

referred to Republican Presidential candidate former Gov. W. Mitt Romney of Massachu-

setts. He also referred to Jefferson-Jackson dinners, Democratic Party fundraising events.

The President's Weekly Address

May 26, 2012

This weekend, folks across the country are opening up the pool, firing up the grill, and taking a well-earned moment to relax. But Memorial Day is more than a 3-day weekend. In town squares and national cemeteries, in public services and moments of quiet reflection, we will honor those who loved their country enough to sacrifice their own lives for it.

This Memorial Day, Michelle and I will join Gold Star families, veterans, and their families at Arlington National Cemetery. We'll pay tribute to patriots of every generation who gave the last full measure of devotion, from Lexington and Concord to Iraq and Afghanistan.

Later that day, we'll join Vietnam veterans and their families at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial—the wall. We'll begin to mark the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam war. It's another chance to honor those we lost at places like Hue, Khe Sanh, Da Nang, and Hamburger Hill. And we'll be calling on you, the American people, to join us in thanking our Vietnam veterans in your communities.

Even as we honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice, we reaffirm our commitment to care for those who served alongside them, the veterans who came home. This includes our newest generation of veterans, from Iraq and Afghanistan. We have to serve them and their families as well as they have served us: by making sure that they get the health care and benefits they need, by caring for our wounded warriors and supporting our military families, and by giving veterans the chance to go to college,

find a good job, and enjoy the freedom that they risked everything to protect.

Our men and women in uniform took an oath to defend our country at all costs, and today, as members of the finest military the world has ever known, they uphold that oath with dignity and courage. As President, I have no higher honor than serving as their Commander in Chief. But with that honor comes a solemn responsibility, one that gets driven home every time I sign a condolence letter or meet a family member whose life has been turned upside down.

No words can ever bring back a loved one who has been lost. No ceremony can do justice to their memory. No honor will ever fill their absence.

But on Memorial Day, we come together as Americans to let these families and veterans know they are not alone. We give thanks for those who sacrificed everything so that we could be free. And we commit ourselves to upholding the ideals for which so many patriots have fought and died.

Thank you, God bless you, and have a wonderful weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 12:55 p.m. on May 25 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on May 26. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 25, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on May 26. The related proclamation of May 25 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at a Memorial Day Ceremony in Arlington, Virginia

May 28, 2012

Thank you very much. Please be seated. Good morning, everybody. Thank you, Secretary Panetta, for your introduction and for your

incredible service to our country. To General Dempsey, to Major General Linnington, Kathryn Condon, Chaplain Berry, all of you who are