

your fullback, Adam Ballard. He gained 134 yards against Air Force. When he was named MVP, he wisely—wisely—gave the credit to his offensive line. Smart move, Adam. [Laughter]

You know, it's interesting—how would you like to be the punter on the Navy team who went full—two full games without showing up on the field? [Laughter] Veteto—Greg is his first name—was, like, the punter on the team, and for two games in a row, he was never used. And yet I think he didn't mind.

The team had a special leader in Eddie Martin. I don't know if the country knows this, but he was diagnosed with cancer last year. He didn't play any games this year, but he always led the team out of the locker room for every home game. And so, Eddie, I appreciate the inspiration you've provided for your team and for the Academy. I know you're fighting a brave battle, and a lot of people will pray for your full recovery.

When you signed up for the Naval Academy, you signed up for more than playing football. I'm glad Coach Johnson—I'm sure Coach Johnson was glad that you said, "I want to be a football player at the Naval Academy." But you signed up to become officers in the finest military the world has ever known. And my job is to keep it that way, and I will. But you can't have the finest military the world has ever known without men and women who volunteer to wear the uniform, just like you've done.

You volunteered after September the 11th, 2001. That's a remarkable decision you have made. I vowed after September 11th, 2001, that I would use the full power of our Government to protect the American people from harm, and I meant what I said. And therefore, anybody who signed up afterwards knew what they were getting into. It's a remarkable country when people make such a noble decision to serve their country in a time of war. And I'm proud to be the Commander in Chief of such decent, honorable, sacrificing men and women.

The lessons you have learned on the football field and at the Naval Academy will serve you well on the battlefield. You learned the importance of teamwork and leadership and strong personal character. And you're going to put those qualities to the highest possible

use, and that is to protect the American people and to lay the foundation of peace for generations to come.

The Navy and Marine Corps are on the frontline of fighting and winning the war against the extremists, radicals who would do this country harm. Every day we're on the offense against an enemy. My attitude is, I would rather defeat them over there so we do not have to face them here. And the Marine Corps and the Navy are helping to lead that charge. The sailors and marines on the high sea are sending a clear message to the world that we stand for strength, and we stand for peace.

Former Navy football players have distinguished themselves in the line of duty. Marine First Lieutenant Brian Stann comes to mind, the class of '03. He won the Silver Star. We also have some of the former Navy football players lose their lives: Ron Winchester of '01; J.P. Blecksmith of the class of '03; another gave his life in flight over the Pacific, Navy Lieutenant Commander Scott Zellem, the class of '91. The United States of America will not forget their sacrifices. We will complete our missions so that their sacrifices will not have gone in vain.

It is such an honor to welcome such fine men to the Rose Garden. I'm proud to be standing with you. I thank you for your service to our country. I appreciate the fact that you're good football players. But, more importantly, I appreciate the fact that you're good Americans.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:35 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Vice Adm. Rodney P. Rempt, USN, superintendent, U.S. Naval Academy; and Kaiponua Keheaku-Enhada, quarterback, Kennan Little, strong safety, and Eddie Martin, running back, U.S. Naval Academy football team.

Message on the Observance of Passover, 5767

April 2, 2007

*This day shall be for you a memorial day,
and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord;*

throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast.

Exodus 12:14

I send greetings to those celebrating Passover, beginning at sundown on April 2.

During Passover, Jews around the world gather with family and friends to remember God's deliverance of the Children of Israel from bondage more than 3,000 years ago. To celebrate their Exodus from Egypt, the Jewish people commemorate the Passover each year by reading the Haggadah, singing traditional songs, and sharing the Seder meal. Through these traditions, the Jewish people express their gratitude for God's redemption and the blessings of freedom, and they ensure that their heritage is passed on to future generations. Passover is a time of hope and faith and a time to reflect on God's boundless love and endless mercy.

Laura and I send our best wishes for a blessed Passover.

George W. Bush

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Executive Order 13428—Renaming a National Forest in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico

April 2, 2007

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including section 1 of the Act of June 4, 1897 (16 U.S.C. 473) and section 1 of the Act of July 1, 1902 (48 U.S.C. 746), and to rename the Caribbean National Forest in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. The Caribbean National Forest in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico is hereby renamed the "El Yunque National Forest."

Sec. 2. Previous references to the Caribbean National Forest in Executive Order 7059-A of June 4, 1935, and Executive Order 10992 of February 9, 1962, shall, for all purposes hereafter, be deemed references to the "El Yunque National Forest."

Sec. 3. This order shall be implemented in accordance with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations.

Sec. 4. This order is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, agencies, entities, officers, employees, or agents thereof, or any other person.

George W. Bush

The White House,
April 2, 2007.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:50 a.m., April 3, 2007]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on April 4.

The President's News Conference

April 3, 2007

The President. Good morning. I've just had a good meeting with Secretary of Defense Bob Gates and General Pete Pace, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Secretary Gates and General Pace updated me on the deployment of American reinforcements to Iraq.

At this moment, two of the five additional U.S. Army brigades we are sending for this mission are operating in Baghdad. A third brigade is now moving from Kuwait and will be fully operational in Baghdad in the coming weeks. And the remaining two brigades will deploy in April and May. It will be early June before all U.S. forces dedicated to the operation are in place, so this operation is still in its beginning stages.

The reinforcements we've sent to Baghdad are having a impact. They're making a difference. And as more of those reinforcements arrive in the months ahead, their impact will continue to grow. But to succeed in their mission, our troops need Congress to provide the resources, funds, and equipment they need to fight our enemies.

It has now been 57 days since I requested that Congress pass emergency funds for our troops. Instead of passing clean bills that fund our troops on the frontlines, the House and Senate have spent this time debating bills that undercut the troops by substituting