

Americana

I spy it hanging from
the second floor porch draped
across the back of a large gray
frame building on the corner
of 10th Street and State Route 144
in Renovo, Pennsylvania.

I thought I was just passing through
after I crossed the West Branch
of the Susquehanna River
from the town of South Renovo,
but turn around, double back,
stop in a place where I can see,
long enough to carefully read
the banner, hand-painted
on a white bed sheet:

“Welcome Home
Deployed Soldiers
THANK YOU for
Defending Our
Freedom Overseas
—Renovo VFW”

First thought: Yes, that is
what you must believe, isn't it,
or else you would be forced
to confront the truth, which is
that everything was a lie.

Second thought: Well, perhaps
you have spoken the truth
after all. But then we are compelled
to ask: Why is it that our nation

enjoys so much “freedom overseas”
while those who live overseas
seem to have so little?

Steve Bloom
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