

Remarks Honoring the 2008 Super Bowl Champion New York Giants April 30, 2008

The President. Welcome. It's my honor. Thank you for coming. Please be seated. Welcome to the White House. It's an honor to recognize the Super Bowl champs, the New York football Giants.

I appreciate you all coming. Mr. Vice President, thank you for joining me up here as we welcome the Giants to the South Lawn. I want to thank John Mara and his mom Ann, who's joined us; Steve Tisch and his mother Joan; of course, their head football coach, Tom Coughlin, and his wife Judy. He got the extension; that's a good thing. [Laughter] Makes it a little easier to be standing up here. [Laughter]

I appreciate all the players who have joined us today and the coaches and the personnel that make the club function.

I thank members of my administration who have joined us. I welcome Members of the Congress, Senate, particularly from New Jersey and New York, State elected officials from New Jersey and New York—that's a good thing to be here.

I welcome those from Walter Reed who have joined us today. And of course, welcome to all the Giants fans. [Applause] Behave yourselves. [Laughter]

First, it's good to be up here with the Super Bowl MVP, Eli Manning. We have a few things in common. [Applause] We got some things in common. Eli has a father and a brother in the same business he's in. [Laughter] Sometimes the press are skeptical. [Laughter] And he just survived a big wedding. So I asked him coming in, "Any advice?" He said, "I wasn't father of the bride." [Laughter]

New York Giants have one of the great storied histories of—in pro football. And this club carried on that great tradition. And perhaps—many would say this is probably the most exciting chapter ever written in the New York Giants' football history. After all, you started off the season and

allowed 80 points in the first two games. That would be called a lousy start. [Laughter] And then you're playing the Redskins—

Audience members. Boo!

The President. It's okay, you know. [Laughter] And the game wasn't going very well, as I recall. And then you rallied, and you won.

And a lot of the people that know something about football said that was the turning point. And the winning streak—what's interesting is—six straight games, as I understand, on two different continents. You also had a great road record. I don't know if the fans understand this, but you piled up more away-game victories than—in NFL history. And the good news is, your fans still loved you at home. [Laughter] They really loved you.

You got into the—you secured a wild card. And it was interesting, in the last game of the season, a lot of folks thought the coach would just kind of lay down and let New England cruise to a perfect season—I remember a lot of people speculating about that last game of the season—and yet you didn't, Coach. Your team didn't win on the scoreboard, but you won the hearts of a lot of Americans for contesting the game. And you also—your team—[applause]—and it clearly gave your team some self-confidence, because you stormed through Tampa Bay and then went into Dallas—

Audience members. [Applause]

The President. Okay, look, I'm a good sport. [Laughter] We're going to send Jessica Simpson to the Democrat National Convention. [Laughter]

Packers was one of the coldest games in NFL history. You lit up the field like you were on fire. And Lawrence Tynes, who's with us here, came through with a 47-yard fieldgoal in overtime, putting you

in Super Bowl XLII. Yes, I knew you were going to make it. [*Laughter*] I don't know if everybody else did, but I knew you were going to make it. And you knew you were going to make it.

Lawrence Tynes. I did.

The President. And all of a sudden, a 0–2 team was about to square off against the 18–0 New England Patriots. Now they've got a lot of experts in our society—Coach, you might know what I'm talking about—and in looking back, it's hard to find many of the experts who predicted a Giants victory. Most people were calling it a cakewalk; you know, be prepared to turn off your television sets early because this isn't much of a game you're about to watch; when, in fact, it turned out to be really one of the great, legendary football games in our country's history.

First of all, your defense was awesome, Coach, and they deserve a lot of credit. And so does your offense. It was the 83-yard comeback drive in the fourth quarter that a lot of folks will remember for a long time coming. Eli Manning started one of the great plays called the Great Escape; it ended on David Tyree's helmet. [*Laughter*] So, like, I'm going to take you in the White House, and you can show me how you did it. [*Laughter*] And then Plaxico Burress, of course, caught the winning touchdown with 35 seconds left.

This is a great team that worked together. You won the Vince Lombardi Trophy, and you won the deep gratitude of the 1972 Miami Dolphins. [*Laughter*]

First of all, you've won the gratitude of your fans. New York Giants fans love these Giants. So we congratulate you all, but we're also congratulating your families, your loved ones, those who make the locker room work, the trainers, the people who clean up after you. We want to—we know you played for some—ones who lost loved ones, like the Tyrees and the Maras and the Tisches. I know you loved going down the Canyon of Heroes for the first ticker-tape parade since before the attacks of Sep-

tember the 11th, 2001. And I guarantee you, there was a lot of New York firefighters and police who were really thrilled to see you.

I like the fact that this team, the coaches and players, offer free camps for kids. Some of them run life-changing ministries. They raise money for children who have cancer. This is a team that supports the Ronald McDonald House and the United Way, promotes family literacy through Read Across America. It's even helped run a charter school program in inner-city Newark.

I appreciate the fact, Coach, that you and your players support our troops, but more importantly, our troops appreciate the fact that you support them. You've come to know the story like I have of Lieutenant Colonel Greg Gadson. He lost both of his legs while in Iraq. He first met up with the Giants in September, when you invited him to address a pregame meeting that helped inspire the comeback over the Redskins.

Then you saw him in Tampa, when he was trying out his legs that he walked on today to be on the stage with you. He was an honorary captain in Green Bay. He never left the sidelines, despite the 23-below windchill. In your last team meeting before the Super Bowl, Lieutenant Colonel Greg Gadson urged you to have pride in your team and believe in yourselves, which is exactly what you did.

I'm proud to be on the stage with this man. To me, it's a symbol of your respect for our country and your patriotism that you would let Greg Gadson be a part of this team. He has got the Purple Heart and three Bronze Stars, and now he's got a Super Bowl ring minted for a true "giant."

So while you're still on your feet: The Super Bowl New York Giants.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:14 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his

remarks, he referred to John K. Mara, president and chief executive officer, Steven Tisch, co-owner, Lawrence Tynes, kicker, and Plaxico Burress, wide receiver, New York Giants; E. Archibald Manning III, father, and Peyton Manning, brother, of Eli Man-

ning, quarterback, New York Giants; and entertainer Jessica Simpson. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of New York Giants head coach Tom Coughlin.

Statement on North Korea Freedom Week *April 30, 2008*

Laura and I send greetings to all those observing North Korea Freedom Week. I am deeply concerned about the grave human rights conditions in North Korea, especially the denial of universal freedoms of speech, press, religion, assembly, and association and restrictions on freedom of movement and workers' rights. I have met in the Oval Office with some of the brave individuals who have escaped from that country. I am deeply concerned by the stories of divided families, harsh conditions,

and suffering. The United States stands with the North Korean people in their call for freedom. We believe it is every person's basic right to live in freedom and dignity. We will continue to support the North Korean people as they strive to achieve the rights and freedoms to which they are entitled as human beings. We look forward to the moment when we can celebrate the blessings of liberty with the North Korean people.

Message to the Congress Reporting on Blocking Property and Prohibiting Certain Transactions Related to Burma *April 30, 2008*

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) (IEEPA), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order (the "order") that takes additional steps with respect to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13047 of May 20, 1997, and expanded in Executive Order 13448 of October 18, 2007.

In 1997, the United States put in place a prohibition on new investment in Burma in response to the Government of Burma's large scale repression of the democratic opposition in that country. On July 28, 2003, those sanctions were expanded by steps

taken in Executive Order 13310, which contained prohibitions implementing sections 3 and 4 of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-61) (the "Act") and supplemented that Act with additional restrictions. On October 18, 2007, I determined that the Government of Burma's continued repression of the democratic opposition in Burma, manifested at the time in the violent response to peaceful demonstrations, the commission of human rights abuses related to political repression, and engagement in public corruption, including by diverting or misusing Burmese public assets or by misusing public authority, warranted an expansion of the