

ticularly young people of color—are so prone to end up in a criminal justice system that makes it harder for them to ever get a job and ever be effective, full citizens of this country.

So I want to express appreciation to everybody who helped make this happen. I want to give a special shout-out to our prison guards. They've got a really tough job, and most of them are doing it in exemplary fashion. One of the things that we talked about is how we can continue to improve conditions in prisons. This is a outstanding institution within the system, and yet we've—they've got enormous overcrowding issues. I just took a look in a cell where, because of overcrowding, typically, we might have three people housed in a cell that looks to be, what, 15 by—

Correctional Officer Ronald Warlick. Nine by 10.

The President. What?

Officer Warlick. Nine by 10.

The President. Nine by 10. Three, whole-grown men in a 9-by-10 cell. There's been some improvement: Now we have two. But overcrowding like that is something that has to be addressed.

As I said the other day, gang activity, sexual assault inside these prisons—those are all things that have to be addressed. And so we're also going to be consulting with prison guards, wardens, and others to see how we can make some critical reforms.

A lot of this, though, is going to have to happen at the State level. So my goal is that we start seeing some improvements at the Federal level and that we're then able to see States across the country pick up the baton. And there are already some States that are leading the way on both sentencing reform as well as prison reform. We want to make sure that we're seeing what works and build off that.

Remarks on the Shootings at United States Military Facilities in Chattanooga, Tennessee July 16, 2015

I just received a briefing from FBI Director Comey, as well as my White House team,

All right? Thanks, everybody.

The President's Meeting With Inmates/Criminal Justice Reform

Q. Mr. President, what struck you most about seeing the prison here today?

The President. What's that?

Q. What struck you most about seeing this prison here today?

The President. Visiting with these six individuals. I've said this before: When they describe their youth and their childhood, these are young people who made mistakes that aren't that different than the mistakes I made and the mistakes that a lot of you guys made. The difference is they did not have the kinds of support structures, the second chances, the resources that would allow them to survive those mistakes.

And I think we have a tendency sometimes to almost take for granted or think it's normal that so many young people end up in our criminal justice system. It's not normal. It's not what happens in other countries.

What is normal is teenagers doing stupid things. What is normal is young people making mistakes. And we've got to be able to distinguish between dangerous individuals who need to be incapacitated and incarcerated versus young people who, are in an environment in which they are adapting, but if given different opportunities, a different vision of life, could be thriving the way we are.

That's what strikes me: There but for the grace of God. And that, I think, is something that we all have to think about.

All right? Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:25 a.m. in Cell Block B.

about the tragic shooting that took place in Chattanooga today. We don't know yet all the

details. We know that what appears to be a lone gunman carried out these attacks. We've identified a name. And at this point, a full investigation is taking place. The FBI will be in the lead, working closely with local law enforcement.

We've also been in contact with the Department of Defense to make sure that all our Defense facilities are properly attentive and vigilant as we sort through exactly what happened. And as details of the investigation proceed, we'll make sure that the FBI as well as local law enforcement are providing the public with all the information that's involved.

My main message right now is obviously the deepest sympathies of the American people to the four marines that have been killed. It is a heartbreaking circumstance for these individuals who have served our country with great valor to be killed in this fashion.

And although the families are still in the process of being contacted, I want them to know that I speak for the American people in expressing our deepest condolences and knowing that they have their full support—our full support as they try to overcome the grief that's involved here.

I also want to say that there are reports of injuries to Chattanooga local law enforcement officials. Thankfully, as far as we know at this point, they have survived the assault. And we

want to make sure that they know that we're thinking of them. They're in our thoughts and prayers.

We take all shootings very seriously. Obviously, when you have an attack on a U.S. military facility, then we have to make sure that we have all the information necessary to make an assessment in terms of how this attack took place and what further precautions we can take in the future. And as we have more information, we'll let the public know.

But in the meantime, I'd ask all Americans to pray for the families who are grief stricken at this point. And I want everybody to understand that we will be thorough and prompt in figuring out exactly what happened.

All right? Thank you very much

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:20 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mohammad Youssuf Abdulazeez, suspected gunman in the shootings at the military facilities in Chattanooga, TN; Sgt. Carson A. Holmquist, USMC, Gy. Sgt. Thomas Sullivan, USMC, L. Cpl. Squire K. Wells, USMC, and S. Sgt. David Allen Wyatt, USMC, who were killed in the shooting at the Naval Operational Support Center in Chattanooga; and Chattanooga Police Officer Dennis Pedigo, who was injured in the shooting.

Statement on the Observance of Eid al-Fitr July 16, 2015

Michelle and I would like to extend our warmest wishes to Muslims in the United States and around the world celebrating Eid-ul-Fitr. As Muslims mark the end of the month, they are reminded that Ramadan is a time to reflect spiritually, build communally, and aid those in need. While Eid marks the end of Ramadan, it marks a new beginning for each individual, a reason to celebrate and express gratitude on this holiday.

For millions of Muslims, the morning of Eid is marked with the call to prayer echoing through cities and towns across the globe. Millions of people head to local mosques for spe-

cial Eid prayers followed by festive gatherings, gift exchanges, and feasts among friends, neighbors, and families. The diversity of traditions paint the vibrant images we see from around the world capturing the spirit and excitement of Eid: colorful dresses or white garments decorating the masses of people standing in lines for prayer, lanterns and ornaments lighting up bazaars and neighborhoods, intricate henna designs painted on hands of young girls and women, and an abundance of delectable foods and aromatic cuisines.

As Muslim Americans celebrate Eid across America, the holiday is a reminder to every