

So, in the coming weeks, as the idea of reform becomes more real and the debate becomes more heated, and there are folks who are trying to pull this thing apart, remember Alan and all those who share the same hopes and the same dreams. Remember that this is not just a debate about policy. It's about people. It's about men and women and young people who want nothing more than the chance to earn their way into the American story.

And throughout our history, that has only made our Nation stronger. And it's how we will make sure that this century is the same as the last: an American century, welcoming of every-

body who aspires to do something more and is willing to work hard to do it and is willing to pledge that allegiance to our flag.

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

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:40 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Sergey M. Brin, co-founder and former president, Google Inc.; Jerry Yang, cofounder and former chief executive officer, Yahoo! Inc.; Andrew S. Grove, co-founder and former chief executive officer, Intel Corp.; and Mike Krieger, cofounder, Instagram, Inc.

## Videotaped Remarks on the Situation in Syria

*January 29, 2013*

For nearly 2 years, the Asad regime has waged a brutal war against the Syrian people, murdering innocent men, women, and children in their homes, in bread lines, and at universities. In the face of this barbarism, the United States has joined with nations around the world in calling for an end to the Asad regime and a transition that leads to a peaceful, inclusive, and democratic Syria, where the rights of all Syrians are protected. We've worked to isolate Asad and his regime, impose sanctions that starve the regime of funds, recognize the Syrian opposition coalition as the legitimate representative of the Syrian people, call for accountability for perpetrators of atrocities, and provide humanitarian relief to Syrians in need.

The relief we send doesn't say "Made in America," but make no mistake, our aid reflects the commitment of the American people. American aid means food and clean water for millions of Syrians. American aid means medicine and treatment for hundreds of thousands of patients in Damascus, Dara'a, and Homs. It means immunizations for 1 million Syrian children. American aid means winter supplies for more than half a million people in Aleppo, Homs, and Dayr az Zawr. And we're working with allies and partners so that this aid reaches those in need.

Today we're taking another step. I've approved an additional \$155 million in humanitarian aid for people in Syria and refugees fleeing the violence. Here, I want to speak directly to the people of Syria. This new aid will mean more warm clothing for children and medicine for the elderly, flour and wheat for your families, and blankets, boots, and stoves for those huddled in damaged buildings. It will mean health care for victims of sexual violence and field hospitals for the wounded. Even as we work to end the violence against you, this aid will help address some of the immediate needs you face each day.

This new commitment will bring America's total humanitarian aid to Syria to \$365 million, making us the largest single donor of humanitarian assistance to the Syrian people. Today I also call on the international community to do more to help these Syrians in need and to contribute to the latest U.N. humanitarian appeal.

We're under no illusions. The days ahead will continue to be very difficult. But what's clear is that the regime continues to weaken and lose control of territory. The opposition continues to grow stronger. More Syrians are standing up for their dignity. The Asad regime will come to an end. The Syrian people will have their chance to forge their own future.

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And they will continue to find a partner in the United States of America.

NOTE: In his remarks, the President referred to President Bashar al-Asad of Syria. The Of-

fice of the Press Secretary also released an Arabic language transcript of this address. Recording information was unavailable.

## Statement on the Resignation of Raymond H. LaHood as Secretary of Transportation *January 29, 2013*

I want to thank Secretary LaHood for his dedication, his hard work, and his years of service to the American people, including the outstanding work he's done over the last 4 years as Secretary of Transportation. I also want to thank Ray for his friendship. Years ago, we were drawn together by a shared belief that those of us in public service owe an allegiance not to party or faction, but to the people we were elected to represent. And Ray has never wavered in that belief.

As Secretary of Transportation, he has fought to create jobs and grow our economy by re-

building our roads, bridges, and transit systems. Under his leadership, we have made significant investments in our passenger rail system and laid the groundwork for the high-speed rail network of the future. And every American who travels by air, rail, or highway can thank Ray for his commitment to making our entire transportation system safer and stronger. I am grateful to Ray for everything he's done, and I wish him only the best going forward.

## Statement on Senate Confirmation of John F. Kerry as Secretary of State *January 29, 2013*

I am pleased that the Senate has confirmed John Kerry as our next Secretary of State with overwhelming bipartisan support. From his decorated service in Vietnam to his decades in the Senate as a champion of American global leadership, John's distinguished career has prepared him to guide American diplomacy in the years ahead.

John has earned the respect of leaders around the world and the confidence of Democrats and Republicans in the Senate, and I am confident he will make an extraordinary Secretary of State. I look forward to his counsel and partnership in the years ahead as we ensure American leadership in the world and advance the interests and values that keep our Nation strong.

## Letter to Congressional Leaders Regarding the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act, 2013 *January 29, 2013*

*Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)*

In accordance with section 902 of the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act, 2013, I hereby designate as emergency requirements all funding so designated by the Congress in the Act pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Bal-

anced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as amended, as outlined in the enclosed list of accounts.

The details of this action are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget.