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Memorial Day Services in Glasgow

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STATEMENT OF SENATOR MAX BAUCUS
FOR MEMORIAL DAY SERVICES
Glasgow, Montana
May 28, 1984

"REMEMBERING THE SOLDIER"

Lloyd Eide, Mayor Zeller, fellow citizens, over the weekend, the unknown Viet Nam soldier has been lying in state in the Capital Rotunda. And thousands of Americans have filed by to pay their respects.

Today, in Arlington Cemetery, that Vietnam soldier was buried in the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is one of this nation's most moving symbols. On that tomb is inscribed: "Here rests in honored glory, an American soldier known but by God."

That tomb is a national symbol of all those who died for this country.

And today is a national day of gratitude...to them and to their families.

Similar ceremonies are being held all over America. Here in Glasgow and in communities all over the country...

...those towns and villages that have sent some of their own
OFF TO FIGHT AND DIE.

AND THIS DAY, MEMORIAL DAY, IS IMPORTANT...

TO LET THEIR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS KNOW THAT WE HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN THEM.

BUT ALSO TO EXPLAIN TO OUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN HOW PRECIOUS OUR LIBERTY IS.

NO ONE CAN FULLY APPRECIATE THAT PRECIOUS LIBERTY WITHOUT REMEMBERING THAT MANY AMONG US AND MANY WHO PRECEDED US RISKED THEIR LIVES AND IN SOME CASES, GAVE THEIR LIVES, TO KEEP THAT LIBERTY SECURE.

MONTANA'S CONTRIBUTION

WE IN MONTANA HAVE DONE MORE THAN OUR FAIR SHARE OF CONTRIBUTING TO THAT SECURITY.

PRESIDENT McKINLEY ASKED 500 MONTANANS TO VOLUNTEER FOR THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR.

1,400 MONTANANS RESPONDED.

ONE OF THEM WAS JOE MONTGOMERY OF LEWISTOWN.

JOE WAS HONORED LAST YEAR AS THE OLDEST VETERAN IN THE
United States.

And on this Memorial Day, as we honor all veterans, we should remember Joe Montgomery who died earlier this year.

In every other war since the one Joe fought in, Montana has given more than its expected share.

In World War I, Montanans like "C.O." Christensen of Glasgow, who is now 95 years old, served this nation with great distinction.

And in our nation's most recent war, 259 Montanans were killed in Viet Nam. And there remain 11 M.I.A.s.

We in Montana are proud of the men and women who have represented us in the armed services.

Today is their day to be honored...

And we honor them.

But we must do more.

A fitting memorial

It was Abraham Lincoln who wrote:
"It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced.

For us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us -- that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion."

Lincoln's words remind us what our "Memorial" should be:

0 To continue to preserve the liberty they fought for.

0 And to be certain we are strong enough to defend those liberties.

It is troubling to me that in 1984, our country is headed in directions that make that liberty less secure.

And that is what I wanted to discuss with you briefly today.

**Bolstering our conventional forces**

As we look around the world, there are many "trouble spots" we must be concerned about:

0 The Persian Gulf
0 The Middle East
CENTRAL AMERICA

In each of those areas, and in others, we have to be prepared to defend our interests in a variety of ways:

- To rescue our citizens
- To display strength through a naval presence, or
- To show a resolve through joint military exercises.

These maneuvers require capable and trained soldiers like the ones we honor today.

And they require dependable equipment, weapons and ammunition to support those personnel.

These are the two basic elements of our "conventional forces".

And it's these forces that provide us with the capability to meet the challenges we face today.

Unfortunately, that capability is being threatened.

It's being threatened because this country is neglecting its conventional forces.

We are spending too much on extravagant oversophisticated weapons hardware.
AND WE ARE SPENDING TOO LITTLE ON THE TRAINING AND SUPPORT OF OUR SOLDIERS.

NEXT YEAR'S DEFENSE BUDGET CALLS FOR A 37 PERCENT INCREASE IN NUCLEAR, STRATEGIC FORCES...

... AND ONLY A 9 PERCENT INCREASE IN FUNDS FOR CONVENTIONAL FORCES.

OUR STRATEGIC NUCLEAR DETERRENT IS OF COURSE CRUCIAL, BUT THESE PRIORITIES ARE WRONG.

WE SHOULD BE SPENDING MORE ON OUR CONVENTIONAL FORCES:

- Increased numbers of military personnel
- Better pay scales for personnel
- Increased funding for training and preparedness
- More ammunition procurement
- Increased research and development of simple and effective combat weapons

ALL OF THESE COMPONENTS OF OUR CONVENTIONAL FORCES NEED INCREASED FUNDING...

AND INSTEAD THESE AREAS ARE BEING CUT BACK WHILE NUCLEAR STRATEGIC SPENDING IS GOING OUT OF CONTROL.

WE, AS AMERICANS, NEED TO REVERSE THIS TEND.
WE NEED TO GET BEHIND AN EFFORT TO REARRANGE OUR DEFENSE SPENDING PRIORITIES.

AND IT IS VERY APPROPRIATE THAT WE DISCUSS SUCH AN EFFORT TODAY.

BECAUSE AS WE HONOR THE SOLDIERS OF THE PAST WE SHOULD COMMIT OURSELVES TO SUPPORTING OUR SOLDIERS OF TODAY.

CONCLUSION

IT WAS FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT WHO SAID IN ONE OF HIS FIRESIDE CHATS:

"WE BUILD AND DEFEND NOT FOR OUR GENERATION ALONE."

"WE DEFEND THE FOUNDATION LAID BY OUR FATHERS."

"WE BUILD A LIFE FOR GENERATIONS YET UNBORN".

LET US TODAY DO BOTH:

0 LET US HONOR, AND BE FAITHFUL, TO THOSE BRAVE MONTANA SOLDIERS WHO HAVE PRECEDED US.

0 AND AS A TRIBUTE TO THEM LET US DEVELOP AND DEFEND A SOUND FOUNDATION FOR OUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN.

A FOUNDATION THAT CONSISTS OF:
STRONG CONVENTIONAL FORCES

A COMMITMENT TO MUTUAL AND VERIFIABLE ARMS CONTROL, AND

DEDICATION

A CONTINUED FIGHTING OF THE LIBERTY WE ALL CHERISH.

A DEDICATION TO SUCH A FOUNDATION IS THE BEST WAY TO REMEMBER OUR SOLDIERS.

AND IT IS THE MOST FITTING MEMORIAL WE CAN LEAVE BEHIND.

THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS YOU ALL.