

REMARKS OF GOVERNOR THOMAS H. KEAN

AT THE

VETERANS' SUPERMARKET

COOK COLLEGE - RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

SATURDAY, JUNE 1, 1985

JUST TWO DAYS AGO, I DEDICATED A NEW MEMORIAL IN NEW JERSEY.

THE MEMORIAL WAS CALLED "LIBERATION" -- AND MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE, IT IS A MEMORIAL TO OUR VETERANS. A MEMORIAL TO THEIR SACRIFICES, THEIR STRENGTH, THEIR COMPASSION.

IT IS A MOVING TRIBUTE -- A SCULPTURE OF A WORLD WAR II SOLDIER CARRYING A VICTIM TO SAFETY.

THE SOLDIER'S HEAD IS HUNG -- AS IF IN RECOGNITION OF HIS SOMBER TASK. BUT HIS ARMS ARE STRONG. AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, HIS HEART IS FULL OF COMPASSION FOR HIS FELLOW MAN.

THAT STATUE REPRESENTS, BEAUTIFULLY IN MY VIEW, WHAT VETERANS HAVE BEEN TO AMERICA AND THE WORLD: DEFENDERS OF LIBERTY, GUARDIANS OF FREEDOM, LIBERATORS OF THE OPPRESSED.

I THINK IT'S IMPORTANT TO HONOR OUR VETERANS. AND AS LONG AS I AM GOVERNOR, WE SHALL CONTINUE TO DO SO.

BUT, TO BE HONEST, WE OWE OUR VETERANS MORE THAN THAT. MORE THAN HONORS AND MEMORIALS. WE OWE THEM OUR COMMITMENT AND HELP.

THAT'S WHAT TODAY IS ALL ABOUT.

THERE ARE VETERANS PROGRAMS AVAILABLE FROM A NUMBER OF STATE, LOCAL, AND PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS. I'VE TRIED TO INCREASE THE KINDS OF BENEFITS AVAILABLE.

BUT, TOO OFTEN, IT'S DIFFICULT OR AT LEAST CONFUSING TO GET INFORMATION ON ALL THE VARIOUS PROGRAMS.

THIS "VETERANS' SUPERMARKET" IS DESIGNED TO CHANGE ALL THAT -- TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR YOU, OUR VETERANS TO WHOM WE OWE SO MUCH, TO FIND OUT EXACTLY WHAT IS AVAILABLE.

THIS SUPERMARKET, AND THE TWO OTHERS LIKE IT WE ARE HOLDING WITHIN THIS MONTH, IS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE ONE-STOP SHOPPING FOR VETERANS.

THERE ARE OVER 30 FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES HERE TODAY, READY TO PROVIDE YOU WITH INFORMATION ON SERVICES AND BENEFITS AVAILABLE TO VETERANS.

IN ADDITION, THERE ARE A NUMBER OF PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS, LIKE THE AMERICAN LEGION, THE VFW, THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS, THE AMVETS, THE AMERICAN EX-POWS, THE CATHOLIC WAR VETERANS, THE JEWISH WAR VETERANS, THE MARINE CORPS LEAGUE, THE VIETNAM VETERANS, AND THE VETERANS OF WORLD WAR I, WHO ARE WORKING TO HELP NEW JERSEY VETERANS. MOST OF THOSE ORGANIZATIONS ARE REPRESENTED HERE TODAY AS WELL.

THERE ARE OVER 925,000 VETERANS IN NEW JERSEY -- THAT MAKES US NINTH IN THE NATION IN VETERANS POPULATION.

AND WE'RE WORKING TO SERVE THOSE VETERANS:

WE HAVE AN ENTIRE DIVISION -- THE DIVISION OF VETERANS PROGRAMS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES -- DEDICATED TO SERVING VETERANS.

WE'VE OPENED FOUR VETERANS MULTI-SERVICE CENTERS IN JERSEY CITY, NEW BRUNSWICK, BRICK TOWNSHIP, AND DEPTFORD TO BETTER SERVE VETERANS.

AND LAST YEAR, I SIGNED A CONTRACT WITH THE VIETNAM VETERANS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM TO ESTABLISH FOUR VIETNAM VETERANS CENTERS TO BE CO-LOCATED IN THOSE SAME AREAS.

WE'VE CREATED A SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FOR COMBAT VETERANS OF THE VIETNAM WAR -- AND WE'VE STARTED A RESEARCH PROGRAM ON AGENT ORANGE THAT IS UNLIKE ANY OTHER STATE'S IN THE COUNTRY. IT'S A NATIONAL MODEL.

I BROKE GROUND ON A NEW CEMETERY FOR NEW JERSEY VETERANS IN BURLINGTON COUNTY.

AND WE'RE BUILDING A NEW VETERANS MEMORIAL HOME IN BERGEN COUNTY.

MONEY FROM THE HUMAN SERVICES BOND ISSUE THAT WE PASSED LAST YEAR IS GOING TOWARD VETERANS FACILITIES -- LIKE THE HOMES FOR DISABLED SOLDIERS IN VINELAND AND MENLO PARK.

AND WE'VE STARTED A VETERANS HOTLINE TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT EDUCATIONAL AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR VETERANS.

BUT DESPITE ALL THAT, QUITE FRANKLY, WE HAVEN'T DONE ENOUGH.

I'M STILL DISHEARTENED -- NO, FURIOUS -- WHEN I READ THAT NEW JERSEY RANKS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE STATES IN ACTUAL FEDERAL DOLLARS WE'VE RECEIVED FROM WASHINGTON IN VETERANS BENEFITS.

SO WE'RE GOING TO DO MORE.

TODAY'S VETERANS SUPERMARKET IS ANOTHER NEW JERSEY FIRST.

IT'S A SPRINGBOARD TO HELP US CHANGE THAT RANKING -- TO MAKE SURE THAT NEW JERSEY VETERANS GET THE HELP THEY DESERVE.

AS I MENTIONED, WE'RE SPONSORING THREE OF THESE  
SUPERMARKETS OVERALL.

AT THE FIRST ONE, HELD ON MAY 11TH, OVER 250 VETERANS  
GOT HELP ON THE SPOT. JOB APPLICATIONS WERE FILLED OUT.  
NEW CLAIMS FOR PENSIOINS AND COMPENSATION WERE FILED.  
VETERANS GOT ASSISTANCE IN EVERYTHING FROM SETTING UP SMALL  
BUSINESSES TO FINDING OUT ABOUT EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES.

I WANT TO EXCEED THAT RECORD TODAY. I WANT TO MAKE  
SURE THAT WHEN YOU LEAVE HERE TODAY, YOU KNOW WHAT BENEFITS  
YOU'RE ENTITLED TO -- AND EXACTLY HOW TO GET THEM.

NEW JERSEY IS COMMITTED TO HELPING ITS VETERANS.

BECAUSE A VETERAN IS SPECIAL.

TODAY'S SUPERMARKET IS ONE PART OF THAT COMMITMENT.

NATAN RAPAPORT'S SCULPTURE WAS MADE BECAUSE AMERICAN  
VETERANS HAVE LIT THE LAMP OF LIBERTY AROUND THE WORLD.

TODAY, WE'RE HELPING TO LIGHT THE LAMP OF OPPORTUNITY  
FOR OUR VETERANS AROUND NEW JERSEY.

THANK YOU.