

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2021

Remarks in an Exchange With Reporters in Wilmington, Delaware
December 31, 2021

The First Lady. Happy New Year!

Q. Mr. President——

President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia/Ukraine/North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Q. President Biden, what did you convey on your call with Vladimir Putin?

Q. [Inaudible]—of their homes?

The President. I made it clear to the—President Putin that if he makes any more moves and goes into Ukraine, we will have severe sanctions. We will increase our presence in Europe with our NATO allies, and it will just to be a heavy price to pay for it.

Q. Did you get the sense that he is any less likely to invade Ukraine after your conversation?

The President. What I got the sense of is that he has agreed that we would have three major conferences in Europe beginning in the middle of the month with our senior staffs that relate to the OSCE, the Russia-NATO Council, as well as continuation of discussions on our strategic doctrine. And so he did not disagree with any of that.

And he laid out some of his concerns about NATO and the United States and Europe, and we laid out ours. And we said we'd begin to negotiate some of those issues. But I made it clear that they only could work if in fact he deescalated, not escalated, the situation there.

Ukraine/International Diplomatic Efforts

Q. Do you expect more concrete progress after the talks in January?

The President. Well, I always expect, if you negotiate you make progress, but we'll see. We'll see.

Thanks.

Russia/Ukraine

Q. Does Russia face sanctions if he keeps troops at the border?

The President. I'm not going to negotiate here in public, but we made it clear that he cannot—I emphasize "cannot"—move on Ukraine.

Thank you.

Q. [Inaudible]

Death of Actors Betty White

Q. Do you have a response on the news of Betty White?

The President. That's a shame. She was a lovely lady. Always was.

The First Lady. Who didn't love Betty White? [Laughter] We're so sad about her death.

The President. Ninety-nine years old.

The First Lady. Yes.

The President. As my mother would say, God love her.

The First Lady. Yes.

The President. It's incredible.

The First Lady. We loved her.

The President's New Year Resolution

Q. Any New Year's resolutions?

The First Lady. Not yet. [Laughter]

The President. I'm going to try to earn her—more love, you know? [Laughter] I mean, everybody knows that I love her more than she loves me. [Laughter] We work on it hard. Anyway——

The President's Travel Plans/Federal Disaster Assistance to Colorado

Q. Will you travel to Colorado?

The President. Say it again?

Q. Will you travel to Colorado?

The President. I may very well. We'll see.

Thank you.

Q. Thank you.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. By the way, I had a long talk with the Governor this morning. We've initiated additional help for the Governor. But at any rate——

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:39 p.m. outside the Banks' Seafood Kitchen and Raw Bar. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jared S. Polis of Colorado.

Categories: Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters :: Wilmington, DE.

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