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IN CONVERSATION WITH VICE PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN

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LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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IN CONVERSATION WITH VICE PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN

(1.45 p.m.)

SPEAKER: Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome the vice president of the United States, Joseph R. Biden, and Walter Isaacson, president and CEO of the Aspen Institute.

(Applause)

MR. ISAACSON: Thank you so much for being here.

MR. BIDEN: I miss Tom Friedman.

(Laughter)

MR. ISAACSON: Your wife was -- so there's Tom right there, Jon Dore, Tom.

MR. BIDEN: Tom you got a -- you have a wonderful daughter.

MR. ISAACSON: Yeah. And Tom, well, you can get --

MR. BIDEN: You know, my -- well, my dad used to have an expression. He'd say, "You know, your success as a father, you look at your kid and you realize they turned out better than you." She is better, your kid.

(Laughter)

MR. BIDEN: She is better than you -- on the success as well.

MR. ISAACSON: And if Orley (phonetic) is wondering where her knapsack is, it's in my office because they wouldn't let her bring it in because she had juices in it.

So -- well, thank you for being here. The vice president everybody knows much about him, but what you most know about him is he actually cares about every

person in America gets up, has that instinct that every working and middle class person needs to be part of our prosperity. I've heard him talk about this since 1973 or so when you entered the Senate.

And so once again let's give him a warm Aspen welcome.

(Applause)

MR. ISAACSON: If we could, I'd like to start with what the president most recently tasked you to do, which is this moonshot on cancer. It wasn't something you knew a lot about except from a deeply personal perspective. Tell me what you've learned? What we're doing? How we're fighting cancer now?

MR. BIDEN: I like to ask one question before I begin.

MR. ISAACSON: Sure.

MR. BIDEN: Newt going to do it?

MR. ISAACSON: Newt -- where Newt?

MR. BIDEN: All right, that's okay. That's all I want to know. I just want to -- I want to get to the important things out of the bat. And --

(Laughter)

MR. GINGRICH: Should -- should I?

MR. ISAACSON: The question --

MR. BIDEN: I think he needs the help, yes.

(Laughter)

MR. ISAACSON: The question was should I --

MR. BIDEN: Should he be vice president. I tell him -- anyway, it's a hell of a job, getting big pay

raise, it's all work.

(Laughter)

MR. BIDEN: And I'm sorry. You asked a serious question and I shouldn't kid.

MR. ISAACSON: No, no, I tell you, right before -- because that's not bad.

(Laughter)

MR. ISAACSON: Should not just speak of Gingrich, but should somebody be -- I mean is there something you've really shown what you could as vice president?

MR. BIDEN: Well, I don't know about that.

MR. ISAACSON: Tell me about that job?

MR. BIDEN: Well, you know --

MR. ISAACSON: And tell Newt about the job.

MR. BIDEN: As -- Newt's buddy sitting to his left is an old friend of mine too. He's a damn Republican, but I love him.

MR. ISAACSON: And Korologos, our former chair.

MR. BIDEN: Yeah. But all kidding aside, when I was asked to consider this by then Senator Obama when he was the presumptive nominee, I actually thought I could help him better by not doing it, by doing -- staying in the Senate. And he said he needed an answer right away and I told him, no, I don't want to be considered. And he said how much time do you need.

(Laughter)

MR. BIDEN: So I went home and talked with my family. He asked me to go home and talk. And then Jill was right that I should do it. It has been the most

rewarding thing I've done only for one reason. There is no inherent power in being vice president, none, zero. It totally, completely, thoroughly depends on your relationship with the president of the United States whomever that vice president is.

And the great benefit for me is that in the 13 debates we had seeking the nomination, he and I are the only two that never disagreed in principle on any issue. Tactic we disagree. And he has been an absolute man of his word. He asked what I wanted, if there's any one request to do it. I said I just want to be the last guy in the room -- I mean not figurative, literally the last person in the room. He's president. He makes the decision. But after all the years I spent in the Senate, I wanted an opportunity to try to affect the outcome of some of these vital decisions.

And he has been absolutely thoroughly consistent. And the interesting part is he said it in a different way as only the president could say. He said, "To my surprise we became great friends." And I said --

(Laughter)

MR. BIDEN: But he has become a very close personal friend and which made it all work is our families are close. Our -- my number three granddaughter and his number two daughter are each other's best friend. They vacation together. They are in the same school together. They are in the same teams together. Jill and Michele are good friends.

So it has worked out really well because he has been inclusive. But there's no -- and the other thing I found and I think Newt would agree of this because he has studied it, the job of president is so complicated these days. There is no one woman or one man that can do it, all out be willing to trust someone else to give them major responsibility.

And so therefore you have to have a genuine relationship. You have to be on the same page. And so when we did the Recovery Act, which I know a lot of folks

didn't like -- I think was great success -- the president just said do it. I never once checked with him. I never went back. He gave me control over the cabinet. The same with other things we've done.

So it's not because anything special about me. It's just the job is so big and it has gotten so broad and the world has changed so drastically you really need someone who is value-added. So I wasn't kidding -- Newt and I disagree, but he's one of the brightest guys I know. He knows the government and he knows the issues and I would feel better even though we disagree philosophically.

No, I'm not being facetious. I feel better knowing that there is somebody there with the depth and gravitas on the issues that Newt possesses. There are others who possess it as well.

So it's a long way of saying that the relationship -- the personal relationship really, really, really matters. Trust matters. And what I've been able to do because of his trust, when I -- I've travel a million -- 200,000 miles around the world. Tom and I have talked about this. When I show up with another head of state and I say something, they know I speak for the president. There's no -- no one wonders. No one wonders up -- some of the colleagues in the Senate wonders if I say something in the House or Senate.

And it's not because of me. It's because he said, "I have this relation with Biden. Biden speaks for me." And if you do it well -- and I hope I've done it somewhat well -- it can be a very -- can be value-added for the president.

(Applause)

MR. ISAACSON: Well --

MR. BIDEN: I never looked for this job, though.

MR. ISAACSON: Yeah. But we will --

MR. BIDEN: I never ran for vice president.

MR. ISAACSON: We will know in two weeks whether your endorsement today of Newt Gingrich as vice president --

(Laughter)

MR. ISAACSON: -- will help his chances --

MR. BIDEN: I'm sorry, Newt.

MR. ISAACSON: -- or destroy his chances to be the vice president or running mate.

MR. BIDEN: I want to make it clear -- I want to make it clear. Donald I'm not endorsing.

MR. ISAACSON: Yeah. Oh, yeah.

(Laughter)

MR. BIDEN: I'm not -- I'm just saying he is bright as hell. I disagree with him, though.

MR. ISAACSON: Let's go back if we can to the moonshot. Explain what the moonshot is?

MR. BIDEN: Well, look, the moonshot -- you know, one of the things that -- I sometimes almost regret we call it the moonshot because, you know, Kennedy and Nixon talked about the moonshot and people expect that there's some kind of a epiphany that's going to occur and there's going to be a breakthrough on all cancers, we're going to cure cancer. That was never what this was about.

The way this came about is I said -- when I announced I wasn't running, and Newt I found out you want to be popular now that you're not running for president. If I had known this, I would have announced everyday I'm not running.

(Laughter)

MR. BIDEN: But I said -- and it was more

wishful, Walter, than anything else. I said in Rose Garden "but I would have liked to been the president who presided over a fundamental change in cancer." And the reason I say that is we've reached an inflection point -- and some of the real experts that are in this audience know it. We're reached an inflection point that didn't exist during Nixon's time.

For the first time I learned when our son -- Jill and I -- when our son was going through what he went through that up until five years ago immunology was like a -- it was out in the wilderness. No one paid any attention. There was very little collaboration and cooperation between virologists and immunologists and genomic science. I mean there was none of that -- there was no collaboration.

But now there is. It's only just beginning. It's beginning and there's a lot more to do. But the difference between when Nixon announced it, now we've mapped the human genome, we're in a position where immunology is making significant strides. We have cooperation with all, everyone from mechanical engineers to biochemist that are engaged in the enterprise.

And it's -- for example, when Nixon announced it, we had no idea there were 200 different cancers.

MR. ISAACSON: Nixon announced a war on cancer -

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MR. BIDEN: I'm sorry. I beg your pardon.

MR. ISAACSON: -- 45 years ago.

MR. BIDEN: I beg your pardon. And so what we've decided, the president and I, he is at -- he decided was that I believe we could make five years of progress what otherwise would take 10 years even if we didn't have another single major breakthrough.

If we take all the information we have available till now, better organize it, correlate it, share it, change the way the federal government operates its various

agencies, the way everyone from the FDA to the NIH, the way the drug companies move, the way in which we do dual trials, the way we share information -- for example, now we can do -- I know you know this because you've written about it -- we can do a million, billion calculations per second.

And so the ability to find patterns of why cancers form, why a cancer cell develops, how it metastasizes, what were -- giving an example, there was a study done -- I think it was with 1,400 women on Medicare on ovarian cancer. And they used one therapy on all of them. Only a handful benefited from the therapy. And they are trying to figure out why that was that case.

But because there are only 1,400, they went back and they aggregated all the health records, the backgrounds of these women, what they -- what other medicines they were taking, what their lifestyles were, et cetera and to over simplify it. What they found out was those women who were taking a statin while they were taking this anti-ovarian cancer drug, they did the best.

Now, imagine with our ability to sequence the cancer genome. Imagine if we're able to aggregate the biopsies that have been done on cancer. Imagine if we can aggregate the lifestyles, the treatment process, et cetera all in one place -- we had 2 million, 5 million, 10 million of folks in that one spot.

The ability of the supercomputers to go in and find patterns, to find out what it is in terms of everything from lifestyle to what other drugs you're taking, to find answers as to why so many people -- all of you know somebody who has had -- who has suffered from cancer. All of you know somebody -- it maybe some of you who are dealing with fighting cancer.

And, you know, people with the same exact diagnosis taking the same drug two different outcomes. Imagine if we were willing to share this data imagine what we could do. And so there's a lot of breakthroughs that are possible, but we have to change sort of the culture a little bit.

MR. ISAACSON: Let me push on that a bit, because for that to work you have to be able to be counted in to a big data base. HIPAA makes it very hard to share electronic medical records. It's difficult for me even to get my electronic medical records, you know, from Washington out here.

Why haven't we been able to break the back, as Eric Lander said earlier this week, as Sylvia Mathews said -- Sylvia Burwell said earlier this week -- break the back on big data and getting our data in if we want it?

MR. BIDEN: Come hell or high water I'm going to break the back.

MR. ISAACSON: Yes.

MR. BIDEN: No, no, not a joke because --

MR. ISAACSON: No, no. And it's important to break this thing.

MR. BIDEN: -- what's happening here is -- look, I'll try to be delicate. The culture of medical research does not rest on sharing data and information, number one.

(Applause)

MR. BIDEN: And it's not because -- they are all good guys and good women. It's just the way in which it's developed over the last hundred years, number one. Number two, you have -- when I was -- I keynoted the Davos this year on -- and I was asked, though, before I would do that, would I have a roundtable on cancer. And I had two noble laureates at that roundtable. I had a number of folks, heads of major hospitals. And they started talking to me about how -- there was Orion, there is Cancer Link, there are a number of these new organizational structures, where you have philanthropy and major, major, major hospitals that --

MR. ISAACSON: Yeah, why don't I give you this.

MR. BIDEN: That have major hospitals. And what they are doing is they are correlating data -- all the data they have in one place. And so I asked them all to come visit me. And I won't mention them all. But five were -- close to a billion dollars are being spent to aggregate this data. And I said, "Tell me what you're doing?" And I sat in the Ceremonial Office of the Eisenhower Building at that big conference table.

And they all told me what they are doing. And I said, "Well, it sounds like you're all doing the same thing." I'm not being facetious. And they all kind of put their heads down. And I said, "Wouldn't we go" -- "make a hell of lot more progress if it was all open data, if you shared it all?" And the answer was, "Yeah."

And after, we broke up and two of the heads of these major outfits came up to me and said, "Keep the pressure on. I can't do this myself. I mean I'm not able to, you know" -- so there is a growing recognition on the part of the major -- I've visited now 10 or 11 of the major cancer centers in America -- in the world, but they are in America.

I've spent a better part of a day at each one of them. I've met with -- I've spoken to over 9,000 cancer researchers; these two large organizations represent them. I privately met with over 280 of the leading virologist, oncologist, immunologist in the world. And they all privately say basically the same thing. They say that we're not sharing data well enough, and if we did, we could exponentially increase the potential of financiers to a whole range of questions relating to cancer therapies.

Number two, they say that it is very difficult to be able to do dual trials with different medicines: you represent one drug company; I represent another. A bright young researcher says, "I think the combination of those two could really have a potential impact" -- and it does.

They say that they are not enough -- there's no way, if any of you have gone through it, where if you want to find out whether you can get in a cancer trial. There's no place you can go to find out every cancer trial

that's going on in the United States. Hell, I can get on -- you can get on -- you know, Uber can tell you exactly where everybody is, how to -- I mean --

MR. ISAACSON: Well, let's pick that one. How do we get more people access information about getting into cancer trial?

MR. BIDEN: Well, here's what we're doing. We are changing -- we're going to have -- at NIH we're having a new website. You know, I knew you would ask me that, so we're going to -- I can't remember what the hell the name of the website is. But --

(Laughter)

MR. ISAACSON: Greg (phonetic), what's the website?

MR. BIDEN: But we will, as I say, get it to you. But there's going to be a new website, where we are going to aggregate every single solitary trail that takes place in the United States of America. Because this happen, if you don't live near a major cancer center, you don't live near MD Anderson or you don't live near The Hutch or you don't -- I mean I can name them all -- and you're an oncologist in a rural area in the Midwest or anywhere in the country, you have a patient you diagnose with a particular cancer and you want to get them in a trial, you have no idea how the hell to get them associated with or tied up with or connected with that trial.

So this can be one place. We're in the process of putting this site together now -- that NIH is -- where you can click on and you could find out what every trial for every type of cancer is being conducted.

It's also a helpful thing for the pharmaceutical companies. They have trouble finding people to be in their trials. And the perception is that people don't want to give their information. Well, they are much more ready and willing to give their information and it can be done and your privacy protected very easily. But up to

now there has been no willingness to decide if there's going to be one site, one place.

MR. ISAACSON: And in return should the pharmaceutical companies try to keep a lid on these hundred thousand dollar a year drugs?

MR. BIDEN: Well, that's not necessarily related, but, yes, they should try to keep a lid. But here's -- look, in fairness to the companies, they drill a lot of dry holes. They spend a lot of money doing a lot of tests that costs tens of millions or hundreds of millions of dollars. They get no return on their investment.

But there's some place between -- a sweet spot between the legitimate return on your investment and holding hostage people who need the drug to live but can't possibly afford the drug. For example, there's one particular drug that has been very, very helpful -- and I don't want to pick on a particular company -- one particular drug that has been very helpful for lymphoma cancer, a particular one. When the drug came out 15 years ago -- and a pretty miraculous impact it has for this particular cancer -- it was \$26,000 a year. Now, if I'm not mistaken -- I don't know where Greg Simon is -- but I think it's \$149,000 a year.

Let me ask you a rhetorical question. Imagine if Jonas Salk decided that he was going to patent, like drug companies do -- essentially if he had a patent for his vaccine for polio and he said, "Okay, I'm going to charge \$1,000 a shot." What the hell would have happened? What would happen?

There's some place between a rational return on an investment and profit, particularly since an awful lot of what drug companies are able to accomplish are a consequence of taxpayer investment in research and development. It's about -- somewhere between \$80 billion and \$100 billion a year in research done by a myriad of outfits out there to try to find cures or drugs that will increase the lifespan.

About \$30 billion of that is federal money. And so there is some correlation here between their progress, their success and their societal obligation. And I think this can be done -- excuse my back to people over here. I apologize. And my Secret Service agent is 8-foot-tall, so I can't see you here. But he's a great guy. I'm embarrassing the hell out of him right now, but --

(Laughter)

MR. BIDEN: He was a hell of a basketball player. That's another grudge. Anyway -- I don't get a chance to embarrass them very often.

(Laughter)

MR. ISAACSON: Yeah.

MR. BIDEN: But to make a long story not quite so long, there has to be -- I met with industry -- a roundtable at the Cancer Moonshot Summit we had and a number of industry personnel. We had a roundtable -- it was off the record -- with about 20 people. And I said, "Look, we got to have to have an adult conversation about this. There's got to be a way. We've got to find a way through here."

You know, as Lasker said: "If you think drugs are expensive, try disease." I'm paraphrasing. And so there is a correlation between the communal obligation, the public obligation to underwrite the cost of some of these drugs that exceed the cost that is imposed -- that is incurred by drug companies in producing these drugs.

But it's a debate that has to take place because you're going to see -- in the next six months to the next five years you're going to see some significant, significant drug applications that can extend and save lives that the price tag on them is absolutely prohibitive including co-pays.

Last point -- and this is not a political point, it's a practical point. Without the Affordable Care Act or something replacing it, you would have tens of millions of people who cannot even remotely afford some of the expensive but much less expensive drug requirements that cost \$10,000, \$20,000 and \$30,000 a year.

So if you're a family of four making less than 60 grand, you still have great trouble but you don't ever have to pay more than 12. That's a gigantic chunk of your income, but still it's within the reach of some people to be able to do. But without that -- I mean we're going to find -- we have a revolution on our hands, figuratively speaking.

MR. ISAACSON: What about if you have your -- you can keep that. I think mine is working and -- trust me. What if you had your gene sequence, you're one of these drug trials, how do we make it easier to say, "Count me in, put all of my data out there in the public realm for people to use"?

MR. BIDEN: Well, there's two things. One, you got to make clear to people they own their data.

MR. ISAACSON: Yeah.

MR. BIDEN: And right now it's not so clear they do. Right now there is -- I remember -- Jill won't like me mentioning this because it's -- I remember with Beau, my son, attorney general, I assume that the sequencing of his human genome he owned that he could do whatever he wanted with it -- not accurate. I assume that all the records that they had of his battle for over two years with glioblastoma that they could be made available -- not so clear.

The cost of getting those records was -- and by the way, he was at a great, wonderful hospital and incredible doctors. I don't want to turn this into a screed about -- but just practical things that are really, really difficult to work your way through.

For example, we all heard and Democrats and Republicans have talked about how much money we can save in the healthcare system and how much we can increase the efficacy of certain medicines as well as recommendations by docs as how to treat all kinds of diseases if we had electronic record keeping.

MR. ISAACSON: Right.

MR. BIDEN: Well, you know, I know a lot of folks don't like the fact that the Recovery Act was over \$800 billion. But to be blunt with it, you or the -- the president and I sat down and said, "While we're doing this, we might as well try to make government function better." And so we did things that bothered people that Amy (phonetic) loved and others didn't, like, you know, focus \$100 billion in education and \$48 billion on interstate -- excuse me --

MR. ISAACSON: Infrastructure.

MR. BIDEN: -- on infrastructure, more interstate highway system, et cetera. One of the things we did, we put in \$35 billion for electronic record keeping. But what happened is five great outfits came along and they all bid for it, they all got a piece of it and they all made sure they couldn't talk to each other.

MR. ISAACSON: It's amazing. Incompatible.

MR. BIDEN: So I'll give you a practical example. A lot of you know this. You know, there's a great advantage to all of you in this room. We probably have greater access to the best people than other people may have.

As vice president of the United States -- my son was a decorated war veteran. He was -- you know, so -- he was at -- we got him to MD -- anybody can get to it, but we got him to MD Anderson. And toward the end, he turned

out to be part of a trial of one with very -- two experimental programs that were last ditch.

And they were immunotherapies designed to get the T cells to focus on -- focusing on the cancer, break the blood-brain barrier, get to the cancer and essentially eat up the cancer, in layman's terms. But it required him to have MRIs regularly, meaning couple times a day, to see what was happening, how it was going.

And what we found out was when he was at -- because he had been up here, he was at Walter Reed in Bethesda and they were very good. They had a great team as to following what MD Anderson wanted them doing in terms of the particular MRIs and the focus, et cetera. And we found out there's no way to get the information --

MR. ISAACSON: Astonishing.

MR. BIDEN: -- down. So the medical doc assigned to me -- a really great diagnostician, a good guy, Doc O'Connor, former Delta -- he was going in and my son-in-law, who is -- sounds so -- but he's a leading surgeon in the Delaware Valley, does -- at Jefferson Hospital does cancer flaps, reconstructs people's bodies and faces with cancer.

And because they both knew their way around, what they do, they go in and take a picture of the MRI on a cell phone and sending it down or getting on a plane and flying down. Now, that is bizarre. I mean it really is bizarre. We cannot -- and there's no incentive for any one of these five outfits to say, "Hey, look, let's all get together and" -- so one of the things I'm finding is I've gone around the --

MR. ISAACSON: Can you push that?

MR. BIDEN: Yes, we can.

MR. ISAACSON: Can you make that happen?

MR. BIDEN: And here's what I think we can do. There is a growing consensus among the best people in the country across the board in all of the disciplines that relate to the fight against cancer that we should have a common language. Like, for example, when the human genome was sequenced, we found out that, you know, you're talking about a couple of billion pieces of information and thousands of genes and it was so big that we concluded no one outfit could do it.

So what we did is we went around the world literally and we handed out. We said, "Okay, you take" -- I'm being figurative.

MR. ISAACSON: Yeah.

MR. BIDEN: "You take A to C and you take C to P," you know. And we broke it up. But the condition was that each of these organizations and somewhere in other countries had to immediately share all of the data that they got with one another. It was insisted by the NIH it had to be done that way. So we cracked the human genome. We actually were able to do that in sharing that information instantaneously.

And now in the human genome there is a common language. You must use the precise language that is needed, the precise terminology in order to do anything in terms of dealing with the genome. There is no such precise language as it relates to medical records. So one -- to oversimplify it: one doc will write down, you know, a broken leg. Other guy will write down a broken femur. Another guy will write down a fractured hip. And there's no way the computer can go out and aggregate all that data.

So one of the things I proposed when I started this five months ago is why don't we insist on a common language in electronic record-keeping. Well, that made a lot of people very angry. But at the last Moonshot, where we had over 9,000 people participating, you had leading members of industry and medicine saying, "We need a common

language." And that's one of things I talked to -- one of the brightest guys I've ever met is Lander.

MR. ISAACSON: Yeah, Eric Lander, who some of you saw the other day, you know.

MR. BIDEN: I mean Eric Lander with MIT, you know. So we're talking about how we can get a consensus among these various large entities that we have a common language in electronic record-keeping.

MR. ISAACSON: You've mentioned a couple times what you learned from your son Beau's treatment. What about emotionally? Walk us through that.

MR. BIDEN: I'm not going to ask for a show of hands, but I'll bet 20 percent of you have had someone close to you die or go through a pretty damn tough period of time. And one of the things that we all have in common in this tent is that when someone you love, when someone you adore, when someone's your soul and they have a problem, particularly if they're your child or your spouse, but just any -- but particularly if it's your child, what you try to do is you try to learn as much as you possibly can about whatever that crisis is facing that child at that moment. And so that's what Jill and I did.

And one of the things for us at least and for my Ashley, my daughter, sitting here who is the love of his life was that we knew the August before at Anderson that he received a death sentence. Stage IV of glioblastoma of the brain, virtually no one makes it.

But like all of you who have been through this, hope matters. My mother used to say as long as you're alive, you have an obligation to strive and you're not dead till you've seen the face of God. And you have to have hope. And for Jill and me and my whole family, Beau made it -- I don't know how to say easier -- Beau made it possible for us to get up every morning and put one foot in front of the other.

Like when Beau -- you know, six months before he left, he sat me down. Jill and I were having dinner at his home and -- on a Friday. We would come home every weekend. And he asked his wife, Hallie, a wonderful woman, if she could put the kids upstairs and come back down. And he sat down with me, and he said, "Dad, I know no one loves me more than you do. But Dad look at me, look at me." I said, "Honey, I'm looking at you." He said, "Dad, I'm going to be okay." Excuse me. "I'm going to be okay no matter what happens. But you got to promise me, dad -- "promise me, promise me you're going to be okay. You've got to be okay, dad. Look at me dad. You've got to be okay."

And so Beau for us was -- you know, he -- every time we'd get sort of down, he was the kid who was -- he just gathered the family up and he'd say, "Now, come on damn it, come on." And so it was maybe a different experience than some people have.

But as my son Hunter said -- he said, "Dad, I don't know whether to thank you or hate you for teaching us how to love each other so much." Because, you know -- well, you all know, you know I know.

(Applause)

MR. BIDEN: But the one thing Beau did was -- you know, I know -- since I'm not running, no intention of running, I can say it now: Beau made us all promise, not a joke, promise that we stay engaged, man; that we push this. You know, my dad used to have an expression. He'd say, "Joey, never complain and never explain." Not one time from the moment he was born -- you will not find a living person who will tell you Beau Biden ever, ever, ever, ever once complained about a thing.

And so he looked at us and was like, you know, "You got to stay in the game. You've got to get up." And he'd say, "You got to put one foot in front of the other, just move, move."

So we've decided to -- I'll conclude with this -
- we decided to look at what happened to our Beau and
focus on what he want us to be doing, what he want us to
be working on, what he'd -- what would make him proud of
us, of the things that he cared so deeply about. And I
hope I'm saying it the right way, babe.

MR. ISAACSON: And among those things --

(Applause)

MR. ISAACSON: Among those things I know he
talked about was things your mom and dad talked about a
lot, which was just making sure everybody got the decent
shot. I mean but eight or nine years ago right before the
financial crisis you were saying working people in this
country weren't getting a decent shot, that's why you were
doing this, that's what you're fighting for.

MR. BIDEN: Well, look -- no, I'm sorry.

MR. ISAACSON: Go ahead.

MR. BIDEN: No, go ahead.

MR. ISAACSON: I was just going to ask you, we
now see this eruption around the world that people are
very frustrated and the things your son fought for and
your dad and mom stood for are being undermined and it's
something you've spoken out a lot about. How does that
explain the frustration we're all feeling today?

MR. BIDEN: The honest answer is: I'm not sure,
but I -- it's an old joke: I don't know much about art,
but I know what I like. I think it's a couple of things.
Number one, I think those people outside are getting wet,
so they ought to come in.

(Laughter)

MR. BIDEN: And you ought to let them in the house here.

MR. ISAACSON: Use this one too.

MR. BIDEN: Yeah, I think you all ought to come in.

MR. ISAACSON: Is there a way we can bring people in --

MR. BIDEN: A little bit --

MR. ISAACSON: -- as the vice president said. Put them in the aisle if it's allowed, yeah.

MR. BIDEN: But I think a couple of things. There used to be a basic bargain in my view, a basic bargain in the country that just at least from the late '30s on Democrats and Republicans shared the view. And that is that if you contributed to the profitability enterprise you were part of, you got to share in the benefits that flowed from that. And -- no, I mean it was --

(Applause)

MR. BIDEN: Republicans were strong -- felt strongly about that. That was sort of the basic bargain. And as a practical matter, that bargain hasn't been sustained now. You can argue about the details -- and there are those who criticize -- but there was a study done at the University of Massachusetts published in Harvard Business Journal, where 447 of the -- and I come from the corporate state of Delaware. I got elected seven times. I'm not a "I love Bernie, I hate Bernie."

But what happened was that those 447 who had been in the Fortune 500 for that entire time, they made \$2.7 trillion in profit. And that's a good thing. That's a really good thing. But what happened was they spent 53 percent of that profit buying back their own stock and

they spent 37 percent on dividends and 9 percent for everything else, research, development, expansion, et cetera.

There's a lot of reason for that, globalization, a whole bunch of other things. But the bottom-line was -- I have a cartoon in my office that my staff keeps trying to put away. It's -- I think you've seen it, David. It's a picture of -- out of *The New Yorker*, a picture of a guy -- a rotund guy in a black turtle neck sweater, black mask, a beret, big bag of money on the table being interrogated. And he says, "How was I supposed to know he was a job creator?"

(Laughter)

MR. BIDEN: Well, you know, my dad sold automobiles. He was a job creator for General Motors. You know, the folks, you know, who used to be the highest paid people in corporate America beyond the top executives were the sales personnel. They created jobs; they sold the product, etcetera.

That's not the case now. And it's not any cabal or it's not any great conspiracy. It's a consequence of a thousand little changes that have taken place that I think you're finding an awful lot of people not only here, but around the world are beginning to rethink.

I met with five of the -- probably the 25 -- CEOs of the 25 largest companies and the guy who runs the largest management fund, over \$7 trillion. They want to meet with me privately about corporate responsibility and reestablish what constitutes corporate responsibility.

And what happens is people don't think they are part of the deal anymore. And the nature of the financial crisis, in my view which was not any one person's making, but happened was you got a guy who never ever -- a woman who never ever missed a mortgage payment living in a neighborhood where three guys got those cockamamie mortgage. Their lawn has turned brown. What happened was

they were foreclosed down all of a sudden. They lost their home because they were under water.

You found people walking in as a consequence of the crisis who just gotten a corporate -- they got their early review. They got great marks and say "give me your computer card, you're done."

So people felt like they were helpless I think in terms of what happened to them. And I don't think any of us have spoken as clearly to their fears and their aspirations as necessary to let them know that it really matters. I know in Washington a lot of you guys refer to me as Middle Class Joe -- okay, that's the handle. And in Washington that means, as you all know -- you're all sophisticated -- you're middle class, you can't be that sophisticated. And that's what they're talking about with me.

But I tell you one thing. The reason I talk about the middle class so much is not about fairness alone, it's about stability. As long as the middle class is growing, we have a social and political stability in this country and it has been sustained over the last hundred years because the middle class has been more stable than any other place in the world. It is the element of our ability to continue to have this aspirational notion that anything is possible in the country.

And if you notice, they're losing that sense of possibility now and there's no easy answer to it. But failing to speak to it, failing to acknowledge it, failing to indicate -- I always say to my staff, "If you write me a speech, make sure that the first thing that I communicate is I understand what you're worried about. I understand your problem." And I don't think any of us have spoken very well to that concern.

And so -- but you're seeing it around the world
--

(Applause)

MR. BIDEN: Anyway.

MR. ISAACSON: You're seeing -- that's all right. You're seeing it around the world, but especially in this country, especially the Trump voters rejecting immigration, rejecting trade, rejecting some technological progress. Do we have to rethink our trade agreements? Do we have to rethink immigration or do we have to explain better what we stand for?

MR. BIDEN: I think a little of both.

SPEAKER: (Off mic).

MR. BIDEN: I know what --

SPEAKER: In a way I'm just (Off mic).

MR. BIDEN: No, that's not a problem. I was just in Ireland and it's the 100th anniversary of the Easter Rising 1916. And there's a line in Yeats's poem. You know, I know -- Senator Warren and others know I always quote Irish poets on the floor of the Senate. They all think I did it because I'm Irish. That's not the reason. I did it because they're the best poets.

But there's a line in his poem that he was describing his Ireland in 1916 that I think better describes the world today that we find ourselves in than it did his Ireland in 1916. It said: "All is changed, changed utterly: A terrible beauty has been born" -- "All is changed, changed utterly: A terrible beauty has been born."

All has changed in the last 15 years in fundamental ways. And it always takes governments in every moments of inflection -- probably five in our history -- it always requires government to taking time to catch up with the change that has occurred. And so people are having great difficulty understanding and we are

having great difficulty absorbing some of the change that have taken place.

We no longer are directly concerned, immediately concerned about two major wars on two fronts. We're talking about stateless actors around the world who are wreaking havoc on us. And in consequence of that, they're also generating a kind of fear and apprehension that if we don't play -- if we play to that fear, it can eat us alive.

We are not an -- there's no existential threat to the United States from Al-Qaeda. There's reason to worry, but there's no existential threat. Yet it's easy to play on it. I can play on that fear that if in fact at any restaurant you go to in an upscale place like Aspen what could happen to you what just happened in Bangladesh in an upscale bakery.

The likelihood of that happening is like us being struck by lightning and all killed here -- possible, not likely, not likely. But it seems to me it matters: it matters how political leaders speak to these things. It matters how we talk about it.

(Applause)

MR. BIDEN: And so -- and the truth is trade -- some trade agreements have hurt certain industries, have hurt workers in certain places, but there has always been that transitional requirement when every new revolution comes along.

We're kind of in the fourth Industrial Revolution right now and government has to figure out how to manage those changes to provide for and respond to the possibilities that everybody is going to have a chance to be treated with dignity and being able to make a living.

And right now people are worried about that because we are, we are. Even the best thinkers in the country are not exactly sure exactly which way to go. And

so, for example, TPP: TPP from my perspective is a more important foreign policy document than it is an economic tool. If we abandon the region of Asia, where 45 percent of the world's GDP is, just the sheer weight, size and influence of China will have a gigantic impact on the nations with no other place to turn.

But have we negotiated the toughest -- have we negotiated the most reasonable agreement? People can argue about that. But the idea that we can move away from enhancing trade and tying nations closer together is a denial of historical trends.

And so I'm not sure that answers your question, but I think we have to explain it better, but acknowledge -- look, one of the things in my view we have to do is when intelligent, hardworking Americans express a fear and anxiety that has legitimacy to it, we have an obligation to respond to it, not act like we know better, not act like that we have -- there's a clear unequivocal answer.

We've got to engage them and I don't think we do it enough. I don't think we -- because we are -- and I think part of the reason is -- and I don't know whether my Republican friends will agree, but our politics is more divided than our people are right now.

The difference between when Newt was speaker and I was in the Senate is that as strongly as we disagreed, we actually talked with one another. We actually trusted each other. We trusted each other when you gave your hand that that would be a deal. We used to actually get to know one another.

Sadly, I went into Amy -- I didn't realize you guys don't have a proper Senate dining anymore. The dining room that used to be -- there was a Senate dining room and then a private one; two great big conference tables. When I first got to the Senate, I didn't want to be there and Ted Kennedy dragged me over and said, "You want to learn about the Senate, make sure you sit here for an hour-and-a-half every day." All the senior members

came in, Democrat and Republican, and they talked and was the only place we did business. And everybody -- you would hear the old stories. You would talk about strategy. You got to know one another. You would travel with one another.

When you learn that your colleague has a wife with breast cancer or a colleague has a son who is suffering from a drug problem or that their mother has Alzheimer's or they are dealing with a serious problem, it's awful hard to dislike them. It's awful hard to ascribe motive, negative motive to everything they do. And you actually -- it takes the edge off of real differences.

When I got to the Senate there were more substantive differences than exist today. The war in Vietnam was raging, the women's movement and civil rights were just -- I mean it was combustible. There were so many things. But yet you actually spoke to one another.

I'll end by saying the best lesson I ever learned -- I got to the Senate when I was 20 -- I was elected when I was 29. And right afterwards, there was an accident where a tractor-trailer broadsided my wife and daughter's car and my two kids and killed my wife and daughter and my two boys were badly injured. And so I didn't want to go to the Senate. And a lot of the senior guys came to see me, including guys like Saxby and Stevens of Alaska, not just democrats. And you remember this. And they said, "Come on down. Just stay six months. We need you to organize"

I was the first United States Senator I ever knew. Christ, I didn't know they -- they didn't need me. There was a Democratic governor. There were 58 Democratic Senators. They didn't need me at all. But it basically saved my sanity.

And I went down. And what I have to do is every single Tuesday at 3:00 o'clock I went to Senator Mansfield's office. He was the leader of the Senate from

Montana -- Iron Mike Mansfield. I don't think any of my colleagues there would say -- a single person ever doubted his integrity or his character. And he would give me an assignment. And I thought all freshmen got assignments.

(Laughter)

MR. BIDEN: No, I really -- I'm serious, I thought they did. And he'd give me an assignment. But what he was really doing I learned about five months in -- I figured out -- was just sort of taking my pulse, how am I doing -- how are you doing.

And one day I walked in the Senate floor for my 3:00 o'clock meeting and I get off the elevators, walk through those double doors down to the well of the Senate, where I would always check when the last vote was so I could take the train home and see my kid, my boys. And Jesse Helms, who I ended up working with a long, long time was on the floor excoriating Ted Kennedy and a guy who I consider a very close personal friend, Bob Dole, who I still keep in very close contact with, for the precursor to the Americans with Disabilities Act -- and was basically was, "Why the hell should the public have to pay for curb cuts?" I'm exaggerating to make a point. But it was all about those with handicaps and -- anyway.

So I walked in. Unfortunately, I didn't -- I couldn't stop because I was more afraid of Mr. Mansfield. I probably would have said something. Not that I have ever said anything in politics.

(Laughter)

MR. BIDEN: But I probably would have said something very stupid. And I walked in. I sat across Mansfield's desk -- and I would always sit across from the desk. And he always had a corn -- remember that corn cob pipe he had. Hardly ever light it, but he had in his hand all the time. And he looked at me and he said in a clipped tone -- he said, "What's the matter, Joe?"

And I went on what probably was three minutes. It probably sounded like an hour. I went on after Jesse Helms. I said, "He has no social redeeming value. This guy is the" -- I really went after his motive. And he waited till I finished. He looked at me. He said, "Joe" -- it's absolutely a true story. My word as a Biden. He said, "What would you say, Joe, if told you in 1970 sitting in the living room in Raleigh, Dodd Helms and Jesse Helms were reading an advertisement in the Raleigh Observer and there was a picture of a young boy -- I think he was 14, Joe, with metal braces up to his hips on both legs and steel crutches, saying, "All I want for Christmas is someone to love me and take me home."

He said what would you say, Joe, if I told you Jesse and Dodd Helms adopted that young man? I said, "I'd feel terrible." He said, "Well, Joe, they did." And he said, "Joe, something I learned a long time ago. It's never inappropriate to challenge the judgment of another man or woman, but it's never appropriate to question their motive because you don't know. You may think you know. And when you challenge their motive, you make it almost impossible to get to go. You make it almost impossible to reach an agreement."

Today -- and by the way, when Jesse died, Chris Dodd and I were the only two Democrats who went to the funeral. I think you were there. They walked out what was a big Baptist church. They walked out in a receiving room, Dodd and his beautiful daughters, bright kids and this now 55-year-old man on crutches. And they all walked not to me or -- not to be public. They all walked up to me. And they said, "Joe, we had your signs on our lawn this election, Obama/Biden for president."

My point is, before Jesse died, he asked me to do the foreword for his book. The point is that, you know, we don't listen to each other much anymore and nobody disagreed more on civil rights and civil liberties than Jesse Biden -- not Jesse Biden, Jesse and Joe Biden. Now, I'm making him my relative, but --

(Laughter)

MR. BIDEN: But, you know, it's too much invective now and it's awful hard -- you know, it's awful hard to generate a consensus on just about anything. And it worries me -- and it worries me. And I will conclude by saying that's what worries me about this election.

What worries me about this election is it looks like an election that's going to be conducted that is a frontal assault on the other person. And I'm not sure even when there is the substantive arguments being made how much will be listened to by the press. And we got to get by this place -- we really do for the sake of the country. We've got to get by it. And anyway --

(Applause)

MR. ISAACSON: Get back to your wonderful poets, where the falcon can't hear the falconer or the center will not hold. Is there anything we can do to bring back a way for the center to hold?

MR. BIDEN: I think so. First of all, I look out at Senator Warner and other members here.

MR. ISAACSON: Amy.

MR. BIDEN: And Amy. I already mentioned Amy -- is that I think the vast majority of Democrats and Republicans in the Senate and the House know better and this is a case where it's sort of the tail wagging the dog a little bit here. But because of the way we -- I mean we Democrats as well -- the way we've gerrymandered house districts, where there's -- you don't have to worry about anything from -- except a challenge from your right if you're Republican, your left if you're a Democrat.

Because of the ability to put -- and I don't want to sound like a purist here, but the ability to put enormous amounts of money on a single candidate, \$4 million, \$5 million, \$10 million, if they move from the

orthodoxy of the far left or the far right in the parties, it makes it awful hard. I really think that we made -- my friends in the Senate have made a tragic mistake that is going to last for a while on refusal to hold a hearing on the Supreme Court justice.

(Applause)

MR. BIDEN: Now, by the way, it's not -- because it will just be repeated, you know. And so I called 17 of my Republican friends. And I say that -- I mean they are genuinely my friends in the Senate. And all the three said, "Joe, I know you are right -- I know you are right. But, Joe, if I break, it's going to cause me this problem or that problem," whatever. "Joe, if it breaks, we will break with you. We will be there. But don't ask me to be the first person to do this."

And I understand that. But what I don't understand is why a couple haven't broken, because -- look, I don't understand why you would want a job where you have to get up -- if it's true -- and take a position different than you believe 20 percent, 30 percent, 40 percent of the time and still want that job.

MR. ISAACSON: Wow!

MR. BIDEN: I mean it's not about being honorable or -- it's just why the hell would you want that job? No, I am serious. I am deadly earnest. Because I mean I can tell you as -- when the *Washington Post* -- when I did my financial disclosure as vice president and they said, "It's probable no man has ever assumed the office of vice president with fewer assets than Joe Biden."

(Laughter)

MR. BIDEN: I assume they meant financial. They may not --

(Laughter)

MR. BIDEN: But I -- you know, you can do a lot better -- you can do a lot better out there than in here financially. And so I just don't -- I don't quite get it right now.

MR. ISAACSON: Sam says we're going to have more time, so I'm going to actually let a couple of people raise their hands and I will call them if you want. Yes, the person --

MR. BIDEN: Well, I will not be offended if you get up and leave.

MR. ISAACSON: The person hardest for the microphone to get. I always do that. Identify yourself please.

MS. RICHARDS: I'm Rachel Richards (phonetic) with Pitkin County here and welcome to our community. We are really glad to have you here in the institute, who does so many fabulous things for us. I wanted to go briefly back to the cancer issue to ask -- it's my understanding that in the European Union, where there is single payer healthcare, the health system gets more concerned with the causes of cancer and the potential contaminants within our society and chemicals so on.

But here, we are kind of more siloed, where, you know, you go to the medical community when you are sick, but they are not really looking for the various environmental causes. How do we break that wall and that silo down between causation and treatment?

MR. BIDEN: Well, I think we are, by the way. There's an awful lot going on now, for example, there at MD Anderson, at -- over in Baltimore, at -- I'm trying to think of the other major. I think it's The Hutch.

SPEAKER: Hopkins.

MR. BIDEN: And I know Hopkins, but I said -- but I'm thinking The Hutch out in Washington State. They are working --

MR. ISAACSON: Mount Sinai. And we are going to give Ken Davis a shout out too for doing that, yeah.

MR. BIDEN: They all are working on being able to conduct tests that are blood tests in effect to determine whether or not you have a cancer marker in your blood stream that can give advance notice by a long shot as to whether or not you are likely to develop cancer.

I was out at the Huntsman Institute. They have come up with a way -- others have as well -- to determine hereditary causes of colon cancer. And now what they have is they are notifying people so that they can have instead of the colonoscopy once every two years -- this cadre of people will be able to live a hell of a lot longer because they will be able to go in and have colonoscopies -- and there are changes in colonoscopies, by the way -- every six months or so. They're going to live longer.

So we're doing both here. We're not just focusing on one side or the other. But if you want to -- if you could wave a wand, you only got to do one thing, cure -- make -- deal with one of the problems of cancer. If you said, "If I could deal with prevention," and get a response, you would eliminate 50 percent of the cancers that occur in the United States of America -- 50 percent of the cancers, (a), dealing with the air, the water, what you eat, what you smoke, what your dietary habits are. They're gigantic, gigantic, gigantic impact on cancer.

One of the things we're doing in this moonshot is, we are trying to bring together a whole group of folks to cooperate. Like I just went out to Cleveland, the Cleveland Clinic and Case Western along with GW Health Facility, because the incidence of smoking are higher in both of those communities, DC and Cleveland, than they are in other places. And if you are able to get folks exposed to lung cancer -- get tested whether they have lung

cancer, you can save a whole lot of lives setting up a mobile van. There's a lot of things we can do. But we also can't walk away.

If you just did this based on numbers, there's a lot of basically orphan cancers out there that kill 125,000-250,000 people out of the 600,000 who are dying every year. The million -- you know, there's a total of cancers. I think it's 14 million people who get cancer this year and one point some die of cancer.

I mean -- so what we are trying to do, and there is no reason why we think we can't, is try to do all of it because we have enough disciplines to deal with it all without taking away from or impacting upon any one of the initiative, whether it's prevention, better diagnostics, whether it's better treatment. We can do it all -- we can do it all.

And by the way, money is not our biggest problem. Reorganizing the way in which we attack cancer is a gigantic, gigantic, gigantic change that has to take place in order for us to have this sense of urgency. I know I'm always viewed as -- I don't know -- I'm often viewed as being a little too passionate and a little too -- anyway.

(Laughter)

MR. BIDEN: But, you know, there are thousands and thousands of people as I speak today who are turning to their doc and say, "Doc, can you give me just one more month so I can see my daughter get married." "Doc, doc, can I get by for another eight months and see my granddaughter graduate." "Doc, can I get this" -- "just give me" -- "can I get another two months because if this deal comes through I will be able to pay up my home and my wife will not be left in debt, doc."

And there's so many things that we can do right now that can extend life a little bit, also reach real cures. And there's no reason why we have to do it -- we

have to choose among the various disciplines we're going to focus on in my view.

MR. ISAACSON: Thank you. There was one way in the back who has been waving his hand. And you get the last question, so -- because we need an ankle-biter to send us off.

SPEAKER: How do you think the next president and vice president can achieve and improve on your cancer treatments?

MR. BIDEN: Well, I'll tell you what? I'll answer the question if you make me one promise. When you're president and I come by with my great grandchildren and they say "Joe Biden is out there," you won't say "Joe who," okay? You're a bright young guy. How old are you?

(Applause)

SPEAKER: Ten. I'm 10.

MR. BIDEN: How old?

SPEAKER: I'm 10.

MR. ISAACSON: Oh, you're getting old, man, double figures.

(Laughter)

MR. BIDEN: Well, I think we can do two things. One of the things that I was excited about is the Cancer Moonshot. And that -- Greg, what, 260 offsite cancer --

SPEAKER: Two hundred seventy.

MR. BIDEN: Two hundred seventy with over 7,000 people, serious docs and patient groups, et cetera all over America from Guam to Puerto Rico. And thousands of people assembled for the first time ever at the request of the government. And all the stakeholders were there.

I hope we've done one thing: we have reenergized the notion that an awful lot is possible, making sure that everybody understands that there's so much we can do. And I hope -- I've come forward -- we've come forward with 38 changes we've offered, about 20 of them on the federal government side of the ledger.

For example, you know, if you -- but if we make these changes, the next president is going to be in a much better position to make some of the moves that have to be made. For example, if you go into an old diner or you go into a bar and you put money into jukebox, you don't have to work out whether you're going to have a song played or whether you have a licensing agreement with that artist to be able to have the song played.

Well, right now you have literally hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of drugs in trial right now developed by various companies and individuals doing research. And so what happens is you have a lot of bright, young and not so young researchers saying, "If we took a combination of these three drugs and combine them together, we would be able to impact exponentially on that particular cancer that's being treated."

But to get that done now what happens is you have to reach -- you can get agreement as to that you want to get this done, NIH will sign off on you being able to do that, but then you got to go work out an agreement with each of the companies relating to intellectual property and a whole range of other things.

We put a new thing in place that is going to I think have a real impact -- NIH is negotiating with. And so far we have nine or ten biopharmaceutical firms signed up, an awful lot of the biggest philanthropies, an awful lot of the hospitals, where there's now hundreds of drugs in trial. And what you -- and all you have to do is -- because they've already worked out the mechanism that how you would share -- how they would share and protect their

investment in each of the drugs that they produce. So you don't have to work out a licensing agreement with them.

And this will go from making -- having -- taking a year to a year-and-a-half to be able to get permission to move with dual therapies to be able to do it in three months. And that's going to affect a lot of people's lives somewhere -- I can't predict where or how or who, but it's going to increase the sense of urgency of moving forward.

There's a whole range of things we can do where we can move much more rapidly. At the federal level we can move much more rapidly, where we can get CMS more engaged in carrying the cost of some things, where we can get NIH more responsive directly so that they're going -- taking chances earlier on with younger folks who are in -- right now you want to get a grant, you have to be in a lab of somebody very established and be there for a long time in order to qualify, et cetera.

So there's ways we can speed up without in any way negatively impacting on safety or security or proprietary rights that can just move this whole train down the track faster. And I think even people who don't like how hard I'm pushing on some of these things, you ask them, I think they will tell you privately, "Yeah, we can move a whole lot faster -- we can move a whole lot faster."

Some don't like moving faster because it's not going to be them that did it; it's not going to be that individual who did it. Because there's not -- shared science is not -- if you're going to -- if you are an astrophysicist and you want a grant from DARPA or from a space agency. And you get that grant and you decide on -- you find some breakthrough on whether it's Saturn rings or water on Mars, whatever, you got to make that information immediately, immediately available on the web to everybody who wants it so they can all benefit from it.

You do that in -- what was the one was done -- the cancer breakthrough and it was the -- and instead of *Science Magazine* doing it --

SPEAKER: The genome.

MR. BIDEN: The -- when the genome was finally cracked, the decision was where to publish all this information. And *Science Magazine*, which is more prestigious, didn't want it unless they had a proprietary interest in who could have access to it. So it was published in --

SPEAKER: *Nature*.

MR. BIDEN: -- in *Nature Magazine*.

(Laughter)

MR. BIDEN: I'm serious.

MR. ISAACSON: Yeah.

MR. BIDEN: Now, as my brother would say, go figure. Imagine keeping that information under wraps for another year or a year-and-a-half because of some proprietary interest.

In the field of cancer that year makes a difference between someone living and dying, whether they live another three months or six days or whatever. And so all I'm trying to -- we're trying to do is within the range of reason speed up the process in a way that in no way compromises public health, safety or security, does not go in and attempt to deny the benefits that should flow from the research and the development done by an individual or a company, but has some rational basis to it.

You're awful kind. Thank you all so very much.

(Applause)

MR. BIDEN: Thanks.

MR. BIDEN: I want to say one thing personally. In all of my years Vice President Biden is the person I most like and most respect in national public life. It's true, you are a great man. Thank you.

God bless you. God bless Kitty Boone. And God bless America on its 240th birthday.

MR. BIDEN: Thanks.

MR. ISSACSON: Thank you, sir.

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