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Senator Daniel K. Inouye Papers
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Speech by Senator Daniel K. Inouye
25th Annual 100th Battalion (Club 100)
Memorial Service, Hilo
29 September 1968

MY DEAR FRIENDS :

MEN SEARCH FOR MEANING IN ALL THEIR AFFAIRS ,
GREAT OR SMALL . WE GATHER TODAY TO HONOR OUR FRIENDS
AND LOVED ONES BURIED HERE , MANY OF WHOM PAID THE
SUPREME SACRIFICE IN THE PURSUIT OF A COMMON CAUSE.

ON SUCH AN OCCASION IT IS ESPECIALLY APPROPRIATE THAT WE
ASK OURSELVES THE MEANING OF THE TIE WHICH BINDS US AND
WHICH HAS HAD SO PROFOUND AN INFLUENCE UPON OUR LIVES.

IT HAS BEEN ALMOST 27 YEARS SINCE AN ENEMY POWER
COMPELLED THIS NATION'S ENTRY INTO A WAR IT HAD WANTED TO
AVOID. IN THE CHILL TERROR OF THAT SUNDAY MORNING RAID ,
THE UNITED STATES WAS FORCED TO RECOGNIZE THAT , SHORT
OF TOTAL ABDICATION TO THE FORCES OF TYRANNY , IT HAD NO
CHOICE BUT TO TOSS ITS MOST TREASURED POSSESSIONS UPON

THE GAMBLING TABLES OF WAR.

THE GAMBLING TABLES OF WAR.

FOR HAWAII IT WAS A PARTICULARLY TRAGIC CIRCUMSTANCE.

OUR FATHERS AND MOTHERS HAD CHOSEN THIS LAND TO LIVE AND

TO BE BURIED IN , AND TO HAVE THEIR CHILDREN COME AFTER

THEM. BUT NOW , DISTRUST LURKED IN EVERY CORNER AND

SHADOWED EVERY ACTION. THEY HAD NO WAY TO REDEEM

THEMSELVES. WHEN AT LAST THE TIME CAME THAT WE COULD

MOVE POSITIVELY AGAINST THE ENEMY OUTSIDE OUR COUNTRY

AND THE DISTRUST WITHIN , IT WAS A WELCOMED RELIEF. WE

WERE TOLD , AND OUR MOTHERS AND FATHERS KNEW , THAT

SOME OF US WOULD DIE , SOME WOULD BE WOUNDED , AND SOME

CRIPPLED FOR LIFE. BUT WE WERE TOLD THAT THESE SACRIFICES

WERE NECESSARY FOR THE DEFENSE OF OUR DEMOCRACY AND FOR

THE MAINTENANCE OF LIBERTY AND FREEDOM THROUGHOUT THE

WORLD ; THAT OUR SACRIFICES WOULD RID THE WORLD OF

TOTALITARIANISM AND

TOTALITARIANISM AND HERALD AN ERA OF EVERLASTING PEACE ;
AND THAT THIS WOULD BE THE WAR TO END ALL WARS.

THIS WAS ENOUGH. WITH A DEEP SENSE OF PURPOSE AND
DEDICATION WE SEPARATED FROM OUR PARENTS. THE SOUND
OF HIGH SCHOOL COMMENCEMENT ORATORY STILL RUNG IN
MANY OF OUR EARS AS WE SET OUT AGAINST THE ENEMY.

AS WE GATHER HERE, OUR THOUGHTS GO BACK TO ANZIO ,
LIVORNO , THE PO VALLEY , BRUYERES. WE RECALL THE
SUSTAINED TERROR OF THOSE YEARS : NIGHTS SLEPT IN MUD ;
DAYS IN RAIN HUNCHED LIKE CATTLE ; DEATH EVERYWHERE.
ALTHOUGH WE HAD COME FROM A LAND OF SUNSHINE , GENTLENESS
AND ALOHA , WE SERVED OUR DESTINY AS A CUTTING EDGE FOR
OUR NATION'S VAST MILITARY MACHINE. DEDICATED TO
DESTRUCTION , WE DESTROYED AND WERE DESTROYED.

MANY WAVES HAVE WASHED OUR SHORES SINCE THE MEN

WE HONOR TODAY

WE HONOR TODAY RODE THE SURF. WITH THE TIDES HAVE COME
NEW VALUES , NEW NEEDS ---AND BITTER EXPERIENCE. NOW
MANY PEOPLE DOUBT THE WORTH OF SUCH AN UNDERTAKING AS
CONSUMED THESE MEN. IN ONE SENSE WE MUST AGREE WITH
THEM. WHAT FATHER WHO HAS KNOWN WAR WOULD WILLINGLY
RELINQUISH HIS SON TO THE MERCY OF ITS HORROR ? ASK THE
MOTHER WHAT INTERNATIONAL OBJECTIVE IS WORTH THE LIFE
OF HER SON. AS FOR THE SON , IN A LAND WITH SO MUCH TO
LIVE FOR , HOW DO WE EXPLAIN WHAT HE SHOULD DIE FOR ?

WE RECALL THE SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT THAT FILLED
THE LAND WHEN THE WAR WAS ENDED. HOW BEFORE THE INK
WAS DRY ON THE SURRENDER PAPERS THE VICTORIOUS NATIONS
MET IN SAN FRANCISCO TO FORM A UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATION
WHICH WOULD NURTURE AND SAFEGUARD THE PEACE. IT WAS
TO DO BATTLE FOR MEN'S MINDS , AND IT WOULD BE OUR INSTRUMENT

FOR SOLVING INTERNATIONAL

FOR SOLVING INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS AMICABLY. THOUGH
GRIEF FOR LOVED ONES LAY HEAVY ON MANY HEARTS , WE HAD
WON THE WAR AND THE SACRIFICES HAD BROUGHT NEW HOPE FOR
PEACE. IN THIS EUPHORIA , OUR NATIONAL LEADERS RESPONDED
TO THE POPULAR CRY. THEY BROUGHT OUR ARMIES HOME TO
DISBAND THEM. THEY REPHASED OUR INDUSTRY FROM MILITARY
TO CIVILIAN PRODUCTION. AND ALTHOUGH PITCHED BATTLES
RAGED IN GREECE AND TURKEY , THIS NATION PURSUED ITS OWN
COURSE UNILATERALLY , DETERMINED TO STUDY WAR NO MORE.

BUT OUR OPTIMISM WAS SHORT LIVED. WITHIN ONLY
FOUR YEARS AFTER THE ARMISTICE , AMERICAN BLOOD SPLASHED
ON THE HARD AND BARREN CLAYS OF KOREA. STALIN SWALLOWED
EASTERN EUROPE. THE WINTER OF THE LONG COLD WAR HAD
STARTED. IN QUICK SUCCEEDING YEARS , WE SAW ARMED CONFLICT
IN SOUTHEAST ASIA , IN CYPRUS , IN AFRICA. NOW TODAY

AMERICANS ONCE AGAIN

AMERICANS ONCE AGAIN ARE DYING IN ASIA.

SO IN A SENSE THE SACRIFICES MADE BY THESE MEN WE
HONOR TODAY DO SEEM A FUTILE GESTURE.

BUT IN ANOTHER SENSE THERE IS DEEP MEANING IN THEIR
SACRIFICES. ALTHOUGH THEY LOVED LIFE TOO , THEY DID NOT
THINK FIRST OF SELF , BUT RESPONDED AS BEST THEY KNEW TO
THE FATEFUL ISSUES OF THEIR TIMES. AND THEY DID HELP
DESTROY THE TERRIBLE MENACE OF NAZISM WHICH THEN
THREATENED THE BASIC VALUES OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION.
THEY DID HELP ALTER THE COURSE OF HISTORY. BUT PERHAPS
MORE IMPORTANT THAN ALL THE REST , THEY GAVE THIS NATION ,
THIS PEOPLE WITH ITS COMBINATION OF IDEALISM AND RESOURCES ,
ADDED TIME. IT GAVE IT TIME IN WHICH TO DEVELOP A WORLD
CIVILIZATION WHICH COULD SOLVE THE DIFFERENCES WITHOUT
RESORTING TO WAR.

FOR HAWAII

FOR HAWAII THEIR SACRIFICES HAVE YIELDED STILL
MORE TANGIBLE FRUITS. BY THEIR VALOR IN TIMES OF DEEPEST
PERIL , THEY DESTROYED FOREVER THE ARGUMENT THAT RACE
IN HAWAII WAS A BASIS FOR SECOND CLASS CITIZENSHIP ; THUS
THEY PREPARED THE WAY FOR STATEHOOD. AND FOR US
STANDING HERE THERE IS A TIE THAT GOES BEYOND WORDS OR
REASON. FOR WE KNEW AND LOVED THEM. A PART OF OUR
LIFE LIES BURIED WITH THEM. IT FOR THEIR SACRIFICE IT
WOULD HAVE BEEN OUR OWN.

BUT WE ROB THE MEANING OF THESE MEN'S SACRIFICES
WHEN WE DO NOT USE WHAT THEY HAVE GIVEN US TO RID THE
WORLD OF WARS. WE HAVE MADE SOME PROGRESS. WE HAVE
ESTABLISHED IMAGINATIVE PROGRAMS IN THE PURSUIT OF PEACE.
WE HAVE THE PEACE CORPS , THE UNITED NATIONS , FOOD FOR
PEACE , THE NUCLEAR TEST BAN TREATY , THE DISARMAMENT
DISCUSSIONS IN GENEVA , AND OTHERS.

EACH OF THESE EFFORTS

EACH OF THESE EFFORTS IS A BUILDING BLOCK WHICH ADDS
MEANING TO THE SACRIFICES THESE MEN HAVE MADE.

NEVERTHELESS THE CLOCK HAS TURNED ; WE ARE ASKING
ANOTHER GENERATION OF SONS TO RISK THE SUPREME SACRIFICE ,
IN ANOTHER WAR WE DO NOT WANT. AGAIN THE BATTLE IS FOR
TIME---TIME IN WHICH TO CORRECT THE BASIC CAUSES OF WAR.

UNLESS WE ARE SUCCESSFUL , UNLESS IN THE FUTURE WE
MOVE MUCH FASTER THAN WE HAVE IN THE PAST IN TREATING ALL
MEN AS BROTHERS,IN MINISTERING TO THEIR NEEDS WITH
WITH
INTELLIGENCE AND REALISM AS WELL AS/LOVE AND JUSTICE ,
I FEAR WE MAY BE DOOMED. I AM CONVINCED THAT SHOULD
THERE BE ANOTHER WORLD WAR, IT WOULD TRULY BE THE WAR
TO END ALL WARS. I PRAY I WILL NOT BE LIVING THEN. FOR
THE POWER WE AND OTHER NATIONS HOLD IS SO AWESOME AND
THE WEAPONS SO EXOTIC , AS TO MAKE EVEN THE BUCK ROGERS
EXTRAVAGANZAS OBSOLETE.

TODAY THERE EXIST

TODAY THERE EXIST SINGLE BOMBS WITH GREATER EXPLOSIVE
FORCE THAN ALL THE BOMBS USED AGAINST US IN BOTH WORLD
WAR I AND II , AND THE KOREAN CONFLICT COMBINED.

SO REGARDLESS OF THE IMPERFECTIONS IN OUR PEACE -
KEEPING PROCEDURES , WE MUST NOT LOSE OUR SENSE OF
PURPOSE ; AND IN THE FACE OF OUR DISAPPOINTMENT THAT ONCE
AGAIN WE ARE AT WAR , WE MUST NOT LOSE OUR SENSE OF URGENCY
IN FINDING PEACE WHILE THERE MAY STILL BE TIME. LET US
PRAY THAT MANKIND WILL REALIZE IT CANNOT GO ON SOLVING
ITS PROBLEMS BY WARFARE. LET US STRIVE FOR STRONGER
WORLD GOVERNMENT. LET US THE LIVING THROUGH OUR EFFORTS
KEEP FAITH WITH THOSE WE HONOR HERE TODAY.

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