

*Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2009*

## **Remarks at a Barbeque for Young Men**

*June 19, 2009*

Hello, everybody. Everybody have a seat. Now, first of all, let's give thanks that it's not raining, because we thought it might be and we were worried that Bobby would be sending smoke into the White House. But it's a beautiful day.

I want to personally acknowledge, once again—they've already been introduced, but I want to introduce them because some of you young people are sitting with them—you may not know who you're sitting with—the extraordinary men who are participating in this event today. First of all, Chief Quartermaster John Lehen—thank you so much, John. Some of you may know this guy, Dwyane Wade. I hear he plays basketball pretty good. [*Laughter*] Etan Thomas, another ballplayer; Joseph Jones, Center for Urban Families; Greg Brown, who is the CEO of Motorola; Antwaan Randle El, outstanding football player; Dr. Steve Rosen, Northwestern Cancer Center; Jorge Ramos, one of the premier journalists in the country; B.D. Wong, outstanding actor; Tony Hawk, who is the best skateboarder in the world; Coach Bill Cowher of the championship Steelers; Darryl "DMC" McDaniels; Mike Laas, who is a small businessman; Senator Evan Bayh, former colleague of ours; Fatherhood Dads, Inc., president David Ladd; the president of Morehouse College, Dr. Robert Franklin; as well as some of the outstanding members of my staff—Mike Strautmanis, Denis McDonough, Reggie Love. And we also want to thank Bobby Flay, one of the best chefs in the world, for providing us with these unbelievably good-looking grub over here.

I don't want to talk long. I want to come around and say hello to everybody. I just want to thank all of you for participating. For the young people who are here today, I just hope that the message that we're sending out about how important fathers are is something that you will internalize, because all of you are probably going to end up being fathers. And the time is now, to start thinking about what that means in terms of responsibilities, what it means to be a man. And the men who are—you're going to be sitting with today, I think, exemplify—whether they're famous or not famous, rich or not so rich, they embody that spirit of love and dedication and commitment that fatherhood is all about.

So we appreciate all of you. I don't want to get in the way of the food. Thank you for participating. Hope you guys have a good time. And to all the fathers out there, happy Father's Day. All right?

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:25 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to CPO John Lehen, USN, Command Naval Reserve Force Command, Transportation Command, Norfolk, VA; Dwyane Wade, guard, Miami Heat; Etan Thomas, center, Washington Wizards; Joseph T. Jones, Jr., founder, president, and chief executive officer, Center for Urban Families; Antwaan Randle El, wide receiver, Washington Redskins; Steven T. Rosen, director, Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center, Northwestern University; Bill Cowher, former head coach, Pittsburgh Steelers; Darryl "DMC" McDaniels, member of the hip-hop group Run DMC; Mike Laas, president, James H. Laas Company; Chief of Staff to the Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Relations and Public Engagement Michael Strautmanis; Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communications Denis McDonough; and Personal Aide to the President Reginald L. Love.

*Categories:* Addresses and Remarks : Father's Day barbeque for young men.

*Locations:* Washington, DC.

*Names:* Bayh, Evan; Brown, Greg; Cowher, Bill; Flay, Bobby; Franklin, Robert M.; Hawk, Tony; Jones, Joseph T., Jr.; Laas, Mike; Ladd, David; Lehnen, John; Love, Reginald L.; McDaniels, Darryl "DMC"; McDonough, Denis; Ramos Avalos, Jorge; Randle El, Antwaan; Rosen, Steven T.; Strautmanis, Michael; Thomas, Etan; Wade, Dwyane; Wong, Bradley Darryl "B.D."

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