This is not a textual record. This is used as an administrative marker by the Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folder Title:</th>
<th>Memorial Day [1]</th>
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<td>Staff Office-Individual:</td>
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<td>001. speech</td>
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<td>002. email</td>
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**COLLECTION:**
- Clinton Presidential Records
- National Security Council
- Ted Widmer (Speechwriting)
- OA/Box Number: 2190

**FOLDER TITLE:**
- Memorial Day [1]

**RESTRICITION CODES**

- **Presidential Records Act - 44 U.S.C. 2204(a)**
  - P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
  - P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
  - P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
  - P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
  - P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
  - P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

- **C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.**

- **PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).**

- **RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.**

- **Freedom of Information Act - 5 U.S.C. 552(b)**
  - b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
  - b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
  - b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
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  - b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
  - b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
  - b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]
We gather in Arlington every year on this day to honor our war dead, and to remember the values they fell to uplift. We come here to thank their families, friends and fellow warriors for the sacrifice they made on our behalf.

But we also come to Arlington for our own benefit. We come here each year to rediscover, from their example, the strength to defend America against threats both old and new. We come here to share an ancient ritual that is a perennial source of renewal – not just for the good people who go to great lengths to be here on this day, but for our nation as a whole.

Today marks the final Memorial Day of the century. It was a century that added too many white stones to these gentle hills. But it was also a century that saw the triumph of our nation on one field of endeavor after another. A hundred years ago, America was strong, but untested. Today, the entire world knows what we can do.

Our military is second to none, and tremendous material resources, our people have never been more prosperous. Our people have never been more prosperous.

But we have never been defined merely by what we possess. More important by far is what we believe and how we defend those beliefs. Americans are a deeply realistic people – but at the heart of our achievement is a confidence rooted in optimism and a faith in our common humanity. We believe that people are worthy of the astonishing abilities God has given to us. We believe that people owe each other a decent respect for the opinions that guide them and the rights that protect them. We believe that much is expected from those to whom much has been given. That faith precedes our strength – it is the source of our strength.

If the 20th century saw too much violence, it also saw progress in the war against war. Thanks to our brave men and women in uniform, our nation has never been more secure. The Cold War is now another chapter in our history books. The world powers that fought this century’s world wars are cooperating as never before that blighted the century are a thing of the past. At some point, these wars will fade from living memory, and merge into yesterday’s glory, along with earlier wars, all the way back to a Revolution that gave birth to a new nation based on the radical premise that people were able to govern themselves, by themselves.

History beckons us on Memorial Day. Nowhere is our past more palpable and present than here at Arlington. On this day, in this place, previous battles become as vivid as the white stones marking the names of the Americans who lie here. From Concord to Corregidor, from Korea to Khe Sanh, from Kuwait to Kosovo, our entire history unfolds? is written in this ground.
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National Security Council
Ted Widmer (Speechwriting)
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Many of the most famous American names are engraved on the stones that line these hills. John Pershing, George Marshall and Omar Bradley are here. Another veteran of the second world war, John F. Kennedy, lies not far from us. And countless veterans of other struggles: great explorers [Robert Peary]; four brave astronauts who gave their lives to increase our knowledge of the heavens; Medgar Evers, who landed at Normandy on D-Day and then fought for civil rights at home. Familiar names like Joe Louis, Earl Warren, Abner Doubleday and Audie Murphy. All different – all equally American. Their memory inspires us and reminds us why we are here today.

Some might reflect on our history and conclude we are an old nation. It’s true that we are the oldest constitutional democracy in the world. But we must never lose sight of how quickly we have come to be where we are. One of the great Americans buried here is the Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. He served until the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt, and his opinions still affect us every day. But as a boy, he shook hands with a veteran of the American Revolution. As a young man, he fought in the front lines of the Civil War, where he was visited by President Lincoln, not far from here. The President, wearing his stovepipe hat, began to attract Confederate fire until Holmes shouted these immortal words: “Get down, you fool!” Lincoln replied, “I’m glad you know how to talk to a civilian.”

Justice Holmes also saw World War and Depression. He watched the United States assume the mantle of world leadership. And he never forgot that this awesome responsibility began with the humble soldiers and sailors and airmen who have always stepped forward for our democracy. As he said on Memorial Day, in 1895, war is terrible, but it reminds us of something very important – that in our “over-safe corner of the world ... our comfortable routine is no eternal necessity of things, but merely a little space of calm in the midst of the tempestuous untamed streaming of the world.” That not a single freedom we enjoy would be safe without men and women ready, at great cost and peril, to protect it. That not a single one of our “birthrights” would be available at birth if it were not for the courageous generations before our time who defined these rights and defended them against all adversaries.

We did not become a great nation just because this land was generous to the people who settled it – though it was. We did not become a great nation just because the people who fled here were resourceful – though they were. We became a great nation because every time our beliefs and ideals have been threatened, Americans have stepped forward to defend them. From the biggest cities to the smallest towns, patriotic citizens have done what had to be done to advance a dream that began on the fourth of July in 1776.

If today is a day for history, it is also a day to consider the future. One of the reasons America is secure and prosperous is that our parents and their parents were never content to do what was merely adequate to preserve the status quo. They undertook enormously hard challenges to increase freedom and security for the generations to follow. Were they anxious about the risk and the cost of their engagement? Of course they were. But they accepted their responsibility.
and we are a better nation for it. [This is nice, but it’s repetitive of what comes before, and is still about the past – maybe a thought or two from it can be incorporated in the preceding graph.

Today, there is a new challenge before us—a serious threat to the security of our European allies in Kosovo. It is a small province of a small country. But it is a big test of what we believe in. Of our belief in not just our belief in basic human rights. Of our desire to bequeath to our children a world where young people are not taught to brutalize other young people because of their heritage and faith. Of our but our need for a lasting comprehensive peace in a Europe that is undivided and free – on a continent, where there are already far too many American cemeteries.

It would be easy to look the other way, to pretend we do not see the hundreds of thousands of innocent men and women and children driven from their homes, and the thousands singled out for death along the way. We could simply accept what the Serbian leaders tell us — that these people do not exist, that they are figments of our imagination. After all, Kosovo is far away, in a part of Europe most Americans do not know well. It is difficult and expensive to lead a large alliance. Wars are unpopular. They kill innocent people. But looking the other way is not the American way. We did not arrive at this summit of influence by sitting on our hands when our allies needed us, when our values and our interests were at stake.

We have seen enormous progress in the last ten years. In the same year that Mr. Milosevic stripped away the rights of Kosovars, the Berlin Wall fell. Europe has never been more united. The end of the Cold War has opened historic opportunities for more progress. Other parts of the world are beginning to share in the fruits of the global economy. More people than ever before in history live in freedom, united by a shared commitment to law, and shared beliefs about how governments should treat their citizens. Different people from different nations are learning to work together—to honor agreements—and to abide by shared beliefs about what is acceptable and what is not. Those beliefs were articulated in our nation’s founding documents. Many of those beliefs were embraced in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. And for exactly 50 years, they have been defended by NATO. They were protected when NATO was formed, also fifty years, to defend those beliefs.

All of this progress is threatened by a brutal campaign of expulsion, and often extermination, that rejects all of those beliefs. That is why the nations of the world stand as one in condemnation of Slobodan Milosevic and his war crimes. Not only are 19 NATO allies standing strong. But from every continent, help is pouring forth. Palestinians and Israelis are sending aid. Protestants and Catholics from Northern Ireland. Greeks and Turks. Africans – Asians – Central Americans – even those whose lives have been battered by hurricanes and other conflicts.

Of course, it will take time to realize our aims and sacrifice before all of our aims are realized. Today of all days, we remember that no great evil was ever turned back without sacrifice and cost. There will be setbacks, as there are in any large operation. But Americans back up their beliefs. And though we always strive to solve problems peacefully, when we fight, we fight to prevail. That is what we will do. The Kosovars will go home. The Serbian forces who are responsible for their plight will withdraw. An international force will deploy to protect all the people of that shattered land. And we will work build democracy, prosperity and stability in
southeastern Europe, so that our vision of a Europe whole, free and at peace is at last complete. But the message we are sending could not be more important. Americans back up their beliefs.

If we and our allies succeed in drawing a clear line at this crucial moment, Kosovo might be a very good place to start the new century.

In the days and nights ahead, I ask all Americans to remember our brave pilots and crews flying over Serbia. To keep their families in our thoughts. And to do all we can to relieve the dire suffering of the Kosovo people. Even those who escaped will be struggling with what happened to them for a long time. This afternoon, I ask all Americans to reflect on these thoughts in a moment of remembrance at 3 o’clock, Eastern Daylight Time.

In this amphitheater, it is hard not to be moved by the unfolding ongoing story of America. Not only because of the white rows of markers that surround us – but because of all of you who are living symbols of American heroism – members of the armed forces, veterans of every war of this century, the families who gave you the strength to fight, and the children who will take our nation to new heights in the new century. If you want to know why this is a great country, all you have to do is look around you.

As we face this final challenge of the twentieth century, and face down those who believe in a world where human beings belong in different categories, it is fitting that we do so with a military that embodies the strength of diversity. Our armed forces are not weaker because they include people from many different backgrounds. On the contrary. You inspire the entire world with your respect for each other. You pass every test, with the same flying colors – red, white and blue.
Gray, Wendy E.

From: Widmer, Edward L.
Sent: Thursday, May 21, 1998 5:06 PM
To: Blinken, Antony J.
Cc: @PLANNING - Strat Plan & Comm; @DEFENSE - Defense Policy
Subject: Mem Day 1st draft [UNCLASSIFIED]

Wr

Sorry, I found a few typos in version I just sent. Please sub this.
[Acknowledgments]

We gather today on sacred ground for a sacred purpose. As spring turns to summer, as Americans around the nation take a day to enjoy friends and family, we come to Arlington Cemetery to remember how much had to be given before we could enjoy these precious gifts. We come to express our profound respect for those who are not here, but gave all they could for us to be here ... in this place, in this moment ... peaceful, prosperous and free.

Memorial Day began with our most deadly conflict, the Civil War. To this day, the children of Gettysburg spread flowers over the graves of those who fell there. But the debt we owe our veterans and fallen heroes goes back well before the War Between the States. It goes back to the very origin of America, when people from all lands came to this continent to forge a new kind a society. A society where people enjoyed the freedom to pursue their highest aspirations ... where life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness were the birthright of all Americans ... where wars were not undertaken lightly, but only when these ideals were severely threatened. Those ideals shaped us then ... and they shape us today.

At the beginning of our history, we learned an unfortunate truth: freedom needs to be defended. But nothing is more worthy of defending. From the American Revolution onward, from Concord to Khe Sanh [kay sahn] to Kuwait, America's men and women have always stood up
for their country. And let me say how proud I am that we now have a beautiful memorial to the 1.8 million servicewomen who have served our nation.

Thanks to these heroes, our nation has grown into something extraordinary. We are more than a large nation, or a strong nation, or a populous nation. The United States is today the world’s indispensable nation... bringing parties together... making peace possible... setting an example for other friends of freedom around the world as they, too, seek something better.

Today, democracy is on the march. For the first time, a majority of the world’s people live in governments of their own choosing. In a thousand different languages, people are saying “no” to the problems of the past. 34 of the 35 countries in this hemisphere are democracies. It will not be long before Cuba rejoins the family of the Americas.

In Africa, winds of change are blowing across the continent, bringing more democracies than ever, along with trade and investment. In Asia, despite political and economic turbulence, there has been dramatic improvement over the last decade – and I will press for more democracy when I visit China a month from today.

In Europe, where most of our troops have served this century, we are laying the groundwork for something our parents could not have imagined – a Europe that is peaceful, united and democratic. The world’s smallest continent has never looked bigger. Last Friday, the voters of Ireland and Northern Ireland cast off the Troubles that have plagued them for decades. In
Bosnia, the peace we brokered at Dayton is holding. There are still outbreaks of violence, but the international community is determined to preserve order in the Balkans.

And Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic are joining NATO – the most successful military alliance of all time. Americans now have three more reasons to face the future with confidence. We stand at the forefront of a new history. No one deserves the credit more than America’s veterans and our men and women in uniform.

Memorial Day invites us to remember the past. Let us recall two events from fifty years ago, a time when democracy was imperiled. I was just in Berlin, where we commemorated the airlift that supplied two and a half million people for eleven harrowing months in 1948 and 1949. Those were difficult days for freedom. But Americans never soared higher. I’d like to salute the men and women who participated in that remarkable humanitarian effort.

And fifty years ago, our armed forces helped promote democracy at home, too. In the summer of 1948, President Truman ordered the full integration of America’s armed forces because he felt strongly that anyone willing to risk their life for their country should enjoy the full rights of citizenship. Today, U.S. troops set a shining example of how well different people can work together as one. As we ask other nations to resolve internal differences, we depend on the powerful message of hope that comes from our multi-racial, multi-ethnic military. You meet every challenge with flying colors.
When we think of the heroes buried here at Arlington, we realize how far we have come as a nation. The entire story of America is written in these hills. Each headstone is a page from our history. George Washington is part of the history of this hallowed ground, as is Robert E. Lee. There are graves of veterans from the Revolution and Civil War. From the Spanish-American War, fought on two continents a hundred years ago. From every war fought in this century, the brightest century known to man ... but also a century of terrible conflict.

Many of the most famous American names are engraved on these stones. John Pershing, George Marshall, and Omar Bradley are here. Another veteran of the second world war, John F. Kennedy, lies not far from us; next to his brother Robert, who died thirty years ago next week.

And countless veterans of other struggles: great explorers like Robert Peary; four brave astronauts who gave their lives to advance our knowledge of the heavens ... [Gus Grissom, Roger Chaffee, Dick Scobee, Michael Smith]; Medgar Evers, who landed at Normandy on D-Day and then fought for civil rights at home ... presidents and statesmen [William Howard Taft, William O. Douglas, John Foster Dulles and Earl Warren], and familiar names like Abner Doubleday, Joe Louis, Audie Murphy and Dashiell Hammett. The presence of all these Americans – so different, so equally unforgettable – is felt today in Arlington.

We still cherish the ideals that moved Americans to create a nation 222 years ago. We must never let time erode those ideals. In a sense, our beginning is not so far behind us.

One of the great Americans buried here is the Supreme Court Justice, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. Holmes served until the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt, a time many remember as if
it were yesterday. But all his life Holmes remembered how proud he was that he once shook hands with a veteran of the American Revolution.

His memory was a living catalogue of our nation’s growth. As a boy, he witnessed the funeral of John Quincy Adams. As a young soldier in the front lines of the Civil War, he was visited by President Lincoln. The President, wearing his stovepipe hat, began to attract Confederate fire until Holmes shouted the words “get down, you fool.” Lincoln replied, “I’m glad you know how to talk to a civilian.”

Holmes also saw World War and Depression. He watched the United States assume the mantle of world leadership. And he never forgot this awesome responsibility began with the soldiers and sailors who have always defended democracy, and always will. I mentioned famous names, but there are thousands here at Arlington whose names are not familiar. We must never lose sight of these unsung heroes. They, too, share in America’s greatness. They too believed the words Holmes once wrote about Memorial Day: “It embodies in the most impressive form our belief that to act with enthusiasm and faith is the condition of acting greatly. To fight out a war, you must believe something and want something with all your might. So must you do to carry anything else to an end worth reaching.”

Every now and then, we are reminded that the idea of America is bigger than any of us individually. Last week a Vietnam veteran was removed from the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. It was the right course of action. There is a chance we can restore his name and bring comfort to his family, and we must seize it. But if that place in Arlington is now empty, our
hearts and our memories will never be. We can never forget the sacrifice made by those who
served in Vietnam. And we will never stop praying for the unknown soldiers in Vietnam, Korea
and other theaters where Americans lie, far away from home, but never forgotten.

I would like to thank the veterans who are here today, from all the wars of the 20th century.
Without your sacrifice, we would not be standing in the sunlight today, celebrating the end of
one American Century, and the beginning of another.

The children here today will spend most of their lives in the next century. The youngest children
among us will not even remember the 20th century. It is possible they will glimpse the 22nd
century. My hope is that they will look back on us as a people who discharged our duties well
and responsibly.

Just as America's bravest men and women fought two World Wars and a Cold War to give us the
freedom we enjoy; so we must keep fighting to make the world better for people we do not yet
know and may never know. We must strengthen freedom by maintaining America's leading role
in the world. To abdicate responsibility now would be to renounce the sacrifice of ten
generations of Americans.

I hope that fifty years from now, tomorrow's Americans will thank us the same way we thank
our veterans today. We must strive now to keep the dream alive for the next generation ... to
expand democracy ... protect the environment ... deepen the meaning of freedom ... widen the
circle of opportunity ... and always forge a more perfect union.
It is hard to believe, but there will soon come a day when there are no more veterans of the First World War. And then a day when there are no more veterans of the Second World War. We must build a world worthy of them and all they fought for. America must stay committed to peace and democracy at home and abroad. By resolving to build a better future, to never give up the struggle, we will bring further honor to the patriots who lie here, missing from our lives, but eternally present in our memories and the living spirit of America.

###
5/28/99 2 pm

PRESIDENT WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON
MEMORIAL DAY REMARKS
ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY
MAY 31, 1999

[Sec. Cohen, Sec. West, MG Ivany, Col. Brogan]

We gather in Arlington every year on this day to honor our war dead, and to remember the men and women who gave their lives to preserve our liberty and values they fell to uplift. We come here to thank their families, friends and fellow warriors for the sacrifice they made on our behalf. But we also come to Arlington for our own benefit. We come here to rediscover, from their example, the strength to defend America against threats both old and new. We come to share an ancient ritual that is a perennial source of renewal – not just for the good people who go to great lengths to be here on this day, but for our nation as a whole.

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But we have never been defined merely by what we possess. More important by far is what we believe and how we defend those beliefs. Americans are a realistic people – but at the heart of our achievement is a confidence rooted in optimism and a faith in our common humanity. We believe that people are worthy of the astonishing abilities God has given to us. We believe that people owe each other a decent respect for the opinions that guide them and the rights that protect them. We believe that much is expected from those to whom much has been given. That faith precedes our strength – it is the source of our strength.
Holmes
tales. Not unnaturally could his great friend, Sir Frederick Pollock, sixty years later chafing suggest to Holmes that he could reinforce his argument "as to the contra-natural selection of war by the example of a certain stray bullet; whose deviation by a fraction of an inch would have deprived" the world of all that Holmes's lucky escape gave it (Holmes-Pollock Letters, II, 43). His own recital (Who's Who in America) gives Holmes's war record with austere completeness: "Served 3 yrs. with 20th Mass. Volunteers, lieutenant to lieutenant colonel; wounded in breast at Ball's Bluff, Oct. 21, 1861, in neck at Antietam, Sept. 17, 1862, in foot at Marye's Hill, Fredericksburg, May 3, 1863; a-d-c. on staff Gen. H. G. Wright, Jan. 29, 1864, until mustered out July 17, 1864, with rank of captain."

On his return to Boston invalided from the front, his personal distinction and his war record irresistibly combined to make of him a military hero. Bishop William Lawrence gives the contemporary picture: "I saw him, a young officer, marching off to the front . . . I watched his record, for we boys were alert to the heroes of those days, and as he was brought back wounded again and again . . . he was seen on the streets in Boston, a handsome invalid, to the great delection of the girls of the city. He was a romantic hero, built for it" (address of Bishop Lawrence at presentation of portrait of Mr. Justice Holmes, Mar. 20, 1930, Harvard Alumni Bulletin, Mar. 27, 1930). What he called a "flamboyant" piece (Holmes-Pollock Letters, II, 270) in Harper's Weekly of Nov. 9, 1861, and Dr. Holmes's famous but too stylized Atlantic Monthly (December 1862) account of the Antietam episode, "My Hunt after 'the Captain,'" extended young Holmes's martial reputation much beyond the confines of Boston. He himself harbored no romantic notions about war. He saw too much of it. Indeed, he shocked patriotic sentimentalists by speaking of war as an "organized bore," just as later he was to offend those whom he regarded as social sentimentalists by his insistence that war is merely a phase of that permanent struggle which is the law of life. "War, when you are at it, is horrible and dull. It is only when time has passed that you see that its message was divine. I hope it may be long before we are called again to sit at that master's feet. But some teacher of the kind we all need. In this smug, over-safe corner of the world we need it, that we may realize that our comfortable routine is no eternal necessity of things, but merely a little space of calm in the midst of the tempestuous untamed streaming of the world, and in order that we may be ready for danger. We need it in this time of individualist negations, with its literature of French and American humor, revolting at discipline, loving fleshpots, and denying that anything is worthy of reverence,—in order that we may remember all that buffoons forget. We need it everywhere and at all times" ("The Soldier's Faith," a Memorial Day address, May 31, 1895, Speeches, pp. 62-63).

These are the convictions he took out of the Civil War. These were the convictions that dominated him for the long years to come. For the Civil War probably cut more deeply than any other influence in his life. If it did not generate it certainly fixed his conception of man's destiny: "I care not very much for the form if in some way he has learned that he cannot set himself over against the universe as a rival god, to criticize it, or to shake his fist at the skies, but that his meaning is its meaning, his only worth is as a part of it, as a humble instrument of the universal power" (Collected Legal Papers, p. 166). "Life is a roar of bargain and battle, but in the very heart of it there rises a mystic spiritual tone that gives meaning to the whole" (Speeches, p. 97). "It is enough for us that the universe has produced us and has within it, as less than it, all that we believe and love. If we think of our existence not as that of a little god outside, but as that of a ganglion within we have the infinite behind us. It gives us our only but our adequate significance. . . . If our imagination is strong enough to accept the vision of ourselves as parts inseparable from the rest and to extend our final interest beyond the boundary of our skins, it justifies the sacrifice of even of our lives for ends outside of ourselves. (Collected Legal Papers, p. 316).

This faith he expressed as a returning soldier and he repeated it, in enduring phrases endlessly varied, for seventy years—in talk, in letters, in speeches, in opinions. But his "Soldier's Faith" was not merely an eloquent avowal of his philosophical beliefs regarding man's destiny, nor was it a gifted man's expression, in emotionally charged phrases, of what seemed to him "the key to intellectual salvation" as well as "the key to happiness" (Collected Legal Papers, p. 166). Holmes lived his faith. It would be difficult to conceive a life more self-conscious of its directions and more loyal in action to the faith which it espoused. His faith determined the very few personal choices he was called upon to make after he left the army; it was translated into concreteness in the multifarious cases that came before him for judgment for half a century.
THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
(Yulee, Florida)

For Immediate Release

PRAYER FOR PEACE, MEMORIAL DAY, 1999

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
A PROCLAMATION

The challenges to our Nation's peace and freedom are as old as American history and as new as today's headlines. They have taken many forms through the years, from the bitter discord of civil war at home to the aggression of tyrants abroad. But the price of peace and freedom has always remained the same: the service and sacrifice of our young men and women in uniform.

Looking back across the decades, we marvel at the valor and determination of these gallant Americans who, in each generation, have stepped forward to preserve our freedom, defend our democracy, uphold our ideals, and protect our interests. The battles in which they fought and died -- Brandywine, Gettysburg, San Juan Hill, Belleau Wood, Coral Sea, Inchon, Khe Sahn -- are a testament to uncommon courage and indomitable spirit. Those who survived were forever changed. Those who died stay forever young in their loved ones' memories. Their final thoughts most likely were of home and family; their final actions purchased the freedom we enjoy today.

Now, on Memorial Day, our thoughts turn to them. We remember with profound gratitude those who took to the seas and skies in moments of peril for our Nation. We remember those who marched through mud or rice paddies, snow or sand, because they knew, as President Eisenhower reminded us, that "a soldier's pack is not so heavy a burden as a prisoner's chains" and that true peace is won only by those willing to die for it. We remember those in the Normandy American Cemetery overlooking Omaha Beach who, 55 years ago, relit the torch of freedom in a war-weary Europe. We remember those whose final resting place
is unknown, but whose sacrifice is known to us all. The passing of time and the blessings of peace and prosperity can never make us forget what these brave Americans endured and what they lost so that right would triumph, freedom would survive, and our Nation would prevail.

In honor of all the courageous men and women who gave their lives in defense of our Nation and our fundamental ideals, I ask that every American say a prayer for lasting peace on this Memorial Day. I ask that every American remember our heroic war dead in some special way, whether by placing flowers on a veteran's grave, lighting a candle, observing a moment of silence, or saying a prayer of thanks. While we can never fully repay our debt to America's fallen warriors, we can remember their service and honor their sacrifice.

In respect and recognition of the courageous men and women to whom we pay tribute, the Congress, by joint resolution approved on May 11, 1950 (64 Stat. 158), has requested the President to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe each Memorial Day as a day of prayer for permanent peace and designating a period on that day when the American people might unite in prayer.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Memorial Day, May 31, 1999, as a day of prayer for permanent peace, and I designate the hour beginning at 3:00 p.m. EDT of that day as a time to join in prayer. I urge the press, radio, television, and all other information media to take part in this observance.

I also request the Governors of the United States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the appropriate officials of all units of government, to direct that the flag be flown at half-staff until noon on this Memorial Day on all buildings, grounds, and naval vessels throughout the United States and in all areas under its jurisdiction and control, and I request the people of the United States to display the flag at half-staff from their homes for the customary forenoon period.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-sixth day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.
WILLIAM J. CLINTON

# # #
save as you see fit.

In my recent speech at Eureka College, I presented a proposal for substantial reductions in strategic arms. We and our allies hope the Soviets will respond positively and we're prepared to begin START—that's Strategic Arms Reduction Talks—immediately. But arms control can't happen in a vacuum. Over the past decade, the Soviet Union has engaged in a pattern of direct and indirect aggression and suppression in places as varied as Afghanistan, Poland, and Latin America, and that's made it harder for progress in arms control.

We must always remember that, in dealing with the condition in the world today, Western solidarity and defense preparedness are essential to meaningful arms control negotiations. That's the message I'll take with me—the message of a strong, free alliance, working together to protect its freedom and seek meaningful negotiations to build a more peaceful world.

I'm optimistic for the future of our partnerships and the future of freedom. The values for which we and our fellow democracies stand are of enduring and universal worth. Ours is a mission for peace and freedom through Western unity and strength, and with your prayers, it will succeed.

Next Saturday, I'll be talking to you from Europe. Thank you, and God bless you.

Note: The President spoke at 9:06 a.m. from Rancho del Cielo, his ranch near Santa Barbara, Calif.

Remarks at Memorial Day Ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery

May 31, 1982

Mr. President, General, the distinguished guests here with us today, my fellow citizens:

In America's cities and towns today, flags will be placed on graves in cemeteries; public officials will speak of the sacrifice and the valor of those whose memory we honor.

In 1863, when he dedicated a small cemetery in Pennsylvania marking a terrible collision between the armies of North and South, Abraham Lincoln noted the swift obscurity of such speeches. Well, we know now that Lincoln was wrong about that particular occasion. His remarks commemorating those who gave their "last full measure of devotion" were long remembered. But since that moment at Gettysburg, few other such addresses have become part of our national heritage—not because of the inadequacy of the speakers, but because of the inadequacy of words.

I have no illusions about what little I can add now to the silent testimony of those who gave their lives willingly for their country. Words are even more feeble on this Memorial Day, for the sight before us is that of a strong and good nation that stands in silence and remembers those who were loved and who, in return, loved their countrymen enough to die for them.

Yet, we must try to honor them—not for their sake alone, but for our own. And if words cannot repay the debt we owe these men, surely with our actions we must strive to keep faith with them and with the vision that led them to battle and to final sacrifice.

Our first obligation to them and ourselves is plain enough: The United States and the freedom for which it stands, the freedom for which they died, must endure and prosper. Their lives remind us that freedom is not bought cheaply. It has a cost; it imposes a burden. And just as they whom we commemorate were willing to sacrifice, so too must we—in a less final, less heroic way—be willing to give of ourselves.

It is this, beyond the controversy and the congressional debate, beyond the blizzard of budget numbers and the complexity of modern weapons systems, that motivates us in our search for security and peace. War will not come to other young men will not have to die, if we will speak honestly of the dangers that confront us and remain strong enough to meet those dangers.

It's not just strength or courage that we need, but understanding and a measure of wisdom as well. We must understand enough about our world to see the value of our alliances. We must be wise enough about ourselves to listen to our allies, to work with them, to build and strengthen the bonds between us.

Our understanding must also extend to potential adversaries. We must strive to speak of them not belligerently, but firmly and frankly. And that's why we must never fail to note, as frequently as necessary, the wise guidance between our codes of morality. And that's why we must never hesitate to acknowledge the irreducible difference between men as master of the state and their view of man as servant of the state. Nor must we ever underestimate the seriousness of their aspirations to global expansion. The risk is the very freedom that has been dearly won.

It is this honesty of mind that can open paths to peace, that can lead to fruitful negotiations, that can build a foundation upon which treaties between our nations can stand and last—treaties that can someday bring about a reduction in the terrible arms of destruction, arms that threaten us with war even more terrible than those that have taken the lives of the Americans we honor today.

In the quest for peace, the United States has proposed to the Soviet Union that we reduce the threat of nuclear weapons by negotiating a stable balance at far lower levels of strategic forces. This is a fitting occasion to announce that START, as we call it, strategic arms reductions, that the negotiations between our country and the Soviet Union will begin on the 29th of June.

As for existing strategic arms agreements, we will refrain from actions which undercut them so long as the Soviet Union shows the goodwill and dedication to which they bring about a reduction in the terrible arms of destruction, arms that threaten us with war even more terrible than those that have taken the lives of the Americans we honor today.

Gettysburg...and 1 have that feeling here on this hallowed ground, and I have known that same poignant feeling as I looked out across the rows of white crosses and Stars of David in
Europe, in the Philippines, and the military cemeteries here in our own land. Each one marks the resting place of an American hero, of a hero who died in our lifetime, the heroes of World War I, the Doughboys, the GI's of World War II or Korea or Vietnam. They span several generations of young Americans, all different and yet all alike, like the markers above their resting places, all alike in a truly meaningful way.

Winston Churchill said of those he knew in World War II they seemed to call them our secret weapon, the same experience.

As we honor their memory today, let us pledge that their lives, their sacrifices, their valor shall be justified and remembered for as long as God gives life to this nation. And let us also pledge to do our utmost to carry out what must have been their wish: that no other generation of young men will have to share their experiences and repeat their sacrifice.

Earlier today, with the music that we have heard and that of our National Anthem—I can't claim to know the words of all the national anthems in the world, but I don't know of any other that ends with a question and a challenge as ours does: Does that flag still wave o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave? That is what we must all ask.

Thank you.

Note: The President spoke at 11:35 a.m. at the cemetery in Arlington, Va. Prior to his remarks, he placed a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Joint U.S.-U.S.S.R. Announcement on the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks

May 31, 1982

The United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics have agreed to begin formal negotiations on the limitation and reduction of strategic arms on June 29, 1982, in Geneva, Switzerland.

Nomination of Robert H. Phinny To Be United States Ambassador to Swaziland

June 1, 1982

The President today announced his intention to nominate Robert H. Phinny to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Swaziland. He would succeed Richard Cavina Matherson.

Since 1857 Mr. Phinny has been self-employed with the B. H. Phinny Co. (investments and business interests) in Fremont, Mich. He was with Gerber Products Co., in Fremont, Mich., in 1929-1937 as salesmen and then assistant to the director of public relations. He served in the United States Navy as lieutenant in 1942-1945.

Mr. Phinny graduated from Babson College, Mass. (B.S., 1948). He is married, has four children, and resides in Palm Springs, Calif. He was born March 15, 1921.

Appointment of William J. Kilberg as a Member of the President's Commission on White House Fellowships

June 1, 1982

The President today announced his intention to appoint William J. Kilberg to be a member of the President's Commission on White House Fellowships.

He is presently a partner in the law firm of Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher in Washington, D.C. He was a partner in the firm of Breed, Abbott & Morgan in 1977-1980. He was Solicitor of Labor, U.S. Department of Labor, in 1973-1977. Previously he was Associate Solicitor for Labor Relations and Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Labor. He was General Counsel for the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service in 1970-1971.

Mr. Kilberg graduated from Cornell University (B.S., 1966) and Harvard Law School (J.D., 1969). He is married, has four children, and resides in McLean, Va. He was born June 12, 1946.

Message to the House of Representatives Returning Without Approval the Southern Arizona Water Rights Settlement Bill

June 1, 1982

To the House of Representatives:

I return herewith, without my approval, H.R. 5118, the proposed "Southern Arizona Water Rights Settlement Act of 1982." I take this action with sincere disappointment. I am well aware of the hard work of the Arizona Congressional leaders that went into the development and passage of this legislation. I also understand their desire to resolve the litigation that has hung over the head of the City of Tucson and the many private parties involved for the past seven years.

I strongly believe that the most appropriate means of resolving Indian water rights disputes is through negotiated settlement and legislation if it is needed to implement any such settlement. However, H.R. 5118 is a negotiated settlement with a serious flaw. The United States Government was never a party to the negotiations that led to the development of this proposal. This settlement was negotiated among the Tribe, the City of Tucson, the State of Arizona, the affected commercial interests and other defendants with assistance from the Arizona Congressional delegation. The result of this negotiation was that the United States Government, which was absent from the negotiation table, would bear almost the entire financial burden of the settlement at a potential initial cost of $112 million and a potential annual cost of approximately $5 million.

I cannot support this resolution of litigation on behalf of the Papago Tribe by the United States Government. I can only in good conscience approve legislation intended to implement a settlement if the United States has been a major party in the negotiations and if the contribution by the defendants in the litigation involved is significant.

I pledge the full cooperation of my Administration to the States and local governments that are facing the difficult task of
by Verona Devney, a legal secretary who decided to help the needy by sewing and donating clothes. Today HOPE distributes clothes to some 5,000 families a year. In San Antonio, Texas, Nick Monreal founded Teach the Children, and this organization has raised tens of thousands of dollars to provide school supplies to thousands of children from economically disadvantaged families. And in Philadelphia, a group called Wheels has been providing transportation for the sick and handicapped to and from hospitals and doctors' offices since 1959. There is no charge and no reliance on government funds.

One private sector initiative I find most moving is called Christmas in April. Founded by Bobby Trimble of Midland, Texas, Christmas in April organizes volunteers across the country to repair the homes of needy older and handicapped Americans. Right here in Washington, Christmas in April helped a woman named DeLois Ruffing. DeLois ran a home for the elderly that badly needed repairs. The ceiling was virtually falling down around her. With her permission, early one April day more than a dozen volunteers - attorneys, journalists, housewives, even a judge - arrived to do what was needed. Ten hours later, the plumbing and ceiling had been fixed, and the walls were gleaming. And today DeLois is a Christmas in April volunteer herself.

As these and so many other organizations prove, the generosity and character of the American people that de Tocqueville observed more than 150 years ago remain a powerful and life-giving force. So, let us reflect this Memorial Day weekend upon the unselfish millions who are improving the quality of life for all Americans in so many wonderful ways. And as always, let us remember those who gave the greatest gift of all, the gift of their lives, so that we today might live in a nation of freedom.

Until next week, thanks for listening, and God bless you.

Note: The President spoke at 12:06 p.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks at a Memorial Day Ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia
May 26, 1986

Today is the day we put aside to remember fallen heroes and to pray that no heroes will ever have to die for us again. It's a day of thanks for the valor of others, a day to remember the splendor of America and those of her children who rest in this cemetery and others. It’s a day to be with the family and remember.

I was thinking this morning that across the country children and their parents will be going to the town parade and the young ones will sit on the sidewalks and wave their flags as the band goes by. Later, maybe, they'll have a cookout or a day at the beach. And that's good, because today is a day to be with the family and to remember.

Arlington, this place of so many memories, is a fitting place for some remembering. So many wonderful men and women rest here, men and women who led colorful, vivid, and passionate lives. There are the greats of the military: Bull Halsey and the Admirals Leahy, father and son; Black Jack Pershing; and the GI's general, Omar Bradley. Great men all, military men. But there are others here known for other things.

Here in Arlington rests a sharecropper's son who became a hero to a lonely people. Joe Louis came from nowhere, but he knew how to fight. And he galvanized a nation in the days after Pearl Harbor when he put on the uniform of his country and said, "I know we'll win because we're on God's side." Audie Murphy is here, Audie Murphy of the wild, wild courage. For what else would you call it when a man bounds to the top of a disabled tank, stops an enemy advance, saves lives, and rallies his men, and
all of it singlehandedly. When he radioed for artillery support and was asked how close the enemy was to his position, he said, “Wait a minute and I’ll let you speak to them.” [Laughter]

Michael Smith is here, and Dick Scobee, both of the space shuttle Challenger. Their courage wasn’t wild, but thoughtful, the mature and measured courage of career professionals who took prudent risks for great reward—in their case, to advance the sum total of knowledge in the world. They’re only the latest to rest here; they join other great explorers with names like Grisso and Chaffee.

Oliver Wendell Holmes is here, the great jurist and fighter for the right. A poet searching for an image of true majesty could not rest until he seized on “Holmes dissenting in a sordid age.” Young Holmes served in the Civil War. He might have been thinking of the crosses and stars of Arlington when he wrote: “At the grave of a hero we end, not with sorrow at the inevitable loss, but with the contagion of his courage; and with a kind of desperate joy we go back to the fight.”

All of these men were different, but they shared this in common: They loved America very much. There was nothing they wouldn’t do for her. And they loved with the sureness of the young. It’s hard not to think of the young in a place like this, for it’s the young who do the fighting and dying when a peace fails and a war begins. Not far from here is the statue of the three servicemen—the three fighting boys of Vietnam. It, too, has majesty and more. Perhaps you’ve seen it—three rough boys walking together, looking ahead with a steady gaze. There’s something wounded about them, a kind of resigned toughness. But there’s an unexpected tenderness, too. At first you don’t really notice, but then you see it. The three are touching each other, as if they’re supporting each other, helping each other on.

I know that many veterans of Vietnam will gather today, some of them perhaps by the wall. And they’re still helping each other on. They were quite a group, the boys of Vietnam—boys who fought a terrible and vicious war without enough support from home, boys who were dodging bullets while we debated the efficacy of the battle. It was often our poor who fought in that war; it was the unpampered boys of the working class who picked up the rifles and went on the march. They learned not to rely on us; they learned to rely on each other. And they were special in another way: They chose to be faithful. They chose to reject the fashionable skepticism of their time. They chose to believe and answer the call of duty. They had the wild, wild courage of youth. They seized certainty from the heart of an ambivalent age; they stood for something.

And we owe them something, those boys. We owe them first a promise: That just as they did not forget their missing comrades, neither, ever, will we. And there are other promises. We must always remember that peace is a fragile thing that needs constant vigilance. We owe them a promise to look at the world with a steady gaze and, perhaps, a resigned toughness, knowing that we have adversaries in the world and challenges and the only way to meet them and maintain the peace is by staying strong.

That, of course, is the lesson of this century, a lesson learned in the Sudetenland, in Poland, in Hungary, in Czechoslovakia, in Cambodia. If we really care about peace, we must stay strong. If we really care about peace, we must, through our strength, demonstrate our unwillingness to accept an ending of the peace. We must be strong enough to create peace where it does not exist and strong enough to protect it where it does. That’s the lesson of this century and, I think, of this day. And that’s all I wanted to say. The rest of my contribution is to leave this great place to its peace, a peace it has earned.

Thank all of you, and God bless you, and have a day full of memories.

Note: The President spoke at 10:10 a.m. at the Memorial Amphitheater. Prior to his remarks, he placed a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.
On this Memorial Day, let us honor their sacrifice. Let us resolve to keep our America the strongest nation in the world and the world's strongest force for peace and freedom. And let us each do our part to keep the American dream alive.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks at a Memorial Day Ceremony in Arlington, Virginia
May 27, 1996

Thank you. General Foley, Chaplain O'Keefe.

[Laughter] Secretary Brown, Deputy Secretary White, General Ralston, the members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Let me say a special word of thanks to Mr. Jack Metzler for all the work he has done on this magnificent cemetery and for the work that he and others have done to get the amphitheater ready again this year for a reopening. It is an extraordinarily beautiful place of honor for those who have served in our Armed Forces.

To all the members of the Armed Forces who are here, to the distinguished leaders of our veterans organizations, to all of you who are veterans and your families, my fellow Americans: We come together this morning, as we do every year, to honor those who gave their lives so that future generations of Americans might live in freedom. All across our wonderful country, in crowded cities and country towns, America bows its head today in thanks to our fallen heroes. With flags at half-mast, with flowers on a grave, with colorful parades, with quiet prayers, we take this time to remember their achievements and renew our commitment to their ideals.

Here on this peaceful hillside, the silentRolston. ceremony, with its sacrifice and service, is an act of faith in making the future secure for all the rest of us as well.

On this Memorial Day, let us draw inspiration from the heroes of our past, and commit ourselves to becoming those who still defend our freedom and security in the military today the support they need and deserve to fulfill their important mission. And let us remember, as we stand at the edge of a bright new century, the origins of this commemoration. The practice of honoring America's fallen began near the close of the Civil War, the deadliest and most divisive conflict our Nation has ever known. Today is a time to remember what joins us as one America.

Consider the service of just five brave Americans who have recently been buried in this hallowed ground: Marine Corporal Erik Lejeune, North Carolina, who dreamed of becoming an officer and was killed in a helicopter accident earlier this month at Camp Lejeune; a brilliant member of my staff, Air Force Colonel Nelson Drew, who perished in Bosnia last August while working to end the suffering and the slaughter; a proud Army veteran, our Commerce Secretary Ron Brown, who was taken from us last month on a foggy mountainside in Croatia as he was leading a mission of peace and hope to restore a broken land; and in that terrible crash, we also lost Tech Sergeant Cheryl Anne Turnage, a member of the Air Force crew who hoped to pursue a career in law; and just last week, we said goodbye to the Navy's recent champion and most beloved sailor, Admiral Mike Boorda. These five were very different in their backgrounds and in their service. But they were united in their love for America. Their lives reflect the spirit of our democracy, the strength of our diversity, the energy and opportunity that make our country so great.

We are descendants of a common creed: one Nation, under God; partners with a common purpose, to keep our Nation free and foremost a force for peace and progress; a place where people who work hard and take responsibility have the chance to make the most of their own lives, build good, strong, innocent families and live out their dreams in dignity and peace.

May God bless the souls of our departed, and always bless the country they gave everything to serve.

Thank you, and God bless you all.


Remarks Announcing Agent-Orange Related Disability Benefits for Vietnam Veterans and an Exchange with Reporters
May 28, 1996

Mr. Vice President, thank you very much for your very moving remarks and your support of this endeavor. Secretary Brown, thank you for your service to our country in so many ways, and especially for your work at the Veterans Administration, along with Deputy Secretary Hersh Gobbel and the others who are here, Senator Bobb, Cong-ressman Evans, and to Members of Congress who are not here, including Senator Daschle who worked so hard on this issue; to the Vietnam veterans who are here and all others who are concerned about this matter.

This is an important day for the United States to take further steps to ease the suffering of our Nation unintentionally caused its own sons and daughters by exposing them to Agent Orange in Vietnam. For over two decades, Vietnam veterans made the case that exposure to Agent Orange was injuring and killing them long before they left the field of battle, and damaging their children.

For years, the Government did not listen. But steps taken since 1983, and the important steps we are taking today, are showing that America can listen and act. I'm announcing that Vietnam veterans with prostate cancer and the neurological disorders paraplegia, neuropathy are entitled disability payments; that their exposure to Agent Orange. Our administration will also propose legislation to meet the needs of our veterans' children affected with birth defects and birth defects—these last year the first offspring of American soldiers will receive benefits for combat-related health problems. From the outset, we have pressed hard for answers about the effects of Agent Orange and other chemicals used to kill vegetation during the war in Vietnam. Once we had
have that plan to deliver help quickly while we get maximum results for every Federal dollar spent.

But to get that long-term relief to our people, we must have action from Congress. I asked congressional leaders for just that, in an emergency supplemental spending bill, the kind that we have had before when we had disasters. Many Members, led by lawmakers from the Flooded States, worked hard to get a bill to me, but I'm sorry to say, some Members of the majority tried to use this important bill for different purposes. And without taking action, Congress left town, and our people were left in the lurch.

Hundreds of thousands of our citizens are depending on this aid so they can get on with their lives. Even without action from the Congress, we're doing all we can to get immediate help to the victims. FEMA is using all the resources and authority it has to help with food, shelter, and emergency services. But these funds are limited. They will eventually run out, and they won't start the job of long-term recovery.

Unless Congress approves these disaster relief funds, the victims cannot begin their long-term recovery, they can't rebuild homes and businesses; farmers can't dig out their fields to plant crops. These people are in dire need, and Congress has failed to act for their sake. It is unconscionable. It flies in the face of the spirit of bipartisan cooperation we saw in our budget negotiations, and it's not how we treated other Americans when they were in similar dire straits over the last 4 years.

In North Dakota, I saw not only the devastation of the floods, I saw the determination of the people. Proulx doing their level best to survive and get on with their lives. They don't expect free rides or handouts, but they do have a right to expect us to do the right thing by them, as we have by their fellow Americans when they were down and out.

The wrath of nature can be random, swift, and unforgiving. That's where human nature must provide a balance. We should act out of compassion, as many Americans have, to help the victims. And in Government, we must act because that is our duty as Americans. We cannot leave the victims without the help they need and deserve. We have to act.

I urge Congress to do its part and to do it quickly. Disaster doesn't take a holiday. Let's work together to bring relief to people who need it—now.

In closing, I want to wish you all a happy Memorial Day weekend. Drive safely, drive slowly, and buckle up.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:08 p.m. on May 23 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:00 a.m. on May 24.

Remarks at a Memorial Day Ceremony in Arlington, Virginia
May 26, 1997

Thank you very much. General Foley, Chaplain Schwartzman, Mr. Metzler, to the members of the Cabinet, General Shalikashvili, and the leaders of our Armed Forces, to Members of Congress, and especially to the members of the Armed Forces who are here, the leaders of our veterans organizations, all of you who are veterans and your families, and all of you who are family members of those who have given their lives in the service of our country.

My fellow Americans, we gather here today, as we do faithfully every year, to pay tribute to our country men and women who fell in the line of duty, who gave their lives to preserve the liberties upon which our Nation was founded and which we have managed to carry forward for more than 200 years now. All across America, our grateful Nation comes together today to honor these men and women, some celebrated, others quite unknown, each a patriot and a hero.

For many of our schoolchildren who have known no war, today may seem to be little more than a day off from school or a welcome start to the summer. But on this day, and all that we pause to remember, there are essential lessons for the young and, indeed, for all the rest of us as well: Appreciate the blessings of freedom; recognize the power and virtue of sacrifice; respect those who gave everything on behalf of our common good.

This day reminds us of what we can achieve when we pull together as one nation, respecting each other with all of our myriad differences, but coming together, we can fight any battle and face any challenge.

It reminds us of our duty to honor not only those we have lost in freedom's cause but also, through attention and care, the service men and women who came back home and are now our veterans, as well as the families of those who have been tragically never had a final accounting.

It reminds us of our obligation to take care of those who have taken care of us and those who take care of us today. That means ensuring that our men and women in uniform have the best training and equipment and preparation possible to do their jobs for freedom, because even in times of peace, we must remain vigilant in a very new and still uncertain world.

And above all, it reminds us of America's responsibility to remain the world's leading force for peace and prosperity and freedom as we enter the 21st century, so that future generations of young Americans who wear our uniform will never have to endure the losses in battles that our predecessors did in the 20th century.

For just a few yards from where we gather today, lies the grave of General George Marshall, an heroic soldier in war and a visionary statesman for peace after the Second World War. It lies in that same field, which enabled freedom to triumph over tyranny in World War II. And after the war, along with President Truman, Senator Arthur Vandenberg, and others, he inspired America to make the investments and forge the institutions that built the peace, reached out to former adversaries, spread democracy and prosperity, and ultimately won the cold war.

General George Marshall was the very first full-time soldier ever to win the Nobel Prize for Peace. A half-century ago, he knew that in order to be strong at home and safe at home, we had to lead the world to a more secure and better place.

Now, at the end of the cold war, when there appears to be no looming threat on the horizon, we must rise to Marshall's challenge fought a bloody war because we did not appreciate the power and virtue of our sacrifice. Today, at the end of the cold war, when there appears to be no looming threat on the horizon, we must rise to Marshall's challenge fought a bloody war because we did not appreciate the power and virtue of our sacrifice. Today, at the end of the cold war, when there appears to be no looming threat on the horizon, we must rise to Marshall's challenge fought a bloody war because we did not appreciate the power and virtue of our sacrifice.
But I ask you when you leave this place today, to ask yourself, an American, what can I do to honor the sacrifices of those we honor here today. For what did George Marshall dedicate his life? For what did those people fight and die? And how can we ensure that we have a new century in which we do not repeat the mistakes of the last one? I will say, the only way that can happen is if America refuses to walk away from the world and its present challenges. We must learn the lessons General Marshall and his generation left us. Their sacrifice and their spirit call upon us to seize this moment, to shape the peace of the present for future generations, to turn the hope we share into a history we can all be proud of.

And so on this day when we remember those who gave everything for our Nation and its freedom, let us resolve to honor them by renewing our commitment on the edge of a new century and a new era, to lead the world toward greater peace and security, freedom and prosperity. In doing that, we will make Americans safer. We will allow our men and women in uniform to stand sentinel for our freedom with less risk to their lives.

May God always bless the American heroes we honor today. May He bless those fallen and those who still stand at the ready. May He always bless the United States, and may He always give us the wisdom to do what is right for tomorrow.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:30 a.m. in the Amphitheater at Arlington National Cemetery. In his statement, he referred to Maj. Gen. Robert P. Foley, USA, Commanding General, U.S. Army Military District of Washington; Chaplain Joel R. Schwarzmiller; U. S. John M. Shalikashvili, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; and John Metzler, Superintendent, Arlington National Cemetery.

Remarks at a Signing Ceremony for the NATO-Russia Founding Act in Paris, France
May 26, 1997

President Yeltsin gave me this cane; now he's giving it to me twice. [Laughter]

Ladies and gentlemen, on this beautiful spring day in Paris, in the twilight of the 20th century, we look toward a new century with a new Russia and a new NATO, working together in a new Europe of unlimited possibility.

The NATO-Russia Founding Act we have just signed joins a great nation and history's most successful alliance in common cause for a long-sought but never before realized goal: a peaceful, democratic, undivided Europe.

The United States of gratitude today. The world my predecessors dreamed of and worked for is finally within reach. I want to thank President Chirac for his strong leadership in making this day possible and for hosting us. I thank President Yeltsin for his courage and vision, for his unbelievable capacity to imagine a future that is different from the past that imprisoned us.

I thank his Foreign Minister, Mr. Primakov, for his negotiations and good faith to make this day possible. I especially thank Secretary General Solana for his brilliant and successful work closely with NATO, for his negotiations and good faith to make this day possible and for hosting us. I thank my fellow leaders of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and especially our senior leader, Chancellor Kohl, who has worked longer and paid a higher price for the dream of a united Europe than any other leader.

For all of us, this is a great day. From now on, NATO and Russia will consult and coordinate and work together. Where we all agree, we will act jointly, as we are in Bosnia, where a Russian brigade serves side by side with NATO troops, giving the Bosnian people a chance to build a lasting peace. Deepening our partnership today will make all of us stronger and more secure.

The historic change in the relationship between NATO and Russia grows out of a fundamental change in how we think about each other and our future. NATO's member states recognize that the Russian people are building a new Russia, defining their greatness in terms of the future as much as the past. Russia's transition to democracy and open markets is as difficult as it is dramatic. And its steadfast commitment to freedom and reform has earned the admiration of the world.

In turn, we are building a new NATO. It will remain the strongest alliance in history, with smaller, more flexible forces, prepared to provide for our defense but also trained for peacekeeping. It will be strong externally to deal with other nations that share our hopes and values and interests through the Partnership For Peace.

It will be an alliance directed not to look at Russia, but instead designed to advance the security of every democracy in Europe. NATO's old members, new members, and nonmembers alike.

I know that some still see NATO through the prism of the cold war and that especially in NATO's decision to open its doors to Central Europe's new democracy, they see Europe still divided, only differently divided. But I ask them to look again. For this new NATO will work with Russia, not against it. And by reducing rivalry and fear, by strengthening peace and cooperation, by facing common threats to the security of all democracies, NATO will promote greater stability in all of Europe, including Russia. And in turn, that will increase the security of Europe's North American partners, the United States and Canada as well.

We establish this partnership because we are determined to create a future in which European security is not a zero-sum game, where NATO's gain is Russia's loss and Russia's strength is our alliance's weakness. That old thinking, these are new times. Together, we must build a new Europe in which every nation is free and every free nation joins in strengthening the peace and stability for all.

Half a century ago, on a continent darkened by the shadow of evil, brave men and women in Russia and the world's free nations fought a common enemy with uncommon valor. Their partnership forged in battle, strengthened by sacrifice, cemented by blood, gave hope to millions in the West and in Russia that the world alliance would be extended in peace. But in victory's afterglow, the freedom the Russian people deserved was denied them. The dream of peace gave way to a return to the cold war, and our predecessors lost an opportunity to shape a new Europe, whole and free.

Now we have that chance. Russia has opened itself to freedom. The veil of hostility between East and West has lifted. Together we see a future of partnership too long de-
May 25

**Historical Events**

- **1085** Alfonso VI of Castile captures Toledo, thus bringing the Moorish center of science into Christian hands.
- **1659** Richard Cromwell, Lord Protector of England and son of Oliver Cromwell, resigns under pressure from Parliament.
- **1780** Mutiny by two Connecticut regiments at Washington's winter quarters, Morristown, N.J., is suppressed (American Revolution).
- **1787** The American Constitutional Convention meets in first session in Philadelphia to draw up a constitution for the new nation.
- **1810** Revolution occurs in Argentina, initiating the move toward independence, finally achieved July 9, 1816.

**Religious Calendar**

**The Saints**

- **St. Urban I**, pope and martyr. Elected 222 or 223. [d. c. 230]

**1917** Theodore Martin Hesburgh, U.S. author; educator; President, Notre Dame, 1952-86.

**1921** Hal David, U.S. lyricist; Oscar Award for *Raindrops Keep Fallin' on My Head*, 1969.


**1922** Enrico Berlinguer, Italian politician; General Secretary of the Italian Communist Party, 1972-84. [d. June 11, 1984]

**1926** Miles (Dewey) Davis, Jr., U.S. jazz musician, trumpeter.


**1929** Beverly Sills (Belle Silverman), U.S. coloratura soprano.


**1934** Ronald Harold Nessen, U.S. journalist; Press Secretary, 1974-76.

**1936** Tom T. Hall, U.S. singer, storyteller; known for his song, *Harper Valley PTA*.

**1939** Ian Murray McKellen, British actor, director; Tony Award for his role as Salieri in *Amadeus*, 1981.

**1943** Leslie Uggams, U.S. singer, actress; known for her starring role on television miniseries, *Roots*.

**1947** Jessie Colter (Miriam Johnson), U.S. singer.


**1955** Connie Sellecca, U.S. actress; known for her role as Christine Francis on television series, *Hotel*.

**Libya** National Day of Sudan or Revolution Day in the Sudan

Commemorates the overthrow of the government of King Idris I, 1969 (see below).

**Sudan** Revolution Day


**U.S. (New Mexico)** Memorial Day

**U.S.S.R.** African Liberation Day
Let's not be too pleased with present to remember the past

We returned from war to start families and eventually lead the country; others made a bigger sacrifice

By Bob Doyle, Gerald B. Ford, Jimmy Carter and George Bush

Every Memorial Day, America pauses to give back to the war which shaped us and our nation. For our generation, it is the issue that dominated the 1950s and 1960s. Indeed, the Vietnam War was a defining moment in American history. It is a time to reflect on the sacrifice of those who served, the courage of those who returned, and the price of freedom.

In the words of President Jimmy Carter, "The Vietnam War was a defining moment in American history. It is a time to reflect on the sacrifice of those who served, the courage of those who returned, and the price of freedom.

What jogging has to do with Jogjakarta

By Leotah Doyly

Saturday morning in the TV news, a little girl waved before the helmet bag of the Saber, who headed out to negotiate the streets of Jogjakarta. The Saber, a veteran of the Vietnam War, was leading a group of veterans on a run through the streets of Jogjakarta. The Saber, who had served as a marine in the Vietnam War, was determined to show the people of Jogjakarta the true meaning of sacrifice.

The Saber and his group ran through the streets, waving to the people who lined the streets to watch. The Saber, who had lost a close friend in the war, was determined to show the people of Jogjakarta the true meaning of sacrifice.

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The Saber and his group ran through the streets, waving to the people who lined the streets to watch. The Saber, who had lost a close friend in the war, was determined to show the people of Jogjakarta the true meaning of sacrifice.
we are indispensable nation
but sacrifice has not been in vain of 1948
must not relax now
hardest part of struggle the final hill
and anthem
10:15:07 5/19 1964
50 yrs ago at war
1800 100
150 10
200

we won each
each made bells
but that does
not mean we want
more war

we can not

and now we have
shown how much
instability there is
"LET US, THEN, AT THE TIME APPOINTED,
GATHER AROUND THEIR SACRED REMAINS AND
GARLAND THE PASSIONLESS MOUNDS ABOVE
THEM WITH CHOICEST FLOWERS OF
SPRINGTIME; LET US RAISE ABOVE THEM THE
DEAR OLD FLAG THEY SAVED FROM DISHONOR;
LET US IN THIS SOLEMN PRESENCE REVIEW OUR
PLEDGES TO AID AND ASSIST THOSE WHOM
THEY HAVE LEFT AMONG US AS SACRED
CHARGES UPON THE NATION'S GRATITUDE,—"
MEMORIAL DAY
ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY
1998

HONORING THOSE FALLEN MEMBERS
OF AMERICA'S ARMED FORCES

THEIR SACRIFICE WILL ALWAYS
BE REMEMBERED
<table>
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<tr>
<th>DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE</th>
<th>SUBJECT/TITLE</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>RESTRICTION</th>
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<tr>
<td>002. email</td>
<td>Ted Widmer to National Security Advisor; re: Memorial Day Remarks (partial) [50 USC 403 (g), Section 6] (1 page)</td>
<td>05/22/1999</td>
<td>P3/b(3)</td>
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**COLLECTION:**
Clinton Presidential Records  
National Security Council  
Ted Widmer (Speechwriting)  
OA/Box Number: 2190

**FOLDER TITLE:**
Memorial Day [1]

**RESTRITION CODES**

**Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]**
- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

**PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).**

**RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.**

**Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]**
- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]
From: Widmer, Edward L.
Sent: Friday, May 22, 1998 11:42 AM
To: @NSA - Natl Security Advisor
Cc: @PLANNING - Strat Plan & Comm
Subject: Mem Day remarks [UNCLASSIFIED]

One word change, per JS.

---

As Ted—

Marvelous speech.

Elegant and moving.

Saw played around our edges.

C
5/21/98 11:38 am

PRESIDENT WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON
MEMORIAL DAY REMARKS
ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY
MAY 25, 1998

[Acknowledgments]

We gather today on sacred ground for a sacred purpose. As spring turns to summer, as
Americans around the nation take a day to enjoy friends and family, we come to Arlington
Cemetery to remember how much and to be given before we could enjoy these precious gifts.

We come to express our profound respect for those who are not here, but gave all they could for
us to be here ... in this place, in this moment ... peaceful, prosperous and free.

Memorial Day began with our most deadly conflict, the Civil War. To this day, the children of
Gettysburg spread flowers over the graves of those who fell there. But the debt we owe our
veterans and fallen heroes goes back well before the War Between the States. It goes back to the
very origin of America, when people from all lands came to this continent to forge a new kind a
society. A society where people enjoyed the freedom to pursue their highest aspirations ...

where life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness were the birthright of all Americans ... where
wars were not undertaken lightly, but only when these ideals were severely threatened. Those
ideals shaped us then ... and they shape us today.

At the beginning of our history, we learned this hard truth: freedom must be defended. But
nothing is more worthy of defending. From the American Revolution onward, from Concord to
Khe Sanh [kay sahn] to Kuwait, America's men and women have always stood up for their
country. And let me say how proud I am that we now have a beautiful memorial to the 1.8 million servicewomen who have served our nation.

Thanks to these heroes, our nation has grown into something extraordinary. We are more than a large nation, or a strong nation, or a populous nation. The United States is today a force for peace around the world ... bringing parties together ... promoting new solutions to old problems ... setting an example for other friends of freedom as they, too, seek something better.

We have much to be grateful for today. Our nation is at peace. Our prosperity has never been greater. And for the first time in history, a majority of the world's people live in governments of their own choosing. In a thousand different languages, people are saying "yes" to democracy and a new era of international cooperation.

As we anticipate a better future, Memorial Day also invites us to remember the past. Let us recall two events from fifty years ago, a time when democracy was imperiled. I was just in Berlin, where we commemorated the airlift that supplied two and a half million people for eleven harrowing months in 1948 and 1949. Those were difficult days for freedom. But Americans never soared higher. I'd like to salute the men and women who participated in that remarkable humanitarian effort.

And fifty years ago, our armed forces helped promote democracy at home, too. In the summer of 1948, President Truman ordered the full integration of America's armed forces because he felt strongly that anyone willing to risk their life for their country should enjoy the full rights of
citizenship. Today, U.S. troops set a shining example of how well different people can work together as one. As we ask other nations to resolve internal differences, we depend on the powerful message of hope that comes from our multi-racial, multi-ethnic military. You meet every challenge with flying colors.

When we think of the heroes buried here at Arlington, we realize how far we have come as a nation. The entire story of America is written on these hills. Each headstone is a page from our history. George Washington is part of the history of this hallowed ground. There are graves from the Revolution, the Civil War and every conflict since then.

Many of the most famous American names are engraved on these stones. And there are thousands here at Arlington whose names are not familiar to anyone but their families and loved ones. On each of these white tablets is a name, a date of birth, and a date of death. The name of a state ... a religious symbol ... perhaps a few details about rank and service. There is an immense grandeur in these simple facts. They do not tell us much ... but they tell us everything. For each stone stands for a person who once lived in this nation and believed the idea of America was worth fighting for. We must never lose sight of these unsung heroes. They are a part of America’s greatness.

And then there are those who have no names. Last week a Vietnam veteran was removed from the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. It was the right course of action. There is a chance we can restore his name and bring comfort to his family, and we must seize it. But if that place in Arlington is now empty, our hearts and memories will never be. We must never forget the
sacrifice made by those who served in Vietnam. And we will never stop praying for the
unknown soldiers in Vietnam, Korea and other theaters where Americans lie, far away from
home, but still with us in spirit. We take great comfort in something Chaplain O'Keeffe
reminded us of: that if some names are unknown to us on earth, all names are known to God in
heaven. As we remember them, I ask Americans to join me in a moment of silence at 3 o’clock
today Eastern Daylight Time.

I would like to thank the veterans who are here today, from all the wars of the 20th century, from
all the parts of the United States. Without your sacrifice, we would not be standing in the
giant sunlight today. You cast a giant shadow.

The children here will spend most of their lives in the next century. The youngest children
among us will not even remember the 20th century. It is possible they will glimpse the 22nd
century. My hope is that they will look back on us as a people who discharged our duties well
and responsibly.

Just as America's bravest men and women fought two World Wars and a Cold War to give us the
freedom we enjoy; so we must keep fighting to make the world better for people we do not yet
know and may never know. We must strengthen freedom by maintaining America's leading role
in the world. To abdicate responsibility now would be to renounce the sacrifice of ten
generations of Americans.
In the twilight of this century, and the dawn of the next, it falls to us to guard the freedom we have inherited. By strengthening the ties that bind free peoples ... by staying true to the values on which our nation was founded and to which the world aspires ... we ensure that another generation can gather in this theater and say that we honored the trust. We protected the freedom our ancestors passed to us, and held it in safekeeping for those who will come here long after us. We helped make their century – the 21st century – a century of peace. By never giving up the struggle, we made possible a new chapter in our nation’s history, and we extended the glory of the patriots who lie here, missing from our lives, but eternally present in our memories and the living spirit of America.

###
Ted, one of the inputs we'd like to address is the timing of a moment of reflection. In past Memorial Day messages, the President has asked that all Americans take "a time to join in prayer" at 11:00am -- we think, from the precedent set by Veteran's Day memorials which are held at 11:00, on the 11th day of the 11th month. This year, however, we would like to see the Proclamation enjoin Americans to do so at 3:00pm EDT.

The Congressional Medal of Honor Society, No greater Love, and other organizations have already mobilized many public and private organizations and the media to pause for a Moment of Remembrance at 3:00pm EDT and a playing of "Taps." The President's Proclamation would then support this effort, rather than present a conflicting message.

I have additional information on this if needed. Thanks!

-----Original Message-----
From: Widmer, Edward L.
Sent: Thursday, May 07, 1998 6:14 PM
To: @DEFENSE - Defense Policy
Cc: @PLANNING - Strat Plan & Comm
Subject: Memorial Day [UNCLASSIFIED]

I will be working on these remarks soon--are there any themes out there you would like stressed?

Thanks, Ted W. 6-9375
And ladies and gentlemen, during that moment, let us give special thanks. Because today is a historic Memorial Day. Last December, we negotiated an agreement with North Korea that we would send five teams to their country to search for Americans. This morning, at 0200, the remains of two soldiers believed to be Americans were repatriated to the U.N. Command Honor Guard at Panmunjom, on the DMZ. They are coming home this Memorial Day.
OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR POLICY

May 15, 1998

To: Bob Bell

Per our discussion.

Jan M. Lodal
PRAYER FOR THE VIETNAM UNKNOWN DISINTERMENT

Let us pray:

O Lord our God, we gather at the Tomb of the Unknowns, and filled with faith and trust we call upon your Holy Name, for our Nation's motto proclaims "In God we trust."

If it be your holy will, make known the identity of this unknown Vietnam serviceman, and bring peace of mind to an American family. If that be possible, we will praise and thank you O Lord. But if the answer we seek is not ours to know, help us to humbly accept this condition, and with faith and trust in Your Almighty Providence, let us hold fast to our belief that this serviceman's name is known to you alone, O God. For you are the God of the living and the dead, you formed us in our mother's womb, you call us by name, in life and in death you hold us gently in the palm of your hand. Amen.

Prepared 8 May 1998
For Delivery 14 May 1998

Leo Joseph O'Keeffe
Chaplain (Colonel) U.S. Army
MDW Command Chaplain
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM S. COHEN'S REMARKS
AT THE TOMB OF THE UNKNOWNS

"To gather on this site always quickens our hearts and stirs our national pride. We disturb this hallowed ground with profound reluctance. And we take this step only because of our abiding commitment to account for every warrior who fought and died to preserve the freedoms that we cherish.

"If advances in technology can ease the lingering anguish of even one family, then our path is clear. And so we yield today to the promise of science with the hope that the heavy burden of doubt may be lifted from a family's heart.

"But we are not here simply as grateful beneficiaries of modern technology. Instead, our purpose is timeless. We gather to show our deep gratitude for the sacrifices of our warriors, including those who died unknown and unsung on distant battlefields. And that gratitude extends in particular to all of the families of our fallen heroes who have joined us here today.

"Of the millions of visitors to this spiritual place, only a small number actually come to visit a specific gravesite. To the great majority of sojourners, those who lie under these green hills are unknown. And yet thousands are drawn here each week in quiet reverence to honor the service and the sacrifice of our dead.

"As we live yet another day under the freedom for which their lives were given, we give thanks to them once again today. And far from diminishing the sanctity of this cemetery and this tomb, our actions today serve to recommit ourselves to the principles of freedom and democracy which this sacred ground represents.

"May God continue to embrace our nation and all who rest here."

- END -
PRAYER FOR THE VIETNAM UNKNOWN DISINTERMENT
Delivered 14 May 1998

Let us pray:
O Lord our God, we gather at the Tomb of the Unknowns, and filled with faith and trust we call upon your Holy Name, for our Nation’s motto proclaims “In God we trust.” If it be your holy will, make known the identity of this unknown Vietnam service man, and bring peace of mind to an American family. But if the answer we seek is not ours to know, let us hold fast to our belief that this service man’s name is known to you, O God. For you are the God of the living and the dead, you formed us in our mother’s womb, you call us by name, in life and in death you hold us gently in the palm of your hand. Amen.

Leo Joseph O’Keeffe
Chaplain (Colonel) U.S. Army
MDW Command Chaplain
Here in Arlington we glimpse the gauntlet of our nation's short time on this earth. The Custis, a family of Washingtons, and their Civil War ties. On the 25th of July, a hero lies buried along with his brother, who died almost 30 years ago. This week, the home of the US war veteran opened its doors to his family. All different wars, all equally American.

- Saw HA general
- Fight CW wounded 3x
- Shook hands by jet
- Whale oil
- 23 locust
- 18 verts on grave at Arlington
- 73 grave
We gather today on sacred ground for a sacred purpose. As spring turns to summer, as Americans around the nation take a day to enjoy friends and family, we come to Arlington Cemetery to remember how much was given so we could enjoy these precious gifts. We come to express our profound respect for those who are not here, but gave all for us to be here ... in this place, in this moment ... peaceful, prosperous and free.

Memorial Day began with our most deadly conflict, the Civil War. To this day, the children of Gettysburg spread flowers over the graves of those who fell there. But the debt we owe our veterans and fallen heroes goes back well before the War Between the States. It goes back to the very origin of America, when people from all lands came to this continent to forge a new kind of society. A society where people enjoyed the freedom to pursue their highest aspirations ... where life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness were the birthright of all Americans ... where war was undertaken only when these ideals were severely threatened. Those ideals shaped us then ... and they shape us today.

At the beginning of our history, and until the present day, we have learned this hard truth: freedom must be defended. But nothing is more worthy of defending. From the American Revolution onward, from Concord to Khe Sanh [kay sahn] to Kuwait, America's men and women have always stood up for their country. And let me say how proud I am that we now have a beautiful monument to the 1.8 million servicewomen who have served our nation: the Women in Military Service for America Memorial, dedicated here at Arlington last October.

Thanks to these heroes, our nation has grown into something extraordinary. We are more than a large nation, or a strong nation, or a populous nation. The United States is today a force for peace around the world ... bringing parties together ... promoting new solutions to old problems ... setting an example for other friends of freedom as they, too, seek something better.

We have much to be grateful for today. Our nation is at peace. Our prosperity has never been greater. And for the first time in history, a majority of the world's people live under governments of their own choosing. In a thousand different languages, people are saying "yes" to democracy and a new era of international cooperation.
As we anticipate a better future, Memorial Day also invites us to remember the past. Let us recall two events from fifty years ago, a time when democracy was imperiled. I was just in Berlin, where we commemorated the airlift that supplied two and a half million people for eleven harrowing months in 1948 and 1949. Those were difficult days for freedom. But Americans never soared higher. I’d like to salute the men and women who participated in that remarkable humanitarian effort.

And fifty years ago, our armed forces helped promote democracy at home, too. In the summer of 1948, President Truman ordered the integration of America’s armed forces because he felt strongly that anyone willing to risk their life for their country should enjoy the full rights of citizenship. Today, U.S. troops set a shining example of how well different people can work together as one. As we ask other nations to resolve internal differences ... as we continue the work of resolving ours ... we depend on the powerful message of hope that comes from our multi-racial, multi-ethnic military. You meet every challenge with flying colors.

When we think of the heroes buried here at Arlington, we realize how far we have come as a nation. The entire story of America is written in these hills. Each headstone is a page from our history. George Washington is part of the history of this hallowed ground. There are graves from the Revolution, the Civil War and every conflict since then.

Many of the most famous American names are engraved on these stones. And there are thousands here at Arlington whose names are not familiar to anyone but their families and loved ones. On each of these white tablets is a name, a date of birth, and a date of death. The name of a state ... a religious symbol ... perhaps a few details about rank and service. There is an immense grandeur in these simple facts. They do not tell us much ... but they tell us everything. For each stone stands for a person who once lived in this nation and believed the idea of America was worth fighting for. We must never lose sight of these unsung heroes. They are a part of America’s greatness.

And then there are those who have no names. Eleven days ago a Vietnam veteran was removed from the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. It was the right course of action. There is a chance we can restore his name and bring comfort to his family, and we must seize it. But if that place in Arlington is now empty, our hearts and memories will never be. We will never stop praying for the unknown soldiers in Vietnam, Korea and other theaters where Americans lie, far away from home, missing in action, but still with us in spirit. We take great comfort in something Chaplain Leo Joseph O’Keefe reminded us of at the ceremony on May 14: that if some names are unknown to us on earth, all names are known to God in heaven. I ask Americans to join me in a moment of remembrance at 3 o’clock today Eastern Daylight Time, to honor the known and unknown who gave their all for our nation.

I would like to thank the veterans who are here today, from all the wars of the 20th century, from all the parts of the United States. Without your sacrifice, we would not be standing in the sunlight today. You cast a giant shadow.
The children here will spend most of their lives in the next century. The youngest among us will not even remember the 20th century. It is possible they will glimpse the 22nd century. My hope is that they will look back on us as a people who discharged our duties well and responsibly.

Just as America’s bravest men and women fought two World Wars and a Cold War to give us the freedom we enjoy; so we must keep fighting to make the world better for people we do not yet know and may never know. We must strengthen freedom by maintaining America’s leading role in the world. To abdicate responsibility now would be to renounce the sacrifice of ten generations of Americans.

In the twilight of this century, as the dawn rises on the next, it falls to us to guard the freedom we have inherited. By strengthening the ties that bind free peoples ... by staying true to the values on which our nation was founded and to which the world aspires ... we ensure that another generation can gather in this theater and say that we honored the trust. We protected the freedom our ancestors passed to us, and held it in safekeeping for those who will come here long after us. We helped make their century – the 21st century – a century of peace. By never giving up the struggle, we made possible a new chapter in our nation’s history, and we extended the glory of the patriots who lie here, missing from our lives, but eternally present in our memories and the living spirit of America.

# # #