9-14-2001

National Day of Remembrance

Minor Myers, jr.

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/myers_news

Part of the Higher Education Commons

This Article is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by Digital Commons @ IWU with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this material in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/or on the work itself. This material has been accepted for inclusion by faculty at Illinois Wesleyan University. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@iwu.edu.

©Copyright is owned by the author of this document.
We remember this day,
those we cannot yet name,
in a number we cannot yet count,
who died a death we cannot yet explain.

Yet there is no doubt they are unexpected martyrs to the cause of a normal world,
a normal world of joy and productivity guided on every continent by reason.

The Renaissance recovered that classical theme of humanity guided by reason,
Reason apart from fanaticism and dogma,
a reason which knew no sect or national boundary,
a reason which encompassed all the species in its scope and in its hope.

The American government has been an early and evolving experiment shaped by these principles.
And the American model of public judgment by reason in the interest of all has spread over the globe,
always speaking a local language,
always dreaming of international peace and international prosperity,
always knowing prosperity was not yet universal,
but with people of good heart striving ever to make it so.

Whilst eastern families prepared for school and much of a nation slept still in security,
The lives of thousands ended with no notice,
And expectations and certainties of a nation and a world were set awry,
But dreams and commitment were not.

This has been a reflective week among us.

Opportunities to support the Red Cross in its relief efforts continue as you leave today at our Business Office all next week, and a candlelight vigil gathers at the John Wesley Powell Monument tonight at 8 p.m.

In all our gatherings, students, faculty and staff have shown an even greater vigor in imagining a peaceful, just world as it might be.

The lasting impact of September 11 and these martyr victims of irrationality we remember today will surely be a renewed focus in asking the most serious questions for
the most serious of purposes:

whence have we come, and wither are we going?

Perhaps the greatest gift of the Enlightenment was the perception that humanity and reason are not the victims of civilization, but its creators. That civilization itself is an artifact.

May the memory of these victims be the stimulus and the inspiration of creations ever more just, more prosperous, and more peaceful.