

What's being tested here is not just our ability to solve this one problem, but our ability to solve any problem. Right now Americans are understandably despairing about whether partisanship and the undue influence of special interests in Washington will make it impossible for us to deal with the big challenges that face our country. They want to see us focus not on scoring points, but on solving problems; not on the next election, but on the next generation. That's what we can do, and that is what we must

do when we come together for this bipartisan health care meeting next week.

Thank you, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 6:05 p.m. on February 17 in the State Dining Room at the White House for broadcast on February 20. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 19, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on February 20. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on the Death of Alexander M. Haig, Jr. *February 20, 2010*

Today we mourn the loss of Alexander Haig, a great American who served our country with distinction. General Haig exemplified our finest warrior-diplomat tradition of those who dedicate their lives to public service. He enjoyed a

remarkable and decorated career, rising to become a four-star general and serving as Supreme Allied Commander of Europe before also serving as Secretary of State. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family.

Remarks at the National Governors Association Dinner *February 21, 2010*

Thank you, everybody. Thank you. Please, everybody have a seat. Have a seat.

Good evening, and welcome back to the White House. For some of you, this is the first time; welcome. I want to begin by acknowledging your outstanding chairs of this extraordinary organization: Jim Douglas of Vermont and Joe Manchin of West Virginia. Thank you so much for the great work that you guys do each and every day.

I also want to let everybody know that this is not too stiff of an affair—[*laughter*—because last year Ed Rendell led a conga line. [*Laughter*] We still have photographs of some of you that we may use at any point. [*Laughter*]

But it's interesting to think about where we were last year. Last year, we were in the midst of what was the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. Each of you in your own respective States, I think, saw how brutal it was on so many families: hundreds of thousands of people losing their jobs every month; home foreclosures; small businesses having to shut

down, unable to make payroll; and people not sure about the future and unclear about whether or not we were going to be able to pull ourselves out.

And I think that it is worth reminding ourselves of how urgent the situation was, and it's worth this organization taking some extraordinary credit for helping to right the ship, working, I know, with my Vice President, Joe Biden, who's done outstanding work. We took some swift and decisive action, and because of that swift and decisive action, not only were folks in your States able to get unemployment insurance and get COBRA at a much cheaper rate, not only were you able to fill some of those budget holes that I know are still tough and I suspect we'll be talking about tomorrow, but we also started to begin entire new industries and start moving towards a extraordinary future through some of the infrastructure projects and research and development, clean energy projects that are—so many of you have been leaders of.