

Even if—the financial crisis made it much worse, but even if we had not gone through this financial crisis, we’d still have to be dealing with these long-term deficit problems. They have to do with Medicaid; they have to do with Medicare; they have to do with Social Security. They have to do with a series of structural problems that are not unique to America. Some of it has to do with an aging population. And we’ve got to look at a tax system that is messy and unfair in a whole range of ways.

And so they’re looking at the gamut of steps that are going to be taken. And one of the interesting things that’s happened over the last 18 months as President is, for some reason, people keep on being surprised when I do what I said I was going to do. So I say, I’m going to reform our health care system, and people think, well, gosh, that’s not smart politics, maybe we should hold off. Or I say, we’re going to move forward on “don’t ask, don’t tell,” and somehow people say, “Well, why are you doing that? I’m not sure that’s good politics.”

I’m doing it because I said I was going to do it, and I think it’s the right thing to do. And people should learn that lesson about me, because next year, when I start presenting some very difficult choices to the country, I hope some of these folks who are hollering about deficits and debt step up, because I’m calling their bluff. And we’ll see how much of that—how much of the political arguments they’re making right now are real and how much of it was just politics.

All right? Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President’s news conference began at 6:03 p.m. at the InterContinental Toronto Centre. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Stephen Harper of Canada; President Hu Jintao of China; President Lee Myung-bak of South Korea; Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal, USA, former commander, and Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commander-designate, NATO International Security Assistance Force, Afghanistan; President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan; and Prime Minister Naoto Kan of Japan.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Naoto Kan of Japan in Toronto June 27, 2010

President Obama. Well, Prime Minister Kan and I just had an excellent conversation and bilateral meeting after 3 days where we’ve had an opportunity to share ideas on not only the most pressing issues that are facing our economies, but also a range of security issues.

I congratulated Prime Minister Kan on his leadership. And we both noted the significance of 50 years of a U.S.-Japan alliance that has been a cornerstone not only of our two nations’ security, but also peace and prosperity throughout Asia.

We discussed some very pressing security issues, in particular, North Korea, the sinking of the *Cheonan*, and the importance of both our countries standing in solidarity with South Korea and the entire international community standing with South Korea in condemning the incident and making sure that North Korea gets

a clear signal that such provocations are unacceptable.

I also expressed appreciation to Japan for its support for the Iran sanctions that we passed through the United Nations Security Council, and we discussed issues of implementation.

But of course, in addition to significant dangers, we also talked about great opportunities. We see the possibilities of strengthening our economic ties across a whole range of issues. That’s been, obviously, the subject of this summit.

We’re both determined to pursue opportunities in clean energy and job growth and promoting the kind of sustainable recovery that will create opportunities for our people and increase opportunities not just for this generation but for future generations.

And I’m very much looking forward to visiting Japan and enjoying the hospitality of Prime

Minister Kan as he helps to shape the agenda for the next APEC meeting. And I thanked him for the very generous offer of boom and skimmers coming from Japan that can help in what is going to be a very lengthy process of cleaning up the Gulf in the wake of the oil spill.

But it's an example of a friendship and an alliance in which Japan and the United States have consistently been there for each other. And although that friendship and alliance has to continually be renewed and reshaped in light of new circumstances, the core values and the shared vision at the heart of our alliance remains strong, and I am very confident that working with Prime Minister Kan, we are going to be able to continue to build on that tremendous history over the last 50 years.

Prime Minister Kan. I am very happy to have such a—have candid discussions with President Obama today. And at the outset of our meeting, I talked about my experience from 30 years ago when I visited the United States on the invitation of the Department of State and about the experience of seeing the various NGOs are making activities depend solely on the nations, and I saw the grassroots democracy there. And I shared my recognition that President Obama was elected on such a background of the democracy in the United States. And I said to the President I have an experience of political life based on such grassroots activities, and I will also continue to pursue such a style of politics with my allies.

And I am also happy to have such a meeting in a year which is a milestone of 50 years—50th anniversary of the Japan-U.S. alliance. And this alliance between Japan and the United States not only has brought peace and prosperity not only to Japan, but also, it has been a foundation and cornerstone of civility of the whole Asia-Pacific region. And President Obama has such a recognition, and he completely shares the same understanding about our alliance. And for the stability of Asia, Japan is proud of working—having been working together with the United States.

And I told the President that it is very important to further enhance the partnership and our alliance, and at the same time, in or-

der to pursue that goal, it is important for the Japanese public themselves to think really about the significance of our alliance and for them to think about the decisions for the future of our alliance. And I talked about my recognition with President Obama today. And in other words, it is often the case that people see the way—people see the situation as politicians make their decisions and the public makes complaints about it, that it is important for us to avoid such a situation by creating real discussions about our future ways.

And we talked also about the incident in which North Korea attacked the—attacked and sunk the North Korean naval—South Korean naval vessel, and we talked also about the issue of Iran and Afghanistan. Always we have to work together to respond, and we share the common understanding of those issues.

And I also reaffirmed our recognition that it is important for us to cooperate in such issues as climate change or nuclear disarmament in North Korea's regime.

And during the past 3 days, we talked about the economic issues at the G-8 and G-20 meetings, and we discussed these issues together. And President Obama expressed the support for the economic policy that Japan will pursue, and I was strongly encouraged by his comments.

When I was the Finance Minister, Mr. Geithner was my counterpart, but now Finance Minister Noda is his counterpart, and we have other counterparts between us. And we will make sure that these counterparts will work together well.

And I'm happy that in November, we are hosting the APEC meeting, and on that occasion, we will be welcoming President Obama in Japan. I will make sure that we prepare much ice cream for him.

President Obama. That's my favorite. [Laughter]

Prime Minister Kan. And even before November, if I have an opportunity to visit the United States, I would be happy to do so, and as President Obama has suggested, that if our schedules meet, it would be good to create such an opportunity. And in September, I haven't made the final decision, but there is a

possibility of visiting the United States for the United Nations General Assembly. So I will be considering it then.

President Obama. Thank you so much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:25 p.m. at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. Prime Minister Kan spoke in Japanese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Statement on the Death of Senator Robert C. Byrd

June 28, 2010

I was saddened to hear this morning that the people of West Virginia have lost a true champion, the United States Senate has lost a venerable institution, and America has lost a voice of principle and reason with the passing of Robert C. Byrd.

Senator Byrd's story was uniquely American. He was born into wrenching poverty, but educated himself to become an authoritative scholar, respected leader, and unparalleled champion of our Constitution. He scaled the summit of power, but his mind never strayed from the people of his beloved West Virginia. He had the courage to stand firm in his principles, but also the courage to change over time.

He was as much a part of the Senate as the marble busts that line its chamber and its corridors. His profound passion for that body and its role and responsibilities was as evident behind closed doors as it was in the stemwinders he peppered with history. He held the deepest respect of members of both parties, and he was generous with his time and advice, something I appreciated greatly as a young Senator.

We take solace in the fact that he is reunited with his wife of nearly 69 years, Erma, and our thoughts and prayers are with their daughters, their grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, and all the people of West Virginia who loved Robert C. Byrd.

Statement on the New National Space Policy

June 28, 2010

Over the past 50 years, America has led the world in space exploration, broadening humanity's horizons and our understanding of the universe. And our achievements have in turn led to incredible technological advances that have improved our lives and transformed our economy. We can point to satellites orbiting hundreds of miles overhead that can identify our location within inches or communications systems that allow information to flow around the world as never before. In part, what has made this progress possible was a commitment by our Nation to scientific discovery and technological innovation and an unyielding faith in the future, even during difficult times.

That is why each President since Dwight Eisenhower has defined a national space policy: to ensure that as we confront the pressing issues of the day, we continue to press forward in the pursuit of new frontiers. Today my administration is continuing in this tradition. We are releasing a new national space policy, designed to

strengthen America's leadership in space while fostering untold rewards here on Earth. For even as we continue our relentless focus on the serious challenges we face at home and abroad, our long-term success and leadership as a nation demands that we do not lose sight of the promise of the future.

Our policy reflects the ways in which our imperatives and our obligations in space have changed in recent decades. No longer are we racing against an adversary; in fact, one of our central goals is to promote peaceful cooperation and collaboration in space, which not only will ward off conflict, but will help to expand our capacity to operate in orbit and beyond. In addition, this policy recognizes that as our reliance on satellites and other space-based technologies increases, so too does our responsibility to address challenges such as debris and other hazards. No longer is space just a destination to reach; it is a place where we must be able to work in ways that are responsible, sustainable,