

know-how and ingenuity, and it's really an amazing accomplishment. So we can't wait to start hearing back from *Curiosity* and finding out what's going on. We're fortunate to be part of a society that can reach beyond our planet and explore frontiers that were only imagined by our ancestors. So it's inspiring to all of us.

I'm going to give you guys a personal commitment to protect these critical investments in science and technology. I thank you for devoting your lives to this cause. And if, in fact, you do make contact with Martians, please let me know right away. [Laughter] I've got a lot of other things on my plate, but I suspect that that will go to the top of the list. [Laughter] Even if they're just microbes, it will be pretty exciting. [Laughter]

Director Elachi. Well, thank you, Mr. President. And on behalf of all us at NASA, we thank you for taking the time to give us a call. And hopefully, we inspired some of the millions of young people who were watching this landing. Thank you again.

The President. Well, you've already inspired us, but I know that the photographs that are

going to start coming back are going to be remarkable and amazing. And again, you guys should be remarkably proud. Really what makes us best as a species is this curiosity that we have and this yearning to discover and know more and push the boundaries of knowledge. And you are perfect examples of that, and we couldn't be more grateful to you.

So congratulations. Keep up the great work.

Director Elachi. Thank you very much. And have a good day.

The President. Okay. Bye-bye, guys.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10 a.m. aboard Air Force One while en route to Offutt Air Force Base, NE. In his remarks, he referred to Bobak Ferdowsi, Mission Engineer, Adam Steltzner, Lead Mechanical Engineer, Peter Theisinger, Project Manager, Richard Cook, Deputy Project Manager, and John Grotzinger, Project Scientist, Mars Science Laboratory; and John M. Grunsfeld, Associate Administrator, Science Mission Directorate, National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Council Bluffs, Iowa August 13, 2012

The President. Hello, Iowa! It's good to be back! Well, it is good to be back in Iowa. I miss you guys.

Audience members. Obama! Obama! Obama!

The President. Thank you!

First of all, can everybody please give Patricia a big round of applause for the great introduction? A couple other people I want to acknowledge: your outstanding former Governor, now I think the best Secretary of Agriculture we've ever had, Tom Vilsack; Congressman Leonard Boswell; and Mayor Tom Hanafan.

See, the sun is coming out; I love being back in Iowa. Now, we're starting here in Council Bluffs, but we're going to be heading east, and I think I'm going to end at the State Fair. Michelle has told me I cannot have a fried Twinkie. [Laughter] But I will be checking out the butter cow, and I understand this year

there's a chocolate moose. [Laughter] So I'm going to have to take a look at that if I can. The last time I went to the State Fair, Secret Service let me do the bumper cars, but they said this year—I wasn't President yet, so I could do that. [Laughter] But not this time.

Now, before I get started, I just want to say a few words about the drought, because it's had such an impact on this State and all across the country. Right now folks here in Iowa and across the heartland, we're suffering from one of the worst droughts in 50 years. Farmers, ranchers depend on a good crop season to pay the bills and put a roof over their heads. And I know things are tough right now.

The best way to help these States is for the folks in Congress to pass a farm bill that not only helps farmers and ranchers respond to natural disasters, but also makes some necessary reforms and gives farmers and ranchers

some long-term certainty. Unfortunately, right now too many Members of Congress are blocking the farm bill from becoming law.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. I am told that Governor Romney's new running mate, Paul Ryan, might be around Iowa the next few days. He is one of the leaders of Congress standing in the way.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. So if you happen to see Congressman Ryan, tell him how important this farm bill is to Iowa and our rural communities. We've got to put politics aside when it comes to doing the right thing for rural America and for Iowa.

Now, it's always a problem waiting for Congress. So in the meantime, I've made sure my administration, led by Tom Vilsack, is doing everything we can to provide relief to those who need it. So last week, we announced \$30 million to help ranchers and farmers get more water to livestock and rehabilitate land affected by drought.

And today we're announcing that the Federal Government will help livestock producers by purchasing over \$150 million worth of meat and fish right now, while prices are low. We'll freeze it for later, but—we've got a lot of freezers. [Laughter] And that way, that will help ranchers who are going through tough times right now. And also over the long term, obviously, that food is going to be spent by folks at the Pentagon and other places.

America depends on farmers and ranchers to put food on the table, depends on farmers and ranchers to feed our families. So we've got to be there for them, not just today, but tomorrow, and every day until this drought passes, because we are Americans. That's what we do. We take care of each other. And when tough times strike our neighbors, we give them a hand.

Now, that speaks to the larger idea of why I'm here. The notion that I'm my brother's keeper, I'm my sister's keeper, the idea that we're in this together, that was at the heart of the journey that began here in Iowa 5 years ago. We spent a lot of time on bus tours like this one at school gyms and family farms and

small businesses across this State. Although, I have to say the bus we had wasn't as nice as this one. [Laughter] We used to get some buses. [Laughter]

And you know, that campaign back in 2007, 2008, it had plenty of ups and downs, but no matter what, you, the people of Iowa, had my back. You had my back. When the pundits had written us off, when we were down in the polls, you believed in me, and I believed in you. And it was on your front porches and in your backyards where the movement for change in this country began.

But our journey is not finished, not yet. I'm going to spend the next 3 days driving all across this State just like I did in 2007, from Council Bluffs to the Quad Cities, because once more, you face a choice in November. And that choice could not be bigger. It is not just a choice between two candidates or two political parties. More than any other election in recent memory, this is a choice between two fundamentally different visions of this country and the path that we have to take.

And the direction that you choose when you walk into that voting booth in November is going to have an impact not just on your lives, but on your children's lives, your grandchildren's lives, for decades to come. This one counts. I mean, think—

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Think about this, Council Bluffs. Four years ago, we came together—and it wasn't just Democrats, it was Independents and some Republicans—because we understood that we needed to restore the basic bargain that made this country great, the basic deal that created the greatest middle class and the most prosperous economy the world has ever known.

And it's a simple bargain. It says if you work hard, your work should be rewarded. If you act responsibly and you put in enough effort, you should be able to find a job that pays the bills, have a home you can call your own, count on health care when you get sick, put away enough to retire with dignity and respect, and most of all, give your kids an education that al-

lows them to dream even bigger than you did and do even better than you did. That's the American promise. That's the American Dream.

And the reason we came together was because we had seen a decade in which that dream was being betrayed. We had gone through a decade where jobs were being shipped overseas, where you were working harder, but making less, while the cost of everything from health care to a college education kept on going up. And it all culminated in the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression.

And so we knew that restoring the basic bargain that made this country was not going to be easy. We knew it would take more than one year or one term or even one President. And that was before the crisis hit and we saw friends and neighbors lose their jobs or lose their homes, lose their savings, pushing the American Dream even further out of reach for too many working people.

But you know, over the last 3½ years, we've seen America's grit. You folks are tougher than any tough times. When we get knocked down, we stand back up. Some workers lost their jobs; they went back to community college, got retrained, and now got a new job. Small businesses kept their doors open by hook or by crook. And so, slowly, we've seen 4½ million new jobs created, half a million new manufacturing jobs, the most since the Great Depression, the most since the 1990s.

And what we realized was that no matter how bad the crisis was, one thing did not change, and that is the character of the American people and the resilience of the American people. And what hasn't changed is our determination to do what we came together in 2008 to do, and that is to make sure that in America, hard work pays off, so that no matter who you are or where you come from or what you look like, you can make it here in America if you try. That's what this campaign is about, Iowa. And that's why I'm running for a second term as President of the United States of America.

You know, I told you—4 years ago I said, there aren't going to be quick fixes, there won't

be easy solutions. The challenges we face had been building up for decades. And that's still true today. But I want everybody to know that we have the capacity to meet every challenge. We've got the best workers in the world. We've got the best entrepreneurs in the world. We've got the best colleges, the best universities, the best researchers in the world, the best scientists in the world. We're still a young nation. We've got the greatest diversity of talent and ingenuity. People come here from every corner of the globe. They want to be here. So whatever the naysayers may say or folks who try to make things look dark, listen, there is not another country on Earth that wouldn't trade places with the United States of America.

What's holding us back right now is Washington politics.

Audience members. Yes!

The President. You've got folks on the other side who think compromise is a dirty word and whose main idea is to go back to the same old top-down economics that got us into this mess in the first place.

This weekend, my opponent, Mr. Romney, chose as his running mate the ideological leader of the Republicans in Congress. And I've got to tell you, I know Congressman Ryan. He's a good man; he's a family man. He is an articulate spokesman for Governor Romney's vision. But the problem is that vision is one that I fundamentally disagree with.

Governor Romney and his allies in Congress, they think that if we just get rid of more regulations on big corporations and give more tax breaks to the wealthiest Americans, if we end Medicare as we know it, make it a voucher system, then somehow this is all going to lead to jobs and prosperity for everybody.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. The centerpiece of Mr. Romney's entire economic plan is a new \$5 trillion tax cut, a lot of it going to the very wealthiest Americans.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Last week, an independent study—not by me, but by independent economists—said that Governor Romney's plan would actually raise taxes on middle class

families with children by an average of \$2,000 apiece.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Now, this wouldn't be done—not to reduce the deficit. It's not going to be done to create jobs or put folks back to work rebuilding our roads or bridges or schools. This is you guys paying an extra \$2,000 to give another \$250,000 tax cut to folks who are making more than \$3 million a year.

Audience members. No!

The President. Does this sound familiar to you? They have tried to sell us this trickle-down theory before. And guess what: Every time it's been tried, it has not worked. It did not work then; it won't work now. It won't create jobs. It won't lower our deficit. It is not a plan to move our economy forward. We do not need more tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans. We need tax relief for working families.

You need tax relief, folks who are trying to raise kids and keep them healthy and put a roof over their heads and send them to college. And that's the choice in this election. That's the reason I'm running again.

Four years ago, I promised to cut middle class taxes. And by the way, that's exactly what I've done. The average working family here in Iowa and across the country has seen their tax rates go down about \$3,600. So when you see—when you hear the other side talking about Democrats raising your taxes, your taxes are lower since I've been President. That's the truth.

Now, I want to keep your taxes right where they are for the first \$250,000 of everybody's income. So if your family makes under \$250,000—which, by the way, is 98 percent of Americans—you won't see your income taxes go up by a single dime next year. Ninety-seven percent of small businesses will not see their taxes go up.

But here's the thing, Council Bluffs. This is important. If—

Audience member. And Omaha!

The President. And Omaha. We love you. Didn't want to leave our Nebraska folks left out here.

But here's the thing: If you're lucky enough and fortunate enough and been blessed enough to be in the other 2 percent, the top 2 percent, you still get a tax cut for your first \$250,000 of income. All we're saying is, after that, maybe you can do a little bit more to help pay down this deficit and invest in things like education that help our economy grow.

And listen, Government is going to do its part. We've already cut a trillion dollars of savings—of spending. We're going to cut more. We've got to streamline Government and make it work efficiently and effectively. But what we also can do is just ask folks like me to do a little bit more. And all we're asking is for folks like me to go back to the rates that we paid under Bill Clinton. And by the way, that was a time when we created nearly 23 million new jobs, and we created the biggest budget surplus in history. And here's the kicker: Folks at the top actually did well because, guess what, when a factory worker or a construction worker or a receptionist or a teacher or a firefighter or a cop, when they've got a little more money in their pockets, what do they do?

Audience members. Spend it!

The President. Maybe they go out and buy a new car, after having been driving that old beater around for the last 15 years. Maybe they finally get the new dishwasher because the old one has been broke for a long time. Maybe they go buy a computer for their kid for the new school year or they go to a restaurant or, heaven forbid, they take a vacation. And that means businesses suddenly have more customers. And then businesses start hiring more workers because they're making more profit. And everybody does better. That's how we grow the economy, not from the top down, but from the middle out and from the bottom out.

That's the choice in this election. And that's why I'm running for a second term as President of the United States.

You know, across the board, there is a sharp contrast between me and Mr. Romney. When the auto industry was on the brink of collapse, more than a million jobs at stake, Governor Romney said, "Let Detroit go bankrupt." I refused to turn my back on one of the great

American industries. I bet on American workers. I bet on American manufacturing. Three years later, the American auto industry has come roaring back. So now I want to make sure that high-tech manufacturing jobs are taking root here, not in China. I want them to take root here in Council Bluffs.

Governor Romney, he likes to brag about his private sector experience. A bunch of that private sector experience was investing in companies that have been called “pioneers” of outsourcing. Let me tell you something, I want in-sourcing, not outsourcing. I want to stop giving tax breaks to companies that are shipping jobs overseas. Let’s give tax breaks to companies that are investing here in the United States of America, hiring American workers to make American products to sell around the world, stamped with those words: Made in America. That’s what I believe in.

Here’s another difference. Right now home-grown energy, things like wind energy—creating new jobs all across the States like Iowa. And Governor Romney wants to end tax credits for wind energy producers. America now produces twice as much electricity from wind as we did before I took office. We’ve doubled the amount of electricity we’re producing with wind. The wind industry supports about 7,000 jobs in Iowa. Without these wind energy tax credits, a whole lot of these jobs would be at risk: 37,000 jobs across this country would be at risk.

So I think we should stop spending billions on taxpayer subsidies for an oil industry that is making all kinds of profits, and let’s keep investing in the clean energy that’s never been more promising. That’s a disagreement I’ve got with Governor Romney. That’s the choice in this election.

Back in 2008, I said it was time to end the war in Iraq. We ended it. I said it was time for us to go after bin Laden and Al Qaida, and we did. We’ve set a timeline to start bringing our troops out of Afghanistan. And so, after a decade of war, I think it’s time to do some nation-building here at home.

Now, we could not have accomplished any of this without the extraordinary service of our

men and women in uniform. And I promise you this: As long as I am Commander in Chief, this country will care for our veterans and serve our veterans as well as they’ve served us. Nobody who has fought for this country should have to fight for a job or a roof over their heads when they come home. That’s why we’ve invested so heavily in making sure that the VA is working the way it’s supposed to. That’s why we’ve put more money into treatment of PTSD and traumatic brain injury, ending homeless among veterans. But those are investments that we’ve got to make.

And my plan says, let’s take half the money that we’re no longer spending on war, and let’s also use it to put people back to work building our roads and our runways and our ports and our wireless networks and creating a veterans job corps so local communities can hire our veterans to be firefighters and police officers in communities that need it. That’s the America that we want to build. That’s the choice in this election. That’s why I’m running for a second term.

I want to make sure that America once again leads the world in educating our kids and training our workers. I want to help our schools hire and reward the best teachers, especially in math and science. I want to give 2 million more Americans the chance to go to community college and learn the skills that businesses are hiring for right now. And I want to get colleges and universities to bring down the cost of tuition once and for all. Because higher education is not a luxury; it’s an economic necessity in the 21st century. Everybody should be able to afford it.

I’ve got a plan to help homeowners refinance their homes at historically low rates, save an average of \$3,000. My opponent’s solution is to let the market bottom out. That’s what he said. That’s not a solution; that’s part of the problem. That’s a difference in this election.

My opponent says one of the first things he’d do is repeal Obamacare.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. I think that part of being middle class in America is making sure you

don't go bankrupt when you get sick. That's why, because of this law, if you've got a pre-existing condition, you'll be able to get health insurance. That's why 6½ million young people can now stay on their parent's plan. That's why seniors are now getting discounts on their prescription drugs. That's why insurance companies can't drop your coverage or impose lifetime limits when you need it most.

It's true, Obama does care. That's why we passed this bill. The Supreme Court has spoken. We're not going backward, we are going forward.

All these things—whether it's bringing back manufacturing, creating more construction jobs, protecting people's health care, making sure your kids get the best education, making sure our veterans have the same kind of opportunity my grandfather had when he came back from World War II and was able to go to college on the GI bill—all these things are part of what makes up a middle class life. And they're all bound together in that idea that made this country great, that basic promise that if you work hard, you can get ahead.

It's not always going to be smooth. There are going to be times where times are tough. But the basic idea that if you work hard and look after your family, that work is going to be rewarded, that's the promise that our parents and grandparents passed down to us. And now it's the promise we've got to pass on to our kids and our grandkids. That's what's at stake in this election.

And so, over the next 3 months, you are going to see the other side spend more money on negative ads than we've ever seen in history. And these folks, they've got some really rich people writing \$10 million checks. And basically, they're going to say the same thing over and over again. They know their economic theories aren't going to sell because folks remember what happened when we tried them. So all they're going to say is the economy is not as good as it should be and it's Obama's fault. And they expect you to have amnesia and not remember who it is that got us into the mess. But they figure, if we run these ads often enough,

maybe folks will start kind of thinking about it. That is true. [Laughter]

So they may have a plan to win the election, but they can't hide the fact that they don't have a plan to create jobs or revive the middle class or grow the economy. And I do have that plan. I've got a plan that puts you first. I've got a plan that puts middle class families and folks striving to get into the middle class first.

But I'm going to need your help. I'm going to need your help. I've got to make sure you're registered. I've got to make sure your friends are registered to vote. In Iowa, you can get registered online. All you have to do is go on gottaregister.com. That's g-o-t-t-a, "gotta"—[laughter]—gottaregister.com.

The thing is, we've been outspent before and we've been counted out before. But what you taught me in 2007, 2008 was that when the American people cut through all the nonsense, when you focus your attention and you remember the story of your own families and all the struggles your parents and grandparents went through and how, maybe because you got a student loan somewhere or maybe because your dad was able to get that job at the factory, you guys were able to build a good life together, just like Michelle and I were able to get opportunities that our parents could have never imagined; when you focus on that thing that is best in America—the way we pull together and give everybody a fair shot, and everybody is doing their fair share and everybody is playing by the same set of rules and everybody is taking responsibility—when you come together and reaffirm those core values that make this the greatest country on Earth, you can't be stopped. All the money those folks are spending doesn't matter. You are our democracy. You make decisions about the direction of this country.

And, Iowa, I've got to tell you, we've come too far to go back now. We've got too many good jobs we still have to create. We've got too many teachers we've still got to hire. We've got too many schools we still have to rebuild. We've got too many students who still need help getting an affordable education. We've got more homegrown energy we've got to gen-

erate. We've got more troops we've got to bring home. Most of all, we've got more doors of opportunity that we've got to open for everybody who's willing to work hard enough to walk through those doors.

That is what is at stake in this election. That is why I am running for President of the United States. That is why I'm asking for your vote, not just for me, but for this country that we believe in. And if you're willing to work with me and stand with me and knock on doors with me and make phone calls with me, if you vote for me in November, we will win Iowa. We will

win this election. We'll finish what we started in 2008. And we'll remind the world why the United States of America is the greatest nation on Earth.

God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:32 a.m. at Bayliss Park. In his remarks, he referred to Patricia A. LaBounty, collections and outreach manager, Union Pacific Railroad Museum; and Republican Presidential candidate former Gov. W. Mitt Romney of Massachusetts.

Remarks in Missouri Valley, Iowa *August 13, 2012*

Today we are here at the McIntosh family farms, here in Missouri Valley, Iowa, and we just got a tour from Dean, Don, Richard, and Roger. And like a lot of families in this area and across America, the McIntoshes are suffering under one of the worst droughts in 50 years.

We've just been through the warmest 12-month period ever recorded, and right now more than 60 percent of the country is under drought conditions. It's hot, it's dry, and the summer is not over yet.

Things are especially tough for farmers and ranchers, like the McIntoshes, who depend on a good growing season to pay the bills and keep a roof over their heads. The McIntosh family has been farming in the Missouri Valley for 96 years, so they've seen just about everything, but this is the worst drought they can remember in decades. As a result, their corn yield is off by about a third, and some of their neighbors in surrounding areas are struggling even worse.

Here in Iowa, almost half of the corn crop and more than a third of the soybean crop is in poor or very poor condition. Livestock producers are having trouble feeding their herds. Crops and livestock are a \$30 billion business in Iowa, and that's a huge chunk of the economy that's being put at risk. And States all across the heartland have it just as bad.

Now, the best way to help these States is for Congress to act. They need to pass a farm bill

that not only helps farmers and ranchers respond to natural disasters, but also makes necessary reforms and gives them some long-term certainty. But the folks suffering from this drought can't wait for Congress to do its job. So in the meantime, I've made sure that my administration, under the leadership of Secretary Tom Vilsack, is doing everything we can to provide relief to those who need it.

I've directed the Department of Agriculture and the Small Business Administration to help give farmers and small businesses across 32 States access to low-interest emergency loans. We've opened up Federal land for grazing. We're working with insurance companies to give farmers a short grace period on their premiums, since money will be tight for a lot of families at the end of the crop year. And last week, we announced another \$30 million to help get more water to livestock and restore land affected by the drought.

Today we're going to go even further, and we're focusing on helping people who make their living by bringing cattle, pigs, sheep, and other animals to market. The way things work right now, farmers who raise crops are eligible for subsidized insurance to help cushion the blow if disaster strikes. But livestock producers don't have that option. So when grasslands dry up and they've got to sell their animals early, it's a huge financial blow and can affect markets all across the country. We can make a