

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2019

**Remarks Prior to a New Year's Eve Celebration and an Exchange With Reporters
in Palm Beach, Florida**

December 31, 2019

The President. Hello, everybody. Happy New Year. Happy New Year. We're going to have a great year, I predict. I think it's going to be a fantastic year. We had the best economic year, I think, in our country's history. And I think we're really set for additional growth and jobs and everything else. It will be great.

Kevin [Kevin Corke, Fox News].

Political Protests at U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, Iraq/Diplomatic Security

Q. What do you want the American people to know, Mr. President, about how you're handling the situation in Iraq, as it relates to Iran?

The President. Well, I think it's been handled very well. The marines came in. We had some great warriors come in and do a fantastic job. And they were there instantaneously, as soon as we heard. I used the word "immediately"; they came immediately. And it's in great shape, as you know. This will not be a Benghazi. Benghazi should never have happened. This will never, ever be a Benghazi.

But we have some of our greatest warriors there. They got in there very quickly. As soon as we saw there was a potential for problem, they got in, and there was no problem whatsoever.

I also want to thank the Iraqi Government. They really stepped up. I spoke to the Prime Minister today. I thanked him. But they stepped up very nicely.

Iran

Q. Mr. President, do you foresee going to war with Iran?

The President. I don't think that would be a good idea for Iran. It wouldn't last very long. Do I want to? No. I want to have peace. I like peace. And Iran should want peace more than anybody. So I don't see that happening. No, I don't think Iran would want that to happen. It would go very quickly.

Q. Are you going to send more troops?

Chairman of the State Affairs Commission Kim Jong Un of North Korea

Q. Mr. President, can you—what is your message tonight for—what is your message tonight for North Korea?

The President. Well, we'll see. I have a very good relationship with Kim Jong Un. I know he's sending out certain messages about Christmas presents, and I hope his Christmas present is a beautiful vase. That's what I'd like—a vase——

Q. Do you think it will be, sir?

The President. ——as opposed to something else. I don't know. I—look, he likes me; I like him. We get along. And he's representing his country. I'm representing my country. We have to do what we have to do.

But he did sign a contract. He did sign an agreement, talking about denuclearization. And that was signed. Number-one sentence: denuclearization. That was done in Singapore. And I think he's a man of his word. So we're going to find out, but I think he's a man of his word.

Impeachment/The President's Telephone Conversations With President Volodymyr Zelenskiy of Ukraine/U.S. Assistance to Ukraine/The President's Support Among Republicans

Q. I know it's a night of celebration, Mr. President, but are you spoiling for a political fight in January, with the impeachment?

The President. Well, the impeachment thing is a hoax. It's a big, fat hoax. We had, I guess, 196 to nothing, with the Republicans. We had three Democrats come over. One actually joined our party, as you know, which is, I think, a record. I don't think that's been done before, in terms of somebody coming in like that on a vote like that. But he joined our party—from New Jersey. He's going to be fantastic.

And no, I think—I look forward to it. I mean, we'll see. We have absolutely—we did nothing wrong. All you have to do is read the transcripts. If you read the transcripts—or you could also do something else. You could go see or speak to the President of Ukraine. And the President of Ukraine said, loudly and boldly—and I appreciate his statement—he said it many times: There was no pressure. The Foreign Minister of Ukraine said there was absolutely no pressure, and that's the whole case right there. There was no pressure whatsoever.

I do say two things: We have to check corruption, and we also have to find out why is it that the United States is always giving foreign countries money. And Germany and France and all of Europe—they're not doing much. In fact, they're not doing anything, relative to this. Why is it always the United States? I've been asking you those questions and making those statements for a long time to everybody standing here. Nobody ever mentions that.

That was part of it. In fact, that's in the transcript also. I talk about—a very good woman, to be honest with you—Chancellor Merkel. But I said: "Where is Chancellor Merkel? Where is President Macron of France? Why aren't they putting up money? Why is it always the United States?" Nobody ever covers that, but that's a big factor. So I think that's going to go very quick. I think it's going to go very easy.

We have tremendous—and you know, I have to say this—we have tremendous Republican support. What the Democrats did in the House was a disgrace. What they did—how unfair it was. We didn't get lawyers. We didn't have witnesses. We didn't do anything. And still, we got a hundred percent of the Republican votes. And it was bipartisan, because we got three Democrats.

So I think the impeachment thing—I call it "impeachment light." It's a disgrace. And Nancy Pelosi should be ashamed of herself. She's a highly overrated person. I know her well; she's highly overrated.

Q. Phase one, Mr. President, with China?

E-Cigarettes Sales Regulations

Q. [Inaudible]—about vaping?

The President. And the vaping is coming out. We're just going to be announcing it very shortly. Some people already know about what we're doing. We have to protect our families. At the same time, it's a big industry. We want to protect the industry.

And, as you know, we'll be taking it off—the flavors—for a period of time—certain flavors. We're going to protect our families. We're going to protect our children. And we're going to

protect the industry. Hopefully, if everything is safe, they're going to be going very quickly back onto the market.

So the flavors will come off. They're going to be checked. We want to make it—people have died from this. They've died from vaping. We think we understand why. But we're doing a very exhaustive examination, and hopefully, everything will be back on the market very, very shortly.

Look, vaping can be good from the standpoint—you look at the e-cigarettes—you stop smoking. If you can stop smoking, that's a big advantage.

So we think we're going to get it back onto the market very, very quickly, but we have to protect the children. We have to protect the families. At the same time, we have a very big industry. It's become a very big industry. We're going to take care of the industry.

Q. Phase one? Phase one trade deal with China?

Impeachment/The President's July 25 Telephone Conversation With President Volodymyr Zelenskiy of Ukraine/The President's Support Among Republicans/Burden-Sharing Among European Allies

Q. Do you want there to be a trial in the Senate? Or do you want there not to be a trial in the Senate?

The President. I don't really care. It doesn't matter. As far as I'm concerned, I'd be very happy with the trial, because we did nothing wrong. We didn't even have a witness, and we won 196 to nothing. Okay? We didn't have a witness. That was all the Democrats' witness.

Look, Adam Schiff is a corrupt politician. He's corrupt. He got up—he made a speech, said something I never said. And when I released the transcript—which is absolutely a perfect, totally appropriate conversation with a very good man, a very good President—I hear he's doing a great job. But a big reason he got elected was corruption. There's tremendous corruption.

But the other thing—and, again, I ask: Why aren't other countries—Germany, France, and others—why aren't they putting up money like we put up? And I've asked that question for a long time. Not only about Ukraine, about a lot of other places.

I was able to get, recently, at NATO—and you have to speak to Secretary General Stoltenberg—\$530 billion additionally, over a very short period of time; \$130 billion immediately. He has never seen anything like that. That's NATO.

This is something different. Those countries should be putting up money. They should also be giving to Ukraine.

All right, one more question. Go ahead.

China-U.S. Trade/2020 Presidential Election

Q. The phase one—China trade, China trade, Mr. President.

Q. *[Inaudible]*—in the Middle East?

The President. On trade? We're very excited about trade. The China deal will be signed probably on January 15. We put out a notice today. And I'll be going, at some point, to Beijing, to be with President Xi. We have a great relationship. And we'll be doing something reciprocal.

But I think, more importantly, we'll be starting negotiations very soon on phase two. And I think phase two can be complete. A lot of people said, "Well, are you going to have phase two or phase two, phase three?" I think we'll have phase two. I think that should complete it. But we'll be starting those negotiations very soon.

I want to thank everybody. I want you to have a great year. Look, you're honorable people. You have to stay honorable. If you're honorable, I'm going to win the election by a lot. If you're not honorable, I'm just going to win the election by a little. *[Laughter]* So I'd rather have you be honorable, okay?

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Jeff [Jeff Mason, Reuters]. Good luck. Thank you, Kevin.

Q. How about Mrs. Trump's New Year's resolution? Melania?

Q. What is your resolution?

The First Lady. Happy New Year.

National Economy

Q. Happy New Year. How about your New Year's resolution?

Q. What is your resolution?

Q. What's your goal for the New Year?

The First Lady. Peace on the world.

The President. Peace is right. But I'm not sure you're supposed to say resolutions out loud, okay?

Q. Try us.

The President. So we don't want to—I don't want to say what my resolution is because I think we jinx it, all right?

But I can tell you, we have a good—we really have a good resolution, and it's a resolution for our country. We love our country. Our country has never done better than it's doing right now.

We have the best unemployment numbers. We have the best employment numbers. Almost 160 million people are working. African American, Asian American, Hispanic American—they have the best numbers in the history of our country. We're very happy. And we rebuilt our military. We cut taxes down—the lowest in history—biggest tax cut ever. We're doing great. Our country is really the talk of the world. Everybody is talking about it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:24 p.m. outside the Grand Ballroom at the Mar-a-Lago Club. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Adil Abd al-Madhi of Iraq; Reps. Jared F. Golden, Collin C. Peterson, Jefferson H. Van Drew; Rep. Adam B. Schiff, in his capacity as chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence; Minister of Foreign Affairs Vadym Volodymyrovych Prystaiko of Ukraine; and Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 1, 2020.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : New Year's Eve celebration in Palm Beach, FL; Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters :: Palm Beach, FL.

Locations: Palm Beach, FL.

Names: Abd al-Madhi, Adil; Golden, Jared F.; Kim Jong Un; Macron, Emmanuel; Merkel, Angela; Pelosi, Nancy; Peterson, Collin C.; Prystaiko, Vadym Volodymyrovych; Schiff, Adam B.; Stoltenberg, Jens; Trump, Melania; Van Drew, Jefferson H.; Xi Jinping; Zelenskiy, Volodymyr.

Subjects: Armed Forces, U.S. : Funding; Business and industry : Domestic investment, promotion efforts; China : President; China : Trade with U.S.; Congress : House of Representatives :: Impeachment inquiry; Congress : House of Representatives :: Speaker; Economy, national : Improvement; Employment and unemployment : Job creation and growth; Employment and unemployment : Unemployment rate; Florida : President's visits; Foreign policy, U.S. : Diplomatic security, strengthening efforts; Foreign policy, U.S. : Peace efforts, expansion; France : President; Germany : Chancellor; Government organization and employees : Federal regulations, review; Health and medical care : E-cigarette use and vaping, reduction efforts; Health and medical care : Smoking cessation programs; Holidays and special observances : New Year's Eve; Iran : International diplomatic efforts; Iraq : Political unrest and violence; Iraq : Prime Minister; Iraq : Security cooperation with U.S. ; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; North Korea : Chairman, State Affairs Commission; North Korea : International diplomatic efforts; North Korea : Nuclear weapons development; Taxation : Tax relief; Ukraine : President; Ukraine : Relations with U.S.; Ukraine : U.S. assistance; Ukraine : U.S. assistance .

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