

that we have almost a balanced account between Korea and the United States. Of course when Korea was a closed economy with protectionist measures, there were some trade imbalances. But compared to countries like China and Japan, the trade imbalances between our two countries is very miniscule.

And President Obama, as he mentioned in his brief remarks just now, he said that all different economies should be judged on their own merits, and free trade agreements is not an exception. And he and I had very candid and frank discussions and forward-looking discussions between us today during the meeting on the—how to move the KORUS FTA forward. And I very much appreciate President Obama for engaging in such discussions.

In the United States, I think, there is a misperception that KORUS FTA, once it is passed, that it is somehow going to only benefit Korea and be detrimental to American consumers, which is not true. Of course there are economic perspectives to take into consideration, but there are also a much bigger strategic perspective to this. And I believe overall this is beneficial for both Korea and the United States.

Of course each industry will be impacted differently. Here in Korea, the service sector, the agricultural sector, they are completely against the passage of the KORUS FTA because they lag far behind their American counterparts. But for us, the Korean Government,

we view the KORUS FTA in a more comprehensive manner. Overall, it is beneficial for us in the long term.

If there is any problems in the automobile sector, like you asked, then we are ready to resolve this issue. There are other automobile manufacturers, like in the Europeans. I mean that, as we all know, they produce a tremendous number of automobiles, and we have a free trade agreement with the 27-member European Union, and we have an agreement which has been signed. And we are engaging more and more with our European partners.

And so I think we should have more opportunities to talk about these issues with each other. And on this issue, President Obama and I talked about, in detail, again, how to move forward this agreement. I believe that, again, this is beneficial for both Korea and the United States.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 12:35 p.m. at Blue House. In his remarks, he referred to Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Yu Myung-hwan and Minister of National Defense Kim Tae-young of South Korea; and Special Representative for North Korea Policy Stephen W. Bosworth. President Lee and a reporter spoke in Korean, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 25.

## Remarks at the Thanksgiving Turkey Presentation Ceremony November 25, 2009

All right. Happy Thanksgiving, everybody. Welcome to the White House. On behalf of Sasha and Malia and myself, we're thrilled to see you. I want to thank Walter Pelletier, chairman of the National Turkey Federation, and Joel Brandenberger, its president, for donating this year's turkey. His name is Courage. He traveled here from Goldsboro, North Carolina, where he was raised under Walter's own precious care.

*[At this point, the turkey gobbled.]*

There you go—*[laughter]*—Walter.

Now, the National Turkey Federation has been bringing its finest turkeys to the White House for more than 50 years. I'm told President Eisenhower and Johnson actually ate their turkeys. *[Laughter]* You can't fault them for that; that's a good-looking bird *[Laughter]* President Kennedy was even given a turkey with a sign around its neck that said, "Good eatin', Mr. President." But he showed mercy, and he said, "Let's keep him going." And 20 years ago this Thanksgiving, the first President

Bush issued the first official Presidential pardon for a turkey.

Now, today I am pleased to announce that thanks to the interventions of Malia and Sasha—because I was planning to eat this sucker—[*laughter*]—Courage will also be spared this terrible and delicious fate. [*Laughter*] Later today, he'll head to Disneyland, where he'll be grand marshal of tomorrow's parade. And just in case Courage can't fulfill his responsibilities, Walter brought along another turkey, Carolina, as an alternate, the stand-in.

Now, later this afternoon, Michelle, Malia, Sasha, and I will take two of their less fortunate brethren to Martha's Table, an organization that does extraordinary work to help folks here in DC who need it the most. And I want to thank Jaindl's Turkey Farm in Orefield, Pennsylvania, for donating those dressed birds for dinner. So today, all told, I believe it's fair to say that we have saved or created four turkeys. [*Laughter*]

You know, there are certain days that remind me of why I ran for this office. And then there are moments like this—[*laughter*]—where I pardon a turkey and send it to Disneyland. [*Laughter*] But every single day, I am thankful for the extraordinary responsibility that the American people have placed in me. I am humbled by the privilege that it is to serve them and the tremendous honor it is to serve as Commander in Chief of the finest military in the world, and I want to wish a happy Thanksgiving to every servicemember at home or in harm's way. We're proud of you, and we are thinking of you, and we're praying for you.

When my family and I sit around the table tomorrow, just like millions of other families across America, we'll take time to give our thanks for many blessings. But we'll also remember this is a time when so many members of our American family are hurting. There's no question this has been a tough year for America. We're at war. Our economy is emerging from

an extraordinary recession into recovery. But there's a long way to go and a lot of work to do.

In more tranquil times, it's easy to notice our many blessings. It's even easier to take them for granted. But in times like these, they resonate a bit more powerfully. When President Lincoln set aside the National Day of Thanksgiving for the first time, to celebrate America's "fruitful fields," "healthful skies," and the "strength and vigor" of the American people, it was in the midst of the Civil War, just when the future of our very Union was most in doubt. So think about that. When times were darkest, President Lincoln understood that our American blessings shined brighter than ever.

This is an era of new perils and new hardships. But we are, as ever, a people of endless compassion, boundless ingenuity, limitless strength. We're the heirs to a hard-earned history and stewards of a land of God-given beauty. We are Americans. And for all this, we give our humble thanks to our predecessors, to one another, and to God.

So on this quintessentially American holiday, as we give thanks for what we've got, let's also give back to those who are less fortunate. As we give thanks for our loved ones, let us remember those who can't be with us. And as we give thanks for our security, let's in turn thank those who've sacrificed to make it possible, wherever they may be.

Now, before this turkey gets too nervous that Bo will escape and screw up this pardon—[*laughter*]—or before I change my mind, I hereby pardon Courage so that he can live out the rest of his days in peace and tranquility in Disneyland.

And to every American, I want to wish you, on behalf of myself, Malia, Sasha, and Michelle, the happiest of Thanksgivings. Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:41 a.m. on the North Portico at the White House.

## Statement on Native American Heritage Day November 25, 2009

Tomorrow, Americans everywhere will observe our National Day of Thanksgiving. It will

be a time of celebration and reflection as we gather with family and friends to count our