

At the time, Ramadi was in the clutches of Al Qaida terrorists and insurgents. Together the SEALs and the Army 1st Battalion of the 506 Infantry Regiment took the offense against the enemy. The SEALs carried out a broad range of special operations, including providing sniper cover in tough urban conditions and conducting raids against terrorists and insurgents. Overall, Mike's platoon came under enemy attack during 75 percent of their missions. And in most of these engagements, Mike was out front defending his brothers.

In May 2006, Mike and another SEAL ran into the line of fire to save a wounded teammate. With bullets flying all around them, Mike returned fire with one hand while helping pull the injured man to safety with the other. In a dream about the incident months later, the wounded SEAL envisioned Mike coming to the rescue with wings on his shoulders.

On Saint Michael's Day, September 29, 2006, Michael Monsoor would make the ultimate sacrifice. Mike and two teammates had taken position on the outcropping of a rooftop when an insurgent grenade bounced off Mike's chest and landed on the roof. Mike had a clear chance to escape, but he realized that the other two SEALs did not. In that terrible moment, he had two options: to save himself or to save his friends. For Mike, this was no choice at all. He threw himself onto the grenade, and absorbed the blast with his body. One of the survivors puts it this way: "Mikey looked death in the face that day and said, 'You cannot take my brothers. I will go in their stead.'"

Perhaps the greatest tributes to Mike's life is the way different service members all across the world responded to his death. Army soldiers in Ramadi hosted a memorial service for the valiant man who had fought beside them. Iraqi Army scouts, whom Mike helped train, lowered their flag and sent it to his parents. Nearly every SEAL on the west coast turned out for Mike's funeral in California. As the SEALs filed past the casket, they removed their golden tridents from their uniforms, pressed them onto the walls of the coffin. The procession went on nearly half an hour. And when it was all over, the simple wooden coffin had become a gold-

plated memorial to a hero who will never be forgotten.

For his valor, Michael Monsoor becomes the fourth Medal of Honor recipient in the war on terror. Like the three men who came before him, Mike left us far too early. But time will not diminish his legacy. We see his legacy in the SEALs whose lives he saved. We see his legacy in the city of Ramadi, which has gone from one of the most dangerous places in Iraq to one of the most safest. We see his legacy in the family that stands before us filled with grief, but also with everlasting pride.

Mr. and Mrs. Monsoor: America owes you a debt that can never be repaid. This Nation will always cherish the memory of your son. We will not let his life go in vain. And this Nation will always honor the sacrifice he made. May God comfort you. May God bless America.

Come on up. And now George and Sally Monsoor will be here—a Military Aide will read the citation.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:07 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Rear Adm. Robert F. Burt, USN, Chief of Navy Chaplains. Following the President's remarks, Lt. Col. Gina C. Humble, USAF, Air Force Aide to the President, read the citation.

### **Remarks Following a Meeting With Afghanistan Provincial Governors** *April 8, 2008*

I've just had a fascinating opportunity to discuss Afghanistan with eight Governors. I started off the meeting by telling them I was a Governor once. And I—and they were then telling me their stories, their concerns. First of all, they universally thanked the American people for standing with them as this new democracy takes hold.

Secondly, there's concerns about unemployment, about economic development. Some Provinces are quiet. And the Governor wondered whether or not, because it's quiet, people remember the people in the Province exist. Other Provinces have got some difficult security problems.

They shared with me very candidly their concerns about different types of operations,

their desire to see to it that the police get better training and better equipment.

And I shared with them our desire to help them succeed, because one of the things that really matters in democracy is that local governance is strong and good and honest, that the people are being able to see the benefits of democracy. And it's hard work in Afghanistan, but I told these leaders I think it's necessary work.

And I want to thank them for coming to America. They've got a very busy schedule. They've been to several States. And I think it's going to be very important for our fellow citizens to meet these good men and to understand the problems they face, and their desire to have their families live in peace, and young girls go to school, and be people treated with dignity.

So I want to thank you all for coming. Thank you for the wonderful gift, and I'm proud you're here.

I'm now going to show them the Oval Office, a shrine to democracy. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:18 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

**Proclamation 8234—National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day, 2008**

*April 8, 2008*

*By the President of the United States of America*

**A Proclamation**

America is blessed to have brave men and women willing to step forward to defend our freedoms and keep us safe. The members of the United States Armed Forces have proudly held fast against determined and ruthless enemies, protected our citizens from harm, and freed millions from oppression. On National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day, we pay tribute to the courageous and selfless individuals who were taken captive while serving the cause of peace and securing liberty across the globe.

America's former prisoners of war set an example of vision, valor, and unshakeable love of country that inspires our citizens. Through unspeakable conditions, they

upheld their oath to defend America with honor and dignity. Their extraordinary spirit, patriotism, and resolve helped defeat tyranny and build democratic and just societies, enabling decent men and women around the world to live in freedom.

Our Nation is extremely proud of our former prisoners of war, and we owe them and their families a debt we can never fully repay. On National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day, we honor our country's heroes who were prisoners of war, recognize their sacrifice, and express our deepest gratitude to those who helped write a more hopeful chapter in our history.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush**, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 9, 2008, as National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day. I call upon the people of the United States to join me in honoring the service and sacrifices of all of America's former prisoners of war. I call upon Federal, State, and local government officials and private organizations to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

**In Witness Whereof**, I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-second.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:58 a.m., April 10, 2008]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 11.

**Message to the Senate Transmitting Amendments to the International Telecommunication Union Constitution and Convention**

*April 8, 2008*

*To the Senate of the United States:*

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the amendments to the Constitution and Convention of the International Telecommunication Union (Geneva, 1992),