

generated huge amounts of jobs. And then we had the 8 years before I was elected, in which taxes were very low, but there was tepid job growth.

Now, I'm not saying there's an automatic correlation. But what I am saying is that this theory that the only thing, the only answer to every economic problem we have, the only answer for job creation is to cut taxes for the wealthiest Americans and for corporations is not borne out by the evidence. And we should be a little more creative in how we think about it.

The last thing I'll say, because we've got a lot of young people here, I know that sometimes, things feel discouraging. We've gone through two wars. We've gone through the worst financial crisis in any of our memories. We've got challenges environmentally. We've got conflicts around the world that seem intractable. We've got politicians who only seem to argue. And so I know that there must be times where you kind of say to yourself, golly, can't anybody get their act together around here? And what's the world that I'm starting off in? And how do I get my career on a sound foundation? And you got debts you've got to worry about.

I just want all of you to remember, America has gone through tougher times before, and we have always come through. We've always

emerged on the other side stronger, more unified. The trajectory of America has been to become more inclusive, more generous, more tolerant.

And so I want all of you to recognize that when I look out at each and every one of you, this diverse crowd that we have, you give me incredible hope. You inspire me. I am absolutely convinced that your generation will help us solve these problems. And I don't want you to ever get discouraged, because we're going to get through these tough times just like we have before, and America is going to be stronger, and it's going to be more prosperous, and it's going to be more unified than ever before, thanks to you.

God bless you all. God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:04 a.m. in Ritchie Coliseum at the University of Maryland. In his remarks, he referred to Warren E. Buffett, chief executive officer and chairman, Berkshire Hathaway Inc.; Gary C. Kelly, chief executive officer, Southwest Airlines Co.; and Personal Aide to the President Reginald L. Love. He also referred to his brother-in-law Craig M. Robinson. A participant referred to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

## Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister John P. Key of New Zealand

July 22, 2011

*President Obama.* I want to welcome Prime Minister Key to the Oval Office. We have had occasion to work together at various multilateral summits in Asia and have always been struck by the intelligence and thoughtfulness that the Prime Minister brings to his work.

Obviously, we are very pleased that the relationship between New Zealand and the United States is growing stronger by the day. Part of that has to do with the great affection that our peoples have towards each other. Part of it has to do with a great deal of common interests and a set of common values.

So the Prime Minister and I discussed a range of economic issues, including our great interest in promoting a more effective trade regime among the Asia-Pacific nations, and we're working on this Trans-Pacific Partnership; we hope to have a framework agreement by the time that we go to Honolulu for the APEC meeting.

We discussed how countries can cooperate around disaster response. Obviously, we are still heartbroken by the loss of life and property resulting from the earthquakes in Christchurch and are incredibly impressed by the resilience of the people of New Zealand as they

rebuild from that tragedy. But both of us, having seen what happened in Japan as well, understand that when these kinds of natural disasters strike, it's important for us to be able to pool our resources to help each other.

We discussed our security cooperation and continue to thank New Zealand for its participation in our efforts in Afghanistan. We're very grateful to the outstanding service men and women whom New Zealand has sent there.

And we discussed a wide range of regional issues. Our respective Foreign Ministers are currently in Bali, or at least—I'm not sure if they've left yet—

*Prime Minister Key.* Yes. They're close.

*President Obama.* —but they're talking about how we can work on a wide range of issues, everything from green growth to trying to standardize regulations to include the flow of trade. And throughout this process, whether it's in APEC settings, now the East Asia Summit, we've always found New Zealand to be an outstanding partner. And Prime Minister Key personally has always been an outstanding partner on these issues.

So, welcome. We know it's hot out there, so this is a warmer welcome than you perhaps had expected. [Laughter] But we very much appreciate your visit.

#### *Bombing and Shootings in Norway*

I do want to also just make note—we were just discussing the fact that there has been a bombing in Oslo, Norway, as well as a shooting there. We don't have information yet, but I wanted to personally extend my condolences to the people of Norway. And it's a reminder that the entire international community has a stake in preventing this kind of terror from occurring. And so we have to work cooperatively together both on intelligence and in terms of prevention of these kinds of horrible attacks.

I remember fondly my visit to Oslo and how warmly the people of Norway treated me. And so our hearts go out to them, and we'll provide any support we can to them as they investigate these occurrences.

So with that, John, welcome again. Thank you for being here.

*Prime Minister Key.* Mr. President, firstly, thank you for the invitation to Washington, to the White House.

Similarly, I echo your sympathies and concern for that situation in Norway. If it is an act of global terrorism, I think what it shows is no country, large or small, is immune from that risk. And that's why New Zealand plays its part in Afghanistan as we try and join others like the United States in making the world a safer place.

We've had a very good and tremendous reception the last couple of days. I want to thank you for that personally. We're excited about the opportunities of the Trans-Pacific Partnership. We're excited about the chance to put together a regional trade deal which includes the United States and which will expand over time beyond the nine countries, and I think it can deliver strengthened and continued economic growth, jobs, and higher incomes and better opportunities.

I just want to thank the United States for its response when it came to the Christchurch earthquake. Your urban search and rescue team were fabulous, and your call immediately after the earthquake, and the tremendous outpouring of support from the people of America. So thank you very much, indeed.

We are great friends and strategic partners. The Marines are coming down next year to commemorate their amazing contributions, so we're looking forward to welcoming them to New Zealand.

Thank you for allowing us to have this visit. And we thoroughly enjoyed our time here, and we'll see you very soon.

*President Obama.* You're welcome, and I look forward to returning the visit sometime.

*Prime Minister Key.* Great.

*President Obama.* My understanding is the American team is heading out to New Zealand for the World Rugby Cup—

*Prime Minister Key.* The Rugby World Cup.

*President Obama.* —the Rugby World Cup. And so good luck, guys. Although, I hear the

New Zealanders, the Kiwis are pretty good at rugby so—[laughter]—I don't think we're seeded number one in the tournament, but I have confidence that we will acquit ourselves well.

All right. Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:10 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton; and Minister of Foreign Affairs Murray S. McCully of New Zealand.

## Statement on Certification of Repeal of the United States Military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" Policy

July 22, 2011

Today we have taken the final major step toward ending the discriminatory "don't ask, don't tell" law that undermines our military readiness and violates American principles of fairness and equality. In accordance with the legislation that I signed into law last December, I have certified and notified Congress that the requirements for repeal have been met. "Don't ask, don't tell" will end once and for all in 60 days—on September 20, 2011.

As Commander in Chief, I have always been confident that our dedicated men and women in uniform would transition to a new policy in an orderly manner that preserves unit cohesion, recruitment, retention, and military effectiveness. Today's action follows extensive training of our military personnel and certification by Secretary Panetta and Admiral Mullen that our military is ready for repeal. As of September 20th, servicemembers will no longer be

forced to hide who they are in order to serve our country. Our military will no longer be deprived of the talents and skills of patriotic Americans just because they happen to be gay or lesbian.

I want to commend our civilian and military leadership for moving forward in the careful and deliberate manner that this change requires, especially with our Nation at war. I want to thank all our men and women in uniform, including those who are gay or lesbian, for their professionalism and patriotism during this transition. Every American can be proud that our extraordinary troops and their families, like earlier generations that have adapted to other changes, will only grow stronger and remain the best fighting force in the world and a reflection of the values of justice and equality that define us as Americans.

## Remarks on the Federal Budget and an Exchange With Reporters

July 22, 2011

*The President.* Good evening, everybody. I wanted to give you an update on the current situation around the debt ceiling. I just got a call about a half hour ago from Speaker Boehner, who indicated that he was going to be walking away from the negotiations that we've been engaged in here at the White House for a big deficit reduction and debt reduction package. And I thought it would be useful for me to just give you some insight into where we were and why I think that we should have moved forward with a big deal.

Essentially what we had offered Speaker Boehner was over a trillion dollars in cuts to

discretionary spending, both domestic and defense. We then offered an additional \$650 billion in cuts to entitlement programs: Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security. We believed that it was possible to shape those in a way that preserved the integrity of the system, made them available for the next generation, and did not affect current beneficiaries in an adverse way.

In addition, what we sought was revenues that were actually less than what the Gang of Six signed off on. So you had a bipartisan group of Senators, including Republicans who are in leadership in the Senate, calling for what effectively was about \$2 trillion above the Republi-