

Aug. 4 / Administration of Barack Obama, 2012

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:10 p.m. on August 3 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on August 4. In the address, the President referred to Lopez Lomong, runner, 2012 U.S.

Olympic team. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 3, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on August 4.

Statement on the Agreement Between Sudan and South Sudan on Oil Revenue *August 4, 2012*

I welcome the announcement by the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel of an agreement between Sudan and South Sudan on oil revenue. This agreement opens the door to a future of greater prosperity for the people of both countries. The leaders of Sudan and South Sudan deserve congratulations for reaching agreement and finding compromise on such an important issue, and I applaud the efforts of the international community, which came together to encourage and support the parties in finding a resolution. In particular, I am grateful for the work of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel, led by President Thabo Mbeki, for its determined and skilled leadership in bringing about this agreement. I am also encouraged by the announce-

ment of a possible agreement on humanitarian access to Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile and urge the immediate implementation of this agreement to provide urgently needed humanitarian assistance to people in these areas.

The United States will continue to support efforts to advance a lasting peace for the people of Sudan and South Sudan. I encourage the parties to build on the momentum created by these breakthroughs to resolve remaining border and security issues.

NOTE: The statement referred to President Umar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir of Sudan; President Salva Kiir Mayardit of South Sudan; and former President Thabo Mvuyelwa Mbeki of South Africa.

Statement on the Shootings in Oak Creek, Wisconsin *August 5, 2012*

Michelle and I were deeply saddened to learn of the shooting that tragically took so many lives in Wisconsin. At this difficult time, the people of Oak Creek must know that the American people have them in our thoughts and prayers, and our hearts go out to the families and friends of those who were killed and wounded. My administration will

provide whatever support is necessary to the officials who are responding to this tragic shooting and moving forward with an investigation. As we mourn this loss, which took place at a house of worship, we are reminded how much our country has been enriched by Sikhs, who are a part of our broader American family.

Remarks on Signing the Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012 and an Exchange With Reporters *August 6, 2012*

The President. Well, I want to thank everybody who is here because they all did outstanding work in helping to get this legislation completed.

As you know, I think all Americans feel we have a moral, sacred duty towards our men and women in uniform. They protect our freedom, and it's our obligation to do right by them. This

bill takes another important step in fulfilling that commitment.

I want to thank the Members of Congress who helped to make this happen. It is going to have immediate impact. It improves access to health care. It streamlines services in the VA. It expands support for veterans who are homeless.

There are two parts of the bill, though, that I especially want to highlight. First of all, this bill ends a decade-long struggle for those who serve at Camp Lejeune. Some of the veterans and their families who were based in Camp Lejeune in the years when the water was contaminated will now have access to expanded medical care. And, sadly, this act alone will not bring back those who've lost, including Janey Ensminger, but it will honor their memory by making a real difference for those who are still suffering.

The second part of this bill that I want to highlight prohibits protesting within 300 feet of military funerals during the 2 hours before and 2 hours after a service. I supported this step as a Senator. I am very pleased to be signing this bill into law. The graves of our veterans are hallowed ground. And obviously, we all defend our Constitution and the First Amendment and free speech, but we also believe that when men and women die in the service of their country and are laid to rest, it should be done with the utmost honor and respect.

So I'm glad that Congress passed this bill, and I hope that we can continue to do some more good bipartisan work in protecting our veterans. I've been advocating, for example, for a veterans job corps that could help provide additional opportunities for the men and women who are coming home as we're winding down our operations in Afghanistan and having ended the war in Iraq. And so this is a good sign of a bipartisan spirit that I'm sure is going to carry through all the way to election day and beyond.

With that, I'm going to sign the bill. Make sure I sign the right place, though.

[At this point, the President signed the bill.]

There you go. Congratulations, everybody. Good work. Thank you very much.

Shootings in Oak Creek, Wisconsin

Q. Mr. President, after the Wisconsin shooting, are you going to push for any further gun control measures?

The President. Well, first of all, we're still awaiting the outcome of a full investigation. Yesterday I had the chance to speak to both the Governor and the mayor, as well as leaders of the Sikh community in Oak Creek. All of us are heartbroken by what's happened. And I offered the thoughts and prayers not only of myself and Michelle, but also for the country as a whole.

I think all of us recognize that these kinds of terrible, tragic events are happening with too much regularity for us not to do some soul searching and to examine additional ways that we can reduce violence. And as I've already said, I think there are a lot of elements involved in it, and what I want to do is to bring together law enforcement, community leaders, faith leaders, elected officials of every level to see how we can make continued progress.

We don't yet know fully what motivated this individual to carry out this terrible act. If it turns out, as some early reports indicate, that it may have been motivated in some way by the ethnicity of those who were attending the temple, I think the American people immediately recoil against those kinds of attitudes, and I think it will be very important for us to reaffirm, once again, that in this country, regardless of what we look like, where we come from, who we worship; we are all one people, and we look after one another, and we respect one another.

But as I said, the FBI is working with local officials, and they're still investigating what motivated this individual. And as we find out more, I suspect that not only the White House, but others in Congress and at the local level will have more to say.

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:25 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his

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remarks, he referred to Gov. Scott K. Walker of Wisconsin; Mayor Stephen Scaffidi of Oak Creek, WI; and Wade Michael Page, suspected

gunman in the August 5 shootings in Oak Creek, WI. H.R. 1627, approved August 6, was assigned Public Law No. 112–154.

Statement on the Landing of the *Curiosity* Rover on Mars August 6, 2012

Tonight, on the planet Mars, the United States of America made history.

The successful landing of *Curiosity*—the most sophisticated roving laboratory ever to land on another planet—marks an unprecedented feat of technology that will stand as a point of national pride far into the future. It proves that even the longest of odds are no match for our unique blend of ingenuity and determination.

Tonight's success, delivered by NASA, parallels our major steps forward towards a vision for a new partnership with American companies to send American astronauts into space on

American spacecraft. That partnership will save taxpayer dollars while allowing NASA to do what it has always done best: push the very boundaries of human knowledge. And tonight's success reminds us that our preeminence—not just in space, but here on Earth—depends on continuing to invest wisely in the innovation, technology, and basic research that has always made our economy the envy of the world.

I congratulate and thank all the men and women of NASA who made this remarkable accomplishment a reality, and I eagerly await what *Curiosity* has yet to discover.

Remarks at an Obama Victory Fund 2012 Fundraiser in Stamford, Connecticut August 6, 2012

The President. Hello, Connecticut! Thank you so much. Well, it is wonderful to be back in Connecticut. A couple of people I want to give a shout-out to: First of all, your outstanding Governor, Dan Malloy, is here. Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman is here. Senator Dick Blumenthal is here. A outstanding trio of Congressmen: Rosa DeLauro, Jim Himes, Chris Murphy. And please give it up for Ben Harper; we are so grateful to him.

It was my birthday this weekend. I was 51 years old. And Michelle says I don't look a day over 50. [Laughter] She was pointing out, "I think in the last week you've gotten more gray hair." [Laughter] But that's okay.

Obviously, I know that all of you have been spending most of this week rooting for our unbelievable athletes in London. On the flight over here, I've got to admit, I was spending most of my time watching U.S. women's soccer. They won, by the way, 4 to 3. It was a tight game. And it's just an extraordinary reminder of the fact that even when we've got political

differences, when it comes to our love of this country and the incredible people who represent us, we are unified. And it's a very gratifying feeling during the course of a political season, where sometimes the fact that we are unified around so many important things gets hidden.

But unless you've been able to hide from your television or your cable is broke—[laughter]—you are aware that there is a pretty intense campaign going on right now. And it's a healthy thing because that's what our democracy is about. It—sometimes, it's messy, and folks get excited. But in this election in particular, the reason that there is such an intensity is because the choice that we face in November could not be bigger. Could not be bigger.

It's not just a choice between two candidates or two political parties. More than any election in recent memory, it is a choice about two fundamentally different paths for our country. And the direction that we choose, the direction that you choose when you step into that ballot