

REP. TOM TANGRETTI

MEMORIAL DAY REMARKS

MAY, 1993

*Conrad J. ...
Boise Lemps*

*Rev. Clerk ...
Clyde ...
Vets ...
Lester ...*

(GREETINGS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS)

IT WAS NOT SO LONG AGO, WITHIN
THE MEMORY OF MANY PEOPLE HERE,
THAT A MEMORIAL DAY EVENT SUCH AS
THIS WOULD HAVE TAKEN PLACE WHILE
AMERICA WAS AT WAR.

IN THE FORTIES THERE WAS WORLD
WAR TWO. IN THE FIFTIES, KOREA. IN THE
SIXTIES AND SEVENTIES WE HONORED
OUR FIGHTING FORCES THROUGH THE
AGONIES OF VIETNAM.

IN THE EIGHTIES, THE CONFLICTS
SHIFTED TO GRENADA, PANAMA...AND
MORE RECENTLY THE PERSIAN GULF.

TODAY, AMERICA IS AT PEACE. ITS
ARMIES ENGAGED IN A HUMANITARIAN,
PEACEKEEPING MISSION IN SOMALIA.

HOW DIFFERENT IT ALL SEEMS NOW
THAT THE WARS AND RUMORS OF WAR
HAVE BEEN STILLED, AND AMERICANS
ARE NOWHERE INVOLVED IN MILITARY
COMBAT.

AS WE REFLECT ON THIS TRANQUIL
PERIOD OF OUR HISTORY...AND
PARTICULARLY AS WE LOOK UPON THE
FACES OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE HERE
UNTRoubLED BY THOUGHTS OF
WAR...LET US HONOR THE MEMORY OF
THE MEN AND WOMEN WHOSE
SACRIFICES WON FOR US THIS TIME OF
PEACE.

MAKE NO MISTAKE OF THINKING IT
COULD HAVE BEEN OTHERWISE.

THIS PERIOD OF PEACE, FOR
HOWEVER LONG IT LASTS...THIS TRIUMPH
OF DEMOCRACY...WAS BOUGHT AT A
STEEP PRICE. AND PAID FOR IN THE
BLOOD OF HEROES.

HERE IN PENNSYLVANIA, THERE'S
TALK OF CONSTRUCTING A
COMMONWEALTH MEMORIAL TO HONOR
THE SACRIFICES OF STATE CITIZENS IN
ALL OUR WARS.

AND MANY, IF NOT MOST, OF OUR
COMMUNITIES HAVE OVER THE YEARS
ERECTED THEIR OWN MEMORIALS TO
HOMETOWN MEN AND WOMEN WHO GAVE
"THE LAST FULL MEASURE OF
DEVOTION."

IN ADDITION TO ALL OF THESE
TRIBUTES THERE IS A PERMANENT
MEMORIAL TO ALL VETERANS OF
PENNSYLVANIA AND EVERY OTHER STATE
AS WELL.

ONE THAT'S PORTABLE, AND COMES
IN ALL SORTS OF SIZES. BUT IN ONLY
THREE COLORS...RED, WHITE AND BLUE.

I SEE THAT MEMORIAL ABUNDANTLY
ON DISPLAY TODAY. THERE'S SOMETHING
ABOUT THIS TIME OF YEAR, A TIME OF
RENEWED LIFE AND STRENGTHENED
PURPOSE THAT BRINGS OUT THE BEAUTY
OF THIS SIMPLE MEMORIAL.

IT FLIES OVER OUR HOMES,
SCHOOLS AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS JUST
AS IT FLEW IN THE WINTER'S CHILL AT
VALLEY FORGE AND THE DESERT HEAT
OF KUWAIT.

AS LONG AS IT FLIES OVER A
NATION THAT IS FREE, IT IS THE
ULTIMATE MEMORIAL FOR THOSE WHO
PLEGGED TO DEFEND IT.

I'M SURE MANY OF YOU WHO HAVE
TAKEN THE TIME TO BE HERE TODAY
TOOK A MOMENT EARLIER TO PUT ONE
OF THESE MEMORIALS ON DISPLAY IN
FRONT OF YOUR HOME.

AMERICA'S FLAG IS ALSO A SYMBOL
OF OUR UNITY AS "ONE NATION, UNDER
GOD."

WHEN OUR ENEMIES HAVE DOUBTED
THAT UNITY AND PUT IT TO THE TEST,
THEY DISCOVERED THEY WERE WRONG
TO BELIEVE AMERICANS COULD FIND NO
COMMON PURPOSE TO FIGHT FOR.

WHEN WE DISPLAY THE FLAG, WE
HONOR THE SACRIFICES OF AMERICANS
OF ALL RACES, ALL RELIGIONS AND
ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS WHO DIED TO
PRESERVE OUR FREEDOMS.

WE SHOULD REMEMBER THAT AS WE
WORK OUR WAY THROUGH THE
CONFLICTS THAT FACE US HERE AT
HOME.

UNDER THIS FLAG THAT
REPRESENTS EVERY AMERICAN, WE CAN
SHOW OUR COMMITMENT TO CONTINUE
TO WORK TO MAKE AMERICA A BETTER
PLACE.

THAT IS WHAT THEY FOUGHT FOR,
AND THAT IS WHAT THEY WOULD WANT
US TO DO IN THEIR MEMORY -- THAT WE
WHO BENEFITED FROM THEIR SACRIFICE
WOULD STRIVE TO MAKE AMERICA A
BETTER PLACE.

AND MAKE THAT THEIR LASTING
MEMORIAL.

THANK YOU.