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## **PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH**

### **On the occasion of the Commemoration of the 1848 Hungarian War of Liberation**

**Statuary Hall  
United States Capitol  
Washington, D.C.  
March 15, 2006**

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you all. Please be seated. Mr. Speaker, thank you for having me here in this beautiful Capitol to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution.

I appreciate being here with the Mayor of our city, Mayor Williams. Good to see you, Mr. Mayor. I appreciate Chairman Hyde. Mr. Chairman, it's good to see you. I thank the members of the diplomatic corps, most particularly, Ambassador Walker. I've heard of him before. (Laughter.) Ambassador Simonyi -- thank you all. Members of Congress, most particularly a beacon for -- a steadfast beacon for liberty is how I'd like to define my friend, Tom Lantos.

I've come today not only to thank our strong ally, the government of Hungary and the people of Hungary, but I've come to thank my friend, Tom Lantos, and his wife, Annette, for never letting anybody forget that freedom is precious and necessary in our world.

The Hungarian example is an example of patience, and an example of the fact that freedom exists in everybody's soul. It's an example that tyranny can never stamp out the desire to be free. It's an example that -- of a country that, once becomes free, joins with other freedom-loving countries to keep the peace.

I've come to remind the people of Hungary they've got a great friend in America. I want to thank, by the way, the Hungarian Americans who are here with us today. You've made a significant contribution to our country.

You know, it's an interesting world in which we live. There's an argument about -- in some places -- about whether or not freedom is universal, whether or not freedom is okay for some parts of the world, but not others. I believe freedom is universal. I believe the example of Hungary proves that freedom is universal. I believe everybody desires to live in freedom. I believe there's an Almighty, and I believe the Almighty God's gift to each person in this world is liberty. And I believe the United States, and I believe Hungary, and I believe other free nations have the responsibility to help other people realize their freedom, as well.

You know, one of the interesting examples of Europe that I try to explain to our people is that for a hundred years there were war, where a lot of people lost their lives and a lot of Americans lost their life. But today Europe is at peace. Europe is whole, free, and at peace. And I believe the reason why is because democracy has taken hold on that continent. And one of the leading lights of democracy has been Hungary.

We thank the Hungarian people for their example. We thank them for their contribution in helping the newly free in Afghanistan and Iraq realize the blessings of liberty. We thank them for being allies in keeping the peace.

Mr. Speaker, thanks for letting me come by and pay my respects to a strong ally and a good friend, but also pay my respects to Congressman Tom Lantos, a person who understands the difference between freedom and tyranny, and a person who is willing to speak his mind all times, all places, everywhere.

God bless you all. (Applause.)