

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

## MEMORIAL DAY ADDRESS

HON. DICK CHRYSLER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 9, 1995

Mr. CHRYSLER. Mr. Speaker, on this important day of remembrance, I would like to submit the following Memorial Day Address which was given by Mr. Walter Adams, past president of Michigan State University.

MEMORIAL DAY ADDRESS

(By Walter Adams)

On Memorial Day, we pay homage to the men and women who died for our country—from 1776 through two world wars, Korea, Vietnam, and the Persian Gulf. This year, the 50th Anniversary of Victory in Europe and Victory over Japan, we pay special tribute to our dead in World War II—the men and women who fought on land, on sea, and in the air.

The campaigns in North Africa and Italy were anything but a cakewalk. Nor were the battles in Western Europe where I served—first with the 83rd Infantry Division and later with the 11th Armored Division. In France, D-Day was June 6, 1944. According to the plans of supreme headquarters, the British were supposed to take the town of Caen on the first day of the landing. Caen was not liberated until July 8—more than a month later. St. Lo which was the major objective in the U.S. sector was not liberated until July 18. And the Battle of Normandy which was just a slice of France was not concluded until August 22 of 1944—after 200,000 allied casualties.

My own division, the 83rd Infantry, relieved the 101st Airborne at Carentan. The first objective assigned to us was a little town 12 miles to the south. It took our division close to a month to negotiate those 12 miles. Hedge row by hedge row, yard by yard, inch by inch. [For those of you who do not know what a hedge row is, it is an earthen wall surrounding a cow pasture, square or rectangular, 6 feet high, with thick shrubbery growing on top of it. It was impenetrable. The 83rd had on one side a marsh which could not be negotiated by tanks. On the other side, was a field that the Germans had flooded deliberately. So there was no maneuverability. Tanks could not operate. It was a job for the infantry. The dogfaces of the infantry.] In that one month, the 83rd lost 5,000 out of the division's 15,000 men.

After Normandy, the 83rd went on to fight in the Battle of the Bulge, the Rhineland, and Germany. It suffered the fifth highest number of casualties among the divisions operating in the ETO.

In March of 1945, I was transferred to the 11th Armored Division which was spearheading General Patton's drive through southern Germany. On its way, the Division liberated three concentration camps—an experience that none of us will ever forget. These camps were the ultimate example of man's inhumanity to man—the ultimate illustration of the consequences of discrimination, bigotry, and hatred directed against groups of people who were considered undeserving of life—Jews, communists, socialists, Russians, Poles, gypsies, homosexuals, etc., etc. If any of us needed an explanation of why we were

fighting and the evil we were fighting against, these camps provided incontrovertible evidence.

Last year, the 11th Armored Division Association received a letter from a survivor of the notorious Mauthausen concentration camp that the 11th Armored liberated on May 5, 1945—three days before V-E Day. It came from a Pole by the name of Jerzy Adamczek. I'll read an excerpt from it: "I was arrested by the Germans in 1944 and sent to the Mauthausen concentration camp. The weeks there seemed to be months, and months years. And finally, the Russian and American armies approached the camp. The 11th Armored of the 3rd U.S. Army got to us first. God bless those boys and bless the fifth of May. I was 16 at the time. During the liberation of the camp, I looked death in the face. I was so weak and my body so exhausted that I lay two or three days more on the pile of dead bodies without showing any sign of life. Some people thought I was dead like the others. But on the seventh or eight or May, I can not remember which, some American soldiers would not give up on this so-called pile of dead bodies. A young American soldier about 25 years old saw that I moved slightly. He picked me up—the bundle of skin and bones. There was barely a spark of life left but he carried me on his back to the square at the concentration camp where other such half-alive men were gathered. I am now a man of 66. Since that time I have always said, I have two fathers: my biological father who was killed in 1944 during the Warsaw uprising and the American soldier who picked me from the dead. I don't know his name. I need your help. Please help me find that American so I can be at peace with myself and say thank you." That, my friends, was what the war in Europe was all about.

A word about the war in the Pacific. On August 15, this year, we shall be celebrating V-J Day—our victory over Japan. There are some who now want to rewrite history and to call it V-P Day—Victory in the Pacific day—perhaps because of vague guilt feelings about our use of the atomic bomb or because of a reluctance to offend the Japanese who are now our allies. I think that such revisionism would be a brazen mockery of the soldiers who died on Truk and Iwo Jima, on Okinawa and in the Philippines, and to the sailors forever entombed in the U.S.S. Arizona. The historical record cannot be sanitized. The facts are that some of the worst atrocities of WW II were committed by the Imperial Japanese Army. It slaughtered Chinese civilians for sport; it raped and enslaved Korean women to improve the morale of its soldiers; it conducted grisly biological warfare experiments on prisoners of war. It is a well documented fact that the Japanese "beat [prisoners] until they fell, then beat them for falling, beat them until they bled, then beat them for bleeding. They denied them medical treatment. They starved them. . . . They watched them die by the tens of thousands." No wonder that only one out of three Allied POWs survived Japanese captivity. [Gavin Daws, Prisoners of the Japanese: POWs of World War II in the Pacific, 1994] Yet, after 50 years since V-J Day, the Japanese Government has still not seen fit to apologize publicly to the victims of these atrocities or to their families. In those 50 years, the Japanese Government has still not informed its

school children that the long road to Hiroshima started with the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor.

In the Pacific as in Europe, I think that World War II shall remain a symbol of a quintessential confrontation between good and evil. I think the United States and its allies deserve eternal gratitude for ridding the world of that evil. I think it is incumbent on us never to forget the human sacrifice that this entailed. It is incumbent on us never to forget the men and women who died in that noble cause.

(Walter Adams, Past President of Michigan State University, served in the U.S. Army from 1943 to 1945. He landed in Normandy with the 83d Infantry Division and completed his combat service with the 11th Armored Division as aide-de-camp to the Division commander, Maj. Gen. Holmes E. Dager. After the Battle of the Bulge, he received a battlefield commission as a 2nd Lieutenant. He was awarded the ETO campaign ribbon with five bronze campaign stars as well as the Bronze Star Medal for heroic conduct.)

## TRIBUTE TO FORDHAM EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH ON ITS 80TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 9, 1995

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the members and friends of Fordham Evangelical Lutheran Church who on Sunday, November 12, will celebrate 80 years of spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ in my South Bronx congressional district.

In 1915, Rev. Oscar Mees saw the need for a Lutheran church in the fast-growing neighborhood of the South Bronx. He acquired the property of a small church, which had been forced to close on 2430 Walton Avenue, to establish the new Lutheran Church.

Rev. Frederick H. Meyer, the first pastor of Fordham Lutheran Church, led the congregation for 33 years. During his service, the number of worshippers outgrew the size of the church and a larger structure was erected. The architectural beauty of the new building aroused the admiration of many New Yorkers.

During the 1920's, services were offered in German and English to better serve the ethnic groups who were part of our fast-growing community. And, in the 1940's, sad days were endured by the congregation after the loss of 5 of the 85 members who served in the Armed Forces during World War II.

Throughout the years, the church has been blessed with effective ministers, organists, and many members who have dedicated many years of service. During difficult financial times, members and friends of the church tested their strength, and through hard work, successfully kept the church open to the service of the community.

The eight pastors who had faithfully served the church brought many changes in the programs offered to accommodate the needs of

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