

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 12:33 p.m. in the South Court Auditorium of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, the President referred to Warren E. Buffett, chief executive officer and chairman, Berkshire Ha-

thaway Inc.; T. Boone Pickens, founder, BP Capital, L.P.; Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya; and Pfc. Bradley E. Manning, USA, who was accused of leaking classified documents to the WikiLeaks organization.

Remarks Honoring the 2010 Stanley Cup Champion Chicago Blackhawks March 11, 2011

The President. Hello, hello, hello, everybody! Hello, Blackhawks fans! Now, we have hosted a lot of teams at the White House over the last 2 years, but this one is a little sweeter. It's pretty special. That's because it is the first time as President I get to say congratulations on bringing a world championship to my hometown, the city of Chicago.

I want to start by recognizing Rocky Wirtz, John McDonough, and all the folks who helped make this team what it is. Give them a big round of applause.

We're proud to have some Members of Congress here today. You guys didn't have anything to do with it—[laughter]—but I know you're big fans, so we want to acknowledge you.

Finally, I want to congratulate all the fans. We have a proud tradition in Chicago of believing that no matter how long it takes, how much we have to endure, it's only a matter of time before our team finally wins it all. [Laughter] The waiting builds character. We have a lot of character. [Laughter]

Now, I have to say, even by Chicago standards, 49 years, that's a pretty long time. [Laughter] To put that in perspective, the last time the Blackhawks won the Stanley Cup, a movie cost 69 cents. JFK had just moved into the White House. I was still in diapers. [Laughter] And when the legendary Glenn Hall played goalie for the Hawks, he did it with a wooden stick and no mask.

So you can understand why people were a little skeptical when, after this team's first practice last year, Patrick Kane came off the ice and said, "We want to win the Stanley Cup." We had heard that before.

But this time it was different. This was the kind of tough, talented, selfless team that Chicago had been waiting for.

It was a team built around people like Coach Q, who brought years of experience and focus to the bench. Players like 22-year-old captain Jonathan Toews, who lit up the ice on his way to being named playoff MVP. There's Patrick Kane, who scored the biggest goal in franchise history in the overtime to win the Cup. And when Duncan Keith had seven of his teeth knocked out by a puck—seven—some of you guys there, you're missing a few, he's missing seven at one time—but he bit down on some gauze, took a shot of Novocain, and headed right back out onto the ice. They did all this for their fans. And along the way, they helped Chicago become a hockey town again.

During the playoffs, even the Michael Jordan statue had a Blackhawks uniform on. [Laughter] After this team won the Stanley Cup, 2 million people lined Michigan Avenue to see the victory parade go by. And when the Hawks visited Wrigley Field during the Crosstown Classic, they did something even tougher than winning the Cup: They got 40,000 Sox fans and Cubs fans to stand up and cheer at the same time. [Laughter] Never happened before.

In the end, it was about more than just bringing home one of the biggest trophies in sports. It was about a city coming together behind one team and one goal. It was about a new generation of players and fans understanding what it feels like to be the best in the world. It was about getting the chance to share that experience with others.

And that's why, over the last year, members of this team have been taking the Cup on the road, stopping everywhere from ice rinks to

hospitals to let people have their moment with the trophy and help spread some of the joy.

Yesterday, for example, they took the Cup to visit wounded warriors at Walter Reed hospital. So they helped raise the spirits of men and women who've sacrificed so much on behalf of our country. Later today they're going to join Michelle in helping kids stay active by trying out some street hockey out on the South Lawn. So I want to thank them for everything they're doing to give back.

And finally, because it's almost playoff time again, I want to wish these guys the best of luck going into the postseason. I don't want to jinx anything, but after winning 8 of their last 10 games, I think it might be time for Patrick to start growing that playoff mullet again. [Laughter] I thought it was pretty sharp. Because I want to see you back here next year.

And let me, yes, just say to all the Bears fans, Bulls fans, White Sox fans, and Cubs fans—[laughter]—I want to see all of you sometime soon as well.

So congratulations, guys. Thank you.
What have you got for me here?

[At this point, the President was presented with a team jersey.]

Thank you so much. Thank you. There we go. I think we've even got some blood on here. [Laughter] It shows it's authentic. Fantastic.

Chicago Blackhawks President and Chief Executive Officer John F. McDonough. Do you want to put the ring on?

The President. Oh, absolutely. I've got to try the ring out and everything. That's what you call some bling, right there. [Laughter] All right, there you go.

Pete, you got me here?

Let's step up a little bit.

[The President posed for a photograph with members of the Chicago Blackhawks organization.]

Center Jonathan Toews. We got this for you too.

The President. What else do we got here? [Laughter]

Mr. Toews. A mini Stanley Cup, there you go.

The President. Look at this, a mini Stanley—now, can I say that when I first saw this I thought, it looks so much bigger on TV. [Laughter] But then it turned out it was just a replica. But what a wonderful, wonderful gift this is. Thank you so much, team. We are proud of you. Thank you. Appreciate you. Go, Blackhawks!

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:52 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to W. Rockwell Wirtz, chairman, Joel Quenneville, head coach, Patrick Kane, right wing, and Duncan Keith, defenseman, Chicago Blackhawks; Michael J. Jordan, former guard, National Basketball Association's Chicago Bulls; and Chief Official White House Photographer Peter Souza.

Statement on the Earthquake and Tsunami in Japan and the Tsunami Warning for the Pacific March 11, 2011

Michelle and I send our deepest condolences to the people of Japan, particularly those who have lost loved ones in the earthquake and tsunamis. The United States stands ready to help the Japanese people in this time of great trial. The friendship and alliance between our two nations is unshakeable and only strengthens our resolve to stand with the people of Ja-

pan as they overcome this tragedy. We will continue to closely monitor tsunamis around Japan and the Pacific going forward, and we are asking all our citizens in the affected region to listen to their State and local officials, as I have instructed FEMA to be ready to assist Hawaii and the rest of the U.S. States and Territories that could be affected.