

lives in Massachusetts. And I said, they really are a team with two great guards on offense and defense, but unless Kentucky has a bad day no one will get close in this final tournament. And we all know that Kentucky never had a bad day.

And I think one reason is—maybe the overwhelming reason is—that even though they had fabulous players, many of which never got the individual recognition they deserve, they had a great team. And when you can consistently put 10 people out there that can shoot from anywhere and that can play defense as well as offense—I read, coach, I don't know if this is true, that no one averaged more than 27 minutes a game for the University of Kentucky. If that's true that's a stunning statement about the fact that basketball is still a team sport.

Interestingly enough, I thought about you after I saw the clips from the last Chicago Bulls-Magic game because the Chicago Bulls stars didn't get many points that day, but the team played like a dream. That's the way your guys played all year. And that's why you're sporting that 80 percent winning percentage at Kentucky. And that's why Kentucky won the championship that it deserved. And I hope America will remember a lot not only about the stunning play of Tony Delk, who deserved to be the outstanding player of the tournament, but also about the teamwork that you exhibited all year long. And we congratulate you. Thank you very much.

Now I would like to ask Coach Summitt and Coach Pitino to come up here and say whatever they would like to say and bring whatever players they would like to play, because I know all of you really came to see them. But they are all very welcome at the White House. Thank you.

*[At this point, Ms. Summitt thanked her University of Tennessee women's team for its efforts during the season and congratulated the University of Kentucky men's team for its success. She then introduced players Michelle Marciniak and Latina Davis, who presented gifts to the President and Vice President. Next, Kentucky Coach Rick Pitino congratulated the Tennessee women's team and introduced players Mark Pope and Tony Delk, who presented gifts to the President and Vice President.]*

**The President.** I must say I liked having Mark up here. I was sort of standing in the shade back there—*[laughter]*—away from all the bright lights. It was great. What do you think? Hold it up.

Again, let me say—we're going to take formal little photos now with the two teams, and then we will have a receiving line in the next room, so we will break up, but before we break up, again let me thank these two great universities, these two great States, and the coaches and the teams.

I think that America likes March Madness and likes college basketball as much as anything else because it is both an individual and a team sport. And it has both rules and creativity, discipline and energy. And in that sense, it is sort of a symbol of what's best about our country when things are going well.

And I hope we can all remember that. We all need to live with rules and creativity, with discipline and energy, and we all need to remember that, however good any of us are, we're all on a team. And when we're on the team, the team's doing well, the rest of us, we do pretty well individually.

So thank you all for that, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:45 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Gov. Steve Henry of Kentucky.

### **Remarks at the Funeral Service for Admiral Jeremy M. Boorda**

*May 21, 1996*

Mrs. Boorda, Mike's family, Secretary Christopher and our friends from the diplomatic corps, Secretary Perry, Secretary Dalton, General Shalikashvili, members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, unified commanders in chief, the leadership and Members of Congress who are here, Admiral Johnson and the flag leadership of our Navy, Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Hagan; to our great Navy sailors and all of America's Armed Forces.

Today we come to honor and give thanks for the life of Mike Boorda, a special man who earned a special place in the heart of his Navy and the heart of our Nation. He

lived a life that makes America proud, beginning, of course, with his family. His first words upon becoming Chief of Naval Operations were, "I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for Bettie, and I wouldn't want to be here without her."

To Bettie and David and Edward and Anna, your families, I know there is nothing we can say or do to ease the loss of your husband and father and grandfather. I hope you find comfort in the love and respect and honor that surrounds you today, here in this great cathedral and all throughout our great land.

I thank you for your service to the Navy. I thank you, Bettie. I thank you, Edward and Robert, for your service. I thank you, David, for your work on the radio. I thank you, Anna, for your devotion and for your husband's service; and Edward, for your wife's service. But your entire family is a model, a reflection of Mike Boorda's remarkable love for the Navy, a Navy in which he enlisted when he was just 16.

When he was first in his class at personnelman school in San Diego, he was offered his choice of assignments. Displaying his characteristic compassion, he traded the slot with a friend whose wife was sick and expecting a baby. So the friend got to stay in San Diego and Mike got shipped to Oklahoma. Oklahoma's coastline leaves something to be desired for people designing a career in the Navy. But it turned out to be a first-rate assignment because that's where he met Bettie.

He was commissioned an officer in 1962. Then his star rose fast and bright, with important assignments, from weapons officer aboard destroyers to Chief of Naval Personnel, to commander in chief of our Naval forces in Europe and CINC of the Southern Command. And as all of you know, 2 years ago just last month, he became the very first enlisted man in the entire history of the United States Navy to be the Chief of Naval Operations.

At every turn he led in helping us, our country, live up to its responsibilities as the world's leading force for freedom. He served two tours of duty in Southeast Asia. As has been said today, as commander in chief of Allied Forces in Southern Europe, he or-

dered the first offensive action in NATO's history, the strikes against Bosnian Serb aircraft violating the no-fly zone.

I know his family is especially proud of the role he played and the role that they supported in getting food and relief to the war-torn people of Bosnia. I very much want history to record that Mike Boorda's quiet determination to do all we could do to end the slaughter of the children and the innocents in Bosnia and to bring that awful war to an end had a profound impact on his President and on the policy of this Nation.

Even after he became Chief of Naval Operations, I continued to ask him what he thought we should do to get a reality check on the rest of the advice I was given. And I want to say to all of you what I said to his family this last weekend. It is my belief that perhaps more than any other military officer in this country, Mike Boorda helped to lead us to the point of peace at Dayton. And there are countless thousands of people alive in Bosnia today because of this small man with a big heart, a large vision, and great courage.

He developed new strategies to carry our Navy into the 21st century. He spearheaded projects like theater ballistic missile defense and the arsenal ship that have put our Navy on the cutting edge of technology.

Like all great sailors, he loved the sea, and he loved sea stories. The stories about him are legion and now legend. I'm told that when I nominated him to be the Chief of Naval Operations, he called his mother, Trudy Wallace, from Italy to tell her that he was about to become the CNO. She asked if it was a promotion. He said, "No, I'm already a four-star admiral." She asked if he were going to get a raise. He said, "No, I'll be making a little less, I'm losing my overseas living allowance." She then said, "Well, surely you'll get a bigger house." And he said, "Actually, it will be smaller than the Mediterranean villa we have now."

Apparently, his mother then said, "Well, don't you have enough time in to retire?" [Laughter] Now, every family has got a story like that. Well, he didn't get a raise or a promotion or a bigger house, but he got a bigger job, and he did his mother and his family and his country proud.

Many have said before me that his lasting legacy will be his concern for the sailors. He knew the people were the Navy's greatest asset. And every day he made the Navy stronger because he took good care of its sailors. He loved the bluejackets, and he loved the officers. When he came on board a ship or entered a room of sailors, you could see the twinkle in his eye. Without ever ranting or reprimanding, criticizing or cajoling, he found a way to bring out the best of everyone, seaman or admiral, boatswain mate to battle group commander. Talk to him for just a few moments, and you couldn't help but like him; you couldn't help but love our Navy even more and want to do the best you could for our country.

He also understood that beyond the things that he fought for that were material for our men and women in uniform, beyond the better housing, the better pay, the better time at home with families, there was, above all, the importance of caring and compassion. Last year in Norfolk he spoke to a theater full of sailors. The chief machinist mate nervously stepped up to the microphone and explained his predicament. His wife had recently passed away, and he was left with two young daughters. He told the CNO that he had 6 months before his retirement date, but he would have to reenlist before then, and that meant more sea duty and separation from his children.

Right there at the mike, the CNO asked, "So you want to retire in June?" The MMC meekly replied, "Yes, sir." And right then and there, Admiral Boorda said, "Your request is approved. We'll work it out."

The Admiral used to joke about being small in stature. Shortly after I named him Chief of Naval Operations, we were in the English Channel together, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Normandy invasion on the aircraft carrier the *George Washington*. And I spoke just as I am now, but I had the Presidential lectern there. And when I finished, he was coming up, so I pulled out the stand for him to stand on. And he got up, and he looked at me, and he said, "You know, this is the second time you've elevated me in the last couple of months." [Laughter]

Well, that's the kind of sense of honor he had. Even though he was very small, the rest of us always looked up to him, looked up to his ability somehow to inspire us all to do better, to reach beyond ourselves.

There was reported in the press a Navy photographer's remarks I would like to repeat who said, "Everyone was always asking me to take photos with him. They wanted to stand next to the best thing the Navy had."

Before I came over here today, I visited the Pentagon. And I went to the Navy Command Center to the briefing room that Admiral Boorda began his day in several times a week to thank the staff who worked with him every day and who can't be with us here today because they're on duty, as he would want them to be. And they were encouraged to tell me whatever they want. I thought you might be interested to know what those people who are now over at the Pentagon, doing the work they did every day for Mike Boorda, had to say to me.

One said, "There's a \$5 bill over there on the wall. Do you see it, Mr. President?" I said, "Yes, I did." He said, "That's the bet the Admiral had with the weatherman every time we had a briefing. He always bet against the weatherman. And as of the last bet, he was \$5 ahead." Another said that every time there was a briefing in the morning, he brought in strips of bacon and literally shoved bacon at everyone else. He was always trying to share his bacon and make people laugh about it. A third said that the thing that meant the most to her was that at Christmas-time he literally greeted every single sailor in the Pentagon. No matter how much time it took, that's what he did.

A young sailor in the office said that the thing that moved her most was that she handled his correspondence, and he would never let her send a form letter. Even when someone wrote to him and went outside the chain of command, he would write a gentle letter back explaining what the chain of command was. But it was always a personal letter, so that the young sailor who wrote would know that the CNO really cared and really read the letter.

And finally, one very large African-American sailor from the State of Tennessee stood up in the back of the room and he said, "Mr.

President, how can we ever replace this man?"

In the Bible there is the great story of two warriors and friends, David and Jonathan. When they prepared to part, Jonathan said, "Tomorrow there is a new moon, and thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty." Mike Boorda's seat is empty and how we shall miss his warm smile, his easy manner, his wonderful voice, his sharp wit. What a legacy he has left behind, his ferocious devotion to all of you, his commitment to give all of you a chance to be the very best that you can be, to give our country its chance for true greatness, his deep sense of honor, which no person should ever question.

Now Mike Boorda's ship is moored. His voyage is complete. But I know when the whistle blew and the colors were shifted he was welcomed on the pier by God's loving eternal embrace. May God bless and cherish Admiral Mike Boorda as he blessed and cherished our lives and our beloved America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:26 p.m. at the Washington National Cathedral. In his remarks he referred to Admiral Jay L. Johnson, acting Chief of Naval Operations, and Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy John P. Hagan.

**Proclamation 6900—National Maritime Day, 1996**  
*May 21, 1996*

*By the President of the United States of America*

**A Proclamation**

The men and women of the United States Merchant Marine stand prepared to help our Nation in times of crisis. Their outstanding professionalism and performance have been manifest throughout America's proud history, most recently in the Persian Gulf, Haiti, and Somalia. Today, these brave individuals continue to bring honor to the maritime community and to our country through their steadfast service to our troops in Bosnia.

Those working on and in support of U.S. vessels play another important role by strengthening our economy. Every day, merchant ships carry the Nation's domestic and

foreign commerce, acting as an integral part of our seamless transportation system. Those aboard go to sea to move American goods and materials, to help provide aid and comfort to others around the world, and, when necessary, to defend our interests and to seek international peace.

The Maritime Security Program legislation currently before the Congress will preserve a strong sealift capability so that critical military cargoes can reach American troops and our allies abroad as they strive to fulfill their peacekeeping and humanitarian missions. It will protect American jobs and foster our efforts to expand international trade. In standing behind this important measure, we affirm our commitment to maintaining a strong U.S.-flag presence on the high seas for our continued national security and economic growth.

In recognition of the importance of the U.S. Merchant Marine, the Congress, by a joint resolution approved May 20, 1933, has designated May 22 of each year as "National Maritime Day" and has authorized and requested the President to issue annually a proclamation calling for its observance.

**Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 22, 1996, as National Maritime Day. I urge all Americans to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs and by displaying the flag of the United States at their homes and in their communities. I also request that all ships sailing under the American flag dress ship on that day.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-first day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twentieth.

**William J. Clinton**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., May 22, 1996]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 23.