

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023

Remarks in a Telephone Conversation With NBC's Al Roker During the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City
November 23, 2023

NBC weather anchor and "Today" program cohost Al Roker. Welcome back to the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

And on this most American of holidays, we have very special guests about to join us by phone. Right now we have the President of the United States, Joe Biden, and the First Lady, Dr. Jill Biden.

Happy Thanksgiving to both of you.

The President. Happy Thanksgiving, Al. It wouldn't be Thanksgiving without you.

The First Lady. Happy Thanksgiving!

Mr. Roker. Oh, thank you. And of course, a belated happy birthday, Mr. President, as well. And thank you so much for taking the time to be here.

First of all, what is your—what's your Thanksgiving message for all of our viewers?

The President. Well, I think we have to remind ourselves how blessed we are to live in the greatest nation on the face of the Earth. And that's real. We're an extraordinary—made extraordinary progress. There's nothing beyond our capacity when we work together.

So today's about coming together, giving thanks to this country we call home.

And thanks to all the firefighters, police officers, first responders, and our troops, some of whom are stationed abroad.

I've never been more optimistic, Al. So I—and we're delighted to be with you——

Mr. Roker. And we're——

The President. ——even though it's by telephone.

Mr. Roker. Well, we're thrilled to have you.

The First Lady. And I think, Al——

Mr. Roker. Go ahead.

The First Lady. Thank you. And I think it's important that we all commit to an act of kindness today. So call someone and wish them a happy Thanksgiving, or do something kind.

Mr. Roker. Yes. Mr. President and First Lady, we're at a time right now where there are a lot of divisions. A lot of folks—you know, a lot is going on right now. What's the message on this Thanksgiving Day?

The President. On this Thanksgiving Day, Al, we have to come together. You know, we have—we can have different political views, but there's—we have one view. The one view is, we are the finest, greatest nation in the world.

We should focus on that. And we should focus on dealing with our problems and being together, not—and stop the—stop the rancor. You know, we have to bring the Nation together. And we have to treat each other with a little bit of decency.

And so—and I think that's who the vast majority of the American people are.

Mr. Roker. Thank you, and happy Thanksgiving to both of you. I hope you enjoy your time with your family, as we will with all of ours. Thank you so much, Dr. Jill Biden and the President of the United States, Joe Biden. Thank you so much for joining us. We appreciate it.

And now, giving us an——

The First Lady. Thank you. Thanks, Al.

Mr. Roker. Thank you, thank you.

And giving us——

The First Lady. God bless our troops.

Mr. Roker. Absolutely. Well said.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 9:15 a.m. from the vacation residence of David M. Rubinstein in Nantucket, MA. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 24.

Categories: Interviews With the News Media : NBC's Al Roker during Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City, telephone conversation from Nantucket, MA.

Locations: Nantucket, MA.

Names: Biden, Jill T.; Roker, Al.

Subjects: First responders, service and dedication; News media, Presidential interviews; Thanksgiving; U.S. servicemembers, service and dedication.

DCPD Number: DCPD202301049.