

A GENERAL'S TESTIMONY

Sunday is Veterans Day 2018, an official United States holiday honoring people who have served in the Armed Forces. It coincides with Armistice Day, proclaimed by President Woodrow Wilson for Nov. 11, 1919, to mark the end of World War I.

In 1945, Raymond Weeks, a World War II veteran from Birmingham, Alabama, had the idea to expand Armistice Day to celebrate all veterans, not just those who died in World War I, and President Dwight Eisenhower signed a bill establishing the holiday in 1954. It has been known as Veterans Day since.

What would an old soldier – one who by his valor and leadership on the battlefield in World War II rose to appointment as the first Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff – have us consider on this special day? General of the Army Omar N. Bradley was a U.S. Army field commander in North Africa and Europe during that global conflict. On Nov. 10, 1948, Bradley spoke for an Armistice Day celebration in Boston. Here are some of his comments:

“The American people have said ... that any threat to freedom is a threat to our own lives. For we know that unless free peoples stand boldly and united against the forces of aggression, they may fall wretchedly, one by one, in the web of oppression. It is fear of the brutal, unprincipled use of force by reckless nations that might ignore the vast reserves of our defensive strength that has caused the American people to enlarge their air, naval and ground arms. Reluctant as we are to muster this costly strength, we must leave no chance for miscalculation in the mind of any aggressor.”

Referring to the atom bomb as a military weapon, Bradley said it may “*contain the choice between the quick and the dead. The way to win an atomic war is to make certain it never starts. Our knowledge of science has clearly outstripped our capacity to control it. We have many men of science; too few men of God. We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount. Man is stumbling blindly through a spiritual darkness while toying with the precarious secrets of life and death. The world has achieved brilliance without wisdom, power without conscience. Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants. We know more about war than we know about peace, more about killing than we know about living.*”

History has borne Gen. Bradley's testimony to be true. Since his speech, we have had the Korean Conflict, the Vietnam War and wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

If we want to give hope to our children and generations to follow, we must have more men and women of God, a commitment to Christ, and the development of character in ourselves so that His light can shine in this very dark world.

Some points worthy of pondering on this Veterans Day 2018.

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? Psalm 27:1 NKJV

– Beecher Hunter