These figures show the staggering amount of lives that were lost due to wars. US service members pay an enormous price for their service, risking their physical, mental and financial health.

Artist: Paul Krehbiel , Political Poster Collective

All the flowers and flags that adorn the cemeteries are not enough to honor those who died in wars. Let's turn Memorial Day into day not only to grieve for those who died in wars, but also a time to deliberate on the price of war. An important way to honor the fallen is to do all we can to prevent the loss of more lives.

Memorial Day

…. is a federal date observed on the last Monday of May of each year. It is a time for Americans to remember those US service members who died while serving in the US military. Many people do not know about the origin and history of this important American holiday…. **An historical reminder of the history and cost in lives of our wars….**

….by Military Families Speak Out & Veterans For Peace Chapter 110

www.veteransforpeace.org

www.mfso.org

The first Memorial Day in America was started by former Black slaves in 1865 after the Civil War. It was to honor the estimated 257 dead Union Soldiers who had been buried in a mass grave in a Confederate prison camp.

The first national commemoration of Memorial Day was held in Arlington National Cemetery on May 30, 1868, where both Union and Confederate soldiers are buried.

Memorial Day was officially proclaimed "Decoration Day" On May 5, 1868 by General John Logan, National Commander of the Grand Army of the Republic. It was customary on Decoration Day to decorate the graves of soldiers killed in battle with flowers.

Black Union Civil War soldiers commemorated the first memorial day event in 1865 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OwfUAWABCc4

Although many Americans think of **Memorial Day** as the beginning of summer and plan parties or see it as a "day off" from work and school, **it is the day many families take time to remember those service men and women who died in war.**

On December 28, 2000, President Bill Clinton signed the "National Moment of Remembrance Act", designating 3pm as the "official" time on Memorial Day to remember veterans who died during wartime.

AMERICANS KILLED IN WARS~ THE NUMBERS

498,332~ number of US service members who lost their lives in the Civil War, the war with the greatest number of deaths in American history. The Battle of Gettysburg, was one of the deadliest battles during the Civil war. Over 7,000 Union and Confederate soldiers died in this one battle.

405,399~ the number of US service members killed during World War II. This war had the second highest number of US deaths. During WW1, 26, 000 soldiers died during one battle- the largest killed in a single battle in our entire history.

36,000~ the number of US service members who were killed in the Korean War (1950-1953). At least 2.5 million other people lost their lives during this war, yet this war is often referred to as "The Forgotten War"!

58,318~ the number of US service members who died during the Vietnam War. This war took place from 1955-1975 and is officially memorialized by the Vietnam Wall in Washington DC. Every day US soldiers and their families and loved ones, who survived this war go by to see all 58,318 names carved onto this wall and reflect on the true cost of war.

7,000+~ the number of US service members killed in the "Global War on Terror" that took place **after 9-11. Over 4, 412 were killed in Iraq**, while the rest died in the conflict in Afghanistan. All US troops left Afghanistan in 2021, but US troops still remain in Iraq and Syria.

 Although they are not technically in direct combat roles, they remain in harm's way. **More than 53,000 were wounded during this conflict**, many of whom are trying to re-integrate into American society. This number does not include the invisible wounds of war such as PTSD, traumatic brain injury, moral injury and other traumas.