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EXPENSIVE GAS - The average price of a gallon of gasoline was \$2.751 last Friday 4/20/18, up 26.5 cents YTD. The last time that the average price of gasoline nationwide was \$3 a gallon was on 10/31/14 (source: AAA).

THE THING TO DO - 70% of high school graduates enroll in college less than a year after graduation (source: Department of Labor).

LET'S WATCH A SHOW - The proposed tariffs on imports from China would increase the cost of TVs made in China and sold in the USA by +23%. 47% of all TVs bought in the USA are imported from China (source: Consumer Technology Association).

In order to obtain freedom for all Americans, our country was forced to endure a civil war. Through the tragedy of those times, America was able to truly become the United States of America. We lost more American lives in the Civil War than in any other war in history. All throughout time, brave men and women have been called upon to protect the very core of this great nation. They have sacrificed their comfort, their time, and even their lives. For a soldier to lay down his or her life in the protection of another is one of the great expressions of love.

In the beginning, Memorial Day was referred to as Decoration Day. It was the day set aside to honor those individuals who died during our nation's Civil War, by decorating their graves. The soldiers who were lost were remembered on Decoration Day, May 30, 1868. To this end, we now celebrate these brave soldiers' ultimate sacrifice on Memorial Day.

One of the great leaders of the United States of America, Abraham Lincoln, fully realized the gravity of the situation our nation was facing. He sanctified the lives of those lost in the Civil War through his words when he offered the Gettysburg Address.

"Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

"Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of it as a final resting place for those who died here that the nation might live. This we may, in all propriety do. But in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead who struggled here have hallowed it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here.

"It is rather for us the living, we here be dedicated to the great task remaining before us – that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they here gave the last full measure of devotion – that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth."

During this Memorial Day holiday, may we all strive to add our feelings to those of Abraham Lincoln, and remember all those that have died in defense of the freedoms that we enjoy every day.

Have a safe and enjoyable Memorial Day!

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