

Community Comment 11/11/2013

By Jon Sapper

Veterans Day

Today is Veterans Day, a time when we honor those who have served this great country. The following thoughts are not my own. I quote, "Today we are here to celebrate and to honor and to commemorate the dead and the living, the young men who in every war since this country began have given testimony to their loyalty to their country and their own great courage.

I do not believe that any nation in the history of the world has buried its soldiers farther from its native soil than we Americans, or buried them closer to the town in which they grew up.

We celebrate this Veterans Day for a few seconds of silence and then this country's life goes on. But I think it most appropriate that we recall on this occasion, and on every other moment when we are faced with great responsibilities, the contribution and the sacrifice which so many men and their families have made in order to permit this country to now occupy its present position of responsibility and freedom.

In a world tormented by tension and the possibilities of conflict, we meet in a quiet commemoration of an historic day. In an age that threatens the survival of freedom, we join together to honor those who made our freedom possible. Congress first proclaimed Armistice Day on Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>, 1918, as the end of the most destructive and far-reaching war in the history of human annals, expressing hope that the First World War would be the war to end all wars, suggesting that those who had died had not died in vain.

It is tragic that this hope has not been fulfilled, that wars still more destructive have followed and that man's capacity to devise new ways of killing his fellow men have far outstripped his capacity to live in peace with his fellow men.

But let us not forget that Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>, 1918 also signified a beginning. There is no way to maintain the frontiers of freedom without cost and commitment and risk. But let no nation confuse our perseverance and patience with fear of war or

unwillingness to meet our responsibilities. In the end, the ONLY way to maintain the peace... is to be prepared in the final extreme to fight for our country...and to mean it.

As a nation, we have little capacity for deception. We can convince friend and foe alike that we are in earnest about the defense of freedom only if we are in earnest...and I can assure the world that we are.

On this day of remembrance, let us pray in the name of those who have fought in this country's wars with the hope there will be no veterans of any future war, not because all have perished, but we have lived in peace." End quote.

Two years after those words were spoken and 50 years ago this Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup>, President John F. Kennedy was assassinated.

Let us remember those words of strength for this country and the men and women who have faithfully served.

This has been Jon Sapper for Community Comment.