

After decades of a dictator's sustained assault on Iraq's society and dignity and spirit, a Jeffersonian democracy will not spring up in a matter of months. We know that our Ba'athist and terrorist enemies are ruthless and cunning. We also know that the lives of Iraqis have improved greatly in 7 short months. Yet, we know the remaining tasks are difficult.

We also know a few things about our own country. America gained its own independence and helped free much of the world by taking on difficult tasks. We're a confident people, and we have a reason to be confident. Our Armed Forces are skilled and powerful and humane. They're the best in the world. I will keep them that way.

We've got good friends and allies serving with us in Iraq. There are 32 countries standing beside our troops. Our commanders have the capabilities they have requested, and they're meeting a changing enemy with flexible tactics. The Congress has provided the resources we need to support our military and to improve the daily lives of newly liberated people. Other nations and organizations have stepped up to provide more than \$18 billion to the emerging democracies of Afghanistan and Iraq. The peoples of those two countries are sacrificing for their own liberty. And the United States once again is fighting in the cause of our Nation, the great cause of liberty. And we know that the cause of liberty will prevail.

Much is asked of us, and we have answered this kind of challenge before. In the summer of 1948, the Soviet Union imposed a sudden and total blockade on the city of Berlin in order to force the allies out. More than 2 million people would soon be without food or fuel or medicine. The entire world watched and wondered if free peoples would back down, wondered whether free people would abandon their commitments. It was at the outset of the cold war, and the will and the resolve of America were being measured.

In an urgent meeting, all the alternatives were discussed, including retreat. When the moment of decision came, President Harry Truman said this: "We stay in Berlin, period. We stay in Berlin, come what may." By the determination of President Truman, America

and our allies launched the Berlin airlift and overcame more than 10 months of siege. That resolve and the daring of our military saved a city and held back the Communist threat in Europe.

Nearly four decades later, Ronald Reagan came to West Berlin with the same kind of resolve, and vision beyond the cold war. When he called on the Soviets to tear down that wall, he was asserting a confident new doctrine. He believed that communism can not only be contained but transcended, that no human barrier could hold back the spread of human liberty. The triumph of that vision eventually turned enemies into friends, healed a divided continent, and brought security and peace to Europe and America.

Two years into the war on terror, the will and resolve of America are being tested in Afghanistan and in Iraq. Again the world is watching. Again we will be steadfast. We will finish the mission we have begun, period.

We are not only containing the terrorist threat, we are turning it back. We believe that freedom is the right of every person. We believe that freedom is the hope of every culture. We believe that freedom is the future of every nation in the Middle East. And we know as Americans that the advance of freedom is the surest path to peace.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:16 p.m. at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center. In his remarks, he referred to Edwin J. Feulner, president, The Heritage Foundation, and his wife, Linda Leventhal; former Attorney General Edwin Meese III; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Medal of Freedom To Secretary General Lord Robertson of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

November 12, 2003

Good morning. I'm proud to welcome members of the diplomatic corps and my administration, and of course Lord Robertson, the Secretary General of NATO, to the

White House. I've been honored to host Lord Robertson here at the White House many times over the past 3 years. I'm grateful that he's come once more before he leaves his post.

The Presidential Medal of Freedom is our Nation's highest civil award, given to individuals of exceptional merit and integrity. For Lord Robertson, it is a fitting tribute to his long and distinguished career of service to his nation, to our alliance, and to the world.

NATO is the most successful alliance in history, and Lord Robertson has led NATO during some of the most challenging years of its history. Not long ago, some questioned whether NATO could or should survive the end of the cold war. Then the Alliance proved its enduring worth by stopping ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and keeping the peace in Kosovo. Some wonder whether NATO could adopt to the new threats of the 21st century. Today, NATO forces are fighting terror in Afghanistan and supporting a multinational division in Iraq.

Today in Iraq, a member of NATO, Italy, lost some proud sons in the service of freedom and peace. The United States sends our deepest condolences to the families who died—of the soldiers and policemen who died. We appreciate their sacrifices. I appreciate the steadfast leadership of Prime Minister Berlusconi, who refuses to yield in the face of terror.

Lord Robertson is a patient leader. He's a determined leader, and over the past 4 years his skills and talents have made many achievements possible. Lord Robertson oversaw the largest expansion in NATO's history, a major milestone in the fulfillment of our shared vision of a Europe whole, free, and at peace. He helped open a new chapter in NATO's relationship with Russia through the creation of the Russian-NATO Council. He ensured that NATO would honor its commitment to come to the defense of fellow NATO member Turkey. And he pursued an ambitious agenda of transformation to make NATO forces lighter, faster, and better able to respond to complex and ever-changing threats.

America owes a special debt to Lord Robertson. When our Nation was attacked on September the 11th, 2001, Lord Robertson

led NATO to invoke, for the first time in its history, Article V, which states that an attack against one NATO Ally is an attack against all. Americans will never forget that vital support from our closest allies on one of the darkest days of our history.

Our alliance continues to face and to meet the threats to peace and prosperity and freedom. Lord Robertson's leadership has been crucial to meeting these challenges. His tenure at the helm of this institution shows the power of collective defense when free nations act to serve great causes and free nations act to produce results. Lord Robertson's efforts and vision leave behind a legacy of effective multilateralism that will benefit this Alliance for years to come.

When NATO was founded over half a century ago, President Harry Truman said this: "By this treaty, we are not only seeking to establish freedom, freedom from aggression and from the use of force in the North Atlantic community, but we're also actively striving to promote and preserve peace throughout the world." We honor Lord Robertson here today for his dedication to the high ideals of the NATO Alliance, the promise of peace throughout the world.

I'm going to ask the military aide now to read the honor. It is my honor to welcome this good man, to present the Medal of Freedom to the Right Honorable Lord Robertson of Port Ellen.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:54 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary General Lord Robertson.

Notice—Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Iran

November 12, 2003

On November 14, 1979, by Executive Order 12170, the President declared a national emergency with respect to Iran pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701–1706) to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy,