

why so many of you entered the profession in the first place, that's why the standards he set for journalists still stand, and that's why he loved and valued all of you. But we loved and valued Walter not only as the rarest of men, but as an indispensable pillar of our society.

He's reunited with his beloved Betsy now, watching the stories of this century unfold with boundless optimism, every so often punctuating the air with a gleeful "Oh, boy!" [Laughter] We are grateful to him for altering

and illuminating our time and for the opportunity he gave to us to say that, yes, we too were there.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:37 p.m. in the Avery Fisher Hall at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. In his remarks, he referred to Walter L. "Chip" Cronkite III, son, and M. Kathleen Cronkite and Nancy E. Cronkite, daughters, of Walter L. Cronkite.

## Message to the Senate Transmitting the Protocol Amending the France-United States Taxation Convention September 9, 2009

*To the Senate of the United States:*

I transmit herewith, for the advice and consent of the Senate to its ratification, the Protocol Amending the Convention between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the French Republic for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital, signed at Paris on August 21, 1994, as Amended by the Protocol signed on December 8, 2004, signed January 13, 2009, at Paris, together with a related Memorandum of Understanding, signed January 13, 2009 (the "proposed Protocol"). I also transmit for the information of the Senate the report of the Department of State, which includes an overview of the proposed Protocol.

The proposed Protocol provides for the elimination of withholding taxes on certain cross-border direct dividend payments and on cross-border royalty payments.

The proposed Protocol also provides for mandatory arbitration of cases that the competent authorities of the countries have been unable to resolve after a reasonable period of time. The proposed Protocol contains a comprehensive provision designed to prevent "treaty shopping," which is the inappropriate use of a tax treaty by third-country residents. It provides for the exchange of information between tax authorities of the two countries to facilitate the administration of each country's tax laws.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the proposed Protocol and give its advice and consent to ratification.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,  
September 9, 2009.

## Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on Health Care Reform September 9, 2009

*The President.* Madam Speaker, Vice President Biden, Members of Congress, and the American people: When I spoke here last winter, this Nation was facing the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. We were losing an average of 700,000 jobs per month,

credit was frozen, and our financial system was on the verge of collapse.

Now, as any American who is still looking for work or a way to pay their bills will tell you, we are by no means out of the woods. A full and vibrant recovery is still many months