

## Remarks at the Rolls-Royce Crosspointe Plant in Petersburg, Virginia March 9, 2012

*The President.* Hello, Virginia! Thank you so much. Thank you, everybody. Wow, what a unbelievable crowd. Everybody, please have a seat, if you have one. *[Laughter]*

Well, thank you, James, for that rousing introduction and letting me hang out a little bit with your workers. We've got a few other folks I want to acknowledge: The Governor of the great Commonwealth of Virginia, Bob McDonnell, is here. Outstanding Congressman Bobby Scott is in the house. We've got your mayor, Brian Moore. And I want to very much say thank you to our outstanding Secretary of Commerce, Secretary Bryson, who was here, and he is doing great work trying to create jobs and investment and opportunity all across the country.

It is great to be back in Petersburg. Last time I was here was during the campaign. I had my bus pull over so I could get a cheeseburger—*[laughter]*—at Longstreet's Deli. You guys have eaten there. *[Laughter]* Some of you may think this violates Michelle's "Let's Move!" program—*[laughter]*—but she gives me a pass when it comes to a good burger—*[laughter]*—and fries.

Now, back then, in 2008, we were talking about how working Americans were already having a tough go of it. Folks were working harder and longer for less. It was getting tougher to afford health care or to send your kids to college. The economy was already shedding jobs, and in less than a decade, nearly one in three manufacturing jobs had vanished. Then the bottom fell out of the economy, and things got that much tougher. We were losing seven to eight hundred thousand jobs a month. The economy was hemorrhaging.

And 3½ years later, we're still recovering from the worst economic crisis in our lifetimes. And we've got a lot of work to do before everybody who wants a good job can find one, before middle class folks regain that sense of security that had been slipping away even before the recession hit and before towns like Petersburg get fully back on their feet.

But here's the good news: Over the past 2 years, our businesses have added nearly 4 million new jobs. We just found out that last month in February we added 233,000 private-sector jobs. More companies are bringing jobs back and investing in America. And manufacturing is adding jobs for the first time since the 1990s. We just had another good month last month in terms of adding manufacturing jobs. And this facility is part of the evidence of what's going on all across the country. This company is about to hire more than 200 new workers, 140 of them right here in Petersburg, Virginia.

So the economy is getting stronger. And when I come to places like this, and I see the work that's being done, it gives me confidence there are better days ahead. I know it because I would bet on American workers and American know-how any day of the week.

The key now—our job now is to keep this economic engine churning. We can't go back to the same policies that got us into this mess. We can't go back to an economy that was weakened by outsourcing and bad debt and phony financial profits. We've got to have an economy that's built to last. And that starts with American manufacturing. It starts with you.

For generations of Americans, manufacturing has been the ticket into the middle class. Every day, millions clocked in at foundries and on assembly lines, making things. And the stuff we made—steel and cars and jet engines—that was the stuff that made America what it is. It was understood around the world.

The work was hard, but the jobs were good. They paid enough to own a home and raise kids and send them to college, gave you enough to retire on with dignity and respect. They were jobs that told us something more important than how much we were worth; they told us what we were worth. They told us that we were building more than just products. They told us we were building communities and neighborhoods, we were building a

country. It gave people pride about what America was about.

And that's why one of the first decisions I made as President was to stand by manufacturing, to stand by the American auto industry when it was on the brink of collapse. The heartbeat of American manufacturing was at stake, and so were more than a million jobs. And today, the American auto industry is coming back, and GM is number one in the world again, and Ford is investing billions in American plants and factories. And together, over the past 2½ years, the entire auto industry has added more than 200,000 jobs.

And here's the thing. They're not just building cars again, they're building better cars. For the first time in three decades, we raised fuel standards in this country so that by the middle of the next decade the cars that are built in America will average nearly 55 miles to the gallon. That will save the typical family about \$8,000 at the pump over time. That's real savings. That's real money.

And it shows that depending on foreign oil doesn't have to be our future. It shows that when we harness our own ingenuity, our technology, then we can control our future. See, America thrives when we build things better than the rest of the world. I want us to make stuff here and sell it over there. I don't want stuff made over there and selling it over here. And that's exactly what you're doing here at the largest Rolls-Royce facility in the world. That's what you're doing by building the key components of newer, faster, more fuel-efficient jet engines.

I just took a tour, and I learned a bit about how a jet engine comes together. Don't quiz me on it. *[Laughter]* I'm a little fuzzy on some of the details. *[Laughter]* I did press some buttons back there. *[Laughter]*

But a few weeks ago, I actually got to see the finished product. I went to Boeing, in Washington State, and I checked out a new Dreamliner. I even got to sit in the cockpit, which was pretty sweet. I didn't press any buttons there, though—*[laughter]*—because if it had started going, it would have been a problem.

So this plane, the Dreamliner, is going to keep America at the cutting edge of aerospace technology. American workers are manufacturing various components for it in Ohio and Oklahoma and South Carolina and Kansas and right here in Petersburg. In fact, the demand for their planes was so high last year that Boeing had to hire 13,000 workers all across America just to keep up. And Boeing is gaining more and more share all the time.

So think about that. Rolls-Royce is choosing to invest in America. You're creating jobs here, manufacturing components for jet engines, for planes that we're going to send all around the world. And that's the kind of business cycle we want to see. Not buying stuff that's made someplace else and racking up debt, but by inventing things and building things and selling them all around the world stamped with three proud words: Made in America. Made in America.

Think about how important this is. I mean, imagine if the plane of the future was being built someplace else. Imagine if we had given up on the auto industry. Imagine if we had settled for a lesser future.

But we didn't. We're Americans. We are inventors. We are builders. We're Thomas Edison, and we're the Wright Brothers, and we are Steven Jobs. That's who we are. That's what we do. We invent stuff, we build it. And pretty soon, the entire world adapts it. That's who we are. And as long as I'm President, we're going to keep on doing it. We're going to make sure the next generation of life-changing products are invented and manufactured here in the United States of America.

So that's why we launched an all-hands-on-deck effort. We brought together the brightest academic minds, the boldest business leaders, the most dedicated public servants from our science and our technology agencies all with one big goal: a renaissance in American manufacturing. We called it the Advanced Manufacturing Partnership. The Advanced Manufacturing Partnership. And today, we're building on it.

I'm laying out my plans for a new national network of manufacturing innovation, and

these are going to be institutes of manufacturing excellence where some of our most advanced engineering schools and our most innovative manufacturers collaborate on new ideas, new technology, new methods, new processes.

And if this sounds familiar, that's because what you're about to do right here at Crosspointe. Later this summer, the Commonwealth Center for Advanced Manufacturing will open its doors. And it's a partnership between manufacturers, including this one, UVA, Virginia Tech, Virginia State University—[*ap- plause*]—VSU is a little overrepresented here, obviously—[*laughter*]—the Commonwealth, and the Federal Government. So think of this as a place where companies can share access to cutting-edge capabilities. At the same time, students and workers are picking up new skills, they're training on state-of-the-art equipment, they're solving some of the most important challenges facing our manufacturers.

You just got all this brain power and skill and experience coming together in this hub, and that makes the whole greater than the sum of its parts. It allows everybody to learn from each other and figure out how we're going to do things even better. It's going to help get that next great idea from a paper or a computer to the lab, to the factory, to the global market-place. And that's especially important for the one in three Americans in manufacturing who work for a small business that doesn't always have access to resources like these.

Obviously, big companies—the Boeings, the Intels, the Rolls-Royces—they've got the resources, the capital, to be able to create these platforms. But some of the small to medium-sized businesses, it's a little bit harder. So this gives them access and allows them to take part in this new renaissance of American inventiveness. And we've got to build these institutes all across the country—all across the country. I don't want it just here at Crosspointe, I want it everywhere.

To do that, we need Congress to act. Hmm. We—[*laughter*]—it's true. [*Laughter*] But that doesn't mean we have to hold our breath. We're not going to wait; we're going to go ahead on our own. Later this year, we're going

to choose the winner of a competition for a pilot institute for manufacturing innovation, help them get started. With that pilot in place, we'll keep on pushing Congress to do the right thing because this is the kind of approach that can succeed, but we've got to have this all across the country. I want everybody thinking about how are we making the best products, how are we harnessing the new ideas and making sure they're located here in the United States.

And sparking this network of innovation across the country, it will create jobs and it will keep America in the manufacturing game. Of course, there's more we can do to seize this moment of opportunity to create new jobs and manufacturing here in America.

We've got to do everything we can to encourage more companies to make the decision to invest in America and bring jobs back from overseas. And we're starting to see companies do that. They're starting to realize this is the place with the best workers, the best ideas, the best universities. This is the place to be. We've got to give them a little more encouragement.

Right now companies get tax breaks for moving jobs and profits overseas. Companies that choose to invest in America, they get hit with one of the highest tax rates in the world. Does that make any sense?

*Audience members.* No!

*The President.* It makes no sense. Everybody knows it. So it's time to stop rewarding businesses that ship jobs overseas; reward companies that create good jobs right here in the United States of America. That's how our Tax Code can work. That's how our Tax Code should work.

At the same time, we've got to do everything we can to make sure our kids get an education that gives them every chance to succeed. I've been told that last year's valedictorian at Petersburg High, whose name is Kenneisha Edmonds, she had a pretty good statement. She said her cap and gown was "the best gown that anybody can hang in their closet." [*Laughter*] I like that. So let's make sure students like Kenneisha have teachers who bring out the best in them. Let's make sure if they want to go to

college, their families can afford them to go to college.

And let's make sure all our workers have the skills that companies like this one are looking for, because we've got to have folks engaged in lifelong learning. The days when you started out at 20 at one company and you just kept on doing the same thing for 40 years, that's not going to happen anymore.

So even if—as I was meeting some of the folks here, they had been in the industry, they'd been machinists, they'd been in manufacturing for years. But they're constantly upgrading their skills and retraining. And some of them had been laid off and had gone back to school before they came to this company. And so we've got to make sure those opportunities for people midcareer and onward, that they can constantly go back to a community college and retool so that they can make sure they're qualified for the jobs of tomorrow.

At a time when so many Americans are looking for work, no job opening should go unfilled just because people didn't have an opportunity to get the training they needed. And that's why I've asked Congress, join me in a national commitment to train 2 million Americans with the skills that will lead directly to a job, right now.

We need to create more partnerships like the one this plant has with John Tyler Community College. We should give more community colleges the resources they need. I want them to be community career centers, places that teach people skills that companies are looking for right now, from data management to the kind of high-tech manufacturing that's being done at this facility.

So, day by day, we're restoring this economy from crisis. But we can't stop there. We've got to make this economy ready for tomorrow. Day by day, we're creating new jobs, but we can't

stop there, not until everybody who's out there pounding the pavement, sending out their résumés has a chance to land one of those jobs.

Every day we're producing more oil and gas than we have in years, but we can't stop there. I want our businesses to lead the world in clean energy too. We've got the best colleges and universities in the world, but we can't stop there. I want to make sure more of our students can afford to go to those colleges and universities. Everybody knows we've got the best workers on Earth, but we can't stop there. We've got to make sure the middle class doesn't just survive these times, we want them to thrive. We want them to dream big dreams and to feel confident about the future.

I did not run for this office just to get back to where we were. I ran for this office to get us to where we need to be. And I promise you we will get there. Some of these challenges may take a year, some may take one term, some may take a decade, but we're going to get there. Because when we work together, we know what we're capable of. We've got the tools, we've got the know-how, we've got the toughness to overcome any obstacle. And when we come together and combine our creativity and our optimism and our willingness to work hard, and if we're harnessing our brainpower and our manpower and our horsepower, I promise you we will thrive again. We will get to where we need to go. And we will leave behind an economy that is built to last. We will make this another American century.

Thank you. God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:57 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to James M. Guyette, president and chief executive officer, Rolls-Royce North America Inc.

## Statement on the First Anniversary of the March 11 Earthquake, Tsunami, and Nuclear Disaster in Japan *March 9, 2012*

As we mark 1 year since the catastrophic earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear disasters in

Japan, Michelle and I join all Americans in honoring the memory of the 19,000 victims lost