

They loved doing it as a family. They loved doing it as a community.

That's a spirit that's reflected in a song that almost every American knows. But it's a song most people, I think, would be surprised was actually written by a coal miner's son about this town, Beckley, about the people of West Virginia. It's the song "Lean on Me," an anthem of friendship, but also an anthem of community, of coming together.

And that community was revealed for all to see in the minutes and hours and days after the tragedy: rescuers, risking their own safety, scouring narrow tunnels saturated with methane and carbon monoxide, hoping against hope they might find a survivor; friends keeping porch lights on in a nightly vigil, hanging up homemade signs that read, "Pray for our miners and their families"; neighbors consoling each other and supporting each other and leaning on one another.

And I've seen it, the strength of that community. In the days that followed the disaster, e-mails and letters poured into the White House. Postmarked from different places across the country, they often began the same way: "I am proud to be from a family of miners." "I am the son of a coal miner." "I am proud to be a coal miner's daughter." They were always proud, and they asked me to keep our miners in my thoughts, in my prayers. Never forget, they say, miners keep America's lights on. And then in these letters, they make a simple plea: Don't let this happen again. Don't let this happen again.

How can we fail them? How can a nation that relies on its miners not do everything in its power to protect them? How can we let anyone in this country put their lives at risk by simply showing up to work, by simply pursuing the American Dream?

We cannot bring back the 29 men we lost. They are with the Lord now. Our task, here on Earth, is to save lives from being lost in another such tragedy, to do what we must do, individually and collectively, to assure safe conditions underground, to treat our miners like they treat each other, like a family. Because we are all family, and we are all Americans, and we have to lean on one another and look out for one another and love one another and pray for one another.

There's a Psalm that comes to mind today, a Psalm that comes to mind, a Psalm we often turn to in times of heartache: "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me."

God bless our miners. God bless their families. God bless West Virginia. And God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:20 p.m. in the Beckley-Raleigh County Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Joseph Manchin III of West Virginia; and musician Bill Withers. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Joe Biden.

Joint Statement by President Barack Obama and President Dmitry A. Medvedev of Russia Commemorating the 65th Anniversary of the Meeting of Soviet and American Troops at the Elbe River *April 25, 2010*

April 25, 2010 marks the 65th anniversary of the legendary meeting of Soviet and American troops at the Elbe River, which became a striking symbol of the brotherhood-in-arms between our nations during World War II.

We pay tribute to the courage of those who fought together to liberate Europe from fas-

cism. Their heroic feat will forever remain in the grateful memory of mankind.

The atmosphere of mutual trust and shared commitment to victory, which accompanied the historic handshake at the Elbe, is especially called for today when Russia and the United States are building a partnership for the sake of

a stable and prosperous world. We are convinced that, acting in the “spirit of the Elbe” on an equitable and constructive basis, we can successfully tackle any tasks facing our nations

and effectively deal with the challenges of the new millennium.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks Honoring the 2009 World Series Champion New York Yankees April 26, 2010

Hello, everybody. Everybody have a seat, please.

[At this point, the President exchanged greetings with Yankees manager Joseph E. Girardi. He then continued his remarks as follows.]

Hello, everybody, and welcome to the White House. And congratulations on being World Series champions.

As you can see, we’ve got a few Yankees fans here in the White House—*[laughter]*—who are pretty excited about your visit. I want to actually start by recognizing Secretary of Treasury Tim Geithner, who is here, and Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood. Now, I understand Ray and Joe went to the same high school a few years apart. *[Laughter]* But they grew up, obviously, big Yankees fans.

I want to congratulate the Steinbrenner family, Brian Cashman, and all the folks who helped to make this team what it is. And I want to thank all of the members of the New York congressional delegation. And I notice a couple of Connecticut and North Dakota guys showing up here too—*[laughter]*—all of whom take credit for the Yankees’ success. *[Laughter]*

Now, it’s been 9 years since your last title, which must have felt like an eternity for Yankees fans. I think other teams would be just fine with a spell like that—*[laughter]*—the Cubs, for example. *[Laughter]* But this is a team that goes down to spring training every year expecting to win it all, and more often than not, you guys get pretty close. Of course, if I had Rivera, I’d get pretty close too. *[Laughter]* My White Sox would get close every year. That attitude, that success has always made the Yankees easy to love and, let’s face it, easy to hate as well. *[Laughter]* For a White

Sox fan like me, it’s painful to watch Mariano’s cutter when it’s against my team or to see the Yankees wrap up the pennant while the Sox are struggling on the South Side. Although, I do remember 2005, people, so—*[laughter]*—don’t get too comfortable. *[Laughter]*

But for the millions of Yankees fans in New York and around the world who bleed blue, nothing beats that Yankee tradition: 27 World Series titles; 48 Hall of Famers—a couple, I expect, standing behind me right now. From Ruth to Gehrig, Mantle to DiMaggio, it’s hard to imagine baseball without the long line of legends who’ve worn the pinstripes. Last season, this team continued that legacy, winning 103 games and leaving no doubt who was the best team in baseball.

But what people tend to forget, especially after watching their teams lose, is that being a Yankee is as much about character as it is about performance, as much about who you are as what you do. Being successful in New York doesn’t come easy, and it’s not for everybody. It takes a certain kind of player to thrive in the pressure cooker of Yankee Stadium, somebody who’s poised and professional and knows what it takes to wear the pinstripes. It takes somebody who appreciates how lucky he is and who feels responsibility for those who are less fortunate.

So it’s somebody like Mark Teixeira. Before he was a three-time Golden Glove winner, Mark was a 21-year-old kid fresh out of Georgia Tech. Shortly after signing his first Major League contract, Mark visited his old high school and asked how much it would cost to set up a scholarship in the name of a friend who’d been killed in a car accident. And when he was told it would cost \$75,000, he wrote a check on the spot. And he’s been funding that scholarship ever since, helping to make the