

Apr. 8 / Administration of Barack Obama, 2013

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:45 p.m. in the Chase Family Arena of the Sports Center. In his remarks, he referred to Nicole and Ian Hockley, parents of Dylan Hockley, who was

killed in the shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, CT, on December 14, 2012; and First Selectman E. Patricia Llodra of Newtown, CT.

Statement on the Death of Former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of the United Kingdom

April 8, 2013

With the passing of Baroness Margaret Thatcher, the world has lost one of the great champions of freedom and liberty, and America has lost a true friend. As a grocer's daughter who rose to become Britain's first female Prime Minister, she stands as an example to our daughters that there is no glass ceiling that can't be shattered. As Prime Minister, she helped restore the confidence and pride that has always been the hallmark of Britain at its best. And as an unapologetic supporter of our transatlantic alliance, she knew that with

strength and resolve, we could win the cold war and extend freedom's promise.

Here in America, many of us will never forget her standing shoulder to shoulder with President Reagan, reminding the world that we are not simply carried along by the currents of history, we can shape them with moral conviction, unyielding courage, and iron will. Michelle and I send our thoughts to the Thatcher family and all the British people, as we carry on the work to which she dedicated her life: free peoples standing together, determined to write our own destiny.

Statement on Holocaust Remembrance Day

April 8, 2013

I join people here in the United States, in Israel, and around the world in observing Holocaust Remembrance Day. Today we honor the memories of the 6 million Jewish victims and millions of others who perished in the darkness of the Shoah. As we reflect on the beautiful lives lost and their great potential that would never be fulfilled, we also pay tribute to all those who resisted the Nazis' heinous acts and all those who survived.

On my recent trip to Israel, I had the opportunity to visit Yad Vashem, Israel's national Holocaust memorial, and reaffirm our collective responsibility to confront anti-Semitism, prejudice, and intolerance across the world. On this *Yom Hashoah*, we must accept the full responsibility of remembrance—as nations and as individuals—not simply to pledge “never again,” but to commit ourselves to the understanding, empathy and compassion that is the foundation of peace and human dignity.

Remarks at PBS's “In Performance at the White House: Memphis Soul”

April 9, 2013

Everybody, please have a seat. And give it up for our musical director, Booker T. and the Memphis Soul all-stars. I just want everybody to know that it is now my second term, so rather than “Hail to the Chief,” we're going with that from here on out. *[Laughter]* Little change in tradition.

Now, before we get started, I am going to exercise some Presidential prerogative to say a few words about two very special people who are here tonight. This will humiliate them, but I'm going to go ahead and do it anyway. Jess Wright and Kenny Thompson both work on

my staff, crucial members of my team since way back in Iowa in 2007.

Over the weekend, Kenny popped the question, and Jess said yes. So I want to congratulate—publicly—Kenny Thompson, Jess Wright. Beautiful couple. We love them. They are wonderful. They've been loyal, shown such great friendship to me, and I'm so glad that they have gone ahead and taken the plunge.

By the way, guys, Justin Timberlake just got married to this lovely young lady right here, Jessica Biel. So Justin can probably offer you a few pointers. And, Justin, they are looking for a wedding singer. [Laughter] I'm just saying.

Tonight I am speaking not just as a President, but as one of America's best known Al Green impersonators. [Laughter] So I have a new appreciation for what Al once said about the Memphis soul sound that he helped create: "We don't even know ourselves how that music has endured for so long and how that came out of us."

All I know is I've been looking forward to tonight because, let's face it, who does not love this music? These songs get us on the dance floor. Even the Governor of Tennessee said he's going to dance tonight. [Laughter] They get stuck in our heads. We go back over them again and again. And they've played an important part in our history.

In the sixties and seventies, Memphis knew its share of division and discord and injustice. But in that turbulent time, the sound of Hi and Duke and Sun and Stax records tried to bridge those divides, to create a little harmony with harmony. The great Memphis musician Don Nix went to an all-White school, and he described what it was like. He said: "If you could imagine, nobody's ever heard R&B music before. White kids had never heard it. And you can imagine what that did to us."

So he and others kept playing music that everybody could get in to. They created a whole new sound, and as they did, they broke down barriers. On McLemore Avenue, in the heart of a segregated city, Stax Records was integrated from the studio musicians all the way to upper management. Booker T. Jones and Steve Cropper, who are both here tonight, helped

form one of the city's first integrated bands. They weren't allowed to go to school together. They weren't always allowed to travel or eat together. But no one could stop them from playing music together.

And that was the spirit of their music—the sound of "Soulsville, U.S.A."—a music that, at its core, is about the pain of being alone, the power of human connection, and the importance of treating each other right. After all, this is the music that asked us to "Try a Little Tenderness." It's the music that put "Mr. Big Stuff" in his place. [Laughter] And it's the music that challenged us to accept new ways of thinking with four timeless words: "Can you dig it?" [Laughter]

So it's really no surprise that Memphis soul swept the Nation, and it has stood the test of time. Tonight we bring it to the White House.

We've got folks here who were there at the beginning, legends like Mavis Staples, Charlie Musselwhite, William Bell, and Eddie Floyd. We've got artists like Cyndi Lauper and Ben Harper and Queen Latifah, who still turn to Memphis for inspiration. We've got Justin Timberlake, a proud son of Memphis who's never forgotten his roots, and the Alabama Shakes, who are bringing the Muscle Shoals sound to a new generation.

So to all of you, even more than for the music you've created, I want to say a special thank you for the difference that you've made in our lives. More than half a century after Soulsville, U.S.A., first opened its doors, you still bring us together. You still remind us how much we have in common. You still help us imagine a better place. And you promise, through your beautiful music, that you can take us there.

So tonight we're going to start things off with two extraordinary artists who span the generations. One's a Memphis legend who's been around just about forever, the other an "American Idol" who's turning 21 today. In the heyday of soul music, no band had more hits than the group known simply as Sam and Dave. Here to perform his classic "Soul Man" along with Joshua Ledet, please welcome the great Sam Moore.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:40 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Kenneth D. Thompson, Director of Messaging, Office of the

Vice President; actor Jessica C. Biel; Gov. William E. Haslam of Tennessee; and musicians Al Green and Dana E. “Queen Latifah” Owens.

Remarks on the Federal Budget *April 10, 2013*

Good morning, everybody. Please, please have a seat. Well, as President, my top priority is to do everything I can to reignite what I consider to be the true engine of the American economy: a rising, thriving middle class. That’s what I think about every day. That’s the driving force behind every decision that I make.

And over the past 3 years, our businesses have created nearly 6.5 million new jobs. But we know we can help them create more. Corporate profits are at an alltime high. But we have to get wages and incomes rising as well. Our deficits are falling at the fastest pace in years. But we can do more to bring them down in a balanced and responsible way.

The point is, our economy is poised for progress, as long as Washington doesn’t get in the way. Frankly, the American people deserve better than what we’ve been seeing: a short-sighted, crisis-driven decisionmaking, like the reckless, across-the-board spending cuts that are already hurting a lot of communities out there, cuts that economists predict will cost us hundreds of thousands of jobs during the course of this year.

If we want to keep rebuilding our economy on a stronger, more stable foundation, then we’ve got to get smarter about our priorities as a nation. And that’s what the budget I’m sending to Congress today represents: a fiscally responsible blueprint for middle class jobs and growth.

For years, the debate in this town has raged between reducing our deficits at all costs and making the investments necessary to grow our economy. And this budget answers that argument, because we can do both. We can grow our economy and shrink our deficits. In fact, as we saw in the 1990s, nothing shrinks deficits faster than a growing economy. That’s been my

goal since I took office. And that should be our goal going forward.

At a time when too many Americans are still looking for work, my budget begins by making targeted investments in areas that will create jobs right now and prime our economy to keep generating good jobs down the road. As I said in my State of the Union Address, we should ask ourselves three questions every day: How do we make America a magnet for new jobs? How do we give our workers the skills they need to do those jobs? And how do we make sure that hard work leads to a decent living?

To make America a magnet for good jobs, this budget invests in new manufacturing hubs to help turn regions left behind by globalization into global centers of high-tech jobs. We’ll spark new American innovation and industry with cutting-edge research, like the initiative I announced to map the human brain and cure disease. We’ll continue our march towards energy independence and address the threat of climate change. And our Rebuild America Partnership will attract private investment to put construction workers back on the job rebuilding our roads, our bridges, and our schools, in turn attracting even more new business to communities across the country.

To help workers earn the skills they need to fill those jobs, we’ll work with States to make high-quality preschool available to every child in America. And we’re going to pay for it by raising taxes on tobacco products that harm our young people. It’s the right thing to do.

We’ll reform our high schools and job training programs to equip more Americans with the skills they need to compete in the 21st-century economy. And we’ll help more middle class families afford the rising cost of college.

To make sure hard work is rewarded, we’ll build new ladders of opportunity into the mid-