The original documents are located in Box 133, folder "May 27, 1974 - Speech, Memorial Day Address, Arlington National Cemetery" of the Gerald R. Ford Vice Presidential Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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MEMORIAL DAY ADDRESS BY
VICE PRESIDENT GERALD R. FORD
ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY
II:30 A.M., MONDAY, MAY 27, 1974



I REGARD IT AS THE HIGHEST PRIVILEGE I HAVE HAD SINCE BECOMING VICE PRESIDENT TO REPRESENT PRESIDENT NIXON AND A GRATEFUL NATION IN PAYING TRIBUTE TODAY TO AMERICA'S HONORED DEAD.

IN MY OWN LIFETIME MORE THAN 600,000 AMERICANS FIGHTING
MEN AND WOMEN HAVE DIED IN FOUR WARS.

TODAY. LET US WORK AND LET US PRAY WITHOUT CEASING THAT THE

LAST FLAG-DRAPED COFFIN HAS COME HOME FROM COMBAT.

WE HAVE GATHERED HERE IN THE SEASON OF GROWTH AND LIFE,
SURROUNDED BY SILENT MARKERS, TO RENEW ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S RESOLVE
THAT THESE DEPARTED COMRADES AND LOVED ONES SHALL NOT HAVE DIED
IN VAIN.

THEY DIED THAT WE MIGHT LIVE -- BUT SO HAVE WARRIORS FROM THE DAWN OF TIME. THEY DIED FOR THEIR COUNTRY -- BUT SO DID THE ENEMIES THEY FOUGHT.

THERE IS SOMETHING MORE, SOMETHING SPECIAL, SOMETHING SACRED TO AMERICAN HEARTS ABOUT THIS SUPREME SACRIFICE.

IT IS HARD TO PUT INTO WORDS, SO I HAVE BORROWED SOME.

OVER IN THE SHENNANDOAH VALLEY, IN THE CENTER OF THE
TOWN OF HARRISONBURG, YOU WILL FIND A MONUMENT TO THOSE WHO
FELL IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR. IT IS A SEATED FEMALE FIGURE
REPRESENTING LIBERTY, HER HEAD BOWED IN MOURNING FOR HER DEAD.

AROUND THE BASE OF THE STATUE, AND ABOVE THE NAMES OF THE YOUNG VIRGINIANS WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES IN THAT LONG-AGO CONFLICT, ARE INSCRIBED THESE WORDS:

"THEY TASTED DEATH IN YOUTH, THAT LIBERTY MIGHT GROW OLD."

FOR ALMOST 200 YEARS, FROM CONCORD BRIDGE TO THE MEKONG DELTA, YOUNG AMERICANS HAVE DIED THAT LIBERTY MIGHT GROW OLD ON THIS CONTINENT, AND AROUND THE WORLD.

IN THE MEMORIAL DAY OR DECORATION DAY PROGRAMS OF MY
CHILDHOOD, WE WERE TOLD THAT THE DOUGHBOYS WHO FELL IN FLANDERS
AND FRANCE HAD MADE THE WORLD SAFE FOR DEMOCRACY. WITHIN 20 YEARS,
FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY WERE AGAIN IN DIRE PERIL. SO MY GENERATION
WAGED A WAR TO END WARS. TEN DAYS FROM NOW MARKS THE 30TH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE D-DAY INVASION UNDER GENERAL EISENHOWER, THE
BEGINNING OF THE END OF WORLD WAR II.



SINCE AMERICAN GIS CLAWED THEIR WAY ACROSS THE NORMANDY
BEACHES AND U.S. MARINES CRAWLED UP IWO JIMA'S BLAZING
MOUNTAINSIDES, WE HAVE HAD THREE DECADES WITHOUT A GENERAL
WORLDWIDE WAR. BUT THERE HAVE BEEN MANY REGIONAL OUTBREAKS OF
FIERCE FIGHTING AND IN TWO PLACES, KOREA AND VIETNAM, OUR COUNTRY
HAS BEEN DEEPLY INVOLVED AND WE HAVE SUFFERED HEAVY CASUALTIES.



THERE ARE NOT MANY STATUES IN TOWN SQUARES TO THE HEROES

OF KOREA AND SOUTHEAST ASIA. THERE ARE NOT MANY PLAQUES IN PUBLIC

PLACES LISTING THE NAMES OF THE HOMETOWN BOYS WHO DIDN'T COME

HOME. THERE ARE NOT MANY SCHOOLS AND STREETS AROUND AMERICA

NAMED FOR THEM. FOR THESE WERE NOT POPULAR WARS AND THE SPIRIT

OF PATRIOTISM SEEMED AN EBBING TIDE AS THEY CONTINUED.

YET I BELIEVE, AND YOU BY YOUR BEING HERE SHOW YOU BELIEVE,
THAT THESE DEAD OF VIETNAM AND KOREA DID NOT DIE IN VAIN, NO MORE
THAN ALL THEIR COMRADES WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE.

LIBERTY IS STILL ALIVE, THANKS TO THEM.

WE CANNOT THANK THEM WITH OUR WORDS, NOR RETURN THEM TO US WITH OUR TEARS.

WHAT WE CAN DO IS REMEMBER, AS WE DO TODAY, AND IN SOME STATES ON OTHER DAYS -- THE PARTICULAR DAY DOESN'T MATTER MUCH SINCE OUR REMEMBERING SHOULD BE EVERY DAY.



WE CAN REMEMBER NOT ONLY THAT THEY DIED, BUT WHY THEY
DIED. WE CAN REMEMBER THE TORCH OF LIBERTY THEY PASSED AND HOLD
IT HIGH UNTIL OUR TURN COMES. WE CAN REMEMBER OUR DEPARTED
COMRADES-IN-ARMS BY THINKING OF THE LIVING WHO HAVE BORNE THE
BATTLE, AND THEIR WIDOWS AND THEIR ORPHANS.



FROM THIS HALLOWED PLACE, I CALL UPON MY COUNTRYMEN TO
HONOR AND TO HELP THE LIVING VETERANS OF VIETNAM, WHO HAVE KNOWN
FEW PARADES, FEW BANDS FEW CHEERS. HONOR AND HELP NOT ALONE
WITH GOVERNMENT MONEY AND MEDICAL CARE, IMPORTANT AS SUCH VETERANS
BENEFITS ARE -- BUT WITH GENUINE RECOGNITION IN THE COMMUNITY,
WITH REWARDING WORK, AND, WITH THE NEIGHBORLY HELPING HAND THAT
HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE HALLMARK OF AMERICAN CHARACTER.



THE AMERICANS WHO SERVED IN THE LONGEST WAR OF OUR HISTORY
IN SOUTHEAST ASIA AND THE SOUTH CHINA SEA WERE NO LESS BRAVE,
THEIR SUFFERING WAS NO LESS SEVERE, AND THEIR SACRIFICES WERE
NO LESS REAL THAN THOSE OF VALLEY FORGE AND GETTYSBURG. THEIR
GALLANTRY AND DEVOTION TO DUTY MATCH THAT OF THE ARGONNE OR
GUADALCANAL OR THE YALU RIVER. LET US BE PROUD OF THEM.



ONLY HISTORIANS WHOM WE WILL NEVER READ CAN MEASURE
WHETHER THE SACRIFICES OF MILLION OF AMERICANS, LIVING AND DEAD,
DURING THE 20TH CENTURY ON BEHALF OF FREEDOM FOR OTHER PEOPLES
AS WELL AS FOR THEMSELVES, INDEED MADE POSSIBLE A NEW ERA OF
PEACE AMONG NATIONS. I HOPE AND BELIEVE THIS WILL BE HISTORY'S
VERDICT.



BUT EVEN IF PEACE ON A GLOBAL BASIS ELUDES OUR GENERATION'S
BEST EFFORTS, MAY THE DEAD WE HONOR TODAY BE REMEMBERED BY FUTURE
AMERICANS AS HAVING "TASTED DEATH IN YOUTH, THAT LIBERTY MIGHT
GROW OLD" IN THIS, OUR OWN SWEET LAND OF LIBERTY.

AND LET US ALSO REMEMBER THEM FONDLY, AS THE POET ALFRED EDWARD HOUSMAN DID IN THESE LINES:

"THEY CARRY BACK BRIGHT TO THE COINER THE MINTAGE OF MAN,
"THE LADS WHO WILL DIE IN THEIR GLORY AND NEVER GROW OLD."



Bill Roberts
Ready By
NLT 1030 MONDAY MEMORIAL DAY ADDRESS BY

Z 7 MAY. VICE PRESIDENT GERALD R. FORD

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Arlington National Cemetery
May 27, 1974

I regard it as the highest privilege I have had since becoming Vice President to represent President Nixon and a grateful nation in paying tribute today to America's honored dead.

In my own lifetime more than 600,000 American fighting

men and women have died in four wars.

Let us give thanks to God that none are fighting and

that the last flag-draped coffin has come home from

We have gathered here in the season of growth and life, surrounded by silent markers, services to renew Abraham Lincoln's resolve that these departed commendes and loved ones shall not have died in vain.

They died that we might live, but so have warriors from the dawn of time. They died for their country, but so did the enemies they fought.

There is something more, something special, something supreme sacrifice. sacred to American hearts about this

It is hard to put into words, so I have borrowed some.

Over in the Shenandoah Valley, in the center of the town of Harrisonburg, you will find a monument to those who fell in the First World War. It is a seated female figure representing Liberty, her head bowed in mourning for her dead.

Around the base of the statue, and above the names of the young Virginians who gave their lives in that long-ago conflict, are inscribed these words:

"They tasted death in youth, that Liberty might grow old."





died that liberty might grow old on this continent,

the world. In the memorial Day or Decoration Day programs of
my childhood, we were told that the doughbodys who fell in

Flanders and France had made the world safe for democracy.

Within 20 years, freedom and democracy were again for in
Ten day from now
dire peril. So my generation waged a war to end wars.

D-Day
marks are the 30th anniversary of the seginning of the end of
World War II.

to stretch the interior period between world were from 20 to 30 years. An optimist would say world were are no longer possible with nuclear weapons

Since are GIs clawed their way across the Normandy beaches
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and Marines without Iwo Jima's blazing mountainsides the we
three decades without a general worldwide war. But
there have been many regional outbreaks of fierce fighting and
in two places, Korea and Vietnam, Anadom have suffered heavy
casualties.

There are not many statues in town squares to the here of Korea and Southeast Asia. There are not many plaques in public places listing ***** the names of the hometown boys who didn't come home. There are not many schools and streets around America named for them, for these were not popular wars and the spirit of patriotism seemed an ebbing tide as they continued.

Yet I believe, and you by your being here believe, that these dead of Vietnam and Korea did not die in vain, no more than all the comrades who have gone before.

Liberty is still alive, thanks to them.

We cannot thank them with words, nor return them to us with our tears.

What we can do is remember, as we do today, and in some states on other days -- the particular day doesn't



much since our remembering should be every day. much matter

We remember not only that they died, but why they died. We remember the torch of liberty they passed and hold it high until our turn comes. We remember our departed comrades-in-arms by. the living who also have

borne the battle, and their widows and their orphans.

From this hallowed Pace call upon my countrymen

to honor and to help the living veterans of Viet-Nam, who, have Known, few parades, few bands, few cheers.

Honor and helphot alone with government money and medical care, important as the veterans benefits are; but with genuine recognition

in the community, with rewarding work and the neighborly keeps he programme that has always been the hallmark of American character.

> The Americans who served in the longest war of our history in Southeast Asia and the South China Sea were no less brave, their suffering was no less severe, and their sacrifices were no less real than those of Valley Forge and lantry and devotion to duty match that of the Harry Argonne or Guadalcanal or the Yalu River. Tetus be proud of them.

Only historians/we will never read can measure whether millions of the sacrifices of paralle Americans, living and dead, during well as made possible a new era of peace among nations. I hope and believe this will be history's verdict.

But even if peace on a global basis eludes our generations best efforts the general the dead we honor today be remembered by future Americans as having "tasted death in youth, that liberty might grow old" in this, one own Subst land of liberty.

And let us remember them fondly, as the poet Alfred Edward Housman did in these lines:

"They carry back bright to the Coiner the mintage of man, "The lads who will die in their glory and never grow old."

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We have gathered here in the season of growth and life, surrounded by silent markers, to renew Abraham Lincoln's resolve that these departed comrades and loved ones shall not have died in vain.

They died that we might live — but so have warriors from the dawn of time.

They died for their country — but so did the enemies they fought.

There is something more, something special, something sacred to American hearts about this supreme sacrifice.

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Around the base of the statue, and above the names of the young Virginians who gave their lives in that long-ago conflict, are inscribed these words:

"They tasted death in youth, that Liberty might grow old."

For almost 200 years, from Concord Bridge to the Mekong Delta, young Americans have died that liberty might grow old on this continent, and around the world.

In the Memorial Day or Decoration Day programs of my childhood, we were told that the doughboys who fell in Flanders and France had made the world safe for democracy. Within 20 years, freedom and democracy were again in dire peril.

(more)

So my generation waged a war to end wars. Ten days from now marks the 30th Anniversary of the D-Day invasion under General Eisenhower, the beginning of the end of World War II.

Since American GIs clawed their way across the Normandy beaches and U. S. Marines crawled up Iwo Jima's blazing mountainsides, we have had three decades without a general worldwide war. But there have been many regional outbreaks of fierce fighting and in two places, Korea and Vietnam, our country has been deeply involved and we have suffered heavy casualties.

There are not many statues in town squares to the heroes of Korea and Southeast Asia. There are not many plaques in public places listing the names of the hometown boys who didn't come home. There are not many schools and streets around America named for them, for these were not popular wars and the spirit of patriotism seemed an ebbing tide as they continued.

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What we can do is remember, as we do today, and in some states on other days — the particular day doesn't matter much since our remembering should be every day.

We can remember not only that they died, but why they died. We can remember the torch of liberty they passed and hold it high until our turn comes. We can remember our departed comrades—in—arms by thinking of the living who have borne the battle, and their widows and their orphans.

From this hallowed place, I call upon my countrymen to honor and to help the <u>living</u> veterans of Vietnam, who have known few parades, few bands, few cheers. Honor and help not alone with government money and medical care, important as such veterans benefits are — but with <u>genuine</u> recognition in the community, with rewarding work, and with the neighborly helping hand that has always been the hallmark of American character.

The Americans who served in the longest war of our history in Southeast Asia and the South China Sea were no less brave, their suffering was no less real than those of Valley Forge and Gettsburg. Their gallantry and devotion to duty match that of the Argonne or Guadalcanal or the Yalu River. Let us be proud of them.

Only historians whom we will never read can measure whether the sacrifices of millions of Americans, living and dead, during the 20th Century on behalf of freedom for other peoples as well as themselves, indeed made possible a new era

of peace among nations. I hope and believe this will be history's verdict.

But even if peace on a global basis eludes our generation's best efforts, may the dead we honor today be remembered by future Americans as having "tasted death in youth, that liberty might grow old" in this, our own sweet land of liberty.

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