

## Remarks on Presenting the Commander in Chief's Trophy to the United States Naval Academy Midshipmen April 18, 2014

*The President.* All right. Everybody, please have a seat, have a seat. Welcome to the White House. Congratulations to the Navy Midshipmen. Does this get old?

*Audience member.* Never.

*The President.* No? Okay. [Laughter] It's good to see Coach Ken again. And I want to recognize Vice Admiral Mike Miller for his service to the Academy and to our country.

This is the second time these seniors have come here to claim the Commander in Chief's Trophy. If you guys have your punchcards with you, the next one is free. [Laughter] I'm pretty sure Coach Ken would agree that this was one of the best teams yet.

First of all, you had incredible talent. Senior captain Cody Peterson and D.J. Sargenti led the defense. I hear that they're known in the locker room as the Meatheads. [Laughter] On a football team, though, that's high praise.

This year, quarterback Keenan Reynolds had one of the best seasons in school history. His 31 rushing touchdowns weren't just an Academy record, they were a Division I record for a quarterback. He is one of only a handful of players in Division I history to rush for 30 or more touchdowns in a single season. I think it's fair to say that if you're on a list with Barry Sanders you're doing pretty good.

So this team had the leadership, it had the tools. But this is a team that also had a knack for getting the job done under some pretty tough circumstances. When the Government was forced to shut down, you didn't even know if the game against Air Force was going to happen. Luckily, the Secretary of Defense stepped in, gave the green light, which tells you how important it was, because Secretary Hagel has a few things on his plate, but he personally intervened on this one.

A few weeks later, you beat San Jose State in triple overtime, with Keenan scoring seven rushing touchdowns, the most ever by a Division I quarterback in a single game. And you kept on rolling through the games that really

mattered. In the snow, you beat Army for the 12th time in a row—they're starting to feel bad about this—[laughter]—locking up the Commander in Chief's Trophy for the ninth time in 11 years. You went on to beat Middle Tennessee State to win your first bowl game since 2009.

So, overall, this was a pretty good year on the gridiron. What's more impressive is the fact that for these outstanding young men, football isn't even the main thing. When these guys sign up—when you sign up to play at Annapolis—you know you're in for a different experience. A typical day starts at 6 a.m. in the training room. Breakfast is at 7. After that, it's class, lunch, and football meetings. Then more class, football practice, dinner. Free time starts at 8, which most players use to study until midnight. And when students at other colleges are enjoying summer vacation, these guys are busy with military training and summer school and offseason workouts.

So yes, it's about learning to be a good football player, but more importantly, it's about learning how to be a good leader and to be a good man. And that's what these outstanding Americans are and will continue to be.

Next month, 14 of these guys are going to be commissioned as ensigns in the Navy. Another eight will become 2d lieutenants in the Marine Corps. Senior captain Matt Aiken will serve on a ship down in Norfolk. And Wave Ryder—by the way, if your name is Wave Ryder, then you've got to be in the Navy—[laughter]—will suit up as a naval aviator.

That's their commitment to service. That's a commitment to country and to each other that sets this team apart.

And today, that commitment is as strong as ever. Last month, I know that all of us were mourning the loss of Will McKamey. Two busloads of classmates and teammates made the 8-hour trip to Knoxville to attend his funeral, as did Coach Ken. I understand your motto for this season is "I Will" in memory of him. And

that's what camaraderie is all about: honor, courage, commitment. That's what makes the Midshipmen so strong. And that's why I'm so proud to serve as your Commander in Chief, not only—in fact, not primarily—because of what you've done on the football field, but because of your dedication to each other and your service to America.

So today it is my privilege to present you with a trophy that weighs about as much as I do. [Laughter] Congratulations, guys, once again.

[At this point, Head Coach Ken Niumatalolo gave brief remarks, after which the President

was presented with a team jersey and commemorative ring.]

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:02 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Cody Peterson and D.J. Sargenti, linebackers, Matt Aiken, wide receiver, and Wave Ryder, safety, U.S. Naval Academy football team; Barry D. Sanders, former running back, National Football League's Detroit Lions; and Will McKamey, a Midshipmen running back who died on March 25 after collapsing at football practice the previous weekend.

## Statement on Signing Legislation Concerning Visa Limitations for Certain Representatives to the United Nations *April 18, 2014*

Today I have signed into law S. 2195, an Act concerning visa limitations for certain representatives to the United Nations. S. 2195 amends section 407 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1990 and 1991, to provide that no individual may be admitted to the United States as a representative to the United Nations, if that individual has been found to have been engaged in espionage or terrorist activity directed against the United States or its allies, and if that individual may pose a threat to United States national security interests. As President Bush observed in signing the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1990 and 1991, this provision "could constrain the exercise of my exclusive constitutional authority to receive within the United States certain foreign ambassadors to the United Nations." (Public Papers of the President, George Bush, Vol. I, 1990, page 240). Acts of espionage and terrorism against the United States and our allies are unques-

tionably problems of the utmost gravity, and I share the Congress's concern that individuals who have engaged in such activity may use the cover of diplomacy to gain access to our Nation. Nevertheless, as President Bush also observed, "curtailing by statute my constitutional discretion to receive or reject ambassadors is neither a permissible nor a practical solution." I shall therefore continue to treat section 407, as originally enacted and as amended by S. 2195, as advisory in circumstances in which it would interfere with the exercise of this discretion.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,  
April 18, 2014.

NOTE: S. 2195, approved April 18, was assigned Public Law No. 113–100.

## Statement on the Observance of Easter *April 18, 2014*

This weekend, Michelle and I join our fellow Christians in marking Good Friday and celebrating Easter. We will reflect on the sacri-

fice that Jesus Christ made for us and rejoice in the triumph of the Resurrection. This season reminds us that God is always with us, in