

President's remarks were streamed live via the whitehouse.gov web site, broadcast live via C-

SPAN, and made available through live satellite feed.

Statement on the G-20 Summit in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania September 8, 2009

Michelle and I look forward to welcoming world leaders to the wonderful city of Pittsburgh on September 24th and 25th, and we thank the people of Pittsburgh and Pennsylvania for opening their city as a showcase to the world.

The Pittsburgh summit is an important opportunity to continue the hard work that we have done in confronting the global economic crisis and renewing prosperity for our people. Together, we will review the progress we have made, assess what more needs to be done, and discuss what we can do together to lay the groundwork for balanced and sustainable economic growth.

Pittsburgh stands as a bold example of how to create new jobs and industries while transitioning to a 21st-century economy. As a city that has transformed itself from the city of steel to a center for high-tech innovation, including green technology, education and training, and research and development, Pittsburgh will provide both a beautiful backdrop and a powerful example for our work.

It's important to note how far we have come in preventing a global economic catastrophe. A year ago, our economy was in a freefall. Some economists were predicting a second great depression. Immediate action was required to rescue the economy. In the United States, we passed an historic Recovery Act that quickly put money in the hands of working families and is putting Americans to work all across the country, including in Pittsburgh and the surrounding area. That includes companies like East Penn Manufacturing, a third-generation family business which is now building batteries for the hybrid, energy-efficient vehicles of the 21st century. That includes Serious Materials manufactur-

ing plant outside of Pittsburgh that was shuttered last year, which is now rehiring the workers who lost their jobs and giving them a new mission producing some of the most energy-efficient windows in the world. And at medical laboratories in Pittsburgh, scientists are making advances in tissue regeneration which will help people across the globe, including our troops wounded in combat in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The steps that we have taken to jump-start growth have also been coordinated with our partners around the world. Industrial production throughout the G-20 has either stabilized or is growing. Global trade is expanding. Stresses in financial markets have significantly abated, and our financial institutions are raising needed capital.

But all of us must remember that our work is far from complete, not when our people are still looking for work. As the leaders of the world's largest economies, we have a responsibility to work together on behalf of sustained growth, while putting in place the rules of the road that can prevent this kind of crisis from happening again. To avoid being trapped in the cycle of bubble and bust, we must set a path for sustainable growth while steering clear of the imbalances of the past. That will be a key part of the G-20 agenda going forward, and the Pittsburgh summit can be an important milestone in our efforts.

In a place known as the city of bridges, we can come together to advance our common interest in a global recovery while turning the page to a truly 21st-century economy. By working with our friends and partners from around the world, the U.S. is ready to help lead this effort in Pittsburgh and beyond.

Remarks at a Memorial Service for Walter L. Cronkite in New York City September 9, 2009

Thank you very much. Thank you.

To Chip, Kathy, and Nancy, who graciously shared your father with a nation that loved him; to Walter's friends, colleagues, proteges, and all who considered him a hero; to the men of the *Intrepid*; to all of you who are gathered here today: I am honored to be here to pay tribute to the life and times of the man who chronicled our time.

I did not know Mr. Cronkite personally, and my regret is made more acute by the stories that have been shared here today. Nor, for that matter, did I know him any better than the tens of millions who turned to him each night in search of the answer to a simple question: What happened today? But like them and like all of you, I have benefited as a citizen from his dogged pursuit of the truth, his passionate defense of objective reporting, and his view that journalism is more than just a profession; it is a public good vital to our democracy.

Even in his early career, Walter Cronkite resisted the temptation to get the story first in favor of getting it right. He wanted to get it first, but he understood the importance of getting it right. During one of his first jobs in Kansas City, Walter's program manager urged him to go on the air reporting a massive blaze—and we just heard how much he loved fires—[laughter]—a massive blaze at city hall that had already claimed lives. When Walter reached for the telephone, his boss asked, "What are you doing? Get on the air!" Walter replied that he was calling the fire department to confirm the story. "You don't need to confirm it," the manager shouted, "my wife's watching the whole thing!" [Laughter]

Needless to say, Walter made the call, and even as the program manager took the air himself to broadcast the unfolding tragedy, Walter discovered that it had been nothing more than a small fire that hadn't resulted in any injuries. He lost his job, but he got the story right.

Walter wasn't afraid to rattle the high and the mighty, but he never dared to compromise his integrity. He got along with elected officials, even if they were wary of one another's

motives. One politician once remarked, "Walter, my friend, you've got to believe me; fully 85 percent of everything I told you today is the absolute truth." [Laughter]

He shared a complicated relationship with Presidents of both parties, who wanted him on their side even as they were convinced that he wasn't. President Johnson called Walter after the evening news from time to time to voice his displeasure over a certain story. But Walter knew that if he was receiving vociferous complaints from both sides, he must be doing his job.

His endless inquisitiveness about our world, I can imagine, came from a mother who sold encyclopedias for a living. As a boy, Walter spent countless hours getting lost within their pages, endlessly sidetracked by new and interesting entries that branched off from one another, fascinated by the world around us and how it worked.

And that's the way he lived his life, with curiosity, exploring our planet, seeking to make sense of it, and explaining it to others. He went everywhere, and he did everything. He raced cars and boats; he traveled everywhere from the Amazon to the Arctic; he plunged 8,000 feet below the sea, trekked 18,000 feet up into the Himalayas, and experienced weightlessness in the upper reaches of our atmosphere, all with one mission: to make it come alive for the rest of us.

And as our world began to change, he helped us understand those changes. He was forever there, reporting through World War and cold war, marches and milestones, scandal and success, calmly and authoritatively telling us what we needed to know. He was a voice of certainty in a world that was growing more and more uncertain. And through it all, he never lost the integrity or the plain-spoken speaking style that he gained growing up in the heartland. He was a familiar and welcome voice that spoke to each and every one of us personally.

So it may have seemed inevitable that he was named the most trusted man in America. But here's the thing: That title wasn't