

came from. We know it was born in the basement of a house on West Grand Boulevard in the Motor City, Detroit. And we know it started with a man named Berry Gordy, who is here with us tonight. Stand up, Berry.

Now, apparently Berry tried a lot of things before following his heart into music. A high school dropout, he failed as a record store owner, competed as an amateur boxer, finally took a job earning \$85 a week on the assembly line at the local Lincoln-Mercury plant. And it was there, watching the bare metal frames transformed into gleaming automobiles, that Berry wondered why he couldn't do the same thing with musicians and help turn new talent into stars.

And before long, he quit his job at the plant, borrowed \$800, and set up shop in a little house with a banner across the front that read "Hitsville, U.S.A." His family thought he was delusional. [Laughter] But as Berry said, "People thought the Wright Brothers had a stupid idea, so I say, 'Bring on the stupid ideas.'"

As it turned out, Berry could recognize talent and potential better than anybody else in the business. It began with Smokey Robinson, who stopped by the Motown house with a group of friends calling themselves the Miracles, then came one of Smokey's neighbors, a high school senior named Diana Ross, who started out working as a secretary. One of the Miracles brought along his little brother, who invited a 10-year-old blind kid named Stephen Hardaway Judkins to tag along. [Laughter] And then there was a group called the Jackson Five, fresh from amateur night at the Apollo, that Gladys Knight told Berry he just had to see.

Pretty soon, the basement studio was turning out hits faster than Detroit was turning out

cars. From 1961 to 1971, Motown produced 110 Top 10 hits from artists like Marvin Gaye, the Temptations, the Four Tops, and the Supremes. In the process, Motown's blend of tight lyrics, catchy melodies, and deep soul began to blur the line between music that was considered either Black or White. As Smokey Robinson said: "I recognized the bridges that were crossed, the racial problems and the barriers that we broke down with music. I recognized that because I lived it."

Along the way, songs like "Dancing in the Streets" and "What's Going On" became the soundtrack of the civil rights era. Black artists began soaring to the top of the pop charts for the first time. And at concerts in the South, Motown groups literally brought people together, insisting that the ropes traditionally used to separate Black and White audience members be taken down.

So today, more than 50 years later, that's the Motown legacy. Born at a time of so much struggle, so much strife, it taught us that what unites us will always be stronger than what divides us. And in the decades since, those catchy beats and simple chords have influenced generations of musicians, from Sheryl Crow to the Jonas Brothers.

So to everybody watching, both here and at home, let's take a trip back to that little studio in Detroit and enjoy the unmistakable sound of Motown. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:31 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to musicians Gladys M. Knight and Stevie Wonder. Portions of these remarks could not be verified because the audio was incomplete.

## Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Cuba and of the Emergency Authority Relating to the Regulation of the Anchorage and Movement of Vessels February 24, 2011

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergen-

cies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its

declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the national emergency declared with respect to the Government of Cuba's destruction of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba on February 24, 1996, as amended and expanded on

February 26, 2004, is to continue in effect beyond March 1, 2011.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John A. Boehner, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 25. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

### Statement on the Anniversaries of Kuwait's Independence and Liberation by Coalition Forces *February 25, 2011*

On behalf of the people of the United States, I congratulate the Government and people of Kuwait on the 50th anniversary of their independence on February 26. Kuwait is a longstanding friend and partner of the United States, and we thank His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah for his steadfast partnership and friendship.

February 26 is also the 20th anniversary of Kuwait's liberation by U.S.-led coalition forces.

On that day, the international community, having rejected outright aggression and acted to reverse it, stood shoulder to shoulder with Kuwait in securing its freedom and sovereignty. I take this opportunity to honor all those who made the ultimate sacrifice for the cause of freedom in that undertaking: Kuwaitis, Americans, and other coalition partners alike. I also wish to reinforce our enduring commitment to the peace and prosperity of the region.

### Statement on Sanctions Against Libya *February 25, 2011*

The Libyan Government's continued violation of human rights, brutalization of its people, and outrageous threats have rightly drawn the strong and broad condemnation of the international community. By any measure, Muammar al-Qadhafi's Government has violated international norms and common decency and must be held accountable. These sanctions therefore target the Qadhafi Government, while protecting the assets that belong to the people of Libya.

Going forward, the United States will continue to closely coordinate our actions with the international community, including our friends and allies and the United Nations. We will stand steadfastly with the Libyan people in their demand for universal rights and a government that is responsive to their aspirations. Their human dignity cannot be denied.