

REP. TOM TANGRETTI  
MEMORIAL DAY REMARKS  
MAY, 1992

(APPROPRIATE GREETINGS)

MEMORIAL DAY IS THE DAY THAT WE  
REMEMBER FAMILY MEMBERS AND  
FRIENDS...AND ALL THOSE WHO DIED IN  
SERVICE OF THEIR COUNTRY, OR WHO  
DEDICATED YEARS OF DUTY TO THIS NATION.

BUT, ON THIS MEMORIAL DAY, I THINK  
THOSE WE HONOR WOULD FEEL THAT IN OUR  
HEARTS WE CARRY A BIT OF CELEBRATION, AS  
WELL.

FOR NEARLY TWO GENERATIONS,  
AMERICAN SERVICEMEN AND WOMEN HAVE STOOD  
VIGILANT AGAINST ONE OF THE GREATEST  
THREATS TO MANKIND....THE EXPANSION OF  
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM ...A SYSTEM THAT  
WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATH OF  
MILLIONS IN THE SOVIET UNION AND  
ELSEWHERE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

MANY OF THE BEST OF THEIR  
GENERATION DIED IN THE CAUSE OF  
PRESERVING OUR FREEDOM...IN KOREA...  
IN VIETNAM AND ELSEWHERE...ALONG WITH  
THE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF OUR ALLIES WHO  
FOUGHT COMMUNISM IN THEIR HOME  
COUNTRIES.

TODAY, IN 1992, WE NOW KNOW THAT  
THE SACRIFICES THAT WERE MADE WERE NOT  
IN VAIN.

WHERE IS THE BERLIN WALL?....GONE.

WHERE THE SOVIET UNION?....GONE.

WHERE ARE THE DICTATORIAL REGIMES  
OF EAST GERMANY, COMMUNIST POLAND, AND  
THE PUPPET GOVERNMENTS OF THE BALTIC  
STATES, HUNGARY AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA?

ALL DISCARDED IN THE DUSTBIN OF  
HISTORY.

AND ALL REPLACED BY STRUGGLING  
DEMOCRACIES TAKING AS THEIR MODEL THESE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

YES, AMERICA IS THE MODEL THAT THE  
PEOPLE OF VIRTUALLY ALL NATIONS SEE AS  
THE MOST BENEFICIAL, THE MOST  
HUMANITARIAN, THE MOST DEMOCRATIC, THE  
MOST EFFECTIVE FORM OF GOVERNMENT.

AMERICAN DEMOCRACY IS NOT PERFECT.  
BUT IT IS A SYSTEM THAT GIVES ALL OF US  
THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK OUT AGAINST THE  
WRONGS THAT WE EXPERIENCE AND TO CHANGE  
THEM BY PEACEFUL MEANS.

WE HAVE BEEN BLESSED BY THE VISION  
OF THE FOUNDERS OF THIS GREAT NATION.

THEY SPELLED OUT THAT VISION IN THE  
DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND GAVE IT A  
LASTING LEGAL FRAMEWORK IN THE U.S  
CONSTITUTION AND IN THE BILL OF RIGHTS.

THEY GAVE US THE MEANS...FREE  
SPEECH...FREEDOM OF THE PRESS...FREEDOM  
OF ASSEMBLY...TO PINPOINT OUR PROBLEMS  
AND CONVINCED OUR FELLOW CITIZENS THAT  
WRONGS MUST BE MADE RIGHT.

AND THEY GAVE US THE BALLOT AS THE  
MEANS TO RIGHT THOSE WRONGS.

ONLY ONCE IN OUR NATION'S HISTORY,  
IN THE CIVIL WAR, DID THE BALLOT GIVE  
WAY TO THE BULLET AS THE MEANS TO  
REDRESS A GRAVE WRONG.

EVEN THEN, WHAT SURELY WAS THE  
DARKEST HOUR OF OUR HISTORY WAS  
REDEEMED BY THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM AND THE  
TRIUMPH OF REPUBLICAN DEMOCRACY.

TODAY, WE CAN LOOK AT THE GRAVES OF  
OUR VETERANS AND TO THE VETERANS WHO  
STAND AMONG US AND SAY, "YOUR WORK AND  
YOUR LIVES AND YOUR SACRIFICE HAVE  
BROUGHT THIS ABOUT."

HAVE BROUGHT ABOUT A NATION MORE  
SECURE FROM FOREIGN DANGER THAN EVER  
BEFORE...MORE CONFIDENT OF ITS PROSPECTS  
THAN...AND MORE CERTAIN THAT IT WILL  
PASS THE BLESSINGS OF LIBERTY ALONG TO  
FUTURE GENERATIONS.

TODAY WE HEAR ABOUT A NEW WORLD ORDER. BUT A GENERATION AGO A PHRASE CAME INTO COMMON USE TO MARK THE PERIOD AND ANNOUNCE OUR COUNTRY'S ASPIRATIONS.

THAT PHRASE DESCRIBED OUR TIME AS "THE AMERICAN CENTURY."

I BELIEVE WE NOW STAND NEAR THE HEIGHT OF THE AMERICAN CENTURY.

AND AS WE SURVEY THE VIEW AND TAKE SIGHT OF THE CONTINUING JOURNEY, LET'S CELEBRATE THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THOSE VETERANS WHO BROUGHT US SAFELY HERE.

AND AT THE SAME TIME, MAY WE PLEDGE THAT HAVING MET THE CHALLENGE OF HISTORY AND OF THE COLD WAR, WE MAY SECURE TRUE PEACE, PROSPERITY AND DEMOCRACY AMONG ALL THE NATIONS.

ONLY THEN WILL THE AMERICAN CENTURY BE FULLY ACHIEVED.

THANK YOU.