

*Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2017*

**Remarks During a Briefing on Hurricane Irma Relief Efforts in Fort Meyers, Florida**

*September 14, 2017*

*The President.* Well, I just want to thank everybody. I came down to see FEMA, to see the Coast Guard, to see the Army, the Marines, everybody—the Navy. The job that everybody has done is incredible. And I know you're also in the process, but to think of the incredible power of that storm. And while people unfortunately passed, it was such a small number that nobody would have—people thought thousands and thousands of people may have their lives ended. And the number is a very small number, which is a great tribute to you.

Also in the fact that I know in the case of FEMA and the case of Coast Guard, the job you've done in saving people, saving lives. As an example, in Harvey in Texas, we talked—over 16,000 lives. And nobody would even understand that, it's hard to even imagine, and down here the same thing.

So I want to thank, everybody. You guys have been—I don't want to see you next week in another place, okay? [*Laughter*] We've seen you enough.

*Participant.* Yes, sir, Mr. President.

*The President.* But I just want to thank everybody, the first responders, on behalf of myself, our Vice President. Melania really wanted to be with us; she's really—it has really touched her heart what's gone on. And we've seen the devastation. We're going to see some more of it now unfortunately. And I have to say that your Governor—where is our Governor here? Rick Scott. The job he's done is incredible, and I guess I've been very lucky, because, you know, you have a great Governor in Texas; you have a great Governor in Florida. The job that Rick has done is being talked about all over.

And to think that—and I must say, Florida Power and Light—where's Eric?

Eric. Where's Eric? Come here, Eric. Eric, great job.

*Florida Power and Light Co. President and Chief Executive Officer Eric E. Silagy.* Thank you.

*The President.* But get going, Eric. I will say they're way ahead of schedule. There are more electrical people in this State, I think, than ever accumulated anywhere in the world is what I read before.

*Mr. Silagy.* It's big.

*The President.* It's from all over the country they came, and I've never seen—you've never seen anything—

*Mr. Silagy.* No, we haven't.

*The President.* Mobilized all over. I see Pam Bondi, who has done such an incredible job stopping certain little problems before they start and actually getting some of the companies to put up a lot of money.

*Florida State Attorney General Pamela J. Bondi.* They've been great.

*The President.* So the attorney general, I want to thank you, Pam. Fantastic job. Really fantastic job.

Elaine—where's Elaine Duke? Elaine Duke and—where's our Brock? Don't lose him, okay, Elaine, please. [*Laughter*] I have to say that Brock, working with your Governor, working with Pam, working with Elaine, working, by the way, with Marco Rubio, who is around here someplace.

It's a team like very few people have seen, and I want to thank everybody. Marco, I want to thank you a lot; you were really helpful.

*Senator Marco A. Rubio.* Thank you.

*The President.* And I just—again, I have to say that, what do I know? But I hope this man right here, Rick Scott, runs for the Senate. I don't know what he's going to do. [*Laughter*] But I know that at a certain point it ends for you, and we can't let it end. So I hope he runs for Senate. Who knows what he is going to do?

Again, I came down to say hello to you folks and to say hello to you folks. And the First Lady and myself, this is an honor for us to be here. We're now going to tour some of the areas.

And as Rick said, we have been very, very fast, and we had to be. We were signing papers as the storm was coming in, and that's never happened before. But, Rick, thank you very much, really great job. And, Brock, everybody, thank you very much. We have a great—Rick Perry here.

*Secretary of Energy J. Richard Perry.* We've got your back, sir.

*The President.* We have Energy. We have Linda—Linda McMahon, we have so many people, so many of the Cabinet members, because they're going to help. I want to thank Mike Pence. He is—in fact, I'd like you to say a few words.

[*At this point, Vice President Michael R. Pence made brief remarks, concluding as follows.*]

*Vice President Pence.* And as the President has said, we're with you today, we're going to be with you tomorrow, and we're going to be with you until Florida rebuilds bigger and better than ever before. So thank you.

*The President.* Just one word on a very important subject, so your power is, I mean literally, Rick, it's going on as we speak. It's going way ahead of schedule, weeks ahead of schedule. And much of it—most of it, I guess outside of the Keys, where we have a very special problem, but we're working hard on that. That's a very, very special problem. That was just dead-center, but we're working very hard on that. And we have a lot of goods out there, a lot of water, a lot of food, a lot of everything.

But I'd like to ask your Governor to say a few words. Again, he's been absolutely outstanding. Thank you.

Rick.

[*Governor Richard L. Scott of Florida made brief remarks, concluding as follows.*]

*Governor Scott.* So we have a lot of work to do. This is not—we're not done today. We're going to work hard. I know the Federal Government will continue to be a partner, our locals will, our State will. We're going to make sure—we're going to continue to be a strong, resilient State.

I want to thank from the bottom of my heart, everybody's prayers to help us get through this.

*The President.* So we are now going to be making a tour of the areas. We're going to see some of the folks and make sure they're happy, because we're trying to keep it as happy as we can under the circumstances. In many cases, they lost their homes, and it's a tough situation. So we're going to go see a lot of the folks.

And I will tell you again, I want to thank you. I want to thank the military. Just incredible. So thank everybody, and we'll see you later.

Media, we appreciate you being so understanding. It's been a very tough period of time even for you folks, and we really do appreciate your understanding. This has been a difficult situation.

As Rick knows, almost all of the roads are now open, and the ports are just about open. What we had to do to get some of those ports open, people wouldn't even believe that we did it so quickly. So we're very proud of the job that everybody around here has done.

Thank you all. Thank you very much. We'll see you later. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:04 a.m. in Hangar Bay 3 at Southwest Florida International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Gregory W. Abbott of Texas; Acting Secretary of Homeland Security Elaine C. Duke; Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator W. Brock Long; and Administrator of the Small Business Administration Linda E. McMahon. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Pence and Gov. Scott.

*Categories:* Addresses and Remarks : Hurricane Irma relief efforts, briefing in Fort Myers, FL.

*Locations:* Fort Myers, FL.

*Names:* Abbott, Gregory W.; Bondi, Pamela J.; Duke, Elaine C.; Long, W. Brock; McMahon, Linda E.; Pence, Michael R.; Perry, J. Richard; Rubio, Marco A.; Scott, Richard L.; Silagy, Eric; Silagy, Eric E.; Trump, Melania.

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