

FOIA MARKER

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Revised Final 4/19/00 3:30 pm
Sam Afridi

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN
4-19-00

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
DEDICATION OF OKLAHOMA CITY
NATIONAL MEMORIAL
OKLAHOMA CITY, OK
APRIL 19, 2000

cc:
Speechwriting

4-19-00

Acknowledgements: Governor Keating; Senator

Nickles ; Members of the Congress; Mayor Humphreys;

Robert Johnson (Chairman of the Oklahoma City

National Memorial Trust); Karen Luke (Chair of the

Oklahoma City National Memorial Foundation); Robert

Stanton, Attorney General Reno and all the Members of

my Administration, Dr. Harris (First United Methodist

Church), the Oklahoma City Philharmonic Brass, the 168-

Voice Memorial Community Choir, Shantel Smith (Miss

America 1996); all those responsible for the design of this

memorial.

~~TY - TY & Oregon University TY Professor on going effort to return~~
~~TY Design / bell / school / ~~house~~~~
~~Pratt~~
~~Ch. Allen~~

Most of all, to the families who lost your loved ones,
the survivors and your families, the rescue workers, and
the family of Oklahoma. ^π I can add little to the words and
music, to the silence and amazing grace of your
memorial.

~~By Signature~~

Its empty chairs recall the Mercy Seat of Old
Testament scripture (*Exodus 25:17*)—a place for the
children of God to come for renewal and dedication.

This is a day for remembrance and for renewal.
Hillary and I will never forget being with you at the
memorial service while the rescue teams were still
searching.

I know the last five years haven't been easy. But I hope you can take comfort in knowing that America is still with you, and that, with this memorial, America will never forget.

There are places in our national landscape so scarred by freedom's sacrifice that they shape forever the soul of America. This place is such sacred ground.

On this day 225 years ago, the American Revolution began. The brave Americans we lost here 220 years later, though they were not fighting a war, were also patriots in service to their fellow citizens, or children whose promise keeps our old democracy forever young.

Five years ago, the cowards who killed them made a choice. They chose to attack this building and the people in it, because they wanted to strike a blow in America's heartland—at the core of our nation's being. This was an attack on all America, and every American.

Five years later, we are here because you made a choice. You chose hope and love over despair and hatred. It was a wise but hard choice. I know there are still days when anger wells up inside you, when tears fill your eyes, when you feel your heart will break.

On those days, I hope you can find solace here, in the memory of your loved ones.

I hope you can find the strength to live a full, loving life, free of crippling hatred, as your loved ones would want you to do. [¶] Though you have given too much, you still have much good to give.

The great writer, Ralph Ellison, a native of this city, once observed that “America is woven of many strands...our fate is to become one, and yet many.” On April 19, 1995, our many strands became one in love and support for you, and in our determined opposition to terror. [¶] [You taught us again how much stronger we are when we all stand together,] — ^{in our common humanity,} to protect life, liberty & the rule of law for all.

4-14-00

~~I pray this memorial will forever serve as a powerful
reminder to all Americans of our common humanity, and
our profound duty to protect life, liberty and the rule of
law for all.~~

We ^{may} ~~will~~ never have all the answers for what
happened here. But as we continue our journey toward
understanding, ^{our President's} ~~these truths ring clear: what was meant to~~
~~divide us has brought us together; what was meant to~~
break us has made us stronger.

As I left the White House today, I looked, as I often do, upon your tree—the dogwood that Hillary and I planted on the South Lawn for those lost here. Five years later, that tree stands a little taller, its spring flowers are a little fuller, its roots have dug in a little deeper. But it's still a young tree.

Five years isn't a long time for trees to grow, for wounds to heal, for hearts to mend. But today, like your beautiful dogwood tree, Oklahoma City is blooming again.

For that, all Americans--and decent, good people the world over—are grateful to you. And to God for the grace that led you on.

It is written in Romans: “The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.” (*Romans 13:12-14*)

May you keep on the armor of light—may you keep your light shining on this place of hope--where the memories of the lost and the meaning of America will live forever. Thank you. God bless you. God bless America.

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