



November 12, 2007

Watco Team:

The PBS Network recently aired a documentary by Ken Burns called "The War". Burns' wanted to honor the experiences of those who lived through the greatest cataclysm in human history by providing the opportunity for them to bear witness to their own history.

The series was an outstanding account of World War II through the life of men and women, both at war and at home. It revealed some amazing history about a world wide conflict beginning with the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937 and the Nazi invasion of Poland in 1939, ending with the capture of Berlin in 1945 and the Japanese surrender following the atom bomb attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As we know, WWII was the most wide spread war in history, which mobilized more than 100 million soldiers, resulting in the deaths of more than 70 million people and physical and emotional detriment to many more.

It was also a testament to the power of human fortitude resulting in an amazing accomplishment to defeat the evils of Japanese and Nazi imperialism to secure world freedom. The collective fortitude of the people of the Allied nations and the technological strength of their industrial economies was the determining factors in the defeat of what many consider the truest of evil. Many amazing facts were revealed by Mr. Burns, including the fact that the U.S. entered the war at a time when our military capabilities still depended on horseback cavalries and single shot rifles. The war finally ended when President Truman authorized the production and use of the atomic bomb just a few years later...a weapon fashioned from one of the most scientific discoveries even by today's standards.

On this Veterans Day, we should all honor the fact that freedom is not free by making a special effort to say thank you to someone who is serving or has served in the military. Let's say thank you for the sacrifices they have made and continue to make to protect this precious right that many in the world even today do not understand. I would also ask that we make a special effort to reach out and thank a WWII veteran for their sacrifice during and after the war.

In explaining the reason for the series, Mr. Burn explained that correspondent Eric Sevareid was troubled because he had been reporting on the fighting for four years, and had done his best to convey to his listeners back home all that he had seen and heard in Burma, France, Italy and Germany--But he was haunted by the sense that he had failed. He told his audience:

“Only the soldier really lives the war. The journalist does not -- war happens inside a man -- and that is why, in a certain sense, you and your sons from the war will be forever strangers. If, by the miracles of art and genius, in later years two or three among them can open their hearts and

the right words come, then perhaps we shall all know a little of what it was like -- and we shall know then that all the present speakers and writers hardly touched the story.”

We salute all veterans and thank you for your supreme sacrifice for the freedom you have given us.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. D. ...". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line above the first few letters.