

What Makes America Great

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Imagine, it is May 9, 1918. You are repeatedly under heavy machine gun fire and in the trenches in France, thousands of miles from your home. You're cold, tired and hungry. A single shot rings out, you have been hit from a round of an enemy sniper. This was Clifford Phillips of Pinedale, Wyoming. He is buried in the killing fields of France.

It is now July 15, 1918, about 2 months later. You are an American Soldier in a hospital in France recovering from an appendicitis when you hear a lone plane overhead. Then you hear the incoming shell, just before the explosion. This was Sydney Edwards of Pinedale, Wyoming. He is buried in the Pinedale Cemetery.

For the two local men who lost their lives during WWI, The Great War, Pinedale's American Legion Post is named in their honor: Phillips-Edwards Post 47.

What is it that our soldiers will risk their lives for? And, may ultimately make the ultimate sacrifice? As with today's Armed Forces, Clifford and Sydney were volunteers. There were over 70 men from Pinedale and the Upper Green that answered the call to serve their country during WWI (1917-18).

My own Father answered that call in 1944 during WWII when he was just 16 years old. He served in the Merchant Marines off the coast of Africa where German U-boats were lying in wait just to sink them. Later, he served in the US Army Infantry in Korea witnessing the "human-wave" attacks from the North. He told me that the second wave had no guns, but would pick up the guns from the first wave and continue the charge. He survived.

Why do they do it?

What makes this country so Great?

One Nation under God.

Our Founding Fathers of this great land gave us a government of, for, and by the people. Prayer was an essential part of the founding. They understood that a nation ruled by God would be predicated upon the righteousness of the people.

One nation, under God, would be blessed and prosperous. There is nowhere found in the Constitution that speaks to us otherwise. Many people originally came to this land seeking religious freedom, one of our core values. And, the Bill of Rights, ensures the rights of the individual to be Free. These are God-given rights to each and every one. Each person is Sovereign to oneself.

Here are some quotes from our Founding Fathers of this great Republic:

George Washington stated, "The adoption of the Constitution will demonstrate as visibly the finger of Providence as any possible event in the course of human affairs can ever designate it."

And, Ben Franklin, spoke the following: "I have so much faith in the general government of the world by Providence that I can hardly conceive a transaction of such momentous importance (as the framing of the Constitution)...should be suffered to pass without being in some degree influenced, guided, and governed by that omnipotent, omnipresent, and beneficent Ruler in whom all inferior spirits live and move and have their being."

Thomas Jefferson said, "May you and your contemporaries...preserve inviolate (the) Constitution, which, cherished in all its chastity and purity, will prove in the end a blessing to all the nations of the earth."

I still remember a speech I heard while attending Boy's State when I was just 17 years old. The speaker said, "America is the hope of the free world". I have never forgotten it.

Our revolution inspired other revolutions around the world for those desiring to be Free. In Europe, the French Revolution, in South America, the Bolivar Revolution, just to name a few.

In France, during the French Revolution (1789-1799), they chose to create a nation-state of men and not of God. Shortly after the revolution began the Reign of Terror. Tens of thousands of French, including many women and children (entire families) were put to death by the Guillotine. They were put to death for not following the rules of the newly created nation-state.

In Germany, under National Socialism, aka: the Nazi Party (1933-1945), Adolf Hitler created a nation-state of men and not of God. In the end, there were over 6 million people killed in concentration camps, and millions of others around the world. Germany was left in ruins.

Under the former USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, 1922-1991), over 12 million Ukrainians' were forced to starve to death (aka: Holodomar, to kill by starvation, 1932-1933), and an estimated 40 million people were killed in the Gulags for not complying with the government rules. Again, a nation of men – not of God.

So, what makes America Great?

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America. – Preamble, US Constitution

We are a free people, with individual rights – we are one nation under God.

Would the Veterans in this room please stand and be recognized.

These are the brave men and women that answered the call. They took an Oath to “defend and support the US Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic”. “So help me God”. This oath never expires. Today, we honor these Veterans. They are in an elite group, because at this time, our active military make up less than 1% of the population. These are amazing people. It is to them that we owe much, for the price of freedom, is not free.

Could we now have the families of those standing please stand. These are those whom we love dearly and will fight to our dying breath to keep free. We also want to recognize the love and sacrifice our families make while we are away in service to our God, Family and Country.

Would everyone please stand. These are our friends, neighbors and community – fellow Americans of which everyone is included. Let us let Freedom Ring from our mountaintops here in the Rocky Mountains! Let us protect these liberties and participate in our great Republic to keep us Forever Free!

This is what makes America Great!!!

Please be seated.

In ending:

For God, For Family, For Country.

God Bless America! And, God Bless each and every one of you!!!

Veterans Day 2019
Pinedale, Wyoming

Introduction

On the 11th day, on the 11th month and on the 11th hour, all hostilities ceased in the Great War. All shooting stopped. All guns fell silent. The killing was over.

American losses in **World War I** were amounted to 116,516 deaths and approximately 320,000 sick and wounded of the 4.7 million Americans who served. Worldwide, there were over 40 million casualties.

11th day, 11th month, 11th hour.

This was the day in 1918 that WWI had officially ended.

But the war ended with an armistice, an agreement in which both sides agree to stop fighting, rather than a surrender. For both sides, an armistice was the fastest way to end the war's misery and carnage.

This armistice was signed on November 11th.

Veterans Day started as a day to reflect upon the heroism of those who died in our country's service and was originally called [Armistice Day](#). However, in 1954, the holiday was changed to "Veterans Day" in order to account for all veterans in all wars.

Today, We celebrate and [honor America's veterans](#) for their patriotism, love of country and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.