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July 21, 2015: A Great President

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Title: A Great President

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7/21/2015—It is time to give President Barack Obama his due. He really has improved things for America and the world. The four major items of accomplishment are: medical insurance for many of the uninsured, the reopening of diplomatic relations with Cuba, the Iranian deal and coming out of the 2008 recession. As for Obamacare, this has been a goal of progressives since the New Deal. The program could be better but it is done. And it has had a major effect on the life of poor and working class people. That effect will only grow. As for Cuba, this move has improved US relations with Latin America more than any action since the Panama Canal Treaty, for which President Carter never gets enough credit. The move should have been made years ago. If the Iran deal prevents Iran obtaining a nuclear weapon for 10 years, it should count as a major achievement. And there is the potential for even a greater payoff. Within those ten years, the deal may change the nature of the regime. Finally, I cannot say I am ecstatic with the state of the economy—with its 5.3% unemployment and low participation rate and too much part-time work—but have you looked around the world? Obama's opponents would have moved us down the path of Europe. I would add other matters as well. I am committed to free trade and believe the potential Asia trade pact will be helpful. Some kind of peaceful counterweight to China is needed. There are a number of areas where Obama has clearly failed. The worst misstep was promising action against the Syrian regime and not acting. But in general no clear policy with regard to the Arab world, China and Russia. But Obama is a cautious man. No clear policy is better than a bad one.