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“Freedom Is Costly”

by
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Another Independence Day has passed and many Greenbrier Countians and other fellow Americans allowed it to come and go without really considering the importance of the day and what it symbolizes to our country. For most it represented another day off from work and a great time for family get-togethers around the BBQ Grill. One can't be too harsh on those who don't know the true history of our country and the feelings and attitudes of our founding fathers because it hasn't been taught in our public schools for a couple of generations. When I was in school we regularly were given assignments by our teachers to read speeches given and papers written by our country's leaders in those earliest years of its existence and I, for one, was stirred by the intensity of their commitment and passion to establishing this fledgling nation onto a proper foundation upon which it could grow and prosper. Unfortunately, a great faction of those occupying the seats of leadership of our House of Representative and Senate have strayed so far away from that passion exhibited by their predecessors.

Last week's article spoke briefly about the conflict with England and our struggle for true independence from royal rule from abroad and assistance from foreign allies. We could not have achieved it without their help. In these days and times there are many who would rather we run and hide than fight for the freedom of others. Our entry into WWII was not necessary either yet we went into it boldly and proudly, and with the mindset that there were evil men and governments at work in the world and it was our DUTY to fight on foreign soil to protect our allies in those remote areas and liberate other countries unknown to the average American. Everyone knows and agrees that our huge country did not fear a threat of a frontal assault and open occupation by German or Japanese enemy forces, yet we fought them with a ferocity and human sacrifice never before seen in this country's history.

The number of American dead in a 12 week period alone, in 1944, was far greater than it will ever be in the terrorist war in which we now find ourselves. Those brave American and Allied soldiers, sailors and marines, including men and women from rural and peaceful Greenbrier County, who participated in the storming of Normandy's beaches 62 years ago knew that it would be a serious conflict because over 5,000 warships of every type and 100,000 American combatants participated in the assault at Normandy and ultimate liberation of France from German occupation. Yet, in spite of those enormous numbers of personnel and equipment, in that short 12 week conflict Allied casualties totaled over 200,000, with 37,000 of them killed. Germany suffered over 400,000 dead and wounded among the prisoners taken. 20,000 French citizens also lost their lives during the battle for their freedom. Yes, and many of the soldiers saw their buddies blown apart by land mines and machine gun bullets but yet they fought on till the task was completed. War is hell and no sane person likes to fight them, but they are a real and necessary part of existence in this inhuman world.

Did the French look upon the Americans and Allied Forces as murderers and invaders and blame them for the deaths of 20,000 of their countrymen? NO.... they knew who the evil ones were... the Germans. The French residents of Normandy did and still do look upon the Allied forces, especially Americans, as angels of liberty. The total of WWII American fighting men and women injured or killed in the 4 years of war totaled almost 300,000 compared to 3.25 Million Germans and 1.5 Million Japanese, yet when we recount WWII history we look on it as an almost noble conflict. Why would that be we wonder? Because during and after the war we realized that leaders and the people of evil nations should not, nay could not, be allowed to determine the destiny of their neighbors. Had we and our allies intervened in the early German conquests of neighboring countries it is possible that it would not have grown to a World War size conflict. But we didn't... and it did.

Today there still are horrific onslaughts into peaceful countries by evil and maniacal enemies. These social blitzkriegs are by radical Islamic factions attacking the American way of life and the religious freedoms of the peoples of the world. They will not attack our military establishment in a frontal assault... they are too cowardly for that. They kill from the shadows and in crowds and plane loads of innocent civilians. They also, aided by sympathetic members of the Fourth Estate and a politically correct court system, try to erode our freedoms and those of allied nations from within. Somehow we must maintain our fight against them, intervening where necessary and at whatever cost to protect our way of life. President Franklin Roosevelt said of the war in Europe, we must be there "to preserve our civilization and to set free a suffering humanity." Is not our cause against the enemy today as just and valid?

In reading the final State of the Union address given by our first President, I found in the last paragraph a telling attitude of this great man who helped lay the forms for our country's foundation. He recognized the acceptance of our original Constitution as an experiment in government but one that worked and should be maintained. He was also bold enough to acknowledge God's rightful place of authority not only in our government but over every nation of the world. I end with these words from his mouth in 1796:

"The situation in which I now stand for the last time, in the midst of the representatives of the people of the United States, naturally recalls the period when the administration of the present form of government commenced, and I can not omit the occasion to congratulate you and my country on the success of the experiment, nor to repeat my fervent supplications to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe and Sovereign Arbiter of Nations that His providential care may still be extended to the United States, that the virtue and happiness of the people may be preserved, and that the Government which they have instituted for the protection of their liberties may be perpetual."

President George Washington - 1796