

July 16 / Administration of George W. Bush, 2001

brought the water, ammunition, and supplies that saved many lives on the ground. And the same pilot flew more than 70 wounded soldiers to safety.

In a moment, we will hear the full citation, in all its heroic detail. General Eisenhower once observed that when you hear a Medal of Honor citation, you practically assume that the man in question didn't make it out alive. In fact, about one in six never did. And the other five, men just like you all here, probably didn't expect to.

Citations are also written in the most simple of language, needing no embellishment or techniques of rhetoric. They record places and names and events that describe themselves. The medal itself bears only one word and needs only one: Valor.

As a boy of 13, Ed Freeman saw thousands of men on maneuvers pass by his home in Mississippi. He decided then and there that he would be a soldier. A lifetime later, the Congress has now decided that

he's even more than a soldier, because he did more than his duty. He served his country and his comrades to the fullest, rising above and beyond anything the Army or the Nation could have ever asked.

It's been some years now since he left the service and was last saluted. But from this day, wherever he goes, by military tradition, Ed Freeman will merit a salute from any enlisted personnel or officer of rank.

Commander Severs, I now ask you to read this citation of the newest member of the Congressional Medal of Honor Society. And it will be my honor to give him his first salute.

[*At this point, Comdr. Paul J. Severs, USN, Navy Aide to the President, read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. We'll see you for a reception. Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:35 a.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Remarks on Accepting a Bust of Winston Churchill and an Exchange With Reporters *July 16, 2001*

The President. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador.

I think I casually mentioned to the Ambassador, right after my swearing-in, that I lamented the fact that there was not a proper bust of Winston Churchill for me to put in the Oval Office. He's a man of great action, because here sits a bust on loan from Her Majesty's Government that I accept gratefully and will place right here, where the flowers are, beneath one of my favorite west Texas paintings. I accept gratefully, and I look forward to looking at Sir Winston on a daily basis.

People said, "Why would you be interested in having the bust of an Englishman

in your Oval Office?" And the answer is, because he was one of the great leaders in the 20th century. He was an enormous personality. He stood on principle. He was a man of great courage. He knew what he believed, and he really kind of went after it in a way that seemed like a Texan to me. He wasn't afraid of public opinion polls. He wasn't afraid of—he didn't need focus groups to tell him what was right. He charged ahead, and the world is better for it.

He also had a great sense of humor. There have been a lot of Churchill stories, some of which you can repeat on TV, some of which you can't, Mr. Ambassador. One

that came to mind was, after he lost office in the election in 1945, King George VI offered him the Order of the Garter. And here is what he said: "I could hardly accept His Majesty's offer of the Garter when his people have given me the order of the boot." [Laughter]

Churchill reminds me of two things—one, we need more humor in the public arena. He had a great wit. He had a fantastic way of making people smile and laugh. And secondly, he reminds me of the importance of our relationship, the relationship between Great Britain and America.

As the Ambassador mentions, in a couple of days' time I will go to confirm and renew that relationship. Not only will I have the honor of meeting with Her Majesty; I will also spend some quality time again with the Prime Minister. We've got a strong personal relationship that is most helpful to making sure our countries continue the tie that binds.

I'm looking forward to my trip overseas. And a perfect way to begin is to stop off in London and then eventually go to Chequers and then—and have a very constructive and honest and straightforward dialog about areas where we cooperate to make the world a better place.

In the meantime, Mr. Ambassador, I'm honored that you came by. Thank you very much for bringing Sir Winston. I look forward to visiting with him. Sometimes he'll talk back; sometimes he won't, depending upon the stress of the moment. But he is a constant reminder of what a great leader is like.

So, thank you for coming, sir.

United Kingdom-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, is the special relationship as healthy today as it was in Churchill's time?

The President. I think it is. I do. We cooperate in the Balkans. The Prime Minister and I talk quite frequently on issues that are of concern for world peace. We don't agree on every single detail of

issues, but we do agree that the relationship is special and unique. And I think it is very strong.

Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change

Q. Are you expecting criticism, on your UK trip, of your policies on the Kyoto treaty and missile defense?

The President. You mean, from whom? Editorial page writers? Oh, perhaps. But on both issues I have made my positions clear. People shouldn't doubt where the United States stands. And I made those positions on principle.

In principle, it's important for us to develop a new strategic framework to make the world more peaceful. The Prime Minister, in his public statement at Camp David, understood exact—said to the people he understood exactly where I was coming from. We will continue to consult with Great Britain on the issue. I will keep him posted about my dialog with Mr. Putin. As a matter of fact, one of the things I look forward to doing is sharing the conversations I had with Mr. Putin and what my intentions are in Genoa, as well as in Shanghai, when I meet Mr. Putin.

And I think the Prime Minister and others are beginning to realize the cold war is over. I know he knows it's over. And the fundamental question is, how do we deal with the threats of the 21st century?

And on global warming, the Prime Minister knows, as do the leaders of the EU—they heard me say as loudly and as clearly as I can, we agree with the goal of reducing greenhouse gases, but we don't accept the methodology of the Kyoto treaty. So I look forward, over time, to detailing our strategy with our friends and allies. And again, I repeat, it's with the goal in mind of making sure that we all work in the world, developing and—developing nations as well as industrial nations, at reducing greenhouse gases.

U.S. Sanctions Against Cuba

Q. Mr. President, on a question that is of interest to Europe, do you plan to extend the waiver of the Title III of Helms-Burton for another 6 months?

The President. I do.

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, do you have any initiative to suggest in Northern Ireland that might break the deadlock between the parties there?

The President. Where? Northern Ireland? No, what I told the leaders of—Prime Minister Blair and Ahern, I said, “Call me if you need help.” They’re the folks closest to the ground. They’re intricately involved in the situation, and the United States stands ready to assist. If there’s anything we can do to help bring peace to the region, my Government is more than willing to do so.

Q. But you haven’t received a call yet?

The President. I have not, but I suspect that Tony Blair and I will discuss this issue. I look forward to getting his perspective on the issue. And again, if he needs our help, we’ll be glad to help.

President’s Upcoming Visit to the United Kingdom

Q. You’ve been to Britain before, Mr. President. What are you looking forward to most on your revisit?

The President. Well, I’m looking forward to going to Chequers. The Prime Minister told me when he came to Camp David that he thought I was—would really love to see Chequers. And my dad told me the same thing. The Ambassador’s confirmed that as well. I look forward to going.

I look forward to seeing Her Majesty the Queen. I had the honor of coming to a state dinner here in Washington that my mother and dad gave for her. And it’s—I found her to be a lovely, dignified, smart lady. And I look forward to representing my country in her presence.

My first trip to overseas was a successful trip. I’m confident this will be as well. It’s such an honor to represent our Nation in foreign capitals and to be with foreign leaders. I look forward to—but I really look forward to making progress on key issues such as missile defense and world trade, working with nations who are less fortunate than Great Britain and the United States—nations in Africa. We’re going to have a very interesting session in Genoa with the leaders of developing nations. And the United States and Great Britain will take the lead in helping convince all our friends and allies to provide support necessary to help nations develop, starting with free trade.

Energy Policy

Q. Mr. President, on energy, your Cabinet is out today, pushing your energy plan. Is it a tougher sell now, given that gas prices have come down, we’re not seeing the rolling blackouts in California that we were just a couple of months ago?

The President. Well, I think anytime there’s not an immediate problem that’s apparent to people, it’s tough to convince people to think long term. But it’s clear that there are warning signs. It’s clear—it should be clear to the American people that we’re dependent upon foreign sources of crude oil, when every quarter we worry about whether or not OPEC is going to run the price of crude up. It should be worrisome to people that the State that’s had the best conservation efforts is the State that’s had brownouts. And even though there may not be a brownout today, it’s an indication that we need an energy policy.

And so we’re going to take a very strong effort to convince the American people that we’ve got a plan that couples not only sound conservation but the need to develop new sources of energy. And one of the primary topics that will be on the agenda when the President of Mexico, Vicente Fox,

comes after our August recess, in the beginning of September, will be to continue to talk about the hemispheric strategy to bring natural gas into the United States, and to Mexico, for that matter.

I'm going to meet with Jean Chretien in Genoa, and we'll be talking about energy, I can assure you. Canada has got a lot of natural gas in the Northwest Territories; we need to figure out how to get that gas into the United States.

And I think the American people will listen to a rational, logical approach about how best to create energy security and diversification, as well as how to promote conservation.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:12 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to United Kingdom Ambassador to the United States Christopher Meyer, who presented the bust; Queen Elizabeth II and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; President Vladimir Putin of Russia; Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland; and Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada. A reporter referred to Title III (protection of property rights of U.S. nationals) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996 (Public Law No. 104-114).

Statement on the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, Title III *July 16, 2001*

Today I transmitted to Congress my decision to exercise the authority granted to me under the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act to suspend for 6 months, from August 1 through January 31, the right to bring actions under Title III of that Act. In exercising this authority, I do so taking into account that it is necessary for the national interest of the United States and will expedite the transition to democracy in Cuba.

Real differences remain between the United States and our allies concerning the best methods for pursuing change in Cuba. However, for its part, the European Union has again renewed its Common Position on Cuba and has reaffirmed its goal of promoting a peaceful transition to democracy

in Cuba. Our actions will encourage support for the embargo and further strengthen, not weaken, the growing multilateral, multifaceted movement to promote democracy and human rights in Cuba.

My administration is firmly committed to a proactive Cuba policy that will assist the Cuban people in their struggle for freedom. On Friday I reaffirmed my commitment to maintain existing sanctions against the Cuban regime and to strengthening pro-democracy movements in Cuba. I call upon the European Union and the international community to work together with us toward the fundamental goals that should unite us: free speech, free elections, and respect for basic human rights in Cuba.