

1979

Veteran's Day Ceremony

Roger J. Miner '56

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.nyls.edu/tributes_testimonials



Part of the [Judges Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Miner '56, Roger J., "Veteran's Day Ceremony" (1979). *Tributes & Testimonials*. 3.
http://digitalcommons.nyls.edu/tributes_testimonials/3

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Speeches and Writings at DigitalCommons@NYLS. It has been accepted for inclusion in Tributes & Testimonials by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@NYLS.

VETERANS DAY

November 11, 1979

We are gathered once again to honor those who have served our nation in all its wars. Today, November 11, 1979, the United States of America is at peace, owing to the sacrifices of those whom we honor here. General MacArthur said: "No one appreciates peace as much as the soldier, for he has known the penalty of war." It is the duty of every American to observe Veteran's Day. But it is significant that most of those present in 7th Street Park in the City of Hudson on this Veteran's Day are themselves veterans, mustered to pay homage to their fallen comrades and to celebrate the peace they have earned.

This day presents an opportunity for veterans to bring to the attention of their fellow Americans a lesson they have learned at great cost -- that to be always ready for war is the surest way to avoid it. It is generally conceded that the military preparedness of the United States today is not what it should be and that our national security is in jeopardy. In short, we are not ready for war. The overall balance of military power between the United States and the Soviet Union is shifting against us. A national news magazine recently reported that the Soviets hold substantial leads in the total military manpower, in tanks, in artillery, in tactical warplanes and in major warships. Over all, they have spent about 100 billion dollars more than the United States on arms in the past decade.

Although defense spending claimed 58% of all our federal

expenditures in 1955, it fell to 40% in 1965 and now stands at 23% of federal spending, the lowest since the early 1940s. While the Pentagon is now asking for a 3% increase in our military budget, the Soviets have increased their military budgets 5% per year for the past 15 years. A New York City newspaper reported last week that, regardless of the Salt II Treaty, the nuclear margin will be in Russia's favor in the 1980s and the Soviet conventional force will be even greater than it is now. The result is an increasingly aggressive Soviet international policy, a lack of confidence on the part of our Allies and a lack of respect on the part of those opposed to us. The potential consequences are serious.

an examination of world geography reveals that forces hostile to our interests are in place in many strategic locations throughout the globe. There are Russian bases and supply depots in such diverse locations as South Yemen, eastern Europe, Ethiopia, Libya, Cuba and Afghanistan. Their forces lie close to the oil fields of the middle east. The apparent Soviet policy is to take advantage of every opportunity to subvert established governments, to influence events and to advance their interests at our expense. Former Secretary of State Kissinger has warned of this unprecedented use of Cuban and other proxy forces. We find such forces now in Africa, Southeast Asia, the Middle East and now even on our own doorstep in Central America. Indeed, Soviet supported subversive activities are flourishing in the Caribbean and in South America in violation of the doctrine which

was enunciated by President Monroe in 1823 and has formed a cornerstone of our foreign policy ever since. The military alliances known as SEATO and CENTO are no more, and our NATO alliance is only of limited value. Events in Iran during the past week bear out the fact that we face deadly threats around the world.

The lesson is clear. Our national security requires that the United States of America possess a military force second to none, and those who do not wish us well must know that we are resolved to maintain this force. Government spending for health and housing has increased two thousand per cent in the past decade. But veterans know that a nation's most fundamental social welfare obligation is to protect and defend its citizens, and that we must therefore increase our military spending as well.

This country is still the greatest country in the world. Refugees from many nations still seek to breathe the air of freedom in the United States. I have presided in court on many occasion when foreign born people were admitted to American citizenship. It is truly a moving experience to witness their emotions on being received as citizens.

The Russians come here to buy wheat, the Chinese come for modern technology and the Arabs come with money to invest. We must be doing something right. What we are doing wrong is failing to provide all that is necessary for our national security. The hour is late and the time to act soon will be

past.

The veterans we honor today met the challenges they faced in the defense of our beloved nation with strength and courage. May we all find the same strength and courage in the years ahead. Our form of government and our way of life lie in the balance.