping our families together and for helping them to weather potentially difficult times. My own family experienced this kind of community outpouring nearly four years ago when my own twin brother, Ensign Jim Logan, was killed in a naval aviation training accident off the coast of Pensacola, FL. The outreach from our friends and neighbors was not only helpful during that most trying of times, but continues through to this very day.

Whenever something of a tragic nature happens to a member of our community, the impact can be just as devastating for our friends and neighbors as it is within that person's own family. This holds especially true if we lived on the same street or grew up in the same neighborhood as that individual and knew them personally. I'm positive that the other service members who grew up in San Dimas are well known and admired within their closely-knit neighborhoods. To that end, I believe these banners should be placed in various locations near the service member's local neighborhood and not necessarily restricted to one main street. This will ensure maximum exposure of their well-earned recognition before the very community that knows them best. What higher honor can we have than to be recognized on a daily basis whenever our family, friends or neighbors see our names displayed while driving down Foothill Blvd, San Dimas Ave or any other designated street in our city?

In conclusion, I want to reiterate my thanks and gratitude to the council and for everyone involved in this project. I believe these banners will indeed foster pride within our city and allow us to continue to send a message of unity and support to all our service members overseas and here at home. I find it fitting that this project uses the acronym HEROES as its name. A Hero is defined as any person admired for his or her courage, nobility or exploits. Now, I am certainly not saying that I would be deserving of such a title and I am sure you would be hard pressed to find any other active service member who would consider themselves a hero as well. Rather, they will most likely tell you that they are just simply doing their job. This may be true; however our great country was founded and protected by such patriots not unlike themselves who were just doing their jobs. Defining moments such as Yorktown, Gettysburg, Belleau Wood, Iwo Jima, Normandy, the Chosin Reservoir, Da Nang, Kandahar and Ramadi have been forever enshrined in America's history by the heroic actions of such ordinary persons who answered their nation's call. This country has always held a special place in its heart for remembering such events as evident by the various monuments and memorials found in our nation's capital and in smaller communities all across this land. I am sure that I'm not alone when I say that I'm looking forward to the day when San Dimas' very own heroes will be enshrined in a lasting, permanent memorial in the heart of our city to commemorate such honorable service from its sons and daughters. Thank you for your time and God bless.