

form [return],^{*} and I thought, hmm—there is a moment there where you look at the figure you're paying, and you say, wow, I don't—let me think about my position on taxing the wealthy here. [Laughter] I understand that. Nobody volunteers and says, boy, I'm just wild to pay more taxes. But it's a matter of values and what we prioritize. And I certainly don't think my taxes should be even lower. That's—I think America wants a smart Government. It wants a lean government. It wants a accountable government. But we don't want no government.

I mean, according to the Republican budget that was passed, for example, we would have to eliminate transportation funding by a third. We'd have to cut transporting funding by a third. You remember when that bridge in Minnesota collapsed with all those people on it? And there was a big hue and cry: How can this happen in America? Well, the National Society of Engineers, they've looked around, and they give us a D when it comes to infrastructure. Our roads, our bridges, our sewer systems are all deteriorating.

We don't even have a serious high-speed rail infrastructure in this country. Our broadband lines are slower than places like South Korea. Well, how—so what, we cut transportation by another third, and what's going to happen to America? We're just going to have potholes everywhere? [Laughter] We're just going to have bridges collapsing everywhere? Are we going to continue to have airports that are substandard? Are we going to go to other countries and suddenly realize that China and South Ko-

rea and all of Europe all have better infrastructure than we do, and we think that businesses are going to come here and invest? Or do we think that at some point companies say, you know what, America has got a second-rate infrastructure, and it costs us too much money because our trucks going over those potholes are getting messed up?

So that's the choice that we're going to have to make. This debate is going to be very important though. And as I said before, I'm going to need all of you involved in this debate. You've got to make your voices heard. And I would say—I'm not just talking to Democrats here. Republicans, I want you to be able to talk to your Members of Congress and say, yes, I'm serious about reducing the deficit; yes, I want limited government; yes, I want reductions in spending, but I do think that we've got to make investments in basic research and infrastructure and education, and so let's do it in a balanced way.

And if we do that, we can come up with a compromise that is effective, that puts America's fiscal house in order, but also allows us to win the future. That's my goal. I'm going to need your help though.

Thank you very much, everybody. God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:33 a.m. at Northern Virginia Community College. In his remarks, he referred to Warren E. Buffett, chief executive officer and chairman, Berkshire Hathaway Inc.

Statement on the 16th Anniversary of the Oklahoma City Bombing *April 19, 2011*

Sixteen years ago today, America witnessed a horrific attack in Oklahoma City, killing more than 160 men, women, and children and wounding hundreds of others. Michelle and I send our deepest condolences to the families and friends who lost a loved one and suffered through this

tragic event. We also need to remember the resilience and toughness of the American people and know that our Nation's resolve to fight terror and combat violent extremism in all its forms will not waver. As a nation, we should take a moment to recognize the courage and spirit of our

^{*} White House correction.

fellow citizens, the first-responders who rushed to the site to save countless lives, and the people of the Nation, who stood together to lift up this

tight-knit community. Our thoughts and prayers are never far from those who lost their lives 16 years ago.

Remarks at a Facebook Town Hall Meeting and a Question-and-Answer Session in Palo Alto, California April 20, 2011

The President. Well, thank you so much, Facebook, for hosting this, first of all. My name is Barack Obama, and I'm the guy who got Mark to wear a jacket and tie. [Applause] Thank you. I'm very proud of that. [Laughter]

Facebook Founder and Chief Executive Officer Mark E. Zuckerberg. Second time.

The President. I know. [Laughter] I will say—and I hate to tell stories on Mark, but the first time we had dinner together and he wore this jacket and tie, I'd say halfway through dinner he's starting to sweat a little bit. It's really uncomfortable for him. So I helped him out of his jacket. [Laughter] And in fact, if you'd like, Mark, we can take our jackets off.

Mr. Zuckerberg. That's good.

The President. Woo, that's better, isn't it?

Mr. Zuckerberg. Yes, but you're a lot better at this stuff than me. [Laughter]

The President. So first of all, I just want to say thank you to all of you for taking the time, not only people who are here in the audience, but also folks all over the country and some around the world who are watching this town hall.

The main reason we wanted to do this is, first of all, because more and more people, especially young people, are getting their information through different media. And obviously, what all of you have built together is helping to revolutionize how people get information, how they process information, how they're connecting with each other.

And historically, part of what makes for a healthy democracy, what is a good politics, is when you've got citizens who are informed, who are engaged. And what Facebook allows us to do is make sure this isn't just a one-way conversation, make sure that not only am I speaking to you, but you're also speaking back,

and we're in a conversation, we're in a dialogue. So I love doing town hall meetings. This format and this company, I think, is a ideal means for us to be able to carry on this conversation.

And as Mark mentioned, obviously, we're having a very serious debate right now about the future direction of our country. We are living through as tumultuous a time as certainly I've seen in my lifetime. Admittedly, my lifetime is a lot longer than most of yours so far. This is a pretty young crowd. But we're seeing, domestically, a whole series of challenges, starting with the worst recession we've had since the Great Depression. We're just now coming out of it. We've got all sorts of disruptions, technological disruptions that are taking place, most of which hold the promise of making our lives a lot better, but also mean that there are a lot of adjustments that people are having to make throughout the economy.

We still have a very high unemployment rate that is starting to come down, but there are a awful lot of people who are being challenged out there day in, day out, worrying about whether they can pay the bills, whether they can keep their home.

Internationally, we're seeing the sorts of changes that we haven't seen in a generation. We've got certain challenges like energy and climate change that no one nation can solve, but we're going to have to solve together. And we don't yet have all the institutions that are in place in order to do that.

But what makes me incredibly optimistic—and that's why being here at Facebook is so exciting for me—is that at every juncture in our history, whenever we've faced challenges like this, whether it's been the shift from a agricultural age to a industrial age or whether it