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KILROY
WAS HERE

A National WWII Day. Now!

I'M NOT A WWII VETERAN, nor did I tough out life on the home front. I never kneaded color into margarine, never fell to my knees praying as a kamikaze screamed overhead. My connection to World War II, however, is still personal. I am connected to it by people.

Those people—Mom and Dad, aunts and uncles—were all WWII folk. Whenever they talked about the old days, especially the war, I soaked it up. From Mom, I heard about the margarine. Dad told stories of flying on medium bombers in Europe. Uncle Leo was at Pearl Harbor's Hickam Field on December 7, and my Seabee uncle Butch was the one praying beneath the kamikaze.

My kids have WWII connections, too. They have known my mom (who still has moxie at 82), my late dad, and some of my aunts and uncles. But their kids will know maybe one or two very old WWII people, and their grandkids won't know any. That's when World War II will officially slip into the past.

That will be a dangerous moment. For too many people, World War II will become remote and irrelevant, a faint and fading impression. But the conflict that rewired the world and opened the door to our modern era is too important for such a fate. Isn't there something we can do to make sure Americans don't forget about World War II?

Yes there is! Right now, thanks to the nonprofit Keep the Spirit of '45 Alive (www.spiritof45.org), there is a proposal in the US House of Representatives to create a permanent national WWII day of remembrance. House Concurrent Resolution 226 would establish Spirit of '45 Day on the second Sunday of every August, near V-J Day.

We need that day of remembrance! Here's why:

1. Because World War II and its aftereffects continue to shape world events and international relations. Understanding World War II is indispensable for understanding our own times.
2. Because World War II underscores the harm that comes when extremism, intolerance, and aggression fester and spread.
3. Because young people need to hear how perseverance, hope, faith, sacrifice, and hard work got WWII Americans through their darkest days.
4. Because World War II is a monumental example of what people can accomplish when they work together.
5. Because we owe tribute to our WWII people. They were, as my dad said, "just a bunch of dumb kids" when they stepped up to halt the greatest surge of tyranny, aggression, and outright evil the earth has ever seen. Then they helped rebuild their shattered world.

An annual WWII day will give communities and organizations a hook for celebrations and educational activities—the very things that will help future generations learn about World War II.

Are you with me on this? Then let's give it the Rosie the Riveter treatment. We can do it! Contact your congressmen today and ask them to establish a WWII day of remembrance! See americainwwii.com for help.



James P. Kushlan
Editor and Publisher, *America in WWII*