

May 27 / Administration of Barack Obama, 2010

Jewish Americans continue to help us uphold each and every day.

So thank you. God bless you, and may God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:27 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks,

he referred to former Brooklyn/Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Sanford “Sandy” Koufax; Rabbi Alysa Stanton of Congregation Bayt Shalom in Greenville, NC; and entertainer Regina I. Spektor. The related proclamation of April 30 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the Death of John W. Finn

May 27, 2010

Michelle and I were deeply saddened to learn of the passing of retired Navy Lt. John William Finn, the oldest living Medal of Honor recipient. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and loved ones at this time. Lt. Finn received the medal for the heroism he displayed during the attack on Pearl Harbor. Under a torrent of gunfire, Lt. Finn defended his fellow sailors, holding his position for 2 hours until the skies went quiet, despite suffering serious wounds. Like many of those who have served our Nation with such distinction, Lt. Finn often said that he never intend-

ed to be a hero. Instead, he felt that he was simply doing his duty. But his modesty does not diminish his extraordinary conduct or the incredible example he has set for our men and women in uniform and for all Americans. I had the privilege of meeting Lt. Finn last year, and I was struck by his warmth and humility. As we mark Memorial Day, and pay tribute all who have fallen in defense of this Nation, the passing of Lt. Finn is a reminder of the sacrifices that generations have made to preserve the freedoms we hold dear.

Statement on Congressional Action on the Department of Defense’s “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” Policy

May 27, 2010

I have long advocated that we repeal “don’t ask, don’t tell,” and I am pleased that both the House of Representatives and the Senate Armed Services Committee took important bipartisan steps toward repeal tonight. Key to successful repeal will be the ongoing Defense Department review, and as such I am grateful that the amendments offered by Representative Patrick Murphy and Senators Joseph Lieberman and Carl Levin that passed today will ensure that the Department of Defense can

complete that comprehensive review that will allow our military and their families the opportunity to inform and shape the implementation process. Our military is made up of the best and bravest men and women in our Nation, and my greatest honor is leading them as Commander in Chief. This legislation will help make our Armed Forces even stronger and more inclusive by allowing gay and lesbian soldiers to serve honestly and with integrity.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the National Security Strategy of the United States

May 27, 2010

To the Congress of the United States:

BARACK OBAMA

Consistent with section 108 of the National Security Act of 1947, as amended (50 U.S.C. 404a), I am transmitting the National Security Strategy of the United States.

The White House,
May 27, 2010.

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters in Port Fourchon, Louisiana May 28, 2010

The President. Everybody, I want you all to meet Charlotte Randolph, who's the parish president in this parish. And what I just heard from Thad Allen was that this parish has been as effective as any in coordinating and working to make sure that they respond quickly.

You've got about 7 miles of beach here where two types of boom have already been laid. This is new boom as well. What you're seeing here, if I'm not mistaken—right, Thad?—is——

Adm. Thad W. Allen, USCG. The old boom was picked up yesterday.

The President. The old boom was picked up yesterday, but this will just soak up the oil as it comes up. And if you guys want to get a little bit closer and get dirty, you can see—you might want to stop right around here—you can see these little balls; these are the tar balls that they're talking about.

So, Madam President, these you can actually send out teams to pick up as they wash up on-shore.

Lafourche Parish President Charlotte A. Randolph. And it's picked up by the booms.

The President. So either the boom soaks stuff up or manually you can pick up these tar balls as they're coming ashore. But obviously, the concern is, is that until we actually stop the flow, we've got problems. And it may be that there's some additional strategies, Madam President, that you're interested in pursuing.

So the—Thad, you want to just talk a little bit about how the parish, Coast Guard, has been—and the cleanup teams have been working together?

Adm. Allen. Yes, Mr. President. I was here yesterday meeting with the parish president——

The President. Yes, that stick is——

Adm. Allen. You got an oiled stick there.

The unified command center they have here is one of the best examples I've seen in the region where you have Coast Guard, the responsible party, and the local responders both from the parish and the State and the other Federal stakeholders that are there. They sit in a room every day; they work together. They've got everything up on a screen in front of them; they know where the boom is at; they track it. They're using modern technology to do that, and they've got a real sound booming strategy. If oil were to get into the bay over here, which is very, very sensitive, they'd have to have local shrimp boats that are standing by to deploy the boom. A lot of good integration among State and local and Federal here—and the contractors.

The President. Good.

Parish President Randolph. Plus we're concerned about the port being closed by oil.

The President. Right.

Parish President Randolph. The Coast Guard has been very vigilant over that, any oil that has attempted to get into the port, the Coast Guard is on top of. We can't close our port.

The President. Right.

Adm. Allen. The other thing is we have—if a ship comes through and it gets oiled before it hits port, we try to establish a cleaning station so we can manage that so we can keep the com-