

America and our Armed Forces remain the greatest force for peace and security that the world has ever known. And together, you're standing with all of those around the world who are reaching for the same freedoms and the same liberties that we celebrate today.

So I just want to close by saying thank you. You've done everything we could have asked of you. Your families have served alongside of you with strength and devotion. America is proud of all of you. And as long as I have the privilege of serving as your Commander in Chief, I'm going to make sure that you have the support that you need in the field; I'm going to make sure that you get the care you deserve when you come home. And with the help of Michelle

and Dr. Jill Biden, we will make sure America takes care of your families and recognizes the extraordinary sacrifices that they are making.

This day is possible because of your service. And so I think it's only appropriate that we give you a chance to celebrate it together as well.

God bless you. God bless the United States of America. And happy Fourth of July, everybody. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 6:30 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Sgt. Brent A. Larimer, USMC, 1st Battalion, 2d Marine Regiment, Alpha Company; and Jill T. Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden.

Remarks Prior to White House Press Secretary James F. "Jay" Carney's Briefing *July 5, 2011*

All right. Hello, everybody. I just wanted to give you an update on the deficit negotiations that we've been having for the last several weeks. And I want to wish, again, everybody a happy Fourth of July.

Over the July 4 weekend, my team and I had a series of discussions with congressional leaders in both parties. We've made progress, and I believe that greater progress is within sight, but I don't want to fool anybody, we still have to work through some real differences.

Now, I've heard reports that there may be some in Congress who want to do just enough to make sure that America avoids defaulting on our debt in the short term, but then wants to kick the can down the road when it comes to solving the larger problem of our deficit. I don't share that view. And I don't think the American people here—sent us here to avoid tough problems. That's in fact what drives them nuts about Washington, when both parties simply take the path of least resistance. And I don't want to do that here.

I believe that right now we've got a unique opportunity to do something big: to tackle our deficit in a way that forces our Government to live within its means, that puts our economy on

a stronger footing for the future and still allows us to invest in that future.

Most of us already agree that to truly solve our deficit problem, we need to find trillions in savings over the next decade and significantly more in the decades that follow. That's what the bipartisan fiscal commission said, that's the amount that I put forward in the framework I announced a few months ago, and that's around the same amount that Republicans have put forward in their own plans. And that's the kind of substantial progress that we should be aiming for here.

To get there, I believe we need a balanced approach. We need to take on spending in domestic programs, in defense programs, in entitlement programs. And we need to take on spending in the Tax Code, spending on certain tax breaks and deductions for the wealthiest of Americans. This will require both parties to get out of our comfort zones and both parties to agree on real compromise.

I'm ready to do that; I believe there are enough people in each party that are willing to do that. And what I know is that we need to come together over the next 2 weeks to reach a deal that reduces the deficit and upholds the

full faith and credit of the United States Government and the credit of the American people.

That's why, even as we continue discussions today and tomorrow, I've asked leaders of both parties and both Houses of Congress to come here to the White House on Thursday so we can build on the work that's already been done and drive towards a final agreement. It's my hope that everybody's going to leave their ultimatums at the door, that we'll all leave our political rhetoric at the door, and that we're going to do what's best for our economy and do what's best for our people.

And I want to emphasize—I said this at my press conference: This should not come down

to the last second. I think it's important for us to show the American people and their leaders that we can find common ground and solve our problems in a responsible way. We know that it's going to require tough decisions. I think it's better for us to take those tough decisions sooner rather than later.

That's what the American people expect of us. That's what a healthy economy is going to require. That's the kind of progress that I expect to make. So I promise I will keep you guys updated as time goes on. All right?

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:49 p.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House.

Remarks at a Question-and-Answer Session With Twitter Participants July 6, 2011

Twitter Cofounder and Executive Chairman Jack Dorsey. Good afternoon, and welcome to the White House. I am Jack Dorsey from Twitter.

Through more than 200 million tweets per day, people around the world use Twitter to instantly connect to what's most meaningful to them. In every country—Egypt and Japan, the U.K. and the United States—much of this conversation is made up of everyday people engaging in spirited debate about the future of their countries.

Our partners at Salesforce Radian6 studied more than a million tweets discussing our Nation's politics over the recent weeks, and they found that America's financial security to be one of the most actively talked about topics on Twitter. They further found that President Obama's name comes up in more than half of these conversations.

And so today this vibrant discussion comes here to the White House, and you get to ask the questions. To participate, just open your web browser and go to askobama.twitter.com. Neither the President or I know the questions that will be asked today. That decision is driven entirely by the Twitter users.

And so let's get the conversation started. Ladies and gentlemen, the President of the United States.

The President. Hello, everybody! How you doing, Jack?

Mr. Dorsey. Thank you.

The President. Good to see you.

Mr. Dorsey. Good seeing you.

The President. Thank you.

Well, first of all, everybody can sit down. [Laughter] It's much easier to tweet from a seated position. [Laughter]

Mr. Dorsey. And I understand you want to start the conversation off with a tweet of yourself.

The President. I am going to make history here as the first President to live tweet. So we've got a computer over here.

[At this point, the President sent a tweet.]

Mr. Dorsey. It's only a hundred and forty characters. [Laughter]

The President. All right, I think I have done this properly. But here's the test.

Mr. Dorsey. Then you tweeted.

The President. How about that? Not bad. Thank you. So I think my question will be coming up at some point.