

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FEBRUARY 27, 1975

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
 AT THE
 PORTRAIT UNVEILING OF
 OLIN TEAGUE
 REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS
 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

7:35 P.M. EDT

Tiger and Freddy and your family, and the artist, Terry, Mr. Speaker, people from the Executive Branch and all of the friends of the Space Committee:

It is a great privilege for me to be here and to have a part in paying tribute to one of my dear friends and one of the outstanding Members of the House of Representatives.

I think you are all familiar with the slogan, "Put a tiger in your tank." (Laughter) You don't know what I am going to say now. (Laughter)

I think America can be mighty grateful that 29 years ago some Texans put a tiger in the House. You know, Tiger, from my experience, has proven to me -- and I am sure to the Speaker and to others -- that he is a man for all seasons. We know him as a patriot, as a legislator, a humanitarian and as an athlete. (Laughter)

Not too many people know about his athletic skill, but I can tell you from personal experience they did not call him the Minnesota Fats of the House paddleball court for nothing. (Laughter)

I have known Tiger, I have worked with him, I have admired and I have respected Tiger ever since I first came to the Congress in January of 1949. Tiger preceded me by a term or two, and I have looked back into the record, and I cannot help but say that his election to the House is one of the most dramatic on record.

Sometimes the term "war hero" is used rather loosely, but in Tiger Teague's case, it is almost an understatement. As the Commander of a combat battalion, Tiger more than lived up to his name. He was wounded in battle a good many times, decorated 11 times by the French and by the United States, and while he was still being treated in an Army hospital -- I think it was 1946, wasn't it, Tiger -- recovering from combat-inflicted wounds, that he learned of his highest honor, that of being elected to the Congress, to the House of Representatives.

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(OVER)

I am sure that gave him the great feeling of satisfaction and honor that it has to all of us who have ever had the privilege of serving in the House of Representatives.

Tiger, from what we know of those who dealt with him, words of trust and honor -- they were sort of the thing that Tiger believed in and acted on and respected.

So, Tiger, your 29 years in the House, culminating in your high-ranking position: on the Space and Veterans Committee -- I think that is a tribute to you and your record. Tiger worked, as we all know, in getting the Space Committee and its activities moving.

He is known by those of us that knew him in the House as Mr. Veteran himself, and I think the record shows that more veterans legislation can have the mark of identity with Tiger than almost any other Member of the Congress.

His sensitivity and his compassion for others has been expressed in many tangible and many lasting ways. I have talked to Tiger, and it is my judgment from chatting with him that the one piece of legislation that really means more to him than almost anything else is the War Orphans Scholarship program, which is a great piece of legislation for a most worthy cause.

Let me just conclude by saying that I know that Tiger is a no-nonsense, hard working, get-to-the-point legislator, and when you come right down to it, whether you agree with him or disagree, that is the kind of a legislator that I think is good for America, and that is what it is all about.

So, Tiger and Freddy, let me just express my deep gratitude for the contributions you have made and that you continue to make.

In my younger days, there was a popular song with the words "hold that tiger." (Laughter) Ladies and gentlemen, here is one Tiger you will never hold.

END (AT 7:45 P.M. EDT)