



THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

MAY 21 2001

**National Moment of Remembrance
Memorial Day Message
May 2001**

From the Pentagon, there is visible a small, gently rolling corner of Arlington Cemetery. One cannot look upon its headstones, row on row, without being powerfully reminded of the great spirit of service and sacrifice that has defined this country from its very beginnings. With Memorial Day's dawn, we are called as a nation to remember these souls and all our honored dead, the men and women whose ultimate sacrifice guaranteed the liberties that we have enjoyed throughout the history of our nation.

Their sacrifice spans generations, and yet they share a common bond--they all died for a cause much greater than themselves. There is a long-told story that in the early days of the Second World War, General George Marshall was asked if America had a secret weapon to win the war. He replied that we did have such a weapon--he called it "the best darn kids in the world." Today, the "best darn kids" still wear this nation's uniform; they are the men and women who nobly put their lives at risk defending the freedoms we hold dear. And their devotion to duty honors the memory of their fallen brethren each and every day.

On this Memorial Day, in gratitude for our country's blessings, let each of us pause in a national moment of remembrance for America's sons and daughters who gave the last full measure of devotion--to recall their hopes, their dreams, their valor. Let us be inspired by their selfless idealism and pledge ourselves anew to do our part to ensure the children of today and tomorrow will not have to share in their suffering and sacrifice.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donald H. Rumsfeld", is positioned above the printed name.

Donald H. Rumsfeld

