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MEMORIAL DEDICATION REMARKS

by John Anson Ford

The long and sometimes discouraging effort of the Memorial's Advisory Committee has not been without its humorous aspects. For example, in this era of mounting prices, all of us have had experience in having our cost estimates prove wholly inadequate. That was the case through the nearly ten years of planning and building of this monument. Not once, not twice, but on many occasions we had to appeal to the Board of Supervisors to supplement the original appropriations, or provide for added features. And so someone declared that this was not "Fort Moore Memorial" but "Fort More and More Memorial!"

But to speak more seriously. As we gather at the dedication of this memorial wall, our imaginations are stirred by the chapter in history which we seek to commemorate. It was marked by courage, hope, despair, and finally, reward. We have long taken pride in honoring the conquistadores and the heroic padres, particularly Father Serra, who laid imperishable Spanish and Mexican foundations for our California culture. California's pioneers of our American culture and form of government seem not always to have received the recognition they deserve. This monument helps to make up for this disparity, if such it has been.

As we try to re-live the rugged experiences and deep emotions of those men and women whom we honor today we realize that one of their strongest purposes was to make California one of the United States. They wanted our democratic laws to be established here; they wanted freedom to flourish; they wanted an opportunity for



self-improvement and community advancement. The various ceramic tile panels executed by Gladding McBean and designed by Henry Kreis and the beautiful eagle on the pylon by Albert Stewart vividly suggest these objectives of the American pioneers.

Those hardy men and women could not have foreseen the full richness of the culture they were helping to create - a strong growing society marked by self reliance, thrift, and industry and democratic ideals. And to all this, was being added the spirit of the earlier California which completely captivated the Yankees - a warm, human relationship, a spontaneous, overflowing generous hospitality, marked by fiestas and colorful religious celebrations.

Yes, the coming of the Yankees to Southern California created a charming dynamic society, distinct from all the rest of America and destined to have its influence around the world.

Now what of this monument itself and the problems overcome in its construction? If you will consult your brochures you will read the names of the steadfast Advisory Committeemen past and present, the contractors, and indispensable county officials to each of whom goes great credit. If time permitted I would like to pay tribute to each of them, but let me mention especially Mrs. Moses Cozzens Davis who conceived of a Pioneer Memorial on this historic spot and Mrs. Norman Chandler without whose unfailing support and counsel for nearly ten years we would not be here today. I must mention also Councilman John Holland whose steadfast support prevented defeat of the City Council's contribution back in 1947.

Engineering-wise this structure presented many unique problems. This sheer vertical wall of massive height and without buttresses or frontal supports scarcely has a counterpart in masonry construction. The excavation of the area back of the wall presented most



difficult hazards because of the possibilities of caving in. Indeed, despite every precaution, one of the workmen, Doyle Strong, lost his life here. And in his honor and memory his name has been added to one of the large bronze plaques to the south of the basin.

Seldom has sculptured ceramic tile been used as extensively as on the wall south of the waterfall and on this 68 foot pylon. The heroic figures in the flag-raising scene range in height up to 20 feet.

One of the structural features that keeps this wall - nearly 400 feet in length - in its true vertical position is a horizontal apron of massive reinforced concrete which lies beneath the soil on which we are standing and is integrated into the base of the wall. To indicate the thickness and strength of this hidden apron which is so strongly tied to the wall, the workmen have saved a sample cross section of it which was cut out with diamond drills. It stands near the south side of the pool.

The pylon is of reinforced concrete, 68 feet high. Its construction was not assured until the wall proper had been built. The architects, Kazumi Adachi and Dike Nagano, native American citizens of Japanese ancestry, could not risk putting the weight of this massive spire on the apron I have just described, so the contractors with diamond drills cut large round openings in this apron, through which ten caissons were sunk into the earth as independent supports for the pylon and its platform. The four that support the pylon itself extend down into the earth 46 feet.

The three powerful Jackson pumps installed beneath the pool keep the water in constant circulation. This unique installation



has already attracted wide attention. One additional point: The distinguished jury that selected the Adachi-Nagano design especially commended the proposal that from time to time in the future historic memorials could properly be placed at the base of the wall.

Our chairman has introduced many well known persons in our audience. But may I have the privilege of acknowledging the presence of many not so well known perhaps but equally important - the workmen, craftsmen, skilled technicians and other experts in many fields who are here at our special invitation because they did the actual construction. They may be identified by the badges they are wearing. Let us greet them now.

It is of little value merely to remind ourselves of these pioneers in whose memory this wall is built, unless we like them have faith that a great future lies ahead and we are determined to bring it to pass.

This far-flung metropolis and this fabulous county of nearly 6 million people face many local problems and as a part of a great nation, face many grave national issues.

We may not be called on to march a thousand miles as did the Mormon Battalion but we need the same courage and determination as we combat conditions that sap our strength and belie our oath of allegiance. This occasion does not call for a catalog of our faults or our weaknesses. For we face the future with faith and a steadfast purpose. We are determined to recognize the facts as to both our strength and our weakness. Let us not be unmindful, for example, of the appalling percentage of American homes that are disrupted or broken; of rampant vandalism and delinquency; of cynical self-



interest among some leaders of both major parties; of the high percentage of boys rejected by the draft. These are a part of current life that we must face.

For these are sobering times. Today new kinds of reports are filtering through from Russia. They do not diminish the familiar picture of Russian ruthlessness and a lack of moral or religious code. But the newer reports from Russia more sharply reveal a nation of enormous and increasing strength, a nation that is determined above all else to surpass America. This also is a part of the reality we must face.

And as we leave this monument today and as we may return to it from time to time to recall the courage, strength and virtue of these pioneers, let us paraphrase Lincoln's words: Let us highly resolve that these founders of western America have not lived and died in vain; that this nation under God shall in each generation have a new dedication, a new birth of freedom; that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth.