

don't want to—that's not why we're here. [Laughter]

I was hoping that, Coach, you were going to bring some books for Republicans and Democrats in Congress maybe to get them to start playing like a team together. [Laughter] Coach is famous for passing out books and helping people get the job done.

We are obviously honored to have one of the alltime greats in NBA history, Magic Johnson. Magic did pretty well during his time with the Lakers. He wasn't bad. [Laughter] And now a new generation is continuing his legacy. But obviously, part of what makes Magic special wasn't just how he played on the court, but also just the infectious enthusiasm about life and what he's now doing with businesses and minority communities. He's just been an outstanding leader in our country for a long time.

Of course, I've got to recognize Kobe Bryant, one of the most competitive players I've ever seen, for being named finals MVP last year—obviously already MVPs under his belt, the youngest player ever to reach 25,000 points in his career. And he's playing with a broken finger. Now, if I was—if I had a broken finger, I would have trouble getting out of bed. [Laughter] And he's still leading the team day in and day out.

This is a team that never lost its focus last season, from the first tipoff to the final buzzer. I know that the Lakers have a tradition of ending each team gathering—whether it's a practice or a game or a team meeting—with the chant, "One, two, three, rings." As Lamar Odom said, "We kind of always saw that light." Everyone was willing to do what it took to get a little stronger, to play a little harder, and to bring home that title.

But I think it's important to note that this team also knows that being a champ is about more than trophies and rings. It's about being a winner off the court as well as on it and giving back to those who are less fortunate. The Lak-

ers and the NBA have always been about serving others, at home and around the world. And that tradition continued last week, when the NBA and the Players Association, led by Derek Fisher, pledged to donate \$1 million to support relief efforts in Haiti. Jordan Farmar and Pau Gasol are also donating their money to the Clinton Bush Haiti Fund. Pau pledged \$1,000 for every point he scored against the Knicks, and I'm glad he dropped 20—[laughter]—helping the Lakers to beat New York and changing the lives of Haitians thousands of miles away.

And earlier today, the team joined with our United We Serve initiative to hold a fitness clinic for kids from Stanton Elementary School right here in Washington, DC, teaching them about a few moves, but also how to live healthy and active lives.

So I just want to again thank the entire Lakers organization for your service, for the great joy that you have given the city of Los Angeles, but also the incredible competition that your organization has graced the basketball court with for decades now. If this season is anything like the last one—I know that you guys have your sights on the NBA finals—so we might see you here before long. But we are very grateful for your presence here today. Give them a big round of applause.

Now, one last thing, I was also told that Mr. Brown here intends to win the dunk contest—[laughter]—so we'll see how that goes.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:19 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Michael J. Jordan, former shooting guard, and John Paxson, former point guard, Chicago Bulls; and Jeanie Buss, executive vice president of business operations, Kobe Bryant, guard, Lamar Odom, forward, Derek Fisher, guard, Jordan Farmar, guard, Pau Gasol, forward-center, and Shannon Brown, guard, Los Angeles Lakers.

## Statement on India's Republic Day *January 25, 2010*

I send my warmest wishes on behalf of the American people to the people of India and to

those here in America and around the world who are celebrating Republic Day. As the

world's largest democracies, the United States and India have a strong shared belief in the values of liberty, pluralism, and religious tolerance.

This Republic Day is particularly special because it marks India's Diamond Jubilee. In the 60 years since the Indian Constitution was adopted, we have built a strong and vibrant partnership. I was pleased that Prime Minister Singh was the honored guest for the first state dinner of my Presidency. It was a chance to

celebrate the great and growing partnership between our two nations and the friendship between our peoples. Indeed, the more than 2 million Indian Americans in the United States enrich every corner of our great Nation, leading in government, science, industry, and the arts. And as our peoples continue to build upon that friendship, let our Governments continue to work together to advance peace, prosperity, and stability around the globe.

## Videotaped Remarks Commemorating the 65th Anniversary of the Liberation of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp *January 27, 2010*

Good morning, and thank you to everyone who worked to bring us to this day, especially the International Auschwitz Council and the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.

To President Kacynski, Prime Minister Tusk, and to the people of Poland: Thank you for preserving a place of such great pain for the Polish people, but a place of remembrance and learning for the world.

Although I can't be with you in person, I am proud that the United States is represented there today by a delegation of distinguished Americans, including Ambassador Feinstein, my wife Michelle's chief of staff, Susan Sher, and my good friend and the son of Holocaust survivors, Julius Genachowski.

And let me commend you for recognizing a woman who has devoted her life to preserving the lessons of the Shoah for future generations, Sara Bloomfield of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington.

But most of all, I want to thank those of you who found the strength to come back again so many years later, despite the horror you saw here, the suffering you endured here, and the loved ones you lost here. Those of us who did not live through those dark days will never truly understand what it means to have hate literally etched into your arms. But we understand the message that you carry in your hearts.

For you know the truth that Elie Wiesel spoke when I stood with him at Buchenwald last spring. There, where his father and so

many innocent souls left this Earth, Elie said, "Memory has become the sacred duty of all people of good will."

We have a sacred duty to remember the twisted thinking that led here, how a great society of culture and science succumbed to the worst instincts of man and rationalized mass murder and one of the most barbaric acts in history.

We have a sacred duty to remember the cruelty that occurred here, as told in the simple objects that speak to us even now: the suitcases that still bear their names; the wooden clogs they wore; the round bowls from which they ate; those brick buildings from which there was no escape, where so many Jews died with "Sh'ma Israel" on their lips; and the very earth at Auschwitz, which is still hallowed by their ashes, Jews and those who tried to save them, Polish and Hungarian, French and Dutch, Roma and Russian, straight and gay, and so many others.

But even as we recall man's capacity for evil, Auschwitz also tells another story, of man's capacity for good: the small acts of compassion, the sharing of some bread that kept a child alive, the great acts of resistance that blew up the crematorium and tried to stop the slaughter, the Polish rescuers and those who earned their place forever in the Righteous Among the Nations.

And you, the survivors: The perpetrators of that crime tried to annihilate the entire Jewish