

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2018

Remarks at the Broward County Sheriff's Office in Fort Lauderdale, Florida
February 16, 2018

The President. Thank you all very much. Fantastic community here. Thank you. What a great job you've done, and we appreciate it very much. An incredible job, and everybody's talking about it.

And I just got back from the hospital. A young woman was shot—four bullets, two in her lungs. And they'd gotten her over to the hospital in less than 21 minutes. She had no chance, and, between the first responders, your people who got her—you know they—who I'm talking about—they got her there, Scott.

What a job you've done, and the doctors did a great job over at the hospital—a combination which is incredible. And I hope you're getting the credit for it. Because, believe me, you deserve it. The job you've done is unparalleled.

Broward County Sheriff Scott Israel. You know what? I'm giving them all raises next week. [Laughter]

The President. Give them a raise. Give everybody here a raise.

Sheriff Israel. Mr. President, these are the leaders. They led SWAT teams; they led staging areas; they led command posts. These are the leaders who led the first responders from police and fire, our deputies who were able to do the amazing things we did in Broward County.

So these men and women are—and we're—so appreciative and honored that you and the First Lady could come down and spend time in Broward County and let us know what it means to you. So thank you very much.

The President. Well, thank you very much, Scott, and you did fantastically.

You know, I know Broward very well. I've been here many times. I don't live very far away. I'm right up the road. And we actually drove down. We landed over at Palm Beach International; we drove down. And this was supposed to take place on Sunday or Monday. And I said, "No way." And then, Marco said, "Hey"—he wants to go down early too. We didn't want to wait. We didn't want to wait.

Maybe we could ask you each to say your name and a little bit about what you do. You have a lot of folks here. I'd like to get the world to see the great job that you've done.

So the Governor of Florida, we all know—Rick Scott has done a fantastic job. Fantastic Governor. Truly a State that's doing well. We know that Rick, right?

Governor Richard L. Scott of Florida. Yes. [Inaudible]—jobs.

The President. So I just want to thank you. [Inaudible]—say something.

Gov. Scott. First off, I want to thank you for coming down. As soon as it happened, Kirstjen Nielsen called me, and made sure that—if there was any Federal resources, you know. And thank you for the conversation we had.

The President. Yes.

Gov. Scott. And you promised any resources the Federal Government could provide.

I know everybody in law enforcement here, starting with the Sheriff, and everybody has worked really hard. As you said, the hospitals did a really good job. We've had the opportunity to visit the patients over there. Those kids are—it's horrible what happened, but they're very optimistic about the future.

The President. Yes, yes.

Gov. Scott. So I just want to thank you and the First Lady for being down here——

The President. Thank you.

Gov. Scott. ——and be showing your gratitude for all the individuals that took care of everybody.

The President. Thank you, Rick. Fantastic job. Fantastic Governor.

Attorney General Pam Bondi.

Attorney General Pamela J. Bondi of Florida. Thanks, President, and thank you and the First Lady, again, for being here. And, Sheriff, thank you for the great job you did. And, FBI, thank you for everything you did. And Governor, of course, you agree.

We were on the ground with our advocates from all over the State.

The President. That's right.

Attorney General Bondi. They came on at a moment's notice. And we had the very difficult job of being with the deceased's families. There is no easy way to talk to someone about losing a child, especially 17 of them. And so it was very, very difficult.

And then, today, we went to the hospital and got to see what you saw. So some very good coming out of that. And we've also seen a lot of good with the citizens coming forward, wanting to help and wanting to help our first responders. And from all over the country, people have been reaching out, in such horror and tragedy.

Gov. Scott. The Attorney General has great victim advocates.

The President. It's true.

Gov. Scott. She's done it—we had Pulse, and then she—after the Las Vegas shooter, she took a lot of her individuals out with her to help out there. And she's done a great job here, bringing her child advocates and helping people—or victim advocates helping people.

Attorney General Bondi. Thanks, Governor.

The President. I'll tell you who appreciates it, too, are the parents. Because I was at the hospital with a lot of parents. And they are really thankful for the job you've done. Now, in those cases, their child is in really great shape considering they, in most cases, would not have been. But they are really thankful to everybody. Thanks, Pam.

Broward County Sheriff's Office Undersheriff Colonel Steve Kinsey. Steve Kinsey, I'm the undersheriff with Broward Sheriff's Office. Thank you for coming, Mr. President and Ms. First Lady. We really appreciate your support of law enforcement. You and the Governor are always behind us.

The President. Thank you very much. Appreciate it.

Broward County Sheriff's Office Patrol and Regional Support Services Colonel Jim Polan. Jim Polan. I'm a colonel assigned to operations for the Sheriff's Office. Again, thank you for being here.

The President. Thank you, Jim.

Broward County Sheriff's Office Department of Professional Standards and Department of Investigations Colonel John D. Dale. Jack Dale. I'm the colonel of investigations. So we led the investigative effort.

The President. Great. Good job.

Broward County Sheriff's Office Deputy Chris Wirth. Chris Wirth. I'm a deputy with the Sheriff's Office assigned to the bomb squad responders unit, which is a SWAT team, part of the EOD element.

The President. Thank you, Chris.

Sunrise Police Department Lieutenant Greg Cardinale. Greg Cardinale from Sunrise Police. I was one of the first responders there, along with Captain Bradley, Jim McLean from Coral Springs, and Deputy Carbocci from BSO. And the victim you were talking about earlier, this gentleman here, along with Jim McLean brought her out first, and then we got her on a—
[inaudible]—cart, got her some rescue.

The President. That's right. And you found her in a very odd place too. Not easy to even find. What a job you did. Thank you very much.

Sunrise Police Department Captain Gareth Bradley. Gareth Bradley. I was one of the SWAT medics that responded after the incident.

The President. Yes. Great job. I've heard about that, heard about you. Great job. Thank you.

Parkland District Police Department Officer Deputy William "David" Hanks. Mr. President, I'm Deputy Hanks. I'm assigned to the Parkland district. I was part of a small contingent of the Broward Sheriff's Office deputies and Coral Springs officers that made the initial entry into Building 12, where the incident happened.

The President. Thank you very much.

Broward County Fire Chief Joseph Fernandez. Mr. President, Joe Fernandez, Fire Chief for Broward County under Sheriff Israel. Thank you for your support for the fire rescue service. We're in a much more forward-leaning posture thanks to your support, equipment, and we were able to work tightly with law enforcement to save those lives.

The President. You did. Thank you.

Chief Fernandez. Thank you.

Broward County Sheriff's Office Department of Detention Executive Director Colonel Gary Palmer. Good evening, Mr. President. My name is Colonel Gary Palmer, executive director of the Department of Detention, where he's being housed currently.

The President. That's right. Great job, thank you.

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives Miami Field Division Special Agent in Charge Peter J. Forcelli. Mr. President, Pete Forcelli, Special Agent in Charge of ATF's Miami Field Division. Thanks for your support, and it's great to work with these fine people. The law enforcement and public safety community down here in South Florida is like no other I've had the honor of working with. It's amazing people.

The President. That's very nice. That's very nice. Thank you very much.

Federal Bureau of Investigation Miami Division Special Agent in Charge Robert F. Lasky. Robert Lasky, Special Agent in Charge, FBI. We're happy to lend a hand and be a part of the

team to overcome these events. Of behalf of me and the thousand people that work for me, thank you for all your support and thank Broward County. They're a tremendously professional organization.

The President. Great job, Bob. Really great job. And you had a lot FBI guys down here, quickly. So great job. Thank you very much.

Special Agent Lasky. Thank you, sir. Appreciate it.

The President. Marco. We know Marco.

Senator Marco A. Rubio. Mr. President, we just want to thank you and the First Lady for coming. Obviously, the Governor and the Attorney General for their response. And the heroes—the stories of the heroism from the schools that inspire: teachers, the administrators, some who lost their lives; and the men and women of law enforcement who rushed into this building not knowing what's on the other side.

This is a community and a State that's in deep pain. And they want action to make sure this never happens again. It's happened too often. And I know, and I hope, and I pray we'll come together. And I know you want to solve this, and——

The President. Well, you're behind them. I can tell you that, Marco. I spent a lot of time with Marco. He's behind you, a hundred percent, as is the Governor, as is Pam, as we all are. Really, as we all are.

You have a great story to tell. Go ahead.

Coconut Creek Police Department Officer Michael Leonard. Mr. President, thank you for having me here. My name is Officer Michael Leonard. I'm with Coconut Creek Police Department. I was the one that located the shooter. With the assistance of my backup, once they arrived, Sergeant—[*inaudible*—]of the Coral Springs Police assisted me in handcuffing and taking him into custody.

The President. That was so modest. I would have told it much differently. [*Laughter*] I would have said, "Without me, they never would have found him." [*Laughter*]

But you know, their story is amazing because Coconut Creek is not that close. And they heard he wasn't around, and they can't find him, and there was a description, and you were in a different area. And you said—it must have been sort of strange because you were so far away. You said, "I think that maybe is the shooter." And very few people would have done what you did. I think it was a fantastic job.

Ofc. Leonard. Thank you.

The President. So now I've told the real story. Okay. [*Laughter*] All right?

The First Lady. Great job.

The President. First Lady, would you like to say anything?

The First Lady. Thank you all for what you do and saving our children. That's the most important. They're our future. And let's take care of them, because they will go through a lot with what they experienced in—2 days ago. And we need to take care of them. Thank you.

The President. Very nice. Thank you.

Sheriff Israel. Mr. President, I just want to, on behalf of this agency, thank you. You know, when you get to spend time with the President of the United States and the First Lady, it's something you'll never forget. But our conversation is not what I'm going to remember most. I'm going to remember about a half hour that you and the First Lady spent with the son of—who was

shot—of one of our injured deputies. I'll never forget that, and for you to do something like that is amazing. And it shows what you think of law enforcement, and we appreciate it.

The President. Thank you. He's a good boy. Thank you. Congratulations. Let's sit down, and thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:05 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Madeleine Wilford, student, Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, FL, who was injured in the February 14 shooting; and Nikolas J. Cruz, suspected gunman in the shooting. Gov. Scott referred to Secretary of Homeland Security Kirstjen M. Nielsen.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Broward County Sherriff's Office in Fort Lauderdale, FL.

Locations: Fort Lauderdale, FL.

Names: Bondi, Pamela J.; Bradley, Gareth; Cardinale, Greg; Cruz, Nikolas J.; Dale, John D.; Fernandez, Joseph; Forcelli, Peter J.; Hanks, William "David"; Israel, Scott; Kinsey, Steve; Lasky, Robert F.; Leonard, Michael; Palmer, Gary; Polan, Jim; Rubio, Marco A.; Scott, Richard L.; Trump, Melania; Wilford, Madeleine; Wirth, Chris.

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