



DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
OFFICE OF  
EMBASSY OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC AFFAIRS  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 3 1946

No. 1666

Habana, May 31, 1946

AIR MAIL

Subject: Memorial Day Ceremony in Habana and  
Decoration of Veterans' Graves

UNRESTRICTED

The Honorable  
The Secretary of State,  
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to report that the American Legion Post in Habana organized a brief Memorial Day ceremony at the Colon Cemetery to express homage on May 30, 1946 to the memory of deceased American veterans. There were prayers by American Episcopal, Jewish and Catholic clergymen, and I made a brief address, a copy of which is enclosed in accordance with Note 2, Sec. I-15 of the Foreign Service Regulations. After this ceremony, a delegation of the members of the Legion, the Military and Naval Attachés and the Counselor of the Embassy went out to the cemetery at the former United States Military Aviation Base at San Antonio de los Baños where each of 57 graves was decorated and the same three clergymen offered prayers after brief remarks by Colonel E. E. Glenn, Military Attaché of this Embassy.

Respectfully yours,  
For the Ambassador:

*Robert F. Woodward*  
Robert F. Woodward  
Counselor of Embassy

Enclosure:  
Copy of Memorial Day address

File No. 121  
RFWoodward/hmf

To Department in original and hectograph

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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Memorial Day Address  
by Ambassador R. Henry Norweb

Bishop Blankingship;  
Members of the American Legion;  
Fellow Americans and friends:

Since the sad days of our Civil War in the United States, we have set aside this Memorial Day each year. We are here to pay homage to the memory of those men who have sacrificed their lives for our country and for our ideals. The members of the Legion have come here today as loyal veterans to decorate the graves of their comrades in a patriotic gesture of respect and gratitude to them.

Tragically, the number of these graves has grown from generation to generation. Now, in addition to the venerable heroes buried in this Colon Cemetery, there are 57 graves in the cemetery near San Antonio de los Baños. Some of those men never entered combat; but all were equally victims of the titanic world struggle and made the supreme sacrifice for the same objectives.

After each war in which Americans have died, the people of our Nation have determined that there shall be no more American lives lost in this way. Up until now, we have not been successful in this determination. But each time, the chances of success have improved. Each time these sacrifices have been made, our nation has become a greater moral force and a more powerful instrument toward world peace.

Lincoln spoke for all of us when he said, "It is for us the living 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 their last full measure of devotion." These words are even more challenging today than they were 83 years ago. Now, again, the first sentence of the United Nations Charter asserts the determination of the peoples of the United Nations to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. This objective is now more than a challenge; new instruments of destruction make it a question of national survival. In the face of possibilities of such magnitude, we may feel that there is little we can do as individuals to make sure that these honored dead have not died in vain. But as we lay flowers on these graves under the tropical sun, we can remember that the ideals for which these men died are the ideals of all men of good will. The causes for which they fought ignored all petty differences and small disputes. We too can do our utmost to overlook small differences; we can support our leaders who are exerting every effort to establish guarantees of lasting peace; and we can consecrate in our hearts the democratic ideals for which these compatriots gave their lives.