

As you continue to defend us with quiet dignity, we proclaim loudly our appreciation for the acts of service you perform as part of your daily routine. When you see civilians at risk, you don't see them as strangers. You see them as your own family, and you lay your life on the line for them. You put others' safety before your own, and you remind us that loving our country means loving one another. Even when some protest you, you protect them. What is more professional than that? What is more patriotic? What is a prouder example of our most basic freedoms—to speech, to assembly, to life, and to liberty? And at the end of the day, you have a right to go home to your family, just like anybody else.

Robert Kennedy, once our Nation's highest-ranking law enforcement official, lamented in the wake of unjust violence a country in which we look at our neighbors as people “with whom we share a city, but not a community.” This is a time for us to reaffirm that what makes us special is that we are not only a country, but also a community. That is true whether you are black or white, whether you are rich or poor, whether you are a police officer or someone they protect and serve.

With that understanding—an understanding of the goodness and decency I have seen of our Nation not only in the past few weeks, but throughout my life—we will get through this difficult time together.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch, Federal Bureau of Investigation Director James B. Comey, Jr., and Department of Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh C. Johnson *July 19, 2016*

We just had a useful discussion, following up on the Task Force meeting that I had last week, as well as a number of conversations that we've had with various stakeholders in the wake of the tragic events that we've seen over the last couple of weeks.

Obviously, the loss of three more police officers in Baton Rouge over the weekend, three of them still wounded, one critically

We will do it with the love and empathy of public servants like those we have lost in recent days. We will do it with the resilience of cities like Dallas that quickly came together to restore order and deepen unity and understanding. We will do it with the grace of loved ones who even in their grief have spoken out against vengeance toward police. We will do it with the good will of activists like those I have sat with in recent days, who have pledged to work together to reduce violence even as they voice their disappointments and fears.

As we bind up our wounds, we must come together to ensure that those who try to divide us do not succeed. We are at our best when we recognize our common humanity, set an example for our children of trust and responsibility, and honor the sacrifices of our bravest by coming together to be better.

Thank you for your courageous service. We have your backs.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: This letter was posted on Facebook by the National Fraternal Order of Police on July 18 and released by the Office of the Press Secretary as a White House blog post on July 19. The letter referred to Dallas, TX, resident Bill Connor. The related proclamations of July 8 and July 18 are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

wounded—and we're praying for him as we speak—right on the heels of Dallas indicates the degree to which it is very important for us to do everything we can to help police officers go home at night and to be safe. And as I said the other night, it's a reminder of the extraordinary risks and dangers that they are taking every single day to protect us and our way of life.

And as has been consistent throughout all the conversations I've had over the last several weeks, I strongly believe that there is no contradiction between us protecting our officers, honoring our officers, making sure that they have all the tools they need to do their job safely, and building trust between police officers and departments in the communities that they serve. In fact, those things are complementary and not contradictory.

And the more we can do to make sure that communities feel that these are their police departments and that they have an interest in protecting them, the easier it's going to be for police officers to do their jobs.

The good news is that, thanks to the leadership of Attorney General Lynch, FBI Director Comey, as well as Secretary Jeh Johnson at DHS, we do have a toolkit of best practices, of training, of resources and equipment that can help police departments protect their officers, make sure that they can do their jobs. But we're going to have to do more than we already are doing.

And some of that is engaging at the local level, because this cannot just be a Federal, top-down initiative, this has to be a local initiative in the 18,000 law enforcement jurisdictions that are out there all across the country. And it also has to be resourced. We were talking—just to give you a few examples—about the great interest on the part of police departments around the country in training for safety, deescalation, dealing with active-shooter cases. Unfortunately, not all those departments that want to train their officers have the resources to do it. And the Justice Department has programs that can be made available, but we don't have enough coverage, not as much as we'd like.

Something as basic as bulletproof vests, large numbers of departments do have bulletproof vests for all their officers on patrol and in situations where there's significant risk, but there are a number of places where they're still short of bulletproof vests. That can make a difference.

And so my intention over the next several months, as long as I'm in this office, is to con-

tinue to look at best practices, figure out what's working well; listen to our police departments in how we can help them engage the community, build up trust. What kind of equipment do they need? What kind of training do they need? What kind of recruitment strategies that—do they need? And then to do everything we can to convene all parties concerned, including Congress, to make sure that they can get those resources.

And we are going to continue, building off the Task Force report and the meeting that we had last week, to encourage the kinds of conversations between police departments and communities so that we can incorporate—as part of a strategy to make the lives of police officers safer—encourage the kind of best practices that assure communities are embracing their police departments the way they should and the way they need to.

So I appreciate the efforts that have already taken place. We've got a lot more work to do. I want to repeat, this is not something that we're going to be able to do solely from this office or from the Justice Department or the FBI or the Department of Homeland Security. This is something that's going to have to be bottom up and not just top down.

But the fact that in the wake of this tragedy, we've seen over the course of several weeks much more constructive conversations and the offering up of very concrete recommendations and suggestions for how we can do better is encouraging to me.

All right? Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:35 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Ofc. Matthew Gerald and Cpl. Montrell Jackson, Baton Rouge Police Department, and Deputy Brad Garafola, East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office, who were killed in the shooting in Baton Rouge, LA, on July 17; and Deputies Bruce Simmons and Nicholas Tullier, East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office, and Ofc. Brad Montgomery, Baton Rouge Police Department, who were injured in the shooting.

Remarks at the White House Summit on Global Development July 20, 2016

The President. Thank you! Thank you, everybody. Thank you. Everybody, please have a seat. Thank you so much. Well, thank you, Strive, for those kind words and your great work to promote opportunity in Africa and across the globe. I should point out, by the way, Strive just told me he was in the middle of a board meeting, he flew here, he's got to go back. He hasn't gotten any sleep. That's how committed he is to the work that we're doing. So give Strive a big round of applause.

So this is quite a group. [Laughter] Just a lot of do-gooders in one room. [Laughter] That's good. Just own it. [Laughter] You should be proud of it. I want to welcome our partners from around the world. We've got leaders from government, from the private sector, civil society, faith communities who are doing great work, and so many inspiring young people. And I want to thank our partners in Congress from both sides of the aisle who prove that every once in a while, in a city that doesn't agree on much—[laughter]—we can all agree on the imperative of smart development. So thank you. Thank you.

Obviously, this has been a tough couple of weeks, not just here in the United States, but around the world. And that's being amplified to some degree during political season. So I think maybe it's worth stepping back for a moment. This is a challenging time, with threats of terrorism, an international order that is buffeted by all kinds of different events, a sense that globalization is leaving too many people behind, and expanding inequality within countries, even if we are seeing progress in the aggregate.

And all of this creates legitimate fears and anxieties that have to be addressed and, at least a feeling, a perception that people don't have full control over a rapidly changing world. So it is worth reminding ourselves of how lucky we are to be living in the most peaceful, most prosperous, most progressive era in human history.

Now, that's hard to absorb if we're watching the newscasts every night, because there's heartbreak and terrible things taking place at any given moment across the globe. But it's important for us to remember, not so that we become complacent, but so that we understand that good works can make a difference. Think about it. It has been decades since a war between major powers. More people live in democracies. More people are linked by technology. Thanks in part to the dedication and passion and hard work of so many of the people who are gathered here today, in recent decades, the world has achieved incredible advances in development and human dignity.

We've saved over 60 million lives from measles and malaria and tuberculosis. We've slashed HIV/AIDS infections and deaths. Across the developing world, incomes have gone up. Tens of millions of boys and girls are in school. Millions have gained access to clean energy, helping to mitigate the threat of climate change. In just the past 25 years, more than 1 billion people have been lifted out of extreme poverty—1 billion. Michael Elliott, the former head of the ONE Campaign, who we remember today—he liked to say that we're living through an “age of miracles.” And he's right.

And sometimes, when I'm talking to young interns at the White House who are still immunizing themselves from the cynicism that's so chronic in this town—[laughter]—I remind them, if you had to choose a moment in history to be born and you didn't know ahead of time who you were going to be, you'd choose now. [Laughter] Because the world has never been less violent, healthier, better educated, more tolerant, with more opportunity for more people, and more connected than it is today.

And all of you can take great pride in these historic achievements. It's a testament to what's possible when we work together: governments, multilateral institutions, the private sector, and civil society. And it is a testament to our shared commitment to the dignity of every