
Korean War Memorial Dedication
Remarks by Gov. Tommy G. Thompson
Plover, Wisconsin
June 19, 1994

(Below are the governor's prepared remarks. Please be aware that the governor may deviate from these remarks.)

THANK YOU. I AM HONORED TO BE HERE TODAY.

A FEW YEARS AGO, A SHORT CEREMONY WAS HELD ON THE CAPITOL GROUNDS IN MADISON TO HONOR A VETERAN'S MEMORIAL STATUE DESTINED FOR CENTRAL WISCONSIN.

WHEN THE CEREMONY WAS OVER, AFTER THE CROWD HAD CLEARED, I STOOD WATCHING FROM MY OFFICE WINDOW TWO STORIES ABOVE AS A NEATLY-DRESSED, MIDDLE-AGED MAN QUIETLY APPROACHED THE STATUE.

I WATCHED AS HE WALKED AROUND THE MEMORIAL. HE REACHED OUT AND TOUCHED ONE OF THE FIGURES. AND THEN HE SOFTLY DROPPED TO HIS KNEES, AND BOWED HIS HEAD.

IN THE QUIET OF THIS MOMENT, I TRIED TO IMAGINE WHAT THIS MAN WAS THINKING.

PERHAPS HE WAS LIFTING UP A PRAYER FOR A FELLOW SERVICEMAN WHO DIED IN COMBAT.

OR MAYBE HE WAS REFLECTING UPON HIS OWN EXPERIENCES IN WAR.

OR PERHAPS, LIKE ME, HE WAS SIMPLY OFFERING A PRAYER OF GRATITUDE FOR ALL OF THOSE COURAGEOUS MEN AND WOMEN WHO GAVE OF THEMSELVES SO FREELY, AND SO COURAGEOUSLY.

THIS MEMORIAL, IN THIS BEAUTIFUL SPOT, WILL BE THE SITE OF MANY SCENES SUCH AS THE ONE I JUST DESCRIBED.

IT WILL BE A PLACE FOR PEOPLE TO PAY TRIBUTE, AND TO REMEMBER. TO REMEMBER MEN SUCH AS CORPORAL MITCHELL RED

CLOUD, A WINNEBAGO INDIAN FROM BLACK RIVER FALLS WHO TOOK EIGHT BULLETS DEFENDING HIS COMPANY FROM A SURPRISE ATTACK IN THE WOODS OF KOREA.

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OR EINAR (EYE-nar) INGMAN, WHO -- ALL ALONE -- CHARGED TWO ENEMY MACHINE GUN POSITIONS NEAR MALTARI, KOREA, CONTINUING TO CHARGE EVEN AFTER HE WAS SERIOUSLY WOUNDED. HE IS ALSO WISCONSIN'S ONLY LIVING MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT.

OR MEN SUCH AS MY OWN BROTHER, CORPORAL CHARLES ROCHE OF THE 5TH MARINES, WHO TOOK FOUR SHOTS AT THE CHOSIN RESERVOIR.

THIS MEMORIAL IS TO REMEMBER ALL THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO FOUGHT IN WHAT IS NOW REFERRED TO AS "THE FORGOTTEN WAR."

WELL, 132,000 WISCONSINITES SERVED IN THAT WAR, 801 WERE KILLED AND 84 ARE STILL OFFICIALLY LISTED AS MISSING IN ACTION.

THIS GOVERNOR -- AND THIS STATE -- WILL NOT FORGET OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS WHO FOUGHT FOR FREEDOM IN KOREA.

THAT IS WHY THIS MEMORIAL IS SO IMPORTANT. AND THAT IS WHY I AM PROUD TO BE ABLE TO PRESENT TODAY A CHECK FOR \$100,000 FROM THE STATE TO COMPLETE ITS CONSTRUCTION.

I CONGRATULATE ALL OF YOU ON ALL OF YOUR HARD WORK. AND THANK YOU FOR ASKING ME TO BE HERE TODAY.

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