

Community Comment May 25th, 2015

By Jon Sapper

Fulfilling Our Promise

On this Memorial Day, I want to share some words penned by Disabled American Veterans and the importance of fulfilling our promises to the men and women who have served this country. Quote.. "It's an honor to remember the service and sacrifice of our nation's bravest. As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them. Let us reflect on one sentiment, uttered many years ago by President Kennedy. Words, he believed, were useless when not followed by action.

It is a small fraction of our population charged with keeping us safe and keeping our liberties intact. So how do we properly thank those who have done so much to keep this country, our prosperity and freedoms intact? It is interesting how different generations of veterans respond to being thanked for their service. Our World War II veterans generally seem to receive it politely, stoically, knowing that they had simply fulfilled their patriotic duty. Korean and Vietnam veterans, too often overlooked, seem genuinely touched when welcomed home and remembered. For our most recent veterans, the gratitude is accepted but many feel a sense of disconnect from their civilian peers. What is common, though, throughout all generations of veterans is the absolute insistence that the gratitude does not belong to them, but rather to their fallen brothers and sisters who paid the ultimate price. This leads me to believe that the best way to thank them is to honor the fallen and to care for the wounded.

The wounds that used to claim lives on the battlefield are now being treated and instead are becoming a lasting part of life for so many who return home. Many men and women who have sustained serious injuries as part of their military service, are fighting their own fights right now. In a sense, those who have been profoundly injured have given their life for this country. Yet, they would do so again, as would those who gave their last measure of devotion.

So when we think of the tremendous sacrifices our veterans have made, physically and emotionally, how can we possibly say thanks? What could possibly be good enough to convey how grateful we are that they had the courage to do

what so many others could not and would not do? We should spend today reflecting on their service and sacrifice, and live in gratitude each and every day.

As a nation, we made a promise, a promise that must be kept....to honor those who paid the ultimate price and making sure that those veterans who need care are properly supported.” That’s the least we can do.

This has been Jon Sapper for Community Comment.