

alized that both his legs were gone. And his left arm. And his right hand.

But as Taylor lay there, fully conscious, bleeding to death, he cautioned the medics to wait before rushing his way. He feared another IED was nearby. Taylor's concern wasn't for his own life, it was for theirs.

Eventually, they cleared the area. They tended to Taylor's wounds. They carried him off the battlefield. And days later, Taylor was carried into Walter Reed, where he became only the fifth American treated there to survive the amputation of all four limbs.

Now, Taylor's recovery has been long. And it has been arduous. And it's captivated the Nation. A few months after the attack, with the help of prosthetics, the love and support of his family, and above all, his girlfriend Danielle, who never left his side, Taylor wasn't just walking again. In a video that went viral, the world watched he and Danielle dance again.

I've often said the most humbling part of my job is serving as Commander in Chief. And one of the reasons is that, every day, I get to meet heroes. I met Taylor at Walter Reed. And then in July, at the White House, I presented him with the Purple Heart. And right now hanging on a wall in the West Wing is a photo of that day, a photo of Taylor Morris smiling wide and standing tall.

## Statement on the Observance of Diwali November 13, 2012

Today, here at home and across the globe, Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, and some Buddhists will celebrate the holiday of Diwali, the festival of lights. Diwali is a time for gathering with family and friends, often marked with good food and dancing. It is also a time for prayer and reflection about those less fortunate. It is a testament to the compassion of these communities that so many of them have helped those that have been devastated by Hurricane Sandy.

Many who observe this holiday will light the *diya*, or lamp, which symbolizes the triumph of light over darkness and knowledge over igno-

I should point out that Taylor couldn't make it here today because he and Danielle are out kayaking. [Laughter] In Taylor we see the best of America: a spirit that says, when we get knocked down, we rise again. When times are tough, we come together. When one of us falters, we lift them up. In this country, we take care of our own, especially our veterans, who have served so bravely and sacrificed so selflessly in our name. And we carry on, knowing that our best days always lie ahead.

On this day, we thank all of our veterans from all of our war, not just for your service to this country, but for reminding us why America is and always will be the greatest nation on Earth.

God bless you. God bless our veterans. God bless our men and women in uniform. And God bless these United States of America. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:36 a.m. at Arlington National Cemetery. In his remarks, he referred to Richard J. Delaney, president of the national board of directors, Retired Enlisted Association; Maj. Gen. Michael S. Linnington, USA, commanding general, National Capital Region and Military District of Washington; Jill T. Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden; and Danielle Kelly, girlfriend of PO Taylor Morris, USN.

rance. As that lamp is lit, we should all recommit ourselves to bring light to any place still facing darkness.

Earlier this year, we were reminded of the evil that exists in the world when a gunman walked into the Sikh *gurdwara* in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, and opened fire. In the wake of that horrible tragedy, we saw the resilience of a community that drew strength from their faith and a sense of solidarity with their neighbors, Sikh and non-Sikh alike. We also saw compassion and love in the heroic actions of the first-responders and the outpouring of support from people across the country. Out of a day of

sadness, we were reminded that the beauty of America remains our diversity and our right to religious freedom.

## The President's News Conference November 14, 2012

*The President.* Good afternoon, everybody. Please have a seat. I hear you have some questions for me. [Laughter] But let me just make a few remarks at the top, and then I'll open it up.

First of all, I want to reiterate what I said on Friday. Right now our economy is still recovering from a very deep and damaging crisis, so our top priority has to be jobs and growth. We've got to build on the progress that we've made, because this Nation succeeds when we've got a growing, thriving middle class.

And that's the idea at the core of the plan that I talked about on the campaign trail over the last year: rewarding manufacturers and small businesses that create jobs here, not overseas; providing more Americans the chance to earn the skills that businesses are looking for right now; keeping this country at the forefront of research, technology, and clean energy; putting people back to work rebuilding our roads, our bridges, and our schools; and reducing our deficit in a balanced and responsible way.

Now, on this last item, we face a very clear deadline that requires us to make some big decisions on jobs, taxes, and deficits by the end of the year. Both parties voted to set this deadline. And I believe that both parties can work together to make these decisions in a balanced and responsible way.

Now, yesterday I had a chance to meet with labor and civic leaders for their input. Today I'm meeting with CEOs of some of America's largest companies. And I'll meet with leaders of both parties of Congress before the week is out. Because there's only one way to solve these challenges, and that is to do it together.

As I've said before, I'm open to compromise, and I'm open to new ideas. And I've been encouraged over the past week to hear Republican after Republican agree on the need for more revenue from the wealthiest

To those celebrating Diwali, I wish you, your families, and loved ones happy Diwali and *Saal Mubarak*.

Americans as part of our arithmetic if we're going to be serious about reducing the deficit.

Because when it comes to taxes, there are two pathways available: Option one, if Congress fails to act by the end of this year, everybody's taxes will automatically go up, including the 98 percent of Americans who make less than \$250,000 a year and the 97 percent of small businesses who earn less than \$250,000 a year. That doesn't make sense. Our economy can't afford that right now. Certainly, no middle class family can afford that right now. And nobody in either party says that they want it to happen.

The other option is to pass a law right now that would prevent any tax hike whatsoever on the first \$250,000 of everybody's income. And by the way, that means every American, including the wealthiest Americans, get a tax cut. It means that 98 percent of all Americans, and 97 percent of all small businesses won't see their taxes go up a single dime. The Senate has already passed a law like this. Democrats in the House are ready to pass a law like this. And I hope Republicans in the House come on board too.

We should not hold the middle class hostage while we debate tax cuts for the wealthy. We should at least do what we agree on, and that's to keep middle class taxes low. And I'll bring everyone in to sign it right away so we can give folks some certainty before the holiday season.

Now, I won't pretend that figuring out everything else will be easy, but I'm confident we can do it, and I know we have to. I know that that's what the American people want us to do. That was the very clear message from the election last week. And that was the message of a letter that I received over the weekend.

It came from a man in Tennessee who began by writing that he didn't vote for me, which is okay. [Laughter] But what he said