

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Chicago October 27, 2015

Well, first of all, to Robbie and D'Rita, thank you so much for helping to pull this together. Two weeks isn't a lot of time, so I apologize in advance for putting you on the spot like that. [Laughter]

Austen, you are official now. [Laughter] I am conferring on you officialdom. [Laughter] And, Ava, you are the big sister of official. [Laughter] So we are proud of you both. And we're so grateful to the whole Robinson family.

And I want to just thank everybody here. Look, it is always good coming home. It's always good being home. And looking around the room—and I say this every time I come home, but it's true because it's true—[laughter]—my entire career has been impacted by people in this room. I've got folks who were friends of mine when I ran for my first State senate race in this room. I have people who went with me or were in classes in the little tot music thing with Malia when she had two buns—[laughter]. And I've got people here who have been friends to me and Michelle for years and to help guide our Presidential campaign. So whenever I see all of you, it just brings back great memories, and it reminds me of the values that we've tried to carry into the White House and have tried to promote all these years.

I'm going to be very brief because the nice thing about an intimate group like this is, I can take time to take questions from you. I'll just say this. After 7 years of hard work, I think we can look back and say that the country is better because of what we've done together.

We pulled the United States and the world out of an economic crisis, stabilized the financial system, have grown jobs for over 5 years, more than 13 million jobs created; 17 million people without health insurance before now have it. We've seen a doubling of clean energy. We have seen an explosion in production of energy of all sorts; reduced our imports of foreign oil by more than half. We're finally tackling climate change in a serious way and rees-

tablishing ourselves as a world leader on the environmental stage.

High school graduations up; college enrollment up; millions of young people able to go to college that couldn't go before because of the work that we've done. We've changed how people think about each other and helped usher in marriage equality and the ending of "don't ask, don't tell." Attention to criminal justice issues in ways that can keep our streets safe and ensure fairness in the application of the law.

There are very few measures by which the country is not better off than when we came in. Now, I say "we" deliberately because I always remind folks, in Grant Park and prior to Grant Park, I always said, "Yes, we can." I didn't say, "Yes, I can." And this has been a collaborative effort with the American people. And I get a chance—I have the privilege of meeting them everywhere, in all walks of life. And I will tell you that I am more optimistic now, 7 years after Grant Park, than I was on that night. I believe more deeply in the decency and hard work and persistence and generosity of the American people.

And as frustrating as Washington can be—and I promise you, it can be frustrating—[laughter]—the system has a way of, over time, just jiggering and going down blind allies and hitting bumps, but if we are determined to change it, it changes. About a year and a half ago, people we're saying I was a lame duck. We've been flapping our wings a lot over that year and a half. [Laughter] But the reason is, is because if we're able to continually build coalitions and change minds and make arguments, you don't always win the first time but eventually you do win.

Now, we've still got some big challenges ahead. There remains a troubling trend of growing inequality in our society that has to be attended to, and it's not just a matter of tinkering at the edges. We've got to invest in education in ways that we have not. We're going to have to make sure that we're investing in re-

search and development and stay on the cutting-edge of technological change in ways that we have not. We've got to rebuild our infrastructure. We have to make sure that our immigration system reflects our traditions as a nation of laws, but also a nation of immigrants, and that welcomes in the best and the brightest from all around the world.

We've got more work to do to build on the success of Obamacare so that we are continually improving quality and reducing costs and expanding access. We've got to make sure that what we've started on climate change we finish. And internationally, there are still tragedies and crises and war where our leadership is vital.

And that's why I'm here tonight. As you may have noticed, I will not be on the ballot the next election. And this is due to our Constitution and the wisdom of George Washington's example, and it is due to Michelle Obama—[laughter]—and her wisdom. So the reason I'm here is not for "I," it is for "we," because just as this started as a collaborative project between me and so many citizens in this city and then in

this State and, ultimately, around the country, when I step down from this office I'm still a citizen, I'm still part of "we," and I am very invested in making sure that we continue on the path of progress that we've made.

And that's why you're here. You've always been a part of this team. And it doesn't stop once my particular time in office is done. Our job continues in making sure that my successor is building on the progress that we've made, and that we have a Congress that reflects the values that we care about. And I'm confident we can do it. But it's going to be because we did it together.

And for your presence here tonight, I couldn't be more grateful. Thanks, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:37 p.m. at the PUBLIC Chicago hotel. In his remarks, he referred to E.O. "Robbie" Robinson, Jr., managing director, BDT Capital Partners, LLC, his wife D'Rita Robinson, founder and chief executive officer, Chatty Guest, and their children Austen and Ava. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex, of the United Kingdom October 28, 2015

President Obama. Well, it is a great pleasure to welcome His Royal Highness Prince Harry here to the Oval Office. I've had an opportunity to spend a lot of time with so many of his family members, but this is the first time that we had a chance to talk directly.

He has gotten to know Michelle very well, for a range of reasons, but in particular, he's here to talk about the Invictus Games, an initiative that is bringing together wounded warriors from around the world, under the leadership of Prince Harry and others, to make sure that we see not simply the sacrifices they've made, but also the incredible contributions, strength, and courage they continue to display.

And so we are very glad to support the Invictus Games. It's going to be coming here to the United States, to Orlando, in March [May]^o of next year. Michelle and myself are interested in promoting it.

We want to thank His Royal Highness for his own service in Afghanistan alongside our outstanding American troops. It is a testament to the special relationship, the incredible bond that we share between our two countries. And that bond continues into the next generation of leadership that His Royal Highness represents.

So we're very grateful for him not only for this specific work, but also for continuing to strengthen the deep, deep bonds between our two countries.

^o White House correction.