

May 27 / Administration of Barack Obama, 2010

Jewish Americans continue to help us uphold each and every day.

So thank you. God bless you, and may God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:27 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks,

he referred to former Brooklyn/Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Sanford “Sandy” Koufax; Rabbi Alysa Stanton of Congregation Bayt Shalom in Greenville, NC; and entertainer Regina I. Spektor. The related proclamation of April 30 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the Death of John W. Finn

May 27, 2010

Michelle and I were deeply saddened to learn of the passing of retired Navy Lt. John William Finn, the oldest living Medal of Honor recipient. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and loved ones at this time. Lt. Finn received the medal for the heroism he displayed during the attack on Pearl Harbor. Under a torrent of gunfire, Lt. Finn defended his fellow sailors, holding his position for 2 hours until the skies went quiet, despite suffering serious wounds. Like many of those who have served our Nation with such distinction, Lt. Finn often said that he never intend-

ed to be a hero. Instead, he felt that he was simply doing his duty. But his modesty does not diminish his extraordinary conduct or the incredible example he has set for our men and women in uniform and for all Americans. I had the privilege of meeting Lt. Finn last year, and I was struck by his warmth and humility. As we mark Memorial Day, and pay tribute to all who have fallen in defense of this Nation, the passing of Lt. Finn is a reminder of the sacrifices that generations have made to preserve the freedoms we hold dear.

Statement on Congressional Action on the Department of Defense’s “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” Policy

May 27, 2010

I have long advocated that we repeal “don’t ask, don’t tell,” and I am pleased that both the House of Representatives and the Senate Armed Services Committee took important bipartisan steps toward repeal tonight. Key to successful repeal will be the ongoing Defense Department review, and as such I am grateful that the amendments offered by Representative Patrick Murphy and Senators Joseph Lieberman and Carl Levin that passed today will ensure that the Department of Defense can

complete that comprehensive review that will allow our military and their families the opportunity to inform and shape the implementation process. Our military is made up of the best and bravest men and women in our Nation, and my greatest honor is leading them as Commander in Chief. This legislation will help make our Armed Forces even stronger and more inclusive by allowing gay and lesbian soldiers to serve honestly and with integrity.