

**The original documents are located in Box 40, “10/25/76 - Remarks at Tree-planting Ceremony at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Honor of Medal of Honor Recipients” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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THANK YOU, GOV. EVANS

CONG. PRITCHARD

MR. DOLEZAL

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN . . .

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS AT MEDAL OF HONOR

MEMORIAL TREE PLANTING

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, OCTOBER 25, 1976

THERE IS NO GREATER PRIVILEGE THAN

~~I AM GRATEFUL~~ TO HONOR AMERICA'S MEDAL OF HONOR

RECIPIENTS ON VETERANS DAY BY THE PLANTING OF THIS SYMBOLIC

TREE.



PLANTED HERE IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST, WHERE YOUR  
FORESTS ARE OUR NATIONAL PRIDE, THIS TREE IS SYMBOLIC  
OF AN AMERICA THAT ~~STANDS~~ TALL FOR FREEDOM.

I AM DETERMINED TO KEEP FAITH WITH OUR VETERANS.

THE PLANTING OF TREES WILL MEAN LITTLE IF WE DO NOT PRESERVE

THE VALUES OUR HEROES HAVE SERVED.

ONE OF MY LAST OFFICIAL DUTIES AS VICE PRESIDENT,  
PERHAPS THE HARDEST OF ALL, WAS TO PRESENT, <sup>Post</sup> POSTHUMOUSLY,  
14 CONGRESSIONAL MEDALS OF HONOR TO THE PARENTS, WIDOWS,  
AND CHILDREN OF AMERICAN FIGHTING MEN WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES  
IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.

IT MADE ME EVEN MORE DETERMINED, WHEN I BECAME  
PRESIDENT, TO BUILD THE KIND OF AMERICA THEY WOULD HAVE  
WANTED FOR THEIR FAMILIES.

WITH THEIR VALOR THEY PAID THE HIGHEST PRICE FOR  
THEIR NATION'S FREEDOM. WE PLEDGE TO THEM OUR OWN  
RESOLVE TO PRESERVE THE FREEDOM THEY MADE SECURE.

*effective*  
~~SKILLFUL~~  
~~MEANINGLESS~~ I INTEND TO PRESERVE PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH AND <sup>*military*</sup> ~~1~~

~~MEANINGLESS~~ NEGOTIATION•

AMERICA'S GOOD WILL MUST NEVER  
~~BE~~ ~~MISCONSTRUED~~

BE MISCONSTRUED AS LACK OF WILL.  
~~III~~

PEACE AND SECURITY  
~~III~~ ~~III~~

REQUIRE PREPAREDNESS AND DEDICATION•  
~~III~~ ~~III~~

AS PRESIDENT, AND AS A VETERAN OF WARTIME SERVICE,

I AM DETERMINED THAT AMERICA RECOGNIZE THE VETERAN AS A

HUMAN BEING AND NOT JUST A "C" NUMBER TO BE PROCESSED

BY COMPUTERS.

OUR GREAT VETERANS HOSPITALS MUST BE THE FINEST THAT

MEDICAL SKILL, COMPASSION, AND DEDICATION CAN CREATE•

THE V.A. MEDICAL AND NURSING CARE SYSTEM FOR THE OLDER

VETERAN MUST BECOME A SHOWCASE FOR THE ENTIRE NATION•



WE MUST RENDER THE BEST POSSIBLE SERVICE TO ALL VETERANS,

REGARDLESS OF AGE OR THE WARS IN WHICH THEY SERVED.

TO MEANINGFULLY COMMEMORATE VETERANS DAY AND PAY

TRIBUTE TO OUR MEDAL OF HONOR HEROES, WE MUST KEEP AMERICA

STRONG IN WILLPOWER, STRONG IN CHARACTER, STRONG IN

SPIRITUAL QUALITIES -- AS WELL AS STRONG IN NATIONAL DEFENSE.

THE TREES WE PLANT TODAY HERE AND ALL ACROSS AMERICA

SHOW OUR DEDICATION TO THE VALUES PERSONIFIED BY THE AMERICAN

VETERAN.

I SALUTE ALL THOSE WHO WE HONOR TODAY. AND ASK GODS  
BLESSING FOR THEM. *who gave so much.*  
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

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