

law and now suddenly, I'm paying for your kid's school and your kid's hospitalization, and it feels unfair, at a time when people are already feeling burdened by their own challenges, trying to afford their own kid's college education, or feeling like they're worried about their own retirement.

So the language we use, I think, is important. You have to speak to the fact that, if somebody broke the law—even if they're good people—they've got to be held accountable. And there are going to be responsibilities in-

involved in it. Because if it's just rights and no responsibilities, then people feel resentful.

Does that make sense? All right, guys, I enjoyed spending time with you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:26 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Renata Soto, cofounder and executive director, Conexión Américas; Frances Dean, daughter of Mayor Karl F. Dean of Nashville; and White House Trip Director Marvin D. Nicholson, Jr. He also referred to S. 744.

Statement on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Study of the Central Intelligence Agency's Detention and Interrogation Program *December 9, 2014*

Throughout our history, the United States of America has done more than any other nation to stand up for freedom, democracy, and the inherent dignity and human rights of people around the world. As Americans, we owe a profound debt of gratitude to our fellow citizens who serve to keep us safe, among them the dedicated men and women of our intelligence community, including the Central Intelligence Agency. Since the horrific attacks of 9/11, these public servants have worked tirelessly to devastate core Al Qaida, deliver justice to Osama bin Laden, disrupt terrorist operations, and thwart terrorist attacks. Solemn rows of stars on the Memorial Wall at the CIA honor those who have given their lives to protect ours. Our intelligence professionals are patriots, and we are safer because of their heroic service and sacrifices.

In the years after 9/11, with legitimate fears of further attacks and with the responsibility to prevent more catastrophic loss of life, the previous administration faced agonizing choices about how to pursue Al Qaida and prevent additional terrorist attacks against our country. As I have said before, our Nation did many things right in those difficult years. At the same time, some of the actions that were taken were contrary to our values. That is why I unequivocally

banned torture when I took office, because one of our most effective tools in fighting terrorism and keeping Americans safe is staying true to our ideals at home and abroad.

Today's report by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence details one element of our Nation's response to 9/11: the CIA's detention and interrogation program, which I formally ended on one of my first days in office. The report documents a troubling program involving enhanced interrogation techniques on terrorism suspects in secret facilities outside the United States, and it reinforces my long-held view that these harsh methods were not only inconsistent with our values as [a] nation, they did not serve our broader counterterrorism efforts or our national security interests. Moreover, these techniques did significant damage to America's standing in the world and made it harder to pursue our interests with allies and partners. That is why I will continue to use my authority as President to make sure we never resort to those methods again.

As Commander in Chief, I have no greater responsibility than the safety and security of the American people. We will therefore continue to be relentless in our fight against Al Qaida, its affiliates, and other violent extremists. We will rely on all elements of our national

* White House correction.

power, including the power and example of our founding ideals. That is why I have consistently supported the declassification of today's report. No nation is perfect. But one of the strengths that makes America exceptional is our willingness to openly confront our past, face our imperfections, make changes, and do better. Rather than another reason to refight

old arguments, I hope that today's report can help us leave these techniques where they belong: in the past. Today is also a reminder that upholding the values we profess doesn't make us weaker, it makes us stronger, and that the United States of America will remain the greatest force for freedom and human dignity that the world has ever known.

Remarks at the White House Summit on Early Education December 10, 2014

The President. Thank you. Hey! Give Alajah—give Alajah a big round of applause. Thank you so much. Everybody have a seat.

Now, Alajah clearly knows where power is. [Laughter] She knows who has clout and who does not. You did a wonderful job. I'm so proud of you. Good job.

Student Alajah Lane of West Education Campus in Washington, DC. Thank you.

The President. You're welcome. [Laughter] In addition to Alajah, we have some important personages here. I want to thank, first of all, America's Secretary of Education—somebody who is so passionate about making sure every child gets a chance in this country—Arne Duncan. Where's Arne? We've got some of early education's strongest supporters in Congress from both parties who are here. We've got Bob Casey from the great State of Pennsylvania. We've got Representatives Richard Hanna—where's Richard? There he is—Jared Polis, Bobby Scott.

I want to thank the business leaders and philanthropists and mayors, all who came here from across America to make big new commitments to our kids. And I know we've got thousands of parents and teachers and alumni from Head Start and Early Head Start watching this live in New Orleans and Fort Lauderdale. So please give them a shout-out as well. Thank you, guys.

Now, you may know that last week brought some good economic news, building on the momentum that we've seen over the past couple of years. Over the first 11 months of 2014, our economy has created more jobs than in any full year since the 1990s. So, already—we've

still got a month to go—we've already seen more jobs created this year than any time in over a decade. Over the last 4 years, America has put more people back to work than Europe, Japan, and every other advanced economy combined. Overall wages are rising again, which is a welcome sign for millions of families. So, for all the work we have left to do, America is outpacing most of the world. And if we seize this moment, we have the chance to lead the next century just like we led the last one and make sure that citizens in this country, our children, can have a better life than we did.

But in order to reach our full potential, kids like Alajah need a chance to reach their full potential. Because what makes America exceptional isn't just the size of our economy or the—our influence around the globe. That is a byproduct of a more fundamental fact about America: the promise we make to our children; the idea that no matter who they are, what they look like, where they start, how much their parents earn, they can make it if they try. It's the essential promise of America, that where you start should not and will not determine how far you can go.

And we're here today because it's never too early in a child's life to begin delivering on that promise. I'm preaching to the choir now, but I'm going to go ahead and preach. [Laughter] Study after study shows that children who get a high-quality early education earn more over their lifetimes than peers who don't. They're more likely to finish school. They're less likely to go to prison. They're more likely to hold a job. They're more likely to start a stable family of their own, which means that you have a