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Last week, Secretary Nicholson told me about a visit he made to New York City, where he met a group of veterans who lost limbs in this war. Secretary Nicholson asked them how they could keep their spirits up. One man answered,"Sir, it is because we feel the American people are so appreciative of our service." Many of our veterans bear the scars of their service to our country, and we are a nation that will keep its commitments to those who have risked their lives for our freedom. That young man was right—we do appreciate the service of those who wear our uniform.

To help Americans show our appreciation to those who have served, Secretary Nicholson has asked all our Nation's veterans to wear their medals today. I urge our citizens to go up to those men and women and shake a hand and give a hug and give a word of thanks. I ask you to consider volunteering at a veterans hospital or a nursing home. I encourage you to work with your local veterans group to help support our troops in the field and their families here at home.

As we raise our flag and as the bugle sounds taps, we remember that the men and women of America's Armed Forces serve a great cause. They follow in a great tradition, handed down to them by America's veterans. And in public ceremonies and in private prayer, we give thanks for the freedom we enjoy because of their willingness to serve.

I thank you for honoring those who serve today and for honoring those who have set such a sterling example, our Nation's veterans. May God bless our veterans; may God bless all who wear the uniform; and may God continue to bless the United State of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:39 a.m. in the Amphitheater at Arlington National Cemetery.

Remarks at the Groundbreaking Ceremony for the Martin Luther King, Jr., National Memorial

November 13, 2006

Thank you all very much. I'm honored to join you today in today's ceremony. I'm proud to dedicate this piece of our Nation's Capital to the lasting memory of a great man.

We have gathered in tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, to the ideals he held, and to the life he lived. Dr. King showed us that a life of conscience and purpose can lift up many souls. And on this ground, a monument will rise that preserves his legacy for the ages. Honoring Dr. King's legacy requires more than building a monument; it required the ongoing commitment of every American. So we will continue to work for the day when the dignity and humanity of every person is respected and the American promise is denied to no one.

This project has been over a decade in the making, and I thank those who have worked to bring about this day. I particularly want to thank my predecessor, the man who signed the legislation to create this memorial, President Bill Clinton. It sounds like to me they haven't forgotten you yet. [*Laughter*] He's become, as you know, my fourth brother. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Harry Johnson. I appreciate the members of my Cabinet who are here. I welcome the Members of Congress. I thank my mayor, Tony Williams, who is here. I'm proud to be with the members of the King family. I thank the representatives of the community and civil rights groups who have joined us. I thank the Martin Luther King, Jr., National Memorial Project Foundation board members and executive cabinet. Most of all, thank you all for coming.

Our Declaration of Independence makes it clear that the human right to dignity and equality is not a grant of government. It is the gift from the Author of Life. And Martin Luther King considered the Declaration one of America's great, as he called it, "charters of freedom." He called our Founders' words, "a promise that all men—yes, black men, as well as white men—would be guaranteed the unalienable right of liberty, life, and the pursuit of happiness."

Throughout Dr. King's life, he continued to trust in the power of those words, even when the practice of America did not live up to their promise. When Martin Luther King came to Washington, DC, in the summer of 1963, he came to hold this Nation to its own standards and to call its citizens to live up to the principles of our founding. He stood not far from here, on the steps of

the Lincoln Memorial. With thousands gathered around him, Dr. King looked out over the American Capital and declared his famous words, "I have a dream."

His dream spread a message of hope that echoed from his hometown of Sweet Auburn, Georgia, to the pulpit of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church to the Edmund Pettus Bridge. An assassin's bullet could not shatter the dream. Dr. King's message of justice and brotherhood took hold in the hearts of men and women across the great land of ours. It continues to inspire millions across the world.

As we break ground, we give Martin Luther King his rightful place among the great Americans honored on our National Mall. The King Memorial will span a piece of ground between the Jefferson and Lincoln Memorials. And by its presence in this place, it will unite the men who declared the promise of America and defended the promise of America with the man who redeemed the promise of America.

The memorial will reflect the arc of Dr. King's life, his search for justice, and the enduring beauty of his words. The memorial will include a wall where visitors can read passages from Dr. King's sermons and speeches through a stream of water. And on the banks of the Potomac, visitors will walk from the Mountain of Despair to the Stone of Hope, where Dr. King's image is rendered.

Today we see only these open acres, yet we know that when the work is done, the King Memorial will be a fitting tribute, powerful and hopeful and poetic, like the man it honors. As we break ground, we remember the great obstacles that Dr. King overcame and the courage that transformed American history. The years of Martin Luther King's life were tumultuous, difficult, and an heroic time in the life of our country. Across our Nation, African Americans faced daily cruelties and pervasive wrongs. In 1955, a woman, Rosa Parks, challenged these wrongs on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, when she refused a driver's order to give her seat to a white man. Her act of defiance inspired a young Baptist minister and changed our Nation forever.

Within days of Rosa Parks's lonely protest, Dr. King helped organize a boycott that captured the attention of our country. When Dr. King's leadership—with Dr. King's leadership, the boycott forced America to confront the glaring contradiction between the sign on the bus and the words of our Declaration of Independence. And on this date, exactly 50 years ago, the Supreme Court ruled the segregation of public buses unconstitutional. And so today we celebrate the courage that won victories and helped spark one of the greatest movements for equality and freedom in American history.

Eventually, the civil rights movement would succeed in persuading Congress to pass sweeping legislation that represented a new founding for our Nation. On July 2, 1964, President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act at the White House. As of that date, no longer could weary travelers be denied a room in a hotel or a table at a restaurant on account of their race. And no longer could any American be forced to drink from a separate water fountain or sit at the back of the bus just because of their race.

Dr. King liked to say that our Civil Rights Act was written in the streets by citizens who marched for the idea that all men are created equal. He was right; yet there is no doubting that the law came as it did when it did because of the courage and leadership of Martin Luther King.

As we break ground, we recognize our duty to continue the unfinished work of American freedom. America has come a long way since Dr. King's day, yet our journey to justice is not complete. There are still people in our society who hurt; neighborhoods are too poor. There are still children who do not get the education they need to fulfill their God-given potential. There's still prejudice that holds citizens back. And there's still a need for all Americans to hear the words of Dr. King so we can hasten the day when his message of hope takes hold in every community across our country.

We go forward with the knowledge that the Creator who wrote the desire for liberty in our hearts also gives us the strength and wisdom to fulfill it. We go forward with trust that God, who has brought us thus far on the way, will give us the strength to finish

the journey. And we go forward with the confidence that no matter how difficult the challenge, if we remain true to our founding principles, America will overcome.

Dr. King was on this Earth just 39 years, but the ideas that guided his work and his life are eternal. Here in this place, we will raise a lasting memorial to those eternal truths. So in the presence of his family, his coworkers in freedom's cause, and those who carry on his legacy today, I'm proud to dedicate this ground on behalf of the American people as the site of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:07 a.m. on the National Mall. In his remarks, he referred to Harry E. Johnson, Sr., president and chief executive officer, Washington, DC Martin Luther King, Jr. National Memorial Project Foundation, Inc.; and Mayor Anthony A. Williams of Washington, DC.

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel and an Exchange With Reporters

November 13, 2006

President Bush. Mr. Prime Minister, welcome back to Washington. The Prime Minister and I had a fascinating discussion the last time he was here. We were sitting on the Truman Balcony. We spent probably an hour-and-a-half strategizing about how we can work together to achieve peace. Our conversation today continued this—that important dialog.

I appreciate the Prime Minister's strategic thoughts. He cares deeply about his country, and he cares deeply about securing the peace. We talked about our commitment to a two-state solution. We talked about the need for a Palestinian Government to embrace the principles of the Quartet and the roadmap, which both our Governments strongly support.

We spent a great deal of time on Iran and about how we can work together with other nations of the world to convince the Iranians to abandon their nuclear weapons ambitions. I recognize the threat to world peace that the Iranians propose, as does—that the Iranians pose, as does the Prime Minister. We talked about Iraq. We talked about a variety of issues.

But the whole central thrust of our discussions was based upon our understanding that we're involved in an ideological struggle between extremists and radicals versus people who just simply want to live in peace, and that as democracies we have an obligation, obviously, to listen to the will of our people, but at the same time, work together to help those who want to live in a peaceful society achieve their ambitions.

Mr. Prime Minister, it has been a delight to be with you again, and welcome back.

Prime Minister Olmert. Thank you very much. President—there's nothing that I can add to the very accurate analysis that you made with regard to these big issues. We in the Middle East have followed the American policy in Iraq for a long time, and we are very much impressed and encouraged by the stability which the greatest operation of America in Iraq brought to the Middle East. And we pray and hope that this policy will be fully successful so that this stability which was created for all the moderate countries in the Middle East will continue.

We shared thoughts about the Iranian threat. There is no question that the Iranian threat is not just a threat for Israel but for the whole world. The fanaticism and the extremism of the Iranian Government, and the fact that the leader of a nation such as Iran can threaten the very existence of another nation, as he does towards the State of Israel, is not something that we can tolerate or will ever tolerate, and certainly not when we know that he is trying to possess nuclear weapons. And I'm very encouraged by our discussion and thoughts that we have exchanged about what needs to be done in the Middle East, Mr. President.

Finally, I say time and again, on different occasions, that we want to open a serious dialog with the Chairman of the Palestinian Authority, and I will make every possible effort to help Abu Mazen to get into such a dialog with us. Indeed, we hope that the new Government will be established soon on the basis of the Quartet and the roadmap, and that will allow an immediate contact between him