

Chronological: Joint Meeting, WWII Ceremony, House Chamber, 1995-10-11

Senator Daniel K. Inouye Papers
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**During the past four years, Americans
have gathered in cities, towns and
villages, and in far away places with
strange names such as Guadalcanal,
Normandy, Anzio, Iwo Jima, Okinawa,
Guam, Moscow, Rome and many,
many other places,**

to honor the 299,131 American men and women who stepped forward in harms way and gave their lives on our behalf.

Thousands of citizens participated in parades and many inspiring speeches were heard.

**As a veteran of that war, I am grateful
to America for the many honors
bestowed upon our fallen comrades, but
most respectfully, I feel that these
glorious parades and inspiring speeches
may have
~~somehow~~ missed the real essence of
what made us victorious.**

I remember the thousands of school
children scouring the countryside looking
for scrap metal--[↑] *tons of* scrap metal that found
its way to the front lines as bullets and
bombs.

I remember the thousands of victory gardens throughout this land in every hamlet, village and town--gardens that produced over one-third of the vegetables we consumed during that war.

I remember those long lines of citizens waiting to give blood and to buy war bonds.

I remember the 866 American merchant ships sunk during that war and the nearly 7000 merchant seamen who rest at the bottom of the sea.

I remember those gallant ladies, wives
and sweethearts who rolled up their
sleeves to take their loved ones' places in
assembly lines or take over the ^{farm} tractors
until the return of their men.

I recall our national productivity rate suddenly increasing by over 25 percent.

The record shows that these sweethearts of America helped to build over 60,000 tanks, over 120,000 naval vessels and over 300,000 aircraft.

And I recall that more than 6 million men and women of our Armed Forces had volunteered. High among this list of volunteers were Native Americans -- our first citizens, the Indians, who volunteered in larger numbers per capita than any other group.

Something happened to America. I don't know what it was, but it was the same strange power that our founding fathers experienced in those early uncertain days. Let's call it the spirit of America -- a spirit that united and galvanized our people. We were ready for any challenge, any obstacle.

**Today the obstacles and challenges
are many. But where is that spirit?**

**Eight days ago, a verdict was
announced in a Los Angeles courtroom.
Experts throughout the land sadly
suggested that our land was divided.**

We know that. Our land is dangerously divided and dangerously polarized.

elect

But what are we, the voices of

America, doing? Sadly, what Americans hear are sounds of dissension, discord and division on Capitol Hill.

Instead of the great and grand voice of reason, they hear angry shouts. They see party leaders congratulating themselves on party line votes in the Congress. Americans need not go to Los Angeles to see division. They can just watch the Congress.

**If we are to appropriately remember
and honor those 299,131 men and
women who gave their lives in that great
war, let us begin by discarding those
sounds of division.**

Let us begin by demonstrating that we are capable of calm and resolute leadership. Let us begin the process of restoring that spirit of America that blessed us at the time of the revolution and the great war.

We can do no less.