The intentions behind Barack Obama's strategic use of personal pronouns

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Abstract
Politicians are often seen as great speakers and that makes them very interesting topics for linguistic research and their use of personal pronouns has been studied both by linguists and journalists such as Alastair Pennycook (*The politics of pronouns*, ELT Journal vol48, nr2, p 176) and writer and journalist, Mark Leibovich (*Democrats try various styles, and pronouns*, New York Times, Dec 31, 2007). This study focuses on the President of the United States, Barack Obama, and his usage of the personal pronouns *I, you* and *we* in three different political contexts. The study will provide analyses of three speeches by Obama which will show examples that suggest how Obama prefers the personal pronoun *we* in situations where he wants to decrease his personal involvement and own responsibility and instead act as a spokesman for the American people. The study will also provide suggestions of intentions and strategies behind his use of these particular pronouns and a comparison pointing out the differences between the three speeches investigated, for example how, at big events, watched by a global audience as in his inaugural address speech, he chose to be more formal and decrease the use of the pronoun *I*, and instead put the focus on what the American citizens have to do by using *we*. In the study I also have tried to bring some clarity to whom Obama is referring when he uses these pronouns, for example how he by using an *inclusive we* claims to have the authority to speak for the whole American nation.

Keywords: Personal pronouns, Barack Obama, referential source, pragmatics, personal involvement.
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1 Introduction
The pragmatics of personal pronouns such as I, you and we is not always easy to understand, for instance why we use personal pronouns and why we use them in particular contexts. For example when you use the pronoun I you express quite clearly that it is your own opinions, but what is expressed by the use of pronouns like you and we? Could the use of we show authority to speak for others and could you by using you distance yourself from someone else’s opinion? These are all questions that I will look at in this study. But I have chosen to put these questions into political contexts by investigating if the President of the United States, Barack Obama uses pronouns as a strategy to gain trust, loyalty and respect from the audience.

There have been researchers that have done studies and articles written about how politicians use pronouns in a strategic way to show power, solidarity or authority e.g. Pennycook (1994) and Bull and Fetzer (2006) which I will show in section 1.2. This could also be a strategy to show personal involvement, which can be included in the linguistic term *stance*.

This is an empirical study where my focus has been to look deeper into the pragmatic functions of certain personal pronouns and how they are used in political contexts. The material that I have selected is political speeches by the president of the United States of America, Barack Obama.

Pronouns are more than just a word class whose main function is to work as a substitute for nouns and noun phrases. They can also have pragmatic functions and one of the aims of this study is to investigate this, for example what does Barack Obama mean with a phrase like: “Today I say to you that the challenges we face are real “(Obama’s inaugural Address 20th January 2009). Who is he referring to when he uses personal pronouns like you and we in this utterance? It is not always easy to define what referential source is intended to when it comes
to interpersonal pronouns such as you and we (Connor & Upton, *Discourse in the professions*, 2004:310-311). According to Connor and Upton, (2004:310-311) Interpersonal pronouns are first and second person pronouns in both the plural and the singular that are used to express interpersonal interaction and personal involvement but also what they call politeness strategies with a purpose to show belonging of any kind.

1.1 Barack Obama
Barack Hussein Obama was born in Hawaii on August the 4th 1961. His father was born and raised in a small village in Kenya and his mother was from small-town Kansas during the depression.¹

Obama is often seen as a man who wants to change American politics and help people who live in bad conditions and this interest and thoughts began sometime around his college years and in 1985 he put law school and his corporate life on hold and moved to Chicago where he became a community organizer with a church-based group which worked to improve living conditions in poor neighborhoods with a lot of crime and high unemployment. Although the church-based group had some success Obama soon realized that a change at a local level wasn’t enough, and if they were to succeed a change in our laws and politics was needed.

After this Obama returned to law school and earned his degree from Harvard in 1991. It was after his hard work as a lawyer that led to him finally running for the Illinois State Senate where he served for eight years. In 2004 he was elected into the U.S Senate.

After this it is Obama’s own experiences from growing up in different places with different ideas that grounded his personal political philosophy and belief in an ability to unite the

¹ [http://www.barackobama.com/about/](http://www.barackobama.com/about/)
American people around a politics with a purpose where solving the challenges of everyday Americans is more important than partisan calculation and political gain.

1.2 Previous research
As I mentioned in section 1, there have been some research and articles about pronouns and their functions in political contexts. Alastair Pennycook has written an article in ELT Journal (vol48, nr2, 173-178, April 1994) with the title The politics of pronouns where he discusses the role of pronouns in political contexts and he also argues that pronouns are complex and political words and that they always raise difficulties when trying to define who is being represented by pronouns such as we, you, they, I, he or she. I agree with this since I came across a few problems like this when I analyzed the political speeches in the present study. For example, Barack Obama uses the pronoun we a lot in his speeches and it is not always clear who he is including in these situations. Sometimes it represents the American people but sometimes it is the audience who is present. When you use a pronoun like we you also automatically express a belonging of some kind. You can also argue that there are people that are not included, or as Pennycook expressed it: “As I have suggested, if ‘we’ claims authority and communality, it also constructs a ‘we/they dichotomy” (1994). This is what causes a lot of the difficulties that Pennycook mentions because by using we or you in political contexts you always create two sides where one is the we where the speaker includes himself/herself and then there is they which, depending on the context, is more or less acceptable.

This subject however is discussed not only by linguists but it has also been looked at from a popular science perspective. Mark Leibovich is an American writer and journalist who also did some research in the area of politician’s use of pronouns and one of these studies is called “Democrats try various styles, and pronouns” (New York Times, Dec 31, 2007). In this article he discusses the three democratic candidates for the presidential nomination and their
different campaign strategies but also what pronouns they prefer in their speeches and why. He argues that the three candidates, Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama and John Edwards, have very different strategies about how to win the people’s votes. According to him, Hillary Clinton, for example, often uses the phrase “When I’m president”, as opposed to the “If I’m elected” construction and he continues this with an argument that she prefers to use the pronouns I and me. Furthermore, most of her campaign speeches is about her own experience from living in the White House and her accomplishments and all the things she has worked for.

John Edwards, on the other hand, prefers the pronoun they which would represent the evil forces that have to be fought.

In contrast to these two, according to Leibovich, Obama wants to be seen as a new fresh face and he, as opposed to the others, prefers the pronouns we and us to represent everyone who wants to change the political system and to unite the nation. This would be an example of an inclusive we which I will define further on in this section. This attitude and aim are well illustrated in one of his speeches and probably one of the clarified examples of his new way of thinking; “Instead of sending someone to Washington to play the game, we need someone to change the game plan”, “We are not a divided nation as our politics suggests.”

Using we in these contexts is in my opinion his way of introducing his new way of thinking and also a way to invite everyone to be participants on the road to accomplishment. Just as he wanted from the beginning, he acts as a spokesman for the people instead of a powerful leader just giving orders.
Peter Bull and Anita Fetzer together published a paper called: “Who are we and who are you? The strategic use of forms of address in political interviews” (Bull & Fetzer 2006). In this paper they studied politicians’ use of personal pronouns such as we and you in political interviews and investigated how they are used strategically for example to accept, deny or distance themselves from responsibility for political actions but also to encourage solidarity and also to point out and identify supporters and enemies. This is discussed in the study with a close connection to the term equivocation. Equivocation has been defined as: nonstraightforward communication and it appears for example as ambiguous or contradictory (Bavelas et al. 1990:28 in Text & Talk: an interdisciplinary journal of language, discourse & communication studies 2006) but a new clearer definition is “intentional use of imprecise language” (Hamilton and Mineo 1998). The pioneering studies made in the area of equivocation were done by Janet Bavelas and colleagues (Bavelas in Text & Talk: an interdisciplinary journal of language, discourse & communication studies 2006). According to them, for something expressed to be called equivocal it has to be ambiguous to one of four dimensions which include sender, clarity, receiver and context (Bavelas et al. 1990:34). The sender dimension is when the speaker’s response is his own opinion and the statement would be equivocal if he fails to acknowledge it as such, or state it as someone else’s opinion. The clarity dimension refers to statements that are unclear and therefore being equivocal. The receiver dimension refers to when it becomes unclear to whom the speaker addresses. Finally the context dimension, which refers to whether a response is a direct answer to the question, the less relevance, the more equivocal (Bavelas in Text & Talk: an interdisciplinary journal of language, discourse & communication studies, 2006/26/1:8). My study attempts to show that Obama just as any other politician uses this kind of strategy. Another aspect discussed in Bull and Fetzer (2006) is the differences between inclusive we and exclusive we which will be proven relevant further on in this study. According to Mühlhäuser and Harré (1990),
inclusive we refers to a original source of a group including the speaker, listener and possibly some other people. But then it can be divided into two subcategories called (a) an integrative use, which include both speaker and hearer(s), and (b) an expressive use, which is just as (a) but it also expresses solidarity. Exclusive we on the other hand refer to a group of people including the speaker but excluding the hearer(s) (Mühlhäusler and Harré in Text & Talk: an interdisciplinary journal of language, discourse & communication studies, 2006/26/1:13).

1.3 Aim/Purpose
The aim of this study is to investigate the use of the personal pronouns I, we and you and their pragmatic function in a political context consisting of three different speeches by Barack Obama.

- Does Barack Obama use pronouns for strategic purposes and if that is the case what could be the reason behind it?
- Does he apply different pronouns depending on the speaking context?
- To whom is he referring when applying the personal pronouns I, you and we?

1.4 Material
The material that I have worked with in this study consists of three speeches by Barack Obama, where each speech has its own particular context. The purpose of this is to see if there is a change in pronoun use depending on what situation Obama finds himself in. Here follows a short introduction of the particulars of each speech.

The first speech is Obama’s inaugural address speech. It was held at the Capitol in Washington D.C on 20th of January 2009 and it was the first time that he spoke to the American nation after being elected the 44th President of the United States of America. Based on the combined attendance numbers, television viewership and internet traffic it was among
the most observed events ever by the global audience.\textsuperscript{2} I chose this speech because it will give some answers about how knowing that the whole world is watching can affect Obama’s use of personal pronouns.

The second speech is Obama’s Nobel Prize acceptance speech also called \textit{A just and lasting peace}. This speech was held on December the 10\textsuperscript{th} 2009 in Oslo. The particulars of this speech are that there were divided reactions about Obama receiving this prize. Some said that it wasn’t right since they argued that he won the prize not on what he has achieved but what he has promised. I chose this text because it would be interesting to see for example if he would take responsibility for these promises by using the pronoun \textit{I} in a situation where he might have to defend his promises and prove himself to be deserving of this prize.

The last text I chose is a speech that Obama held on March 19\textsuperscript{th} 2010 at George Mason University in Virginia with nearly 10 000 people in the audience. It was his final attempt to convince people about his historical vote on a new healthcare reform. This is a context where Obama’s ideas are being questioned but it is also a context where he tries to convince people to stand on his side. The reason why I chose this particular speech was to see what type of pronouns you could expect in a situation that is in a more local context with and without the global audience.

\textbf{1.5 Method}

This is an empirical analysis based on three selected speeches by Barack Obama in three different contexts. The first thing that I did was to automatically mark every occurrence of the pronouns \textit{I}, \textit{you} and \textit{we} in the three speeches. Later I double-checked it by manually going through the three texts. The results of the occurrences I then counted and normalized so a comparison would be possible and finally I compiled the numbers into a table (table 1).

\footnote{http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inauguration_of_Barack_Obama}
Next I read the texts and started to analyze them one by one searching for pragmatic functions and strategies behind the use of the three pronouns. When I analyzed the texts terms like *equivocation, referential sources* and *inclusive/exclusive we* occurred while reading some earlier studies dealing with this subject presented in section 1.2, which I have included in my own analysis. Finally I made a comparison between the three contexts and looked at the differences in Obama’s use of pronouns.

### 2 Results
In this section I will present my analyses of the three speeches and share my research and my results and also compare my results with the previous research presented in section 1.2.

#### Table 1. Raw and normalized scores of the pronouns *I, you* and *we*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Text 1</th>
<th>Normalized</th>
<th>Text 2</th>
<th>Normalized</th>
<th>Text 3</th>
<th>Normalized</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Words:</strong></td>
<td>2421</td>
<td>10 000</td>
<td>4123</td>
<td>10 000</td>
<td>3420</td>
<td>10 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>I</em></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>92.2</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>108.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>You</em></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>178.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>We</em></td>
<td>89</td>
<td>367.6</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>172.2</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>210.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table shows how many times Obama used the pronouns *I, you* and *we* in the three different speeches. The raw figures are normalized to occurrences per 10 000 words so a comparison would be possible.

#### 2.1 Hypotheses
- My hypothesis before doing the analysis of speech 1 was that Obama would use pronouns such as *we, us* and *our* and that it would be a clear strategy from him to stick to his unity campaign at a big event like this.
• My hypothesis regarding the second speech is that Obama will try to convince the people who feel that he does not deserve this prize by using a high amount of the personal pronoun I.

• My hypothesis regarding the third speech is that Obama will use a high frequency of the pronoun we to point out the importance of this vote and why the American people must help him make this healthcare reform possible.

2.2 Analysis of speech 1
The first speech that I have looked at is Obama’s inaugural address speech. This was the first time that he spoke to the American nation after he was elected the 44th president of the United States of America and an important moment not only for Obama and the American nation but also for the rest of the world. If you look at Obama’s way to this powerful position during his “unity” campaign as it was called, he was very clear about how he wanted to be seen as one of the people and as a spokesman for the people with the aim of uniting the American nation.

As you can see in table 1, the figures support my theory and that we was the most frequently used pronoun in this speech. But I will start by looking at the pronoun that might cause the least difficulties when it comes to referential sources and that is the first person singular pronoun I.

As you can see in table 1, I is used only three times during the whole speech and it is very clear that he is referring to himself all three times. What is worth pointing out is when he uses another pronoun in situations where I claim that he might have been more honest if he used the pronoun I. As in example (1) that follows.

(1) The state of our economy calls for action bold and swift. And we will act, not only to create new jobs, but to lay a new foundation for growth. We will build the roads and bridges, the electric grids and digital lines that feed our commerce and bind us together.
In this case I argue that the things he claims that we will do are not things that the American people can influence and of course he could be referring to the government but still he is the one who has the authority to influence the government and therefore I say it would be possible and maybe more honest of him to use I here to cause less confusion. But I am well aware that the way he uses we instead works just as well and I believe that the strategic purpose behind this is to decrease his own and the government’s pressure and responsibility.

The next pronoun I will look at is the second person personal pronoun you, which might be one of the most confusing when it comes to terms of referential source since it could have both singular and plural references. As seen in table 1, Obama does not use a large amount of this pronoun but when he does it often is to send a clear message to those who are against his opinions and aims as you can see in (2) and (3).

(2) And for those who seek to advance their aims by inducing terror and slaughtering innocents, we say to you now that our spirit is stronger and cannot be broken -- you cannot outlast us, and we will defeat you.

(3) To those who cling to power through corruption and deceit and the silencing of dissent know that you are on the wrong side of history, but that we will extend a hand if you are willing to unclench your fist.

I argue that the message he wants to send by these utterances is quite obvious and that they clearly state that he see these opinions as unacceptable and that he and the people that follows him must distance themselves from this group, but still for someone who does not know anything about the context in which this was said, and might be confused about who he is referring to.

In my opinion this is another example of how a politician such as Obama uses pronouns strategically to send messages but also to gain trust and respect from his audience and as you
can see this supports the theories discussed in section 1.2 found in Bull and Fetzer’s (2006) study.

But in the beginning of the speech Obama uses the pronoun you for another purpose and that is in polite phrases where his aim is to bond with his audience and this is not stranger than what I believe everybody expects from him.

(4) My fellow citizens: I stand here today humbled by the task before us, grateful for the trust you’ve bestowed, mindful of the sacrifices by our ancestors.

(5) Today I say to you that the challenges we face are real.

My first reaction was that he must be referring to his audience, but when I analyzed it, it was not that simple. In (4), for example, it is not just the audience but in my opinion everyone that voted for him in the election and in (5) he can be referring to the audience, the voters or possibly the whole American nation. These cases confirm that it is not always easy to point out what referential source pronouns like you are referring to.

I will continue this analysis by looking deeper into Obama’s use of the first person plural pronoun we, which, as you can see in table 1, is the one that Obama prefers the most in this speech. The reason for this, I argue, is based a lot on his aim to unite the American people and to point out that change can only be achieved if the whole nation works together towards shared goals.

In my analysis I have come to the conclusion that in this speech Obama uses the pronoun we to refer to three different referential sources. The first one is the one that he applies the most: it is when he uses we to speak for the American people, see (6) - (8). This is something that I argue is very strategic and used especially when he wants to point out what needs to be done and that it is the whole nation’s responsibility to make sure it is achieved.
I argue that Obama is very good at escaping too much of the responsibility and that this is one form of equivocation which is mentioned in section 1.2, and this is something that I believe that Obama is very aware of.

(6) At these moments, America has carried on not simply because of the skill or vision of those in high office, but because we, the people have remained faithful to the ideals of our forebears and true to our founding documents.

(7) That we are in the midst of crisis is now well understood.

(8) For the world has changed, and we must change with it.

The second case is when Obama finds himself in situations where he cannot refer to the whole nation simply because it is about issues that he himself or some other high authority can accomplish, as you can see in (9) and (10).

(9) The state of our economy calls for action bold and swift. And we will act, not only to create new jobs, but to lay a new foundation for growth. We will build the roads and bridges, the electric grids and digital lines that feed our commerce and bind us together. We’ll restore science to its rightful place, and wield technology’s wonders to raise health care’s quality and lower its cost.

(10) And we will transform our schools and colleges and universities to meet the demands of a new age.

These are questions that only high authorities have the power to act on, but still he uses we instead of for example I to avoid all the responsibility himself. And in (9) about the health care it will be shown later on in this study that it was not just words, and that Obama himself took action to make a change.
Finally there are a few instances where Obama talks about *we* meaning himself and the audience present which also could be called an *inclusive we* (section 1.2). I draw this conclusion based on the fact that at the beginning of these two examples (11) and (12) starts off with the phrases: *on this day we gather or we come*, and to me that sounds as a way of approaching the people at the same place as the speaker.

(11)On this day, *we* gather because we have chosen hope over fear, unity of purpose over conflict and discord.

(12)On this day, *we* come to proclaim an end to the petty grievances and false promises, the recriminations and worn-out dogmas that for far too long have strangled our politics.

2.3 Analysis of speech 2
When Obama received the Nobel Prize many people were shocked and even a bit angry since Obama was awarded the prize only for what he has promised but has not yet accomplished, therefore it will be interesting to see how he will respond to these doubts.

As you can see in Figure 1 Obama tends to use the pronoun *I* a little more often in this speech than in his inaugural address speech, but when it comes to the question if he tried to convince the opponents to his Nobel prize I would say that it is the other way around. Instead Obama, in my opinion, acts very passively and carefully but also more accepting of the voices against him than I expected.

(13)And yet *I would* be remiss *if I did* not acknowledge the considerable controversy that your generous decision has generated. In part, because *I am* at the beginning, and not the end, of my labors on the world stage.
As you can see in (13) he brings up the questioned matters that have been discussed, and that is a strategy used to make sure that he is well aware of these matters and that he knows what he needs to do to fulfill his promises.

(14) I cannot argue with those who find these men and women – some known, some obscure to all but those they help – to be far more deserving of this honor than I.

Example (14) is just another illustration of how he uses I to show how he feels about accepting this prize knowing how remarkable it is. This personal pronoun is most of the time used to show personal involvement, and in political contexts I argue that politicians like Obama use pronouns strategically so, as in this case, even if they are the greatest and most powerful men in the world they can show humility and honesty when questioned just to earn some respect.

On the other hand, the fact that he uses a higher amount of this pronoun still shows us that he is taking more responsibility for his own promises and that, I argue, makes it possible for him to gain the trust of the people. I believe this is a very strategic way of him to show what a great man he is by being so humble and honest even though he is being questioned.

As table 1 shows, the first person plural pronoun we is still the most preferable for Obama. And he still acts a lot as the spokesman for the American nation and talks about what they have to do. In contrast to the fact that when he used the pronoun I he was very careful and often used mitigated utterances such as: I believe and I cannot; instead, when using the pronoun we, he often speaks about what we must do.

(15) We must begin by acknowledging the hard truth that we will not eradicate violent conflict in our lifetimes.

(16) But war itself is never glorious, and we must never trumpet it as such.
I do not think that this difference is unknown to Obama. I believe this is his way of pointing out that change is nothing that one man can accomplish but something that can be achieved only if the government and the people work united. And this argument is much based on Obama’s election campaign that focused on a united nation.

Lastly we have the pronoun you which Obama used surprisingly few times in this speech; only three times did it occur.

It is very often hard to determine to whom someone refers when they use these pronouns which could refer to many different people. In these three cases, however, I argue that Obama speaks about people in general, to everyone present but also listeners around the world.

(17) As the world grows smaller, you might think it would be easier for human beings to recognize how similar we are; to understand that we all basically want the same thing; that we all hope for the chance to live out our lives with some measure of happiness and fulfills for ourselves and our families.

(18) For if you truly believe that you are carrying out divine will, then there is no need for restraint – no need to spare the pregnant mother, or medic, or even a person of one’s own faith.

2.4 Analysis of speech 3
This speech was held on March 19th 2010 at George Mason University in Virginia. This was one of the final speeches and chances for Obama to convince people about his new Health care reform just one week before the big vote. Similar to the Nobel Prize acceptance speech this was also a time where Obama’s actions were questioned because not everyone was convinced about this new health care reform.

This speech is very different compared to the two earlier speeches analyzed in sections 2.2 and 2.3. I argue that there is one main reason for this and that is that Obama gets more
personally involved in this speech, an argument that I base on how the frequency of the pronoun *I* has increased in contrast to the other speeches, but it is also shown in the increased numbers of the pronoun *you* especially when he is addressing the people present directly.

In the speech there is a part where he talks about what this reform will do, and by using the pronoun *you* he points out what this reform will result in, and how it is going to affect every single person in the room at the same time as he probably is referring to the American people (19).

(19) If this reform becomes the law, insurance plans will be required to offer free preventive care to their customers. If *you* buy the new plan, there won’t be lifetime or restrictive annual limits on the amount of care *you* receive from your insurance companies. And by the way, to all the young people here today, starting this year if *you* don’t have insurance, all new plans will allow *you* to stay on your parents’ plan until *you* are 26 years old.

So *you’ll* have some security when *you* graduate. If that first job doesn’t offer coverage, *you’re* going to know that *you’ve* got coverage. Because as *you* start your lives and your careers, the last thing *you* should be worried about is whether *you’re* going to go broke or make your parents broke just because *you* get sick.

I claim that it is a well-planned strategy from Obama to get the listener’s attention at the same time as he shows a lot of personal engagement and involvement in the subject, and to show such personal involvement will earn him more respect from the listeners.

As you can see in table 1, section 2, this is the speech where Obama used the highest number of the pronoun *I*.

By using the first person pronoun Obama chooses to get more involved and it gives his audience a chance to listen to his personal opinions (20).
(20) I don’t believe we should give government or the insurance companies more control over health care in America. I think it’s time to give to you, the American people, more control over your health.

This gives him a more honest and trustworthy appearance and it creates a more down to earth context. It becomes more than just words on a piece of paper spoken by a man with high authority.

His personal involvement and how he feels for the question discussed is shown even more clearly when he makes clear statements that he doesn’t really care about how this reform affects his political position (21). Instead he brings up examples of how the vote will change people’s lives. And that, I argue, suggests that Obama is not a man who wants power but a man who cares about the American citizens.

(21) Look, let me say this, George Mason: I don’t know how this plays politically. Nobody really does. I mean, there’s been so much misinformation and so much confusion and the climate at times during the course of this year has been so toxic and people are so anxious because the economy has been going through such tough time. I don’t know what’s going to happen with the politics on this thing. I don’t know whether my poll numbers go down, they go up. I don’t know what happens in terms of Democrats versus Republicans.

But here’s what I do know. I do know that this bill, this legislation, is going to be enormously important for America’s future. I do know the impact it will have on the millions of Americans who need our help, and the millions more who may not need help right now but a year from now or five years from now or 10 years from now, if they have some bad luck; if heaven forbid, they get sick; if they’ve got a preexisting condition; if their children has a preexisting condition; if they lose their job; if they want to start a company – I know the impact it will have on them.
With this construction of *I don’t know* and *I do know* Obama sends a clear message of what he thinks is the most important thing to care for and that in my opinion is just what he wants.

Finally I will look at the pronoun *we*, which just as in the other two speeches is the pronoun that Obama prefers the most. At the beginning of this speech Obama speaks about *we* meaning the members of his campaign from the beginning, about three years earlier and refers to a visit at this particular university.

(23) They had counted us out before *we* had even started, because the Washington conventional wisdom was that change was too hard. But what *we* had even then was a group of students here at George Mason.

This, I argue is just a politeness strategy from Obama to bond with his audience.

In the rest of the speech Obama uses an *inclusive we* as a strategy to include everyone who agrees with him and is for this new healthcare reform and the strategy behind this is to make them feel that they are all a part of this important decision and they should all take credit if their goal is achieved, see (24) and (25).

(24) And right now, *we* are at the point where *we* are going to do something historical this weekend.

(25) Do not quit, do not give up, *we* keep going. *We* are going to get this done. *We* are going to make history.

3 Discussion
In this section I will compare and discuss the results from the three analyses by looking at one pronoun at the time from the perspective of all the three contexts.

I will begin with Obama’s use of the pronoun *I*. If you compare all the three speeches we can see that his *Inaugural address speech* was the one where he used *I* the fewest times. This is
not just a coincidence. I believe that Obama preferred not to use I for two reasons: the first reason as I mentioned in section 2.3 is that he wants to decrease the pressure and responsibility on himself and the government, and the second reason is simply because he wants to stick to his beliefs from his campaign about a united nation sharing the aim of a change in politics. But then you may ask, why this low number of I just in this particular context and not the other two? The reasons for this can be many, but I argue that in the Nobel Prize acceptance speech Obama knew that his worthiness of this prize was challenged by many, and that he had won the prize because of his own promises and not on achievements and therefore he had to take responsibility for them. At the same time he showed the audience that although he is a great man with a lot of power and authority, in a pressured situation he can show a great deal of humility and solidarity.

The fact that it was in the speech about his new healthcare reform that he used I the most was quite surprising in the sense that this context might not be seen as big and important as the other two. But the fact that this context does not have the same global interest as the other two might be one of the reasons why Obama chose to show more personal involvement as I illustrated in (20) and (21) in section 2.4. It is also interesting to see that when he speaks about his own opinion he often gets very careful and talk about I don’t know or I believe as in (21). That he chooses to get more personally involved in a context like this also shows that his work for better living conditions that started in his earlier college years (see 1.2) has continued and is still very important for him.

My conclusions regarding Obama’s use of the pronoun I is that strategically he chooses to get more personally involved when it comes to contexts dealing with the American people but in contexts with a more global interest he decreases his personal opinions and promotes his beliefs that the work can only be done by the whole nation working together, but I also argue that it is a strategy to be more formal in situations like this.
I will continue this discussion by having a look at how the pronoun *you* was used in the three speeches. As I mentioned in section 2.2 this is the pronoun that might be the most difficult when it comes to determining its referential sources, and this, I argue, is one reason why it is quite common in everyday speech but not in political contexts such as these three speeches. One reason for Obama to prefer not to use *you* could be to avoid to be unclear about who the addressee is which also could be called equivocal in the receiver dimension as I mentioned in section 1.2. But as the researches by Hamilton and Mineo and Bavelas suggests, to be equivocal could be intentional and strategic when politicians such as Obama wants to be vague about whom they are referring to (Bull and Fetzer 2006).

When it comes to the differences between the three speeches it is possible to draw the conclusion that in the first two speeches Obama does not use *you* a lot but when he does, it often is in either polite phrases as in (4), or to point out what is accepted and make people choose if they are with or against him as in (2) and (3) but it can also be illustrated with other constructions like when Barack Obama, in his Nobel Prize acceptance text, spoke about how he will continue the effort to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons.

(22) One urgent example is the effort to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, and to seek a world without them. In the middle of the last century, nations agreed to be bound by a treaty whose bargain is clear: all will have access to peaceful nuclear power; those without nuclear weapons will forsake them; and those with nuclear weapons will work toward disarmament. I am committed to upholding this treaty. It is a centerpiece of my foreign policy. And I am working with President Medvedev to reduce America and Russia's nuclear stockpiles.
But it is also incumbent upon all of us to insist that nations like Iran and North Korea do not game the system. Those who claim to respect international law cannot avert their eyes when those laws are flouted. Those who care for their own security cannot ignore the danger of an arms race in the Middle East or East Asia. Those who seek peace cannot stand idly by as nations arm themselves for nuclear war.

This is relevant to this study since by starting with words like: *those who claim (they)*, Obama is able to express that everyone that feels included in this category is against nuclear weapons and if you disagree with his opinion you are excluded. This function corresponds with Pennycook’s claim that pronoun use often result in creating sides (1994:176). Obama uses this strategy the most in his *Inaugural address speech* and this I argue is mainly to get the people on his side. It also proves that there can be strategies behind the use of a personal pronoun.

As you can see the use of *you* increased a lot in his health insurance speech and the strategy behind this is first of all that he chose to get more personally involved and shared his opinions but also to convince his audience about the reality of this problem and what this reform will lead to (19).

My conclusions when it comes to Obama’s use of the pronoun *you* is that overall he prefers to avoid this pronoun as in the two first speeches mainly to keep the focus on what he and the people together have to do to reach the goals. But in a context where he wants to convince a smaller audience he chooses to share more of his personal opinions and addresses the people present more directly to convince them of the importance of the subject.

Finally I will look at the last pronoun which is *we*, which is the pronoun that Obama prefers the most no matter the context, which table 1 clearly shows. This is not surprising when his
whole campaign was focused on how the people working together could change the politics of the United States. Therefore he put almost all focus on explaining the work ahead of them and that everybody needs to play their part, and it was quite hard for me to see any differences between the three contexts since when he uses we it is for the same purpose in all of them. This was often expressed by using a form of inclusive we (see (11) and (12) in section 2.2), with which he often refers to the American people but he only includes all the people who agree with him and at the same time he clearly states that if you do not you are not included. Obama also uses we in the strategic sense that he wants to take some pressure off himself and the government, and by using we he reduces their responsibility and instead expresses a shared responsibility with the American citizens which is illustrated in (9) and (10) in section 2.2.

My conclusions about Obama’s use of we is that he does not use the pronoun differently in different contexts and that is because he has a clear strategy to act as a spokesman for the people and to unite them to achieve a change in the American politics. He uses we to decrease his own responsibility and to send a clear message about what is accepted and that if you do not agree with him then you are not included when he talks about we. Finally as a contrast to his cautiousness when he used I, he is very clear and direct in his use of we, as you can see in (15) and (16) where he very often talks about we meaning the American people and what they must or have to do.

3.1 Conclusion
In this study I have investigated if Barack Obama uses the personal pronouns I, you and we with strategic purposes differently in three speeches selected for their different contexts.

The conclusions that my results suggest are that Obama does change his usage of these particular pronouns depending on the context of his speeches. His reasons for doing this are to show more or less personal involvement. My results show that he shares more of his personal
opinions in smaller contexts and gets more formal and less personal in bigger events where he
speaks to a more global audience. He also uses pronouns such as you and we to decrease his
own responsibility in situations where he wants to express the importance of the American
people’s participation to reach a particular goal, such as a change in American laws and
politics. Finally he prefers the personal pronoun we the most because it supports his aim about
a more united nation and his will to appear as the spokesman for the American people.
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Appendix 1
Barack Obama’s Inaugural Address speech

By President Barack Hussein Obama
My fellow citizens: I stand here today humbled by the task before us, grateful for the trust
you’ve bestowed, mindful of the sacrifices borne by our ancestors.
I thank President Bush for his service to our nation -- (applause) -- as well as the generosity
and cooperation he has shown throughout this transition.
Forty-four Americans have now taken the presidential oath. The words have been spoken
during rising tides of prosperity and the still waters of peace. Yet, every so often, the oath is
taken amidst gathering clouds and raging storms. At these moments, America has carried on
not simply because of the skill or vision of those in high office, but because we, the people,
have remained faithful to the ideals of our forebears and true to our founding documents.
So it has been; so it must be with this generation of Americans.
That we are in the midst of crisis is now well understood. Our nation is at war against a far-
reaching network of violence and hatred. Our economy is badly weakened, a consequence of
greed and irresponsibility on the part of some, but also our collective failure to make hard
choices and prepare the nation for a new age. Homes have been lost, jobs shed, businesses
shuttered. Our health care is too costly, our schools fail too many -- and each day brings
further evidence that the ways we use energy strengthen our adversaries and threaten our
planet.
These are the indicators of crisis, subject to data and statistics. Less measurable, but no less
profound, is a sapping of confidence across our land; a nagging fear that America’s decline is
inevitable, that the next generation must lower its sights.
Today I say to you that the challenges we face are real. They are serious and they are many.
They will not be met easily or in a short span of time. But know this America: They will be
met. (Applause.)
On this day, we gather because we have chosen hope over fear, unity of purpose over conflict
and discord. On this day, we come to proclaim an end to the petty grievances and false
promises, the recriminations and worn-out dogmas that for far too long have strangled our
politics. We remain a young nation. But in the words of Scripture, the time has come to set
aside childish things. The time has come to reaffirm our enduring spirit; to choose our better
history; to carry forward that precious gift, that noble idea passed on from generation to
generation: the God-given promise that all are equal, all are free, and all deserve a chance to
pursue their full measure of happiness. (Applause.)
In reaffirming the greatness of our nation we understand that greatness is never a given. It
must be earned. Our journey has never been one of short-cuts or settling for less. It has not
been the path for the faint-hearted, for those that prefer leisure over work, or seek only the
pleasures of riches and fame. Rather, it has been the risk-takers, the doers, the makers of
things -- some celebrated, but more often men and women obscure in their labor -- who have
carried us up the long rugged path towards prosperity and freedom.
For us, they packed up their few worldly possessions and traveled across oceans in search of a
new life. For us, they toiled in sweatshops, and settled the West, endured the lash of the whip,
and plowed the hard earth. For us, they fought and died in places like Concord and
Gettysburg, Normandy and Khe Sahn.
Time and again these men and women struggled and sacrificed and worked till their hands
were raw so that we might live a better life. They saw America as bigger than the sum of our
individual ambitions, greater than all the differences of birth or wealth or faction.
This is the journey we continue today. We remain the most prosperous, powerful nation on
Earth. Our workers are no less productive than when this crisis began. Our minds are no less
inventive, our goods and services no less needed than they were last week, or last month, or last year. Our capacity remains undiminished. But our time of standing pat, of protecting narrow interests and putting off unpleasant decisions -- that time has surely passed. Starting today, we must pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off, and begin again the work of remaking America. (Applause.)

For everywhere we look, there is work to be done. The state of our economy calls for action, bold and swift. And we will act, not only to create new jobs, but to lay a new foundation for growth. We will build the roads and bridges, the electric grids and digital lines that feed our commerce and bind us together. We'll restore science to its rightful place, and wield technology's wonders to raise health care's quality and lower its cost. We will harness the sun and the winds and the soil to fuel our cars and run our factories. And we will transform our schools and colleges and universities to meet the demands of a new age. All this we can do. All this we will do.

Now, there are some who question the scale of our ambitions, who suggest that our system cannot tolerate too many big plans. Their memories are short, for they have forgotten what this country has already done, what free men and women can achieve when imagination is joined to common purpose, and necessity to courage. What the cynics fail to understand is that the ground has shifted beneath them, that the stale political arguments that have consumed us for so long no longer apply.

The question we ask today is not whether our government is too big or too small, but whether it works -- whether it helps families find jobs at a decent wage, care they can afford, a retirement that is dignified. Where the answer is yes, we intend to move forward. Where the answer is no, programs will end. And those of us who manage the public's dollars will be held to account, to spend wisely, reform bad habits, and do our business in the light of day, because only then can we restore the vital trust between a people and their government. Nor is the question before us whether the market is a force for good or ill. Its power to generate wealth and expand freedom is unmatched. But this crisis has reminded us that without a watchful eye, the market can spin out of control. The nation cannot prosper long when it favors only the prosperous. The success of our economy has always depended not just on the size of our gross domestic product, but on the reach of our prosperity, on the ability to extend opportunity to every willing heart -- not out of charity, but because it is the surest route to our common good. (Applause.)

As for our common defense, we reject as false the choice between our safety and our ideals. Our Founding Fathers -- (applause) -- our Founding Fathers, faced with perils that we can scarcely imagine, drafted a charter to assure the rule of law and the rights of man -- a charter expanded by the blood of generations. Those ideals still light the world, and we will not give them up for expedience sake. (Applause.)

And so, to all the other peoples and governments who are watching today, from the grandest capitals to the small village where my father was born, know that America is a friend of each nation, and every man, woman and child who seeks a future of peace and dignity. And we are ready to lead once more. (Applause.)

Recall that earlier generations faced down fascism and communism not just with missiles and tanks, but with the sturdy alliances and enduring convictions. They understood that our power alone cannot protect us, nor does it entitle us to do as we please. Instead they knew that our power grows through its prudent use; our security emanates from the justness of our cause, the force of our example, the tempering qualities of humility and restraint. We are the keepers of this legacy. Guided by these principles once more we can meet those new threats that demand even greater effort, even greater cooperation and understanding between nations. We will begin to responsibly leave Iraq to its people and forge a hard-
earned peace in Afghanistan. With old friends and former foes, we'll work tirelessly to lessen the nuclear threat, and roll back the specter of a warming planet. We will not apologize for our way of life, nor will we waver in its defense. And for those who seek to advance their aims by inducing terror and slaughtering innocents, we say to you now that our spirit is stronger and cannot be broken -- you cannot outlast us, and we will defeat you. (Applause.) For we know that our patchwork heritage is a strength, not a weakness. We are a nation of Christians and Muslims, Jews and Hindus, and non-believers. We are shaped by every language and culture, drawn from every end of this Earth; and because we have tasted the bitter swill of civil war and segregation, and emerged from that dark chapter stronger and more united, we cannot help but believe that the old hatreds shall someday pass; that the lines of tribe shall soon dissolve; that as the world grows smaller, our common humanity shall reveal itself; and that America must play its role in ushering in a new era of peace.

To the Muslim world, we seek a new way forward, based on mutual interest and mutual respect. To those leaders around the globe who seek to sow conflict, or blame their society's ills on the West, know that your people will judge you on what you can build, not what you destroy. (Applause.) To those who cling to power through corruption and deceit and the silencing of dissent, know that you are on the wrong side of history, but that we will extend a hand if you are willing to unclench your fist. (Applause.) To the people of poor nations, we pledge to work alongside you to make your farms flourish and let clean waters flow; to nourish starved bodies and feed hungry minds. And to those nations like ours that enjoy relative plenty, we say we can no longer afford indifference to the suffering outside our borders, nor can we consume the world's resources without regard to effect. For the world has changed, and we must change with it.

As we consider the role that unfolds before us, we remember with humble gratitude those brave Americans who at this very hour patrol far-off deserts and distant mountains. They have something to tell us, just as the fallen heroes who lie in Arlington whisper through the ages. We honor them not only because they are the guardians of our liberty, but because they embody the spirit of service -- a willingness to find meaning in something greater than themselves. And yet at this moment, a moment that will define a generation, it is precisely this spirit that must inhabit us all. For as much as government can do, and must do, it is ultimately the faith and determination of the American people upon which this nation relies. It is the kindness to take in a stranger when the levees break, the selflessness of workers who would rather cut their hours than see a friend lose their job which sees us through our darkest hours. It is the firefighter's courage to storm a stairway filled with smoke, but also a parent's willingness to nurture a child that finally decides our fate.

Our challenges may be new. The instruments with which we meet them may be new. But those values upon which our success depends -- honesty and hard work, courage and fair play, tolerance and curiosity, loyalty and patriotism -- these things are old. These things are true. They have been the quiet force of progress throughout our history.

What is demanded, then, is a return to these truths. What is required of us now is a new era of responsibility -- a recognition on the part of every American that we have duties to ourselves, our nation and the world; duties that we do not grudgingly accept, but rather seize gladly, firm in the knowledge that there is nothing so satisfying to the spirit, so defining of our character than giving our all to a difficult task.

This is the price and the promise of citizenship. This is the source of our confidence -- the knowledge that God calls on us to shape an uncertain destiny. This is the meaning of our
liberty and our creed, why men and women and children of every race and every faith can join in celebration across this magnificent mall; and why a man whose father less than 60 years ago might not have been served in a local restaurant can now stand before you to take a most sacred oath. (Applause.)

So let us mark this day with remembrance of who we are and how far we have traveled. In the year of America's birth, in the coldest of months, a small band of patriots huddled by dying campfires on the shores of an icy river. The capital was abandoned. The enemy was advancing. The snow was stained with blood. At the moment when the outcome of our revolution was most in doubt, the father of our nation ordered these words to be read to the people:

"Let it be told to the future world...that in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope and virtue could survive... that the city and the country, alarmed at one common danger, came forth to meet [it]."

America: In the face of our common dangers, in this winter of our hardship, let us remember these timeless words. With hope and virtue, let us brave once more the icy currents, and endure what storms may come. Let it be said by our children's children that when we were tested we refused to let this journey end, that we did not turn back nor did we falter; and with eyes fixed on the horizon and God's grace upon us, we carried forth that great gift of freedom and delivered it safely to future generations.

Thank you. God bless you. And God bless the United States of America. (Applause.)
Appendix 2

Barack Obama Nobel Prize Acceptance Text, as prepared for delivery and provided by the White House
"A Just and Lasting Peace"

Your Majesties, Your Royal Highnesses, Distinguished Members of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, citizens of America, and citizens of the world:

I receive this honor with deep gratitude and great humility. It is an award that speaks to our highest aspirations – that for all the cruelty and hardship of our world, we are not mere prisoners of fate. Our actions matter, and can bend history in the direction of justice.

And yet I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the considerable controversy that your generous decision has generated. In part, this is because I am at the beginning, and not the end, of my labors on the world stage. Compared to some of the giants of history who have received this prize – Schweitzer and King; Marshall and Mandela – my accomplishments are slight.

And then there are the men and women around the world who have been jailed and beaten in the pursuit of justice; those who toil in humanitarian organizations to relieve suffering; the unrecognized millions whose quiet acts of courage and compassion inspire even the most hardened of cynics. I cannot argue with those who find these men and women – some known, some obscure to all but those they help – to be far more deserving of this honor than I.

But perhaps the most profound issue surrounding my receipt of this prize is the fact that I....

...am the Commander-in-Chief of a nation in the midst of two wars. One of these wars is winding down. The other is a conflict that America did not seek; one in which we are joined by forty three other countries – including Norway – in an effort to defend ourselves and all nations from further attacks.

Still, we are at war, and I am responsible for the deployment of thousands of young Americans to battle in a distant land. Some will kill. Some will be killed. And so I come here with an acute sense of the cost of armed conflict – filled with difficult questions about the relationship between war and peace, and our effort to replace one with the other.

These questions are not new. War, in one form or another, appeared with the first man. At the dawn of history, its morality was not questioned; it was simply a fact, like drought or disease – the manner in which tribes and then civilizations sought power and settled their differences.

Over time, as codes of law sought to control violence within groups, so did philosophers, clerics, and statesmen seek to regulate the destructive power of war.
The concept of a “just war” emerged, suggesting that war is justified only when it meets certain preconditions: if it is waged as a last resort or in self-defense; if the forced used is proportional, and if, whenever possible, civilians are spared from violence.

For most of history, this concept of just war was rarely observed. The capacity of human beings to think up new ways to kill one another proved inexhaustible, as did our capacity to exempt from mercy those who look different or pray to a different God. Wars between armies gave way to wars between nations – total wars in which the distinction between combatant and civilian became blurred.

In the span of thirty years, such carnage would twice engulf this continent. And while it is hard to conceive of a cause more just than the defeat of the Third Reich and the Axis powers, World War II was a conflict in which the total number of civilians who died exceeded the number of soldiers who perished.

In the wake of such destruction, and with the advent of the nuclear age, it became clear to victor and vanquished alike that the world needed institutions to prevent another World War. And so, a quarter century after the United States Senate rejected the League of Nations – an idea for which Woodrow Wilson received this Prize – America led the world in constructing an architecture to keep the peace: a Marshall Plan and a United Nations, mechanisms to govern the waging of war, treaties to protect human rights, prevent genocide, and restrict the most dangerous weapons.

In many ways, these efforts succeeded. Yes, terrible wars have been fought, and atrocities committed. But there has been no Third World War. The Cold War ended with jubilant crowds dismantling a wall. Commerce has stitched much of the world together. Billions have been lifted from poverty. The ideals of liberty, self-determination, equality and the rule of law have haltingly advanced. We are the heirs of the fortitude and foresight of generations past, and it is a legacy for which my own country is rightfully proud.

A decade into a new century, this old architecture is buckling under the weight of new threats. The world may no longer shudder at the prospect of war between two nuclear superpowers, but proliferation may increase the risk of catastrophe. Terrorism has long been a tactic, but modern technology allows a few small men with outsized rage to murder innocents on a horrific scale.

Moreover, wars between nations have increasingly given way to wars within nations. The resurgence of ethnic or sectarian conflicts; the growth of secessionist movements, insurgencies, and failed states; have increasingly trapped civilians in unending chaos. In today’s wars, many more civilians are killed than soldiers; the seeds of future conflict are sewn, economies are wrecked, civil societies torn asunder, refugees amassed, and children scarred.

I do not bring with me today a definitive solution to the problems of war. What I do know is that meeting these challenges will require the same vision, hard work, and persistence of those men and women who acted so boldly decades ago. And it will
require us to think in new ways about the notions of just war and the imperatives of a just peace.

We must begin by acknowledging the hard truth that we will not eradicate violent conflict in our lifetimes. There will be times when nations – acting individually or in concert – will find the use of force not only necessary but morally justified.

I make this statement mindful of what Martin Luther King said in this same ceremony years ago – “Violence never brings permanent peace. It solves no social problem: it merely creates new and more complicated ones.” As someone who stands here as a direct consequence of Dr. King’s life’s work, I am living testimony to the moral force of non-violence. I know there is nothing weak – nothing passive – nothing naïve – in the creed and lives of Gandhi and King.

But as a head of state sworn to protect and defend my nation, I cannot be guided by....

.... their examples alone. I face the world as it is, and cannot stand idle in the face of threats to the American people. For make no mistake: evil does exist in the world. A non-violent movement could not have halted Hitler’s armies. Negotiations cannot convince Al Qaeda’s leaders to lay down their arms. To say that force is sometimes necessary is not a call to cynicism – it is a recognition of history; the imperfections of man and the limits of reason.

I raise this point because in many countries there is a deep ambivalence about military action today, no matter the cause. At times, this is joined by a reflexive suspicion of America, the world’s sole military superpower.

Yet the world must remember that it was not simply international institutions – not just treaties and declarations – that brought stability to a post-World War II world. Whatever mistakes we have made, the plain fact is this: the United States of America has helped underwrite global security for more than six decades with the blood of our citizens and the strength of our arms.

The service and sacrifice of our men and women in uniform has promoted peace and prosperity from Germany to Korea, and enabled democracy to take hold in places like the Balkans. We have borne this burden not because we seek to impose our will. We have done so out of enlightened self-interest – because we seek a better future for our children and grandchildren, and we believe that their lives will be better if other peoples’ children and grandchildren can live in freedom and prosperity.

So yes, the instruments of war do have a role to play in preserving the peace. And yet this truth must coexist with another – that no matter how justified, war promises human tragedy. The soldier’s courage and sacrifice is full of glory, expressing devotion to country, to cause and to comrades in arms. But war itself is never glorious, and we must never trumpet it as such.

So part of our challenge is reconciling these two seemingly irreconcilable truths –
that war is sometimes necessary, and war is at some level an expression of human feelings. Concretely, we must direct our effort to the task that President Kennedy called for long ago. “Let us focus,” he said, “on a more practical, more attainable peace, based not on a sudden revolution in human nature but on a gradual evolution in human institutions.”

What might this evolution look like? What might these practical steps be?

To begin with, I believe that all nations – strong and weak alike – must adhere to standards that govern the use of force. I – like any head of state – reserve the right to act unilaterally if necessary to defend my nation. Nevertheless, I am convinced that adhering to standards strengthens those who do, and isolates – and weakens – those who don’t.

The world rallied around America after the 9/11 attacks, and continues to support our efforts in Afghanistan, because of the horror of those senseless attacks and the recognized principle of self-defense. Likewise, the world recognized the need to confront Saddam Hussein when he invaded Kuwait – a consensus that sent a clear message to all about the cost of aggression.

Furthermore, America cannot insist that others follow the rules of the road if we refuse to follow them ourselves. For when we don’t, our action can appear arbitrary, and undercut the legitimacy of future intervention – no matter how justified.

This becomes particularly important when the purpose of military action extends beyond self defense or the defense of one nation against an aggressor. More and more, we all confront difficult questions about how to prevent the slaughter of civilians by their own government, or to stop a civil war whose violence and suffering can engulf an entire region.

I believe that force can be justified on humanitarian grounds, as it was in the Balkans, or in other places that have been scarred by war. Inaction tears at our conscience and can lead to more costly intervention later. That is why all responsible nations must embrace the role that militaries with a clear mandate can play to keep the peace.

America’s commitment to global security will never waiver. But in a world in which threats are more diffuse, and missions more complex, America cannot act alone. This is true in Afghanistan. This is true in failed states like Somalia, where terrorism and piracy is joined by famine and human suffering. And sadly, it will continue to be true in unstable regions for years to come.

The leaders and soldiers of NATO countries – and other friends and allies – demonstrate this truth through the capacity and courage they have shown in Afghanistan. But in many countries, there is a disconnect between the efforts of those who serve and the ambivalence of the broader public. I understand why war is not popular. But I also know this: the belief that peace is desirable is rarely enough to achieve it. Peace requires responsibility. Peace entails sacrifice.
That is why NATO continues to be indispensable. That is why we must strengthen UN and regional peacekeeping, and not leave the task to a few countries. That is why we honor those who return home from peacekeeping and training abroad to Oslo and Rome; to Ottawa and Sydney; to Dhaka and Kigali – we honor them not as makers of war, but as wagers of peace.

Let me make one final point about the use of force. Even as we make difficult decisions about going to war, we must also think clearly about how we fight it. The Nobel Committee recognized this truth in awarding its first prize for peace to Henry Dunant – the founder of the Red Cross, and a driving force behind the Geneva Conventions.

Where force is necessary, we have a moral and strategic interest in binding ourselves to certain rules of conduct. And even as we confront a vicious adversary that abides by no rules, I believe that the United States of America must remain a standard bearer in the conduct of war. That is what makes us different from those whom we fight. That is a source of our strength.

That is why I prohibited torture. That is why I ordered the prison at Guantanamo Bay closed. And that is why I have reaffirmed America’s commitment to abide by the Geneva Conventions. We lose ourselves when we compromise the very ideals that we fight to defend. And we honor those ideals by upholding them not just when it is easy, but when it is hard.

I have spoken to the questions that must weigh on our minds and our hearts as we choose to wage war. But let me turn now to our effort to avoid such tragic choices, and speak of three ways that we can build a just and lasting peace.

First, in dealing with those nations that break rules and laws, I believe that we must develop alternatives to violence that are tough enough to change behavior – for if we want a lasting peace, then the words of the international community must mean something. Those regimes that break the rules must be held accountable. Sanctions must exact a real price. Intransigence must be met with increased pressure – and such pressure exists only when the world stands together as one.

One urgent example is the effort to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, and to seek a world without them. In the middle of the last century, nations agreed to be bound by a treaty whose bargain is clear: all will have access to peaceful nuclear power; those without nuclear weapons will forsake them; and those with nuclear weapons will work toward disarmament. I am committed to upholding this treaty. It is a centerpiece of my foreign policy. And I am working with President Medvedev to reduce America and Russia’s nuclear stockpiles.

But it is also incumbent upon all of us to insist that nations like Iran and North Korea do not game the system. Those who claim to respect international law cannot avert their eyes when those laws are flouted. Those who care for their own security cannot ignore the danger of an arms race in the Middle East or East Asia. Those who seek peace cannot stand idly by as nations arm themselves for nuclear war.
The same principle applies to those who violate international law by brutalizing their own people. When there is genocide in Darfur; systematic rape in Congo; or repression in Burma – there must be consequences. And the closer we stand together, the less likely we will be faced with the choice between armed intervention and complicity in oppression.

This brings me to a second point – the nature of the peace that we seek. For peace is not merely the absence of visible conflict. Only a just peace based upon the inherent rights and dignity of every individual can truly be lasting.

It was this insight that drove drafters of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights after the Second World War. In the wake of devastation, they recognized that if human rights are not protected, peace is a hollow promise.

And yet all too often, these words are ignored. In some countries, the failure to uphold human rights is excused by the false suggestion that these are Western principles, foreign to local cultures or stages of a nation’s development. And within America, there has long been a tension between those who describe themselves as realists or idealists – a tension that suggests a stark choice between the narrow pursuit of interests or an endless campaign to impose our values.

I reject this choice. I believe that peace is unstable where citizens are denied the right to speak freely or worship as they please; choose their own leaders or assemble without fear. Pent up grievances fester, and the suppression of tribal and religious identity can lead to violence. We also know that the opposite is true. Only when Europe became free did it finally find peace. America has never fought a war against a democracy, and our closest friends are governments that protect the rights of their citizens. No matter how callously defined, neither America’s interests – nor the world’s – are served by the denial of human aspirations.

So even as we respect the unique culture and traditions of different countries, America will always be a voice for those aspirations that are universal. We will bear witness to the quiet dignity of reformers like Aung Sang Suu Kyi; to the bravery of Zimbabweans who cast their ballots in the face of beatings; to the hundreds of thousands who have marched silently through the streets of Iran. It is telling that the leaders of these governments fear the aspirations of their own people more than the power of any other nation. And it is the responsibility of all free people and free nations to make clear to these movements that hope and history are on their side.

Let me also say this: the promotion of human rights cannot be about exhortation alone. At times, it must be coupled with painstaking diplomacy. I know that engagement with repressive regimes lacks the satisfying purity of indignation. But I also know that sanctions without outreach – and condemnation without discussion – can carry forward a crippling status quo. No repressive regime can move down a new path unless it has the choice of an open door.
In light of the Cultural Revolution’s horrors, Nixon’s meeting with Mao appeared inexcusable – and yet it surely helped set China on a path where millions of its citizens have been lifted from poverty, and connected to open societies. Pope John Paul’s engagement with Poland created space not just for the Catholic Church, but for labor leaders like Lech Walesa.

Ronald Reagan’s efforts on arms control and embrace of perestroika not only improved relations with the Soviet Union, but empowered dissidents throughout Eastern Europe. There is no simple formula here. But we must try as best we can to balance isolation and engagement; pressure and incentives, so that human rights and dignity are advanced over time.

Third, a just peace includes not only civil and political rights – it must encompass economic security and opportunity. For true peace is not just freedom from fear, but freedom from want.

It is undoubtedly true that development rarely takes root without security; it is also true that security does not exist where human beings do not have access to enough food, or clean water, or the medicine they need to survive. It does not exist where children cannot aspire to a decent education or a job that supports a family. The absence of hope can rot a society from within.

And that is why helping farmers feed their own people – or nations educate their children and care for the sick – is not mere charity. It is also why the world must come together to confront climate change. There is little scientific dispute that if we do nothing, we will face more drought, famine and mass displacement that will fuel more conflict for decades. For this reason, it is not merely scientists and activists who call for swift and forceful action – it is military leaders in my country and others who understand that our common security hangs in the balance.

Agreements among nations. Strong institutions. Support for human rights. Investments in development. All of these are vital ingredients in bringing about the evolution that President Kennedy spoke about. And yet, I do not believe that we will have the will, or the staying power, to complete this work without something more – and that is the continued expansion of our moral imagination; an insistence that there is something irreducible that we all share.

As the world grows smaller, you might think it would be easier for human beings to recognize how similar we are; to understand that we all basically want the same things; that we all hope for the chance to live out our lives with some measure of happiness and fulfillment for ourselves and our families.

And yet, given the dizzying pace of globalization, and the cultural leveling of modernity, it should come as no surprise that people fear the loss of what they cherish about their particular identities – their race, their tribe, and perhaps most powerfully their religion. In some places, this fear has led to conflict. At times, it even feels like we are moving backwards. We see it in Middle East, as the conflict between
Arabs and Jews seems to harden. We see it in nations that are torn asunder by tribal lines.

Most dangerously, we see it in the way that religion is used to justify the murder of innocents by those who have distorted and defiled the great religion of Islam, and who attacked my country from Afghanistan. These extremists are not the first to kill in the name of God; the cruelties of the Crusades are amply recorded. But they remind us that no Holy War can ever be a just war.

For if you truly believe that you are carrying out divine will, then there is no need for restraint – no need to spare the pregnant mother, or the medic, or even a person of one’s own faith. Such a warped view of religion is not just incompatible with the concept of peace, but the purpose of faith – for the one rule that lies at the heart of every major religion is that we do unto others as we would have them do unto us.

Adhering to this law of love has always been the core struggle of human nature. We are fallible. We make mistakes, and fall victim to the temptations of pride, and power, and sometimes evil. Even those of us with the best intentions will at times fail to right the wrongs before us.

But we do not have to think that human nature is perfect for us to still believe that the human condition can be perfected. We do not have to live in an idealized world to still reach for those ideals that will make it a better place. The non-violence practiced by men like Gandhi and King may not have been practical or possible in every circumstance, but the love that they preached – their faith in human progress – must always be the North Star that guides us on our journey.

For if we lose that faith – if we dismiss it as silly or naïve; if we divorce it from the decisions that we make on issues of war and peace – then we lose what is best about humanity. We lose our sense of possibility. We lose our moral compass.

Like generations have before us, we must reject that future. As Dr. King said at this occasion so many years ago, “I refuse to accept despair as the final response to the ambiguities of history. I refuse to accept the idea that the ‘isness’ of man’s present nature makes him morally incapable of reaching up for the eternal ‘oughtness’ that forever confronts him.”

So let us reach for the world that ought to be – that spark of the divine that still stirs within each of our souls. Somewhere today, in the here and now, a soldier sees he’s outgunned but stands firm to keep the peace. Somewhere today, in this world, a young protestor awaits the brutality of her government, but has the courage to march on. Somewhere today, a mother facing punishing poverty still takes the time to teach her child, who believes that a cruel world still has a place for his dreams.

Let us live by their example. We can acknowledge that oppression will always be with us, and still strive for justice. We can admit the intractability of depravation, and still strive for dignity. We can understand that there will be war, and still strive for peace.
We can do that – for that is the story of human progress; that is the hope of all the world; and at this moment of challenge, that must be our work here on Earth. ###
THE PRESIDENT: Hello, George Mason! (Applause.) How’s everybody doing today? (Applause.) Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, everybody. It’s good to be back with some real Patriots. (Applause.) I want to thank Dr. Alan Merten, the President of George Mason University, and his family. (Applause.) Dr. Shirley Travis, who’s here -- thank you. And Coach Larranaga, we were just talking a little bit about -- (applause) -- looking forward to picking George Mason in my bracket next year. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: I love you! (Applause.) I don’t know if some of you remember, but I visited this university about three years ago for the first time. (Applause.) This was at just the dawn of my presidential campaign. It was about three weeks old, I think. We didn’t have a lot of money. We didn’t have a lot of staff. Nobody could pronounce my name. (Laughter.) Our poll numbers were quite low. And a lot of people -- a lot of people in Washington, they didn’t think it was even worth us trying.

THE PRESIDENT: They had counted us out before we had even started, because the Washington conventional wisdom was that change was too hard. But what we had even then was a group of students here at George Mason -- (applause) -- who believed that if we worked hard enough and if we fought long enough, if we organized enough supporters, then we could finally bring change to that city across the river. (Applause.) We believed that despite all the resistance, we could make Washington work. Not for the lobbyists, not for the special interests, not for the politicians, but for the American people. (Applause.)

And now three years later, I stand before you, one year after the worst recession since the Great Depression, having to make a bunch of tough decisions, having had a tumultuous debate, having had a lot of folks who were skeptical that we could get anything done. And right now, we are at the point where we are going to do something historic this weekend. That’s what this health care vote is all about. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: A few miles from here, Congress is in the final stages of a fateful debate about the future of health insurance in America. (Applause.) It’s a debate that’s raged not just for the past year but for the past century. One thing when you’re in the White House, you’ve got a lot of history books around you. (Laughter.) And so I’ve been reading up on the history here. Teddy Roosevelt, Republican, was the first to advocate that everybody get health care in this country. (Applause.) Every decade since, we’ve had Presidents, Republicans and Democrats, from Harry Truman to Richard Nixon to JFK to Lyndon Johnson to -- every single President has said we need to fix this system. It’s a debate that’s not only about the cost of health care, not
just about what we’re doing about folks who aren’t getting a fair shake from their insurance companies. It’s a debate about the character of our country -- (applause) -- about whether we can still meet the challenges of our time; whether we still have the guts and the courage to give every citizen, not just some, the chance to reach their dreams. (Applause.)

At the heart of this debate is the question of whether we’re going to accept a system that works better for the insurance companies than it does for the American people -- (applause) -- because if this vote fails, the insurance industry will continue to run amok. They will continue to deny people coverage. They will continue to deny people care. They will continue to jack up premiums 40 or 50 or 60 percent as they have in the last few weeks without any accountability whatsoever. They know this. And that’s why their lobbyists are stalking the halls of Congress as we speak, and pouring millions of dollars into negative ads. And that’s why they are doing everything they can to kill this bill.

So the only question left is this: Are we going to let the special interests win once again?

THE PRESIDENT: Or are we going to make this vote a victory for the American people? (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: George Mason, the time for reform is right now. (Applause.) Not a year from now, not five years from now, not 10 years from now, not 20 years from now -- it’s now. (Applause.) We have had -- we have had a year of hard debate. Every proposal has been put on the table. Every argument has been made. We have incorporated the best ideas from Democrats and from Republicans into a final proposal that builds on the system of private insurance that we currently have. The insurance industry and its supporters in Congress have tried to portray this as radical change. (Applause.)

Now, I just -- I just want to be clear, everybody. Listen up, because we have heard every crazy thing about this bill. You remember. First we heard this was a government takeover of health care. Then we heard that this was going to kill granny. Then we heard, well, illegal immigrants are going to be getting the main benefits of this bill. There has been -- they have thrown every argument at this legislative effort. But when it -- it turns out, at the end of the day, what we’re talking about is common-sense reform. That’s all we’re talking about. (Applause.)

If you like your doctor, you’re going to be able to keep your doctor. If you like your plan, keep your plan. I don’t believe we should give government or the insurance companies more control over health care in America. I think it’s time to give you, the American people, more control over your health. (Applause.)
And since you’ve been hearing a whole bunch of nonsense, let’s just be clear on what exactly the proposal that they’re going to vote on in a couple of days will do. It’s going to -- it’s going to change health care in three ways. Number one, we are going to end the worst practices of insurance companies. (Applause.) This is -- this is a patient’s bill of rights on steroids. (Laughter.) Starting this year, thousands of uninsured Americans with preexisting conditions will be able to purchase health insurance, some for the very first time. (Applause.) Starting this year, insurance companies will be banned forever from denying coverage to children with preexisting conditions. (Applause.) Starting this year, insurance companies will be banned from dropping your coverage when you get sick. (Applause.) And they’ve been spending a lot of time weeding out people who are sick so they don’t have to pay benefits that people have already paid for. Those practices will end.

If this reform becomes law, all new insurance plans will be required to offer free preventive care to their customers. (Applause.) If you buy a new plan, there won’t be lifetime or restrictive annual limits on the amount of care you receive from your insurance companies. (Applause.) And by the way, to all the young people here today, starting this year if you don’t have insurance, all new plans will allow you to stay on your parents’ plan until you are 26 years old. (Applause.)

So you’ll have some security when you graduate. If that first job doesn’t offer coverage, you’re going to know that you’ve got coverage. Because as you start your lives and your careers, the last thing you should be worried about is whether you’re going to go broke or make your parents broke just because you get sick. (Applause.) All right?

So that’s the first thing this legislation does -- the toughest insurance reforms in history. And by the way, when you talk to Republicans and you say, well, are you against this? A lot of them will say, no, no, that part’s okay. (Laughter.) All right, so let’s go to the second part.

The second thing that would change about the current system is that for the first time, small business owners and people who are being priced out of the insurance market will have the same kind of choice of private health insurance that members of Congress give to themselves. (Applause.)

So what this means is, is that small business owners and middle-class families, they’re going to be able to be part of what’s called a big pool of customers that can negotiate with the insurance companies. And that means they can purchase more affordable coverage in a competitive marketplace. (Applause.) So they’re not out there on their own just shopping. They’re part of millions of people who are shopping together. And if you still can’t afford the insurance in this new marketplace, even though it’s going to be cheaper than what you can get on your own, then we’re going to offer you tax credits to help you afford it — tax credits that add up to the largest middle-class tax cut for health care in American history. (Applause.)
Now, these tax credits cost money. Helping folks who can’t afford it right now, that does cost some money. It costs about $100 billion per year. But most of the cost --

THE PRESIDENT: Well, here’s the reason it’s all right. (Laughter.) Here’s the reason it’s all right. It wouldn’t be all right if we weren’t paying for it -- and by the way, that’s what a previous Congress did with the prescription drug plan. All they did was they gave the benefits and they didn’t pay for it.

That’s not what we’re doing. What we’re doing is we’re taking money that America is already spending in the health care system, but is being spent poorly, that’s going to waste and fraud and unwarranted subsidies for the insurance companies, and we’re taking that money and making sure those dollars go towards making insurance more affordable. (Applause.)

So we’re going to eliminate wasteful taxpayer subsidies to insurance companies. (Applause.) We’re going to set a new fee on insurance companies that stand to gain millions of new customers. (Applause.) So here’s the point: This proposal is paid for. Unlike some of these previous schemes in Washington, we’re not taking out the credit card in your name, young people, and charging it to you. We’re making sure this thing is paid for. (Applause.) All right, so that’s the second thing.

Now, the third thing that this legislation does is it brings down the cost of health care for families and businesses and the federal government. (Applause.) Americans who are buying comparable coverage in the individual market would end up seeing their premiums go down 14 to 20 percent. (Applause.) Americans who get their insurance through the workplace, cost savings could be as much as $3,000 less per employer than if we do nothing. Now, think about that. That’s $3,000 your employer doesn’t have to pay, which means maybe she can afford to give you a raise. (Applause.)

And by the way, if you’re curious, well, how exactly are we saving these costs? Well, part of it is, again, we’re not spending our health care money wisely. So, for example, you go to the hospital or you go to a doctor and you may take five tests, when it turns out if you just took one test, then you send an e-mail around with the test results, you wouldn’t be paying $500 per test. So we’re trying to save money across the system. (Applause.) And altogether, our cost-cutting measures would reduce most people’s premiums. And here’s the bonus: It brings down our deficit by more than $1 trillion over the next two decades. (Applause.)

So you’ve got -- you’ve got a whole bunch of opponents of this bill saying, well, we can’t afford this; we’re fiscal conservatives. These are the same guys who passed that prescription drug bill without paying for it, adding over $1 trillion to our deficit -- “Oh, we can’t afford this.” But this bill, according to the Congressional Budget Office -- which is the referee, the scorekeeper for how much things cost -- says we’ll save us $1 trillion. Not only can we afford to do this, we can’t afford not to do this. (Applause.)
So here’s the bottom line. That’s our proposal: toughest insurance reforms in history, one of the biggest deficit-reduction plans in history, and the opportunity to give millions of people -- some of them in your own family, some of the people who are in this auditorium today -- an opportunity for the first time in a very long time to get affordable health care. That’s it. That’s what we’re trying to do. (Applause.) That’s what the Congress of the United States is about to vote on this weekend.

Now, it would be nice if we were just kind of examining the substance, we were walking through the details of the plan, what it means for you. But that’s not what the cable stations like to talk about. (Laughter.) What they like to talk about is the politics of the vote. What does this mean in November? What does it mean to the poll numbers? Is this more of an advantage for Democrats or Republicans? What’s it going to mean for Obama? Will his presidency be crippled, or will he be the comeback kid? (Applause.) That’s what they like to talk about. That’s what they like to talk about. I understand.

One of the things you realize is basically that a lot of reporting in Washington, it’s just like SportsCenter. It’s considered a sport, and who’s up and who’s down, and everybody’s keeping score. And you got the teams going at it. It’s Rock ‘Em Sock ‘Em Robots. (Laughter.)

Look, let me say this, George Mason: I don’t know how this plays politically. Nobody really does. I mean, there’s been so much misinformation and so much confusion and the climate at times during the course of this year has been so toxic and people are so anxious because the economy has been going through such a tough time. I don’t know what’s going to happen with the politics on this thing. I don’t know whether my poll numbers go down, they go up. I don’t know what happens in terms of Democrats versus Republicans.

But here’s what I do know. I do know that this bill, this legislation, is going to be enormously important for America’s future. (Applause.) I do know the impact it will have on the millions of Americans who need our help, and the millions more who may not need help right now but a year from now or five years from now or 10 years from now, if they have some bad luck; if, heaven forbid, they get sick; if they’ve got a preexisting condition; if their child has a preexisting condition; if they lose their job; if they want to start a company -- I know the impact it will have on them. (Applause.)

I know what this reform will mean for people like Leslie Banks, a single mom I met in Pennsylvania. She’s trying to put her daughter through college, just like probably some of your moms and dads are trying to put you through college. And her insurance company just sent her a letter saying they plan to double her premium this year -- have it go up 100 percent. And she can’t afford it. So now she’s trying to figure out, am I going to keep my insurance or am I going to keep my daughter in college? Leslie Banks needs us to pass this reform bill. (Applause.)
I know what reform will mean for people like Laura Klitzka. I met Laura up in Green Bay, Wisconsin, while I was campaigning. She thought she had beaten her breast cancer. Then she discovered it had spread to her bones. And she and her insurance -- she and her husband, they were lucky enough to have insurance, but their medical bills still landed them in debt. So now she’s spending time worrying about the debt when all she wants to do is think about how she can spend time with her two kids. Laura needs us to pass this reform bill. (Applause.)

I know what reform will mean for people like Natoma Canfield. When her insurance company raised her rates, she had to give up her coverage, even though she had been paying thousands of dollars in premiums for years, because she had beaten cancer 11 years earlier. They kept on jacking up her rates, jacking up her rates. Finally she thought she was going to lose her home. She was scared that a sudden illness would lead to financial ruin, but she had no choice. Right now she’s lying in a hospital bed, faced with paying for such an illness, after she had to give up her health insurance. She’s praying that somehow she can afford to get well. She knows that it is time for reform.

So George Mason, when you hear people saying, well, why don’t we do this more incrementally, why don’t we do this a little more piecemeal, why don’t we just help the folks that are easiest to help -- my answer is the time for reform is now. We have waited long enough. (Applause.) We have waited long enough.

And in just a few days, a century-long struggle will culminate in a historic vote. (Applause.) We’ve had historic votes before. We had a historic vote to put Social Security in place to make sure that our elderly did not live out their golden years in poverty. We had a historic vote in civil rights to make sure that everybody was equal under the law. (Applause.) As messy as this process is, as frustrating as this process is, as ugly as this process can be, when we have faced such decisions in our past, this nation, time and time again, has chosen to extend its promise to more of its people. (Applause.)

You know, the naysayers said that Social Security would lead to socialism. (Laughter.) But the men and women of Congress stood fast and created that program that lifted millions out of poverty. (Applause.)

There were cynics that warned that Medicare would lead to a government takeover of our entire health care system, and that it didn’t have much support in the polls. But Democrats and Republicans refused to back down, and they made sure that our seniors had the health care that they needed and could have some basic peace of mind. (Applause.)

So previous generations, those who came before us, made the decision that our seniors and our poor, through Medicaid, should not be forced to go without health care just because they couldn’t afford it. Today it falls to this generation to decide
whether we will make that same promise to hardworking middle-class families and small businesses all across America, and to young Americans like yourselves who are just starting out. (Applause.)

So here’s my bottom line. I know this has been a difficult journey. I know this will be a tough vote. I know that everybody is counting votes right now in Washington. But I also remember a quote I saw on a plaque in the White House the other day. It’s hanging in the same room where I demanded answers from insurance executives and just received a bunch of excuses. And it was a quote from Teddy Roosevelt, the person who first called for health care reform -- that Republican -- all those years ago. And it said, “Aggressively fighting for the right is the noblest sport the world affords.”

Now, I don’t know how passing health care will play politically -- but I know it’s right. (Applause.) Teddy Roosevelt knew it was right. Harry Truman knew that it was right. Ted Kennedy knew it was right. (Applause.) And if you believe that it’s right, then you’ve got to help us finish this fight. You’ve got to stand with me just like you did three years ago and make some phone calls and knock on some doors, talk to your parents, talk to your friends. Do not quit, do not give up, we keep on going. (Applause.) We are going to get this done. We are going to make history. We are going to fix health care in America with your help. (Applause.)

God bless you, and God bless the United States of America. (Applause.)