



Dr. Rudy Buser

A short while ago, we lost a great patriot that has left, in addition to a devoted wife; for children; and ten grandchildren....a legacy of innovative equipment that has turned night into day for our Armed Forces and has allowed us to find the enemy wherever he is. He brought the Night Vision Electronic Sensor Directorate to the forefront of research and development in the Department of Defense. The most significant endorsement of Rudy's contributions came out of the many accolades received during Desert Storm operations. There is nothing more satisfying than seeing the systems you have worked on for many years helping our forces accomplish their mission because of your contributions. This was shown on the TV sets every night during that conflict.... Rudy was very proud of these accomplishments, but you would never hear him brag....to him, he was just doing his job.

To give you an idea of Rudy's devotion to duty, following a restructure on Army laboratories in 1978, he "moved" to Fort Belvoir, Virginia where he was the Director of the Laser Division. In 1989, he was appointed the Director of the Night Vision Directorate. He and his wife, Waltrup, made the decision that they would not move from Wall Township. So he commuted to Virginia every weekend for many years, setting and breaking his own speed records 37 times.... He did this without complaint, even though the toll of constant travelling was extreme, and he never was absent for an important event at his office.

Rudy was fiercely loyal to his Night Vision Directorate, but when I took over the RDEC, I asked him to help me unite the Research and Development Center — to include those "renegades" from the Night Vision Laboratory — he readily agreed after

some negotiation (I had to invoke the name of Tony Soprano several times), and with his help we built an R&D activity that was at the forefront of Digitization. Every time I would visit, I would still picture his people taking down the Night Vision Lab sign and putting up the NVESD part of the CERDEC sign. His exceptional commitment to the development and fielding of advanced sensors allow us to dominate the 21st Century Battlefield.

When Rudy retired in 1996, he returned (at considerable personal expense) to help me at the headquarters to improve the technical portfolio of the R&D Center and try to bring some of our efforts back to the basics where "people actually built stuff in-house". He always advocated that the Government engineers and scientists should be able to build prototypes of the "stuff" they were asking industry to build. He once again accepted this challenge willingly, even though he could make more money outside, and he was highly instrumental in improving the technical focus on many of our current programs.

Rudy was one of the most technically proficient people I have ever met....understanding the technical underpinnings of everything he did, challenging his people to understand as well, and trying to build prototypes of everything he proposed. He did his homework, was better prepared than most, understood the operational utility of his concepts, and understood the political implications as well. That is the reason he was so successful in all he did....and we all owe him a debt of gratitude for all he has done. "Do what it takes to get the job done, don't let the bureaucracy get in the way, produce what you promise, give all that you have. Rudy did this in spades and his untimely passing is a loss for all of us. I will always remember our times working together to beat the system. Rudy, we all salute you and your accomplishments. Thanks for sharing your life with us and we are all the richer for knowing you.