

in the first place? [Laughter] And maybe things can't change after all. And when you do something courageous, it turns out, sometimes you may be attacked. And sometimes the very people you thought you were trying to help may be angry at you and shout at you. And you say to yourself, maybe that thing that I started with has been lost.

But you know what? Every once in a while—every once in a while a moment comes where you have a chance to vindicate all those best hopes that you had about yourself, about this country, where you have a chance to make good on those promises that you made in all those town meetings and all those constituency breakfasts and all that traveling through the district, all those people who you looked in the eye, and you said, “You know what, you're right, the system's not working for you, and I'm going to make it a little bit better.”

And this is one of those moments. This is one of those times where you can honestly say to yourself, “Doggone it, this is exactly why I came here. This is why I got into politics. This is why I got into public service. This is why I've made those sacrifices. Because I believe so

deeply in this country, and I believe so deeply in this democracy, and I'm willing to stand up even when it's hard, even when it's tough.”

Every single one of you have made that promise, not just to your constituents, but to yourself. And this is the time to make true on that promise. We are not bound to win, but we are bound to be true. We are not bound to succeed, but we are bound to let whatever light we have shine. We have been debating health care for decades. It has now been debated for a year. It is in your hands. It is time to pass health care reform for America, and I am confident that you are going to do it tomorrow.

Thank you very much, House of Representatives. Let's get this done.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:53 p.m. in the auditorium at the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center. In his remarks, he referred to former White House Deputy Chief of Staff Karl C. Rove; former Sens. Thomas A. Daschle, Robert J. Dole, and Howard H. Baker, Jr. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Videotaped Remarks on the Observance of Nowruz March 20, 2010

Today I want to extend my best wishes to all who are celebrating Nowruz in the United States and around the world. On this New Year's celebration, friends and family have a unique opportunity to reflect on the year gone by, to celebrate their time together, and to share in their hopes for the future.

One year ago, I chose this occasion to speak directly to the people and leaders of the Islamic Republic of Iran and to offer a new chapter of engagement on the basis of mutual interests and mutual respect. I did so with no illusions. For three decades, the United States and Iran have been alienated from one another. Iran's leaders have sought their own legitimacy through hostility to America, and we continue to have serious differences on many issues.

I said last year that the choice for a better future was in the hands of Iran's leaders. That remains true today. Together with the interna-

tional community, the United States acknowledges your right to peaceful nuclear energy; we insist only that you adhere to the same responsibilities that apply to other nations. We are familiar with your grievances from the past; we have our own grievances as well, but we are prepared to move forward. We know what you're against; now tell us what you're for.

For reasons known only to them, the leaders of Iran have shown themselves unable to answer that question. They have refused good faith proposals from the international community. They have turned their backs on a pathway that would bring more opportunity to all Iranians and allow a great civilization to take its rightful place in the community of nations. Faced with an extended hand, Iran's leaders have shown only a clenched fist.

Last June, the world watched with admiration as Iranians sought to exercise their universal right to be heard. But tragically, the aspirations of the Iranian people were also met with a clenched fist, as people marching silently were beaten with batons, political prisoners were rounded up and abused, absurd and false accusations were leveled against the United States and the West, and people everywhere were horrified by the video of a young woman killed in the street.

The United States does not meddle in Iran's internal affairs. Our commitment, our responsibility is to stand up for those rights that should be universal to all human beings. That includes the right to speak freely, to assemble without fear, the right to the equal administration of justice, and to express your views without facing retribution against you or your families.

I want the Iranian people to know what my country stands for. The United States believes in the dignity of every human being and an international order that bends the arc of history in the direction of justice, a future where Iranians can exercise their rights, participate fully in the global economy, and enrich the world through educational and cultural exchanges beyond Iran's borders. That is the future that we seek. That is what America is for.

That is why, even as we continue to have differences with the Iranian Government, we will sustain our commitment to a more hopeful future for the Iranian people. For instance, by increasing opportunities for educational exchange

es so that Iranian students can come to our colleges and universities and through our efforts to ensure that Iranians can have access to the software and Internet technologies that will enable them to communicate with each other and with the world without fear of censorship.

Finally, let me be clear: We are working with the international community to hold the Iranian Government accountable because they refuse to live up to their international obligations. But our offer of comprehensive diplomatic contacts and dialogue stands. Indeed, over the course of the last year, it is the Iranian Government that has chosen to isolate itself and to choose a self-defeating focus on the past over a commitment to build a better future.

Last year, I quoted the words of the poet Saadi, who said, "The children of Adam are limbs to each other, having been created of one essence." I still believe that; I believe it with every fiber of my being. And even as we have differences, the Iranian Government continues to have the choice to pursue a better future and to meet its international responsibilities while respecting the dignity and fundamental human rights of its own people.

Thank you. And *Eid-eh Shoma Mobarak*.

NOTE: The President's remarks were videotaped at approximately 6 p.m. on March 19 in the Green Room at the White House for later broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released Arabic and Persian transcripts of these remarks.

Statement on the Death of Stewart L. Udall *March 20, 2010*

For the better part of three decades, Stewart Udall served this Nation honorably. Whether in the skies above Italy in World War II, in Congress, or as Secretary of the Interior, Stewart Udall left an indelible mark on this Nation and inspired countless Americans who will continue

his fight for clean air, clean water, and to maintain our many natural treasures. Michelle and I extend our condolences to the entire Udall family, who continue his legacy of public service to this day.