

Remarks to the White House Religious Liberty Commission
September 8, 2025

The President. Well, thank you very much. Thank you very much.

I said we'll have to cut Lee Greenwood a little bit short. *[Laughter]* How good is he? Right? He's been with us right from the beginning. And I wanted to stand and listen to the entire song, but people would have said, "Look at the ego of that guy." *[Laughter]* "He just wouldn't stop. He just stood there and listened to the applause."

But I appreciate it very much.

And I want to thank you for doing an incredible job. Pam Bondi, the Attorney General, has been unbelievable. Incredible job. Thank you, Pam. *[Inaudible]*

And thank you to all of the faith leaders, pastors, and patriots who have come to the Museum of the Bible for this historic meeting of the Presidential Commission on Religious Liberty.

These are incredible people, and everybody wanted to be on this Commission, and I made a couple of people unhappy, maybe even enemies for life, I don't know. *[Laughter]* But they all wanted to be on the Commission, but we picked the right ones, and they've done a really—a profound—an amazing job.

But America was founded on faith, as we know, and I've been saying it for a long time. And when faith gets weaker, our country seems to get weaker. When faith gets stronger, as it is right now, we're having a very good period of time.

After some rough years, good things happen for our country. It's amazing the way it seems to work that way. And under the Trump administration, we're defending our rights and restoring our identity as a nation under God. We are one nation under God, and we always will be.

The need for this Commission has never been more clear than it was last week when the ineffectual Senator from Virginia, a man named Tim Kaine—*[laughter]*—stated that the notion our rights come from our Creator is, quote, "extremely troubling" to him. *[Laughter]* Very troubling. Isn't it troubling? Isn't it terrible, though? *[Laughter]* How he would say something like that and advocated really by a totalitarian regime—this is what they say.

But as everyone in this room understands, it is tyrants who are denying our rights and the rights that come from God, and it's this Declaration of Independence that proclaims we're endowed by our Creator with the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

The Senator from Virginia should be ashamed of himself for many things. For many—*[laughter]*—for many things. For things even beyond that. But in its own way, nothing is more important than those words—those terrible words.

As President, I will always defend our Nation's glorious heritage, and we will protect the Judeo-Christian principles of our founding, and we will protect them with vigor. We have to bring back religion in America, bring it back stronger than ever before, as our country grows stronger and stronger.

Our country is now the hottest nation anywhere in the world. One year ago, our country was dead. And I say it, "One year ago, our country was dead." We had leaders from all over the world that talk to me. They say, "Your country is in trouble."

And I just left the Middle East—King of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, U.A.E., a lot of the big countries—and I was with the heads of NATO—the NATO nations: All of them—everyone said essentially the same thing, that "A year ago, your country was dead, and now you have the hottest country anywhere in the world." It's true. It's true in every way.

But to have a great nation, you have to have religion. I believe that so strongly. There has to be something after we go through all of this, and that something is God. We go through all of this for a reason. It's not easy, believe me. *[Laughter]*

But I want to thank the Commission's Chairman, Texas Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick. He's been the chairman of my Texas campaign from day one. All right, Dan. He's been the chairman of my Texas campaign. And we went through six primaries, and we went through everything that we went through, and we won them all.

Lieutenant Governor Patrick of Texas. Yes, sir.

The President. We won everything, including three elections. Got the most votes in the history of Texas three times. Can you believe that? That's pretty good. I heard that the other day. I said, "I like that." But I want to thank you, Dan. You've done a great job and very instrumental in the creation of what we're doing——

Lt. Gov. Patrick. Thank you.

The President. ——today.

As well as a very special friend of mine, Dr. Ben Carson. So special that he's being honored. He's being honored in a couple of weeks.

And I was absolutely not here—it was a very important mission, for the country an—because I usually take missions only for the country. But this was for the country, and I said: "I can't do that one. I'm going to go back. I'm going to be with Ben Carson at Mount Vernon"—I believe it's going to be. Pretty good place, pretty good location. Right, Ben?

But he's been my friend from the beginning—right from the beginning. Should I tell him the story about what you said to me, Ben? The famous words. *[Laughter]*

He was a very tough opponent. We were fighting it out, and we had actually 18 candidates, including me. And Ben came up to me right after the first debate. He said, "You know you're going to win, don't you?" And I said: "No, I don't know that. Think I'm going to win, but I don't know it." Eighteen people, and I had never done it before. They had all done it. They were all Governors and Senators. Talented people. He said, "No, you're going to win it, because God wants you to win it." Right? Right?

But that didn't stop him. *[Laughter]* We went through—I said, "When is this guy going to quit, you know?" He gave me these words of beauty, then he goes for weeks and weeks. *[Laughter]* He was tough. He was—no, he was a tough one.

But, we love Ben. Ben is special, and we appreciate it. Thank you, Ben.

Thanks also to the Commission members, including Secretary Scott Turner. Pastor Paula White, who has been with me from the very beginning, right? Great. Pastor Franklin Graham, a great, great gentleman. Great gentleman. Thank you, Franklin.

A man I've watched for years on television, but you're not supposed to admit it. You know, it's like with me—*[laughter]*—people don't like to admit it, but we all watch Phil McGraw. Dr Phil. Dr Phil. Thank you, Phil. Great guy.

He came out early for me. He did a piece on me before the election that was different than any interview I've ever done. He asked me the most personal questions. I said, "This guy is really

getting personal." [Laughter] But everybody that saw it loved it. So thank you. [Laughter] Thank you very much.

Cardinal Timothy Dolan, highly respected man. Great. You come from New York. He was in his own right, the king. He was great. And we worked together in the first administration so much on going through that horrible epidemic that we went through—couple of epidemics we had to go through, a couple of really bad ones. But we worked together, and I helped financially with your church and your schools—keeping your schools going, and it was an honor to do so.

Bishop Robert Barron. Bishop, thank you very much. Appreciate it. Great job you've done.

A man I watch on television a lot. He doesn't believe it, and I do. Eric Metaxas. Where is Eric? Eric? I do watch. He said, "You really don't." I said, "I really do." I say: "You have to have more confidence in this. Your show is excellent." [Laughter] And he's a great guy.

And he wants me to call it the "Super Centennial." He said, "Super Centennial." [Laughter] And I think we're—we're going to do that. Let's change it. I really like that idea, because we call it the 250 Centennial, but it's really not. It's really just below the tri, right? So we're going to call it Super Centennial then. Okay? Let's do that. Will you please make the changes? All of my people that are all over the room, please make that change. [Laughter]

A wonderful person who I've known for a long time, Kelly Shackelford. Kelly, thank you. Thank you very much. Great job. Ryan Anderson. Ryan, thank you. Congratulations. Carrie Boller and Allyson Ho. Carrie. Two great people.

And we're also joined by the chairman of the Faith and Freedom Coalition, Ralph Reed. Where's Ralph? Ralph, you helped so much. You know, Ralph, I think, hit more doorbells than anybody else I know. [Laughter] Millions and millions. What was the number, Ralph?

Faith and Freedom Coalition Chairman Ralph Reed. Ten million.

The President. Ten million. And—and it's true. [Laughter] You know, somebody else would say, "Ralph, was it really?" And it was. People were saying he was all over the place. Thank you very much, Ralph. I appreciate it. We'll never forget it. Thank you.

Let me also thank everyone at the Museum of the Bible, including Steve and Jackie Green. The job they've done is just incredible. It's—I want to say their entire family is here. I want them to all hear it. But they founded this beautiful museum to honor the most widely read book in history. And the job they've done is amazing.

I ask, "Which museum does the best?" You know, I always like to find that out. And numerous times they're saying "The Museum of the Bible"—that more people come here than anyone else. You probably won't read that in the newspapers or the media. But this is an amazing place, and it does tremendously well. So respected. And they—they built it up, and it was a labor of love. Well, it's nice that he's rich as hell too. [Laughter] It always helps.

Where are you—where are you guys? Where are they? Look at that. They don't even get good location. Okay? [Laughter] See, if I did the Museum of the Bible, it wouldn't be as successful, but I'd be sitting right here. [Laughter] No, I'd be sitting up here. [Laughter]

You've done a great job. Everybody's talking about it.

It's—I got a little involved with museums, you know, because I had a little problem with the Smithsonian. We like—like a little more positivity. It was all about all the bad things in our country. I said, "What about the good things we've done?" So I got a little involved. I got a little involved with that.

And they'll—they're making honestly, they're making changes. You know, they were also told what to do by people that came before me, in all fairness, but they're making changes. Big changes are being made at the Smithsonian.

But I just want to thank the Green family, because what you've done here is incredible. Thank you very much.

For thousands of years, the Bible has shaped civilization, ethics, art, and literature. And it's brought hope, healing, and transformation to untold millions and millions of lives. The Bible is also an important part of the American story.

That's why I'm delighted to announce that, just moments ago, I personally delivered the Trump family Bible given to me by my mother—I remember the time she gave it to me—but it was used in both my Inaugurations and also a display at the museum, and I guess it will now be displayed right in the heart of our Nation's Capital, right here, and that's an honor. That's an honor.

We're here this morning to discuss the grave threats to religious liberty in American schools. And you know what's going on. We all know what's going on. But I will tell you a lot of progress has been made in the last 8 months—tremendous progress, more than I thought we could make—in so many ways, not only that.

The woke agenda is practically gone. It's deep-seated. We have to make sure it's out. It's very bad. It's like a weed. You think you killed it, and then it starts growing again. *[Laughter]* So we have to be careful. But it's very, very different than it was.

You look at West Point, how proud they are of their heritage. They did something this week, which I thought was appropriate. Some of you know what that is.

Does anybody know what that is?

Audience member. Yes.

The President. Yes, I like it. I like it.

Oh, look at who we have over here. We have your associate, Pam, huh? "Leo 2.0." That's nice. Well, we have Leo here. We have—is he doing a good job, Pam?

Attorney General Pamela J. Bondi. He's doing a great job.

The President. That's great. He's at DOJ. He's a great man. He's a great friend of mine.

Senior Counsel to the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Leo Terrell. You're the greatest President of all time.

The President. I'm glad I got to see him. I would have been in big trouble, Pam, if I didn't see him.

But thank you, Leo, very much. I appreciate it.

For most of our country's history, the Bible was found in every classroom in the Nation, yet in many schools today, students are instead indoctrinated with antireligious propaganda, and some are even punished for their religious beliefs and very, very strongly punished. It's ridiculous.

Joining us this morning is Hannah Allen from Honey Grove, Texas. A few years ago, Hannah organized a group of her classmates to pray for an injured peer. The school principal declared that Hannah's generous act of love was prohibited from taking place in front of other students. Didn't like it. The—the principal didn't like it. Can you imagine? But Hannah, very

strongly, stood her ground, and she won. And, Hannah, I just want to thank you for letting the light of your faith shine for all of those to see. We really appreciate it.

And where is Hannah? Is Hannah here someplace? I think so. Hannah, stand up, please. Thank you very much. Thank you very much. Thank you, Hannah.

I know what you went through. I know what you went through. It's great. Appreciate it.

To support students like Hannah, I am pleased to announce this morning that the Department of Education will soon issue new guidance protecting the right to prayer in our public schools. And it's total protection.

Thank you, Hannah. Great job. See what you did, Hannah? Who knew? *[Laughter]* Who knew that was going to happen, right? Thank you, darling.

Also with us is 12-year-old Shea Encinas from California. Last year, in fifth grade, Shea was forced to read a book to a kindergarten student promoting a message of radical gender ideology that is contrary to his religious beliefs and ours. I'd like to have Shea come up and tell the story. It's an amazing story.

Shea, please come up.

[Inaudible] I love your tie. *[Laughter]* I like that tie. That's great. Good tie.

[Secretary of Housing and Urban Development E. Scott Turner adjusted the podium.]

Secretary Turner. There you go, buddy.

Carlsbad, CA, resident Shea Encinas. Thank you again, Mr. President.

Hi, I'm Shea Encinas. I've been a Christian my whole life, and Jesus means everything to me.

When I was in fifth grade, my school forced me to teach my kindergarten buddy about changing his gender using a book called "My Shadow Is Pink." The book said you can choose your gender based on feelings, instead of how God made us. I knew this was not right, but I was afraid of getting in trouble.

After my family spoke up, the school treated us badly, and kids started bullying me and my brother because of our faith, and the school did nothing to stop it. It hurt a lot, but I kept trusting God.

I believe kids like me should be able to live our faith at school without being forced to go against what we believe. I hope no other family has to go through what mine did.

Thank you.

The President. Thank you, Shea. Great job. That was delivered well, wasn't it?

Audience members. Yes.

The President. On day one of my administration, I signed an Executive order to slash Federal funding for any school that pushes transgender insanity on our youth.

We also banned the chemical and surgical mutilation of our children. It's bad. Thank you.

We got men out of women's sports. How tough was that? How crazy?

But could you imagine—seriously, I'm just thinking to myself, transgender for everybody, men playing in women's sports, all of the different things we talk about. It's insane.

And if you were here 15, 20 years ago, and if somebody made a speech about transgender for everyone—I always say transgender—because—for everyone. Transgender. They have some

States that actually can force it upon you without the parents' notification or approval. It's not even believable.

But can you imagine men playing in women's sports? So you're up—15 years ago, I guess—probably 10 years ago, but 15 years ago, and somebody said, "We will not allow men to play in women's sports." People would look at the person and say, "What's he talking—is he crazy?" [Laughter] It happened.

And not only that, the Democrats don't want to give it up. I watched a Congressman fighting like crazy this weekend for men having the right to play in women's sports, and they don't understand. But I don't want to really fight them on that. I let them—I tell all of the Republicans: "Let them go. Let them go." [Laughter] Just—just bring it up about a week before the election—[laughter]—because you don't want to talk them out of it.

They say it's an 80/20 issue. I say it's—I say, Dan, it's a 97-to-3 issue, okay? And transgender is about the same. It's crazy. It's sort of a crazy thing. It's a world gone wrong—just a world gone wrong.

And I made the official policy of the United States Government that there are only two genders—you're going to hate this—male and female. You're going to hate it. And we got rid of a very sinister thing, the Johnson Amendment—so that pastors can speak the truth that's in their hearts.

You know, I'll tell you, I was in a boardroom early on—Paula was there; a couple of people in the room were there—but we had about 50 pastors, some rabbis. We had people from a few different religions. And I was just running. I'd never done it before. So it was very early in the campaign. It was in early 2016, and Trump Tower was 68 stories up in the air—the beautiful boardroom, and places loaded up with these people, and they were all excited.

And then at the end, I said, "I'd love to have your support," and the room went dead silent. Do you remember?

Senior Adviser to the White House Faith Office Paula White-Cain. Yes.

The President. It's like—I said "What happened? I know you like me. What happened?" [Laughter] "Well, we'd like to talk to you about it later." Anyway. I said, "All right, but if we could leave and we'll have another meeting, maybe, but I would love to have your support." And there was, again, no answer. And I said, "Well, we'll figure this out."

And I went to Paula and some of the others after, and I said, "Could I ask you"—I know when I'm doing well, when I'm doing poorly, and I was doing really well, and then when I asked for support, it was like stone-cold silence." They said, "We have something called the Johnson Amendment—that if a pastor, minister, rabbi, or imam, or anybody says anything about politics, you can lose your tax-exempt status." I said, "You've got to be kidding." So that's what happened. And they were petrified of it.

Senior Adviser White-Cain. Yes. Very much.

The President. Remember that? Nobody even wanted to talk about it. They were absolutely—they became a different group of people.

And I pledged to them at the next meeting—we had another meeting a couple of weeks later with a similar group of people, and I pledged to them that, if I win, we're going to get rid of the Johnson Amendment. This was Lyndon Johnson, who had a tremendous fight with a minister from, I believe it was Houston—Houston or Dallas, and they didn't like each other. And Lyndon Johnson was a very powerful President. He had good power, good strength, good—he ended up being very weakened by the position.

But he had tremendous power. He was a big dealmaker, and he got that done, which is pretty amazing that he could get that done. Everybody fought him, but he got it done. He pushed it through—pushed it through Congress, where you lose your tax-exempt status if you even utter a word about politics. And that was amazing when I heard that that—I never heard of that before. And I said, "We're going to get rid of it." And we got rid of it.

You have got—because you're the people we want to hear from. We want to hear from you. I don't want to hear from a lot of people. *[Laughter]* I hear from too many people. You're the people we respect. Franklin is incredible. All of the people that are up here, I want to hear from these people.

And they come from a different place than me. I come from a business place where there's a lot of rough people, bad people, not really religious people. There are some, but you're the people that I want to hear. That's why we go to church on Sundays, or we go to wherever we are to listen to people of faith.

And it was horrible. I said, "You mean"—when I heard that, and I said to the other people, "That means that you should be the most powerful people on Earth, in a sense, and yet you have less power." And I pointed down to Fifth Avenue, which was 68 stories below, and I said, "That means that anybody on Fifth Avenue, in theory, has more power than you do."

And that's not the way it's supposed to be. It's supposed to be the opposite. We have to give you your voices back. And I've given your voices back, and that's one of the reasons that we see upticks now, I think, in religion. So it's very important, right?

Remember that moment when I said, "I'd love to have your support, ladies and gentlemen," and it was like dead silence. I said, "There's something going on," and when we figured it out, we did something about it.

So thank you. Thank you very much to Paula White too. Great job.

But upon taking office, I also ended the weaponization of law enforcement against religious believers and pardoned the pro-life activists thrown in jail by Joe Biden for saying prayers.

And, you know, people don't realize about the Biden administration: It was a very mean administration. He's a mean guy, actually. Not a smart guy. Never was. But he was a mean guy. *[Laughter]* No, he was a mean guy.

And he knew enough about what was going on. He wasn't like some of the people that surrounded him on the Resolute—the beautiful Resolute Desk in the Oval Office. They were stone-cold mean. But Joe Biden and the Biden—they were mean people. What they did to people, what they did to J6, what they did to so many people—they were mean people. These were really radical, horrible people.

And he wasn't that way 20 years ago. He was never the—the brightest bulb in the ceiling, but he was—he was a man who wasn't overly mean, that I saw. But, boy, he became really mean. And his administration was one of the meanest we've ever had, and that's why they're out of here.

And people, they're having a hard time getting jobs, and that's the way it should be, because they are—they were bad. They did tremendous disservice to this country, including allowing 25 million people into the—from jails, from prisons, from mental institutions, drug dealers. All over the world, they were—entered our country, from jails. The prison population of Venezuela was emptied out into our country, and that's what we're doing now.

I spent so much of our time—Tom Homan and the—the people that have worked on this so, so hard. You know, Kristi Noem, all of them, they've worked on it so hard. It's just—it's like an unforced error.

And to allow people into our country who are truly—there are evil people. We're all people of religion, but there are evil people, and we have to confront that.

I just give my love and hope to the family of the young woman who was stabbed this morning—or last night—in Charlotte by a madman. A lunatic just got up and started—it's right on the tape. Not really watchable, because it's so horrible. But just viciously stabbed. She's just sitting there. So they're evil people. We have to be able to handle that. If we don't handle that, we don't have a country.

And I created the first-ever Department of Justice Task Force To Eradicate Anti-Christian Bias. And for those people that are a little bit naive or not well-read, there is a tremendous anti-Christian bias. We don't hear about it. We don't think about it. You hear about antisemitic, but you don't hear about anti-Christian.

No, you have a strong anti-Christian bias, but we're ending that rapidly, I will tell you. It's a whole—we're in a much different world today than we were one year ago. This is like a different place.

And to support parents' rights, we're fighting, as you know, for school choice, which most people want. Most people want it, I'll tell you. Dan was responsible for getting it, along with the Governor of Texas. They got it in Texas, and we helped you a little bit.

They needed about 20 votes from the legislature. He said, "Could you make a phone call to the"—whoever they were—the legislators, who I like a lot. But they were about 20 votes short, and they had been for about 10 years. I said, "All right, let's give it a shot." So I gave a big talk to the—who were they? Senators or——

Lt. Gov. Patrick. They were House members. But you also helped us defeat about 15 anti-school choice people in the last election, yes.

The President. That's right. We defeated a lot of anti-school choice. But anyway, he got it done. So congratulations. That was a big accomplishment.

But as part of our tax cuts, we've created a massive tax credit for school choice scholarships so that you can send your child to a school that shares your values and you get tax credits, and all sorts of good things happening.

And I'm also taking action against anti-Semitic and anti-Christian bias in our institutions of higher learning. You've been watching that play out. They're making very substantial settlements. And Leo is involved, and Pam Bondi is involved. We've launched—[*applause*].

You know, we're getting hundreds of millions of dollars in settlements, Pam. And Leo called me up, "Sir, you can do better than that." I said, "What am I going to do?" [*Laughter*] I'm going to get one where he really likes it. But he always says—everyone else says, "That's amazing," except for Leo. He says, "Sir, you could have gotten more." [*Laughter*] "Oh, good. Thanks, Leo."

But we've launched sweeping civil rights and title IX investigations into more than 60 colleges, going on currently, and universities to stop their violations of civil liberties and First Amendment freedoms. And you know, we're involved very much in Harvard. That's one that people seem to be reading about more than others. We have many going. And other than having a radical-left judge—you have a very radical-left judge. But, you know, the appellate courts have been really good to us. The—so you go before some of these judges, no matter how good a case you have, you can't win.

But we've had a lot of them. But we've done very well in the appellate—at the appellate level. And the case of Harvard, we have an absolute radical-left judge. Disgraceful. Should not

even be there. But we have—we're doing very well with Harvard, and we're doing very well with all of them.

And where we don't win at the lower courts—which sometimes we do. Some—in some States, we get a very fair shake. In other States, it's not even possible. But we've done very well at the appellate level and at the United States Supreme Court.

But this includes an unprecedented \$200 million payment from Columbia University. Columbia paid us \$200 million, essentially, in fines and penalties. But many more settlements are soon to follow. And they're going to be behaving, because they understand we're coming back.

They would not let you have your voice. They wouldn't let the people in this room—any of them—have their voice, because that's not the voice they wanted to hear from. They wanted to hear from a very sinister voice, and we're not going to allow that.

In recent years, we've seen far too many violent attacks perpetrated against Americans of faith—beautiful Americans of faith, including in our schools and places of worship. And you know about it more than I do.

Two weeks ago, in Minneapolis, a demonic killer shot 21 people and murdered the two precious children at a Catholic school. Can you believe that? Hard to believe. And time goes by and people say, "Oh, I sort of remember it," but I remember it. I'll always remember it. What a horrible thing. Too many. Happens too much. Our hearts are shattered for the families of those beautiful children. And I've made clear: Attorney General Pam Bondi is working really hard that we must get answers about the causes of these repeated attacks. And we're working very, very hard on that.

The Trump administration will have no tolerance for terrorism or political violence, and that includes hate crimes against Christians, Jews, or anybody else. We're not going to allow it.

And there was also a horrible killing recently in Charlotte, where I talked about, and so many others. And we will—we're going to get to the end of it. And, you know, when you have horrible killings, you have to take horrible actions. And the actions that we take are nothing.

We—this—cashless bail started a wave in our country where a killer kills somebody and is out on the street by the afternoon, in many cases, going out and killing again. Cashless bail.

And you try and reason with people—like in Chicago, with the Governor and the mayor. You try and reason with them, and it's like you're talking to a wall. It just doesn't—I assume it's just a political ideology. They're not stupid people. It must be an ideology that's just buried in their head, and you can't do a damn thing about it.

And we'd love to go into Chicago and straighten it out. You know, Washington, DC, you'll be happy to know, is a free and safe zone. It's so safe right now.

It was one of the most dangerous. Can you believe it? So, you know, you see the beautiful buildings. But we're going to also do an upgrade, because a lot of the beautiful buildings have a little graffiti on them. They have roads that aren't proper. They have medians that are bad and falling down into the road—the dividers. We have things that we have to take care of and beautify. We want to beautify it. Very little work will be done.

I'm very good at that. That's what I really did the best in life, probably. *[Laughter]* I said, "Was I a better builder or politician?" They said, "I think you were a better builder, sir." *[Laughter]* I said—I didn't know if I was happy about that or not.

But I am. I was a really good builder. And I'll fix this place up for peanuts. I'll fix it up. We'll fix—we'll put in new dividers. All the—you ever notice? They're all rotted, rusting, and falling

down on the road. Potholes all over the place. We're going to have this place looking beautiful within 12 months.

Even the little white tiles in the tunnels. You know, you go through the tunnels, and there's little white tiles—they've been up for about 60 years—and, like, there's pieces missing. [Laughter] And you can't match them. Believe me, you can't. [Laughter] You try and match them. It never works. You can't. They've been up 60 years. You don't get the same match, no matter what you do. But we'll take all those tiles off, and you're going to have beautiful white tile tunnels again.

And everything's going to be really the way it should be, because when foreign leaders come—you know, I had to take down the tents. We had over 58 tent cities that we took down right in the middle of our parks, right next to our great buildings. Supreme Court—you'd have a tent city right there, and nobody would ever tell them to do it.

We had a blue tent right on Lafayette, and they seemed to have a permit. And one of the fake news media was asking me the other day, "What about the blue tent?" "What blue tent?" Because all the tents you got—somehow these people were very well connected with the communist cause. [Laughter] And I said, "There's a tent up there, really?" "Yes." And he was a friendly reporter for a change. He said, "It's terrible that the tent"—I said, "I didn't know that. I'm surprised." And I checked, and there was. And we got it down very quickly. It's down. It's down. [Laughter]

It wasn't easy. You know, people chained themselves to a tree and this and that, but that's okay. They can chain themselves if they want. That was a tough one. That's been there for years. It's been there for many years. We took it down. Came down very quickly, Pam.

So I hope Attorney General Bondi will be looking into some of these things, and I really know that some of them she is. She's—she's done such an incredible job. You know, she's got a lot of pressure on her not to do these things by a certain group of people that, I guess, don't love our country or there's some ideology that they're just indoctrinated with. But she's going to do a fantastic job.

And we're waiting for a call from Chicago. We'll fix Chicago. And again, DC is right now so safe. You can go out. Friends of mine called. One in particular—he's been in Chicago—in DC for a long time, and he said, "I haven't gone out in four years for dinner with my wife." The restaurants were all closing because people were afraid. Even if they were in the restaurant, it didn't matter. They were held up. You know, guys would walk in with guns into a restaurant. And that's over. It's not happening. It's now safe.

And this man said, "I've gone out to dinner in the last week and a half four times. And I am so safe, my wife could meet me at the restaurant. She could walk by herself. There is zero threat."

The National Guard—working with the police, working with the mayor. The Mayor has—you know, that's not her ideology, and now I think it maybe is her ideology. [Laughter] She's taking a lot of heat too from the radical left. You know, they don't like that she's allowing it. But look, she's going to either allow it or we'll just do it, because, you know, it's just—and she understands that. No, she understands that.

But I can tell you, the people of DC are thrilled. I have never had so many people—the other day, I had a big scrum in front of me of the press. And I said, "You know everybody here, or many of you, have been mugged. Right?" And they're all going like—and these aren't people necessarily on our side. They're all going, "Yes, yes, yes." "What about you?" "Yes. It's true. I was. A couple of times." Every one of them. It's crazy. [Laughter] Not going to happen anymore.

So right now we went from a—one of the most—and some people say the worst, the most violent city—can you imagine our capital being the most violent city?—but it was—it was really bad—into a totally safe zone. It's called a "safe zone city." There's no crime.

They said crime is down 87 percent. I said: "No, no, no. It's more than 87 percent." Virtually nothing. And much lesser things. Things that take place in the home they call crime. You know, they'll do anything they can to find something. If a man has a little fight with the wife, they say, "This was a crime, see?" So now I can't claim 100 percent.

But we are a safe city. You can walk to a restaurant. You can walk to the White House, if you work there. You can walk to the Capitol. And even the Democrats say, "I can't believe it," but they don't want to admit it. But "I can't believe it."

We could do the same thing in Chicago, New York.

Los Angeles, we did it. We saved—we saved Los Angeles. We saved Los Angeles, Dan. You know that. Los Angeles was a mess. If we didn't send our troops in, Gavin Newsom would have had a real problem. *[Laughter]* We sent our troops. The head police officer—the top person—said, "We could have never done this alone." We sent our troops right in at the beginning, and we killed it. And it was nasty, but we killed it immediately. Immediately.

And I don't know why Chicago isn't calling us saying, "Please, give us help," when you have, over just a short period of time, 50 murders and hundreds of people shot. And then you have a Governor that stands up and says how crime is just fine. It's really crazy. But we're bringing back law and order to our country.

And I began my remarks today by noting that the reverence for our Creator—I mean this—we have reverence for our Creator. And it's inscribed into our Declaration of Independence—a copy of which I have very proudly hanging in the Oval Office. An original copy—very old, beautiful copy.

Next year, we will celebrate 250 years since that declaration was signed. As part of the grand—well, this is really a commemoration like—I think we're going to do—we're going to try and do a commemoration like nobody's ever seen before.

But we've invited America's great faith communities to pray for our nation and for our people and for peace in the world, and it's going to be an amazing—it's going to be an amazing time. We're going to have an amazing time.

We have the Olympics. We have the World Cup. And we have 250—okay?—the "supercentennial," as our man would say. But—and we're going to—it's going to be amazing. It's going to be maybe bigger than the both of those events.

You know, when I was President, I got the World Cup and I got the Olympics. I got them to choose us, Los Angeles. And I was very proud of it. The only problem was I wasn't going to be President because I would have served out, normally, my time. And then you had some very bad people who rigged an election, and look what happened. I end up getting the Olympics, the World Cup, and 250.

It's amazing the way God works, isn't it? No, it's amazing—isn't amazing the way God works, huh? *[Laughter]* It's true. I got the Olympics, you know, because I'm a little bit of a selfish person, I guess. *[Laughter]* I said, "You know, I got the Olympics."

And Obama would not call. I'll never forget. The head of the Olympic Committee called, and the mayor of Los Angeles called me, and he said, "Sir, the President will not talk to them." You know why? Because he traveled to Geneva, or wherever, to make the presentation, and he came in fourth. Now, a President shouldn't do that. A President should say: "I will do that. I will make

that journey"—which has never been made before—"but if I make that journey, you have to pick me." [*Laughter*]

He didn't do that. That's why we had a country that was going to hell, because he didn't do a lot of things like that. [*Laughter*] So he ended up sitting there and they announced that we're fourth. We were, like, almost last. [*Laughter*] And so he didn't like the Olympic Committee too much, so he refused to talk to him.

So I get a call from the mayor of Los Angeles, who said: "Please, sir, would you call? We're ready to get it, but"—and I spoke to a gentleman, and I believe it was Geneva—whatever—wherever they are. And I couldn't get him off the phone. He was so dying for love. [*Laughter*] He finally got—finally got something—anyway—and he agreed that the Olympics would come to the United States. And I was so proud of it, and then I realized. Even then, I said, "I'm not going to be the President."

And then the World Cup—we got the World Cup. I did that one too with Gianni and got the World Cup. And I said: "I can't believe it. Can you hold it a little sooner?" "Sir, it's all given out at all these different places." So I wasn't going to get that either. And now I got them both.

And I can't say that I created 250. That one is—that one we had. [*Laughter*] I'd like to say I created 250 years. I can't say that, but we are going to create a great party and a great celebration.

And I'd like to ask a very good friend of mine, Secretary Scott Turner, to come up and say a few words about some of the things we're doing.

And, Scott, please take it away.

Secretary Turner. Yes, sir. Thank you.

Well, good morning.

Audience members. Good morning.

Secretary Turner. So grateful to be here. What an honor it is to stand with this commission and with our President.

Y'all, we're in the Nation's Capital. We're at the Museum of the Bible. We're together, and we're talking about faith. Did anybody else pick up on that? I wouldn't want to be anywhere else but right here.

So thank you, Mr. President. It's an honor to serve under your leadership, sir, and to be a part of this tremendous Cabinet. How many know we have a godly, faithful Cabinet and—a Cabinet that prioritizes prayer?

[*Secretary Turner continued his remarks, concluding as follows.*]

On behalf of President Trump and ultimately the Lord God, Almighty, who calls us to pray without ceasing, I am inviting all Americans to pray with unwavering faith for the renewal of our nation and our fellow citizens. Amen?

Audience members. Amen.

Secretary Turner. All Americans.

Will you all stand with me as we rededicate America to "one nation under God"?

Father, we thank you for this time that we have together. Lord God, we thank you that we can gather together as faithful people, as faithful leaders, as denomination leaders, as religious leaders. Father, we thank you for our President, Donald J. Trump, Father God, who you have anointed and appointed for this time, for such a time as this.

[Secretary Turner continued his remarks, concluding as follows.]

And, God, we know that from this day until on that great day, July 4 of 2026, when we celebrate 250 years, that, Lord God, from now to then and forevermore you will be glorified and honored. And Father, we pray for a sweet celebration and, Lord God, that all people of all faiths, Father God, will come together, Lord—not just Democrat, not just Republican, but all American people will come together under the banner of Yahweh, of God Almighty.

And, Lord God, we praise you and we thank you and we love you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Audience members. Amen.

The President. Thank you, Scott. Thank you very much, Scott.

So America has always been a nation that believes in the power of prayer, and we will never apologize for our faith—ever, ever, never, never. We will never surrender our God-given rights. We will defend our liberties, our values, our sovereignty. And we will defend our freedom.

And with the help of amazing faith communities across the land—so many are represented with us today—we will truly make this the golden age of America. It's what we're doing. We're in a golden age. We're at the very beginning of a golden age.

So much progress has been made in the last 8 months—progress like nobody has ever seen before. They're writing about it. They're actually saying it. They've never seen anything like what's happened in the last eight months.

And together, we will make our country greater, stronger, more united, and more faithful than ever before.

Thank you. God bless you, and God bless America.

Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you. The Green family, thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:36 a.m. at the Museum of the Bible. In his remarks, he referred to King Salman bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia; former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Benjamin S. Carson, Sr., in his capacity as Vice Chair of the Religious Liberty Commission; W. Franklin Graham III, president and chief executive officer, Billy Graham Evangelistic Association; Cardinal Timothy Dolan of New York; Bishop Robert Barron of Winona–Rochester, MN; author and radio personality Eric Metaxas; Kelly J. Shackelford, president and chief executive officer, First Liberty Institute; Ryan T. Anderson, president, Ethics and Public Policy Center; author and former Miss California Carrie Prejean Boller; Allyson Ho, partner, Gibson, Dunn, and Crutcher; Steven T. Green, president, Hobby Lobby, in his capacity as chairman of the board for Museum of the Bible, and his wife Jackie; Lee Frost, principal, Honey Grove Middle School in Honey Grove, TX; White House Border Czar Thomas D. Homan; Iryna Zarutskya, a Ukrainian refugee who was fatally stabbed on a Charlotte Area Transit System light-rail train in Charlotte, NC, on August 22; Decarlos Brown, Jr., suspect in the stabbing; Gov. Gregory W. Abbott of Texas; Allison D. Burroughs, judge, U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts; Robin Westman, suspect in the shooting at the Assumption Catholic Church and School in Minneapolis, MN, on August 27; Harper Moyski and Fletcher Merkel, students, Annunciation Catholic School, who were killed in the shooting; Gov. Jay R. "J.B." Pritzker of Illinois; Mayor Brandon Johnson of Chicago, IL; Brian Glenn, White House correspondent, Real America's Voice; Mayor Muriel E. Bowser of Washington, DC; Gov. Gavin C. Newsom of California; Chief of Police Jim McDonnell and former Mayor Eric M. Garcetti of Los Angeles, CA; Thomas Bach, former president, International Olympic Committee; and Giovanni V. Infantino, president, Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA). The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on September 9.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : White House Religious Liberty Commission.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Abbott, Gregory W.; Allen, Hannah; Anderson, Ryan T.; Bach, Thomas; Barron, Robert; Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Boller, Carrie Prejean; Bondi, Pamela J.; Bowser, Muriel E.; Brown, Decarlos, Jr.; Burroughs, Allison D.; Carson, Benjamin S., Sr.; Dolan, Timothy, Cardinal; Encinas, Shea; Frost, Lee; Garcetti, Eric M.; Graham, W. Franklin, III; Green, Jackie; Green, Steven T.; Greenwood, Lee; Ho, Allyson; Homan, Thomas D.; Infantino, Giovanni V.; Glenn, Brian; Irutka, Iryna; Johnson, Brandon; Kaine, Timothy M.; McDonnell, Jim; McGraw, Phil; Merkel, Fletcher; Metaxas, Eric; Moyski, Harper; Newsom, Gavin C.; Noem, Kristi L.; Obama, Barack; Patrick, Dan; Pritzker, Jay R. "J.B."; Reed, Ralph; Salman bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud, King; Shackelford, Kelly J.; Terrell, Leo; Turner, E. Scott; Westman, Robin; White-Cain, Paula.

Subjects: Attorney General; California, 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles; California, Governor; California, political demonstrations in Los Angeles; Cashless bail, efforts to eliminate; Department of Justice Task Force To Eradicate Anti-Christian Bias; District of Columbia, beautification efforts; District of Columbia, law enforcement improvement efforts; District of Columbia, Mayor; District of Columbia, Museum of the Bible; Diversity, equity, and inclusion programs, restriction efforts; Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup; Illinois, crime in Chicago; Illinois, Governor; Massachusetts, Harvard University in Cambridge; National Guard; New York, Columbia University in New York City; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; North Carolina, Charlotte Area Transit System light-rail train in Charlotte; Religious freedom; Saudi Arabia, King; Secretary of Homeland Security; Secretary of Housing and Urban Development; Senior Adviser to the White House Faith Office; Senior Counsel to the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights; Smithsonian Institution; Sports, efforts to restrict transgender participation; Tax Code reform; Texas, Governor; Texas, Lieutenant Governor; Transgender athletes, efforts to restrict participation; White House Border Czar; White House Religious Liberty Commission.

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