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President Barack Obama, left, hugs rapper Common after a Moving America Forward rally for [Democratic candidates](#) Saturday, Oct. 30, 2010 in Chicago. (AP)

A musician with ties to President Obama's former controversial pastor, Rev. [Jeremiah Wright](#), will take center stage Wednesday night when Obama hosts a poetry ceremony at the [White House](#) featuring rapper and actor Common.

Common, a socially-conscious lyricist whose real name is Lonnie Rashid Lynn, Jr., has defended the retired pastor, and also has unleashed lyrical attacks on former President [George W. Bush](#) that have been criticized by conservatives.

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REAL CLEAR POLITICS POLL

Job Approval	Approve	Disapprove	Spread
Obama	47.1%	46.5%	+0.6%
Congress	19.2%	73.4%	-54.2%

Direction of Country	Right Direction	Wrong Track	Spread
RCP Average	28.1%	63.6%	-35.5%

Common is not known as a gangsta rapper, but some of his songs and poems feature violent imagery. In one poem, he called for the metaphorical burning of President George W. Bush -- a "burning Bush."

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[The White House](#) did not return calls seeking comment for this story.

Obama most likely met Common at Trinity United Church of Christ, a church that Obama attended for 20 years and Common grew up attending. Wright retired as pastor there in 2008, the same year that Obama ended his relationship with Wright after videos of his explosive sermons became a campaign issue.

In the sermons, Wright accused the U.S. [government](#) of racism and in the days after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, he said "America's chickens are coming home to roost" after it dropped atomic bombs on [Japan](#) and "supported state terrorism against Palestinians and black South Africans."

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Karl Rove: Common a 'Thug' Part 2
Ex Bush adviser sounds off on rapper

Obama initially defended Wright but later cut ties with him when Wright continued to make inflammatory comments.

But Common defended Wright.

"He never really was against white people or another race," Common told Electronic Urban Report in 2008. "It was more against an establishment that was oppressing people. I think we all can see that this country has problems and a lot of it starts in the political [system](#)."

Common said during the 2008 presidential race that Wright's sermons were filled with love, not hate.

"What I picked up from the pews...was messages of love," he said. "Anything that was going on against that love he would acknowledge and expose. He's been a preacher that's helped raise one of the greatest political figures in the world, and hopefully, the next president. He's also raised one of the greatest rappers in the world."

In a 2007 poem entitled "A Letter to the Law," Common railed against the U.S. invasion of [Iraq](#) while urban areas were being neglected.

"Seeing a fiend being hung/With that happening, why they messing with Saddam?"

"Burn a Bush cos' for peace he no push no button/Killing over [oil](#) and grease/no weapons of destruction."

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