

our success is not the other party; it's us. It's complacency. It's apathy. It's indifference.

It's people feeling like: "Well, we only got 80 percent of what we want. We didn't get the other 20, so we're just going to sit on our hands. We're not going to go out there. It turns out bringing about change is hard." [Laughter] "I thought it was going to be easy. I liked the cute posters of the Obama campaign. I enjoyed the Inauguration. It was great when Beyonce and Bono was singing." [Laughter] "I didn't know that we were actually going to have to grind it out, that sometimes we'd have setbacks." [Laughter]

You know, the only way we fall backwards is if we don't get mobilized, if we don't get energized—because I promise you, the other side is energized—if we don't turn out our friends and our neighbors to vote. And that's what I need you to do. I need you to knock on some doors. I need you to talk to your neighbors. I need you to make some phone calls. I need you to remember that that election was not about me, it was about you.

If we do that, if we understand what's at stake and we step up to the plate and we realize that change is not a spectator sport and that no, it won't come easy and you're not going to get it all in one fell swoop and you won't even then get a hundred percent, if you remember that every bit of progress we've made from emancipation to women's suffrage to civil rights to So-

cial Security to Medicare—each and every one of those steps were laborious and difficult, and there were people who were trying to block that progress and people who were saying, that's socialism, and people who were saying this was undermining the country—every step of the way, there were people who were fighting it. But people didn't lose heart. Instead, people stood up and they said, you know what, we're just going to keep on pushing; we're going to keep on fighting.

Dr. King made famous a saying that "the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice." We are moving in the direction of justice. We are moving in the direction of prosperity. But we've got to keep on moving. We can't stop now. And if we are out there working hard, if we are out there rekindling that spirit of hope, we won't just win this election, we will restore our economy, rebuild the middle class, reclaim the American Dream for the next generation.

Thank you, New York. God bless you. God bless the United States of America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:46 p.m. at the Roosevelt Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Rep. Pete Sessions, in his capacity as chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee; Gov. Deval L. Patrick of Massachusetts; and musicians Beyonce G. Knowles and Paul D. "Bono" Hewson.

Remarks at a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee and Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee Dinner in New York City September 22, 2010

Hello, New York! Thank you. Thank you so much. Everybody, please have a seat. It is wonderful to see so many friends, colleagues, people who have done so much for the country and so much for New York City. It is wonderful to be back in the Big Apple. And this is kind of an intimate affair, so I hope you don't mind, I'm going to occasionally go off script.

But the first thing I want to do is just say that we truly have the good fortune of having one of

the finest Speakers of the House, I think, in our history, and that's Nancy Pelosi, here tonight. She is doing outstanding work.

A terrific Senator who has taken on what is always a thankless task, and that is being head of the DSCC, and doing it with tremendous energy, Bob Menendez. I'm grateful for him. I'm grateful for chairman of the DCCC Chris Van Hollen, who's been working tirelessly. And then the whole New York delegation—Carolyn

Maloney, Charlie Rangel, Scott Murphy, Steve Israel, Nita Lowey, Jerry Nadler, and Greg Meeks—thank you guys for the great work that you've done each and every day.

We are at, I think, a critical, fascinating, difficult time in our history. Two years ago, when I came into office, we were coming on a surge of enormous energy, because people understood that we couldn't keep doing things the way we had been doing them.

And I want everybody to look back at the track record of 2001 to 2009 and what was happening in this country. We had not only entered into two wars that weren't paid for, not only had we turned record surpluses to record deficits, but what had happened to the middle class in this country or those aspiring to be part of the middle class—that beating heart of our economy, that representative of the American Dream, the notion that if you worked hard and you took responsibility, that not only could you provide for your family, but you could be assured that the next generation was going to do better than you did—they had taken hit after hit after hit.

This is not my opinion. The Wall Street Journal, a great champion of the Obama agenda—[laughter]—had an article just last week based on census data showing that middle class wages went down 5 percent from 2001 to 2009—went down 5 percent.

We had the slowest job growth during that period of any time since World War II. In fact, the pace of job creation was slower than it's been over the last year coming out of this horrific recession. At the same time, ordinary families were seeing their health care costs go up. They were seeing their college tuition for their kids go up.

And all of this was brought to you by, was underwritten by a very specific ideology that basically said, we're going to cut taxes, especially for millionaires and billionaires. We're going to cut rules for the most powerful interests in our society. We're going to cut ordinary folks loose to fend for themselves. And somehow, magically, we're going to grow and we're going to prosper.

And for a few years, at least, there was the illusion that maybe this might work, because we had a housing bubble and people were maxing

out on their credit cards and spending. And so the sense was, well, maybe we can keep this thing going.

Although all across the country, people were struggling. They were seeing plants move out of their towns and suddenly empty out. Main Streets start getting boarded up. And then all of it finally culminated in the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression and the worst recession since the 1930s.

That was the context in which I was sworn into office in January of 2009. Six months leading up to the election, we actually lost 4 million jobs—4 million jobs in the last 6 months of 2008. We lost 750,000 the month that I was sworn in.

So my first responsibility as President, Nancy's first responsibility as Speaker, Bob's first responsibility, all the Members of Congress here today, our first responsibility was to make sure that we did not slip into a second Great Depression.

And we've succeeded at doing that. The financial markets are stabilized. The economy that was contracting 6 percent in the quarter in which I took office is now growing again. We've had 8 consecutive months of private sector job growth. We're making progress. But—[applause]—we are making progress.

But the fact is that the devastation that was caused by this recession lingers on. There are millions of people out there who are still looking for work. There are hundreds of thousands of people who have lost their homes, millions more who aren't sure if they're going to be able to make their mortgage payments or pay the bills. People are scared. People are anxious. People are uncertain about the future. And people are angry, because they feel at some fundamental level that they've been betrayed, that they've been betrayed by Washington, that they've been betrayed by folks who somehow had the inside line and the inside scoop.

And so they're frustrated. And essentially, what the other side has done over the last 2 years is count on amnesia. They're counting on the fact that people forget who got us into the mess and that they can ride anger and frustration all the way until November.

Essentially, they made a tactical decision that they would sit on the sidelines, and they'd let us try to clean up after them. And if it didn't work, then the politics would work for them. They were thinking about the next election instead of the next generation.

You know, I've been using an analogy that I think works. Essentially, they drove the economy into the ditch. And so Nancy and Bob and me, we all put on our boots, and we went down into the ditch. And it's dusty and muddy down there and hot and sweaty and bugs swirling around. And we're pushing and shoving, and we've got our shoulder to the bumper there, and we're pushing and yanking. And every so often, we look up, and there are the Republicans standing up on the road, sipping a Slurpee—[laughter]—looking down at us. And we say, "You want to come down and help?" And they say: "No, no, no, we can't. But you're not pushing hard enough. You're not pushing the right way."

And finally, after all this work, we finally get the car back on the road. It's pointing straight. It's banged up, it's dented, needs a tuneup, needs some bodywork, needs a paint job, but it's pointing in the right direction. And we feel this tap on our shoulders, and it's the Republicans. They say, "We want the keys back." And we have to explain to them: "You can't have the keys back. You don't know how to drive. We don't want to go back into the ditch. We're sorry, but you can't have them back."

Now, it would be one thing if they had meditated after the 2008 election and they said, boy, we really screwed up. Our ideology doesn't work. It's not serving the interests of the American people. And so they had come back and they had said, boy, we've got a whole bunch of new ideas. We realize the error of our ways. We'll work with the President where we can. Where we disagree with him, we'll be part of the loyal opposition.

That's not what happened. That's not what's happening now. The chairman of the other side's committee, when asked, "Well, what exactly would you do if you guys ended up taking over the House?" he said, "We're going to go back"—and I'm quoting—"to the exact same

agenda that we had before the President took office." The exact same agenda.

And you can see it now in the proposals that they've got. They've said, well, you know, where are the jobs? We've got to grow the economy faster. We've got better ideas.

Here's their idea. Their primary idea, their principal idea is we're going to borrow \$700 billion—borrow it because we don't have it—and we're going to give tax cuts that won't go to 98 percent of the American people. Ninety-eight percent won't get a dime of those tax cuts. And we will borrow \$700 billion to do it.

And that's their principal agenda. This is the same crew that says that they're all about fiscal responsibility. They don't have new ideas. They don't have an agenda that would move the country forward.

Now, we've got a lot to be proud about over the last 2 years because not only did we prevent a Great Depression, but we moved forward a set of issues that so many people in this room had been hungry to see action on for years, because you understood that it wasn't good enough just to solve the crisis, we also had to start laying the foundation for moving this country forward over the long term.

And so after decades, we've finally tackled health care and passed the most important piece of legislation that ensures that 30 million people get health care, but also ensures that we're going to lower the cost of health care in years to come.

And I was at a little town hall—actually, a little backyard discussion with a group today, before I came up to New York. There was one woman who had been stricken by cancer at a time when she did not have insurance. She now is able to buy insurance because of the Affordable Care Act. Two small businesses who were about to discontinue health care for their employees because their costs had gone up a hundred percent over the last 7 years, who are now not only still able to provide health insurance but have seen \$15,000 worth of tax breaks; two moms whose kids had preexisting conditions who could not get health care, and now have the security of knowing that their kids are covered. Every parent out there whose child

doesn't have health insurance is going to be able to keep their kids on their insurance until they're 26 years old. That's a consequence of the majorities in the House and the Senate, the incredibly important and difficult work that they did.

On financial regulatory reform, not only have we made sure that we're looking out for systemic risks and preventing the kind of crisis that forces us a choice between bailouts or financial collapse, not only are we in a position now to prevent that, but we've also got a consumer protection agency that is long overdue that makes sure that people out there who are getting credit cards or mortgages, that somebody out there is looking for them—somebody out there is looking out for them, that they can't just have their interest rates jacked up for no reason, that they're not steered to mortgages that they can't afford. That's because of the outstanding work of these majorities in the House and the Senate.

We have made changes in how tobacco companies can market to their kids—to our kids. We have expanded national service more than at any time since the Peace Corps. We've provided—before the health care act—4 million children health insurance, including the children of legal immigrants.

On issue after issue—on education, we've probably initiated more changes in education across the country than at any time in the last 50 years. And for good measure, we shifted billions of dollars that were going to subsidies to financial industry through the student loan program, and now millions of young people are able to get scholarships that weren't able to get it before.

We made the largest investment in clean energy in our history so that you've got solar panels and wind turbines and advanced batteries and green cars being made right here in the United States of America, all across the country.

The largest investment in education in our history, the largest investment in our infrastructure since Dwight Eisenhower, the largest investment in research and basic science in a generation, and we did all this while we were making sure that we didn't go into a Great Depression and while we were ending one war and

making sure that we were in a position to start bringing our troops home and stabilizing Afghanistan at the same time.

Now, I tick all these things off because ultimately, when you look at what's going to happen in this election, it's not going to depend on me; it's going to depend on you. The other side is energized. As I said, they are surfing anger and frustration. And some of that anger is legitimate, although misplaced, misdirected. But people are feeling what they're feeling, and that is that we've been slipping and that they've gotten the brunt of some very bad decisions over the last several years. And the question is, are we as energized? Are we as motivated?

I was just talking to a larger crowd out there, and I had to remind them, you know, when I was running for office, in some ways, maybe we gave people the wrong impression about how change happens in a democracy. Everybody saw those nice Obama posters. It was kind of cool and trendy, that whole Internet thing. [*Laughter*] You have these big rallies and Barbra is singing and, you know, then the Inauguration, you had Bono and Beyonce.

And so I think people maybe got the impression that somehow change in this country is easy. Change in this country has never been easy. Emancipation was not easy. Women's suffrage wasn't easy. Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, the civil rights movement, basic worker protections, basic consumer protections, each and every one of those issues we had to fight for. And sometimes you'd get 50 percent of it done or maybe 60 percent, and then you'd have to go back, and folks would try to chip away at it, and you'd have to push and try to get some more done the next year and the year after that.

And what was sustaining was that sense, that north star, that sense that, you know what, if we stay true to our values, if we believe that all people are created equal and everybody is endowed with certain inalienable rights and we're going to make those words live, that we're going to give everybody opportunity, everybody a ladder into the middle class, every child able to go as far as their dreams will take them, if we stay true to that, then we're going to be able to

maintain the energy and the focus, the fight, the gumption to get stuff done. And it may not always happen in our lifetimes. And we may sometimes experience disappointments. And sometimes compromises are going to be made. But we know where we're going.

Well, people, this is what change looks like. This is what the elections of 2008 and 2006 were about. It wasn't about it happens one time and suddenly it's over and everybody can go home and relax. It's about everybody going out there and doing what needs to get done.

So I want to say to all of you, I am grateful for the extraordinary support that you provided me and that you provided House and Senate candidates all across the country. But don't stop now. There is too much at stake. There are other Supreme Court appointments to be made. There are other decisions in terms of how we're dealing with the international community to be made.

We're going to have to—if the last election was about changing the guard, this is about guarding the change that we've initiated. We've got to implement health care reform. We've got to implement financial regulatory reform.

There are still kids in this country that are hungry. There are still families in this country that are homeless. There are still people out there looking for work. And if we're compla-

cent, if we're lethargic, we're letting those folks down and we're letting ourselves down and we're letting the country down.

So I don't know about you, but I'm still fired up. I am still ready to go. And I am going to need every single person out here not just to write checks, but to knock on doors, talk to your neighbors, talk to your friends, talk to your co-workers. If you got a business, talk to your employees; if you work at a business, talk to your employer. And tell them that even though times are tough, we're making progress. We remember that north star. We remember what we're about. We remember what this country is about. If we do that, I'm confident not only are we going to do well in this election, more importantly, we are going to serve the next generation.

Thank you, everybody. God bless you. God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:50 p.m. at the Roosevelt Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Rep. Pete Sessions, in his capacity as chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee; musicians Barbra Streisand, Beyonce G. Knowles, and Paul D. "Bono" Hewson. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 23.

Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly in New York City *September 23, 2010*

Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, my fellow delegates, ladies and gentlemen, it is a great honor to address this Assembly for the second time, nearly 2 years after my election as President of the United States.

We know this is no ordinary time for our people. Each of us comes here with our own problems and priorities. But there are also challenges that we share in common as leaders and as nations.

We meet within an institution built from the rubble of war, designed to unite the world in pursuit of peace. And we meet within a city that

for centuries has welcomed people from across the globe, demonstrating that individuals of every color, faith, and station can come together to pursue opportunity, build a community, and live with the blessing of human liberty.

Outside the doors of this hall, the blocks and neighborhoods of this great city tell the story of a difficult decade. Nine years ago, the destruction of the World Trade Center signaled a threat that respected no boundary of dignity or decency. Two years ago this month, a financial crisis on Wall Street devastated American families on Main Street. And these separate