

over the past decade, and they're the ones who deserve a break.

And I believe that instead of sitting still, we should invest in rebuilding America's roads and railways and runways. Too many American workers have been out of work for months, even years, and that doesn't do anybody any good when there is so much of America to rebuild. Our infrastructure is falling far behind what the rest of the world is doing, and upgrading it is vital to our economy and our future competitiveness. This is a project worthy of America's efforts. It's something that engineers, economists, Governors, and mayors of every political stripe support, and many of them issued a sobering report about this challenge last week. And on Monday, I will be meeting with some of them at the White House to discuss how we can put Americans to work doing what they do best, building America.

As I've said many times before, it took us a long time to get out of where we are right now. And the damage left by this recession is so deep that it's going to take a long time to get out. It will take determination, persistence, and most importantly, the will to act, all elements that the American people have in abundance. And if we summon that spirit now, if we keep moving forward, I'm absolutely convinced that we will rebuild our economy, we will put our people back to work, and we'll come through these tough days to brighter and better days ahead.

And I want to thank Brendan not only for his hospitality here today, but somebody who's got the courage and the foresight and the skills to create a terrific business that's supporting so many families. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:40 a.m.

Remarks on the Resignation of James L. Jones, Jr., as National Security Adviser and the Appointment of Thomas E. Donilon as National Security Adviser

October 8, 2010

The President. Good afternoon, everybody. When I took office, I pledged to do whatever was required to protect the American people and restore American leadership in the world. And over the past 20 months, that's exactly what we've done. During this time, I've relied every day on the advice and counsel of my National Security Adviser, General Jim Jones.

When I talked to Jim about taking this job shortly after the election, it was a difficult decision for him. He had just retired from the military, had a wide range of family obligations. But because of his patriotism, his dedication to keeping America safe, we were able to agree that he would serve, but he asked that we would—he would serve for about 2 years. I am extraordinarily thankful that both he and his wife Diane agreed to make that additional sacrifice for our country.

Today, as we approach that 2-year mark, I'm announcing that Jim has decided to step aside as National Security Adviser later this month

and that he will be succeeded by his very capable deputy, Tom Donilon.

The American people owe Jim an unbelievable debt of gratitude for a lifetime of service. As a marine in Vietnam, he risked his life for our country and was highly decorated for his courage. As Commandant of the Marine Corps, he led our Marines into the 21st century and won widespread admiration within the Corps and beyond. As Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, he helped the NATO alliance prepare for the new missions of our time. And given the multiple crises that we inherited, Jim has drawn on all of these experiences as National Security Adviser.

The list of challenges that our country has faced these last 2 years is daunting. Since my administration took office, we have removed nearly 100,000 troops and ended our combat mission in Iraq. We've refocused on the war against Al Qaida and subjected its leadership to relentless pressure. We are pursuing a new

strategy that finally devotes the resources we need in the fight against extremism in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

We've reset relations with Russia and signed a historic new START Treaty. And after years of drift, we have built a broad international coalition to hold Iran accountable and applied unprecedented pressure through tough new sanctions.

We have renewed the push for peace in the Middle East, charted a course to secure vulnerable nuclear materials within 4 years, and reestablished our leadership in the Pacific rim, while taking the lead in forging a response at the global level to the economic crisis.

And in between, we've responded to a range of crises like Haiti and the floods now in Pakistan that are required from us as leaders in the world.

In short, we've spared no effort to keep the American people safe, while also repairing old alliances, building new partnerships, and restoring America's leadership in the 21st century.

Through these challenges, Jim has always been a steady voice in Situation Room sessions, daily briefings, and with meetings with foreign leaders, while also representing our country abroad with allies and partners in every region of the world. At the same time, he has led an unprecedented reform of our national security staff here at the White House. Reflecting the new challenges of our time, he put new emphasis on cybersecurity, development, and climate change and made sure that homeland security is fully integrated into our efforts.

Serving as National Security Adviser is one of the most difficult jobs in our Government. But through it all, Jim—like the marine he has always been—has been a dedicated public servant and a friend to me. After a lifetime of service, I know this was also an enormous sacrifice for the Jones family. Many of them are here today, and I want to thank them as well. Jim, like your father and uncle and generations of Joneses who served before you, you complete this assignment knowing that your country is safer and stronger. I thank you, and the American people thank you.

National Security Adviser Jones. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. I am also proud to announce that General Jones will be succeeded by his deputy, and one of my closest advisers, Tom Donilon.

Tom has a wealth of experience that will serve him well in this new assignment. He has served three Presidents and been immersed in our national security for decades. Over the last 2 years, there's not a single critical national security issue that has not crossed Tom's desk. He has helped manage our national security team and the policymaking process and won the respect and admiration of his colleagues in the White House and across the administration. He has a probing intellect and a remarkable work ethic, although it's one that depends on a seemingly limitless quantity of Diet Coke. [*Laughter*]

Tom, however, is not the only valuable member of the Donilon team who works here at the White House. His wife Cathy, who's here, has done an extraordinary job as Jill Biden's Chief of Staff. I'm grateful to the Donilon family for all the work that they've already done for our Nation and for agreeing to take on this additional responsibility.

We have some huge challenges ahead. We remain a nation at war, and we will not rest in our efforts to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat Al Qaida. And above all, we are committed to forging the kind of American leadership that can shape the world in the 21st century just as we shaped the world in the 20th: a world of greater peace, a world of growing markets and expanding prosperity, a world of shared security, a world where American leadership enlists the support of old allies and new partners while advancing the values that help keep us safe and make America a beacon to the world.

That is the kind of American leadership that Jim Jones has always stood for and the kind of leadership that Tom and my entire national security team will continue to work for in the years to come.

So with that, I want to once again personally thank Jim for his outstanding service and offer the mike to him to say a few words.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:05 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Catherine M. Russell, Chief of Staff to Jill T. Biden, wife of Vice

President Joe Biden. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of National Security Adviser Jones.

Remarks on Signing the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010

October 8, 2010

Hello, everybody. Good to see you. Everybody, please have a seat. Well, it is wonderful to see all of you here today, to be with all of you. I want to make some special acknowledgements. We've got some legislators here who have been fighting on behalf of the disabilities community for a very long time. We're so proud of the legislation I'm signing today, as well as legislation we signed earlier this week. So I want to acknowledge all of them.

First of all, responsible in large part for guiding this process through in the Senate, Senator Mark Pryor of Arkansas; Representative Ed Markey, Democrat from Massachusetts. We also have here Senator Jay Rockefeller of West Virginia; Senator Barbara Mikulski, Democrat of Maryland. We've got Kent Conrad, as well as Byron Dorgan, the Dakota boys from North Dakota. *[Laughter]*

We've got Representative Henry Waxman, who's on so many important pieces of legislation this year, and we're grateful to him. Mr. Julius Genachowski is here, who's the chairman of the FCC. Where's Julius? There he is right there, a classmate of mine, somebody who has just been a great friend for a long time.

And finally, we've got this guy. *[Laughter]* Some of you may know him. I happened to be listening to him this morning when I woke up. He's what I work out to. *[Laughter]* He's what I sweet-talk Michelle to. *[Laughter]* Mr. Stevie Wonder is in the house. I was doing a little rendition of some of his music to him, and he was kind enough not to laugh. *[Laughter]*

Now, earlier this year, we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act right here in the White House. Many of you were here. And it was a moment for every American to reflect not just on one of the most

comprehensive civil rights bills in our history, but what that bill meant to so many people. It was a victory won by countless Americans who refused to accept the world as it is and, against great odds, waged quiet struggles and grassroots crusades until finally change was won.

The story of the disability rights movement is enriched because it's intertwined with the story of America's progress. Americans with disabilities are Americans first and foremost and, like all Americans, are entitled to not only full participation in our society, but also full opportunity in our society.

So we've come a long way. But even today, after all the progress that we've made, too many Americans with disabilities are still measured by what folks think they can't do, instead of what we know they can do.

The fight for progress isn't about sympathy, by the way; it's about opportunity. And that's why all of us share a responsibility to keep building on the work of those who came before us, one life, one law, one step at a time.

So today we're here to take two more steps on that journey. First of all, on Tuesday I signed Rosa's Law. This is named for a 9-year-old girl, right there. Rosa, wave to everybody. That's some good waving there, Rosa. *[Laughter]*

Rosa Marcellino, it's so inspiring to have her here. As one of hundreds of thousands of Americans with Down syndrome, Rosa worked with her parents and her siblings to have the words "mentally retarded" officially removed from the health and education code in her home State of Maryland.

Now, Rosa's Law takes her idea a step further. It amends the language in all Federal health, education, and labor laws to remove that same phrase and instead refer to Americans