



## **Patriot Day and National Day of Service and Remembrance**

### **(Greetings)**

**The events of September 11, 2001, instantly transformed America and forever changed the world. As terrorists hijacked aircraft, cowardly plunging them into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and into the ground in a rural field in Pennsylvania, any innocence or naivety we once held as a nation was lost.**

**The certainty of events was there for all of us to see as nearly 3,000 innocent men, women and children were killed and more than 6,000 were wounded during the attacks on**

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**America: The motive and truth behind the deeds of the terrorists made it clear that America and freedom-loving people everywhere have enemies. Those enemies aren't guided by religious beliefs but by bigotry and intolerance ... and they fear the very thing we draw inspiration from - freedom!**

**Tyrants and cowards and bullies of the world have misjudged the United States of America in the past. They have made a fatal mistake of assessing our strength of purpose and our national resolve. The forces that fed, nurtured and eventually spawned the terrorist attacks on 9/11 made the same error in judgement.**

**The attacks of 9/11 did not weaken us; they were but a test and only served to unite us as a people. Today, the**

**smoking rubble of the Twin Towers has been removed and, in its place, stands the nation's tallest skyscraper and a memorial that continues to remind the nation of the resilience of its people. The scarred and scorched field in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, has been healed by time and nature, and the destroyed halls of the Pentagon have been repaired and rebuilt.**

**The memories of the infamous events of that day are just as clear today as they were 23 years ago. And although years, and even decades may pass, the memories of 9/11 will stay with us. None of us will forget where they were and what they were doing when our world came to a screeching halt.**

**And because we remember, we will forever and always honor the memory of the men, women and children who perished that day, by continuing on with the same determination and sense of spirit exhibited by so many of our fellow citizens that day including heroic acts ... moments of valor and courage beyond words shown by firefighters, police and emergency personnel.**

**We may have been frightened by the terrorist attacks on 9/11, but America didn't surrender or succumb to fear. Our nation drew upon the same values that have carried American ideals from century to century, from one generation to another ... goodness will prevail over the forces of evil, because what is life without freedom.**

**September 11th changed our perspective and the way we see the rest of the world. It has brought a new and sometimes harsh reality to us all ... it has become evident that evil *does* exist in the world and unless we are willing to make a stand against the surge of violence and evil aimed at our nation, we will be destroyed by it. Unless we stand strong, wickedness will prevail. Over the past 23 years, America has continued to live up to its responsibilities to ensure that does not happen.**

**This responsibility has brought with it a fresh reminder that freedom must never be underappreciated ... it is never free. We have set an example ... have put forth the effort and sacrifice in places like Afghanistan and Iraq to help see to it that people of those countries have the same opportunity to live in freedom and peace that we do.**

**For generations to come, Americans will look back to 9/11 and remember their responsibilities in preserving liberty and maintaining America's ideals and in doing so will do just as we are doing today – honor the memory and the deeds of September 11th.**

**As we leave here today, join me in vowing to those here and to the world that we will do more than we did the day before to serve our communities and our nation.**

**Thank you, and may we always stand together as proud Americans.**

**-VFW-**