

Lời từ biệt của Trưởng nam Cố Mũ Đỏ Bùi Quyền

Thưa Bố,

Growing up without you was difficult. I prayed every night hoping that you would somehow be miraculously released from the North Vietnamese's government's re-education camp and join us in America. Over time, I learned that you had the chance to leave Saigon in the final days of the South Vietnamese government but chose to stay to help organize the remnants of the remaining South Vietnamese Airborne battalions to defend the city. Although you did secure safe transit out of the country for mom, my brother, and me, how did you expect us to survive? Mom was a house wife and had never been in the workforce while my brother and I had just turned four and five, respectively. We only spoke Vietnamese. As a child growing up in a single parent home and the resultant financial struggles, I didn't understand why a husband and father would choose this path and that thought made me both sad and a little angry.



As I grew older and learned more about concepts such as duty, honor, and integrity, I understood more and came to accept that you had no choice on that fateful day you put your wife and two young sons on that airplane to flee a country that would soon no longer exist. I became very ashamed about my earlier feelings as a child because I came to appreciate that you had to stay and fulfill your oath to lead your men and to defend a government you swore to serve.

Were the sequence of events that led me to meet a soon-to-be close family friend, USAF Colonel Masuoka, who became my USAF Academy Liason Officer and who ultimately helped me get an appointment at the USAF Academy the result of my childhood prayers? I am not sure but when Colonel Masuoka, with the direct help of the former President of the US, George Bush, called to let me know that you would be coming to Colorado Springs to physically attend my graduation and help me pin on my 2nd Lieutenant's officer bars, I couldn't believe it. How fitting that you were there at my graduation because my Academy's class of 1991's motto that is inscribed on our class ring reads "Duty First, Integrity Always".

Saying and understanding these words are easy. Living by these words day in and day out is more difficult, especially when confronted with decisions like on that day in April

1975 on an airplane tarmac with your wife and two young sons looking to you for assurances and hope. How internally torn that must have made you feel!

I am so proud to be your son, Dad, and can only hope that I can live a life true to principles that you have lived by and pass down your legacy of duty, honor, and integrity to your grandsons. Your legacy in the South Vietnamese community is strong and secure. They call you, “Anh Hung Mu Do” or Hero with a Red Beret. How amazing a tribute and I cannot think of anything more appropriate to describe a man who has lived a truly heroic life.

Bùi Quang



Nguồn: Internet eMail by Đoàn Hữu Định chuyển

*Đăng ngày Thứ Năm, June 11, 2020
Ban Kỹ Thuật Khóa 10A-72/SQTB/ĐĐ, ĐĐ11/TĐ1ND, QLVNCH*