

I want to thank Richard Huisinga, the chairman of the National Turkey Federation, and his wonderful family for donating this year's turkey from his farm in Willmar, Minnesota. The turkey's name is Liberty—there he is—and along with his understudy named Peace, he has the distinction of being the luckiest bird on the face of the Earth. Right now he's also probably one of the most confused. [Laughter]

Liberty was chosen from a flock of about 30 other contestants for the honor of being here today. And for the first time in history, these two turkeys were raised by four students from nearby Willmar High School.

Now, I'm told that in order to prepare Liberty and Peace for their big day, the students exposed them to loud noises and flashbulbs so that they'd be ready to face the White House press corps. This is actually true. They also received the most important part of their media training, which involves learning how to gobble without really saying anything. [Laughter]

So Liberty is ready for his turn in the spotlight. And after he finishes a round of cable hits and a few Sunday shows, he's going to retire to a life of leisure at Mount Vernon, the same place where George Washington spent his golden years.

And later today Michelle, Malia, Sasha, and I will also be taking two unnamed turkeys, who weren't so lucky, to a local food bank here in DC that helps those in need. And I want to thank the folks at Jandl's Turkey Farm in Orefield, Pennsylvania, for donating these dressed birds for the third year in a row.

Statement on the Situation in Yemen November 23, 2011

I welcome today's action by the Yemeni Government and the opposition to sign a political agreement brokered by the Gulf Cooperation Council to form a government of national unity within 14 days and hold early Presidential elections within 90 days. In particular, the United States welcomes President Ali Abdallah Salih's

A great writer once called Thanksgiving the "one day that is ours . . . the one day that is purely American."

When we gather around our tables tomorrow to share the fruits of our blessings, let's remember what that means. Let's be grateful for what we have. Let's be mindful of those who have less. Let's appreciate those who hold a special place in our lives and make sure that they know it. And let's think about those who can't spend the holiday with their loved ones, especially the members of our military serving overseas. I'd like to thank all our men and women in uniform and their families for their incredible service and devotion.

And that's what being an American is all about. Even when times are tough, we look out for each other. We lift each other up. And we remind ourselves just how lucky we are here, together, in the greatest country on Earth.

So from our family to yours, I want to wish everybody a wonderful and happy and healthy Thanksgiving.

And now, since Liberty and Peace have been so patient, it is my privilege to grant them the official pardon. And I'm going to—I've got to give them a little symbol. [Laughter]

[At this point, the President made a hand gesture and pardoned the turkey.]

You are hereby pardoned. [Laughter] Give him a round of applause.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:40 a.m. on the North Portico at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Brianna Hoover, Brenna Ahlquist, Val Brown, and Preston Asche, students, Willmar High School in Willmar, MN.

decision to transfer executive powers immediately to the Vice President in accordance with the agreement. This represents an important step forward for the Yemeni people, who deserve the opportunity to determine their own future.

For 10 months, the Yemeni people have courageously and steadfastly voiced their de-

mands for change in cities across Yemen in the face of violence and extreme hardship. Today's agreement brings them a significant step closer to realizing their aspirations for a new beginning in Yemen. The United States urges all parties to move immediately to implement the terms of the agreement, which will allow Yemen to begin addressing an array of formidable challenges and chart a more secure and

prosperous path for the future. The United States will continue to stand by the Yemeni people as they embark on this historic transition. We also acknowledge the important work done by our GCC partners in supporting this step forward.

NOTE: The statement referred to Vice President Abd al-Rabuh Mansur Hadi of Yemen.

Message on Small Business Saturday *November 23, 2011*

From the mom-and-pop storefront shops that anchor Main Street to the high-tech startups that keep America on the cutting edge, small businesses are the backbone of our economy and the cornerstones of our Nation's promise. These businesses create two out of every three new jobs in America, helping spur economic development in communities across our country and giving millions of families and individuals the opportunity to achieve the American dream. Through events such as Small Business Saturday, we keep our local economies strong and help maintain an American economy that can compete and win in the 21st century.

My Administration is committed to helping small businesses drive our economy toward recovery and long-term growth. I have signed into law 18 tax cuts for small businesses, including tax credits for hiring unemployed veterans as part of my American Jobs Act. The Small Business Administration had a record year,

providing more than 60,000 small businesses with over \$30 billion in lending support. And my Administration has helped provide 1,000 high-growth businesses with \$2.6 billion more in capital, while also launching Startup America, an initiative to strengthen access to capital and mentoring while reducing barriers to growth for small businesses.

Through these and other initiatives, we are supporting the entrepreneurs and small businesses that are the engine of our prosperity and a proud reflection of our Nation's character. When small businesses do well, communities flourish and our economy grows.

America was built on the hard work and creativity of our people. On this occasion, we reaffirm our support for America's small business owners and their staff, and we celebrate the proud tradition of entrepreneurship they represent.

BARACK OBAMA

The President's Weekly Address *November 24, 2011*

From my family to yours, I'd like to wish you a happy Thanksgiving. Like millions of Americans, Michelle, Malia, Sasha, and I will spend the day eating great food, watching a little football, and reflecting on how truly lucky we are.

As Americans, each of us has our own list of things and people to be thankful for. But there are some blessings we all share.

We're especially grateful for the men and women who defend our country overseas. To all the servicemembers eating Thanksgiving dinner far from your families: The American people are thinking of you today. And when you come home, we intend to make sure that we serve you as well as you're serving America.

We're also grateful for the Americans who are taking time out of their holiday to serve in