

Remarks of a Representative of the President of the United States
at the
Luxembourg American Cemetery and Memorial
Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

I am pleased to represent the president of the United States and the American people as we commemorate Memorial Day in a place consecrated by the sacrifice of our countrymen.

In the dark days of 1940, when Great Britain stood virtually alone against the Nazi menace ... Sir Winston Churchill spoke to the British Parliament, the people of Great Britain, and to freedom-loving men and women the world over.

“You ask: what is our aim?” he said. “I can answer in one word: ‘Victory!’ Victory at all costs, victory in spite of all terror, victory however long and hard the road may be; for without victory there is no survival.”

Today, we remember more than five thousand men who made the ultimate sacrifice for that victory. Americans who withstood bitter weather ... treacherous terrain ... and near total surprise to throw back the last great *throw of the dice* of a wounded— but still dangerous enemy.

In the fierce life-and-death struggle we now call the Battle of the Bulge, these young men gave their lives to free Europe from the shackles of Nazi tyranny.

They courageously answered their country's call, and responded to the anguished cries of those who desperately sought Freedom. They rushed to the sound of the guns, though it cost them their lives.

Fighting long and hard across the fields and forests of France, Belgium, and Luxembourg, they were tested in the fires of adversity at St. Vith ... Bastogne ... and on dozens of lesser known battlefields.

One might ask, why? What prompted such devotion?

President Abraham Lincoln once gave definition to the noble idea for which these patriots — and one million of their brethren — fought and died over the course of our Nation's history.

He said— *“America’s reliance is in the love of liberty, and in the preservation of that spirit which prizes liberty as the heritage of all men, in all lands, everywhere.”*

The sentries of stone that safeguard the hallowed history of this shrine attest to our Nation's love of Liberty ... our legacy of Freedom ... and to our willingness to fight and die so that others, in other lands, may share that heritage with us.

More than six decades past, the Americans we honor today secured for Western Europe, an enduring Freedom. And for that, we their benefactors, will forever remember their victory ... and mourn their sacrifice

Let me close with the poignant words of an English poet, Laurence Binyon, written in honor of England's World War I dead.

His poem, *“For the Fallen,”* is frequently recited at Memorial Day events in the United States—especially at our National Cemeteries—and I would like to read from it today:

*“They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old.
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun, and in the morning
We will remember them.”*

May God bless the souls of all those interred here at the Luxembourg American Cemetery ...

May He bless the people of Luxembourg.

And may God bless the United States of America and the men and women who defend her.