

Administration of Barack Obama, 2014

Remarks Prior to a Lunch Meeting With Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters

November 7, 2014

The President. Well, I want to thank the leadership of both the House and the Senate for being here for this lunch, postelection. As I said the other night, obviously, Republicans had a good night, and I've congratulated both Mitch McConnell as well as Speaker Boehner for running very strong campaigns.

As I also said the day after the election, what we've seen now for a number of cycles is that the American people just want to see work done here in Washington. I think they're frustrated by the gridlock. They'd like to see more cooperation. And I think all of us have the responsibility, me in particular, to try to make that happen. And so this gives us a good opportunity to explore where we can make progress on behalf of the people who sent us here.

The good news is, today we saw another good set of jobs numbers. We've now had 56 consecutive months of job growth; more than 10.6 million jobs have been created. And the unemployment rate now is down to 5.8 percent.

So business is out there investing, hiring. The economic indicators are going in the right direction. As I travel to Asia for the G-20 summit, I'm going to be able to say that we've actually created more jobs here in the United States than every other advanced country combined. And they notice that we're doing something right here. But what we also know is, is that the American people are still anxious about their futures, and that means that what we can do together to ensure that young people can afford college; what we can do together to rebuild our infrastructure so we're competitive going forward; what we can do together to make sure that we've got a tax system that is fair and simple and unleashes the dynamism of the economy; what we can do together to make sure that we keep the progress that we've been making in reducing the deficit while still making the investments we need to grow.

Those are all going to be areas where I'm very interested in hearing and sharing ideas. And then, the one thing that I've committed to both Speaker Boehner and Leader McConnell is that I am not going to judge ideas based on whether they're Democratic or Republican, I'm going to be judging them based whether or not they work. And I'm confident that they want to produce results as well on behalf of the American people.

So I appreciate their graciousness in coming here. And I'm very much looking forward to giving them some updates on progress we've been making on issues like Ebola and ISIL. There's going to be some specific work that has to get done during the next several weeks before the new Congress commences. And my hope is, is that even as we enter into a new Congress, the previous Congress has the opportunity still to make progress on a whole bunch of fronts, and I'm confident we can get that done.

So thank you again.

Selection Process To Replace Attorney General Eric H. Holder, Jr.

Q. Have you made a decision on an Attorney General, Mr. President?

The President. You're going to be the first to find out, Major [Major Garrett, CBS News], along with everybody else.

Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12: 52 p.m. in the Old Family Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Congressional leaders, meeting with President; Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters :: White House.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Boehner, John A.; McConnell, A. Mitchell.

Subjects: Commerce, international : Group of Twenty (G–20) nations; Congress : Bipartisanship; Congress : House of Representatives :: Speaker; Congress : Members, meetings with President; Congress : Senate :: Minority leader; Diseases :Ebola, domestic response and containment efforts; Economy, national : Economic concerns; Economy, national : Improvement; Economy, national : Strengthening efforts; Elections : 2014 congressional elections; Employment and unemployment : Job creation and growth; Iraq : Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization; Justice, Department of : Attorney General.

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