

you. And a lot of your friends and peers, they may not know that they need you, but if something happens somewhere down the road where they really need to get to a hospital or a doctor, the fact that you have talked to them and gotten them involved is going to make all the difference in the world.

And finally, let me just make a broader point to all the young people here. This whole exercise obviously has huge implications for this country's future, because if we can start bringing down health care costs, make sure people are covered, give people financial security, that's good for the economy, it's good for businesses, it's good for the Federal budget.

But I hope you haven't been discouraged by how hard it's been, because stuff that's worth it's always hard. The civil rights movement was hard. Getting women the right to vote, that was hard. Making sure that workers had the right to organize, that was hard. It's never been easy for us to change how we do business in this country and particularly to address needs that a

lot of people aren't worried about on a day-to-day, constant basis, but then suddenly are desperately worried about it when a mishap happens.

So this has been the case for Social Security, for Medicare, for all the great social progress that we've made in this country. And I wanted to say all that just because my hope is not only that you work hard to help folks get signed up today and tomorrow and next week, but I look around the room and I see a lot of leaders who are going to be leading the charge well into the future on a whole range of issues. Don't get discouraged. Be persistent. You may get a few gray hairs as a consequence—[laughter]—but I think at the end of the day, you'll think it's worth it. All right?

Thank you, guys. See you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:10 p.m. in the South Court Auditorium of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building.

Remarks on the Death of Former President Nelson R. Mandela of South Africa

December 5, 2013

At his trial in 1964, Nelson Mandela closed his statement from the dock saying: "I have fought against White domination, and I have fought against Black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."

And Nelson Mandela lived for that ideal, and he made it real. He achieved more than could be expected of any man. And today he has gone home. And we have lost one of the most influential, courageous, and profoundly good human beings that any of us will share time with on this Earth. He no longer belongs to us, he belongs to the ages.

Through his fierce dignity and unbending will to sacrifice his own freedom for the free-

dom of others, Madiba transformed South Africa and moved all of us. His journey from a prisoner to a President embodied the promise that human beings and countries can change for the better. His commitment to transfer power and reconcile with those who jailed him set an example that all humanity should aspire to, whether in the lives of nations or our own personal lives. And the fact that he did it all with grace and good humor and an ability to acknowledge his own imperfections only makes the man that much more remarkable. As he once said, "I am not a saint, unless you think of a saint as a sinner who keeps on trying."

I am one of the countless millions who drew inspiration from Nelson Mandela's life. My very first political action—the first thing I ever did that involved an issue or a policy or politics—was a protest against apartheid. I would

study his words and his writings. The day he was released from prison gave me a sense of what human beings can do when they're guided by their hopes and not by their fears. And like so many around the globe, I cannot fully imagine my own life without the example that Nelson Mandela set, and so long as I live, I will do what I can to learn from him.

To Graça Machel and his family, Michelle and I extend our deepest sympathy and gratitude for sharing this extraordinary man with us. His life's work meant long days away from those who loved him most. And I only hope that the time spent with him these last few weeks brought peace and comfort to his family.

To the people of South Africa, we draw strength from the example of renewal and reconciliation and resilience that you made real. A free South Africa at peace with itself, that's an

example to the world, and that's Madiba's legacy to the nation that he loved.

We will not likely see the likes of Nelson Mandela again. So it falls to us, as best we can, to forward the example that he set: to make decisions guided not by hate, but by love; to never discount the difference that one person can make; to strive for a future that is worthy of his sacrifice.

For now, let us pause and give thanks for the fact that Nelson Mandela lived: a man who took history in his hands and bent the arc of the moral universe towards justice. May God bless his memory and keep him in peace.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:25 p.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Graça Machel, wife of former President Mandela.

Remarks at a Hanukkah Reception

December 5, 2013

The President. Hello, everybody! Welcome to the White House. Now, normally, we just have one Hanukkah reception, but this year, we are hosting two, because we have so many friends to celebrate with, we had to do it twice. And I'll be welcoming a whole other group this evening. Don't tell them, though, but you're my favorite group. [Laughter] It is our own little Hanukkah miracle. The party that was supposed to last only 1 hour will go on for 8. [Laughter] You got that one? [Laughter]

Now, this is the fifth time I've celebrated Hanukkah as President. But this is my first "Thanikkah." Did I say that right?

Audience member. Thanksgivukkah.

The President. This intersection of two wonderful holidays has inspired a whole lot of people across America; we are delighted to welcome a few of them here tonight.

We've got 10-year-old Asher Weintraub from New York City—where's Asher? Asher came up with what we believe is the world's first-ever menorah shaped like a turkey. It is called the "menurkey." [Laughter] Where is the menurkey? I had it just a second ago.

The First Lady. Wait. You just had it. Where is the menurkey?

The President. We've got to bring in the menurkey out here. I'll continue speaking. You've got to see this. Thank you, Asher, for your spirit and your creativity.

We've got Dana Gitell. Where's Dana, who actually coined the term "Thanksgivukkah." Her sister Deborah—oh, here's the menurkey.

Audience member. Team Thanksgivukkah is here!

The President. There we go. [Laughter] So I'm going to keep this in a special place.

So Dana, along with her sister Deborah, expect this term to catch on around the country. Where are they?

Hebrew SeniorLife Marketing Specialist Dana Reichman Gitell. Right here.

The President. There they are. Let's see them. Hey, guys. How are you? They've had a lot of fun with their project. But there is a serious side to it, because they've said they always express their gratitude to America, a place where no matter who you are, you can always celebrate your faith. And that same spirit is re-