

But I want all of you to know something. You inspire me. You inspire everybody here. Michelle and I treasure the moments that we've had with some of you and your families.

Corporal Nickolas Edinger is here. Where's Nickolas? Right there, right in the middle. He was one of our special guests when Michelle and I hosted a recent dinner for military leaders at the White House. He was serving in Afghanistan when an IED blast cost him one of his legs. But he's here today as part of his journey to recovery. And I want to just welcome Nickolas back.

Private First Class Corey Kent, where's Corey? Corey is right there. I met Corey during one of my visits to Walter Reed last year. And it was my honor to pin a Purple Heart on him. He's lost both legs. But he's working hard to recover, and he's here today, ready to ride. So, Corey, you are an inspiration.

Ted Wade is here. Ted, where are you? Right there. After sustaining multiple injuries in Iraq, Ted's doctors did not think he would survive. But he persevered. He pulled through. And I was honored that Ted and his wife Sarah joined us last year when I signed legislation for veterans and caregivers. I'm pleased that Ted and Sarah are back with us again today because I can report that starting next week, our veterans, wounded warriors, and caregivers can start applying for the support that you need and deserve. We are going to get this done, and we're very proud of that.

## Statement on Elections in Nigeria May 4, 2011

This morning I called President Goodluck Jonathan of Nigeria to congratulate him on his election victory and to commend the people of Nigeria for their resolve and patience during last month's historic Presidential, legislative, and gubernatorial elections. The success of the elections was a testament to Nigerian voters who waited in long lines, stayed to watch their votes counted, and were determined that these elections mark a new chapter in Nigerian history. Credit also belongs to the Independent National Electoral Commission, the National

Now, Sarah once said of Ted, "Just like he needed a team in the military to accomplish the mission, he needs a team at home for the longer war." And so I say to all of you today, we're going to keep building that team that you need for recovery. We're determined to take care of you as well as you've taken care of us.

So to all the riders here today, I want to say, as your Commander in Chief and as an American, thank you. We are grateful for you. You represent the very best in America. And in your fight to recover and in the ride that you're about to begin, we see the values and virtues that make our country great.

We may take a hit. We may endure great loss. But we are a strong and resilient people. We push on. We persevere. We're confident in our cause. And we know that, like generations of Americans before us, we will emerge stronger than before.

So God bless you all. God bless the United States of America. And with that, let's get this thing started. I think I've got a horn.

All right. Are you all ready? You look ready. One, two, three.

*[At this point, the President sounded the horn to begin the Soldier Ride.]*

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:18 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Chris Carney, founder, Wounded Warrior Project Soldier Ride.

Youth Service Corps, and Nigeria's vibrant civil society, all of which must play a role in ensuring that the final results reflect the will of the Nigerian people and that Nigerian authorities investigate and address any allegations of fraud or irregularities.

While the majority of Nigerians cast their ballots free from intimidation and coercion, the postelection violence that followed the Presidential election on April 16 was deplorable. Violence has no place in a democratic society, and it is the responsibility of all Nigerians to reject

it. Democracy, however, neither begins nor ends with elections. Now is the time for Nigeria's leaders and its people to come together and build the future that they deserve, a multi-party democracy that addresses the aspirations of all Nigerians, especially its youth, who did so much to make the recent elections a success and who will define the nation's future.

As Africa's most populous country, Nigeria can show what is possible when people of dif-

ferent parties, ethnicities, and faith backgrounds come together to seek peace, provide for their families, and give their children a better future. Today, Nigerians have an historic opportunity to move forward together and make their nation into a model for Africa. As I told President Jonathan, I look forward to strengthening our partnership with Nigeria so that this and future generations of Nigerians can live in peace, democracy, and prosperity.

### Remarks at a New York City Fire Department Firehouse in New York City *May 5, 2011*

Well, listen, the main reason I came here is because I heard the food's pretty good. [Laughter]

But to the commissioner, to Mayor Giuliani—who obviously performed heroic acts almost 10 years ago—but most of all, to all of you, I wanted to just come up here to thank you.

This is a symbolic site of the extraordinary sacrifice that was made on that terrible day almost 10 years ago. Obviously, we can't bring back the friends that were lost, and I know that each and every one of you not only grieve for them, but have also, over the last 10 years, dealt with their family, their children, tried to give them comfort, tried to give them support.

Well, what happened on Sunday because of the courage of our military and the outstanding work of our intelligence sent a message around the world, but also sent a message here back home, that when we say we will never forget, we mean what we say. And our commitment to making sure that justice is done was something that transcended politics, transcended party; it didn't matter which administration was in, it didn't matter who was in charge, we were going to make sure that the perpetrators of that horrible act, that they received justice.

So it's some comfort, I hope, to all of you to know that when those guys took those extraordinary risks going into Pakistan, that they were doing it in part because of the sacrifices that

were made in this State. They were doing it in the name of your brothers that were lost.

And finally, let me just say that although 9/11 obviously was a high-water mark of courage for the New York Fire Department and a symbol of the sacrifice, you guys are making sacrifices every single day. It doesn't get as much notoriety, it doesn't get as much attention, but every time you run into a burning building, every time that you are saving lives, you're making a difference. And that's part of what makes this city great, and that's part of what makes this country great.

So I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart and on behalf of the American people for the sacrifices that you make every single day. And I just want to let you know that you're always going to have a President and an administration who's got your back the way you've got the backs of the people of New York over these last many years.

So God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

And with that, I'm going to try some of that food. All right? Appreciate you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:29 a.m. at Engine Company 54, Ladder Company 4, and Battalion 9 firehouse. In his remarks, he referred to Salvatore J. Cassano, fire commissioner, New York City Fire Department; and former Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani of New York City.