

felt that it should be either on the hypotenuse or inside the hypotenuse. Right there. The flag should be at the apex. Anything else would not negate the political statement.

Mr. Chairman, I request that you consider this. I would also like to enter into the record comments by Mr. Paul Gapp, one of the leading architectural critics of the Chicago Tribune, and I would like to distribute it at your table.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you very much.

While he is doing that, we might call on David DeChant -- please correct me if I mispronounce these names -- speaking as an individual Vietnam veteran.

MR. DeCHANT: You did it very well, sir.

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I want to thank you for the energies and expertise in guaranteeing that the men and women who served honorably in our Nation's longest war are recognized and honored in a tradition that began with a Revolutionary War, continued through the Civil War, through two World Wars, the Korean War and now, 10 years later, the Vietnam War.

To celebrate the peace, to consecrate this place, softly call the names of those we love, those we sadly and

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fearlessly missed, those who died, these words from an anonymous poem written for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, in my opinion, clearly and with lean force describe the philosophies and the goals of the Vietnam Memorial Fund to recognize and honor those who served and those who died; and, secondly, to begin a healing process, a reconciliation of a grievous beginning brought by the war.

I am a Vietnam veteran who spent 31 months in Vietnam. I was not decorated. I have not written a book although I would like to, and I have not been elected to office. But I served my country. I am dedicated to the honesty of the Memorial Fund and their friends who have taken an idea and have created history. I am highly honored by the winning design of Ms. Maya Lin. Over the last several years, I have observed the process that has left me with some anger and sadness; anger because the individuals who speak out against the memorial design allegedly in the name of all their Vietnam brothers, anger because of the individuals who are not veterans who threaten and attempt to dictate their wills through their power and money for spite and their own ego satisfaction, anger for those who still wish to make a political statement about the war through the memorial which is not permitted by law, is not the intent of Congress nor the

Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund.

The memorial transcends the debate of the war. It is time for political debates about the war and its policies, but the memorial is simply not the place to do it. It must be remembered that the American people sanctioned and donated over \$7 million for a memorial to the men and women who served and not to a war memorial.

Finally, sadness because these self-centered interests and political debates seem to have been given a priority over the Vietnam veterans, both living and dead, and their families as a Nation. What is most important is we have a most powerful memorial, a truly magnificent and heroic sculpture and Old Glory in her beauty to honor the men who served, sacrificed, suffered, died and survived. It is my opinion that the placement of the sculpture and Old Glory is placed in your hands as professionals.

I disagree with Mr. Watt's statement that design and aesthetics are the primary concern. They are a latter concern and the philosophy that you have is the philosophy of the Vietnam Memorial to date.

Several weeks ago, I had the pleasure to see the stonecutter put the final task on it. As we watched, a Gold Star mother and father watched us and asked if we could help

find the name Robert S. Shuddig (phonetic). After several minutes of looking, we found it. We backed up and observed the father and mother touching their son's name. They began to cry. The father most profusely in his wife's arms. As we approached in an awkward attempt to comfort them, the father apologized for crying. It was suggested to him there is no reason to apologize for being human and feeling the pain of the loss of their son. It is in this vein, ladies and gentlemen, I strongly urge you to approve the sculpture and the flag staff for many reasons but, most importantly, for the Vietnam veterans and their families who are still waiting for recognition and honor, and in order to complete the necessary requirements for the dedication of this truly historical memorial in November of this year.

I would like to close with the following words of a very humble man who knew well the honor of war. With malice towards none, with charity towards all, to bind up the Nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves -- Mr. Lincoln.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you very much.

Next will be Michael Milne, Director of the Veterans