

Think about what we've done the last 7 years. We did not do that simply because you elected me. We did that together. We did that because Members of Congress like Scott Peters are willing to take votes. We did that because we had a majority in the House and the Senate that were willing to pass Obamacare. We did that because we changed people's minds about "don't ask, don't tell" and said that don't exist no more. We did that with you.

Don't stop now. Let's keep going. Let's keep going, because if we do, I promise you, 7 years from now, we're going to look back and feel just as good about the progress we've made. And there will still be more work to do, but we'll be confident that, as Dr. King often said,

"the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice." It bends towards justice. It just doesn't bend on its own; we've got to help it bend that way.

Thank you, everybody. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:52 p.m. at the residence of Ed and Robin Berman. In his remarks, he referred to Louise A. Talley Dixon and Shahid Abdula, parents of actor Jaime Foxx; and Sen. James M. Inhofe. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Los Angeles October 10, 2015

Thank you. There are some pretty good acoustics in here. I'm going to start singing. *[Laughter]*

Well, let me, first of all, just thank James and Michael. First of all, James is doing outstanding work as the Ambassador to Spain. Part of our incredible diplomatic team all around the world that are solving problems, dealing with conflicts, papering over misunderstandings, and really strengthening the ties that bind us with our allies.

Michael, in addition to having made the Oval Office more presentable, is, in fact, the only person other than my wife and my two daughters who does feel the need to tease me incessantly. *[Laughter]* I know I'm not alone in this. But he does have a certain roguish charm that allows him to get away with it. What is also true is, is that he and James have been just great friends from the start, and not just to me, but to Michelle and to Malia and Sasha. They're really part of the family. And so I just want to say to them how much we appreciate them and the fact that you guys have been in our lives this whole time. So thank you so much.

I've got a lot of other friends here. I look around the room, and there are people who have supported me since the very beginning when most people couldn't pronounce my

name. And somebody observed the fact that I'm not wearing a tie today. Some of you will recall that I used to never wear a tie when I was campaigning right at the beginning. And I was explaining that I think around halfway through the campaign people started realizing that it was conceivable I might end up being President, and so David Axelrod came to me one day, and he said, listen, Barack, you've got to start wearing a tie—*[laughter]*—because you don't look old enough potentially to be President when you look casual. So we've got to dress you up a little bit. So we started wearing a tie. I was wearing a tie all the time. And now that I am so gray there's no doubt that I'm old enough to not only be President, but to have been President, we're reverting back to a more casual style. So this is something you can anticipate for the next 15 months. I think we're going to start dialing down the tie thing. *[Laughter]* Probably, because I always spill things on my ties.

I'm going to be very brief at the front end because I just want this to be a dialogue. We're at a critical time in our history, and that is a cliché, but this time it's really true. We have done really good, important work. And I say "we" purposely because I could not have done it alone. I couldn't have done it without the

support of a lot of the people in this room. But we have gone from a world economic crisis, a world financial crisis, two wars, a diminished standing for the United States around the world to 67 straight months of job creation, an unemployment rate of 5.1 percent, the most job openings ever recorded.

We have doubled the production of clean energy, cut our consumption of oil in half, solar power 20 times more today than when we took office, wind power three times more. We've cut the deficit by two-thirds. We're growing faster than every other large advanced nation on Earth. Reading scores are up, college enrollment is up. Seventeen million people have health insurance that didn't have it before.

There's almost no measure by which we're not better off now than we were when I came into office. But what is also true is that during this time, some big problems haven't fully gotten solved. Most prominently, the fact that wages and incomes for ordinary Americans are still flat, which makes people feel insecure and anxious and uncertain as to whether their kids are going to do better than they did. And when people are anxious economically, the politics of fear oftentimes can override the politics of hope.

And so what we see—most prominently in the Presidential campaigns, but what we're seeing in the struggles taking place in the House—is that politics of fear being fanned and expanding. And it can express itself in anti-immigration rhetoric. It can express itself in hunkering back on the need to take care of folks who are vulnerable or to provide more opportunity for people who've been locked out of the American Dream. It can express itself in sort of cheap jingoism and militarism and nationalism that's not grounded in our national security interests. But it's a dangerous path. And it's a path that, during certain intervals in our history, we have taken when people feel insecure. And there's this other path, and that's the politics of hope.

And the Democratic Party is by no means perfect. There are often times when I want to smack us across the head. We're not immune from money. We're not immune from lobby-

ists. We're not immune from pushing aside what we know to be good policy in favor of something that is a little more expedient. But there are two things that the Democratic Party does that makes me proud to be a Democrat. Number one, when things are really hard and really matter, the leadership of the Democratic Party and, for the most part, the rank and file, are willing to do the right thing even when the politics doesn't work.

That was true for the Iran deal. The politics were not easy, but it was the right thing to do. And we won that argument on the merits, and ultimately, there were people who voted just because they heard the arguments, and they said, you know what, even though, on a less consequential issue, I might be taking the more expedient political vote, on this one I've got to do the right thing.

It was true when I came into office, with the bank bailout. Terrible politics, but had we not taken those steps we could not have stabilized the financial system—in the same way that had I not bailed out the auto industry—which, by the way, polled at 10 percent when we did it—we would not have had a resurgent auto industry that's now selling more cars than ever before.

So that's one thing that makes me proud to be a Democrat. When push comes to shove and something is important, folks are willing to stand up and do things that are contrary to political interest because they're in the interest of the country.

And the second thing—and this is fundamental. This goes to the heart of what we are as a country. At our core, the overwhelming majority of Democrats believe in the basic proposition that it shouldn't matter where you were born, what your last name is, what you look like, what your faith is or whether you have no faith, you are entitled to work hard to achieve the American Dream, and we all have a stake in making sure everybody gets a fair shot.

And that, more than anything else, is what makes America, America. And if you have a contrary ideal, if you have folks who are expressing the notion that there's an "us" and a

“them” and some people are deserving of poverty and some people are inevitably destined for incarceration and some people are less than I am because of who they love and women have a particular role that they have to play, and if they don’t, somehow, that’s contrary to the rules we’ve set—when you have that kind of an attitude, America goes backwards, and we don’t succeed.

So we’ve got a very stark set of choices right now that manifest themselves across the board. And I say this pretty objectively, because I’m not intrinsically partisan. And in fact, I’ve been felted at times by folks in my own party for not being sufficiently partisan. But I don’t think we come out of the womb Democrat or Republican. And I come from a State where the first Republican President was pretty good, a guy named Lincoln. And there have been times where the Democrats were on the wrong sides of issues.

But I will tell you, at this moment in history, the choices are stark, and facts, evidence, values are on our side. And the other side has gone off the deep end. And what you’re witnessing in the House fight right now is that even deeply conservative folks are not considered ideologically pure enough, and we would rather burn the house down than admit the possibility of a democratic process that requires compromise.

And we have to beat that kind of mindset. This is not something where we can just let it pass, because if we let it pass, then you’ve got people in charge who don’t believe in climate change, don’t just not want to do anything

about it, don’t believe in it. We start getting folks who are willing to run funny numbers on the budget that will slash education funding and funding for the disabled and seniors and suggest that somehow it’s justified by economic theories that you can’t find in the textbooks.

So I feel as much urgency about this upcoming election as I’ve felt about any election, and I am not on the ballot. And I’m going to be working just as hard this time as I was in 2012 and 2008. And you need to be too.

Because we’ve got some good people, and one of them, Scott, is back here. Scott Peters is a wonderful Congressman from San Diego. He’s been traveling with us in California. You should get to know him. He takes tough votes and does the right thing. And it’s not always easy. And it matters whether or not we’re going to be able to get more folks like Scott into the House and preserve the Senate. And I definitely need a Democratic successor, because the alternatives that we’re seeing right now are not what I have in mind for the future of America.

So, with that, let me take questions. But I just wanted people to understand the context in which we’re talking here. This is not sort of an abstract exercise. This is not a seminar. This is some serious business about things that we care deeply about.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:20 p.m. at the residence of U.S. Ambassador to Spain James Costos and Michael S. Smith. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Statement on the Death of Former White House Regional Communications Director Brandon D. Lepow

*October 13, 2015*

Seven years ago, like a lot of young people, Brandon Lepow got into politics because he believed he could change his country for the better. And in his time on the campaign trail and in the White House, both as a traveling aide and as a spokesman, he was tireless in that effort: hard-working, cheerful, one of the most

unfilingly kind and gracious people I’ve had the honor to know. He was someone that any American could be proud to have working on their behalf.

Last night we lost Brandon after a long battle with leukemia. It’s a testament to his dedication to others that, over the past few months,