

REMEMBERING WAR
THE AMERICAN WAY



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4

THE "GOOD WAR" AND MODERN MEMORY



Most Americans did not want to fight another war in Europe. From the beginnings of World War II in 1939 until the sudden fall of France in the spring of 1940, isolationist sentiment dominated public and congressional opinion. Even many who believed that Nazi Germany posed a threat to United States interests hoped that America could avoid actual entry into the war by simply providing economic and military aid to Britain.

With Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941 and Germany's declaration of war on the United States a few days later, public opinion shifted. In many ways this explains the more muted tone of American propaganda during World War II in contrast to that of World War I. The moralistic and messianic themes so prevalent in 1917–18 were largely absent in 1941–45. Most people considered World War II a war of self-defense and, particularly in the Pacific, of revenge for a surprise attack on America. Only relatively late and reluctantly did President Franklin D. Roosevelt establish an Office of War Information. In his view, Wilson's Committee on Public Information had fueled much of the hysteria that had swept the country during the First World War, and Roosevelt wanted to avoid a recurrence. He also believed that public expectations concerning the results of the Second World War should not be raised unrealistically, as they had in 1917.

Like many of his contemporaries, Roosevelt believed that much of the popular disillusionment with the Versailles Treaty and the League of Nations had stemmed from overinflated wartime promises by the Wilson administration.

Idealism, however, was not entirely absent from World War II propaganda. The government and the mass media often stressed that the United States was fighting against the morally repugnant ideologies of Nazism, fascism, and militarism and in defense of what Roosevelt called the Four Freedoms—freedom of religion and speech, and freedom from fear and want. The government's wartime message emphasized that the United States had joined forces in a Grand Alliance with Britain, and also with Nationalist China and Stalin's Russia. By 1944 American war publicity predicted that out of this wartime union would grow a permanent international organization—a United Nations—designed to ensure a more stable and peaceful world.¹

American propaganda inflamed emotions—particularly against the Japanese, who were portrayed as an evil, inferior, and barbaric race lacking all sense of decency. These Asians had not only bombed Pearl Harbor without warning but also committed scores of atrocities against American prisoners of war during the Bataan Death March. Hatred of the stereotyped "Jap" quickly reached such a state that the federal government interned American citizens of Japanese descent living near the Pacific Coast in special camps.²

Because of the Pearl Harbor attack and as a result of earlier isolationism, public support for the war against Japan proved much stronger than support for the war against Germany. Initially, the president feared that the United States might be forced to reverse its goal of defeating Germany before dealing fully with Japan. American propaganda, as well as public attitude, remained restrained regarding Germany, failing to match the anger expressed against Japan, or even the level of emotion raised against the "Hun" in 1917. Before the public discovered the concentration camps at the end of the war, the atrocity story failed to become a staple of wartime publicity against the Germans. Perhaps this was partly due to the large number of German Americans living in the United States. It also may have stemmed from the fact that the German army and its soldiers were generally granted more respect than Japanese troops.³

Discovery of the Nazi concentration camps ended any remaining doubt of America's need to crush Germany. In contrast to the aftermath of the First World War, no significant revisionist school emerged questioning

the wisdom of America's entering the war in Europe. Revisionism was only a minor undercurrent—a few old isolationists and, later, neo-isolationists. Most Americans remembered the struggle against Germany as a conflict between good and monstrous evil. In fact, criticism later emerged over the failure of the United States to grasp fully and quickly enough the true nature of Nazism. By the 1970s and 1980s, many were faulting the United States for not doing more to halt the Holocaust.⁴

The First World War, to a large degree, established the organizations and the rituals that the United States used in remembering the Second World War. Once again the U.S. government created a series of overseas cemeteries and monuments. At home, government authorities brought back another unknown soldier, who received a hero's burial at Arlington National Cemetery. The American Legion remained the principal veterans' organization.

In the eyes of many Americans, the Second World War vindicated the first one. The decision to halt German aggression in 1917 was thought correct; the mistake was in not preventing the rise of Hitler. To many internationalists, the great lesson to be learned was that the United States must abandon isolationism. They insisted that America use its economic and military power to shape the international order. Some, especially those on the Left, felt this should be done with the cooperation and help of the Soviet Union. In the late 1940s, however, many liberals and conservatives considered communist Russia the greatest threat to world peace.

Ironically, far more ambiguity surrounded the war in Asia. The Far East conflict had ended in a controversial and sobering manner with the destruction of two Japanese cities by American atomic bombs. A debate subsequently developed over the wisdom and necessity of using weapons of such unprecedented power. Some feared that the atomic bomb might, if not properly regulated, eventually lead to the destruction of humanity. As early as the 1950s historians started to question U.S. policy toward Japan in 1940–41. Charles Beard and, more recently, John Toland argued that Roosevelt's policies had provoked the Japanese attack, in part to foster America's entrance into the war in Europe, a point disputed by most historians and by general public opinion.⁵

American involvement in the Second World War dwarfed that of the First World War. The United States mobilized more than fifteen million servicemen and fought a two-front war in Asia and Europe. During that conflict American industrial production soared and the nation not only equipped its own forces but also met many of the needs of England and

the Soviet Union. The United States built the largest navy and air force in the world. Although American casualties never approached those of Japan, Germany, or the Soviet Union, they remained substantial and far greater than the losses sustained in World War I. The navy, for instance, lost more men during the single day's attack on Pearl Harbor than it had during the entire course of World War I. All told, almost three hundred thousand American soldiers, sailors, and marines died in World War II, compared with slightly more than fifty thousand in World War I.⁶

Despite the unprecedented magnitude of the U.S. effort in the Second World War, Americans did not create a distinct national holiday to commemorate it. Although there were attempts to create specific organizations representing only World War II veterans, those efforts ultimately were aborted. In contrast to the immediate aftermath of the First World War, there was little interest in 1945–47 in building innovative war monuments in the United States.

In 1945, as in 1919, Americans pondered the wisdom of maintaining military cemeteries overseas. Both the army and the American Battle Monuments Commission believed they would serve as useful symbols of national unity, as permanent reminders to other nations of the sacrifices made by the United States, and as symbols of an ongoing friendship between the countries. Because the next of kin had been allowed in the 1920s to determine whether a particular soldier would be buried at home or abroad, it proved virtually impossible to deny this option in 1945. Few wanted to reopen the "unpleasant debate" that took place in the 1920s, but many in the military and the American Battle Monuments Commission hoped that by quickly restoring the World War I cemeteries to their pre-1940 beauty, they could prepare the American public for a "free and cheerful acceptance" of overseas burial of the World War II dead.⁷

This idea won considerable support in the media. Articles appearing in *Reader's Digest*, the *Saturday Evening Post*, and other popular periodicals offered reasons for not returning the war dead, particularly from Europe. It was again argued that those who died in battle would have wanted to remain buried near their comrades. Invariably the views of living soldiers were cited to reinforce this sentiment. Burial on the battlefield forever associated the fallen with a victory considered "one of the great achievements of history." On a more practical level, internment in an overseas cemetery would ensure that sons and husbands would rest in a beautiful parklike cemetery.⁸

With far less furor than in the aftermath of the First World War, Congress decided in 1946 that widows, children, parents, and siblings, in that order, could make the final determination regarding the burial place of their loved ones. Despite the government's pleas against removal, the majority of widows and parents once again wanted the bodies of their next of kin brought back to the United States.⁹

For those who remained buried overseas, the United States again decided to abandon isolated or less-accessible locations and concentrate all overseas burials into several large military cemeteries. It declared that permanent cemeteries would not be established in either Germany or Japan, because these nations had been former enemies, although Italy was deemed a suitable site because it had joined the Allies during the war. The U.S. Army and the American Battle Monuments Commission concluded that most temporary sites in Africa and Asia were unacceptable because they were difficult to reach. The majority of U.S. burial grounds (ten out of fourteen) were based in Europe. Of the permanent cemeteries established, only one was in North Africa, in Tunisia, which was at the time a French colony, only three in the Pacific, one each in the U.S. territories of Hawaii and Alaska, and one in the former colony of the Philippines. Despite the epic nature of the fighting on Iwo Jima, Okinawa, Tawara, and other such islands, no burial grounds were established on any of them. Both the army and the American Battle Monuments Commission stated that parents and widows would be reluctant to allow their next of kin to remain buried on these remote islands. The American Legion echoed these sentiments, insisting that these "desolate" islands experienced "volcanic action, earthquakes, typhoons and other extremely hazardous forces of nature" and that their distance from "civilization" ruled them out as the final resting places for fallen American servicemen.¹⁰

Both the army and the American Battle Monuments Commission wanted to symbolize the bond between the United States and Europe by locating most U.S. military cemeteries on the Continent. Although there were logistical problems in the Philippines, the army and the commission decided that the importance of political ties with the former U.S. colony outweighed such inconveniences. Thus, authorities established a military cemetery in Manila. In one meeting of the American Battle Monuments Commission, General George Marshall, former army chief of staff, stressed the important "psychological effect" a cemetery in the Philippines would have on the Filipino people, serving as "permanent evidence of American sacrifice." Some in the commission wanted to retain a cemetery in India,

but the army ruled against it. In the view of the commander of the army's Memorial Division, the effect of an American cemetery would be lost on the people of India, because of what he called the Indians' "lack of respect" accorded to their own dead.¹¹

In designing the overseas cemeteries and monuments, the American Battle Monuments Commission and the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts again adhered to many of the policies that had been established after World War I. The graves of World War II veterans were to be marked by uniform gravestones, and grass and trees were to dominate the cemeteries. A marble cross or Star of David would be placed on each gravestone, and each cemetery would contain a permanent, nondenominational chapel.¹²

Like their First World War counterparts, Second World War chapels defined the United States as a predominately Christian nation. Although Jewish symbolism was incorporated in some chapels, the American Battle Monuments Commission again showed considerable insensitivity. In considering what it called the "Jewish question," the commission in 1949 refused to heed the calls of many American Jews to abstain from using the cross in chapel designs or to establish an advisory committee to provide advice on religious symbolism. There was even retrogression in this area, as the commission had randomly marked unknown soldiers' graves during the interwar period with either a cross or a Star of David in relation to the "proportion of known Jewish dead to known Christian dead." In 1948 it decided that all unidentified graves would be marked with a cross in order to avoid having a Star of David mark the grave of what the commission suggested might be "an unknown Christian."¹³

In selecting architects and sculptors to design the World War II overseas monuments, both the Commission of Fine Arts and the American Battle Monuments Commission again preferred those who worked in traditional styles. Consequently, most chapels and overseas monuments were built along classical lines. Idealized figures clothed in the garb of Greek citizens, Roman soldiers, or medieval saints served as focal points for several monuments. As they had during the interwar period, the two commissions viewed American overseas memorials as part of a long, European-based cultural tradition dating back to ancient Greece and Rome.¹⁴

To highlight the continuity between the two world wars, the American Battle Monuments Commission made the World War I cemetery at Suresnes, on the outskirts of Paris, a burial ground and memorial to the dead of both conflicts. The remains of twenty-four unidentified soldiers from the Second World War were placed in the cemetery. At the same time, the

commission added two loggias to the original chapel in order to commemorate the unknown dead from both wars. The northern loggia was dedicated to the dead of the First World War, the southern to those of the Second World War.¹⁵

The history of Quentin Roosevelt's burial site provides yet another illustration of how the First World War came to be viewed as but a prelude to the second. After the First World War, former President Theodore Roosevelt had insisted that his son, Quentin, be buried on the spot where he had fallen. The government had granted his request and had allowed the Roosevelt family to erect a special memorial over Quentin's isolated grave in France. During the Second World War, Theodore Jr., another of Roosevelt's sons, died of a heart attack during the Normandy invasion. His wife and his brother, Archibald, insisted that he be buried in the permanent U.S. military cemetery near Normandy. Shortly after the Second World War ended, the Roosevelt family requested that Quentin's body be removed from its isolated location and buried next to that of his brother. After some hesitation, the army and the American Battle Monument Commission granted the Roosevelt family's request, and these two sons of Theodore Roosevelt lie today near each other at the Normandy cemetery.¹⁶

The overseas cemeteries served to symbolize U.S. global military commitments undertaken after 1945. The army, by placing most of the cemeteries in Europe, indicated that it wished to have even greater ties with the Continent. In 1948 the United States began providing economic aid to European countries under the Marshall Plan, and a year later, it joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, thereby forming a permanent military alliance with most of western Europe.

There is no solid evidence to suggest that the decision not to maintain permanent cemeteries in Asia or other regions of the Third World was motivated by racism. The correspondence and minutes of the American Battle Monuments Commission emphasize only that non-European regions were excluded because of their geographic inaccessibility. Nonetheless, government reluctance to place permanent burial grounds in the Third World, particularly in Asia, mirrored the ambivalence many Americans felt toward these regions. Most felt the United States had little in common, culturally or politically, with most African or Asian peoples and nations. Although during the late 1940s, U.S. foreign policy emphasized the need to bolster Western Europe economically and militarily, the United States fought its next two wars not in Europe, but in Asia.

In the late 1940s there were a few efforts to establish the anniversary of V-J Day as a national holiday. On the first anniversary of that day, President Harry S. Truman issued a proclamation urging Americans to observe 14 August 1946, as "Victory Day" by publicly displaying the American flag and by remembering those who had sacrificed their lives for the cause of "justice, freedom, peace and international good-will." Many communities held church services or other public ceremonies to mark the anniversary. Every year from 1946 to 1949, New York's governor Thomas E. Dewey issued a proclamation calling on citizens of the Empire State to remember 14 August as V-J Day. In addition, during the late 1940s, Arkansas and Rhode Island made the day into a legal state holiday.¹⁷

V-J Day never became a national holiday. Instead, Armistice Day, 11 November, was redefined to include the commemoration of both world wars and, eventually, all American wars. Armistice Day was chosen, in part, because the Second World War had really ended on two different dates: V-E Day in Europe was 8 May 1945, and V-J Day in Asia was 14 August 1945. In addition to that confusion, by making V-J Day into a national holiday, the majority of attention would have been focused on the war in the Pacific. Armistice Day still held a special significance for many Second World War veterans. Many of the senior officers of the 1941-45 war had served in the 1917 conflict. Also, many of the citizen-soldiers of World War II had come of age during the interwar period and had never known a time when Armistice Day was not observed.¹⁸

The development of a separate holiday commemorating the Second World War was impeded most by the cold war and the threat of hostilities with the Soviet Union. It became clear following the Korean War (1950-53) that Armistice Day must be formally redefined, because, in the words of one congressman, it was "simply not feasible to establish a national holiday to commemorate the closing of each war." In 1954 Congress renamed Armistice Day, Veterans Day, proclaiming it as a day to honor the participants of all American wars. A House committee supporting this change declared that the veterans of Korea and World War II had, like their World War I comrades, fought for the same noble objective: the advance of a "permanent peace by halting aggression of those who would destroy our democratic ideals."¹⁹

The monuments built within the United States to commemorate the fallen of the world wars served to highlight the continuity between the two conflicts. Many in 1945, like their predecessors, hoped to use the com-

monality, sacrifice, and victory to encourage domestic reform and the reconstruction of American society. Advocates of "living memorials" once again repeated their calls for the construction of playgrounds, parks, highways, bridges, and other useful structures promoting the well-being of communities. Monuments that had a "truly social purpose" would honor the memory of the fallen far better than what one critic called the "mediocre or even tawdry 'monumental' monstrosities that have been left in the wake of all our earlier wars."²⁰

In defence of living memorials, Archibald MacLeish, poet and librarian of Congress, accepted the fact that a great monument could be inspirational, but noted that the supply of great sculptors was limited and their cost beyond the reach of most communities. At best, he claimed, most towns could afford a "mediocre piece," and such works quickly become invisible. A properly selected living memorial had a far better chance of entering the "life" and "consciousness" of a community. MacLeish insisted that every community was different, and what worked in one community might fail in another. Thus, in some areas a park would be a meaningful monument, whereas in others a school would be preferable.²¹

Those who favored living memorials were more reserved about what they would accomplish than they had been after World War I. *American City* once again supported living memorials for their ability to promote community and "practical democracy," but in contrast to the rhetoric it used in 1919 and 1920, the magazine did not justify them as providing a bulwark against possible class and ethnic upheavals. Instead, living memorials, such as community houses, swimming pools, parks, or other civic improvements were seen as enhancing an already stable society.²² Supporters of traditional monuments, such as the Commission of Fine Arts and the National Sculpture Society, used the same arguments they had in 1919 and 1920 to criticize living memorials. The traditionalists insisted that a "true" war memorial must be imbued with beauty and spirituality; something, they claimed, a utilitarian structure could never do. Moreover, they said it was easier to forget the purpose of a living memorial than of a traditional sculptured figure.²³

To the relief of the National Sculpture Society, there were no stock figures of "G.I. Joe" erected in town squares alongside doughboys from World War I and the solemn stone sentinels of the Civil War. But to their dismay, many large and small communities opted to build stadiums, parks, recreation centers, auditoriums, libraries, and other structures rather than statues. In many communities, the monument to World War II was a

bronze table or single granite marker containing the names of those who had fought and died, added to or alongside the marker commemorating the fallen of World War I.²⁴

To a large degree, it was not traditional monuments that preserved and commemorated World War II, but newspaper photographs, newsreels, motion pictures, and, eventually, television. A dramatic picture by press photographer Joseph Rosenthal, which showed five marines and a navy medic raising an American flag on Mount Suribachi during the battle for Iwo Jima, quickly became one of the most popular symbols of the Second World War. Soon after its publication in February 1945, editorial writers and members of Congress called it a "work of art" representing one of the great historical events in American history. Its imagery of heroism, bravery, and courage was frequently compared with that of Emanuel Leutze's painting of "Washington Crossing the Delaware." The Treasury Department used a representation of the Iwo Jima flag raising as the basis for its seventh loan drive poster. The Post Office also broke all sales records with a stamp depicting the flag raising.²⁵

Congress quickly introduced legislation to build a permanent monument to the flag raising at Iwo Jima. Within days of the event, Felix DeWeldon, an Austrian-born sculptor serving in the U.S. Navy, at the behest of his superiors, created a sculptured work depicting the heroic scene. Hastily completed in August 1945, the work was temporarily erected on Constitution Avenue in Washington, D.C.²⁶ The Marine Corps League and the Navy Department viewed DeWeldon's figure as a superb representation of the event and of the "fighting spirit" of the Marine Corps. The Marine Corps League lobbied Congress for permission to erect a permanent monument based on Rosenthal's picture and DeWeldon's sculpture as a memorial to the Marine Corps' dead from all of America's wars. The Commission of Fine Arts, the National Sculpture Society, and the Artist's Guild of Washington considered this an appalling idea. DeWeldon's professional credentials remained suspect, and they believed his temporary monument was artistically horrendous. One former naval officer and sculptor accused DeWeldon of having falsified his artistic accomplishments and education. In addition, a report asserted that DeWeldon had entered the United States illegally in the 1930s and had attempted to commit insurance fraud. The Commission of Fine Arts insisted that a competition be held in order to ensure that only the best design and sculptor were selected to complete this or any major memorial to the Second World War. Moreover, the commission opposed the strict use of Rosenthal's picture as the model for any



Flag raising on Iwo Jima, 23 February 1945. This widely reproduced image, by Joe Rosenthal of the Associated Press, quickly inspired a monument and host of other commemorative activities. (Reprinted from J. Heller, *War and Conflict*, National Archives, 1990, 276; original source U.S. Navy)

memorial. The commission thought that the winning design should strive for an ideal representation of the event in the classical tradition.²⁷

In the end the commission and the professional art organizations lost their battle against the DeWeldon monument. The photographic image was simply too popular. Congress mandated the use of Rosenthal's photographic image and did not require the Marine Corps League to hold a competition. Although the Commission of Fine Arts had to approve the final design, Congress limited its power on this issue. DeWeldon's design won the favor of the navy, the Marine Corps, and of many veterans. Although the commissioners won some modifications of DeWeldon's work and influenced its final location, they could not prevent its completion. The commission was forced to welcome DeWeldon as a colleague when President Harry S. Truman appointed him a member in 1950.²⁸

The inability of the Commission of Fine Arts and the National Sculpture Society to prevent the construction of DeWeldon's Iwo Jima monument illustrates their weak positions in determining how the Second World War would be commemorated. The conservative, classically oriented approach of the commission and sculpture society to public art had increasingly fallen out of favor, both in artistic circles and among various elites in American society. As one member of the National Sculpture Society reported gloomily in 1951:

Circumstances and conditions during the past 25 years have not been kind to sculpture. It is today almost completely overlooked as decoration for homes, for gardens, and for public architecture. Its use for commemorative monuments has of recent years faced much opposition. If ever sculpture was in the dark shadows of near oblivion it is now.²⁹

Many art critics questioned whether classically inspired monuments adequately captured the terrible destructiveness and horrible violence of the Second World War. They insisted that memorial art aim for greater simplic-



Felix DeWeldon's first statue commemorating the flag raising on Iwo Jima originally stood on Constitution Avenue in Washington, D.C. Both the artist and statue he created received searing criticism from the professional art community. (Photograph courtesy National Archives, 80-G-386592)

ity and starkness in design and form. Modern art and sculpture were far more appropriate for modern wars. To many critics the cemeteries and monuments built by the American Battle Monuments Commission symbolized all that should be avoided in memorial art. In their view, the massiveness, uniformity, and stiffness seemed too much like the commemorative structures of fascist Germany and Italy. One critic considered the stiff and lifeless statues authorized by the commission as the "world's worst sculpture."³⁰

The lack of interest in building traditional monuments to the Second World War also suggests that government leaders and much of the public were content with the way First World War memorials and rituals defined the American identity. After 1945 both were even more comfortable than in the interwar period with an ethnically heterogeneous vision of nationhood. In 1954, the first year Armistice Day was formally commemorated as Veterans Day, the federal government organized an unprecedented series of mass naturalization ceremonies. These symbolized the connection of military service to citizenship and declared that the United States had been created from many diverse peoples. In part, the dramatic appeal of the Iwo Jima flag raising image stemmed from the fact that the individuals who had taken part in that event were perceived as "average" Americans drawn together from disparate backgrounds. As was widely publicized, the participants included an American Indian, a Texan, a Kentucky mountaineer, a French Canadian from Vermont, and a Czech-American from central Pennsylvania.³¹

During the interwar years, anticommunism and opposition to what was perceived as foreign-inspired radical subversion had been a core tenet of the American Legion. In 1933 the organization had actively opposed diplomatic recognition of the Soviet Union. Although the legion supported military preparedness in the 1930s, it believed that the United States should intervene militarily only in the Western Hemisphere. The legion insisted that the U.S. alliance with the Soviet Union during World War II had been strictly a matter of necessity.³²

To many other Americans, however, and to President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the Soviet-American alliance represented the beginning of a new era of cooperation between the two countries. Many American soldiers who had met the Red Army at the Elbe on 25 April 1945 insisted that they would keep alive the spirit of goodwill once they returned to America. One veteran, Chicago cab driver Joseph Polowsky, dedicated much of his life to fostering reunions between Soviet and American troops who had met at

the close of the war. In the 1940s and 1950s, Polowsky worked to have the United Nations and the United States declare 25 April a day dedicated to the pursuit of peace. Before his death in 1983, Polowsky directed that his body be buried at the Elbe meeting site as a symbol of goodwill and understanding between the United States and the Soviet Union.³³

The American Veterans Committee (AVC), started by World War II veterans, hailed the spirit of Yalta and insisted that Soviet-American cooperation was still possible. They offered a liberal vision of the 1941 conflict and insisted that the United States continue to promote Roosevelt's Four Freedoms domestically and internationally. In contrast to the American Legion, the AVC argued that veterans should not simply lobby for benefits for themselves but also seek to promote a reordering of American society that would benefit all. As cold war tensions worsened, the American Veterans Committee faltered, suffering from internal strife as competing groups from the Left struggled to control it. Labeled a communist front organization by the American Legion and others, the AVC sought to combat this charge by expelling all communists from its ranks. Nonetheless, the accusations proved effective, and by 1950 the AVC had shrunk to insignificance.³⁴

The failure of the AVC to supplant the American Legion remained part of a wider movement toward making anticommunism central to the definition of the American identity. To the legion, and to President Truman and his successors, the great lesson of the Second World War had been the need to contain early on totalitarian aggression. In contrast to earlier eras in American history, the boundary between peace and war seemed thin during the cold war. The United States spent large sums on the military and in foreign assistance to those who resisted the actions of the Soviet Union and of Third World guerrilla movements.

The cold war grew increasingly strained, casting a long shadow over efforts to commemorate the Grand Alliance of the Second World War. In the late 1940s and the 1950s, Veterans Day ceremonies emphasized the need to meet the threat posed by the Communist bloc. In 1950, after protests from Admiral William H. Standley, a former ambassador to the Soviet Union under the Roosevelt administration, that two of the Four Freedoms (from want and from fear) were inspired by communism, the San Diego City Council decided not to sponsor a World War II monument in which the four freedoms were listed next to the names of those killed from that city.

In many ways the fate of the tomb of the Unknown Soldier provides a

microcosm for understanding how the cold war shaped the remembrance of World War II.³⁵ In 1946 the federal government decided to honor an Unknown Soldier from World War II with a burial in the Arlington National Cemetery amphitheater. Like his counterpart from World War I, this anonymous hero was the embodiment of the unity and diversity of the American character. Authorities also wanted him to symbolize the sacrifice of all World War II servicemen who had fought on behalf of the nation and in the cause of peace. By burying another unknown soldier, Congress and the newly created Defense Department wanted to affirm both world wars as conflicts fought in defense of U.S. interests against outside aggression.

In considering where to bury the second unknown soldier, both the Defense Department and the Commission of Fine Arts pondered the soldier's relationship with the unknown soldier from the First World War. Should he be buried next to his predecessor? Would it be better to destroy the first monument and build another one honoring both? Should space be created for unknown soldiers of future wars?

In 1949 the Defense Department favored a radical overhaul of the tomb and amphitheater. In one plan the department proposed to place the latest unknown soldier in the amphitheater proper. To accomplish this, it wanted grass to replace the marble floor and seats in the amphitheater. To relate the existing tomb to the newer one, the Defense Department called for the destruction of the current museum building. As alternatives, the Defense Department offered more modest plans. One called for merely building a flat tomb at the base of the existing monument, and another, favored by the Commission of Fine Arts, called for the construction of a monument of equal size and shape next to the First World War tomb.³⁶

The Defense Department abandoned plans for radical alterations to the amphitheater. As the Commission of Fine Arts had pointed out, the amphitheater was originally created as a monument to Civil War veterans, and destruction of the building on the East Side could provoke controversy. The department also had misgivings about creating two separate tombs, even if they were near one another. As one department official noted, two tombs would create logistical difficulties when the president and other officials sought to honor the Unknown Soldiers.³⁷

With the blessings of the Commission of Fine Arts, the Defense Department decided in February 1950 to bury the Unknown Soldier from World War II next to his First World War counterpart. The current sarcophagus would be retained, but the inscription on the tomb would be modified to

show that it honored both Unknown Soldiers. At the same time, the Defense Department anticipated the need to bury additional unknown soldiers from future wars. As one general noted, plans for the new tomb included a "preparatory base at least for the burial of a world war III veteran."³⁸

In the end the Defense Department's plans to bury additional unknown soldiers proved to be far-sighted. The Korean War led to a cancellation of plans to entomb an unknown soldier on Memorial Day 1951. After the war ended, Congress decided that an additional unknown soldier should be selected. On Memorial Day 1958, the Defense Department simultaneously honored these two anonymous soldiers in an observance reminiscent of that conducted in 1921 for the Unknown Soldier of World War I. President Dwight D. Eisenhower and a host of other mourners paid their respects as the soldiers lay in state in the Capitol rotunda. A military procession escorted them to the Arlington amphitheater for a funeral service that included the bestowing of military honors, speeches praising their sacrifice, and hymns mourning their passing. To emphasize the heterogeneous character of the nation, a Catholic priest, a Protestant minister, and a Jewish rabbi took part in the ceremonies.³⁹

It had been intended that the Unknown Soldier from World War I serve as a symbol of peace, and, as has been noted, the ceremonies in his honor coincided with a major international disarmament conference. The peace theme was not entirely absent in 1958, but it seemed more ephemeral. For instance, Eisenhower, in a reception for all the living Medal of Honor recipients, dwelt on the need for military unification in order to assure a strong national defense. By burying the Unknown Soldier from Korea next to his comrades from 1917 and 1941, this Arlington memorial became the link between the world wars and the cold war.⁴⁰

The cold war also had a profound impact on how the federal government sought to preserve the memory of the dropping of the atomic bomb, which marked the end of World War II but also heralded the opening of the nuclear age. Within days after the surrender of Japan, Secretary of Interior Harold L. Ickes directed the Park Service to start planning the incorporation and preservation of the site of the first atomic bomb test site in Alamogordo, New Mexico, as part of the national monument system. In response to this directive, the Park Service formulated plans that called for a museum on site that illustrated the workings and nature of the atomic bomb. In addition, it wanted to obtain and put on display two B-29 air-

craft that had dropped the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In the view of Interior Department and Park Service officials, the "use of atomic energy [was] so revolutionary" that Alamogordo was of unprecedented and immediate interest to both the nation and the international community.⁴¹

The residents of Alamogordo, state officials, and the congressional delegation from New Mexico all desired to make the Alamogordo test site into a national monument. John J. Dempsey, governor of New Mexico, encouraged Park Service efforts to preserve the site because it offered a vital argument for "maintaining the peace of the world." He suggested establishing a museum at the proposed national monument and suggested it include a mural of pictures portraying the destruction at Hiroshima and Nagasaki and a display of "relics" from these two cities that underscored the tremendous power of the bomb.⁴²

Some parties calling for the preservation of the atomic bomb site did not grasp the full meaning of the weapon. Many local officials and residents of New Mexico quickly realized the potential of Alamogordo as a Mecca for tourists. And there were those who wanted to trivialize the power of the bomb by suggesting that the fused sand found near ground zero be sold as souvenirs. One resident of Albuquerque, New Mexico, applied to open a souvenir and curio shop near Alamogordo that would have an exclusive right to sell "limited quantities of the fused soil of the Monument site."⁴³ The federal government's attitude toward the site and the bomb itself was less benign. Initially, the army sought to discredit so-called Jap propaganda claiming that the radiation from the atomic bomb explosions lingered in the environment. The military insisted that the bombs dropped on Japan had exploded at a high enough altitude to prevent contamination of the soil. In order to bolster their case, the army invited a team of journalists and photographers to inspect the Alamogordo site two months after the atomic explosion.⁴⁴

In the end, conflict with the Soviet Union derailed efforts to create the Atomic Bomb National Monument. Most of the rickety structures at the site were dismantled by the army for safety reasons and because of indifference regarding their historic nature. Additionally, the passage of time and the forces of nature lessened the effect of many of the site's dramatic features. In the words of one Park Service regional director, the "Atomsite is breaking up badly and is becoming quite dull and drab-looking." Perhaps equally important, as the Los Alamos site continued to produce nuclear technology, the Alamogordo site could not be spared. The War Department turned over the site to the newly established Atomic Energy Com-

mission in 1946 and the laboratory at Los Alamos continued to work on weapons of mass destruction. The Park Service shelved plans to create a national monument at Alamogordo.⁴⁵

The weapons technology used in the Second World War fascinated both federal officials and much of the wider public and remains a reason for the interest in commemorating the creation of the atomic bomb. This interest in modern warfare helps explain why a year before Congress authorized a monument to the marine's flag raising on Iwo Jima, lawmakers passed legislation creating a National Air Museum. Designed in 1946 to document the history of American military and civil aviation, the Air Museum, a part of the Smithsonian Institution, began to acquire a wide array of famous aircraft used in both World Wars—most notably the *Enola Gay*, the plane that dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Until a permanent museum was completed in 1976, the National Air Museum, renamed the National Air and Space Museum in 1966, mounted exhibitions in temporary quarters at the Smithsonian.⁴⁶

Many states, local communities, and private organizations from the mid-1950s to the 1980s shared a fascination with the technological artifacts of the Second World War and clamored for a chance to turn deactivated U.S. naval vessels from that war into floating museums. Several states, such as North Carolina and Alabama, for example, created special committees to maintain decommissioned battleships bearing their states' names as memorials. Other states and private groups wanted to save particular ships because of their "uniqueness" or illustrious records. For instance, a nonprofit organization was formed in 1978 in California to preserve the last remaining Oakland-built liberty ship of the war, the USS *Jeremiah O'Brien*.⁴⁷

Most states and private groups declared that the ships they saved from the scrap heap would serve as war memorials. Alabama decided that the battleship bearing its name should serve as a "state shrine to the sacrifice and courage of Alabamians who served in World War II and Korea." When the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry placed a captured German submarine on display in 1954, it formally dedicated the craft to the "memory of the American seamen who went down to unmarked ocean graves helping to win victory at sea."⁴⁸ Although World War II museum ships were called memorials, they were advertised and valued as tourist attractions. During the early 1980s, the Alabama Battleship Commission put out a pamphlet that assured visitors that they would "enjoy every minute aboard" the vessel. Each year the commission held a pageant to select sev-

eral young women to serve as "crewmates" and to publicize the battleship memorial and other tourist sites in Alabama. The Massachusetts Memorial Committee invited Boy Scouts and other youth groups to "bunk down" aboard the USS *Massachusetts* in Fall River and experience "24 memorable hours." It also advertised the former warship as an ideal site for business meetings, luncheons, and other special events.⁴⁹

The transformation of a war memorial into tourist attraction was not unique to the warships or to the period after the Second World War. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many communities valued their revolutionary and Civil War battlefields for their ability to draw visitors, although many political leaders and veterans expressed misgivings about the commercialization of sacred sites and holidays. As the nineteenth century drew to a close, many Civil War veterans expressed displeasure that Memorial Day had become a day for picnics and shopping. During the early 1920s, a congressional opponent of transferring the care of Civil War battlefields from the War Department to the National Park Service denounced such a plan for fear the battlefields would fill with hot dog and souvenir stands.⁵⁰

Nor did all weapons of war stand idle and passive after 1945. In 1951, a group of retired military pilots formed the anachronistically titled Confederate Air Force (CAF) and started rehabilitating and flying vintage aircraft from the Second World War. During the 1960s and 1970s, this southwestern-based organization acquired a national and even international membership. The United States Air Force granted the CAF an aura of legitimacy by inviting the organization to perform aerial demonstrations and programs at air force bases around the country.⁵¹

The reenactments sponsored by the CAF attempted to convey an aura of realism and included a narration that highlighted the central political and military events of the Second World War. Airplanes simulated bombing runs, ground controls set off explosives buried in the airfield, and aircraft "hit" in mock combat turned on smoke generators. The recreated "battles" focused not only on American triumphs but also on catastrophes such as Pearl Harbor. Until 1976, CAF air shows even recreated the atomic bombing of Hiroshima by featuring a lone B-29 flying over the airfield.⁵²

Battle reenactment as a form of commemoration has a long history. During the antebellum period, elite militia companies from Philadelphia often journeyed to revolutionary battlefields to restage American triumphs as part of Independence Day celebrations. In 1913 at the Gettysburg Blue and Gray reunion, reenactors took part in one last "Pickett's charge" and

its defeat by Union forces. Beginning in the 1950s, scores of amateur military companies attracted members interested in restaging Civil War battles. At the one-hundredth anniversary of Gettysburg, a thousand members of the North-South Skirmishers Association joined the Sons of Union Veterans in another Pickett's charge. After the First World War, veterans and organizers of community pageants depicted the trench warfare of that conflict. Several Kansas American Legion posts in October 1920 raised money to assist twenty-six comrades who had been wounded in the war by organizing an event that featured "sham battles, the thrills of No Man's Land and miniature naval engagements."⁵³

In one symbolic manner, the CAF served to link the Lost Cause with the triumph of the Second World War. Once again, this melding and reworking of the past had ample precedents. After the Spanish-American War and the First World War, national leaders and many veterans, particularly from the South, linked these two conflicts with the Civil War. As a result of criticism from civil rights groups in the 1970s, the leadership of the CAF started to minimize the overt link between the organization and the Confederacy. Members were urged to stop wearing Confederate flags and to cease displaying them on their airplanes. At air shows, narrators no longer offered long homages to the virtues of the Old South and the fighting spirit of the Confederacy. Despite these changes, gray remained the color of the "official" uniform that in most other respects was a copy of that worn by army-air force officers in the Second World War. Pilots of the CAF still bore the title colonel, and many wanted to retain the Confederate flavor of the organization.⁵⁴

In the 1970s, critics insisted that the historical reenactments performed by the CAF trivialized the death and destruction of the Second World War. Protests from the Japanese government and pressure from the federal government forced the CAF to end their depictions of the Hiroshima attack. Despite this concession, the CAF defended their aerial combat demonstrations and maintained that these mock battles neither minimized the tragic qualities of war nor sowed the seeds for future ones. To the CAF, their reenactments served to remind Americans of the need to support a strong military in order to deter future aggression.⁵⁵

Controversy failed to dampen public attendance at public air shows sponsored by the CAF. No doubt their continued popularity stemmed from the relatively limited destruction the United States experienced during the Second World War. Because the mainland United States never suffered the terror bombings of European and other civilian centers,

Americans could cling more easily to a depiction of aerial combat as a glorious affair that served to test the strength and skill of individual aviators and American technology. In a sense, many Americans did not want their memories of the Second World War as the "good war" dimmed by reflecting on the terrible nature of modern warfare. Furthermore, the cold war led policy makers to temper or obscure the destruction caused by the Second World War, especially by the atomic bombs that ended it.

The American peace movement challenged efforts to legitimize the atomic bomb and the use of air power against civilian targets. As early as the late 1940s, peace groups commemorated the anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima with religious services and other ceremonies. By the early 1960s, a number of scholars and activists within the peace movement were insisting that the United States could have ended the Second World War without using nuclear weapons. A revisionist historian, Gar Alperovitz, even suggested that the United States had dropped the atomic bomb on Japan primarily in order to intimidate the Soviet Union into becoming more compliant in the race for postwar power.⁵⁶

The atomic bomb served as one of the dominant symbols of the Second World War and the cold war. After 1945, politicians, diplomats, intellectuals, writers, and the general public struggled to cope with the implications of this weapon. Certainly, the atomic bomb ensured that even at the height of the cold war, ceremonies honoring the Second World War stressed the theme of peace. Speakers and newspaper editorials on Veterans Day spoke of the need to avoid war.

Escalating tensions with the Soviet Union served to hasten reconciliation between the United States and its former enemies. In an effort to combat communism and possible Soviet expansion, the United States allied itself with West Germany and Japan. For the same reason, the United States also permitted a number of former Nazis and Japanese militarists to hold important positions in government and in the economy. Animosity toward the former Axis nations did not disappear completely, but it did diminish—even among many United States war veterans. By the 1970s joint reunions between American troops and their former adversaries, particularly the Germans, became common.⁵⁷

Although many Americans by the mid-1950s viewed Germany and Japan as friends of the United States, the memory of the Second World War loomed large in the public imagination. This war, particularly with regard to the conflict with Germany, was the "good war." In motion pictures such as the *Longest Day*, *Midway*, and *Patton* World War II remained an epic

struggle of national and moral triumph. Although many movies offered an empathetic portrait of the "good" German and Japanese during the war, the Nazis were depicted as the ultimate incarnation of evil because of their extermination of millions of Jews and other civilians.

Even with the pressures of the cold war, reconciliation with Japan and Germany was not free of controversy and tension. Some veterans of the Pacific Theater harbored deep resentment toward Japan and wanted strict limits placed on how far the United States should promote reconciliation between the two nations. And on the fortieth anniversary of the Second World War, differences developed over how the United States should remember the Holocaust and the German role in this crime.

The horror of the Holocaust gradually became part of the memory of the Second World War in the United States. The late 1970s and 1980s witnessed a growing interest in the commemoration of the Holocaust. In 1978 Congress designated 28 and 29 April 1979 as days dedicated to the remembrance of the victims of the Holocaust. To recommend appropriate observances and to examine the entire question of how the Holocaust should be remembered, President Jimmy Carter established a special commission headed by death-camp survivor and author Elie Wiesel.⁵⁸

The Wiesel Commission urged the establishment of a museum and memorial in Washington, D.C., dedicated to the memory of the Holocaust. The commission also called for the nation to observe an annual week of remembrance for the victims of the Nazi death camps—an observance, which the commission recommended be timed to coincide with the day established by Israel for commemorating this tragic event, that would attempt to establish an "internationally recognized Holocaust Commemoration Day." To ensure that the United States would never again sit idly by while genocide was repeated, it called for the creation of a national committee of conscience, which would bring cases of genocide to the attention of the American government and public.⁵⁹

In 1980 Congress voted unanimously to create a permanent United States Holocaust Commission vested with the responsibility of building a museum on the mall in Washington, D.C. Although a committee of conscience was not established, Congress gave the Holocaust Commission the responsibility for planning annual observances of the Holocaust. During the 1980s these observances generally followed the pattern established in 1979, featuring a national memorial ceremony held in the rotunda or another site in Washington. Often the president or a high official in the ad-

ministration spoke, and the ceremony featured a recitation of the Kaddish and other prayers, the lighting of a menorah composed of six candles in memory of the six million dead, and mournful hymns. It also promoted local observances in communities throughout the nation and urged governors as well as mayors to issue proclamations marking Holocaust Remembrance Week.⁶⁰

Widespread efforts to commemorate the Holocaust on the national and local level were an attempt, in one sense, to recognize Jews and Judaism as part of a pluralistic American national identity. At the same time, those who promoted rituals and monuments to mark the Holocaust, particularly Jewish groups, wanted them to underscore the ties that existed between the United States and the state of Israel. For instance, President Jimmy Carter announced the establishment of a Holocaust commission at ceremonies marking the thirtieth anniversary of Israel's independence. During this 1978 celebration, which was held in Washington, D.C., and attended by Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin, Carter affirmed America's continued support for Israel and stressed that the United States viewed that nation as having been founded originally as a refuge for Jews persecuted by Nazi Germany.⁶¹

In a sense the memorializing of the Holocaust helped affirm America's moral virtue. Americans had fought the good fight against Nazi Germany, and the Second World War could be remembered as one of liberation. During the 1980s many national observances sponsored by the United States Holocaust Commission included a military honor guard, which displayed the battle flags of those army divisions that had liberated the death camps. In 1985 the commission sponsored a separate memorial service at Arlington National Cemetery in memory of those who had liberated the concentration camps. And in 1989, the State of New Jersey dedicated a Holocaust memorial, in Liberty State Park across from New York City, a statue entitled *Liberation*, which portrayed an American soldier carrying out a death camp victim.⁶²

In promoting observances of the Holocaust, Jewish leaders and organizations wanted to redefine the memory of the Second World War and offer a more somber interpretation of the conflict. They maintained that the Holocaust remained a singularly unique event in human history and must be remembered in order to ensure that neither the Jews nor any other people would ever again become the victims of genocide. Although Holocaust observances would commemorate liberation, Jewish leaders and organizations also wanted them to remind the American public how little the



Liberation by Nathan Rapoport, 1984. This statue in Liberty State Park, Jersey City, New Jersey, in remembrance of the Holocaust represents the increasing American commemoration in the 1970s and 1980s of both the Second World War and the Holocaust. (Photograph courtesy Gordon Miller)

United States had done to avert the tragedy before it happened or to aid Jewish refugees.

Except for neo-Nazis, a small fringe group, most Americans viewed the Holocaust as one of the darkest chapters in human history. But Americans were divided over the lessons to be learned from this event and how to commemorate it. For example, some conservatives vehemently opposed the ratification of an international convention outlawing genocide for fear it would set a precedent abridging national sovereignty. Others maintained that the Holocaust should be remembered as an event that afflicted not only the Jews but also non-Jews, including Russians, Poles, Gypsies, homosexuals, and the mentally retarded. Others believed that efforts to remember the Holocaust should not stand in the way of a German-American reconciliation.⁶³

In early 1985 President Ronald Reagan announced plans to visit West Germany on the eve of the fortieth anniversary of the Second World War. As part of that trip, the White House announced that the president would visit the German military cemetery at Bitburg in order to join West German chancellor Helmut Kohl in a wreath-laying ceremony for German soldiers killed in the Second World War. Reagan hoped the Bitburg visit would serve to highlight the ties of friendship that had emerged between the United States and West Germany. Even after Reagan learned that Bitburg cemetery contained the graves of more than twenty soldiers of the SS, he still defended his plans to go there. At a press conference prior to his trip, Reagan asserted that German soldiers who lay buried at Bitburg were just as much the victims of the Nazi regime as the inmates of the concentration camps. Although Reagan eventually added a visit to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in an attempt to assuage public protest, he maintained that there was little reason to remind Germans of the Holocaust

since the German people—and very few alive that remember even the war, and certainly none of them who were adults and participating in any way—and they have a feeling, and a guilt feeling that's been imposed upon them, and I just think it's unnecessary.⁶⁴

Many Jewish, Christian, and veterans' groups expressed outrage that the president wanted to go through with the visit. In their view, Reagan's actions served to obscure the horrific crimes committed by the Nazis. Moreover, most found that Reagan's belated acknowledgment of the Holocaust only compounded the problem. According to Elie Wiesel and other Jewish leaders, combining a visit to a death camp with that to a cemetery con-

taining the graves of SS soldiers only served to dishonor the memory of those who had been victims of the Nazis. Not all Americans condemned Reagan's decision to travel to Bitburg. Some former policy makers and press commentators thought the president should go through with the visit in order to maintain a good relationship with the West German government. Shortly after Reagan's trip, half of all Americans, according to one public opinion poll, approved of the trip as an appropriate gesture of reconciliation.⁶⁵

To many Jewish Americans, however, Bitburg aroused fears that the memory of the Holocaust would be forgotten with the passing of time. Before the controversy many sponsors and creators of Holocaust memorials were anxious to find ways to ensure that future generations remembered the tragedy. During the 1970s and 1980s Holocaust memorials built or proposed tended to be stark and modern in their design. Art and architectural critics called them part of a new wave of "anti-monuments" because of their rejection of classically inspired designs and their bleak efforts to evoke a sense of tragedy. One memorial in San Francisco contained an actual barbed-wire fence, behind which stood a lone figure and, farther away, a sculptural group of dead bodies. The design of the National Holocaust Museum incorporated architectural elements used in the death camps.⁶⁶

The movement to commemorate the Holocaust in memorials and ceremonies represented an attempt to alter the way the Second World War was commemorated. It served, in a sense, to focus attention on one of the most sobering aspects of this conflict. To a large degree this represented a departure from the traditional pattern of remembering war. The passage of time has usually led to conscious efforts to emphasize the heroic qualities inherent in particular conflicts. Only the passage of time will tell whether the movement to commemorate the Holocaust will convey to succeeding generations the terrible nature of the Second World War. Surprisingly, German reunification and the collapse of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s failed to reignite a significant debate within the United States over how the Second World War should be remembered. Rather, the end of the cold war and the fiftieth anniversary of Pearl Harbor exacerbated relations with Japan and rekindled the debate over how the war in the Pacific, particularly Pearl Harbor, should be remembered.

During the Second World War, the Pearl Harbor attack symbolized both Japanese treachery and American unpreparedness. In the postwar period's interest in reconciliation, presidents and military leaders glossed over this earlier view of Japan's motives, even as they reminded the public of the

"lessons" taught by Pearl Harbor. In later years, national leaders expressed regret at the hysteria and racism that had led to the internment of Japanese Americans in "resettlement" after Pearl Harbor. In the 1980s, the United States Congress issued a formal apology to those who had been interned and offered them limited compensation. On the fiftieth anniversary of Pearl Harbor, President George Bush echoed these sentiments and declared flatly that the internments had been wrong. In the bulk of his address, Bush urged fellow veterans of this conflict to join him and free themselves of any bitterness or hatred toward their one-time foe.⁶⁷ Like his predecessors, Bush stressed that Pearl Harbor must continue to symbolize the dangers of unpreparedness. During the cold war, this theme took on added immediacy as result of the prevalence of nuclear weapons. The fear of another "surprise attack" remained a central problem for those Americans who planned responses to possible Soviet attacks.⁶⁸

Yet despite the symbolic importance of Pearl Harbor, two decades elapsed before a national memorial was built commemorating the attack. Although the federal government had established an elaborate network of cemeteries for the war dead of the Second World War, not until 1962 did any permanent monuments mark the underwater graves of those entombed aboard the USS *Arizona*, which remained sunk in the waters of Pearl Harbor.⁶⁹ Even before the end of the Second World War, the unsalvaged *Arizona* had served the navy as an object of veneration. Warships entering and leaving Pearl Harbor often "saluted" the sunken vessel. In 1950, the navy formally recommissioned the *Arizona*, attached a flagpole to a sunken mast of the vessel, and hoisted the national colors over it. The navy, veterans' groups, and local leaders in Hawaii wanted a permanent memorial for the *Arizona*. In 1946, the government of Hawaii created the Pacific War Memorial Commission to develop memorials commemorating the territories' role in the Second World War. With the consent of the U.S. Navy, the commission gained permission from Congress in 1958 to conduct a national fund-raising campaign to build a memorial to the *Arizona*.⁷⁰

The memorial, finally completed in 1958 with a combination of private and public funds, left the *Arizona* on the harbor floor. Despite the calls from some to salvage and rebury the ship and crew on land, the vessel was left undisturbed. Instead, a memorial building was built in the harbor and near the vessel in order to permit relatives and other visitors to view the ship's remains. In a shrine room, a marble wall contains an alphabetical list of all those killed aboard the *Arizona*.⁷¹

Like most American memorials, the USS *Arizona* Memorial focused on the tremendous cost of war and offered no overt message of hostility toward Japan. On the other hand, the Pacific War Memorial Commission had rejected proposals calling for incorporating the USS *Arizona* Memorial into a memorial emphasizing Japanese-American reconciliation. Moreover, efforts by the Park Service to display Japanese artifacts—a midget submarine, for example—at the memorial's visitors center met with vehement opposition from some veterans.⁷²

On the fiftieth anniversary of Pearl Harbor, some Americans argued that the United States must again guard against a threat from Japan. Although few feared the resurgence of that country's military power, Japan was labeled a potent economic rival that has not "played by the rules." Automobile executives and other manufacturers urged the United States government to pry open closed Japanese markets and to place restrictions on access to American markets in order to meet the economic threat.⁷³ Fears of "Japan bashing" worried political and economic elites who benefited from the strong ties that had developed between the United States and Japan. In the 1980s, a number of American states and cities courted Japanese investments and wanted to avoid gestures that served to antagonize them. For example, in 1988 Rhode Island considered ending the celebration of V-J Day as a state holiday in order to make it easier for the state to lure Japanese business. In 1992, the Hawaiian tourist industry feared bellicose commemorations of the anniversary of Pearl Harbor could deal a crippling blow to the state by discouraging Japanese visitors.⁷⁴

Will Pearl Harbor be used as a symbol to rekindle emotions of fear, betrayal, and treachery in the coming years? It could, if the economic position of the United States were to decline relative to that of Japan. At the same time, the memory of Pearl Harbor might with the passing of the World War II generation fade into the recesses of the nation's memory. Although the USS *Maine* memorial at Arlington continues to endure, the memory of this vessel and the Spanish-American War no longer arouses intense emotions among Americans. It would be unfortunate if Americans completely forgot the loss and destruction caused by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor; nonetheless, it would be tragic if the events of the Second World War inflamed a new generation of Americans and ended the reconciliation that has developed between Japan and the United States.