

*Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2024*

**Remarks in an Exchange With Reporters in Nantucket, Massachusetts**  
*November 28, 2024*

*The President.* All right.

*Q.* Mr. President, have you spoken——

*Thanksgiving*

*Q.* What are you thankful for? What are you thankful for this year?

*The President.* I'm thankful for my family. I'm thankful for a peaceful transition of the Presidency. And I'm thankful for the fact that, I think, with the grace of God and the good will of the neighbors and a little bit of luck, we're going to get some more progress in the Middle East. And I'm really thankful for being able to get the first piece done on Lebanon. There's a lot to be thankful for.

I mean, look, we're the United States of America. I know I've said this a thousand times—some of you have heard me say it more than once—but I really believe there's nothing beyond our capacity—nothing beyond our capacity—when we work together. So that's the hope: We're going to be able to do that.

So that's what I'm thankful for.

*U.S. Citizens Released From Chinese Custody*

*Q.* Mr. President, have you spoken with the three formerly detained Americans who have returned from China?

*The President.* Yes, I have. I spoke with all three of them. You know, one was there only 3 years, but he was for a life sentence. Other one was there for—I think it was a total of 20-some years. Anyway, they're long, long stays. And I'm really happy they're home.

I got to talk to them all when they landed in Alaska. They're reunited with their families. And it's—I was very happy to be able to get it done.

*President-elect Donald J. Trump/Mexico/Canada*

*Q.* [Inaudible]—tariffs with Canada and Mexico that the President-elect is talking about?

*The President.* I hope he rethinks it. I think it's a counterproductive thing to do.

You know, look, one of the things you've heard me say before that we—we're—we have an unusual situation in America. We're surrounded by the Pacific Ocean, the Atlantic Ocean, and two allies: Mexico and Canada. And the last thing we need to do is begin to screw up those relationships. I think we've got them in a good place.

I think the—and by the way, you know, the cooperation with the outgoing President and incoming President, the illegal crossings are down considerably to what they were back in—when he was in office.

There's a lot more to do. But I—just think—I hope they reconsider.

[At this point, several reporters began speaking at once.]

*China-U.S. Relations/U.S. Diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific*

*Q.* President-elect Trump proposed tariffs on China as well. Are you worried about that as well or that relationship?

*The President.* Well, look, I we have reached a relationship where there's a status quo ante with regard to China. China has—is—we've set up a hotline between President Xi and myself, as well as through our military, a direct line.

The one thing I'm confident about Xi is, he doesn't want to make a mistake. And I mean that sincerely. And I'm not saying that he is our best buddy, but he understands what's at stake.

And that's why I've spent so much time, as you know, getting the situation in the South Pacific, as well as in the Indian Ocean, in the—in train. So a combination of Japan, Australia, India. I mean, things are moving in the right direction, with the grace of God and the good will of the neighbors.

One last question.

*National Economy/Public Opinion/News Media/Presidential Transition Process*

*Q.* Mr. President, there are many Americans who are worried about the future this holiday season. What is your message to them?

*The President.* My message is to just remember who we are.

Look, you all have a very tough job—and I'm not being solicitous—a really tough job. Think about it. If we—I remember a couple weeks ago, the survey done: How do people feel about where they are? Was it 62 percent and—35 percent thought they were doing pretty well. What do they think about the direction of the country? Thirty-five percent—only 35 percent or so thought it was moving in the right direction.

I think there's an explanation for that. If you think about it, what do you—I'm—it's not a criticism of the press—and I mean this; you know me too well—[laughter]—is that you turn on the television and you don't see a lot of good news. Even the stuff that is good news doesn't seem to sell very well. And so, when you turn on the TV, everything looks bad. Everything looks bad.

And now you have—I forget what the number is, but an exceedingly small number of people watching mainstream television and reading the newspapers. I forget the number, but you know better than I would. And they're way down.

So where do you get your news? And what—and how do you know what you're getting is not just what you're looking for as opposed to what's happening? Not because of you. Not—I'm not being critical of the press.

I've talked to too many of you privately. You've been around a long time, and you've got a hell of a job.

I mean, you know—anyway, I don't think—I want to make sure this transition goes smoothly. I want to make sure it goes smoothly. And all the talk about what he's going to do or not do, I think there may be a little bit of internal reckoning on his—in his party, what he is going to do or not do.

So it remains to be seen. And the Congress is—so razor thin across the board, it's going to be a—I think it's going to require what usually happens in these cases: some real compromise. But we'll see. We'll see.

And, on Thanksgiving, I'm hopeful.

Thank you so much.

*Q.* Happy Thanksgiving, Mr. President.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:10 a.m. at the Nantucket Fire Station. In his remarks, he referred to Durant, OK, resident John Shing-Wan Leung, who was detained in China in 2021 on espionage charges; Houston, TX, resident Mark Swidan, who was detained in China in 2012 on drug trafficking charges; Huntington, NY, resident Kai Li, who was detained in China in 2016 on espionage charges; and former President Andrés Manuel López Obrador and President Claudia Sheinbaum Pardo of Mexico. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 29.

*Categories:* Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, Nantucket, MA.

*Locations:* Nantucket, MA.

*Names:* Leung, John Shing-Wan; Li, Kai; López Obrador, Andrés Manuel ; Sheinbaum Pardo, Claudia; Swidan, Mark; Trump, Donald J.; Xi Jinping.

*Subjects:* Canada, relations with U.S.; China, President; China, relations with U.S.; China, release of detained U.S. citizens; Illegal immigration; Indo-Pacific, economic and security cooperation; Israel, military operations in Lebanon; Lebanon, Israeli military operations; Massachusetts, President's visit; Mexico, immigration enforcement, cooperation with U.S.; Mexico, President; Mexico, relations with U.S.; News media, Presidential interviews; Presidency, U.S., transition process between administrations.

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