

"Writing the truth  
as I see it;  
trying not to  
offend  
those who will  
disagree."

# The truth as I see it™

Idaho Common Sense™



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## Taps for the fallen brave

May 26, 2008

Today we remember those who died in our nation's service. Today we proudly display the American flag, a small flag in the living room window or a huge flag on a flagpole, the size is irrelevant. The flag is flown at half-staff until noon to honor the fallen brave, and then flown at full staff the remainder of the day. At 3:00 P.M. offer a moment of silence, remembering those who died for us. Memorial Day is the day we are not republicans or democrats, we are Americans, united honoring our war dead.

Our founding fathers created something unique. Rather than having a government forced on them, they created our government, a luxury few countries enjoy. They embarked on a bold path, creating a government that received its rights from the people rather than a government that granted rights to the people. A grand experiment, indeed. More important, they created one of the most successful forms of government in all history.

Creating and maintaining this experiment in democracy required a significant mortgage, a loan requiring ongoing sizable payments. To date, we have made over 2,800,000 payments on this mortgage. And we have buried those payments, those heroes, all over the world. Thomas Jefferson best described these payments when he said, "From time to time, the tree of liberty must be watered with the blood of tyrants and patriots." Today is about them. Today is for them.

These war dead were willing to do what so many of us were not and still are not willing to do. They were willing to go to war for their country and die for their country. Are we?

They were willing to go wherever their Commander-in-Chief ordered, willing to live in the most inhospitable environments. Are we? They were willing to join the military during a time of war, knowing they might be killed, willing to die for those who denigrate our military, our country. Are we?

They died protecting what we take for granted. They died with a moral clarity too many Americans no longer share. They died protecting the Monday morning quarterbacks; those who never played the "game" but have the self-proclaimed knowledge to know precisely what should be done. I often wonder if there is an inverse relationship between lack of military service and perceived competence in military management.

Our war dead represent all that is the best of America, all that is our way of life. Our military deserves our support. They are reluctant Spartans, reluctant warriors, willing to "stand ready in the night." Do we have that love of country, that duty to country?

What do the rest of us, who did not serve in the military, owe our war dead, our heroes, those who paid with their lives for the rest of us? We owe a humble "Thank you." Thank you to those who died in World War II ensuring America would remain free. Thank you to those who died in Korea ensuring their families had the freedom denied North Koreans. Thank you to those who died in Vietnam while others, like me, were deferred to safely continue our education, in a classroom on the other side of the world. Samuel Johnson described the feelings of many of us who did not serve in the military saying, "Every man thinks meanly of himself for not having been a soldier."

Our military has a sense of duty and honor the rest of us do not. They have a sense of country the rest of us do not. They have a sense of service the rest of us do not. They have the moral clarity the rest of us envy. They are the Americans who "ruck up and close with the enemy," while the rest of us second guess them over a biscotti and a Latte. Our military understands the words of Ronald Reagan, "Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it was once like in the United States where men were free."

Today, no politics. No Clinton. No McCain. No Obama. No President, no Congress. No disparaging remarks about our country. No debates about our government's policies. Today is for the war dead. Today is to celebrate their values. As Sir Winston Churchill said, "All great things are simple, and many can be expressed in single words: freedom, justice, honor, duty, mercy, hope." This is the American military. Today, quietly thank the war dead for the sacrifice they made for you.

If you would like to hear "Taps For The Fallen Brave" visit this Internet site:

<http://namtour.com/fallen.html>