

ida captors. Warren's work benefited people across faiths. Meanwhile, Al Qaida boasted to the world that it held Warren, citing his Jewish faith. Al Qaida held both men for years, even as Warren's health deteriorated. They deprived these men of precious, irreplaceable years with family who missed them terribly.

Amid grief that is unimaginable, I pray that these two families will find some small measure of solace in knowing that Warren and Giovanni's legacy will endure. Their service will be remembered by the Pakistani men, women, and children whose lives they touched and made better. Their spirit will live on in the love of their families, who are in our thoughts and prayers today, especially Warren's wife

Elaine, their daughters Alisa and Jennifer, and their families.

And the shining example of these two men will stand as a light to people the world over who see suffering and answer with compassion, who see hatred and offer their love, who see war and work for peace.

May God bless these two brave men, and may He watch over and comfort their families for all the years to come.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:05 a.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Elaine Weinstein, wife, and Alisa Weinstein and Jennifer Coakley, daughters, of Mr. Weinstein, who was killed in a U.S. counterterrorism operation in Pakistan on January 15.

Remarks Honoring the 2015 Super Bowl Champion New England Patriots April 23, 2015

The President. Hello, everybody. Welcome to the White House. Please have a seat. And well, maybe before you have a seat, give it up for the Super Bowl Champion New England Patriots! All right, now you can have a seat.

A couple of points I'd make at the outset. First of all, it's usually warmer on the South Lawn this time of year, but given the kind of winter that Boston and New England had, I guess this feels pretty balmy to you. [Laughter] Second of all, for some reason that I don't fully understand, there is a disproportionate number of Patriots fans in the White House. [Laughter] I obviously did not screen properly when I was hiring—[laughter]—but there are a lot of Patriot fans in the White House, and there are also a lot of Patriot fans in Congress. I just also want to point out that, despite the fact that he travels probably more than any human on Earth, somehow, my Secretary of State, John Kerry, found a front row seat to be here today. [Laughter] So give it up for John Kerry.

I want to offer my congratulations, first of all, to Patriots owner Robert Kraft, and I also want to acknowledge Coach Bill Belichick. I said to the team, and I think even those of us

who have other teams we root for, the Patriots organization is as good as an organization as there has ever been in professional sports. And to be able to maintain that kind of consistent excellence is a rare thing in any field, including on the football field. And that's a testament to outstanding ownership. It's a testament to a Hall of Fame coach. And I'm particularly grateful that Coach decided to dress up today. [Laughter] We had some scissors if he wanted to cut the sleeves off. [Laughter] Formal hoodies are allowed. [Laughter]

I usually tell a bunch of jokes at these events, but with the Patriots in town, I was worried that 11 out of 12 of them would fall flat. [Laughter] All right, all right, all right. That whole story got blown a little out of proportion. [Laughter] All right. Where were we?

New England Patriots Owner Robert K. Kraft. The Jets gave it to you.

The President. Right, right, right. Here's what makes the Patriots the Patriots. Even in the midst of huge distraction during the biggest media circus of the sports year, they stayed focused. As Coach Belichick would say, it was simply "on to Seattle."

Against the Seahawks, they gave us one of the greatest finishes in Super Bowl history. The Patriots became the first team ever to win the Super Bowl after trailing by 10 points going into the fourth quarter. All game long, you saw what made this team so special.

There was, of course, Tom Brady, an alltime great who couldn't be with us here today, but who engineered a pair of surgical fourth-quarter touchdown drives. You had Julian Edelman playing an unbelievable game after an unbelievable playoffs, clawing for extra yards. Darrelle Revis shutting down receivers like nobody else can. Gronkowski, just being Gronkowski. [Laughter] He's not making rabbit ears back there, is he? [Laughter] I told him to keep his shirt on. [Laughter] So he asked me what would happen if he took it off. I said Secret Service probably wouldn't like it. He said, what could they do to me? [Laughter]

But this team came out on top not just because of big stars, but because of guys who aren't necessarily household names. Jamie Collins. Shane Vereen. Rob Ninkovich. And of course, we all became acquainted with a man named Malcolm Butler on the biggest play of the Super Bowl. Where's Malcolm? How are you doing? He's so small you can't even see him. [Laughter] But made an unbelievable play of—and showed heart and guts on that goal-line slant pass. Of course, as we also know—and he acknowledged—he had practiced for it. So you've got a combination of somebody with toughness and heart, and you've got a great coach and a great organization that anticipates. And so I think it's fair to say that Malcolm has earned a lifetime of free drinks in every "bah" in Boston. [Laughter]

But that's been the story of the Patriots over this past 15 years. There's Belichick and Brady, the most successful player-coach tandem perhaps in NFL history. There's "the Patriot Way," a group that values teamwork and hard work above all else, which is why these guys are able to shine even if the spotlight is not on them. And it works. Since 2001 season, they have four championships, more than any other franchise in that span. Six Super Bowl appear-

ances, more than any other franchise. Twelve division titles. You get the picture. In a league that's known for its parity, they have set a standard for excellence that we may not see again for a very long time.

And the good news is, they're leading the way off the field as well. During the season, Patriots players spend their Tuesdays volunteering in the community, visiting schools, hospitals, getting kids active through the NFL's Play 60 initiative. Earlier today a group of Pats stopped by Walter Reed to visit with our wounded warriors. And we are very grateful to them for that. In fact, in a conversation, one of the docs on the team here served in the Navy for 20 years, and we were talking about the incredible service that our men and women in uniform are rendering every single day. And I think Coach and Bob both acknowledged that they're the kind of heroes that are at a whole other level. And so for our football teams to be able to acknowledge them—because they're all big sports fans—that means a lot.

On Monday, the Patriots Marathon Team ran the Boston Marathon and raised over \$230,000, helping to show that 2 years after a terrible tragedy, Boston is stronger than ever.

So I want to congratulate the Patriots for their leadership on and off the field. I just wish the city of Boston would share some of those titles you keep winning with Chicago. I mean, I'm hoping that I get to see the Bears before I leave here. [Laughter] But in the meantime, I wish the Patriots organization all the best for what is well-deserved success. Congratulations, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:27 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Thomas E.P. Brady, Jr., quarterback, Julian Edelman, wide receiver, Darrelle Revis, defensive back, Rob Gronkowski, tight end, Jamie Collins, linebacker, Shane Vereen, running back, Rob Ninkovich, defensive end, Malcolm Butler, center back, and Matthew T. Provencher, medical director, New England Patriots.