

Discours par Claude Tonino, Bourgmestre de la Ville de Vianden

Over 75 years ago, some 5'000 miles away from here, young men – young Americans, students, husbands and fathers left their homes, their parents, left their brothers and sisters, their wives and their children, they abandoned their high school, their university, their job, to enter the military service. They were told to leave their homeland, to fight in a war, that was not theirs, in a country, they didn't even know to free us.

These brave soldiers from the 1255th Engineer Combat Battalion risked their lives for our liberty.

They sneaked up on their enemies - that in fact were ours, they took them by surprise, on an early, cold and foggy Winter morning, they forced back the horrific and feared enemy from the last Luxembourgish town hold by the Germans ... to liberate Vianden .

That day

- 51 of these heroes were wounded...
- 11 died

Tonight, we honor the memory of those men who gave their live and their future for our freedom.

I ask you to rise and honor the memory of:

**Jack Bender
David Glatter
Nathan Corley
Edward Griffin,
Cyrel Evanow ,
Marion Hanson,
Ira Gambill,
Charles Nance,
Vincent Gambino,
Harold Smith,
and
William Tiff**

They gave their lives on February 12th, 1945 at Vianden.
We will never forget.

Altesse Royale,

your Excellency Ambassador Evans,
Här Minister Marc Hansen,
Här Minister Romain Schneider,
Dir Hären Députierten,
Léif Buergermästeren,
Léif Scheffen an Conseillers,
Léif Zéit-Zeien,
Här Weihbëschof,
Här Dechen,
Léif Inviteeën, léif Leit Allegor,

ech begréissen Eech ganz häerzlech hei zu Veinen an soen Eech en grusse Merci, dass Dir des Gedinkfeier mat ärer Präsenz honoriert.

Am Hiest 1944 honn d'Lëtzebuenger opgeotemt, wi di Amerikanisch Arméi di déitsch Besatzer z'réck hannert is Grënz gebréckt haten.

Den 16. Dezember 1944, kuerz viruan Chrësttag, kumen di déitsch Zaldoten ennert dem Kommando vum Generol Feldmarschall von Rundstedt mat Gewalt z'réck an ist Land,

Dat war e Schock!

D'Amerikaner, déi an iser Gegend stationniert waren, waren nët dorop virberäd, an di Veiner Leit dämols och nët, si honn missen fort laafen, si gufen evakuiert...

Veinen war No-mans-land, ousser en por Léit, en por Kanner an em Keeler, an der Militz am Hannergrond, war kën Veiner méi an iser Stad.

Veinen war vuan déitschen Zaldoten besaat, verbarrikadiert, vermint.

Amerikanisch Zaldoten honn dunn, haut, viruan 75 Jor, probiert, di Déitsch ze iwerraschen an ze verjoen, wat hinnen och mat schwieren Verloster gegléckt ass.

Hierem Courage an hierem Ierengeféill, fir än gerecht Saach ze kämpfen, hiert Liäwen op d'Spill ze seetzen, fir en Cause déi hier nët war, an em Land, wat si emol nët kannt honn, honn mir et ze verdanken, dass mir haut Allegor hei duerfen sënn, an Fréihät.

Och vill Veiner honn dämols missen kämpfen geent unendlicht Läd, vill vuan hinnen honn dat nët iwerstaanen, anerer sënn bis haut gezächent.

Isen Respekt gehiert hinnen all, an viruan allem dänen 11 amerikanischen Zaldoten, junk Mënschen, -voller Hoffnung, voller Pläng an Dräm, déi des geféierlich Aktiun mat hierem Liäwen honn issen bezuahlen.

Si honn hier Hämicht ni méi erem geséien.

Si honn hiert Liäwe gelooss fir d'Fréihät ... fir is Fréihät ... Merci!