

Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2010

The President's Weekly Address

November 25, 2010

Today, like millions of other families across America, Michelle, Malia, Sasha, and I will sit down to share a Thanksgiving filled with family and friends—and a few helpings of food and football too. And just as folks have done in every Thanksgiving since the first, we'll spend some time taking stock of what we're thankful for: the God-given bounty of America and the blessings of one another.

This is also a holiday that captures that distinctly American impulse to give something of ourselves. Even as we speak, there are countless Americans serving at soup kitchens and food pantries, contributing to their communities, and standing guard around the world.

And in a larger sense, that's emblematic of what Americans have always done. We come together and done what's required to make tomorrow better than today. That's who we are.

Consider our journey since that first Thanksgiving. We are among the world's youngest of peoples, but time and again, we have boldly and resiliently led the way forward. Against tough odds, we are a people who endure, who explored and settled a vast and untamed continent, who built a powerful economy and stood against tyranny in all its forms, who marched and fought for equality and connected a globe with our science and imagination.

None of that progress was predestined. None of it came easily. Instead, the blessings for which we give thanks today are the product of choices made by our parents and grandparents and generations before whose determination and sacrifice ensured a better future for us.

This holiday season, we must resolve once more to do the same.

This is not the hardest Thanksgiving America has ever faced. But as long as many members of our American family are hurting, we've got to look out for one another. As long as many of our sons and daughters and husbands and wives are at war, we've got to support their mission and honor their service. And as long as many of our friends and neighbors are looking for work, we've got to do everything we can to accelerate this recovery and keep our economy moving forward.

And we will. But we won't do it as any one political party. We've got to do it as one people. And in the coming weeks and months, I hope that we can work together, Democrats and Republicans and Independents alike, to make progress on these and other issues.

That's why next week I've invited the leadership of both parties to the White House for a real and honest discussion. Because I believe that if we stop talking at one another and start talking with one another, we can get a lot done.

For what we are called to do again today isn't about Democrats or Republicans. It's not about left or right. It's about us. It's about what we know this country is capable of. It's about what we want America to be in this new century: a vibrant nation that makes sure its children are the best-educated in the world; a healthy, growing economy that runs on clean energy and creates the jobs of tomorrow; a responsible government that reduces its deficits; an America where every citizen is able to go as far as he or she desires.

We can do all this, because we've done it before. We're made of the same sturdy stuff as the travelers who first sat down to that Thanksgiving dinner, and all who came after, who worked and sacrificed and invested, because they believed that their efforts would make the difference for us.

That's who we are. We shape our own destiny with conviction, and compassion, and clear and common purpose. We honor our past and press forward with the knowledge that tomorrow will be better than today. We are Americans. That's the vision we won't lose sight of. That's the legacy that falls to our generation. That's the challenge that together, we are going to meet.

To every American, I am thankful for the privilege of being your President. To all our servicemembers stationed around the world, I am honored to be your Commander in Chief. And from the Obama family to yours, have a very happy Thanksgiving. Thanks.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 12:45 p.m. on November 24 in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House for broadcast on November 25. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 24 but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on November 25.

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