

GOVERNOR'S DAY at
ST. JOHN'S AND NORTHWESTERN MILITARY ACADEMIES
2:30 - 3:45 PM -- WEDNESDAY, MAY 22, 1996
Delafield, WI

Thank you, General Spanjer (span-jer, USMC-retired, President of the academy), for your kind introduction.

It's a pleasure to be here again on "Governor's Day." Your academies have a long and distinguished history with Wisconsin Governors and I am proud to be asked to help you renew that long tradition. I've said it before — and I'll say it again — as I long as I'm Governor, we'll do this every year.

Cadets, you are part of a grand tradition of military and civic leadership that goes back hundreds of years. Military academies have trained our finest military and civic leaders for centuries. Your academies...St. John's and Northwestern...have been educating young men like you since the 1880s.

And with the merger of St. John's and Northwestern this year has made it the the largest...and, no doubt, the finest...military academy in the Midwest. Allies are important things to have in the military and I'm sure you're all proud to be a part of this alliance of two very distinguished institutions.

Here at the academies you will work hard...and while you'll work, you'll grow...in discipline, knowledge and confidence. And before you know it, you will take your places as the as the next generation of leaders and defenders of our nation. As Governor, I am proud of your dedication to the great tradition of personal sacrifice and public service.

And I want to pay a special tribute to the 47 graduating seniors. This weekend, you will go out into the world as representatives of the finest military academy in the Midwest...armed with the finest college preparatory education.

As you advance your educations, let the discipline, knowledge and confidence you learn here distinguish you as St. John's and Northwestern graduates. Not all of you will wear a military uniform again.

But throughout your lives, always carry yourselves like you do today —upright, purposeful and confident in every step. When you do, you'll command the utmost respect and be a glowing reflection of the academy that has prepared you for service and leadership. Congratulations, seniors.

Memorial Day is this Monday and I want to take a moment now to pay tribute to the public service and sacrifice of all of America's lost soldiers...the valiant men and women who died protecting the freedom all of us cherish.

The Bible says, "Greater love hath no man than to lay down his life for a friend." As we remember those lost service men and women on Memorial Day, let us keep this in mind: Every one of them was protecting a friend friend...protecting a family...back home.

They were serving their nation, yes. But it was the memory of their families and loved ones back home that sustained their spirit in battle...that drove them to do their duty.

That is the greatest love...the greatest service...the greatest duty...and we deeply thank every soldier who has laid down his life for his friends.

But let us not forget that Memorial Day is also a celebration of the profound sense of duty displayed by all of our service men and women. This sense of duty is an integral part of what you learn here at St. John's and Northwestern. Let that sense of duty instill in you an abiding appreciation for our service men and women.

It may inspire you to military service in the glorious tradition of duty we honor on Memorial Day. If you choose that path, I just want to leave you with this thought: on Memorial Day, as we pay tribute to the memory of the valor of our war heroes -- and every last soldier is a hero -- Always remember who you are doing this for.

Remember your family and friends. Let Memorial Day stand not only as a reminder of the selfless sacrifice of your noble predecessors. But let it also stand as a reminder -- as you rededicate yourself to military service -- that not only are

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you serving the cause of freedom, but you're preserving the safety of your family and friends.

There is no greater service and no greater honor. Keep up your fine work.

Thank you.