

the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Secretary-General Kofi Annan of the United Nations, and Lakhdar Brahimi, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General; and Prime

Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel. Prime Minister Blair referred to Muqtada Al Sadr, Iraqi Shiite cleric whose militia engaged in an uprising in Iraq in early April. A reporter referred to President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt.

The President's Radio Address

April 17, 2004

Good morning. For the past year, the September the 11th Commission has met to examine the facts surrounding the terrorist attack on our Nation. I look forward to the Commission's report, and I expect it to contain important recommendations for preventing future attacks.

One lesson our Nation has already learned is that law enforcement and intelligence personnel must be allowed to share more information, so that we can better pursue terrorists inside the United States. In the weeks after September the 11th, Congress made essential reforms by passing the USA PATRIOT Act. That vital legislation gained overwhelming bipartisan support in the House of Representatives and passed the Senate by a vote of 98 to one.

The PATRIOT Act tore down the artificial wall between the FBI and CIA and enhanced their ability to share the information needed to hunt terrorists. The PATRIOT Act also marked a major shift in law enforcement priorities. We're no longer emphasizing only the investigation of past crimes but also the prevention of future attacks. Because we passed the PATRIOT Act, FBI agents can better conduct electronic surveillance and wiretaps on suspected terrorists. And they now can apply other essential tools—many of which have long been used to investigate white-collar criminals and drug traffickers—to stop terrorist attacks on our homeland.

Our Government's first duty is to protect the American people. The PATRIOT Act fulfills that duty in a way that is fully con-

sistent with constitutional protections. In making America safer, it has helped us defend our liberty. Since I signed the PATRIOT Act into law, Federal investigators have disrupted terror cells in at least six American cities. And since September the 11th, the Department of Justice has charged over 300 persons in terrorism-related investigations. So far, more than half of those individuals have been convicted or pled guilty.

Key elements of the PATRIOT Act are set to expire next year. Some politicians in Washington act as if the threat to America will also expire on that schedule. Yet we have seen what the terrorists intend for us, in deadly attacks from Bali to Mombassa to Madrid. And we will not forget the lessons of September the 11th. To abandon the PATRIOT Act would deprive law enforcement and intelligence officers of needed tools in the war on terror and demonstrate willful blindness to a continuing threat.

Next week, I will travel to Hershey, Pennsylvania, and Buffalo, New York, to meet with the law enforcement officers who see the importance of the PATRIOT Act in their daily duties. They know we must not let down our guard. The war on terror will be won on the offensive, so Congress must renew the PATRIOT Act.

Every hour of the day, America depends on the work of vigilant law enforcement and intelligence personnel. These men and women have difficult and dangerous jobs, and they are performing superbly. In their

mission of security, they are joined by members of the Armed Forces who are taking the fight to our enemies overseas. The American people are grateful to all who defend us, and we will continue to give them every tool and resource they need to keep America safe.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 2:31 p.m. on April 16 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 17. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 16 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks on Presenting the Commander in Chief's Trophy to the United States Naval Academy Midshipmen April 19, 2004

Welcome. Please be seated. Nice going, you finally got back. [Laughter] I am proud of the Midshipmen of the United States Naval Academy, the proud keepers of the Commander in Chief's Trophy. Welcome. Earning the trophy says a lot about these men. It says you work hard, you set high standards, and you beat Army. [Laughter]

I'm honored that Tony Principi, the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs, has joined us. He is a proud graduate of the Naval Academy.

I appreciate Senator Thad Cochran from Mississippi who is with us, who is on the U.S. Naval Academy Board of Visitors. Senator, thank you for coming. You honor us with your presence.

I appreciate the Governor of Maryland, Bob Ehrlich, joining us today. Thank you for coming, Governor. He claims he was a pretty good linebacker in his day—[laughter]—slow but could hit hard. [Laughter] Also on the U.S. Naval Academy Board of Visitors is the Lieutenant Governor from Maryland, Michael Steele. Thank you for coming, Michael. Glad you all are here.

Gordon England is with us, the Secretary of the Navy. He reminded me of the time I went to the Army-Navy game in the fall of 2001. It was a miserable experience for the Naval Academy. My, times have

changed. [Laughter] Mr. Secretary, I'll give you some of the credit.

General Hagee, Commandant of the Marine Corps, is with us. General, thanks for coming. I told the General coming in, his troops in Iraq are performing brilliantly. Thank God we're on the same side.

I want to thank Vice Admiral Rodney Rempt, the Naval Academy Superintendent, for joining us today. Coach Johnson, Paul Johnson, a winning coach, is with us. Coach, appreciate you being here. Proud you're here.

As I said, it's been a while since the Commander in Chief's Trophy was at the Academy. It turns out that the last time it was there—when Ronald Reagan was the President. And a lot of the players on this team weren't even born. [Laughter] That's a long time ago for them. [Laughter] It's not so long ago for some of us older fellows.

I—here's what I found interesting about this team and its captain, Greg Cooper, that the night after you beat Army, Cooper flies to Colorado Springs to pick up the trophy. That's called desire. [Laughter] It turns out that Cooper wasn't sure how big the trophy was and that it was too heavy for the flight home. So he rents a truck and drives the trophy from Colorado Springs to Annapolis. When we recruit the