



THE BLUE FAMILY TREE

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“Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn’t pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our grandchildren’s children what it was once like in the United States where men were free.”
- Ronald Regan July 6, 1987

20 years later brings in a generation of new parents who only felt the pain of 9/11 through our stories. They didn’t suffer the day. They don’t truly understand how we felt and how we all came together. They are more concerned with identity politics than American pride. They have learned to be divisive in an attempt to be inclusive, and they have separated us where we used to be united. This is grim. We swore we would never forget, and we have not. But we also have failed to pass the appreciation for freedom and the cost of liberty on to them, and now, we are just one generation away from the extinction of freedom, as the newest born Americans are brought up with parents who fail to teach its price.

As police officers we take to the streets of this amazing country daily, and we interact with every walk of life from high-rollers to cardboard apartments under the bridge. We do it because we love this country. We love our communities. We love Americans and the American way of life, and we have all sworn to protect it. Part of protecting it is passing it on to the next generation. At work, often, our hands are tied. We cannot preach, and certainly cannot voice opinions that may be construed as political. But we can live our own true lives and demonstrate those values through actions, simply as who we are. When we are off duty, and with

our children and their friends, we have an obligation to the freedom of this country to talk to them about its value, and its cost; They're two different things. Generations that pass through time with little or no national struggle, lose the inspiration to keep freedom, while generations that suffer attacks on Americans are willing to give their lives and their way of life to protect it. It's not always about dying for something; sometimes it's about living a life you wouldn't choose for yourself for something.

The brief national outrage over the senseless murders of our 13 servicemen in Afghanistan gave me hope that maybe this new generation of parents still has the American spirit hiding deep inside. I wish it could be awakened without the sacrifices that generations before have made. I'm afraid it will not.

continue to remember. Never forget. Talk to your children. Talk to your rookies who were born in 2000 and soon in 2001. Remember how much you were impacted by world events that occurred before you were born, and overcome that level of historical apathy that we all suffer from in our younger years.

The new generation must remember and never forget the pain and lessons of Plymouth Rock, Normandy, Iwo Jima, Pearl Harbor, Vietnam, New York City, and so many more. The fact that they weren't there is irrelevant. Their fellow American's were. The men and women that fought for us then are not old news. They're not ancestral. They're not just stories in a book. They're Americans just like your neighbors and your co-workers and your classmates. They're real and their struggle was for us.

"I remember, and I will never forget." It's not a statement of anger. It's a promise to those who gave all before us, and those who come after us.

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