

**The original documents are located in Box 135, folder “July 17, 1974 - Speech, Congressional Medal of Honor Presentation, Blair House” of the Gerald R. Ford Vice Presidential Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR PRESENTATIONS

JULY 17, 1974



AS YOU TRAVEL THE CIRCLE AROUND THE LINCOLN MEMORIAL TO  
CROSS MEMORIAL BRIDGE, THERE STAND TWO HANDSOME MONUMENTS AT THE  
PORTALS OF THE BRIDGE. CARVED IN THE STONE AT THE BASE OF ONE READS THE  
WORD "VALOR" AND AT THE BASE OF THE OTHER--THE WORD "SACRIFICE".

THESE MAGNIFICENT PEICES OF BRONZE STATUARY WERE PRESENTED  
TO THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES BY THE PEOPLE OF ITALY IN GRATEFUL  
APPRECIATION OF THE VALOR AND SACRIFICE OF THOSE AMERICANS WHO  
SERVED--AND MANY OF WHOM DIED--IN ITALY DURING WORLD WAR II.



WE ASSEMBLE HERE AT THIS HISTORIC PLACE, RICH WITH REMINDERS  
OF OUR NATION'S PAST, TO HONOR AND PAY TRIBUTE TO THE VALOR AND  
SACRIFICE OF SEVEN AMERICANS WHO, IN ACTS OF COURAGE AND SELFLESS  
DEDICATION, GAVE THEIR LIVES IN THE SERVICE OF THIS COUNTRY AND THE  
PEOPLE OF ANOTHER NATION NEARLY HALF A WORLD AWAY.





WE ALSO MEET HERE TO GIVE OUR THANKS TO THE FAMILIES OF  
THESE MEN. FOR WE ~~ALSO~~ KNOW THEY HAVE SHARED THE BRUNT OF BATTLE.

LINCOLN, IN HIS SIMPLE BUT ELOQUENT WAY, WOULD EXPRESS--  
IN WORDS THAT HAVE NEVER BEEN SURPASSED--THE TRIBUTE OF A NATION TO  
ITS SONS WHO FELL IN BATTLE. DESPITE HIS MODEST PREDICTION IN THE  
GETTYSBURG ADDRESS, THE WORLD HAS SURELY NOTED AND LONG REMEMBERED  
WHAT HE SAID THERE.



TODAY WE ASSEMBLE HERE FOR ANOTHER HISTORIC TRIBUTE IN OUR  
NATION'S HISTORY. NOR CAN WE FURTHER CONSECRATE OR DEDICATE A  
CEREMONY THAT IS BOTH SOLEMN AND SIGNIFICANT.

SOLEMN THROUGH THE RESPECT WE HOLD FOR THOSE WE HONOR HERE;  
SIGNIFICANT IN THE MEANING THIS MOMENT HAS FOR EACH OF US.



THESE SEVEN AMERICANS SHOWED NOT ONLY SACRIFICE, BUT  
VALOR, TO THEIR COUNTRYMEN. FOR SUCH CONSPICUOUS BRAVERY AND  
SELFLESS DEVOTION THERE IS PRESENTED POSTHUMOUSLY, ON BEHALF OF THE  
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES, THE MEDAL OF HONOR. A MEDAL WHOSE  
AWARD WAS FIRST AUTHORIZED IN 1862 BY THE CONGRESS. A MEDAL TO BE  
GIVEN ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY AS THEIR HIGHEST AWARD  
FOR "COURAGE ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY."





WRITING TO A MOTHER DURING THE CIVIL WAR WHO HAD LOST  
TWO SONS IN THE UNION ARMY, LINCOLN CLOSED HIS LETTER BY NOTING  
THE "SOLEMN PRIDE THAT MUST BE YOURS TO HAVE LAID SO COSTLY A  
SACRIFICE UPON THE ALTAR OF FREEDOM."

IT IS IN THIS SPIRIT--ON BEHALF OF THE PRESIDENT AND THE  
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES--THAT I PRESENT THESE MEDALS OF HONOR.

(PLEASE READ THE FIRST CITATION)

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REMARKS BY VICE PRESIDENT GERALD R. FORD

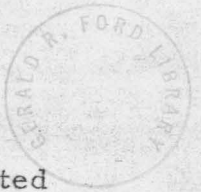
CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR PRESENTATIONS  
BLAIR HOUSE Wednesday, July 17, 1974 10:00 AM

FOR RELEASE ON DELIVERY

As you travel the circle around the Lincoln Memorial to cross Memorial Bridge, there stand two handsome monuments at the portals of the Bridge. Carved in the stone at the base of one reads the word "Valor" and at the base of the other--the word "Sacrifice."

These magnificent pieces of bronze statuary were presented to the people of the United States by the people of Italy in grateful appreciation of the valor and sacrifice of those Americans who served--and many of whom died--in Italy during World War II.

We assemble here at this historic place, rich with reminders of our Nation's past, to honor and pay tribute to the valor and sacrifice of seven Americans who, in acts of courage and selfless dedication, gave their lives in the service of this country and the people of another nation nearly half a world away.



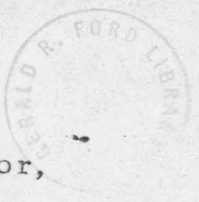
We also meet here to give our thanks to the families of these men. For we also know they have shared the brunt of battle.

Lincoln, in his simple but eloquent way, would express--in words that have never been surpassed--the tribute of a Nation to its sons who fell in battle. Despite his modest prediction in the Gettysburg Address, the world has surely noted and long remembered what he said there.

Today we assemble here for another historic tribute in our Nation's history. Nor can we further consecrate or dedicate a ceremony that is both solemn and significant.

Solemn through the respect we hold for those we honor here; significant in the meaning this moment has for each of us.

These seven Americans showed not only sacrifice, but valor, to their countrymen. For such conspicuous bravery and selfless devotion there is presented posthumously, on behalf of the Congress of the United States, the Medal of Honor. A medal whose award was first



authorized in 1862 by the Congress. A medal to be given on behalf of the people of this country as their highest award for "Courage above and beyond the call of duty."

Writing to a mother during the Civil War who had lost <sup>two</sup> ~~five~~ sons in the Union Army, Lincoln closed his letter by noting the "solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom."

It is in this spirit--on behalf of the President and the Congress of the United States--that I present <sup>these</sup> ~~this~~ Medal of Honor.

(PLEASE READ THE FIRST CITATION)



REMARKS BY VICE PRESIDENT GERALD R. FORD  
CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR PRESENTATIONS  
BLAIR HOUSE, WEDNESDAY, JULY 17, 1974 10:00 A.M.

FOR RELEASE ON DELIVERY

As you travel the circle around the Lincoln Memorial to cross Memorial Bridge, there stand two handsome monuments at the portals of the Bridge. Carved in the stone at the base of one reads the word "Valor" and at the base of the other -- the word "Sacrifice."

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