

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2018

Remarks at the Thanksgiving Turkey Presentation Ceremony

November 20, 2018

Thank you very much. Please, be seated. Good afternoon, everyone. A very special day at the White House. We are thrilled to be joined today by our great First Lady, Melania. On behalf of the entire Trump family, I want to wish all Americans a very, very happy Thanksgiving. At this time of the year, we reflect on all of the many blessings in our lives.

We're also very glad to be joined by the chairman of the National Turkey Federation, Jeff Sveen, along with his wife Marcia, his father John, his sons Andrew, Peter, and Samuel, and their very beautiful families. Thank you very much for being here. Thank you. Thank you. Jeff, thank you.

Thanksgiving is a time of great American traditions, and today we continue a very special one, when a lucky turkey gets a Presidential pardon. *[Laughter]* That turkey is so lucky. I've never seen such a beautiful turkey.

It has been stated that President Abraham Lincoln—Honest Abe—was the first President to grant such a pardon after his son Tad befriended the Christmas turkey and implored his father: "Please, dad. Please, save it."

In this grand tradition, I am pleased to announce that today's lucky bird and guest of honor is named Peas—*[laughter]*—along with his alternate named Carrots. The children will understand that. *[Laughter]* The winner of this vote was decided by a fair and open election conducted on the White House website. This was a fair election. *[Laughter]* Unfortunately, Carrots refused to concede and demanded a recount, and we're still fighting with Carrots. *[Laughter]* And I will tell you, we've come to a conclusion: Carrots, I'm sorry to tell you, the result did not change. *[Laughter]* It's too bad for Carrots. *[Laughter]*

Peas and Carrots are the very first National Thanksgiving turkeys from the very great State of South Dakota. Love South Dakota. For this occasion, we are excited to be joined by Governor-elect—a real friend of ours—Kristi Noem. Where's Kristi? Kristi—stand up, Kristi. Congratulations. And she just ran a very, very great race against a very capable opponent, and that was really something special. Congratulations, Kristi.

We're also happy to have Wyoming Congresswoman—friend of mine—Liz Cheney here with us. And she just had a big victory also. Thank you. That was a great victory. They know what they're doing in Congress, Liz.

Peas and Carrots were raised by a wonderful farmer from Riverside Hutterville Colony—and this is something that he's very proud of—Ruben Waldner. I want to just thank Ruben for having done a great job. Where's Ruben? Ruben—stand up, Ruben. Great job. That's a good-looking turkey. Great job. Thank you very much.

Peas and Carrots were two out of a group of 50 exceptional turkeys raised for this event. And you can see that by looking at them. Together, they are known as "The Presidential Flock."

After their good fortune today, Peas and Carrots will both live out the rest of their days at Gobblers Rest on the campus of Virginia Tech—good place—where they will enjoy a beautiful private enclosure under the care of poultry science students and veterinarians. In other words, they're going to be well taken care of at Virginia Tech.

However, it won't be entirely a rest. Even though Peas and Carrots have received a Presidential pardon, I have warned them that House Democrats are likely to issue them both subpoenas. [Laughter] Nonetheless, in the spirit of Thanksgiving, I will be issuing both Peas and Carrots a Presidential pardon. Unfortunately, I can't guarantee that your pardons won't be enjoined by the Ninth Circuit. [Laughter] Always happens. They're guaranteed.

All joking aside, this is a time for Americans to unite together in a spirit of love, understanding, unity, and joy, as one very proud American family. Our Nation is doing well. We are now at the beginning of a national period of Thanksgiving. And as we pause to give thanks for all of the blessings that we've been bestowed—it really has been blessing after blessing after blessing—we're all very thankful. And we also pray for those in need, especially our fellow citizens impacted by the devastating wildfires in California, where I just came back. I've never seen anything like it. Probably, nobody has. All American hearts are joined with theirs.

We give thanks for the family, friends, neighbors, and loved ones who enrich our lives, lift our spirits, and fill our days with joy. And we give thanks to God, who continues to shed His almighty grace upon this magnificent land that we all love so very much. We are truly blessed to be Americans.

This is an incredible time for our country. Prosperity is soaring all across our land. We are especially thankful for the men and women who protect our families and who protect our flag.

As we gather together this week with those we love, we share our gratitude to all of those who spend this holiday very, very far from home, serving in our military overseas. We send our eternal gratitude to the heroes who keep America safe, strong, proud, prosperous, and free. And we ask God to always watch over these incredible, brave Americans as they faithfully defend our Nation and as they defend our home.

Now it's time to grant Peas and Carrots the pardon they've been waiting for. They are extremely lucky birds.

Thank you, everyone. Have a very, very happy Thanksgiving. God bless you all, and God bless America. Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you very much.

Okay, let's do it. Ready? Peas, I hereby grant you a full pardon! [Laughter] Thank you very much, everybody. Really great. Thank you. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:18 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to South Dakota Democratic gubernatorial candidate State Sen. Billie Sutton.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Thanksgiving turkey presentation ceremony.

Locations: Washington, DC.

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