

We don't do that, by the way, for airline pilots. [Laughter] We don't do that for surgeons. But somehow we think, President of the United States, yes, let's just give—I don't know—who's that guy? Come on. [Laughter]

And so, as a consequence, that means that sometimes Hillary doesn't get the credit that she deserves.

Audience members. That's right!

The President. But the fact is, Hillary is steady. And Hillary is true. And she's been in politics for the same reason I am: because we can improve other people's lives by doing this work. And we don't care about the slings and arrows that are thrown at us, because we know that's how real change and real progress happens and that we, if we're willing to work hard, can finish—can bring about changes that make life better for some kid out there, some senior out there, somebody who's unemployed out there.

And it may take more than a year. And sometimes, it takes more than a term. And sometimes, it takes more than one Presidency or even one generation. And yes, that's old fashioned. I think she'll fess up to that. [Laughter] But we want people to believe that their Government can work and that the President cares and that every child in this country should have the same chance that this country gave us.

Because we weren't born with a silver spoon. And we know that behind all the division and sometimes angry rhetoric of this election year and all the petty bickering and the point scoring and the punditry, the ordinary American—Americans are good. And they are generous. And they are hard working. And

they've got an awful lot of common sense. And we share a certain set of common values and hopes and dreams.

That's why I ran in 2008. And I believe in those values and those ideals more than ever. And I believe in you, the American people, more than ever. And I am more optimistic about our future than ever. And that's why my faith—my faith—is stronger about the simple American ideal as old as our founding that people who love their country can change it for the better. I have seen it happen.

I have run my last campaign. And I couldn't be prouder of the things we've done together. But I'm ready to pass the baton. And I know that Hillary Clinton is going to take it. And I know she can run that race: the race to create good jobs and better schools and safer streets and a safer world. And that's why I'm fired up! And that's why I'm ready to go! And that's why I'm with her!

And that's why I need you to work just as hard to make sure that Hillary Rodham Clinton is the next President of the United States of America.

God bless you, North Carolina. God bless you! God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:47 p.m. at the Charlotte Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Sen. Richard M. Burr; North Carolina State Attorney General Roy A. Cooper III, in his capacity as a Democratic gubernatorial candidate; Donald J. Trump, chairman and president, Trump Organization, in his capacity as a Republican Presidential candidate; and Supreme Court Associate Justice-designate Merrick B. Garland.

Statement on the Death of Former White House Counsel Abner J. Mikva July 5, 2016

No matter how far we go in life, we owe a profound debt of gratitude to those who gave us those first, firm pushes at the start. For me, one of those people was Ab Mikva. When I was graduating law school, Ab encouraged me to pursue public service. He saw something in me that I didn't yet see in myself, but I know why

he did it: Ab represented the best of public service himself, and he believed in empowering the next generation of young people to shape our country. Ab's life was a testament to that truth. Six decades ago, when he first tried to volunteer in Democratic politics, the Chicago political machine told him that they "don't

want nobody nobody sent.” Ab didn’t take no for an answer, because he knew that in America, in our democracy, everybody can be somebody, everybody matters.

That conviction led Ab, a son of immigrants and a World War II veteran, to serve Illinois as a State legislator and serve our Nation in every branch of Government: as a Congressman, Federal judge, and White House Counsel. In every position he held, Ab’s integrity and wisdom consistently put him on the right side of history, from fighting against prejudice and discrimination and for free speech and civil liberties. He reformed Illinois’s criminal code, defended consumers’ rights, and although his decision striking down the ban on gay Americans serving in our military was overturned, history proved him right.

Like so many admirers, I’ve lost a mentor and a friend. But as we mourn his passing, I’m comforted by the thought that countless Americans will continue fighting for progressive causes Ab believed in because he pushed them toward public service, both during his time in Government and through Mikva Challenge, which he established with his wonderful wife Zoe. We’re all better off because we were sent Ab Mikva, and because Ab in turn sent us forward to do big things. Michelle and I send our deepest condolences to Zoe, their three daughters, seven grandchildren, and the generations of young patriots Ab inspired. May his memory be for a blessing.

NOTE: The statement referred to Mary L. Mikva, Laurie I. Mikva, and Rachel Mikva Rosenberg, daughters of Mr. Mikva.

Statement on the Final Report of the Commission on Care *July 5, 2016*

I want to thank the members of the Commission on Care for their comprehensive and thorough review of the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) and for their considered recommendations. In August 2014, I signed into law the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act (VACAA) of 2014, which charged the Commission to examine veterans’ access to VA health care and to recommend how best to organize the VHA, locate health

resources, and deliver health care to veterans during the next 20 years.

The Commission’s report includes a number of specific proposals that I look forward to reviewing closely over the coming weeks. We will continue to work with veterans, Congress, and our partners in the veteran advocacy community to further our ongoing transformation of the veterans’ health care system. Our veterans deserve nothing less for their sacrifices and their service.

Remarks on United States Military Strategy in Afghanistan *July 6, 2016*

Good morning, everybody.

More than 14 years ago, after Al Qaida attacked our Nation on 9/11, the United States went to war in Afghanistan against these terrorists and the Taliban that harbored them. Over the years—and thanks to heroic efforts by our military, our intelligence community, our diplomats, and our development professionals—we pushed Al Qaida out of its camps, helped the Afghan people topple the Taliban and helped them establish a democratic gov-

ernment. We dealt crippling blows to the Al Qaida leadership. We delivered justice to Usama bin Laden. And we trained Afghan forces to take responsibility for their own security.

And given that progress, a year and a half ago, in December 2014, America’s combat mission in Afghanistan came to a responsible end. Compared to the 100,000 troops we once had there, today, fewer than 10,000 remain. And compared to their previous mission—helping to lead the fight—our forces are now