

00:00:01:09 - 00:00:23:18

Speaker 1

What? It's an honor and privilege on behalf of our chapter investment chapter to be hosting the 1996 state convention. It's also my privilege to, come up to the platform and take the, about this time for volunteering as the state chairperson. Somebody would ask me this about a year ago when I first started, and I said, no, no problem.

00:00:23:21 - 00:00:52:19

Speaker 1

yesterday, with a different situation. I think it's come together very well. I welcome all of you from all the chapters, especially those that have traveled great distance. This morning we had a fire salute from our Modesto chapter color guard. Thank you all. So at our breakfast meeting we had some dignitaries, but I welcome this. The city council chairman, City council chairman Tim, Fisher and also Board of supervisors and chairperson Pat Paul.

00:00:52:20 - 00:01:19:03

Speaker 1

Thank you. It's a pleasure to be up here to say that on behalf of the American G.I. forum, we come together to share the things that we believe in. We hope during this conference that we'll be able to express those kind of things, especially for the youth. We have a full gender would like to do is just to continue on our agenda as it's laid out and, and enjoy ourselves.

00:01:19:06 - 00:01:41:04

Speaker 1

One of the things in the Central Valley that we enjoy so much are the, fruits. And that's an abundance of the crops that are here. We also ask you to, enjoy yourself with the entertainment that we have available and to enjoy anything else that we can share with you if they need anything. Those of us that have the blue ribbon, the committee chair, people ask us, and we'll help you.

00:01:41:07 - 00:01:48:24

Speaker 1

Thank you.

00:01:48:26 - 00:01:49:15

Unknown

Young and old.

00:01:49:16 - 00:02:03:13

Speaker 1

For a job well done. At this time, I'd like to introduce the state officers and, And the state commander, our third vice commander, Mr. Richard Martinez from Thomas and.

00:02:03:16 - 00:02:17:18

Speaker 1

Officer, vice commander is, Mr. Rose. Gloria. I sit here in front with us this morning. Grab grammar charity right here. Yeah, I know, you, but I failed to get it from part.

00:02:17:20 - 00:02:29:05

Speaker 1

We appreciate the work that that that everybody has done. Our state treasurer, Mr. Leo Aguilar, and our state commander.

00:02:29:07 - 00:02:36:10

Speaker 1

Okay. Thank. And our secretary, Mr. Stout, that's on. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

00:02:36:12 - 00:02:42:15

Speaker 1

And our chaplain is our Mr.. Our Santa.

00:02:42:17 - 00:03:07:16

Speaker 1

Our sergeant at arms is Escondido Navarro who has not arrived yet, but I appointed Carol from federal state chapter to be our there. I'm sorry. I'm sorry I did not. Yeah. And so you'll be taken over. Our film is no longer comes in. Our women's state chairperson, Mr. Mariana. Thank you. And thanks.

00:03:07:19 - 00:03:40:12

Speaker 3

For Wednesday. Yes. And your your videos. I'm honest with you, there are some every promoted Modesto or our reinvention. Lieutenant Ortiz. Thank you. That from if it only I know that I know where you're from. Is that a member. Yes. That's a no. That's kind of at the front of Army patrol for my first year.

00:03:40:14 - 00:04:02:20

Speaker 3

In a moment, I need that has been working real hard and done with. The Queen. Coordinator will introduce them to you individually so that you can see how beautiful they are, one by one. it's really nice to be here in Modesto. It was very nice to speak to, guest speakers that were here earlier. I look forward to a very fruitful back convention.

00:04:02:22 - 00:04:23:08

Speaker 3

at 10:00. We will meet, shortly, because at 11, by 1030, we can be back here for that press conference. So please don't forget. And I do want to say that I'm really impressed with the job that, the whole community has done. They really have been working hard. It's a thankless job and a lot of work.

00:04:23:08 - 00:04:35:19

Speaker 3

So my special thanks goes to the committee and the members of them. They're still working to.

00:04:35:21 - 00:04:51:05

Speaker 1

Thank you. I got, I'm sure, some budget and happy with it. Going to teacher person. I like to ask stuff. later I would introduce my state clean and clean candidate. I am one of the hardest working members of the American Guard from California.

00:04:51:12 - 00:04:58:14

Unknown

Thank you.

00:04:58:16 - 00:05:06:18

Unknown

I.

00:05:06:20 - 00:05:37:27

Speaker 3

Good morning and welcome. It is my honor and pleasure to introduce to you our state Queen, April Machuca. And I ask her to come up and she will introduce the candidates. April, would you give up the honor?

00:05:38:00 - 00:05:38:29

Speaker 3

Thank you.

00:05:39:01 - 00:05:39:14

Speaker 4

For joining.

00:05:39:15 - 00:06:01:22

Speaker 3

Everybody. somebody I would like to introduce to, the queens vying for my crown this year. So, let us start with, good morning. Representing the Stockton chapter. Little.

00:06:01:24 - 00:06:15:06

Speaker 3

Next is our young lady from East Valley. her name is the night Amber Phenix.

00:06:15:08 - 00:06:24:22

Speaker 3

Representing the Salvaje chapter. We have many meetings.

00:06:24:24 - 00:06:29:24

Speaker 3

And last but not least, we have our friend the Sarah.

00:06:29:27 - 00:06:36:27

Unknown

Your alternate to.

00:06:36:29 - 00:07:02:05

Speaker 3

these girls, like I said before, will be vying for the crown, tomorrow night. So we wish them all the best of luck. And, as you can see, they're very lovely. So the judges will have a hard time figuring out who should be our next queen. Good luck. Girl.

00:07:02:07 - 00:07:28:19

Speaker 3

We have, a schedule for the girls that, is going to be very, busy. And, if you don't see them for a while, sometimes, you know that they're practicing their speeches and what have you. And also, I would like to thank the Chaperons. miss Buttercup, would you stand up, please? So they'll know.

00:07:28:19 - 00:07:29:00

Speaker 3

Are you.

00:07:29:04 - 00:07:37:06

Unknown

And, will have on.

00:07:37:08 - 00:08:01:27

Speaker 3

And special. Especially girls. Florence has consistently with the girls. You're not just saying that. They're, all their needs have been met. Santa Rosa, really? Thank you for the marketing part. And we have, other two other, family members that are arriving later.

00:08:02:00 - 00:08:28:15

Speaker 5

Thank you. Willie. fellow foreigners, I would like to take the great opportunity that has been given to me to, honor some of this heroes that we have within our organization. And, I will start off by letting you know that sometime this afternoon, we are going to have, Colonel Jay Vargas, who is a recipient of the Medal of Honor, 30 years in the Marine Corps.

00:08:28:16 - 00:08:49:23

Speaker 5

He is also the secretary for Veterans affairs for the state of California. He will be coming in shortly this afternoon. But presently we have with us a gentleman that received. He should have received a medal of honor, but he didn't. So they gave him the one right below the Medal of Honor, which is the Distinguished Service Cross. And this is for gallantry in action in Europe during World War two.

00:08:49:26 - 00:09:11:29

Speaker 5

received the Distinguished Service Cross. just, a couple of years ago, a little bit later, about 50 years late. But they had forgotten through the system that he had earned the Distinguished Service Cross. So we worked it out together with the six women of the Presidio and were able to award, this, distinguished medal to, Mr., Raimundo Medina.

00:09:12:02 - 00:09:25:11

Speaker 5

And if he, would kindly come forward.

00:09:25:14 - 00:09:46:13

Speaker 5

secondly, we have, with us, I know there's a lot of heroes among us here, and I want to introduce some of the, ones that have been recognized recently. One that just got back from, New York City. And he was recognized for his heroism in Normandy, the Normandy invasion at Omaha Beach on June 6th.

00:09:46:15 - 00:10:02:23

Speaker 5

they had a reunion with the 30th Division, and we have, with us, Mr., Isidore Sanchez, who is busy taking pictures, but, he should be recognized.

00:10:02:25 - 00:10:19:01

Speaker 5

I forgot to do one thing in this to introduce their beautiful wife. Said Mr. Medina's wife. Jesse, Jose shouldn't be back there. Mr. Sanchez, his wife, Mary, sitting right here with us. Would you please stand, please?

00:10:19:03 - 00:10:42:02

Speaker 5

Also from Vietnam. We have quite a few, heroes. And, they're all heroes. Anybody that serve them. They're all heroes in my book. And we have, David, Ramirez. Rodriguez. I'm sorry. David Rodriguez, who served in Vietnam very gallantly. I believe we received three, silver stars. David, are you here?

00:10:42:05 - 00:10:45:22

Speaker 1

Yes. Is. Come on. David. David. Well, I was talking to.

00:10:45:27 - 00:10:50:08

Speaker 5

David would be joining. Please.

00:10:50:10 - 00:11:23:05

Speaker 5

And he's also the, He's also the San Jose chapter commander. And the other gentleman I'm hoping is here, who did real well. And, and, showed his heroism was able quarter from Vietnam. war. Is he here? Is able to here Abel Cotto or you here? Would you come forward, please? Okay. we have, another gentleman here, as we went along through World War Two.

00:11:23:05 - 00:11:46:13

Speaker 5

Then Korea came along and, of course, we picked up medal after medal, medal of Honor of people. We picked up a total of 38 Congressional Medal of honors throughout this wars. And, during the Korean War, we had a gentleman that served with the Indian had second Infantry Division, and he unfortunately got caught at, Heartbreak Ridge in Korea, where they lost a lot of people there.

00:11:46:16 - 00:12:16:19

Speaker 5

If you were in Korea, you know what Heartbreak Ridge was all about. I'd like to bring to you, Mr. Joseph Paine. Joe, are you here? Come. Okay. He's probably on his way over here. Joe is also a, He's our secretary for the East Valley chapter, which I command. And, of course, also, we have, the, the two gentlemen that I introduced previously, Mr. Marino, Mr. Sanchez, they're also members of the East Valley chapter.

00:12:16:19 - 00:12:26:27

Speaker 5

So I'm just so happy and honored to have this type of, heroes in my organization.

00:12:27:00 - 00:12:53:06

Speaker 5

Okay. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you very much. Mr. Martinez, and at this time, I'd like to really recognize our war heroes and all those veterans that served in the armed forces during, all these



conflicts that we've had, the World War two, World War One and others. And that's we're starting for just a few seconds here while the people are sitting down and coming in.

00:12:53:08 - 00:13:04:14

Speaker 5

We were about ready to start our press conference. And, please, everybody sit down at this time, please.

00:13:04:16 - 00:13:17:01

Speaker 5

I think the women's, group has, already broke and,

00:13:17:04 - 00:13:20:14

Speaker 4

Yeah.

00:13:20:16 - 00:13:38:06

Speaker 5

Ladies and gentlemen, at this time, I'd like to ask you to stand. And observe. just a few seconds in memory of those soldiers who have died in passwords and especially the ones that just died.

00:13:38:09 - 00:13:50:04

Speaker 1

And, so forth.

00:13:50:06 - 00:13:55:19

Speaker 5

Thank you very much for.

00:13:55:21 - 00:14:40:03

Speaker 5

At this time, we we're starting a press conference, and I'd like to introduce the person that will lead the press conference in lieu of our national commander, who is in Bosnia. And today with Secretary of Defense Bill Perry there in, Saudi Arabia, Mr.. Jack Reed and our national director, Mr.. Tony Morales. with the Secretary of Defense in Saudi Arabia and our next a highest official from the American GI forum, national official is Mr. Leo Avila, and he will, then proceed with a press conference.

00:14:40:05 - 00:14:41:06

Speaker 6

Good morning.

00:14:41:08 - 00:14:42:26

Speaker 4

Good morning. You.

00:14:42:29 - 00:15:43:28

Speaker 6

On behalf of the American GI Forum of California, we welcome you here this morning. We are gathered here today. To pay our respects. To those young people that found peace at last, in death, in the service of our country and that far distant place called Saudi Arabia. We ask that our that the rest as peaceful. And we honor their memory because they have joined the countless thousands that have given their all and the service of our country.

00:15:44:00 - 00:15:50:19

Speaker 6

These people did not question if it was right to be in Saudi Arabia.

00:15:50:22 - 00:16:05:06

Speaker 6

They had a duty to their country, and they gave their all. And the fulfillment of that duty. No man can give more.

00:16:05:09 - 00:16:41:27

Speaker 6

In every instance. And we as veterans, a veterans group, know that there is heartache, that there is sorrow and there is grieving. We know of the tears of mothers that say their sons go off to war. Many of them never to return. And that is that. The memory of those young people, both men and women, that serve our country.

00:16:41:29 - 00:17:16:08

Speaker 6

And I think it is also fitting that we honor the families of these people, because they do make sacrifices, and that is because of love of country. We in the American GI forum are a predominantly Hispanic veterans organization, but we honor all veterans because we all serve the same cause. And that is the protection of those principles of liberty and freedom that this country affords that citizens.

00:17:16:10 - 00:17:47:07

Speaker 6

And those privileges do not come cheap. There is sacrifice involved, and it is about that that we are here today to honor. I would like, for you to recognize the family of a young man from Alaska that has been acclaimed a hero.

00:17:47:09 - 00:17:52:10

Speaker 6

Which he rightfully is.

00:17:52:12 - 00:18:53:03

Speaker 6

The mother of Sergeant Guerrero. Maria Navarro. where are you? She's back here. perhaps we can find the place up. Let's get up here. Por favor. They got, estimate under and Ruby. Her sisters. Let's give them a big round of applause.

00:18:53:05 - 00:19:24:03

Speaker 6

Thank you very much for being with us today. We appreciate it. And, we want to recognize again the anxiety and the hardship. And now the joy of knowing that your son and brother is alive and will be coming home. On the other hand.

00:19:24:05 - 00:19:50:18

Speaker 6

On the other hand, we also want, as members of the American GI forum and this community. To join and sharing the grief of another local family. The family of Justin would, who was one of the 19 that will not be coming home.

00:19:50:21 - 00:20:20:17

Speaker 6

And, it is difficult for me to speak because I get emotional about this. Such an emotional issue. These are young people that have left their homes full of ambition, full of desire, of serving their country and coming back to carry on with normal lives like the rest of us. But for 19 of them, that is not to be.

00:20:20:20 - 00:20:47:25

Speaker 6

But thanks to the alert action of Sergeant Guerrero, an untold number will be because of the heroic action that he initiated, and no one asked him to be a hero. He did what he had to do, what he recognized had to be done. And this is what American service people are made of. People that rise to the occasion.

00:20:47:27 - 00:21:16:05

Speaker 6

People to find new adrenaline, to keep going under adverse conditions, even if it means sacrificing their life. I'm sure that for not a moment did he stop and think, well, you know, if I do this and that, I may get hurt. I'm sure that getting hurt was the farthest thing from his mind. He knew that there was a job to be done, and he did it.

00:21:16:08 - 00:21:27:19

Speaker 6

And we congratulate him and we're proud of him for having done it.

00:21:27:21 - 00:22:13:07

Speaker 6

Before. Before I relinquish the microphone to, the next speaker, there's a point that I want to make. We're primarily a, Hispanic veterans organization. And since the media is here and hopefully our message here will be carried out to the general population. The presence of the American flag, given the atmosphere today that we have in this country of division, may prompt some people to say, well, here's another bunch of Mexicans displaying the Mexican flag at an event where we proclaim Americanism because that is what we are.

00:22:13:12 - 00:22:23:13

Speaker 6

We are Americans, but we honor.

00:22:23:15 - 00:22:49:20

Speaker 6

The Mexican flag present under the memory of our parents, who for the most part came from Mexico and sacrificed their lives in this country, earning a living and contributing to the growth of this country. And it is in their memory that we display the Mexican flag, and we do it with great honor.

00:22:49:22 - 00:23:11:04

Speaker 6

And, with that, I will yield the microphone to, a friend of ours, vice president for law with AT&T, who joins us here today. Mr.. Sarah made us.

00:23:11:07 - 00:23:40:23

Speaker 5

Thank you. Liam. Let me say that, on behalf of the business community, I our heartfelt expressions of sympathy go out to those families of those 19 brave people who gave their lives in the defense of our principles and of our country and of our people. We feel that, this is a reminder that our military personnel, even though we are serving in times.

00:23:40:23 - 00:23:42:10

Speaker 7

Of peace.

00:23:42:13 - 00:24:17:25

Speaker 5

Nevertheless lay their lives on the line for those principles that we all hold so, revered and so highly in esteem throughout the history of our country. These are the people who are unsung heroes. A lot of them are, and this is an opportunity to hopefully call attention to the great service that these people do to this country in such a quiet and brave manner, to those two young people.

00:24:17:27 - 00:24:48:08

Speaker 5

the family of, the wood family, we again express our most sincere condolences, and hope that, the death of this young man will not have been in vain, that it will remind us of what our military stands for and of the heroics that people such, as this loss that, the wood family has endured, contributes.

00:24:48:11 - 00:25:06:11

Speaker 5

And what it means to this country, to the family of, Sergeant Guerrero. We also express our admiration for the great service to his own peers. And beyond that, to this country. It's an honor and a privilege to.

00:25:06:11 - 00:25:07:08

Speaker 1

Be able to be.

00:25:07:15 - 00:25:37:13

Speaker 5

In the presence of this family, and in the memory of the acts of their son. The business community, I should say very briefly, has been very supportive of the American GI forum through the years because of their efforts in helping our veterans assimilate back into society by way of job training and education. and as a result of that, you can see here today that those efforts have not gone unrewarded.

00:25:37:15 - 00:25:54:24

Speaker 5

These people have done many, many good things for many, many Americans, which in turn will in turn go out and do many good things for our country. Thank you. Thank you very much.

00:25:54:27 - 00:25:56:20

Speaker 4

I'd like to make a point of order.

00:25:56:22 - 00:25:58:00

Speaker 6

Yes, please.

00:25:58:03 - 00:26:10:18

Speaker 1

We're here to speak to the family, so I would think it is appropriate that we, get on with that. With all due respect to the heritage you have for service. allow them to stay with us.

00:26:10:19 - 00:26:18:27

Speaker 6

And that's what we're about to do. Arturo,

00:26:18:29 - 00:26:20:15

Speaker 4

You know, I don't.

00:26:20:18 - 00:26:22:01

Speaker 3

That.

00:26:22:03 - 00:26:24:09

Speaker 5

Hello?

00:26:24:11 - 00:26:30:02

Speaker 8

Have to do.

00:26:30:05 - 00:26:37:23

Speaker 5

What? My younger brother has done. I don't think.

00:26:37:25 - 00:26:39:09

Speaker 8

He understands.

00:26:39:12 - 00:26:40:25

Speaker 4

The magnitude.

00:26:40:28 - 00:26:47:05

Speaker 5

Like it's hit me. For all those that have been lost in the past. And last.

00:26:47:05 - 00:26:48:09

Speaker 1

Tuesday.



00:26:48:12 - 00:27:24:02

Speaker 8

And next week, we want to say we're sorry. with that, I just like to say that my brother's a very humble person, very responsible and a leader. He's a consummate professional. And what he's done behind what he's done is something that we've always expected of him. we love him to death. also, I'd like to thank the security guards that checked the documents that weren't in order, that did not allow those trucks to come into the buildings any closer.

00:27:24:04 - 00:27:43:23

Speaker 8

Those trucks were turned away. So the people, the guards that looked at that documentation and morning, they are heroes as well. Because if that truck would have been any closer, it would have took out my brother also. at this point, I would like to say thank you, and, I'll turn it over to my sister has spoken to my brother.

00:27:43:26 - 00:27:44:29

Speaker 4

early this morning.

00:27:45:02 - 00:27:58:09

Speaker 8

And she would be able to answer any questions as far as any details. Thank you.

00:27:58:12 - 00:28:26:25

Speaker 9

I'd like to say, this is a heads a little bit closer to home because I knew just and would do this in high school and I knew him. not well, but I knew him, and, there's there's not enough times that we can say that we feel very sorry for the wood family, and, we realize that it could very well have been us in that situation very easily because they were doing the same job.

00:28:26:28 - 00:28:54:13

Speaker 9

We'd also like to say that, my brother wants to offer his condolences to the ones that weren't able to be saved and say that, Here, he hopes nobody sees him as a hero, because what he did was what he was trained to do. And it was instinct that he do what he did. And he he hopes that people to try not to put the hero title on him too much, because he just did what he was trained to do.

00:28:54:15 - 00:29:20:18

Speaker 9

And, he sends his love to all the families and want to say how, how grateful he is for the other two, security polices as well, that, went and also knocked on doors and did what they'd had to do. my brother, it was a very emotional right now. He's, very grateful, obviously, to be alive.

00:29:20:21 - 00:29:46:03

Speaker 9

And he realizes he's going to be bombarded when he gets back to the United States. But, if you guys could give him a little bit of a break. also, I'd like to correct a misquote that's been in the media very prevalently. he is not dead. we've gotten condolence calls. We've had people pulling up at the house telling us they're sorry for my brother.

00:29:46:05 - 00:29:53:12

Speaker 9

And when things get misquoted in the media, it hurts very deeply.

00:29:53:14 - 00:29:59:23

Speaker 9

And that's basically what had to say. If you guys had any questions or wanted to speak to my mother.

00:29:59:25 - 00:30:01:15

Speaker 9

Was there any questions?

00:30:01:17 - 00:30:03:01

Speaker 1

What's your name?

00:30:03:03 - 00:30:07:11

Speaker 9

I'm Ruby Guerrero.

00:30:07:13 - 00:30:10:11

Speaker 10

Because Ruby is morada Mario and Isabel.

00:30:10:14 - 00:30:16:13

Speaker 9

Isabel Huerta as Debbie. h u e r t.

00:30:16:15 - 00:30:17:16

Speaker 1

If you talk to me.

00:30:17:18 - 00:30:35:26

Speaker 9

I talked to him this morning at 1230. I received the phone call from him. He, was very relieved to be able to know that we're okay. My mother has been put under a great deal of pressure, so we had to leave the house. If you have reporters, we're knocking on our doors.

00:30:35:28 - 00:30:40:02

Speaker 4

And hearing this and.

00:30:40:04 - 00:30:44:08

Speaker 9

Any questions that are going to be asked of my mom are going to be deferred to me. My mother wanted.

00:30:44:10 - 00:30:51:05

Speaker 4

Ask for that for me in person.

00:30:51:07 - 00:31:07:17

Speaker 9

It's like I said, she'd been in a great deal of pressure. She's obviously very relieved. At first, we didn't know whether he was dead or alive. Now that we know she has nothing but pride. But she's always had that pride in my brother because he's always been there for everyone. There's there's no. Anyone who knows my brother knows.

00:31:07:17 - 00:31:16:18

Speaker 9

He has a heart of gold. He's there for anyone, anytime, any day. And this this is just on a national level. And he's always been there for us.

00:31:16:20 - 00:31:20:17

Speaker 1

How do you feel about his assignment over there?

00:31:20:19 - 00:31:40:06

Speaker 9

the irony of it all is that we didn't realize how dangerous it was. He's been sent another, to other countries before, but we had no idea of the danger involved until now. Now we realize that what he does is hard work, and it takes discipline. And my brother's a perfect person for it.

00:31:40:09 - 00:31:48:22

Speaker 4

Now that we're all here.

00:31:48:24 - 00:31:58:04

Speaker 9

Well, she's really under a lot of stress. Very much the whole family. And she's extremely emotional right now. She's not at the point where she can talk right now.

00:31:58:07 - 00:32:23:02

Speaker 10

So. And that this boils down to it's been very, very overwhelming and and just as overwhelming. She can't composer's off at this point. So, any just basically she's overwhelmed. She's a she's very proud of him and she's grateful that that he is alive and that he was able to do what, what he was trying to do.

00:32:23:05 - 00:32:23:28

Speaker 1

Even when he has.

00:32:23:28 - 00:32:25:12

Speaker 3

Nothing.

00:32:25:15 - 00:32:36:15

Speaker 9

Some point. So other than that, my brother will be issuing a press release as to when he'll be returning to the United States. But as of right now, we're not going to be disclosing an information other than to.

00:32:36:18 - 00:32:38:08

Speaker 4

Put on the.

00:32:38:10 - 00:32:47:05

Speaker 9

He wants to finish his tour. Other than that, we don't know where he's going to be sent from there or whether he wants to come back earlier or not. Just soon.

00:32:47:07 - 00:32:50:01

Speaker 4

We would.

00:32:50:04 - 00:33:09:22

Speaker 9

His injuries were to the eye. He had lacerations. He had, a few cuts, but not deep enough to cause stitches. He expressed extreme surprise that he's alive right now because he said he doesn't know how he's alive. I say says to the grace of God. I says through the faith that he has in his heart. his injuries are minor.

00:33:09:22 - 00:33:22:20

Speaker 9

Other than, of course, the shock is done right now, as you said, that, he's met so many new people, seen so many new things, and he doesn't anticipate it ending anytime soon, even though he kind of wishes people wouldn't hang the title of your on him.

00:33:22:22 - 00:33:25:01

Speaker 1

When the bomb went off. I mean, what happened?

00:33:25:03 - 00:33:45:10

Speaker 9

He said no, he said that, he was on top of the Khobar Tower when he seen the truck approaching. He knew something was wrong because it was. It may appear to be fishy. He said he immediately sounded

the alarm. I mean, got on the radio, sounded the alarm, and went running as fast as he could. knock on doors and get as many people out as possible.

00:33:45:13 - 00:34:04:17

Speaker 9

He said he'd made it up almost to the third floor and yelling at the top of his lungs, and that's when the blast hit, he said the person next to him went down, just was thrown, and that he basically was just, thrown up against the wall. It wasn't a he just express surprise. He didn't really have too much happening.

00:34:04:20 - 00:34:07:17

Speaker 1

How was he able to get out?

00:34:07:20 - 00:34:19:12

Speaker 9

He didn't want to go into such details. Like, as I said, he's he's emotional right now. And he didn't go on any more details other than expressing surprise that the person next to him was thrown. But he wasn't.

00:34:19:15 - 00:34:23:11

Speaker 1

He was just affected. His attitude toward his.

00:34:23:13 - 00:34:43:18

Speaker 9

It probably. re-emphasized it even more because my brother's a political person and, my my brother probably. I mean, I'm, knowing my brother the way I do, he's a political person. I'm sure it reinforces the way he feels. He feels very strongly about what he's doing over there.

00:34:43:20 - 00:34:52:24

Speaker 9

I'm sorry. 11 years. He. He went back from high school.

00:34:52:26 - 00:34:54:21

Speaker 5

We're going to have a couple of more questions, and then.

00:34:54:21 - 00:35:00:01

Speaker 1

We'll pull the press conference. But, you know, the.

00:35:00:03 - 00:35:17:12

Speaker 9

The age difference is eight years. They they had no contact whatsoever. They didn't know each other. But he he did tell me last night that he knew he had heard about the guy here from Modesto. And he he thought it was rather ironic that he's from here in the, the, the other person was from here and.

00:35:17:15 - 00:35:25:24

Speaker 4

My family learned that your brother was a.

00:35:25:26 - 00:35:29:15

Speaker 10

What they call me to begin with.

00:35:29:17 - 00:35:31:11

Speaker 3

Oh go ahead.

00:35:31:14 - 00:35:55:17



Speaker 10

Okay. I first received a phone call from my sister before Maria that, that there was a bomb that went off before it even hit the local media and anywhere else. So I contacted Edwards Air Force Base, and they started researching it. And we're going back and forth through Tuesday evening until we him that he was okay.

00:35:55:19 - 00:36:02:11

Speaker 5

Okay, we're going to close this press conference with a pledge of allegiance to our country and to our flag, my our Modesto chairman.

00:36:02:11 - 00:36:04:14

Speaker 1

Roll over to.

00:36:04:16 - 00:36:04:27

Speaker 3

You.

00:36:05:00 - 00:36:07:00

Speaker 4

One, one.

00:36:07:03 - 00:36:27:22

Speaker 1

Thing. Oh, no. Oh, arm up to the flag. And United States of America to the Republic. What is that? One nation again? Invisible. Foreign. Foreign, foreign.

00:36:27:25 - 00:36:30:19

Speaker 5

Thank you very much. Thank you. You'll have a chance.

00:36:30:19 - 00:36:46:26

Speaker 1

To ask a few more questions. Thank you. So.

00:36:46:28 - 00:36:54:26

Speaker 4

Let me. Thank you.

00:36:54:28 - 00:36:58:10

Speaker 4

For.

00:36:58:12 - 00:37:11:26

Speaker 9

Following the I and a pet peeve about.

00:37:11:28 - 00:37:15:04

Speaker 4

That.

00:37:15:06 - 00:37:18:06

Speaker 1

Get us to go.

00:37:18:09 - 00:37:18:28

Speaker 6

Over here.

00:37:18:28 - 00:37:26:29

Speaker 1

Today. Thank you very much for coming in today. For our lives. And also our state police are here. Thank you very much for being here.

00:37:26:29 - 00:37:28:11

Speaker 6

We appreciate your.

00:37:28:14 - 00:37:51:14

Speaker 1

A patient with us today and welcome all the Catholic commanders and all the tractors over here can go ahead and enjoy your lives. And then, we'll have appropriately thank you.

00:37:51:17 - 00:37:57:00

Speaker 6

Well, once again good. Good afternoon.

00:37:57:00 - 00:37:59:25

Speaker 1

Now, anyway.

00:37:59:28 - 00:38:06:15

Speaker 6

What? It is my duty here. Now.

00:38:06:17 - 00:38:08:10

Speaker 4

That privilege.

00:38:08:12 - 00:38:18:03

Speaker 6

A person with this problem here from new Jersey to be with us. And we're most appreciative of.

00:38:18:05 - 00:38:26:25

Speaker 6

All seven of us. Vice president for all with an EMT in.

00:38:26:28 - 00:38:45:18

Speaker 6

Received his education at the University of Texas, where he received has very. And his journalist doctor and also he is a native of the town.

00:38:45:21 - 00:38:46:12

Speaker 3

That I did not.

00:38:46:12 - 00:38:59:23

Speaker 6

Know existed until this morning. Brooksville, Texas. And I understand that about 200 people that live there are very proud of the.

00:38:59:25 - 00:39:00:20

Speaker 6

Like, it's not.

00:39:00:20 - 00:39:04:20

Speaker 1

Only 199 up.

00:39:04:22 - 00:39:05:26

Speaker 1

To.

00:39:05:28 - 00:39:28:27

Speaker 6

the Journal recently retired as a full colonel from the U.S. Air Force. He served as the advocate general for all of Europe and the service and the Air Force. He is married to Sylvia. They are proud parents.

00:39:28:29 - 00:39:31:06

Speaker 1

Of their children.

00:39:31:08 - 00:39:39:02

Speaker 6

And I could go on and on, but you would be welcome to the afternoon if I were to record.

00:39:39:02 - 00:39:40:23

Speaker 3

All of this.

00:39:40:26 - 00:39:53:22

Speaker 6

Accomplishments that have been my privilege and pleasure to serve with you over the last few years on the of board of directors. And that's where I became acquainted with you. And I'm very grateful for that.

00:39:53:22 - 00:39:55:01

Speaker 1

Because I have learned from.

00:39:55:01 - 00:39:55:25

Speaker 4

Him.

00:39:55:27 - 00:40:08:12

Speaker 6

And he has been a great help to the organization. Joe is a man that has not forgotten where he came from. I know that we are very proud. Who is joining me and.

00:40:08:12 - 00:40:09:15

Speaker 10

Welcoming.

00:40:09:17 - 00:40:21:17

Speaker 6

Our friend also made us.

00:40:21:20 - 00:40:55:15

Speaker 1

Thank visit. this year, without even speaking to say that I want to thank Gail and the California chapter of the American GI forum for the privilege to be here with you today. I also want to extend my congratulations, to the family, for the deeds, that their sons, Staff Sergeant Guerrero has been decided for and I'm sure will be cited for in the future.

00:40:55:17 - 00:41:19:00

Speaker 1

but beyond that, it's also a privilege to be here at this particular time with this, organization, by a coincidence, is having, it's AA convention and had the opportunity again to honor those who served in the past, as we saw at the conference today. And to honor those who are serving in the present, as we also saw in the conference today.

00:41:19:03 - 00:41:53:17

Speaker 1

So I consider it a real privilege to be here with you today. believe I speak to, to speak today. he asked that I focus on on the future of work and to focus on, what young people today. And there are quite a few here with us today. I'm happy to see, what young people today might want to think about in terms of things that can help them as they go into the world of work.

00:41:53:20 - 00:42:22:24

Speaker 1

One of the things that I think would help put this in perspective is to say that for about the last 15 years, while I was with the Air Force Reserve as leverage, and I was also the chief, labor counsel for AT&T on matters that covered, in these operations throughout the world. And it gave me a tremendous opportunity to see the people end of the business world today.

00:42:22:26 - 00:42:52:11

Speaker 1

and so what I'd like to do is share with you some practical, ideas, almost universal ideas. And when I'm through, I think you're going to say what all of Joe talked about today was common sense. That's true. That's precisely what I'm going to be, talking to you about young people. And if you just kind of use your head and use common sense, you don't have to remember anything that I told you today, because common sense will guide you in that direction.

00:42:52:14 - 00:43:21:29

Speaker 1

Okay. What characterizes as I've gotten older, I have to wear glasses here, but, what characterizes work today? Let me tell you some key terms. Rapid change, flexibility, technology and mobility. If you remember those terms, you know what I'm talking about. And I'm here today. Now all of this makes for extreme excitement in terms of what's happening in the today and more in the future.

00:43:21:29 - 00:43:38:03

Speaker 1

For those of you who are going to work in the future. And by the way, towards the end of my remarks, which will take about 15 or 5 minutes, I want to talk a little bit about the things that people who are in the job market that they can do to help themselves, in that market. Right.

00:43:38:03 - 00:44:07:03

Speaker 1

Young people don't sell yourself short. You can do almost anything that you set your mind to do. An example right here, you've got, or worse will say, Rodriguez, step in here, step down. Okay. His timing is almost perfect, but this young man, right in your midst, is a young chemical engineer, graduate from Yale who was working here for, Procter and Gamble.

00:44:07:05 - 00:44:29:05

Speaker 1

I'm going to make sure that I'm telling my friend Jerry was. I was also on the board of directors of, seven National about my five fine people, they selected here. All right. Don't sell yourself short. I remember when I was running around invisible Texas in that little town of 200 people. It was an agricultural community. tough times.

00:44:29:07 - 00:44:56:11

Speaker 1

no money, all kinds of problems. but it became very apparent to me that the first thing anybody could do to help themselves was to learn English. You know, I'm not sure you've heard that before, but really learn English, learn how to read, learn how to write, learn how to speak. If you dominate that language, you can dominate almost anything you want to get into because you can learn about.

00:44:56:13 - 00:45:22:28

Speaker 1

If you don't know it, you can understand about it. If you don't believe what I know, what's happening, okay, what should you do? All right. Another thing that you've heard, that you've heard before is very hard, but here the key word is flexibility. The reason for the types of things that I'm talking about is flexibility. What does Joe mean by flexibility?



00:45:22:28 - 00:45:45:08

Speaker 1

Well, remember that I'm talking about a rapidly changing work environment. You've all heard about downsizing. You've heard about restructurings. You've heard about mergers and acquisitions. The company I work with at one time, I was the chief personnel lawyer for AT&T, for the Bell System, in the late, in and early 70s, late 70s, we had a million employees.

00:45:45:12 - 00:46:04:02

Speaker 1

Be surprised how many fewer employees there aren't today in the Bell System. I used to think that the Bell System was indestructible. It was, you know, the very backbone of America. What? You saw that, the Bell system was broken up. many different companies went their way. AT&T, the one that I was with. My dad's away.

00:46:04:04 - 00:46:35:20

Speaker 1

When when when divestiture took place in 1984, we had 300. We had 425,000 people at AT&T buying three or 4 or 5 years after that, that 425,000 people that blended down to 275,000. Okay. And now it's back up to, 300,000. And now we had another divestiture at AT&T. So no matter how strong the business you're in, there is change in its future right here.

00:46:35:20 - 00:46:57:21

Speaker 1

If you folks are familiar with and you serve and help the armed forces, even the military has been downsized, right? They call it when I was serving in Europe, but the reserve, they didn't call it downsizing. They called it the drawdown. But we had a lot of people who were placed not on the street. Flexibility young people is a very essential thing for you.

00:46:57:24 - 00:47:28:02

Speaker 1

How do you gain flexibility and what is flexibility? Flexibility is about getting developing as broad a base of knowledge as you can so that when you in the future find that you're not going to be able to stay with the same company for a whole career, you have the ability to jump to another job, to move to something that may be totally different from what you're used to today studying hard, learning English.

00:47:28:06 - 00:48:00:16

Speaker 1

What else? Learn to speak before a move. You will find that as you are making your way through the business world, people who will make decisions about you often have to make those decisions by observing you. In a situation where you are making a presentation before a group and they have 15 minutes to judge you. Now, you will either make a good impression or you will make a not so good impression.

00:48:00:17 - 00:48:30:19

Speaker 1

Obviously, you want to make the good impression how you know what you're talking about. Be able to communicate what else? Study hard. What else? Math, science, or most, sort of the essential learning to use that computer. Learn to use and to find your way. What's the word to serve the internet? That is the world of the future, okay.

00:48:30:21 - 00:48:39:00

Speaker 1

And that's what you need to be able to play. what else?

00:48:39:03 - 00:49:13:20

Speaker 1

Well. Read widely. Why are we widely? You need to be able to understand what's happening wherever you are. You need to be able to understand what's happening all around you. The very. The more you know about things, even outside your own career or your own profession, the better you will be able to understand what's happening in other areas, the better you will be able to communicate with people and the better you will be able to speak when you do get before a group.

00:49:13:22 - 00:49:41:21

Speaker 1

Okay, now what else? What's important? Why is that important? Interpersonal skills. One of the most important things that anyone in the in the job market, the day has to be able to have is the ability to work with different people, different ethnicities, different personal holidays. Often you'll find, hey, I really don't enjoy working with this particular individual.

00:49:41:25 - 00:50:06:19

Speaker 1

You know, I don't like the way he or she, things. Well, in the world of work today, you have to find ways to deal with those people. You can't just say, well, I'm going to walk away because what you're really doing is walking away from your job and walking away from your own future, so that the ability to deal with people who have thoughts different and personal things that are different from you is very critical.

00:50:06:22 - 00:50:27:14

Speaker 1

And all of these things that I'm talking about give you that ability. Now, obviously college, I don't want you to spend any time on that because that's, that's that's a given. But a lot of people give up before they go to school. My parents can't afford going to school. I can't afford to go to school. I've got to go to work.

00:50:27:14 - 00:50:52:28

Speaker 1

That's truly all. And I never had that very same thing happen to us. But believe me, today, if you want to go to college and you should, you can do it. There are loans available out there, all kinds of scholarships available out there. Talk to your school counselors about this one. About what college should I go to? You don't have to go to the best college.

00:50:53:05 - 00:51:22:04

Speaker 1

Don't worry about that. I can't get into that school or I can't get into that school. Don't worry about that. Pick one that's best for you, okay? And move on from there. But whatever you do, go to college. What else? Analyze yourself. The happiest people at work are those who enjoy what they're doing. Then I guess was a good example that probably the best example.

00:51:22:07 - 00:51:45:01

Speaker 1

But believe me, if you're going to be successful at work, you're going to be spending long hours in that job. Why not make it something that that you like, something that's interesting to you? So a little self

analysis. What are your likes? What are your preferences. But also what don't you like. And also what are your strengths and what are your weaknesses.

00:51:45:04 - 00:52:10:12

Speaker 1

Right. And then start thinking about mapping out a career along those lines. Have a dream, have a dream. Don't sell yourself short. I could, I wish I could have time to tell you how many times in my own experience and in many others that I have heard, many people would say, oh, come on, Joe, you're crazy. Many of my own people can't do that.

00:52:10:13 - 00:52:28:10

Speaker 1

That's it. That's not available to us. It is available to us. It's available to you. You make up your own mind what you want for yourself, make up your own mind, what you want for yourself, and then go get it, okay? And don't let anybody talk you out of it. Stick to your own. Don't have your.

00:52:28:10 - 00:52:29:06

Speaker 4

Dream.

00:52:29:09 - 00:52:51:29

Speaker 1

Follow that dream, but then implement it. Do the things that we're talking about in order to pursue that. Don't be afraid. By the way, to learn from your mistakes. Don't be afraid to make mistakes. Most of us find in our cases I can't find it. I can't really do that. And don't worry, you know, they say that they will out.

00:52:52:01 - 00:53:08:12

Speaker 1

I don't know how many times, but he was famous for saying you can't hit a home run as you step up to the plate. Okay, so step up to the plate and don't be afraid to strike up a few times. You'll learn from that and you'll be better the next time you'll hit that ball.

00:53:08:15 - 00:53:11:18

Speaker 4

Now what about.

00:53:11:20 - 00:53:34:03

Speaker 1

Role models and that aspect? Obviously, look at people that you think have succeeded in areas that you have an interest in. Talk to those people, find out about what helped them get ideas from them and so forth. And now let me just spend a few minutes talking about when you are in the world of work, what to do.

00:53:34:03 - 00:54:01:12

Speaker 1

And I'm going to kind of cut this short. So I'm just gonna speak from what I speak. Right. Forget about my not what's happening in the world of work today. I've talked about that already. Now, it used to be that people could go to work. I'm an example of that. People could go to work for one business, and if they kept their nose doing that, their job that they were supposed to do stayed out of the line of our work hard.

00:54:01:14 - 00:54:24:21

Speaker 1

Eventually they'd get a pension. They'd be able to retire or not. And maybe some of that advice, Social Security, you young people, you're not gonna have that anymore. You're not going to have that much anymore. You're going to work for three, four, five, maybe ten different businesses before you retire, though maybe even more. You may end up working for yourself.

00:54:24:23 - 00:54:43:26

Speaker 1

And that, by the way, makes a lot of sense. Once business. But when you've heard about downsizing, it's an awful lot of that. And so I won't spend much time on that. But what can you do? What can you do once you get into, you know, do all the work? Well, first we talked about analyzing your own stuff and analyzing your risk.

00:54:43:26 - 00:55:12:13

Speaker 1

And so what don't worry about going from a standing stock to 100 miles an hour in your career map. A map, of course, for yourself. If you like this particular area of business, try to get a job, whatever the job is, if it's the equivalent of washing dishes in that line of work, get in line, get in on the inside, and then start trying to move, and progress within the organization.

00:55:12:13 - 00:55:43:11

Speaker 1

But whatever you do learn, learn about that business, learn about the people, learn what makes a business, take what else. Why do you have that job? A lot of us say, well, okay, I know what it is that I'm supposed to do and so forth. So we often have a have a tendency to become complacent. Okay. If you want to hold a job in the future and as individuals who are already there today, if you want to hold a job in the future, don't be complacent.

00:55:43:13 - 00:56:09:20

Speaker 1

Constantly, constantly think in terms of how you can do whatever it is that you're assigned to do, and your own organization is doing better. If you don't, somebody else is going to do that and you're going to be out on the street and they're don't have your job. When companies downsize, businesses downsize. They want to keep that type of people, not the complacent type of person.

00:56:09:23 - 00:56:34:07

Speaker 1

So bear that in mind. What else make your boss and your coworkers and your peers, your allies, be friendly with people. Make them feel at ease in working with you. Forget about office gossip and gossip at work. That's not what you want to hear. What other people are saying. But don't you go around talking about other people. You keep your thoughts to yourself.

00:56:34:09 - 00:56:58:23

Speaker 1

Because if I am with you and I'm talking about Joe when I leave you, you're going to say, I can't trust that guy because he's going to go there and talk to Joe about me. So that's very important today, and that's

common sense in the world of work and very important. What else? Again, the idea of speaking, what else?

00:56:58:25 - 00:57:17:00

Speaker 1

Take risks. Don't be afraid that that's a big question. Let me tell you a little story. I remember when I first started working for Southwestern Bell that I didn't know anything about. I had just come out of the Air Force. I didn't know anything about a telephone company. I didn't know. The one thing I knew about the telephone is that if you picked it up, you got a dial on and it worked.

00:57:17:03 - 00:57:41:20

Speaker 1

You'd be surprised how many problems there are behind that instrument. Okay, so I learned about those things, but I wanted to learn as much as I could. I would ask questions and so forth. But notice I noticed that all of us were very busy and whenever work, additional work came up, all of my coworkers started. They were too busy to take on other work.

00:57:41:22 - 00:58:03:27

Speaker 1

All right, so I was a young person. I was born and driven to progress. I used to say to myself, there's only one way to do that, boy. You better, you know, go ahead and take on that risky assignment. So I was often in a work out. Sometimes I didn't, but more often than not it worked out. And then my friends would come back and say, look, Joe, you are a lovely son of a gun.

00:58:03:29 - 00:58:24:07

Speaker 1

You got that assignment and it worked out for you, and it got you got visibility and so on, and it helped you. And I would think I would say to them, yeah, I am working. But inside I would say, hey, luck had nothing to do with that. It's okay. And and so you got to think about that, when you're involved, in work and so forth.

00:58:24:10 - 00:58:48:00

Speaker 1

mobility, mobility. Today in the world of work, you have to be able to move. And that's something that's very difficult for us, with our culture and our own ancestry, we like to stay close to our families and so forth. I can't tell you the number of lost opportunities that, it just me that I've been able to see that people have missed out.

00:58:48:00 - 00:59:07:20

Speaker 1

Because when I moved away from my mom, I don't want to move away from, you know, my brothers and sisters. And so what if you're going to be in business today, you need to make up your mind. You're going to be able to pick up the bag and go wherever it takes you. All right? And often you're going to need to move within two weeks.

00:59:07:22 - 00:59:34:08

Speaker 1

I was tell you many times my wife had to back in two weeks to move from across the country or across the world. but that's true. And that's if you want to do it. That's what it takes. Hey, you can use a telephone and Home and Away like that. What else can young people do? If you go back to that just briefly, what else can young people do, you know, join the Army, join the military that we have.

00:59:34:14 - 01:00:00:25

Speaker 1

We have all kinds of things that good and difficult that happen in the military. Okay. But it's a very, very good learning experience for the types of things that I've been talking about. Just think about that mobility, dealing with people, taking on challenges so many ways when it's all there. The military is a very, very good training, but I can assure you that probably the best thing that happened to me was being in the military.

01:00:00:27 - 01:00:21:12

Speaker 1

I'll tell you a good story about that. It illustrates what I just said was flexibility. When I was in Spain as a young officer, a young legal officer, we got a call one day that an Air Force B-52 bomber and a KC 135 tanker had crashed over southern Spain, and that the B-52 two bomber was carrying more hydrogen bombs.



01:00:21:14 - 01:00:43:23

Speaker 1

Okay. And they dropped them in this little village in, in southern Spain. And I was going down there as the chief legal officer for the operation. I didn't have anything to do with them for longer than I thought. I was supposed to take care of planes. But when I got down there, believe it or not, there weren't very many people along with our team who could speak Spanish and know.

01:00:43:26 - 01:01:00:10

Speaker 1

So the last thing I got involved in was, handling planes. Literally the last thing I got involved in was handling planes. The thing that I got involved in at first was finding those 100 and bombs and helping out people talk to folks, you know, the leaders of why they were one of the bombs landed in the ocean.

01:01:00:12 - 01:01:21:04

Speaker 1

So I learned about those fishermen. Let's say several of our, high fliers group parachuted from the B-52 and landed in the water. And he kept apologizing because there was this that person, he couldn't say, well, it turned out to be the bomb. Okay. I wound up leaving a team of frogmen looking for that bomb that had nothing to do with the.

01:01:21:04 - 01:01:43:08

Speaker 1

Being a lawyer, in the military. But it was flexibility. There was an opportunity there. The situation call for something I was able to do. So I enjoyed what I was doing. I wound up, as a result of that, being selected as the Outstanding Young Lawyer of the year for the Air Force in Europe. That recognition went on a resume.

01:01:43:12 - 01:02:09:27

Speaker 1

And that little recognition on the, resume is what got me my title. I mean, flexibility, okay. And recognizing the opportunity around you. And then on that opportunity and so forth and mobility. I talked long enough left, the other things that, that I could talk about with you, but, what I'd like to do, if you don't mind, is stop here.

01:02:09:29 - 01:02:35:04

Speaker 1

let me, if you wish, I'd be very happy to take some questions. if you have the time. But if you don't, No matter. I've enjoyed being with you as much as I have. And I want to thank all of you for your hospitality.

01:02:35:07 - 01:02:38:03

Speaker 3

You very much.

01:02:38:05 - 01:02:46:07

Speaker 1

For several minutes. Thank you.

01:02:46:10 - 01:02:54:22

Speaker 1

It's my pleasure at this time to do this, I think, commander again. And he wants to make a little presentation. I.

01:02:54:25 - 01:03:12:08

Speaker 1

Thank you. Thank you very much. We really enjoyed it. Moving on so far in the conference. And I think we're going to enjoy it, much more. But, first off, I said we will take your words and your wisdom into consideration and pass it on to our youth, our sons daughters, to our queens, and to all our family.

01:03:12:10 - 01:03:31:26

Speaker 1

I think the American GI forum is doing some of the things that, we want to do towards education. All the chapters in California and throughout the United States are given scholarship, pushing education, education. We can do it. And this ladies here today will prove that we can do it. See what was said for several years. So stick with it.

01:03:31:28 - 01:03:49:13

Speaker 1

I want to give a couple of awards. right now I know people that have done a really good, during this conference, and I want to call leaders, about throwing about a little or third up to the podium here and, to thank you very much for the job that they have done. Keep them in.

01:03:49:14 - 01:04:14:21

Speaker 1

And, both men, he and P and their families have worked so hard, to, to make this conference a big topic. And I want to present this to me on this day in appreciation for all the effort and success and present in the United State founded in 1996, for example, to think.

01:04:14:24 - 01:04:31:24

Speaker 1

Who would be on the list of commander who has done a lot of work and it says the same thing. Appreciated for all the effort and, and, what, success in the conference. Er and with that, thank you everybody.

01:04:31:26 - 01:04:33:24

Unknown

At this time on my back.

01:04:33:26 - 01:04:46:11

Speaker 1

Again to the podium to simply come in and and give us a presentation again on the medal family and to introduce them to the crowd that wasn't there this morning while they're here. Thank you.

01:04:46:13 - 01:05:00:11

Unknown

And that was to start our family.

01:05:00:14 - 01:05:01:16

Speaker 6

Okay.

01:05:01:18 - 01:05:05:18

Speaker 4

Of people.

01:05:05:20 - 01:05:17:24

Speaker 4

01:05:17:27 - 01:05:23:10

Speaker 1

All right. I'm going to allow the sister.

01:05:23:13 - 01:05:37:18

Speaker 6

Of Sergeant Erato to give to the names of her sister, to their mother to long, because I'm not familiar with them. But please give my whole family the round of applause.

01:05:37:18 - 01:05:40:23

Speaker 4

And heartfelt appreciation for their.

01:05:40:23 - 01:05:54:10

Speaker 6

Family's contribution in the defense of our country.

01:05:54:12 - 01:05:58:06

Speaker 3

And you know, I know.

01:05:58:08 - 01:06:12:04

Speaker 4

That they stand up.

01:06:12:06 - 01:06:14:10

Speaker 9

we would like to say thank you for your hospitality.

01:06:14:17 - 01:06:27:29

Speaker 3

we don't want to be rude by leaving early, but we are all extremely, extremely tired. Maybe about three hours of sleep in the past four days. I'm moving around the world to grow the mother, grandmother, and as a work.

01:06:28:01 - 01:06:31:14

Speaker 9

And, we just want to say that, as far as a.

01:06:31:14 - 01:06:49:23

Speaker 3

Member of the military, do they concur with previous speaker saying that, the military was good because after you remember that you made a career, you know, that's very special to him and to all of his families that are his family. We're just grateful that we didn't have to get a chaplain in our house, as martyrs.

01:06:49:23 - 01:07:03:19

Speaker 3

Also, when you think about the young people speaking, always make sure you think before you speak, because everything is going to be misquoted and everything's going to be misdirected. So make sure that you know what you're saying before you say it. It's very important. But thank you for your hospitality.

01:07:03:22 - 01:07:13:29

Unknown

01:07:14:01 - 01:07:14:13

Unknown

Thank you.

01:07:14:13 - 01:07:28:16

Speaker 6

Very much. And, we invite you to remain with us for the rest of the convention. We'd love to have you and your family for a minute. And this concludes the lecture. Now, we're going to get back to work.

01:07:28:19 - 01:07:31:00

Speaker 3

All right.

01:07:31:02 - 01:07:32:24

Speaker 6

move on to.

01:07:32:27 - 01:07:36:21

Speaker 1

The the that.

01:07:36:24 - 01:07:40:13

Speaker 6

Okay. Thank you very much.

01:07:40:15 - 01:07:45:05

Speaker 3

I will.

01:07:45:07 - 01:07:49:07

Speaker 3

Thank you all for being here today. It's my.

01:07:49:07 - 01:07:49:29

Speaker 4

Pleasure.

01:07:50:06 - 01:08:09:09

Speaker 3

And my honor to introduce to you this California American GI forum, April to April. Take over and introduce a lovely lady. And to us.

01:08:09:12 - 01:08:38:01

Speaker 3

Thank you. Anita. Welcome, everybody. It's been a year to five years ago, and it's good to see all of you again. It's good to be with Jessica. You're close to home. Starting over from, This year has been a very wonderful year for me. Thanks to to American GI, foreign to my friends, there are not enough words to say how thankful I am to have been introduced to your organization.

01:08:38:03 - 01:09:02:23

Speaker 3

How thankful I am for you to have given me the opportunity to represent you as your Queen and as a young lady. I hope that our meetings here today get to see just how beautiful you people are and how good you are, and considerate and hospitable. You'll never know how much this year has meant to me. You'll never know what your friendship has meant to me.

01:09:02:25 - 01:09:22:11

Speaker 3

I'll just to do what I feel in my heart. But I'll tell you guys that all that tomorrow. I don't want to get into it tonight. Tomorrow is. I'm still queen right now, so I just want to represent you tomorrow. So at this time, once again, thank you very much. Thank you. Doctor Sam, I will turn to you.

01:09:22:13 - 01:09:55:08

Speaker 3

My mom. Thank you. Rose, everybody. All my friends here. Thank you very much for your support. So now I'd like to introduce our new, chapter queens that will be vying for the crown tomorrow night. So we'll start with, the East Darby chapter. young lady. then you have through martinis, accusing vanilla martinis. Stand up to the drink.

01:09:55:10 - 01:10:03:15

Speaker 3

Okay, then we have another seven minutes from San Jose chapter.

01:10:03:17 - 01:10:05:23

Unknown

And we have.

01:10:05:26 - 01:10:14:28

Speaker 3

Ogden. I have nothing, and that's right from my desk. Sorry. You're really.

01:10:15:01 - 01:10:40:10



Speaker 3

Trying to get their names, Instagram and social. Okay. And then we have Gabby Allen from Stockton. We taking part in the pageant tomorrow night. I wish them all the best of luck. And, I'm sure that's a very fine. Judges will have a hard time deciding on what you went to. I will work with that. California. But there are all winners right now just taking part in the pageant.

01:10:40:10 - 01:10:58:01

Speaker 3

And then part of this one tomorrow. So thank you.

01:10:58:04 - 01:11:32:11

Speaker 3

Excuse me. Okay. I have, I was able to say her speech as she prepared last year and the one that got her the crown in Albuquerque, New Mexico. She is going to do those honors today. You're going to be very impressed. Let me tell you, April. Who? I think it was so much great. as I said, I wrote this speech last year, and it's a speech that comes right from the heart.

01:11:32:13 - 01:12:04:24

Speaker 3

It's something that I feel that I believe in, and I hope that it tells a little bit of everybody here today. Thank you. Thank. Be able to respond. The Latina Chicana am too afraid to come here. They of my people important to me that she reminded. They're too afraid to call me mexicana is the truth. I must not be worthy nose's my soul.

01:12:04:26 - 01:12:43:01

Speaker 3

You are very worthy. Where were truly wanting to prove descent of the earth, fertility and real. You are an Aztec princess. Her skin and valor are a gold nose of my soul. You are in this, created for two cultures, two languages, two races, heroines and warriors. And the struggles have given you your greatness. And with it, your heart has been left with the scars inflicted by the blood, the sweat and the tears.

01:12:43:03 - 01:13:12:01

Speaker 3

Those tears, my soul, the calluses on your hands and the pain in your back are from entering the earth so painfully, so lovingly as would you ancestors to long ago. And the firing field from deep to does not come from anger does not come from hate. It is the fire of sweet desire, the sweet desire to break the chains that will bind you and your people for so long.

01:13:12:04 - 01:13:40:27

Speaker 3

The desire for love and solidarity, peace and unity, justice and equality, power and education, humanity and dignity. Those with my soul. You are more American than red, white and alone. And to the post office you will not give up your cultural identity, but simply with this banner. That woman, she can focus there and to move with my soul.

01:13:40:29 - 01:14:11:29

Speaker 3

You are a person rich with human and thought. And I will have your friend and I go ahead and that with my soul. Maybe the only two of you will ever need to know for the truth. You so much search for my soul and.

01:14:12:02 - 01:14:30:00

Speaker 3

Everything here for the Queen. I hope you have left. But I'm sure you have my message. And the truth inside us. Always guide us when we know what our heart tells us. And go with that. Because sometimes our heart will lead us in the right direction. Even though our mind might tell the computer friend, have faith in yourself.

01:14:30:00 - 01:14:51:19

Speaker 3

Thank you so much. Love yourself. Love your fellow by letting us look at their love your man. When you're your woman, love your you and what you know. Okay, we'll be okay.

01:14:51:21 - 01:14:54:10

Unknown

Okay, that's our back up. And let's head out of.

01:14:54:16 - 01:15:13:14

Speaker 1

Our next session. Take a look at your calendars. Thank you again. Thank you all for.

01:15:13:17 - 01:15:14:18

Speaker 5

At this time, what I'd like to.

01:15:14:18 - 01:15:15:22

Speaker 7

Do is to have.

01:15:15:22 - 01:15:33:13

Speaker 5

Our, one of our key members, Mr. Francisco Alvarez, introduce our keynote speaker this morning. Frank. Well, lead us in to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance. Now, if you could all please stand, please. The flag.

01:15:33:16 - 01:15:51:15

Speaker 1

Has been set. Oh, I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands. One nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

01:15:51:18 - 01:15:58:13

Speaker 4

Or one in.

01:15:58:15 - 01:16:17:14

Speaker 5

Good morning, Fort Myers. welcome to the 39th annual state convention of the American G.I. forum. I'd like to thank all of you for being here. Our ranks are look depleted after last night, but, looks like we have a pretty good turnout. I've been given the opportunity and the pleasure of introducing our keynote speaker for the morning.

01:16:17:16 - 01:16:53:22

Speaker 5

Gary Condit, who is our US congressman. And, Gary's family immigrated to California when he was still a boy. He attended series. He went to Stan State College, graduated from there in 1989. He, went to Congress for the first time to represent us. well, we always have agreed with Gary on his stance. he has, in this last term, protected Social Security help to protect veterans rights, help to protect Medicare, which are issues that are important to the American GI forum.

01:16:53:24 - 01:17:15:13

Speaker 5

he's a man that's deserving of our support and our votes in this next upcoming election. I'd ask that you give a round of applause to our favorite Blue Dog Democrat, Gary Condit.

01:17:15:15 - 01:17:34:16

Speaker 8

Thank you very much. welcome to all of you. to Modesto, California. Those of you who do not, live here, we welcome you here. We're delighted and honored that you're here. We're absolutely honored that you folks are here this morning. We appreciate you and what you have done for this country. And, you know, of, I appreciate that introduction.

01:17:34:16 - 01:17:54:03

Speaker 8

That was a very nice introduction. Maybe I'll just take you with me the rest of the week. I could use that. this week, sort of reminds us, or I think it really reminds us of the ultimate price that men and women in the armed service sometimes pay in line of duty and honor and country in service to country.

01:17:54:05 - 01:18:27:00

Speaker 8

when we speak of veterans programs, I think we can't forget that they are earned benefits. for those who did the heavy work of freedom, who were prepared to give all of themselves, if necessary, to this nation. And I think this week, we're reminded of that. We're reminded of what veterans have done, what they were willing to do if called upon and just and would and others died for the service of this country.

01:18:27:02 - 01:18:42:21

Speaker 8

And they kept their word. And this country has to keep its word to our veterans and to our service people who have made that commitment.

01:18:42:23 - 01:19:04:28

Speaker 8

I know that all of you pay close attention to the activities, in Washington because, I hear from you. You I hear from frequently, matter of fact, I was wandering around the Capitol one day and looked into a room, and there was Leo holding a very important meeting. He had warned me, I so I had snuck in on him.

01:19:04:28 - 01:19:30:27

Speaker 8

But, I know that you all, all of the veterans here pay close attention to what's going on in our recent budget. Budget debate, veterans programs did okay. you often, you often read how the veterans did compared to other entitlement, the entitlement programs. but this in itself should sort of warn us, serve as a warning sign.

01:19:30:29 - 01:20:01:27

Speaker 8

in my opinion, and many of your opinions, veteran benefits should not be compared to social security, welfare or food stamps. Veterans benefits or a different deal. There are contract with our military and our people. These commitments and obligations aren't like others. Veterans and military retirees should have the same status in budget deliberations, that we have for interest on the debt we have to pay.

01:20:02:00 - 01:20:38:17

Speaker 8

We can't fudge, we can't fudge on it, and we can't delay it. And that's why and I would ask all of you in the room and any place that you can promote this. I have introduced a bill and I introduced it several years ago, and I'm having a hard time getting people to focus on it. But I introduce H.R. 206 that would require the armed services to provide all the entering, military people with a contract which defines explains all the benefits and regardless of changes in the law, protects that commitment.

01:20:38:17 - 01:21:07:04

Speaker 8

It is a memorandum of understanding that people that go in the military clearly understand what their benefits are and what they're entitled to, and that they have a contract. And let me tell you what happens in all of you. probably aware of this is that I get from time to time veterans who call me up and say, I was told I was supposed to get this.

01:21:07:06 - 01:21:29:08

Speaker 8

And I say, well, you probably were now my young son, or he's a man now, but just got out of the military. And, when they when he went in during the Persian Gulf War, he was told a lot of things by the guy who recruited him. And the guy who recruited him probably meant well, but it didn't go exactly the way they told him it was going to go.

01:21:29:08 - 01:22:05:13

Speaker 8

And all of you probably have been there, right? My only point is there are a few basic benefits that the contract, the memorandum of understanding, ought to explain. Therefore, each person then has a contract that I can look at when you bring your congressman or whoever can look at and try to hold the military responsible to, because frankly, you know, as I know in the budget crisis, in the budget time where we're trying to cut the budget, the people serving get the attention and the people retired sort of out of sight for themselves.

01:22:05:16 - 01:22:26:00

Speaker 8

And you do a very good job at it. But my point is, is that if they walk in with a contract, I've got something that I can hold them accountable and responsible for. So I would ask all of you, and if you can, any place across the state in this country, if you could get the GI from any group to help me.

01:22:26:03 - 01:22:46:08

Speaker 8

put some pressure that we take up H.R. 206, I think it would do a great service to the people who serve in the military. I think it would be a good service for the country in that people would feel like that. We honored our commitment. And sometimes when decisions are hard to make, people begin to fudge on their commitments a little bit, kind of out of sight, out of mind.

01:22:46:08 - 01:23:34:26

Speaker 8

So it would be most helpful. Other bills which I support, which impact veterans. And I'll just go down them real quickly for you. H.R. 580, which will allow the Medicare program to reimburse the Department of Defense for the care of eligible military retirees, H.R. 3012, which will allow you to purchase health care through the, successful Federal Employees Health Benefits System, H.R. 2193, which will make necessary the changes in the federal tax law to open Corvette programs to veteran veterans currently excluded H.R. 65 and H.R. 303, which will allow retired members of the armed services who have served service connected disabilities to receive military retired pay, currently with the veterans disability Compensation

01:23:35:02 - 01:24:08:06

Speaker 8

without deductions from either H.R. 1513, which will change to the date for service in Vietnam, in Vietnam to December 27th, 1961, thereby covering veterans who were excluded. It just made this a surprise to me. HR 2764, which will allow veterans who totally who are totally disabled as a result of service connected disabilities to travel on military air aircraft or on, if space is available on a space available basis.

01:24:08:09 - 01:24:33:08

Speaker 8

H.R. 1646, which will revise and reform the statutes, organizing the reserves forces to reflect the expanded role in the downsize force, ongoing discussions with veterans, in our district, have led to the following results so far. And, many of you in this room have been helpful, and that is to improve improvements at, Fresno VA hospital, with a screening clinic.

01:24:33:08 - 01:25:05:05

Speaker 8

And mercy said, initiatives of a initiation of a banned service to Fresno VA hospital, and most importantly, a reopening of the, discussions placing a VA outpatient clinic at Castle. And we expect and hope to hear some details soon regarding the region's reorganization priorities. we have been working to convince them that a clinic in this area is not, in this area is not only necessary, but it is justified by the population and the makeup of of our community.

01:25:05:08 - 01:25:31:24

Speaker 8

And I would ask all of you to remember, our efforts in Congress must reflect a fundamental understanding that veterans and military retirees have a special status in relationship with the people of our nation. And if there's any one thing that you could do to lobby and convince members of Congress and federal, people is that veterans, military people have a different status and relationship.

01:25:31:24 - 01:25:54:04

Speaker 8

We have a different category. You are not an entitlement. in the same category of the ones that I mentioned earlier, this is a bond. We have a bond as a nation with our military people. And as you've seen this week, how this nation rallied to a hero, just a young man who has served ten years, afraid of doing his job.

01:25:54:06 - 01:26:17:02

Speaker 8

But they rallied. We have a bonding of the heart with the people who serve in the military, and we cannot allow in any way that bond to be broken. We must keep our commitments as they've kept their commitments. I'm delighted to be here with you this morning. and we're going to have a reception this afternoon. And those people who stay out late, we'll see them there.

01:26:17:02 - 01:26:38:04

Speaker 8

Right. And I clearly understand some of them didn't make it. I serve in Congress. Some people like that. Anyway, thank you very much and God bless you. And I'll be delighted to take questions. If you would like.

01:26:38:06 - 01:26:43:10



Speaker 5

Gentlemen, I really appreciate the past. assistant. You've given the Veterans Affairs.

01:26:43:10 - 01:27:12:26

Speaker 1

I ask you to bring your assistant, Jesse Brown and Colonel Vargas here in California. Furthermore, concerning clinics, I'd like to ask you that in this coming year, we're going to be proposing to Jesse Brown and people that some community clinics able to serve veterans and a difference in the veterans, program. And, I'd like for you to consider that if it comes around and, Secretary Jesse Brown will be proposing that sometime in the near future.

01:27:12:28 - 01:27:18:05

Speaker 8

Absolutely. I would be happy to do that. Yes, sir.

01:27:18:07 - 01:27:22:17

Speaker 1

I do want a little bit of support for selective services.

01:27:22:19 - 01:27:29:17

Unknown

And, you know, we've been doing a tremendous job this time.

01:27:29:20 - 01:27:49:16

Speaker 1

And I'd like to see that program. maybe with the military for it to expand. And we could see case of emergency. Everything is set up and it's a member of the local board, 42, I really encourage you to support this.

01:27:49:18 - 01:27:55:13

Speaker 1

and encourage other than white. Okay.

01:27:55:16 - 01:28:12:10

Speaker 8

let me just comment quickly about that. you know, when I got into Congress, it seemed to make pretty good sense in a budget cut in time, people were trying to eliminate the Selective Service program that simply required, you know, our young people to register, and. And so that we could keep track just in case we did have a problem.

01:28:12:10 - 01:28:46:10

Speaker 8

We had to reinstitute the draft. It seemed to be an easy target, to eliminate or to begin to eliminate. we have since found that, you know, if we had to organize quickly without it, it would be difficult to do so. Your point is well taken. And I just tell you, if there will continue to be attempts to, to reduce it and bring it down because people think the threat is, I'm convinced more and more every day that the threat is not gone and the threat may even be greater, but just in a little different way.

01:28:46:13 - 01:28:46:29

Speaker 7

Bill.

01:28:47:01 - 01:29:19:08

Speaker 6

Yeah. First of all, I'd like to, offer my thanks for our for your participation in pushing your sponsorship of some of our event here. And we're particularly pleased with the fact that you have Mike in your office that that is easily accessible to us. And we feel that, there is a close record. You know, we as respondents were not used to being noticed by politicians.

01:29:19:10 - 01:29:59:24

Speaker 6

And that's, not reality. But it is the case, that has entered my mind more than once. And I got, reminded again by the conversation of the Selective Service. Reform in my mind that perhaps doing away with

Selective Service was the wrong thing. not only from the standpoint of, preparedness for our country, but it seems like to me that it our young people were forced to put in a couple of years of service.

01:29:59:26 - 01:30:14:00

Speaker 6

It would be infinitely cheaper than operating all of the prisons that we operate across the country. Only people.

01:30:14:02 - 01:30:19:07

Speaker 6

With a good dose of discipline and guidance. And I think what be reconsidered.

01:30:19:07 - 01:30:20:02

Speaker 3

Again.

01:30:20:05 - 01:30:41:19

Speaker 8

Thanks, Leo. I you know, I just applaud you. I, I agree with you. We had just, had a serious debate the last couple of days on AmeriCorps, which is a youth program similar to the Peace Corps, but it's domestic. And, and some of us believe that we have the, the mechanism already set up to give young people the ability to have service to the country and true service.

01:30:41:19 - 01:31:05:17

Speaker 8

And that is something that you've just suggested. I'm totally convinced, and I don't mean this in any mean spirited way. I mean, this is sincerely and as thoughtful and compassionate as I can. You can have the smartest, the most clever young person in the world. But if you have no discipline, your life is tough. And one of the things that all of you know that you did, with your military service is one thing happen.

01:31:05:19 - 01:31:35:18

Speaker 8

You learn discipline, you learned how to get up on time. You learn all kinds of stuff that has been, and you've been able to apply it to your daily lives. And I don't mean this in any bad way or like I know it all, but I am just convinced that what you said is right is that if we figured out some way to have a true service for young people, whether it's a year or two years, it doesn't have to be military, but some service that we could use, these principles, I think we'd be better served would have less population in the jails and prisons in this country.

01:31:35:18 - 01:31:51:04

Speaker 8

And we'd have a lot of young people that felt good about themselves and more productive. So you were absolutely right, Leon. Let me also just say that that I won't. Maggie, would you stand up? Maggie works in my office. For those of you who are not.

01:31:51:06 - 01:32:12:09

Speaker 8

And, and with people like Maggie and, and Leo and Raul, who I hear from frequently as well, we're we're not going to, forget or not be involved in the Hispanic community. And the things are important to you, you know, like with the introduction, you may not always agree with me, but you're going to know where I'm coming from and why, and we're not going to go away.

01:32:12:09 - 01:32:36:15

Speaker 8

We're going to be there and be a part of the things that are important to you. Anyway, thank you very much. God bless all of.

01:32:36:17 - 01:32:39:11

Speaker 3

You know how to post your. Thank you.

01:32:39:14 - 01:32:39:28

Speaker 4

Very much.

01:32:40:03 - 01:32:47:07

Speaker 1

Thank you very much. Thank you for your thank you, thank you. There's one other one.

01:32:47:10 - 01:32:47:29

Speaker 4

Thank you.

01:32:48:03 - 01:32:49:27

Speaker 8

Sir. Thank you. Thank you very much.

01:32:49:29 - 01:32:55:10

Speaker 1

I will.

01:32:55:12 - 01:33:00:23

Speaker 1

See you doing okay here on my.

01:33:00:26 - 01:33:06:18

Speaker 1

Oh, yeah.

01:33:06:20 - 01:33:21:23

Speaker 5

Thank you. Yeah. Go ahead and get your coffee or juice right now. We have about ten minutes before we start the conference.

01:33:21:25 - 01:33:23:12

Speaker 5

Thank you, Leland and up.

01:33:23:14 - 01:33:34:00

Speaker 1

But what? Yeah. Nice. Thank you.

01:33:34:03 - 01:33:40:08

Unknown

What else is a. Well, I know.

01:33:40:10 - 01:33:44:07

Unknown

Are.

01:33:44:10 - 01:33:50:00

Unknown

Of her.

01:33:50:02 - 01:34:03:12

Speaker 1

Yeah. Okay. You're in the area. That's right. Yeah, I guess that I thank you. I.

01:34:03:15 - 01:34:11:08

Speaker 1

Yeah. You.

01:34:11:10 - 01:34:18:16

Speaker 9

It's been said that our guest,

01:34:18:19 - 01:34:45:14

Speaker 9

The very first one to give service overseas in uniform. Also, Hispanic women at that time were being sought at that time to, work in the fields as a linguist in the fields of cryptology, communications and interpretation. A lot of times we think of just the men in the service. But you see, the women have contributed their share to.

01:34:45:16 - 01:35:16:02

Speaker 9

Also, at that time, many women accepted jobs in the defense in spite of the hardships that families made on them, because at the time it wasn't kosher for women to go out and earn a living. However, we were very instrumental in working in military institutions, helping to make the equipment to fight the wars. And in spite of that.

01:35:16:04 - 01:35:39:19

Speaker 9

Because of that very tradition of being a home body, it was very difficult. But wartime help to provide them with jobs so that they could, implement an income to help with the families. You know, right now, today, we live in a fast moving society, and it demands for all of us to be prepared for the challenges that are facing.

01:35:39:22 - 01:36:17:26

Speaker 9

We need to continue to encourage all our young people to continue on to higher education. And we must always remember that we are here to honor our veterans at all times. Men and women, veterans. And we must never forget our motto that our founder gave this organization. Education is our freedom, and freedom is everybody's business. So let's continue to make it our business because times are changing for them for the better.

01:36:17:26 - 01:36:35:12

Speaker 9

And we must encourage all young adults to participate in leadership roles in order to develop their potential to run this country one day. And it will happen.

01:36:35:14 - 01:36:57:15

Speaker 9

Let's continue to work with what is important. Let's improve our communities to make it up that not only do we want to improve in our communities, we need to continue to improve throughout the nation so that this becomes a better country that we have today. We must never forget and.

01:36:57:15 - 01:37:00:29

Speaker 3

Especially our youth.

01:37:01:02 - 01:37:24:19

Speaker 9

Don't ask what your country can do for you, but what we can do for our country. We have an obligation and a duty to do for our country what is important to maintain us where we are the number one nation in the world. It's our duty to encourage everyone to register to vote.

01:37:24:21 - 01:37:52:00

Speaker 9

Every vote counts. One vote makes a difference. And remember my message to you, young people, take it to your schools. If your friends are 17 and I have, of course, you missed the deadline already. But if you're 17.5 by October something, or rather before election, if they're going to be 18 by October the 7th, you register six months prior to your 18th birthday.

01:37:52:00 - 01:38:22:09

Speaker 9

You don't wait for your 18th birthday and vote. It is your duty. It is your obligation. And as we're approaching the year 2000, we need to safeguard all the advances that we have achieved to make a dream come true of our great founder, Doctor Hector Garcia. Least of all, let us not forget the pride that we have in our traditions.



01:38:22:11 - 01:38:43:05

Speaker 9

And continue to remember our children. And most important, for everybody, let's provide the world with bread and justice for all. Thank you.

01:38:43:07 - 01:39:04:09

Speaker 5

Thank you. I'm Mariana. We're good. I enjoy the part about the, the young students because you are future leaders. And I'm looking forward to the day that you're up here to take my place. And I can sit out there. at this time, I'd like to do is to bring up our, our youth, chairperson for the, convention.

01:39:04:09 - 01:39:14:08

Speaker 5

And he's our vice chair of Modesto chapter. Jose Rodriguez.

01:39:14:10 - 01:39:25:13

Speaker 5

Is going to give us a quick update on our, on our youth, session, what's going on and where we're at. And if you could say, can you tell us a little bit about yourself very quickly?

01:39:25:16 - 01:39:43:22

Speaker 7

Good afternoon. just do, give you a little bit of background on myself. I'm not from California. I'm actually originally from Houston, Texas. so I'm, the hand at heart always will be.

01:39:43:25 - 01:39:48:16

Unknown

Hey. But,

01:39:48:19 - 01:40:17:07

Speaker 7

I grew up in Houston, and, I was fortunate enough to have opportunities early on in life. I went to a performing arts high school. at a young age, and I, was an actor. Did theater there for four years. So I went to some a special kind of school. But it was a public school, and it was also one of the better institutions where I had a lot of support from my teachers and my peers.

01:40:17:09 - 01:40:41:18

Speaker 7

I then was, able to, go to the East Coast for college. I went to Yale University, where I, graduated with a degree in chemical engineering. after four years. And then, I finally set myself on the other side of the country. Now I'm in California. I took a position with Proctor and Gamble, and I've been here now for a total of one year.

01:40:41:20 - 01:41:09:09

Speaker 7

about two weeks ago. So, I'd like to say that I'm happy to be here. I'm happy to have a community that supports, Latino issues, supports youth. And, since I arrived, I found mentors and, different people specifically, President Raul Ortega, Leo Avila, just to name a few. And, I've been involved with the, Hispanic Leadership Council.

01:41:09:11 - 01:41:47:13

Speaker 7

I'm a, Downey High School advisor, along with that, and, more recently, I became involved with the GI forum. Now, as far as this, conference in specific, we've been working on leadership with our youth. And yesterday we had a workshop on just that subject. We went through, some sort of an exercise to, look, more of a broader perspective as to who our leaders are in our community and around us and really see what makes them who they are and the leaders they are, and try to build those skills in our youth as well.

01:41:47:15 - 01:42:07:25

Speaker 7

So we went through that discussion. and I think the, the young people had as long as well as myself, because I'm a young person, I think, we got, benefit from that. today where our activity, we're going to

do a little more fun, fun things. this afternoon, afterwards, we're going to Camilla Park. And while that's fun, have a little bit of fun.

01:42:07:28 - 01:42:41:22

Speaker 7

But when we come back, our youth will start talking more about their objectives as a, as an organization, how they want to, network, between youth organizations in California. So that's just an update as far as, what, what we're going to be doing, just to, add on that the, there's also a raffle going around where half the proceeds will go to the, youth organizations and the women's group organization, and the other half will go to the winner.

01:42:41:22 - 01:43:06:01

Speaker 7

So I would encourage everyone to buy tickets as many as possible. And, to end, I'd like to ask the youth, to meet in the lobby right after this. Don't go anywhere. We're going to leave right after this. So, we're going to Camilla Park. So thank you again. Welcome.

01:43:06:03 - 01:43:22:01

Speaker 5

at this time, I'd like to have, our commander, Raoul Ortega, come up and assist me for a second.

01:43:22:03 - 01:44:09:00

Speaker 5

On behalf and on behalf of the American G.I. forum, we'd like to do is to recognize the company that Jose works for. Procter and Gamble, which is one of our main sponsors today. just in appreciation of the hard work that they've done for us, and particularly this conference, and also lending Josette to our organization. So, from the American GI Forum to Procter and Gamble to market and, real representative, thank you.

01:44:09:02 - 01:44:29:25

Speaker 5

Hello. We're still there. Okay. One of the names that, One of the names that wasn't mentioned was, that it is Teresa Guerrero. Stand up, please. Thank you.

01:44:29:28 - 01:44:57:18

Speaker 5

That says one of our, main contributors, this community. She is currently the, Hispanic Leadership Council president, is also a member and possibly an officer of, Mujeres Latinas and, involved very deeply with the Hispanic, Youth Leadership Group. And it was responsible for bringing a lot of our youth today. Thank you. Teresa.

01:44:57:20 - 01:45:08:12

Speaker 5

Okay. At this time, we'd like to do is to introduce our queens. If we could have a representative. Aida Benitez.

01:45:08:15 - 01:45:10:09

Speaker 5

Did I just try that?

01:45:10:11 - 01:45:14:13

Speaker 4

01:45:14:16 - 01:45:26:06

Speaker 5

If you could, please, could you, come up and introduce our queens?

01:45:26:08 - 01:45:41:16

Speaker 9

I'm trying to figure out which one it is. Okay. from the Stockton chapter, we have Gabriela Barstow.

01:45:41:18 - 01:45:52:05

Speaker 9

From San Jose, East Valley chapter. Snyder. Martinez.

01:45:52:08 - 01:46:01:18

Speaker 9

From the San Jose chapter, we have Vanessa Ramirez.

01:46:01:21 - 01:46:11:05

Speaker 9

And from our home chapter here in Modesto, we have Adriana, Terra.

01:46:11:08 - 01:46:28:23

Speaker 9

At this time, we also want to introduce, miss 1995 96, miss California from the Stockton chapter. April Machuca.

01:46:28:25 - 01:46:46:14

Speaker 9

And I just want to say that, they really deserve a really good round of applause because, they've all worked very hard, and it's it's actually very hard to do something like that. I competed two years ago, I don't remember a time goes by really fast. I competed two years ago, and I happened to notice.

01:46:46:18 - 01:47:06:04

Speaker 9

It's a really tough situation, to come up in front of a lot of people and try to display just exactly what you're working for and try to encourage and be in the position of just basically because a lot of the smaller and younger children really look up to them, and it's really a position that needs to be applauded because it's not easy at all.

01:47:06:09 - 01:47:20:08

Speaker 9

And they've worked really hard. And so.

01:47:20:11 - 01:47:35:27

Speaker 5

Okay. Thank you very much. She also, failed to mention one thing that she's also a student at Davis, pre-med student, and will be graduating in their future.

01:47:35:29 - 01:47:42:29

Speaker 5

We have a little note here. I want to go ahead and follow protocol. Since somebody has given me the.

01:47:43:02 - 01:48:04:29

Speaker 5

Could could we have all of you, please stand up. Everyone here in the youth program here, all of us. Anyone under 21? All right.

01:48:05:01 - 01:48:11:26

Speaker 5

Thank you.

01:48:11:28 - 01:48:18:12

Speaker 5

Would it roll? Whatever I will say. Did you hear that? He said, I wish I was 30 years younger. yeah.

01:48:18:12 - 01:48:24:24

Speaker 4

Yeah, that.

01:48:24:27 - 01:49:02:16

Speaker 5

Okay, let's continue on with our program. We have a lot of things to cover. at this time, it's my pleasure to introduce, two of our members from our chapter, Modesto chapter, and, two of our lady members, Bea Acosta and, Gracie Ortega. And they're going to be giving out some scholarship awards.

01:49:02:19 - 01:49:10:29

Speaker 5

Anita, do you want to make any presentation before we get started? Okay, okay. Thank you.

01:49:11:01 - 01:49:23:21

Speaker 9

Good afternoon. The Modesto chapter is, honored and pleased to award the annual scholarship awards to the following students. But first, I would like to introduce Gracie Ortega, who is in the committee. And, of course,

01:49:23:23 - 01:49:40:23

Speaker 4

Everybody knows Anita.

01:49:40:26 - 01:50:24:06

Speaker 9

Thank you very much. Be it is, to me, it is a special honor and privilege to award the scholarship to our our Queen, California state queen. April Machuca. April. Come and receive our award.

01:50:24:08 - 01:50:31:18

Speaker 3

oh. Given that my throat. I just want to tell everybody in the American Joy forum.

01:50:31:21 - 01:50:35:00

Speaker 9

Thank you. Once again. I'm not going to spill it all out. That's tonight.

01:50:35:07 - 01:50:45:04

Speaker 3

I'm not going to do it right now, but I would like to just thank you so much for the opportunity to represent you. Thank you for all your support you have.

01:50:45:04 - 01:50:50:06

Speaker 9

Given me this year, your support at nationals, your support during the pageants.

01:50:50:06 - 01:50:58:20

Speaker 3

When I went to go visit San Jose this year. Thank you for always, always giving me a smile, a hug, a pat on.

01:50:58:20 - 01:51:17:05

Speaker 9

The back or a wink, or a wink. Some of you would wink, but it was a nice thing. No. It was a nice wink. Meant with nothing but friendship. And that has meant more to.

01:51:17:05 - 01:51:20:03

Speaker 3

Me than anything else. Is your friendship, your kindness.

01:51:20:05 - 01:51:28:11

Speaker 9

Your hospitality. Thank you very much. Thank you. I need that. And. Leo. doctor Sam's not here, but he will be later.



01:51:28:11 - 01:51:30:27

Speaker 3

Thank you to him. To me.

01:51:30:29 - 01:51:34:16

Speaker 9

Thank you to all my friends here. Thank you very.

01:51:34:16 - 01:51:45:16

Speaker 3

Much.

01:51:45:18 - 01:52:22:18

Speaker 9

And along with that comes the, contribution from all the chapters. I believe it's, I don't know the amount, but, remember that, each chapter contributes for the gift for the Queen. And we are pleased to have committed to that. And, you will get that as well. Okay. Thank you. The next one is for.

01:52:22:20 - 01:52:56:22

Speaker 9

A special queen that we all wish that we also had in the area. Her name is Gloria Foster. Gloria wasn't able to make it today. her sister is getting married, and she's in the wedding party. However, I have, one of the queen contestants that participated, along with Gloria. And she will receive the award for Gloria. And I would like to introduce, Margarita mengele.

01:52:56:24 - 01:53:09:00

Speaker 9

Margarita, please.

01:53:09:02 - 01:53:15:18

Speaker 9

Thank you. Moderator.

01:53:15:21 - 01:53:28:27

Speaker 9

The next student to receive this award is Susana Becerra.

01:53:28:29 - 01:53:48:07

Speaker 9

Thank you so much. Okay. You want to say a few words? well, I would just like to say thank you to everyone in the American GI forum for awarding me this scholarship and giving me the opportunity to continue in my education. Thank you.

01:53:48:10 - 01:54:05:19

Speaker 9

The next student is Anthony Martinez, and I believe that Anthony was unable to attend today.

01:54:05:21 - 01:54:34:02

Speaker 9

Joe Garcia was unable to attend, so we're we're just going to skip him. the next one will be for, Joey Martinez. But before, we present his his award, we have Frank Clemente. That is going to give you a little background about Joey.

01:54:34:04 - 01:54:54:02

Speaker 7

How's everybody doing? Food was good, I'd like to thank the GI forum for giving me this opportunity to come and speak very briefly today. I'm the head wrestling coach at Turlock High School. Been teaching there for 12 years. Been, coaching there for, 17 years. These past five years, I have been running the program. Today.

01:54:54:02 - 01:55:18:10

Speaker 7

We hear so many negative things about youth and, I guess, you know, that's what sells. We hear about the teen pregnancy. We hear about, the gangs and the killings and the drugs and everything else. But being involved with young people as I am on a regular basis, there is far more positive things. going on. And this right here is a very good example of it.

01:55:18:12 - 01:55:39:15

Speaker 7

Joseph Martinez came in our program four years ago. At that time, I really didn't know much of the young man. he has done some amazing things. He's a true leader. He led by example. Many people feel or think of a leader as someone who going to go in there and tell and be boisterous and so on and so forth.

01:55:39:15 - 01:56:04:16

Speaker 7

But, Joseph led by example. I've never been around anybody with the work ethic that Joseph has, not only in the wrestling room as well as in the classroom. he has done more for our program, I think, than he even realizes. along with that, we have people now who are younger than him who are doing things that he was doing as a senior, and they're trying to do them now.

01:56:04:19 - 01:56:31:26

Speaker 7

And, a student athlete is is truly a gifted individual, to go to college and participate and get some scholarships for athletics, means that the amount of time they're putting in for that sport, they're doing the same for the classroom as well. Joseph maintained a 3.2, grade point average all through, and he is currently going to go on to UC Davis.

01:56:31:28 - 01:56:53:07

Speaker 7

Some of the things he has done, he is a three time league champ. He is a, subsection champ, three times a section champ two times. His junior year, he made the state meet in place, fourth. And, this year, as a senior, he made the finals of the state meet and took second place. Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you for this opportunity.

01:56:53:07 - 01:57:16:13

Speaker 7

And I thank you for what you're doing for the young people today. And we just need to read more about it in the paper. I'd like to present to you Joseph Martinez.

01:57:16:15 - 01:57:34:26

Speaker 9

we would also like to, introduce Mr. and Mrs. Martinez, the parents of Joey that are also here at this table. Would you please stand up?

01:57:34:29 - 01:57:46:04

Speaker 9

And also the proud grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Joe, part in this.

01:57:46:07 - 01:58:02:14

Speaker 9

We wish to, award this to Joey Martinez on behalf of the American G.I. forum. Thank you. But Esther chapter.

01:58:02:16 - 01:58:07:22

Speaker 4

I should say something.

01:58:07:25 - 01:58:09:20

Speaker 4

you look well.

01:58:09:23 - 01:58:20:06

Speaker 7

First, I would like to thank, Modesto GI forum chapter and, my parents, Frank and Jolin, because, they helped me.

01:58:20:08 - 01:58:23:05

Speaker 4

what? I get what I'm receiving today.

01:58:23:07 - 01:58:26:05

Speaker 7

and my coach, Frank Clemente, right there for.

01:58:26:05 - 01:58:30:14

Speaker 9

Introducing me and my grandparents.

01:58:30:17 - 01:58:53:21

Speaker 7

Joe Barney for, I made me for this one. And everybody else has supported me or, you know, helped me out through my four years. Thanks.

01:58:53:23 - 01:59:28:23

Speaker 9

Our next special award is for a young lady that has done so much for the GI forum. This young lady has come through and help with the, a newsletter that Leo, prepared when he was state commander and force. I think she worked for about four years doing this, job for the American GI forum, and she never got paid for that.

01:59:28:25 - 02:00:00:09

Speaker 9

We are so appreciative. Along with that, I prepared a newsletter also for the National because I'm a national officer as well. And, she prepared a newsletter for me, in March. And, Patricia did it with, all the

love that she has for this organization. And, we want to present to her an award, and she'll tell you where her studies are going to be continued.

02:00:00:11 - 02:00:28:04

Speaker 9

She graduated from Berkeley. I know that, and she's been working with Latino Issues Forum, but, she has a future ahead of her and her educational future. She will describe it to you. Patricia, please.

02:00:28:06 - 02:00:31:02

Speaker 4

Thank you so much.

02:00:31:05 - 02:01:03:02

Speaker 9

first of all, I'd like to thank the American GI forum for giving me this opportunity. It's been a pleasure working with everyone. I've been at Latino Issues Forum as a project director, pretty much out of college. working on different issues. And that's where I came into contact with Leo and Anita. And, we've been working real closely on a lot of different issues, and I was really pleased to have the opportunity to work with the GI forum and to, do whatever I can to help the organization as a whole.

02:01:03:05 - 02:01:38:04

Speaker 9

I went to Berkeley and in the fall, actually, next month, it's coming around quick. I'm going to the University of Texas at Austin to pursue a degree in public affairs from the Lyndon Johnson School of Public Affairs. And I want to continue the work that I started at Latino Issues Forum. we've been working on lots of different things, from energy to telecommunications to higher education and I think it's very important that our youth, are educated and are actually brought up to speed with the changes that are going on in the world, particularly with technology.

02:01:38:07 - 02:02:03:22

Speaker 9

So that's what I want my focus to be on, youth education and telecommunications in the future. So hopefully I will be back here in California soon so that I continue the work, that I've done over the last couple years. Thank you.

02:02:03:25 - 02:02:23:28

Speaker 9

This is truly a family affair, as we say in the American. Jeff. we're all family here with the next student. It gives me a great pleasure because I have a special interest. My grandson, Tommy Rodriguez. Tommy.

02:02:24:01 - 02:02:27:18

Speaker 4

You want to say yes?

02:02:27:20 - 02:02:39:26

Speaker 7

first, I'd like to thank the GI forum, for presenting me with this award. And I'd like to thank the GI forum from Modesto for putting on this wonderful convention here we're having today.

02:02:39:28 - 02:02:41:15

Speaker 5

I'd like to thank my nana.

02:02:41:15 - 02:02:52:21

Speaker 7

And my papa, B Acosta and Abel Acosta, for just nominating me and pressuring me. To, put in.

02:02:52:24 - 02:03:03:12

Speaker 5

The application for the scholarship and. To get.

02:03:03:15 - 02:03:07:16

Speaker 5

Another for,

02:03:07:19 - 02:03:23:19

Speaker 7

make it well, pushing me to put the the, scholarship application in to make me get some recommendations from my teachers and just, write some words about what I want to do in the future. But I just want to thank you and thank everybody for coming here.

02:03:23:19 - 02:03:33:26

Speaker 4

We.

02:03:33:28 - 02:03:53:14

Speaker 5

A lot of thank you's there. Thank you. Ladies, a couple of, introductions. I failed to make the first one. Of course, most of you know who I am, and you've seen me already. I don't know how many times, but for the rest of you that have not, I failed to introduce myself. My name is Leland Castro.

02:03:53:16 - 02:04:06:10

Speaker 5

I'm the, state convention chair of the 1996 convention here in Modesto.

02:04:06:13 - 02:04:22:17

Speaker 5

The other important person I forgot to mention, as we introduced the ladies earlier was Anita Avila has been doing so many things. You you tend to forget the, But I forgot to introduce you, Anita. Any traveler.

02:04:22:19 - 02:04:28:18



Speaker 5

Who's the boss? Leo said I'm the boss. Although she's the boss.

02:04:28:20 - 02:04:29:23

Speaker 6

Please don't worry.

02:04:29:25 - 02:04:34:21

Speaker 5

Oh.

02:04:34:23 - 02:04:55:01

Speaker 5

It's, It's been a lot of fun. And one of the things that I, I get a good feeling from. And until you're up here and doing some of these things is, Julie is giving, and I think that's what we're doing today. We're giving to you to help you and your future. And you're giving to us because you're going to be our help in our future.

02:04:55:03 - 02:05:18:28

Speaker 5

At this time, I'd like to introduce our, convention chair, our state, chairperson of the, 1996, 1995, 1996, chairperson for American GI Forum of California. Willie Galvan.

02:05:19:00 - 02:05:40:24

Speaker 5

Thank you, Leland and, Raoul, for this wonderful conference that we have today. I want to welcome everybody again. And I want to say hi to the Queens and the Queen candidates and all the committees that have worked so hard. Today. We have a speaker from Washington, and I want to talk a little bit about this lady that's made a lot of things possible for us in Washington.

02:05:40:27 - 02:06:07:21

Speaker 5

When we go to Washington to meet with the Veterans Affairs, to meet with a congressman, she's the lady that opened the doors for us and Leo more often than, than I have been there. And she's been. And her department, her office has been real good to us there. This lady was confirmed by the Senate on November 8th, 1993, following her nomination by President Clinton to be the Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs.

02:06:07:23 - 02:06:35:13

Speaker 5

She directs policy governance in VA public and internal communications programs, as well as arranging as well as intergovernmental and consumer affairs. This year, the Department of Veterans Affairs, before coming to, Washington and Virginia. Mrs.. she was director of government relations for the University of South Florida, Tampa, responsible for state and federal relations for the second largest university in the Florida State University system.

02:06:35:16 - 02:07:16:06

Speaker 5

She served on the Presidential Transition Team, which briefed incoming cabinet secretaries of the Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, and Veterans Affairs. In 1992, she directed press operations for the Clinton-Gore election campaign in Florida and serve as press secretary and travel aide to, Hillary Clinton. Her Washington experience includes many things, but her tenure as an associate with a government and public affairs consulting firm, Fort Collins, Roslyn and Faye, in Arlington, Virginia, she represented client interest to Congress and state legislature.

02:07:16:09 - 02:07:41:03

Speaker 5

She began her career as staff assistant for the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Post Office and Civil Service. Following graduation, the University of Notre Dame with a degree in government and international Relations. She was born in and raised in Tampa. She comes from a Puerto Rican and, American. that said, she is a lady that has helped us a lot.

02:07:41:06 - 02:07:55:04

Speaker 5

I want you to help me welcome Kathy Jurado.

02:07:55:07 - 02:08:11:20

Speaker 9

Thank you, Commander Galvan. That was very, very kind of you. And, that resume, when it gets gets long like that, you start to realize how old you are. And and you wouldn't even have to look very far, because all you have to do is look at these young faces and you realize how old you are. So the.

02:08:11:22 - 02:08:49:03

Speaker 9

I just like to think commander Galvan, state Chairperson Tinoco and national vice chairperson Leo Avila and Anita Villa, I'm very happy to be with you all today. I enjoy so much being part of, GI forum activities, whether they're on the national level, on the state level, I've made very good friends along the way. I've only been at the Department of Veterans Affairs for the last three years, but I have made good friends and the best of the friends that I have made during my tenure at the VA have been those of the GI forum, and I am a member of the GI forum, lifetime member.

02:08:49:06 - 02:08:55:19

Speaker 9

The.

02:08:55:22 - 02:09:16:19

Speaker 9

I am so happy to be with you all today and especially at the Youth luncheon. I look forward to coming to the GI forum event because all of you young people are going to be here today, and I hope that I can share with you, some insights. I'm going to share some insights for the the older folks in the room are veterans because I bring them some news from Washington.

02:09:16:21 - 02:09:38:05

Speaker 9

But but hopefully they'll be a little bit of, of, everything from here. First off, I'd like to say, and I and I hope that that a lot of the youth in the room will be able to go to the national convention in Colorado Springs. I know it's a it's a long trip from here, but I'm very excited to announce that at the national convention in Colorado Springs, Secretary Jesse Brown will be a speaker at the convention.

02:09:38:05 - 02:09:45:01

Speaker 9

And we're very happy that he'll be able to to attend the convention.

02:09:45:04 - 02:10:04:17

Speaker 9

So we work that out with, with national commander ality, just last week and with Tony Morales. And so we're, we're very happy that we'll, we'll we have the secretary at the national convention. This has been a tough week in Washington this week. I know that, that everybody has been looking at the, the papers and that this has hit you all very close to home.

02:10:04:17 - 02:10:27:23

Speaker 9

But, it's been a tough week in Washington and around the world. The tragic bombing this week in Saudi Arabia should remind all of us that the price of peace is still high, and it is our men and women in uniform who bear the brunt of it. Our promise to care for them is just as important now as it was to the veterans of any war in our history.

02:10:27:26 - 02:10:54:20

Speaker 9

Right here in Modesto, you have experienced both ends of the emotional spectrum of this tragedy, sorrow and mourning for the loss of Airman First Class Justin Wood, who was killed in the blast in Saudi Arabia, and pride in the heroism and relief over the safe return of Staff Sergeant Alfredo Guerrero Jr, who sent something suspicious and ran through the building alerting people to get out before the explosion.

02:10:54:22 - 02:11:18:06

Speaker 9

19 Americans were killed and over 300 injured in that blast. They were not fighting a war, but the deaths and injuries and psychological scars are just as real as any resulting from combat. Our obligation to care for them and their families is just as solemn today as it was 200 years ago, when the first benefits for American veterans were created.

02:11:18:09 - 02:11:43:20

Speaker 9

So what does that obligation mean to those men and women in their families? For those who were injured, VA will be there to provide medical care, rehabilitation and compensation, education and job training. In short, everything we can give them to offset the negative effects of their experience and that will impede their ability to lead a normal and happy and productive lives.

02:11:43:22 - 02:12:22:17

Speaker 9

Those who witnessed the event and its aftermath and escaped physical harm may find the memory of what they have seen will become more and more troubling with time. VA will be for them. We'll be there for them with psychological counseling and treatment to help them deal with the effects of post-traumatic stress. And for those who were killed, VA provides much more than a dignified burial and a payment of insurance to the families for the widows and children and dependent parents, VA will pay dependency and indemnity compensation, and a monthly payment to take the place of the income of the veteran.

02:12:22:19 - 02:12:51:05

Speaker 9

We will provide educational benefit so that the spouse and the children can go to college or get vocational training. The spouse can qualify for a VA home loan guarantee to purchase a home and their health insurance needs will be met by the VA Civilian Health and Medical Program.

02:12:51:07 - 02:13:25:18

Speaker 9

This is what keeping the promise to America's veterans means. Anyone who served in the armed forces must be secure in the knowledge that if anything happens to them, and they and their families will be taken care of, we have a phrase, a VA, that serves as a constant reminder of our mission. We call it putting veterans first. And over the past three years of the Clinton administration, we have formed a partnership with veterans organizations like the GI forum, and we have made significant progress in many areas that affect veterans.

02:13:25:20 - 02:13:41:05

Speaker 9

Be veterans who come to the VA for compensation benefits, have experienced long delays because of a backlog that had built up. We have cut that backlog more than in half, and we are working towards having that backlog in a very manageable.