

would be brought down by a coalition of armies from our democratic Allies and freedom fighters from occupied lands and underground resistance leaders. They fought side by side with American GIs who only months before had been farmers and bank clerks and factory hands. And the world's tyrants learned a lesson: There is no power like the power of freedom and no soldier as strong as a soldier who fights for that freedom.

Private Robert Lee Rutledge was one of those soldiers. He gave his life fighting against a brutal attack by two Nazi divisions. Weeks before he died, he wrote a letter to his daughter on her fifth birthday. The letter was addressed to little Ginger Rutledge in Lumpkin, Georgia. Private Rutledge told his daughter, "You're too young to understand it now, but you will later. It's all for your benefit. You came into a free world, and I want you to finish in one."

Sixty years later, Ginger is still free, and she does understand. And so do her three children and eight grandchildren. Private Rutledge did his job well, and the men who fought and bled and died here with him accomplished what they came for. The free America that Ginger grew up in was saved by their courage. The free Europe where many of them lie buried was built on their sacrifice. And the free and peaceful world that we hope to leave to our own children is inspired by their example.

On this day, we celebrate the victory they won, and we recommit ourselves to the great truth that they defended, that freedom is the birthright of all mankind. Because of their sacrifice and the help of brave Allies, that truth prevailed at the close of the 20th century.

As the 21st century unfolds before us, Americans and Europeans are continuing to work together and are bringing freedom and hope to places where it has long been denied, in Afghanistan, in Iraq, in Lebanon, and across the broader Middle East. Freedom is a permanent hope of mankind, and when that hope is made real for all people, it will be because of the sacrifices of a new generation of men and women as selfless and dedicated to liberty as those we honor today.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:09 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Queen Beatrix and Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende of the Netherlands; Mayor H.J.G. (Harrie) van Veers of Margraten, the Netherlands; Gen. James L. Jones, USMC, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander, Europe; Gen. Frederick M. Franks, Jr., USA, (Ret.), Chairman, American Battle Monuments Commission; and Frank Schwind, Superintendent, Netherlands American Cemetery and Memorial.

### **Statement on the Death of Lloyd Cutler**

*May 8, 2005*

Laura and I are saddened by the passing of Lloyd Cutler. Lloyd Cutler served our Nation with dedication and distinction throughout his extraordinary career, including as Counsel and adviser to President Carter and President Clinton, and most recently on the Commission on weapons of mass destruction. He was a devoted public servant who had a profound influence on the legal profession. Laura and I extend our deepest sympathy to his family.

### **Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Vladimir Putin of Russia in Moscow, Russia**

*May 8, 2005*

**President Putin.** Mr. President, allow me to cordially welcome you to Moscow. I'd like to thank you for having decided to visit Moscow to participate in the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II, giving confirmation by that fact to the immense role played by the United States, Soviet Union, and Russian Federation in the victory over nazism.

Tomorrow we'll be pleased to receive our guests of ours, but the visit by the President of the United States is of special importance. On top of that, even today, we've enjoyed a very large volume of cooperation between our countries. And I hope that this cooperation will be helpful to us in addressing our domestic problems in both countries.

And I'm aware of the fact that you currently are confronted with immense tasks