The original documents are located in Box 9, folder "5/26/75 - Arlington Cemetery Wreath Laying" of the President's Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

ARLINGTON CEMETERY WREATH LAYING

MEMORIAL DAY, MAY 26, 1975

- 1 -

THERE IS NO HIGHER OR MORE SOLEMN PRIVILEGE THAN

TO REPRESENT A GRATEFUL NATION IN PAYING TRIBUTE TO ITS HONORED

DEAD. NO MAN OR WOMAN WHO COMES TO ARLINGTON ON MEMORIAL

DAY CAN HELP BUT FEEL THE BURDEN AND THE PRIDE OF WHAT IT MEANS

TO BE AN AMERICAN.

THE FREEDOM WE ENJOY TODAY, THESE FALLEN WON FOR US. THE WAY OF LIFE WE CHERISH, THEY PROTECTED FOR US. THE HERITAGE THEY DEFENDED IS NOW IN OUR HANDS. WE ARE THE GUARDIANS OF THEIR TRUST. ARLINGTON CEMETERY IS THEIR SACRED SHRINE, BUT THEIR GREATEST MONUMENT IS THE AMERICA THEY DIED TO DEFEND.

- 3 -

THE VALUE OF THEIR SACRIFICE -- THE WORTH OF WHAT THEY GAVE THEIR LIVES TO DEFEND -- DEPENDS ON HOW WELL WE MEET

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES TODAY.

IF WE LIVE IN PEACE AS BRAVELY AS THEY DIED IN WAR, THE WORLD WILL REMEMBER THEM AS LONG AS THERE ARE FREE MEN TO BE

INSPIRED.

MEMORIAL DAY HAS ALWAYS MEANT A GREAT DEAL TO ME --AS A <u>SCHOOLBOY</u>, AS A YOUNG MAN IN THE <u>NAVY</u> DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR, IN MY YEARS IN THE <u>CONGRESS</u>, AND, LAST MEMORIAL DAY, WHEN I SPOKE FROM THIS ROSTRUM AS <u>VICE PRESIDENT</u>. TODAY, IT IS AN OCCASION EVEN MORE DEEPLY FELT.

- 5 -

ALTHOUGH WE LIVE IN A RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD, SOME

THINGS REMAIN THE SAME. ONE IS THE NEED TO MAINTAIN OUR MILITARY

STRENGTH. FOR AS LONG AS THERE ARE LAWBREAKERS IN THE WORLD,

WE MUST HAVE THE STRENGTH AND THE RESOLVE TO STAND UP FOR WHAT IS

RIGHT. IT IS THE PRICE WE HAVE ALWAYS PAID FOR BEING FREE.

SO, TODAY, WE PAY TRIBUTE NOT ONLY TO OUR WARTIME DEAD, BUT TO THOSE WHO MADE THE SAME SACRIFICE IN KEEPING THE PEACE. THEY HAVE PROVEN THAT THE QUALITY OF HEROISM -- OF LOVE OF COUNTRY AND WILLINGNESS TO SERVE IN TIME OF TROUBLES --BEATS JUST AS STRONG IN AMERICAN HEARTS TODAY AS EVER.

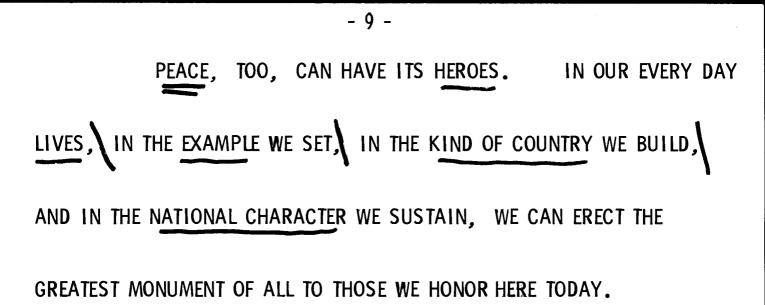
- 7 -

AS WE HONOR THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE GIVEN THEIR LIVES, LET US ALSO PRAY FOR THE SAFETY OF THOSE STILL MISSING <u>IN ACTION AND THE SOLACE OF THOSE WHO WAIT AS WELL AS THOSE WHO</u> <u>MOURN.</u> THE WORLD SHOULD KNOW THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL NOT FALTER IN ITS DETERMINATION TO ACHIEVE AN ADEQUATE ACCOUNTING OF OUR M-1-A'S. FINALLY, LET US RESOLVE TO LEARN FROM THE EXAMPLE OF

THOSE WHOSE MEMORIES WE HONOR TODAY. MAY THE COURAGE

THEY DEMONSTRATED IN WAR GUIDE US TO EVEN GREATER ACHIEVEMENTS

IN PEACE.



THEY WILL NOT HAVE DIED IN VAIN -- AND THEIR LOVED

ONES WILL NOT HAVE SUFFERED IN VAIN -- IF WE VOW TO LIVE OUR LIVES

IN THE CAUSE OF HONOR, FREEDOM AND JUSTICE THAT THEY SO

GALLANTLY SERVED.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

END OF TEXT