

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE WHITE HOUSE

EXCHANGE OF REMARKS  
BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT

AND

DAVID K. E. BRUCE

AT THE

MEDAL OF FREEDOM PRESENTATION

THE CABINET ROOM

3:40 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Secretary, Mr. Secretary  
General, Ambassador Bruce:

This is one of the nicest opportunities I have to recognize one of our foremost, if not our foremost, present-day diplomats in David Bruce. I was looking through the record, and five Presidents have recognized 139 individuals with a Medal of Freedom for outstanding, exemplary, dedicated service on behalf of the United States.

But, this happens to be the first Medal of Freedom (I have) given with added distinction. All of you, or many of you, know David Bruce's long, long career, which I did not know, starting in the Virginia Legislature, as I recall -- or was it the Maryland Legislature? I was half right.

But, I think that shows his versatility, when you can be elected to the State Legislature both from Virginia and Maryland and, if you look at the record, going back a good many years, you see he has been called on by many, many Presidents to do many vitally important, very crucial jobs, and although he is leaving his present job in NATO, I suggested to him that he leave his telephone number because as we face problems from time to time, I am certain now that someone with that prestige, that ability, that experience and that dedication can still be used most effectively on behalf of our country.

So, I would call upon Terry O'Donnell to please read the citation, which will lay out most appropriately the justification for this very, very high honor.

(Mr. O'Donnell read the citation.)

MORE

AMBASSADOR BRUCE: I feel greatly honored by what I think is an undeserved gift from the President. I have been very happy in working for him and enjoying his confidence, and also additionally happy because of the nature of his leadership.

I am content today that the Secretary General of NATO, Dr. Luns, is here. I worked with him, again on the instructions of the President, and our esteemed Secretary of State, for over a year. I left the particular position at NATO with considerable reluctance, because as far as my own professional life is concerned, it was not only the most agreeable but I thought the most interesting thing I had ever had a chance to participate in.

Again, Mr. President, I am deeply indebted to you for your own leadership and for the spirit in which you have animated, I think, so wisely American policies, and especially in respect to NATO, which to my mind should remain, as it has been, the keystone of American foreign policy.

Thank you, sir.

END (AT 3:45 P.M. EST)