

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

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THE WHITE HOUSE

EXCHANGE OF REMARKS  
BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT  
AND  
LORD ELWYN-JONES  
LORD HIGH CHANCELLOR OF GREAT BRITAIN

THE ROSE GARDEN

9:05 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: First, let me extend a very warm welcome to our British friends to the White House as well as to the Rose Garden and we certainly want to express, on behalf of all the American people, our gratitude and appreciation to the United Kingdom and the Parliament for loaning to the United States for a period of one year one of the four original copies of the Magna Carta. It is very appropriate, I think, that it will be displayed in the Rotunda of the United States Capitol where the American people will have an opportunity to see firsthand this very historic document.

The Magna Carta, as we all know in this country as well as in Great Britain, is revered by free people everywhere. It is basically the foundation of our deep-seated beliefs in this country, in the right of freedom for all people, and we are proud of the fact that our own Declaration of Independence to a very substantial degree carries on the great principles and traditions of the Magna Carta, and without our Declaration of Independence, of course, perhaps, this country never would have come into being.

So I do wish to express on behalf of 215 million Americans your generosity in letting us have for a period of one year this very historic document. And I should say in addition all of us in this country are looking forward with great anticipation to the visit of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth. It will be an historic event in not only the history of this country but certainly in our Bicentennial year, and we hope and trust that the visit of the Queen will be one of the great events in our Nation's history.

Thank you very much.

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LORD ELWYN-JONES: Mr. President, may I, on behalf of the British delegation, say what a great honor you have bestowed upon us in receiving us this morning and permitting us to be here in this historic place, the Rose Garden of the White House. It has been a great privilege to us to be able to put into the safe hands of Congress one of the originals of Magna Carta. We cannot imagine safer hands in which to trust it.

And we were greatly touched when Mr. Speaker and the Vice President yesterday indicated to us that it would remain in this place of great honor in the Rotunda, the very heart of Congress.

It is a matter of great satisfaction and pride to us that your next visitor from our country will be Her Majesty the Queen. She has told us how enormously she is looking forward to the visit.

We have enjoyed ourselves enormously, sir. Your hospitality has been as fabulous as American hospitality traditionally is and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your kindness in making us feel that we have come home.

Thank you, sir.

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(AT 9:11 A.M. EDT)