

Today is Veterans Day

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Veterans leave the service much older and wiser than they entered. They don't want a parade. They want a good job and respect and their dignity. They hope the girl or family they left behind will still be there. To honor them, you must do more than talk.

GREEN BAY - We used to call it Armistice Day, to mark the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of 1918 when an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, between the Allied nations and Germany went into effect to stop the bloodshed of World War I. The Treaty of Versailles, which officially ended "The Great War" or the "War to End All Wars" was not signed until seven months later.

Many historians regard the Treaty of Versailles as the first event leading to World War II, since it put into place many of the social and economic factors in Europe that lead to that bloody event. It seems like we have been fighting ever since.

Today we observe Veterans Day to remember and honor the courageous men and women who have served our country in all of our wars. It is fitting we do that, at least. We owe them all our gratitude for a job well done.

But many veterans struggle to reenter civilian life after their service, whether it be finding a job, accessing health care, or finding the other services available to them.

Veterans leave the service much older and wiser than they entered. All the claims of patriotism and glory that they heard on TV before they entered are dulled now by the reality of war and the loneliness of deployment. Most now just want to go home.

But they don't want a parade. They want a good job and respect and their dignity. They hope the girl or family they left behind will still be there. Many would like to go to college and better themselves. They hope for what all of those lucky enough to stay behind in civilian life take for granted.

So today is Veterans Day. Give them a parade if you like. But tomorrow, do something. Open some doorways to those good jobs or college educations. Be there for them, just like you would be there for your own son or daughter, husband or wife, if they were returning home.

That's what veterans day should really be about.

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