

ed; and there are some things that have to be done at a local level, but there are also some things that we have to do together.

We have to invest in an education system that ensures we have the strongest, most skilled workforce on Earth. We have to invest together in things like basic research and science to ensure that we continue to innovate. Together, we've got to make sure that we continue to build the infrastructure for the 21st century, whether it's basics like roads and bridges, or it's things like broadband lines and improved Internet access and the kinds of things that will ensure that we're a platform for success for businesses coming from all around the world.

Together, we've got to make sure that we reduce our debt and our deficit in a balanced way, where everybody is doing their fair share, so that we're not just relying on cuts to programs for the vulnerable or for our kids, but we're also asking those of us who have been incredibly blessed to be born in this country, for us to give a little back and to think about the future.

And that's really what this election is going to come down to: Whose vision is more consistent with our history and those moments when we've been most successful as a country? And I think history is on our side and the facts are on our side. When you think of recent history, when did we grow fastest? It was when Bill Clinton decided we're going to raise taxes a little bit, close our deficit in a responsible way, make investments in the future. Prior to that, when did we grow fastest? In the postwar consensus, when the middle class was getting a decent wage and we began to invest in our infrastructure and our schools and our public colleges and universities and basic research and basic

science and things like environmental protection and worker safety laws. Those didn't impede our growth, they accelerated our growth.

And so I am looking forward to having this debate, and it's a debate that this country needs to have. Because I know a lot of folks are frustrated by gridlock. Well, the reason we've got gridlock is there is just an honest disagreement about how we need to move this country forward. And I'm looking forward to taking that debate to the American people. And the good news is, I think the American people agree with us. They're not following, as David said, the ups and downs, the ins and outs of this campaign. But they do have a sense of what's true, and they have pretty good instincts about what works. And they're not persuaded that an economy built on the notion that everybody here is on their own is somehow going to result in a stronger, more prosperous America.

So our job is just to make sure that we get that message out, that the facts are presented fairly, that we push back against misinformation. But if we can just have a straight, honest, clear debate about the choices presented, then not only are we going to win this election, but more importantly, we're going to keep this country moving forward.

So thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:34 p.m. at Fels Planetarium. In his remarks, he referred to David L. Cohen, executive vice president, Comcast Corp., and his wife Rhonda; Sen. Robert P. Casey, Jr.; Sen. John S. McCain III, in his capacity as the 2008 Republican Presidential nominee; and Republican Presidential candidate former Gov. W. Mitt Romney of Massachusetts. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Remarks at Kenny's BBQ Smoke House *June 13, 2012*

*[The President's remarks were joined in progress.]*

—these guys are also young fathers, and they're doing a great job. He's got four kids.

He's got two. And Michelle and I have been working a lot with military families, trying to support them. When these guys are deployed, sometimes they're leaving the family behind, and we want to make sure they get support.

And then the reason the two older gentlemen are here is, as I was mentioning, barbershops are where a lot of men still come, and we want to work with them—we want to work with barbershops to figure out how we can get better information to fathers about resources that are available to them, where they can find job training programs, they can find support groups for fathers. Because the more information we're getting out there to folks about how they can take responsibility for their kids, make sure that they're in their child's lives, help support their mother even if they're not living with the mother—it makes a huge difference.

It turns out that with the father being involved, the kids are less likely to do drugs, they're less likely to—girls are less likely to have teen pregnancy. And so that message is something that we want to make sure gets out there. And barbershops are a good place to do

it, so—because that's where everybody has to come, right?

So the—although I was teasing these guys, cutting their hair wouldn't be that complicated. [*Laughter*] You just take a—[*laughter*]. Isn't that right? I was just saying you got to give these guys a discount if they come in for a haircut, because that will only take 5 minutes. [*Laughter*]

So all right, guys, thank you. Let—we're going to eat in peace now.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:26 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to 1st Lt. William Edwards, USA, and his children David, Jacob, Elana, and Luke; Capt. Joubert Paulino, USA, and his children Jonah and Julia; and barbers Otis Gamble and Nurney Mason of Washington, DC.

## Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Medal of Freedom to President Shimon Peres of Israel

June 13, 2012

Good evening, everybody. Please have a seat. On behalf of Michelle and myself, welcome to the White House on this beautiful summer evening.

The United States is fortunate to have many allies and partners around the world. Of course, one of our strongest allies, and one of our closest friends, is the State of Israel. And no individual has done so much over so many years to build our alliance and to bring our two nations closer as the leader that we honor tonight, our friend Shimon Peres.

Among many special guests this evening we are especially grateful for the presence of Shimon's children—Zvia, Yoni, and Chemi—and their families. Please rise so we can give you a big round of applause.

We have here someone representing a family that has given so much for peace, a voice for peace that carries on with the legacy of her father Yitzhak Rabin, and that's Dalia. We are grateful to have you here. Leaders who've helped ensure that the United States is a part-

ner for peace—and in particular, I'm so pleased to see Secretary Madeleine Albright, who is here this evening; and one of the great moral voices of our time and an inspiration to us all, Professor Elie Wiesel.

The man, the life that we honor tonight is nothing short of extraordinary. Shimon took on his first assignment in Ben-Gurion's Haganah, during the struggle for Israeli independence in 1947, when he was still in his early twenties. He ran for President of Israel, and won, when he was 83. [*Laughter*]

By the way, I should mention that I just learned that his son-in-law is also his doctor. And I asked for all his tips. [*Laughter*]

Shimon has been serving his nation, and strengthening the bonds between our two nations, for some 65 years, the entire life of the State of Israel. Ben-Gurion and Meir, Begin and Rabin, these giants of Israel's founding generation now belong to the ages. But tonight we have the rare privilege in history, and that's to be in the presence of a true founding father.