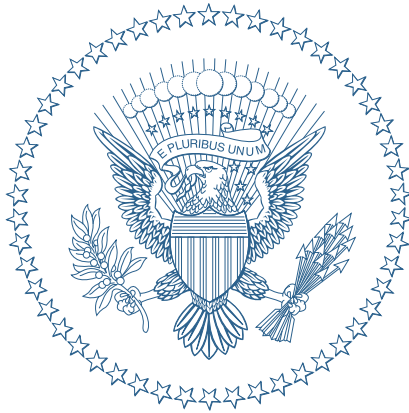


PUBLIC PAPERS OF THE PRESIDENTS  
OF THE  
UNITED STATES

# Barack Obama



## 2016–2017

(IN TWO BOOKS)

BOOK II—JULY 1, 2016 TO JANUARY 20, 2017

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# Foreword

When I took Office 8 years ago, our Nation was in the midst of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. 44 million Americans were without health insurance, our auto industry was on the brink of collapse, and almost 180,000 of our men and women in uniform were serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Nearly 800,000 Americans were losing their jobs each month, and our reputation abroad was on the decline. On so many of the challenges we faced, we had been kicking the can down the road for far too long.

Today, our country is stronger and more prosperous than many ever thought possible, and in reflecting on all we've achieved over the course of my Presidency, I couldn't be prouder of the progress we've made. Our economy as a whole is more durable than it was in the days when we relied on oil from unstable nations and when banks took risky bets with people's hard-earned money. We enacted the most sweeping reforms since the era of President Franklin Roosevelt to protect consumers and prevent a crisis on Wall Street from ever punishing Main Street again. Our auto industry has posted record sales numbers, and our businesses have created almost 16 million new jobs since early 2010. Our energy production has boomed—our dependence on foreign oil now at a more than 30-year low—and thanks to the Affordable Care Act, more than 20 million more Americans now have the peace of mind that comes with having health insurance. Put simply, we turned recession into recovery, and thanks to the hard work, grit, and resilience of the American people, the past 8 years tell a story of progress and prosperity.

Of course, our Nation still faces serious challenges. Too much distrust persists between law enforcement officials and the communities they serve. This past July, after two African American men—in Minnesota and Louisiana—were fatally shot by law enforcement we saw protests across America—including one in Dallas in which 5 brave and honorable police officers who were serving to protect those protesting were shot and killed in an act of horrific violence and hatred. The maintenance of the rule of law is ensured by dedicated public servants who make up police forces across America, and an attack on them is an attack on our very way of life. At the same time, we all must recognize the understandable fear experienced by African Americans who feel unfairly targeted by the criminal justice system. That is why I traveled to the memorial service for the fallen officers—and while there, I saw what all of America saw: how the people of Dallas, out of great suffering, showed us the meaning of perseverance, character, and hope.

We were also forced to face the threat of disease when the Zika virus spread throughout Latin America, the Caribbean, and Puerto Rico. Immediately, my Administration went to work to confront the danger posed by this virus, and I continued my call for Congress to pass nearly \$2 billion in funding for things like basic mosquito abatement and vaccine development.

Abroad, a brutal act of terror struck America's oldest ally, France, in an outrageous attack against innocent civilians on Bastille Day. This act reminded us of the extraordinary resilience and democratic values that make France an inspiration to the world, and it reaffirmed that the forces of violence and hate are no match for the power of our resolve to defeat terrorism around the world. In this spirit, the United States continued our campaign to degrade and destroy ISIL, including undertaking a series of strikes to remove key leaders and attack planners. We also took steps, in concert with our allies and partners, to address the human suffering in Aleppo, Syria—perpetrated by the Asad regime with the backing of Russia and Iran—and continued our efforts to deescalate the violence, push for humanitarian access, and allow for a safe egress for those trapped inside the city.

In September, I was honored to be the first American President to visit Laos—a trip that presented an opportunity to reflect on the unlikely bond forged between our peoples out of the anguish of war and to reaffirm our commitment to a relationship based on mutual respect. This visit, coupled with one to China, was followed by my final trip abroad as President of the United States to Greece, Germany, and Peru. And following my visit to Hiroshima last spring, Japanese Prime Minister Abe made an historic gesture by joining me in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii this December to honor those we

lost on December 7, 1941, in another powerful reminder of how even the deepest wounds of war can give way to friendship and lasting peace.

As my second term in Office wended down, our Nation held a Presidential election to ensure the continuity of our Republic, just as we have done every four years since our founding. The 2016 election pitted Republican Donald Trump against Democrat and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton—the first woman ever to be nominated as a Presidential candidate by a major political party. And although the result was not the one I campaigned for, the election served as an important reminder—nearly 100 years after women won the right to vote—that progress in America has never come easy: sometimes taking one step backwards for every two steps forward, it is the result of the long and often tiring work, done by generations of our people, of pushing us toward becoming a more perfect Union and remaking our Nation to more closely align with our highest ideals. The Presidency is bigger than any one person. And that is why my Administration did everything possible to ensure a smooth and peaceful transition—a hallmark of our democracy.

The remarkable work and accomplishments my Administration achieved over the last 8 years has left the next President, and future generations, with a stronger, better country than the one that existed when I took office. And just as is true with any Presidency, the progress we've made was never preordained, and our success never certain: it was the result of that which has always propelled our Union forward—the fierce and mighty conviction of our people that those who love their country can change it and push us in the direction of greater equality, prosperity, and justice. Nearly a decade after I first announced my candidacy for this Office, and just over 240 years since our Founding Fathers altered the trajectory of the world by throwing off the yoke of tyranny and declaring that all men are created equal, my faith in America has not wavered. We remain a place where opportunity is our birthright and hope is our North Star—the hope of slaves sitting around a fire singing freedom songs, and immigrants setting out for distant shores: hope in the face of difficulty, in the face of uncertainty—the audacity of hope. Being President of the United States has been the privilege of my life, and as I prepare to take on the even more important role of citizen once again, I remain tremendously grateful for having had this incredible opportunity to serve the American people.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barack Obama". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B" and "O".

# Preface

This book contains the papers and speeches of the President of the United States that were issued by the Office of the Press Secretary during the period July 1, 2016–January 20, 2017. The material has been compiled and published by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration.

The material is presented in chronological order, and the dates shown in the headings are the dates of the documents or events. In instances when the release date differs from the date of the document itself, that fact is shown in the textnote. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy: Remarks are checked against an audio recording, and signed documents are checked against the original. Textnotes and cross references have been provided by the editors for purposes of identification or clarity. Speeches were delivered in Washington, DC, unless otherwise indicated. The times noted are local times. All materials that are printed in full text in the book have been indexed in the subject and name indexes and listed in the document categories list.

The Public Papers of the Presidents series was begun in 1957 in response to a recommendation of the National Historical Publications Commission. An extensive compilation of messages and papers of the Presidents covering the period 1789 to 1897 was assembled by James D. Richardson and published under congressional authority between 1896 and 1899. Since then, various private compilations have been issued, but there was no uniform publication comparable to the Congressional Record or the United States Supreme Court Reports. Many Presidential papers could be found only in the form of mimeographed White House releases or as reported in the press. The Commission therefore recommended the establishment of an official series in which Presidential writings, addresses, and remarks of a public nature could be made available.

The Commission's recommendation was incorporated in regulations of the Administrative Committee of the Federal Register, issued under section 6 of the Federal Register Act (44 U.S.C. 1506), which may be found in title 1, part 10, of the Code of Federal Regulations.

A companion publication to the Public Papers series, the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, was begun in 1965 to provide a broader range of Presidential materials on a more timely basis to meet the needs of the contemporary reader. Beginning with the administration of Jimmy Carter, the Public Papers series expanded its coverage to include additional material as printed in the Weekly Compilation. On January 20, 2009, the printed Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents was superseded by the online Daily Compilation of Presidential Documents. The Daily Compilation provides a listing of the President's daily schedule and meetings, when announced, and other items of general interest issued by the Office of the Press Secretary.

Also included in the printed edition are lists of the President's nominations submitted to the Senate, materials released by the Office of the Press Secretary that are not printed in full text in the book, and proclamations, Executive orders, and other Presidential documents released by the Office of the Press Secretary and published in the *Federal Register*. This information appears in the appendixes at the end of the book.

Volumes covering the administrations of Presidents Herbert Hoover, Harry S. Truman, Dwight D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard Nixon, Gerald R. Ford, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, William J. Clinton, and George W. Bush are also included in the Public Papers series.

The Public Papers of the Presidents publication program is under the direction of John Hyrum Martinez, Director of the Publications and Services Division, Office of the Federal

Register. The series is produced by the Presidential and Legislative Publications Unit, Kimberly Tilliman, Supervisor. The Chief Editor of this book was Joseph K. Vetter; the Managing Editor was Joshua H. Liberatore, assisted by Amelia E. Otovo.

The frontispiece and photographs used in the portfolio were supplied by the White House Photo Office. The typography and design of the book were developed by the Government Publishing Office under the direction of Hugh N. Halpern, Director.

Oliver A. Potts  
*Director of the Federal Register*

David S. Ferriero  
*Archivist of the United States*

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Secretary of State.....	John F. Kerry
Secretary of the Treasury.....	Jacob J. Lew
Secretary of Defense.....	Ashton B. Carter
Attorney General.....	Loretta E. Lynch
Secretary of the Interior .....	Sarah M.R. “Sally” Jewell
Secretary of Agriculture .....	Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary of Commerce .....	Penny S. Pritzker
Secretary of Labor.....	Thomas E. Perez
Secretary of Health and Human Services.....	Sylvia Mathews Burwell
Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.....	Julián Castro
Secretary of Transportation .....	Anthony R. Foxx
Secretary of Energy.....	Ernest J. Moniz
Secretary of Education.....	John B. King, Jr.
Secretary of Veterans Affairs.....	Robert A. McDonald
Secretary of Homeland Security.....	Jeh C. Johnson
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United States Trade Representative.....	Michael B. Froman
Director of the Office of Management and Budget .....	Shaun L.S. Donovan
Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers	Jason L. Furman

United States Permanent Representative to  
the United Nations..... Samantha Power

Administrator of the Small Business  
Administration..... Maria Contreras-Sweet