

because it's a smaller coalition? Is it more difficult for you to make concessions and to negotiate?

*Prime Minister Netanyahu.* This is a difficult day for me because I've lost a good friend, the Deputy Premier and Minister of Education. But the composition of the government is irrelevant. The people who could topple the government before Mr. Levi departed could topple it after he departed. And I say to them what I say to everyone here and to President Clinton: We made a decision to go to peace. This is what this government is about, peace with security. And I am sure that I can muster the necessary support across the government and across the coalition for something that will move the peace process forward and maintain secure and defensible boundaries for Israel.

*Q.* And you believe you have enough support within your now more limited government to pass any sort of vote for withdrawal, for further Israeli withdrawal?

*Prime Minister Netanyahu.* For a withdrawal that will ensure our defenses, that is what we're prepared to do. We're prepared to move forward, but not to jeopardize the security of the State of Israel.

[At this point, one group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.]

#### *Prime Minister Netanyahu's Visit*

*The President.* Welcome. Let me just briefly say that I am delighted to see the Prime Minister again. This is our sixth meeting. I'm looking forward to it. We're working hard to make progress, and I want to reaffirm to the people of Israel the strong support of the United States

for Israel and the strong support of the United States for the security of Israel and a peace process that proceeds within that commitment. And I think we can succeed.

*Q.* Mr. President, what are your expectations from the meeting with the Prime Minister?

*The President.* That we're going to have a good-faith, detailed, frank discussion and do our best to make some progress. And I think we've got a chance to do that.

#### *Middle East Peace Process*

*Q.* Are you going to pressure Mr. Netanyahu to give concessions to the Palestinians?

*The President.* I'm going to have a discussion with him about where we think the peace process is. I wouldn't use that word. Israel has to make its own decisions about its own security and its own future.

*Q.* Who do you think is breaching the agreement more severely, more seriously, the Israelis or the Palestinians?

*The President.* I don't think it's fruitful to discuss that. I think what we ought to talk about is what both sides can do now to get the peace process moving again. That's the most important thing.

NOTE: The exchange began at 10:19 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, Prime Minister Netanyahu referred to the late Zevulun Hammer, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education and Culture, and David Levi, former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Israel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

## Remarks on Presenting the Congressional Medal of Honor to Major General James L. Day, USMC (Retired)

*January 20, 1998*

*The President.* Hillary and I are delighted to welcome all of you here today, including our Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Togo West; the National Security Adviser, Sandy Berger; Senator Robb and Congressman Evans; Deputy Secretary of Defense Hamre; Secretary Dalton; General Shelton and other members of the Joint Chiefs; General McCaffrey; Deputy Secretary

Gober; Mr. Bucha, the president of the Medal of Honor Society, and General Foley and other recipients of the Medal of Honor who are here. To all the commanders of our veterans service organizations and proud members of the United States Marine Corps and former marines, to the friends and the large and wonderful family of General Day and Mrs. Day, we welcome you.

I thank Captain Pucciarelli for the fine invocation. He is not devoid of a sense of humor; before we came out here, he said he was going out to offer the exorcism. [Laughter]

To those who lived through World War II and those who grew up in the years that followed, few memories inspire more awe and horror than the battle for Okinawa. In the greatest conflict the world has ever known, our forces fought no engagement more bitter or more bloody. In 82 days of fighting, America suffered more than 12,000 dead in this final epic battle, the most costly one during the entire Pacific war.

At the very heart of this crucible was the fight for a hill called Sugar Loaf, the key to breaking the enemy's line across the south of the island, some of the grimmest combat our forces had ever seen. The marines on Sugar Loaf faced a hail of artillery, mortars, and grenades. They were raked by constant machinegun fire. Time and again, our men would claw their way uphill only to be repulsed by the enemy. Progress was measured by the yard.

On May 14th, 1945, a 19-year-old corporal named Jim Day led several other marines to a shell crater on the slope of Sugar Loaf. What happened then surpasses our powers of imagination. On the first day in that isolated hole, Corporal Day and those with him fought off an advance by scores of enemy soldiers. That night he helped to repel three more assaults, as those with him fell dead or injured. Braving heavy fire, he escorted four wounded comrades, one by one, to safety. But he would not stay in safety. Instead, he returned to his position to continue the fight. As one of his fellow marines later reported, the corporal was everywhere. He would run from one spot to another trying to get more fire on the enemy.

When the next day broke, Corporal Day kept on fighting, alone but for one wounded fellow marine. Through assault after assault and into his second night, he fought on. Burned by white phosphorus and wounded by shrapnel, he continued to fire his weapon and hold his ground. He hauled ammunition from a disabled vehicle back to his shellhole and fought and fought, one assault after another, one day, then the next.

The battle on Sugar Loaf decimated two Marine regiments. But when Corporal Jim Day was finally relieved after 3 days of continuous fighting, virtually alone, he had stood his ground.

And the enemy dead around his foxhole numbered more than 100.

His heroism played a crucial part in America's victory at Sugar Loaf. And that success opened the way to the capture of Okinawa and the ultimate triumph of the forces of freedom in the Pacific.

Now, for this extraordinary valor, we recognize James L. Day as one of the bravest of the brave. In words that echo from the peaks of American military history, he has distinguished himself, at the risk of his life, above and beyond the call of duty. As Commander in Chief, I am proud to award General Day our Nation's highest military honor, the Medal of Honor. This medal confirms what every marine in this room already knows: the name Jim Day belongs in the rolls of the Corps' greatest heroes, alongside Dan Daly, Smedley Butler, Joe Foss, and John Basilone.

General, your achievements leave us all in awe. In particular, it is hard to know whether we should be conferring on you a Medal of Honor for bravery or for modesty.

Let me tell you the story of how we happen to be here today, over 50 years later. Although the battle for Okinawa was still raging when his battlefield commanders nominated young Corporal Day\* for this decoration, so many died in the fighting and so many reports were lost in the battle, the paperwork simply never went forward in 1945. General Day later said that awards weren't on their minds in those days. As he put it, "We just had a job to do, and we wanted to get the job done." Years later, when veterans of Sugar Loaf wanted to restart the process, Jim Day forbade them from doing so. Then a general, he felt that seeking such an honor would set a bad example for those he commanded.

General Day, everyone in our Nation, in the military and outside it, can learn a lot from your selfless conduct both under fire and throughout your life. In your modest service, as well as your heroism, you are a shining example to all Americans.

Today, as we applaud one extraordinary performance on Sugar Loaf, we also celebrate one of the most remarkable military careers in our Nation's history. Just days after the action we recall now, Jim Day distinguished himself again on Okinawa and received the Bronze Star for

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\* White House correction.

his heroism. During a career that spanned more than four decades, he rose from enlisted man through the ranks to major general, becoming one of the greatest mustangs the Marine Corps ever produced. In Korea, his valor in combat was recognized with two Silver Stars. In Vietnam, his leadership and bravery under fire earned him a third Silver Star. Just as astonishing, for his service in three wars, Jim Day received six Purple Hearts.

General, I'm told that your ability to absorb enemy fire led to a lively debate among those who served with you as to whether it was safer to stand near you or far away. [Laughter]

Amid all this heroism, General Day and his wife have also raised a fine family. He has given not only a lifetime of devotion to the Corps, he and Sally have brought up two more generations of marines: his son, Lieutenant Colonel Jim Day, and grandson, Lance Corporal Joshua Eustice, both of whom are here today, and we welcome you.

General, we thank you for a lifetime lived to the highest standards of patriotism, dedica-

tion, and bravery. For all marines and, indeed, for all your fellow Americans, you are the embodiment of the motto *Semper Fidelis*. You have been unerringly faithful to those who fought alongside you, to the Corps, and to the United States. We are profoundly fortunate to count you among our heroes. On behalf of all Americans, I thank you for a lifetime of service without parallel and for all you have done to preserve the freedom that is our most sacred gift. Thank you, sir.

Lieutenant Commander Huey, read the citation.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:29 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Henry H. Shelton, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Paul Bucha, president, Congressional Medal of Honor Society; Maj. Gen. Robert F. Foley, USA, Commander, U.S. Army Military District of Washington; Capt. George W. Pucciarelli, USN, Chaplain, U.S. Marine Corps; and Lt. Comdr. Wesley Huey, USN, Naval Aide to the President.

## Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner

January 20, 1998

Thank you very much. I want to begin by expressing my profound gratitude to Roy Romer and Steve Grossman, to Carol Pensky and Cynthia Friedman, to Alan Solomont and Dan Dutko, and to all the other people who have labored in this past year, sometimes under enormously difficult circumstances, to make sure that our party could celebrate this 150th anniversary year strong, in good shape, poised for the future, and proud of the last 5 years. They have done a terrific job, and I am very grateful to them.

I want to thank Melissa Manchester for being here tonight. I was thinking, when I told her that Hillary and I used to listen to her tapes—over 20 years ago when I became attorney general of my State, I had a little tape deck in my car, and one of the tapes I used to play over and over again was “Melissa Manchester’s Greatest Hits,” until it actually broke, the tape did, I listened to it so many times. And I looked at her and I listened to her, and I thought,

I’m older and grayer, and she looks just like she did 20 years ago. But I thank her for that.

I want to thank all of you for your loyalty, your support, your belief in what we’re doing and where we’re going. You know, I was very moved by what Steve Grossman said a few moments ago, because to me politics is about more than winning elections. Power has no value in and of itself. What we’re here to do is to use what the American people give us momentarily to broaden their horizons and deepen their possibilities and bring us together.

Yesterday, on Martin Luther King Day, I had the privilege of going to Cardozo High School here in the District of Columbia to be part of what was called this year a day on, not a day off, a day of service. And there were all these young people there, students at the high school, teachers, and AmeriCorps volunteers. I met a young woman from Pennsylvania who came right out of high school and joined