

Thanks for your time. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:45 a.m. at Central Piedmont Community College. In his remarks, he referred to Firoz Peera, chair, World Affairs Council of Charlotte; P. Anthony Zeiss, president, Central Piedmont Community College, and his wife, Beth; Mayor Patrick McCrory of Charlotte, NC; Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, senior Al Qaida leader responsible for planning the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack, who was captured in Pakistan on March 1, 2003; Ramzi bin al-Shibh, an Al Qaida operative suspected of helping to plan the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack, who was captured in Karachi, Pakistan, September 11, 2002; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; Ayman Al-Zawahiri, founder of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and senior Al Qaida associate; President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan; President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; and former Secretary of State Colin L. Powell.

Remarks on Immigration Reform Legislation in Charlotte, North Carolina

April 6, 2006

I'm pleased that Republicans and Democrats in the United States Senate are working together to get a bipartisan comprehensive energy bill—let me start over. I'm pleased that Republicans and Democrats in the United States Senate are working together to get a comprehensive immigration bill.

I want to thank the efforts of those involved in the process. I appreciate their understanding there needs to be a comprehensive immigration bill. I recognize there are still details to be worked out. I would encourage the Members to work hard to get the bill done prior to the upcoming break.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:36 p.m. at the North Carolina Air National Guard base at Charlotte-Douglas International Airport.

Remarks Honoring NCAA Championship Teams

April 6, 2006

Thank you all. Welcome. Please sit down. Thanks for coming. It's an honor to welcome outstanding athletes to the White House. I welcome the athletes and their coaches. We offer our congratulations, and we're thrilled to call you national champs.

I'd like to say, Champions Day is also National Student Athlete Day. It's a chance for us to honor those who excel on the field as well as those in the classroom. I'm especially pleased to welcome the Members of the United States Congress here, Senators and Congressmen from the States that we're honoring. Thank you all for coming. Proud you're here. I know you'll want to congratulate the coaches and the team members after these brief remarks. We want to welcome the school officials who are here.

Today is the day we recognize that millions have competed in the NCAA, but only a few become champs. And the first champs we honor are the mighty Florida Gators, ably coached by Billy Donovan. People are making hand gestures back there.

I want you all to recognize that the Gators started the season with 17 wins in a row, and they ended with 11 in a row—the most important 11 wins of the season. They have a following all over the country, including my brother. [*Laughter*] I'm pleased to welcome you here. I'm also pleased to remind the Gator fans the captain of your team, Adrian Moss, was from Humble, Texas. [*Laughter*]

We have three teams today from the great State of Maryland. Perhaps one theme of Champion's Day is: Fear the Turtle.

I want to welcome Brenda Frese and the University of Maryland women's basketball team. They are the NCAA's newest national champions. Less than 48 hours ago, they were cutting down the nets in Boston. Here they are soaking up the sun in the White House. We welcome you here. We marvel at your dramatic overtime win, and we thank you for being such fantastic athletes.

We also welcome the University of Maryland field hockey team. Missy Meharg is with us as well. These women were the number one seed in the NCAA tournament, and they

win the NCAA championship. We're proud you're here. It probably gave you a special delight to be able to beat your archrival, Duke.

We want to welcome Sasho Cirovski's University of Maryland men's soccer team. The men's soccer team won its first national championship in almost 40 years. I thought it was interesting that on Times Square, the NASDAQ ticker displayed a message that said, "Go Terps," in honor of the soccer team.

I want to welcome the University of Portland women's soccer team, coached by Garrett Smith. Portland came to celebrate the championship here in the year 2003. I think one of them said to herself, "You know, we'll be back, but I'm not sure if old George W. is going to make it." [Laughter] You're back, and so am I. [Laughter] I appreciate the fact that the Pilots dominated the season. They did not lose a single game. I appreciate what Father Beauchamp said—he's the university president—"They are Portland's team. They brought us together as a community." Congratulations, ladies, for the championship.

Jerry Schumacher of the University of Wisconsin men's cross country team is with us today. For 3 years in a row, Wisconsin finished second in the NCAA championships. This year, they broke the pattern, and they come to the White House as national champs. Congratulations.

I welcome Peter Tegen and the Stanford women's cross country team. Stanford won its second women's cross country national championship in the past 3 years. Lauren Centrowitz is with us. She asked me not to mention her name. I kind of mentioned names, but I did it anyway. Sorry, Lauren. And the reason I did is because her dad, Lauren—I mean, Lauren's dad, Matt, won a national cross country championship of his own in 1977. The daughter and the dad on national cross country championship teams—there's nothing better than someone following in a famous father's footsteps. Congratulations to Stanford's team.

Jim McLaughlin and the University of Washington women's volleyball team is here. Congratulations to the Huskies. These women won their first national championship in school history. They weren't supposed to

win. They were the underdog. They had low expectations. It's a good thing, is to keep expectations low, by the way. And they brought home a national championship to the University of Wisconsin. Congratulations to you all. I mean, the University of Washington; I beg your pardon.

Now we've got the University of Auburn men's and women's swimming and diving teams. Coach David Marsh is with us. Both the men's swimming and diving teams earned national championships. That's rare to do. And I welcome both teams with us today. It kind of says that, in a year of swimming, this is the year of War Eagle. I want you all to know that the women's swimming team kindly brought me a—[laughter].

[At this point, the President held up a Speedo swimsuit.]

Awfully thoughtful of you. [Laughter] I'm not going to wear it. [Laughter]

I welcome the University of Colorado ski team, under Richard Rokos. This is a coed team. The Colorado ski team's motto was "One team, one goal," and you achieved your goal by winning the National Championship. We welcome you. Your coach is an interesting story. He escaped Communist Czechoslovakia. He's a proud American coaching a wonderful group of athletes. Congratulations, and we're glad you're here.

The university—the United States Military Academy men's rifle team is with us. I congratulate the team here today. This is West Point's first championship in any varsity sport in a half a century. Congratulations to you. If you happen to be walking around and run into the Vice President—[laughter]—you might give him a few pointers. [Laughter] In the meantime, I look forward to coming to see you as your—as the graduation speaker here in May.

The thing I like about these teams is, they're not only great athletes but they also are champs off the field. When you think about the folks here from West Point, they decided to serve our country in a time of war. And I want to thank you for your contributions to our country.

Florida basketball players spent Thanksgiving morning serving hot meals at a local shelter. The Maryland basketball players

raised money to support breast cancer research. The Maryland field hockey players worked as counselors in summer camps for girls. They served as mentors. The Maryland soccer players helped the school canned food drive. The Portland soccer players arranged for the university to donate money for hurricane relief for every goal the team scored. The Wisconsin cross country runners participated in the Frostbite Roadrace to raise money for the local YMCA. The Stanford cross country team visited schools in East Palo Alto to talk about the importance of education and staying off drugs. The Washington volleyball players visited children in hospital. The Auburn swimmers helped raise funds for hurricane relief. The Colorado skiers participated in the Read With the Buff Program in elementary schools. What I'm telling you is, we've not only got fine athletes with us; we've got fine Americans with us. Thank you for serving your communities.

Welcome to the White House. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:05 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Billy Donovan, head coach, University of Florida men's basketball team; Brenda Frese, head coach, University of Maryland women's basketball team; Missy Meharg, head coach, University of Maryland women's field hockey team; Sasho Cirovski, head coach, University of Maryland men's soccer team; Garrett Smith, head coach, University of Portland women's soccer team; Jerry Schumacher, head coach, University of Wisconsin men's cross country team; Peter Tegen, head coach, and Lauren Centrowitz, team member, Stanford University women's cross country team; Jim McLaughlin, head coach, University of Washington women's volleyball team; David Marsh, head coach, Auburn University women's and men's swimming and diving teams; and Richard Rokos, head coach, University of Colorado women's and men's ski teams.

Proclamation 7997—Education and Sharing Day, U.S.A., 2006

April 6, 2006

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

A quality education is the cornerstone of a hopeful tomorrow for all our children. Edu-

cation and Sharing Day highlights our strong support for our young people as they pursue lives of learning, prepare to become responsible leaders, and work to reach their full potential.

On Education and Sharing Day, we remember the efforts of Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, the Lubavitcher Rebbe, who promoted the importance of education and ethical teachings to every student's future. He sought to improve lives and communities through a vast network of education and outreach centers and social service programs around the world. We continue to be inspired by the Rebbe's good works and all those who dedicate their time, talents, and energy to helping our next generation grow into caring, responsible adults. Through devotion to faith, family, education, and community, we can continue building a better and more compassionate society.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 9, 2006, as Education and Sharing Day, U.S.A. I call upon government officials, educators, volunteers, and all the people of the United States to reach out to young people and work to create a better, brighter, and more hopeful future for all.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fifth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

George W. Bush

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