

Remarks at the National Prayer Breakfast

February 6, 2025

The President. Thank you. Well, thank you very much. That's a big group of people. That's a nice group. Well, we want to bring religion back stronger, bigger, better than ever before—very important—and this is a good start. This is really good.

We have to have religion, and it suffered greatly over the last few years, but it's coming back. It's coming back strong.

And I want to thank you, Pastor Paula, who I have known for a long time. She's a fantastic person.

And thanks to the thousands of believers here today from all across the country and from all around the world.

This is a beautiful tradition. They told me I could do it via Skype. *[Laughter]* And I said, "What are we doing?" And they said, "The Prayer Breakfast." I said, "I've been there every year. I'm not doing it via Skype." Right? Via Skype? I'm going to be there. It's not that far. You know, it's like about—about two minutes down the road. *[Laughter]* In fact, it was easier to do this than put up a Skype deal. *[Laughter]* Just—just destroy the White House putting up all that stuff.

But no, I want to be here with you, and I have been here with you. Thank you.

And I do that despite the fact that they say I can't run again. That's the expression. "Sir"—then somebody said, "I don't think you can." "Ohh." *[Laughter]* No, I want to be with you regardless.

And it's an honor. And it's something, you know, I've enjoyed. I've actually met some very nice Democrats here. *[Laughter]* It's true. I have.

But this is a beautiful tradition that started with President Eisenhower in 1953, and I wouldn't miss it for the world after four y- —long years—really, they were very long, dark years—in my opinion. It's great to be back at the Prayer Breakfast.

And I hope you all agree it's nice to once again have a President that shows up to the prayer breakfast and that agrees to be interviewed for the Super Bowl. I'm doing that too. *[Laughter]* They haven't done it in so long, they didn't even—they forgot about it. They said, "Ohh"—but they hadn't done it in years.

But I said—yes, this morning, they wanted to know. And I said: "Yes, why not? What the hell." You know? You know the way I look at it? They ask you a question, and you give them an answer. It's not that hard. *[Laughter]* But they didn't show up for years, so they were almost shocked when I said: "Yes, I'll do it. Why not?"

But I want to thank our great, newly confirmed Secretary of the Interior, Doug Burgum, who's fantastic, by the way, for being here this morning. I don't know if—is he around? Where is he? Where is he?

Participant. He's right there, sir. Right in the—right there. Right there. It's hard to see him.

The President. With the lights, I can't—there you are. You are a handsome devil. *[Laughter]* He's a good—good-looking guy. He's got an even better looking wife, I can tell you that. *[Laughter]* But I want to thank you and Kathryn for—you've been fantastic. I knew

immediately—you know, he was running in a group of people, and I—I spotted him immediately. I said, "That guy's a winner."

He didn't get the gravitas because to get gravitas you have to be controversial and, in many cases, a horrible human being. You get a lot of gravitas that way, and he's a very good human being and very smart.

But I said, they—he is the—really outstanding, and he's going to do a job with Chris Wright—the two of them, it's like a partnership with Interior and Energy.

He's going to have more liquid gold coming out of the ground than anybody has ever seen before. We're going to drive the price down, and everything else is going to follow. So he's one of the really important people.

He's a very, very, very great gentleman; was a fantastic Governor, by the way; and really did do—and for—sort of learned the oil business as a Governor, because he made his money—made a lot of money, which I like. I like people that make money, because that means they can help us.

And they always like me to put in, really, people that have failed. They want—"Please, sir. He's made too much money, and he's become too successful." They want me to hire people that have totally failed to run Department of Energy. *[Laughter]* Somebody that lost all his life. I don't want to do—I just don't want to do it. I know it sounds nice, but I want to get somebody that was so successful, because we got to bring the country back.

And him and Chris are going to be unbelievable. I really believe it, but I want to—so I want to thank you very much, Doug, for what you've gone through. He's gone through a lot too.

But he was easily approved, because he's an honest person. He gave a statement. They read it. They said, "Thank you."

But as well as our cochairs, Representatives Ben Cline and Jonathan Jackson, thank you very much. Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you, fellas. Great.

Congressman Eric Burlison and visiting dignitaries from more than 120 countries.

From the very beginning of our republic, America has always been a nation founded by people of faith and strengthened by the power of prayer and united by four simple but very beautiful words: In God we trust.

And you all know there was a movement to get that out. I said: "No, I—don't bring it up. Don't bring it up. I don't want to hear it."

There was a movement, "We don't want that because we shouldn't be mentioning God." Can—you know, there was a very strong movement. Just like they don't want to say "Merry Christmas," but now they say it. Remember? In 2016, that was a whole big part of my campaign. You're going to say, "Merry Christmas." Well, now they do it again.

But we—I don't know if you've been watching, but we got rid of woke over the last 2 weeks. Woke is gone-zo, despite the other side stealing hundreds of millions of dollars to promote woke.

Did you see what happened yesterday, where they found hundreds of millions of dollars of money was fraudulently given to newspapers and, I guess, Politico? I don't know, they're here. Good. I hope you're enjoying your breakfast. *[Laughter]*

No, they gave money to—to all this—out of USAID, right? USAID. It came out. Hundreds of—just tremendous amounts of money—had nothing to do with anything. This is a terrible thing that was experienced, but we're catching them left and right. We're catching them. We're catching them to a point where they don't know what the heck is going on. They can't believe they're getting caught.

And I have great respect for the people that are doing it. Elon Musk is helping us on it, and he's pretty good. He's pretty good. He's pretty good at it, but the—the numbers are astounding. They're astounding.

Even Doug was shaken up by what he—do you believe that, Doug, what you've been reading? It just—it just—very dishonest stuff.

But it was faith that led the pilgrims to cross an ocean and settle this majestic continent, and we're going to keep it majestic. It was belief in our Creator that moved the patriot farmers to stand strong for liberties at Concord Bridge, 250 years ago this April.

And we're going to have a big—a big party next year, and we have the Olympics coming in and we have the World Cup coming in and we have the 250th-year celebration—all three. And you know, when I was President, I got the Olympics and I got the World Cup. Two hundred and fifty years—I had nothing to do with. Just happened to be. *[Laughter]* But it all came due.

The presidency—after what was—what should have been mine—it really should have been. And they had a little election that, let's just say, didn't work out too correctly. Lot of things have been found out about that.

But—so I got forced to run again, and I ran again. And now I have the Olympics, I have the World Cup, and I have 250. *[Laughter]* So I said, "This is interesting." You know?

When I got them, I said: "You know, the only bad thing about the Olympics is, I won't be president. The only bad thing about getting the World Cup"—I worked hard to get the World Cup, because everybody wants it. Everybody wants the Olympics.

But the only bad thing was—I said, "You know, I won't be President, and I might not—you know, when you're not President, you might not even be invited." I said, "Isn't it sad?" Then all of a sudden, I run, and I win. And then somebody says, "Sir, you're going to have to start thinking about the Olympics." I said: "You know, you're right. I never thought about that during the campaign. I'm going to be here for the Olympics and the World Cup." How about that? God works in very strange ways. *[Laughter]*

But we had a great election. We won by a massive majority. Won all seven swing States. We won the popular vote by millions and millions of people. We have a mandate and, some say, the most consequential election in 129 years. And that's good because I'm a believer, like you're a believer, and we want to have a believer in this position.

And it was confidence in America's God-given destiny that pushed the pioneers to journey west and led Americans to end slavery, crush fascism, defeat communism, and conquer every single challenge that we faced. And they were very great challenges. Now, it's—at the same time, we have to remember unyielding faith in America's mission that inspires us to make our country great again, and soon it will be greater than ever.

We're doing really well. We're doing really well. It's—I think, in 2 weeks, they're saying—I'm reading it, so I'm not even saying it, but I feel it—that we've done more than just about any President ever. The first two weeks have been probably, they say, the most successful 2 weeks in the history of any Presidency. Now all we have to do is keep it going for another couple of hundred weeks, but it's been very successful.

And if this guy gets a lot of oil out of the ground to bring down everybody's prices, it'll even be better. So, Doug, you shouldn't even be here right now. You should be—get out of here, Doug. *[Laughter]* Start looking for oil.

After years of decline, Americans are reasserting our true identity as a people ordained by God to be the freest and most exceptional nation ever to exist on the face of the Earth.

But we weren't that for 4 years. I don't believe we were. And we're getting there very soon. Very quickly, I'll be able to say it, and we'll be able to say it again.

As I said in my Inaugural Address 2 weeks ago, a light is now shining over the world—the entire world—and I'm hearing it from other leaders. I'm hearing it from leaders that have traditionally not been on our side, that there's so much more—there's such a good feeling in the air, so different than it was just a short time ago.

Because here in America, we are, once again, a nation that believes in ourselves. We believe in our destiny and trust in the providence of Almighty God. And I can tell you, the opposite side, the opposing side—and they oppose religion, they oppose God—they've lost their confidence. They've lost their confidence. That's a different group of people than I remember.

Over the past 2 weeks, our strength has been restored, our spirit has been revived, and a new national momentum has been sweeping across our land. The golden age of America has officially begun.

And I will tell you—I just read it this morning—a statistic just came out that in the last 15 years, we just broke the record: Army recruitment. And they think it's going to be 25 years, but right now it's 15—more than 15. Army recruitment has gone up. You've probably been reading that it's been way down in the dumps. And recruitment is the highest it's been in more than 15 years, and that's going to get higher. And it could be 25 years, but that's going to get higher and higher. And that's a tremendous thing. That's a tremendous thing.

And a poll came out that the spirit of the country is up 49 percent. Where did you hear that? That's a record. That's never gone up by—that's gone up over—just since the election, since November 5. What a great day. Was that a great day? Wasn't that great? Because we're going to make our country great again.

After years of stagnation, our economy is roaring back to life, optimism is soaring, hope is returning, and we have brought back the words "common sense" to our Government.

We are—we had a big day yesterday—you saw that—having to do with men in women's sports. No longer. It's over.

But we're going to be securing our borders, defending our freedoms, and restoring the principle of meritocracy—merit. We're a merit-based country again, and we have a Supreme Court ruling to that effect. Nobody thought that was going to happen. That was a great ruling. It didn't get the kind of notoriety that other things get, but, in its own way, it was just about as important as anything. It gave us the right to go back to a merit-based—we're a merit-based country now. It's based on competence, intelligence, and based on ability and all of the things that really can make a country great.

Around the world, America is being respected again, and you are already witnessing a very—some very incredible results. Just days before taking office, my team negotiated a breakthrough cease-fire agreement to stop the bloodshed and killing in the Middle East and return the hostages held captive by Hamas back home to their loved ones.

And as the Bible says, "Blessed are the peacemakers." And in that end, I hope my greatest legacy, when it's all finished, will be known as a peacemaker and a unifier. I hope that's going to be true.

You know, when I left, we had no wars, we had no problems, we had no inflation, we had no—we—all we had was we were going to go just up. And I came back—we have Russia-Ukraine. We have the Middle East has exploded. All of these things would have never happened. We have inflation that was the worst in the history of our country.

But we're joined today by several brave families whose loved ones were taken hostage during the October 7 horrible attack 16 months ago. And I know I speak for everyone here today when I say that we are keeping you in our hearts and our prayers. And please stand up. If you are one of the people who have been so gravely affected, please stand. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you very much.

Well, they're coming in. More are coming in today. They're coming in. It's a very traumatic situation, very tough, as the people know that are here with us. But they're coming in. And I made a statement—I meant it totally—that if they're not home by the time I get into office, all hell will break loose in the Middle East, and I think they respected that statement. So we'll see. But we have more hostages to come, and we hope they live up to their word.

And I have to say, who knows if that's going to happen. But one way or another, it's going to work out. It's going to all work out.

As president, I will not rest until every remaining hostage has been returned to their families. So thank you all for being here. Appreciate it.

Also with us is an incredible survivor of October 7. What a horrible day that was. That would have never happened. Iran was broke. They had no money to pay to Hamas or Hizballah. They were stone-cold broke.

And when I left, they started selling their oil again. They took the sanctions off. They did everything wrong. I mean, I'd like to say the opposite of that. I would. I would much prefer saying the opposite, but they did everything wrong.

That includes with Russia and Ukraine. That should have never happened also. All those millions of kids. You know, their soldiers are just being decimated—the two countries—probably 800,000 Russians; 600-, 700,000 Ukrainians—young people just laying on a battlefield, dead. It's—it's a horrible situation going on over there.

We're working very hard and, I think, making progress to stop it.

Also with us is an incredible survivor of October 7 who was held captive by Hamas for more than eight months. Noa Argamani was—the music festival—she was at the music festival and attacked on that terrible day. Where—where are you? Where are you? Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you very much. That's great that you're here.

I watched you on television. You—I don't know what you're doing, but you look like a much younger person. *[Laughter]* I don't know what the secret is. Please give it to all of us. *[Laughter]*

For 245 harrowing days, Noa showed unwavering strength and courage and faith as she endured the unendurable, really—what—what she went through. But, by the grace of God, she was rescued by the Israeli Defense Forces, and now she's come back to pray with us this morning. And it's such an honor to have you, and you're really an inspiration, Noa, to all of us. Thank you very much. Thank you—*[inaudible]*.

The innocent civilians attacked on October 7 were targeted for one reason: because they were Jews. They were murdered and kidnapped because of their faith. And these events remind us of how blessed we are to live in a nation that has thrived for two and a half centuries as a haven of religious freedom.

Although, I will tell you, the last 4 years have been very difficult. It's—it would have been a very difficult thing for me to have made that statement if this speech was taking place 2 years ago.

My administration is absolutely committed to defending this proud heritage, and I will always protect religious liberty. And that is why today I'm honor—and really honoring a lot of

people, but I'm announcing that I will be creating a brandnew Presidential Commission on religious liberty—it's going to be a very big deal—which will work tirelessly to uphold this most fundamental right.

Unfortunately, in recent years, we've seen this sacred liberty threatened like never before in American history. There's nothing happened like the last four years, what's happened with—so many things have gone bad. But religion, what they've done and the persecution that they've—they've executed have been just horrible.

For example, most of us would not have believed it possible that a grandmother with a severe medical condition—a quite elderly woman—would be put in jail for praying here in America. She was put in jail because she was praying. But we're joined today by a woman who was.

Seventy-five years old, Paulette Harlow was sentenced to 2 years in prison for peacefully praying outside of a clinic, charged under an obscure law that hadn't been used in years—selectively weaponized against Christians by the previous administration.

I never understood how—we won with evangelicals. We won with Christians by a lot. But even that little bit that they got, I said: "Who are the people that voted for them? Who would vote for them?" They were terrible. They were terrible to you, and they were terrible to people of religion—all religions. At her sentencing, the judge mocked Paulette's Christian faith.

Exactly two weeks ago, it was my honor to grant Paulette and other persecuted Christians—about 23 of them—a full and unconditional pardon.

We got them out of there. We got them out. They're so clean now. You know those pardons? You're so clean. There is nobody so clean as Paulette in this whole room. *[Laughter]* She was just—oh, she got a little lucky, didn't she? Yes, she got lucky that I won that election. *[Laughter]* But she was going to be in there for a long time. Right, Paulette?

But what happened to you must never, ever happen again in America. So, I want to thank you very much for being here, Paulette. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you very much. Enjoy your life. *[Laughter]*

To confront such weaponization and religious persecution, today, I'm signing an Executive order to make our Attorney General—who's a great person, a great—she's going to be a great Attorney General, Pam Bondi—the head of a Task Force, brandnew, to eradicate anti-Christian bias. About time, right? Anti-Christian bias.

You never heard of that one before, right? But there's—it's about time. Isn't it, though, really? So many—so many times you hear, but you don't hear the anti-Christian bias.

The mission of this Task Force will be to immediately halt all forms of anti-Christian targeting and discrimination within the Federal Government, including at the DOJ, which was absolutely terrible; the IRS; the FBI—terrible; other agencies.

In addition, the Task Force will work to fully prosecute anti-Christian violence and vandalism in our society and to move heaven and earth to defend the rights of Christians and religious believers nationwide. You've never had that before, but this is a very powerful document I'm signing. You've got it—you've got it now. First time you've had it.

If we don't have religious liberty, then we don't have a free country. We probably don't even have a country.

This week, I'm also creating the White House Faith Office, led by Pastor Paula White, who is so amazing.

That man is happy. Look at—stand up. Let me see. Why are you so happy? You love Paula, right? *[Laughter]*

Audience member. I come from Lebanon. I'm—*[inaudible]*.

The President. Oh, Lebanon, tough. Yes. So you know what we're talking about better than anybody.

Audience member. I definitely know. *[Inaudible]*

The President. Yeah. You're going to have a great new Ambassador to Lebanon.

Audience member. We count on you to build from—*[inaudible]*.

The President. Yes. Thank you very much. Thank you. It's tough. Yes. You're going to have a great new Ambassador. We just put him in.

While I'm in the White House, we will protect Christians in our schools, in our military, in our government, in our workplaces, hospitals, and in our public squares, and we will bring our country back together as one Nation under God with liberty and justice for all.

Throughout history, those who have sought control and domination over others have always tried to cut the people off from the connection to their Creator. At the same time, every nation with big dreams and great ambition has recognized that there is no recourse more precious than the faith in the hearts of our people.

It's the thing that makes our Nation great. It makes other nations great. When you don't have it, you don't see great nations. Without God, we are isolated and alone. But with God, the Scripture tells us all things are possible.

Well, look at me. I'm standing before you today. I shouldn't be here. I shouldn't be here. A lot of people said I shouldn't have been here. A beautiful day in Pennsylvania. It's a shot that should not have been missed—missed. Well, it got me a little bit. *[Laughter]* It got me a little bit but pretty amazing.

My son, who's great shooter, Don—both of them, Eric—they said it's like sinking a 1-foot putt from where that shooter was with that particular weapon. And I just happened to turn at the right instant, a fraction of a second. If I was late or early, it would have been over, and you would have somebody else speaking today.

But I got very lucky. It was—a chart on immigration came down, and I looked to my right. Quickly, I looked to my right. I said, "Drop that chart." Boom. And I said, "Man, what was that?" So if I—if I didn't make that turn—so it's—

And you know, my son, Don, said, "Dad, I'll tell you, you got saved by God." This is—you know, I shouldn't say this, but that was a big statement for him to make. He was moved. Eric, likewise, because it's—you know, you could say it's a miracle, or you could say something, but it was really—it was God that saved me. Thank you.

But even in the dark—thank you. Thank you. Thank you very much. That's very nice.

Even in the darkest moments, hope is never lost. And two weeks ago, I went to a small town in North Carolina. What a great place North Carolina is. We love North Carolina. We won that thing three times. We won the primaries, we won the elections, we won it in—and my daughter-in-law Lara is so incredible. She comes from North Carolina. She did such a great job. They love her in the State.

But we've had great luck there, and I reciprocate. And it had been virtually destroyed, the—the whole state, this Hurricane Helene. It was a heavy-water hurricane, the water like nobody's

ever seen. Lakes were built in areas that were always dry, and the people had lost everything they owned, the—numerous people, many people dead.

FEMA under Biden was a disaster. They didn't—they were almost not even—they essentially weren't even there. They'd been abandoned by their Government.

And seeing their friends and neighbors swept away and die—saw many of them. One of those I met was a pastor named Ramona Nix. Really good woman. Her congregation is small, but they had just purchased a brandnew church, beautiful church. She said people asked her, "What are you going to do with this big building?" It was such a good, beautiful situation to be in, and then came the hurricane. And she looked at them, she said, "Only God knows."

Just one week after dedicating that church, the storm hit their little town, and the pastor's church became a lifeboat for a community that was just displaced. The church stood—it withstood the storm, one of the few buildings that did. Before the end of the week, the sanctuary was so packed with supplies that it was hard to walk. Everybody from all over the country was sending her supplies—food, everything, toys, everything.

And in the midst of so much hardship, the pastor's message was not one of sorrow but of joy. God is good. And she said it very strong. And she said: "Sir, God is good. He is very good."

It's been just 17 days since I took the oath of office. Wow, 17 days. It's—time still flies. It's 17 days that's gone. I've been so busy that—[laughter]—that it's hard to believe. But we've done a lot in 17 days, haven't we? And in those 17 days, we've accomplished, really, what some people haven't accomplished in 8 years, from the flood-ravaged valleys of North Carolina to the flame-scorched bluffs of California.

I went there. What a shame that is. I've never seen anything like it. As far as the eye could see, just devastation of rich neighborhoods—very rich neighborhood. Some of the richest people in the country lost their houses. Rich, middle income, I wouldn't say poor people. Pretty—this was a rough—this was a rough period of weeks.

You know, I opened the floodgates a few days ago, let the water come down because the environmentalists didn't want water. They still don't want it. If they had their choice, they don't want it. I said, "Are you crazy?" [Laughter] And I opened—you—I'm sure you've seen it. The water comes down from the northwest parts of Canada, I guess, and—but the Pacific Northwest, and it comes down by millions and millions of barrels a day. And I opened it up. It wasn't that easy to do, but I opened it up, and it's pouring down, and it's a beautiful thing, and it should have happened.

I told them to do it in my last term. They didn't do it, but now we just did it. They didn't want to do it, but we did it.

But from the gang-ridden streets of our inner cities to the war-torn lands of the Middle East, we're working urgently to restore hope and prosperity, safety and peace all over. Every single day of this administration, we'll act with purpose and historic speed, because, like that pastor in North Carolina, we know that God is good, our future is bright, and America's glorious destiny is just within our reach.

And so, together, we will make America stronger and prouder, safer, freer, greater, and more faithful to our God than ever before.

And I just want to thank you. You're very, very special people. You're great people. It's an honor to be with you, and I will see you again next year.

Okay. Thank you very much. God bless you all, and God bless America. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 a.m. at the Washington Hilton hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Paula White-Cain, president, Paula White Ministries in Apopka, FL; White House Senior Adviser Elon R. Musk; Kingston, MA, resident Paulette Harlow; Colleen Kollar-Kotelly, judge, U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia; Michel Issa, the President's nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon; and Ramona Nix, pastor, Eagle Rock Church in Swannanoa, NC. He also referred to Executive Order 14202.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : National Prayer Breakfast.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Argamani, Noa; Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Bondi, Pamela J.; Burgum, Douglas J.; Burgum, Kathryn; Burlison, Eric; Cline, Benjamin L.; Harlow, Paulette; Issa, Michael; Jackson, Jonathan; Kollar-Kotelly, Colleen; Musk, Elon R.; Nix, Ramona; Trump, Donald J., Jr.; Trump, Eric F.; Trump, Lara J.; White-Cain, Paula; Wright, Christopher A.

Subjects: 2024 Presidential election; Attorney General; Border security; California, wildfires in Los Angeles area; Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); Federal Government recruitment and retention practices, improvement efforts; Gaza, conflict with Israel; Gaza, hostages held by Hamas; Hamas political-paramilitary organization; International Development, U.S. Agency for; Israel, attacks by Hamas of October 7, 2023; Israel, military operations in Gaza; Lebanon, Hizballah political-paramilitary organization; National Prayer Breakfast; North Carolina, Hurricane Helene damage and recover efforts; Oil and natural gas, domestic production; Pardons and commutations; Pennsylvania, attempted assassination of former President Donald J. Trump; Religious freedom; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Secretary of Energy; Secretary of the Interior; Sports, efforts to restrict transgender participation; Task Force to Eradicate Anti-Christian Bias; U.S. servicemembers, service and dedication; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Water management policy, improvement efforts; White House Faith Office; White House Senior Adviser.

DCPD Number: DCPD202500231.