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He's also the first to be awarded this new Medal of Honor flag, authorized by the United States Congress. We count ourselves blessed to have soldiers like Sergeant Smith, who put their lives on the line to advance the cause of freedom and protect the American people.

Like every one of the men and women in uniform who have served in Operation Iraqi Freedom, Sergeant Paul Smith was a volunteer. We thank his family for the father, husband, and son and brother who can never be replaced. We recall with appreciation the fellow soldiers whose lives he saved and the many more he inspired. And we express our gratitude for a new generation of Americans, every bit as selfless and dedicated to liberty as any that has gone on before, a dedication exemplified by the sacrifice and valor of Sergeant First Class Paul Ray Smith.

And now if his family would join me, please. Lieutenant Commander, please 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 Paul Ray Smith's son, David A. Smith, and daughter, Jessica M. Smith; and Maj. Gen. David Hicks, USA, Army Chief of Chaplains. Following the President's remarks, Lt. Cmdr. Keith B. Davids, Navy Aide to the President, read the citation.

Remarks Following a Tour of the Bureau of the Public Debt in Parkersburg, West Virginia

April 5, 2005

The President. See, what's interesting is a lot of people believe that the Social Security trust is—the Government takes a person's money, invests it, and then pays it back to them upon retirement. It doesn't work that way.

Susan Chapman. That's right. That's exactly right.

The President. This is what exists. And it's very important, then, to make sure that in the future that there's real assets for retirees.

But I want to thank you all for having me come. I want to thank all the workers here for representing the mighty United States. I'm proud to work with you. I thank you for what you do. And my message here in town is that we have an obligation to take the system that Franklin Roosevelt created and make it work for a younger generation of Americans. I'm looking forward to working with Congress to do that. That's what the American people expect. They expect us to modernize the system.

Anyway, thanks for having us.

Ms. Chapman. Well, thank you for coming. We're proud to have you visit us.

The President. Thanks.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10 a.m. Participating in the tour was Susan Chapman, Director, Division of Federal Investments, Bureau of the Public Debt. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on Strengthening Social Security in Parkersburg

April 5, 2005

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thank you all. It is nice to be back in Parkersburg. Thanks for having me. It just seems like yesterday that I was here. [*Laughter*] It's great to be back in West Virginia as well. I'm struck by the—every time I come here I'm struck by the beauty of this State. And of course, you put on a beautiful day, for which I'm grateful.

One of these days I'm going to bring my mountain bike. I love to exercise. I'm doing it to make sure that I do the job you expect me to do, and I'm doing it to set an example as well. I think people need to get out all around our country, walk every day or ride your mountain bike every day, get a little exercise every day, stay fit and healthy.

Speaking about staying fit and healthy, that's what we need to make sure we do for our Social Security system too. I'm here to remind the good folks of West Virginia that we have a problem, and we have a duty to renew one of great—America's great institutions, and that's the Social Security system.

I've now traveled to 20 States to talk about Social Security, 20 States in 2 months, all