

**Remarks During a Ballroom Dinner**

*October 15, 2025*

Thank you very much. Thank you very much everybody. Thank you very much.

It's a real honor to be with you. I got back from the Middle East. We had a really historic trip, I would say, would be the least of it. We had tremendous progress on peace in the Middle East, which is a term that hasn't even been used in 50 years, probably. And it's 3,000 years we're playing with.

So people thought that was something, and it really was incredible. We had tremendous friendships, and we've developed some friendships even over the last few days, and it's going very well. And we got the hostages back, which is a big deal, bringing the hostages back. Everybody feels that way. Everybody feels that way.

And other things are happening. Even today, things are happening that are very positive. Everyone wants to see it happen. Countries that didn't get along with each other are now seemingly in love with each other. Now, in the Middle East, that will change, perhaps, but the deal will still be there, and it's going to be—I think it's going to be something to remember.

We have—we've settled, now, eight wars, if you think. It was seven. Now it's eight. And we have another one left. One of the easier ones I thought was going to be Russia. One of the easy ones, I thought, was going to be Russia. I thought the Russia-Ukraine would be easy. It would have never happened. It should have never happened. But a lot of people are being killed in that war. That war is—it's the bloodiest war since the Second World War. I think that we'll get that one too, and we'll stop.

You know, it's not from the U.S., these soldiers that are dying all over the place. Seven thousand two hundred and twelve, they say, last week, died. Think of that: 7,212 soldiers. For—for no reason. It should have never happened. Should have—if the right person were here, it wouldn't have happened. I can guarantee you that. But it did happen, and we've made some good progress.

We've, interestingly, made a lot of progress today because of what took place in the Middle East. Only the deep-thinking businesspeople would understand that—of which we have a lot of them. We have a lot of legends in the room tonight. And that's why we're here: to celebrate you, because you've gave—given tremendous amounts of money to see a ballroom built for the first time at the White House.

The White House—for 150 years-plus, they've wanted to have a ballroom, and it never happened, because they never had a real estate person. *[Laughter]* For me, I like it. For me, it's like—I love it. In between China, Russia, and everything else that we deal with, it's going to be a great ballroom. Going to be a great ballroom.

As an example, this is really been the ballroom for many years, and it holds a hundred people—of which we have 125 today, I'll tell you. *[Laughter]* But now we have 128, and I've never seen it with 128.

And by the way, you're going to have a little bit of entertainment from the military band right after this. You'll see some really talented musicians. They're going to do a few songs, and you're going to love them. They're very talented people.

But—so, for years, they've wanted to have it. And when they have the head of China, the head of any country, we have many—many of the countries came, and they'd always put the tent out on the lawn. And if it was not raining, you'd get away with a little bit. But it's still a tent. And the biggest dignitaries in the world—not only political in many ways—many other ways too.

And so I always said that if I pull it off again, we are going to build a ballroom, and I'm going to start right at the beginning. And we had it designed by one of the top architects in Washington, who's very, very respected and—very, very respected, actually. And we started the process, and we have it concluded, and it's actually starting right behind us.

And if you look, this is really a knockout panel. Should I show you? I guess maybe you've sort of seen, right?

*[At this point, the curtains behind the President were opened to reveal an area under construction.]*

So we don't really want you to walk on there, but you can take a look if you want, if you're curious, because we took out all the strength from underneath that collapse—we collapse it at—over the next few days. It's going to be demolished. Everything out there is coming down, and we're replacing it with one of the most beautiful ballrooms that you've ever seen.

And you have some pictures, and basically, it's right here. Here's your White House, here's the West Wing, and here's the east side, which has been tinkered with for years and years and years.

And they had, originally, a very beautiful building. They called it the East Wing, but that was sort of semi-knocked down about five times and changed and redone and everything else. It was originally done by McKim, Mead, and White—great architects.

And so, that came down, and mostly it's taken down already, and we've started excavation. I'm very good at building things on time, on budget, that I can tell you. You're not going to see, like the Fed, where they're up to \$4 billion or something—*[laughter]*—to paint some walls.

It's the craziest thing I've ever seen. This guy. He's "Too Late." He should have been too late with that one—not done it. It would have been better. It didn't need to be done. He could have painted the ceilings. They ripped down a gorgeous ceiling like this, and then they said, "We have a problem. Now we have to put one up. How do you do a ceiling like this?" And they're way over budget.

They decided they wanted to do a basement. But unfortunately, the basement is right next to—you know, you're right next to the Potomac. And when they went down, they should have stopped immediately, because they should have known, but they have a little thing called the Potomac River where the basement is. *[Laughter]* But they said, "We're going to get it done anyway."

So you build what's called the reverse bathtub. And it's not that uncommon, but it is actually a reverse—you seal it. The problem is, nature always wins. I know a lot about reverse bathtubs. I've done it, and it's something you only do in emergency. You don't—there was no reason to do it there.

They could have, actually, if you think about it, they could have added three floors on top, and it would have cost about \$2 billion less. So, they ended up in this disaster of building a basement in the Potomac River and keeping the water out—very hard to do as you're pouring your concrete, which has to be dry—and it's been a disaster.

And this the same guy that keeps your interest rates too high. *[Laughter]* We should be—we should be much lower in interest. We're doing so well, but we would have been—as good as that is—even better. I don't think it's affected us much. It can't.

We have an alltime high stock market. Everybody in this room is extremely happy with Trump. If you weren't, I would have postponed it. I would have said, "Let's do it some other time." But the stock market hits records almost—almost all the time. Every once in a while, we'll have a little situation come up that drives it down, but it comes right back.

We're doing really well on trade. We're taking in hundreds of billions of dollars on the tariffs. The tariffs are making this country so rich, and they're making it powerful. We stopped a lot of these wars using trade.

We had—as an example, India and Pakistan were going at it really hard. Seven planes were shot down. It was going to happen. Bad things were happening. And I was talking to both of them about trade, and I said, "How are we doing with those two?" "Sir, we're doing very well." "All right, great. Well, we're not going to do well. We're not going to do a trade deal unless they stop the war."

And I got him on the phone, and I said, "Listen, we're going to put a 200 percent tariff on your country for any product you sell into the United States unless you stop this war. Because I'm not going to be a party to it." You have two nuclear nations, by the way.

"No, no, no, you can't do that." I say, "I can do that very easily. I can. We're not going to have—lose millions of people from the planet." And frankly, that dust can blow over here too. It affects everything. It's a powerful, powerful weapon. Too powerful. So powerful, you don't want to talk about it.

So they said, "No, no." I said: "Yes, yes. And here's the story: If you're going to go and do it, we're cutting off all negotiations. There'll be no trade with the United States of America." Both nations. I spoke to them both. I like both the leaders. I like them both a lot. But I said, "That's the way it is."

And I get a call the next day. "We have decided to deescalate." I said, "I thought you would, actually." "We have decided that we will not fight." I said, "Have you come to a conclusion?" "Yes, we're not going to do any more." And they stopped. They stopped, just like that. This could have been a nuclear war. Probably would have been.

In fact, the Prime Minister of Pakistan came and saw me, and he was emotional about it. And in front of a group of people, he said, "This man saved 3 million, 5 million, maybe an untold number of lives." And it was just recently that this happened, so—and we did numerous of them like that, and part of the reason we did it was trade.

I think of the eight, I would say five were because of trade. You know, the power of trade, but the power of tariffs. Tariffs have made us a very kind nation, because a lot of people aren't dying. I use it for purposes of stopping wars. I love stopping wars.

And sort of interesting, I'll be the only President—I don't think any President stopped one war. I stopped eight wars in 8 months. Did I get a Nobel Prize? No. *[Laughter]* I didn't. Can you believe it? Even I said, "Meh, that's an impossible one." But it's all right. I suspect they think next year will be better, but I don't care. You know what I care about? I saved maybe hundreds of millions of lives, but certainly, I saved millions of lives. So we're very happy. Yes.

So now we'll get back to the point on hand, and that's where—you're really here because you've contributed to this incredible building that people have wanted for so many years. And we show another building.

*[The President referred to architectural models on display near the podium.]*

It's an arc. It's the arc. So that circle—that's Arlington Memorial Bridge, as you know. That's sort of the most important one. A very important structure.

And at the end of it, you have a circle that was built 150 years ago. Nobody knows really when. And in fact, they put a couple of columns on each side, so you have two columns on one side, two columns on the other. But you have, in the middle, just a circle. And everyone that passes it said, "Something was supposed to be built there." And it's true. But a thing called the Civil War interfered. That's a good reason. I would say, Ike, that would be a good reason, right? The great Ike Perlmutter.

The Civil War. If you said you're having a war, I think they have a good reason not to build again. You know, they were building the Washington Monument, and they stopped. And you could see where they stopped, because the stone is a little different color when you get up to the middle.

But anyway, they stopped here, and then they were—in 1902, they were going to put a statue of Robert E. Lee up. It would have been okay with me. A lot of people wouldn't have liked it, but would have been okay with me. Would have been okay with a lot of the people in this room, but they didn't do that.

And so, for years and years, it sat. And every time somebody rides over that beautiful bridge going right to the Lincoln Memorial that's so beautiful, right? It's—they literally say, "Something's supposed to be here." And so, we have versions of it, sizes of it. And it's going to be—it's going to be really beautiful. I think it's going to be fantastic.

There's a rendering of what it will look like. You have three sizes. That would be the largest one.

*[The President held up an architectural model.]*

This is just a model of what it would look like in either of the three—any of the three sizes, which is right here. I don't know if you can see it. It's sort of—that's Lady Liberty. Lady—did you ever hear of Lady Liberty?—on top.

But—so the sizes would be very different. Now, here's Lincoln, and this is sort of facing this way. And so, you know, there's a direct line. They did this. They didn't do that. So, this would be—I go, "Small, medium, and large," right? *[Laughter]*

*[The President held up more architectural models.]*

Small, medium, and large. And—whichever one will look good. I happen to think the large looks, by far, the best. *[Laughter]* Why are you shocked to hear that? *[Laughter]*

So we're going to, you know, just do something for the city, because we're so proud of what we've done with crime. This is a very safe city now. This went from a very unsafe city where you were afraid to go out to dinner, to a city that's extremely safe.

The people that we have working on this—it's been a miracle almost. It took 12 days. We took out 1,700 people, brought them back to their countries from where they came. Many of them were let in through the Biden open border. Brilliant thing, where they let people in from jails, from prisons and mental institutions, insane asylum—that's a mental institution on steroids. And—no, I mean, they were literally emptying out insane asylums into our country. This is Venezuela, but other countries also, not only Venezuela.

And speaking of Venezuela, we've—you know, we have a lot of drugs. We had a lot of drugs coming in by water. That stopped. In fact, nobody wants to go fishing anymore. Nobody—

[laughter]. Nobody wants to do anywhere—anything near the water. They might have a beautiful boat, and they might as well get rid of their boat, because they are very nervous about going on the water. It's been amazing.

So now we were having—literally, it was like a subway train of people, of—and drugs coming into this country, a lot of them coming from Venezuela. A lot of them come from Mexico and Colombia too, in all fairness. But we wanted to knock out one track. And I can tell you, we cannot find anybody anymore. We're looking down there, looking down there, since—there's not a boat on the entire ocean that we can see outside of the ocean liners, and even they're a little bit concerned about things. [Laughter]

But it shows you the power and the strength and the technology of our great military. We have—you know, I rebuilt the military in my first term. We had a great first term. We had the best economy ever. We had a rebuilding of the military. We had the big tax cuts and the wonderful—all of the assets of the tax cuts, including the 1-year depreciation. You write it off in one year.

Now, we have better under the "Great Big Beautiful Bill," because we have no tips for—think of this: You have no tax on tips, and you have no tax on Social Security, and you have—for your workers, you have no tax on overtime. It's really a middle—I would say, a middle of the road bill from the standpoint of, who is it representing? It's the workers.

It's the biggest bill ever passed in the history of Congress. And I'm glad we did, because we don't need any more bills. We have everything in that one. Plus, we have the deductibility every single year for 10 years. The other one had it for 1 year. You had to rush. This year—this time you don't. Actually, I was in favor of rushing because that's awfully good for elections. But it's not about elections. It's awfully good.

So you have deductibility. You have so many different things. We have great social programs. Fifty billion dollars going to rural hospitals. So the "Great Big Beautiful Bill"—and we got it all in one. I was very happy, because we had little arguments about that. A lot of people wanted to do it in small chunks. I said: "If you do it in small chunks, you'll never get it approved. You'll get some approved, but not all of it and not even close. You get much less. I would say, less than 30 percent."

So they've never done this before. They put every single thing that I wanted for four years in one bill. And we call it—they—some people call it different. I call it the "Great Big Beautiful Bill," because that's what it is. And we—this will keep us—well, we want to manage it now. We're going to manage it. All you have to do is that. But we got it all approved.

And one of the things I thought, though—well, I do, because it's so relaxing for me. Real estate is relaxing. For a lot of people, real estate is a very trying business. I've always liked it. I've always done well with it. I love building things. And this way, I can build some beautiful things. And this, again, has never been built, and we're going to start that pretty soon. It's going to be great.

And then the ballroom for the White House is the thing that you people have really, really been very generous with. And we're going to build a room that's going to be able to hold, literally, the Inauguration, if we want. All of the glass on the sides is bulletproof.

It's—999 people it can hold. So, if we figure we have 125 people in here, approximately, now—which I've never seen before. I've always heard it's less than a hundred. But it's amazing. When you have too many people, you can fit them in. You know, you can always fit a few more people in. And part of the fact that you're a little tight at your table—that's okay. [Laughter] That's better than lots of room for everybody because nobody shows up, right?

But you've been—you've been so generous in your contributions. Very substantial money. Fully financed. It's fully taken care of now. And, in fact, we'll have money left over, and we'll use that for something. We'll use that probably—maybe for the arc or something else that will come. But we love to fix up Washington.

If you went to the Oval Office, you'd see the Presidential Walk of Fame. And you've heard about it. And with the exception of one particular picture—[laughter]—there's no controversy. It's just—it's beautiful. It's a beautiful thing. It's this beautiful long wall that existed for—it's just literally a wall with half windows on top. And that was originally built as a swimming pool. Now it's where the press is, on the other side of the wall. And it's very interesting.

All these people over here with all their cameras—although they've been very respectful. I'll tell you what, they—they're very respectful for what's taken place over the last week. So I want to thank you. This is just a small little group. They have a big group downstairs. They have a lot of reporters downstairs wanting to be with they are. I don't know, these—I guess—are you special?

This is Doug [Doug Mills, New York Times], who's the—he won the highest awards there is in photography, including Pulitzer Prizes, right? He won many Pulitzer Prizes for—for his great work, one that I wasn't so happy with. He had one with a bullet moving along. [Laughter] He got—he caught the bullet. Can you believe this? He got another Pulitzer.

But anyway, it's great to have you gentlemen. It's really good. They have a whole group downstairs—a big group downstairs. I didn't think you'd like to have that up here, because they can be—some of them are sort of violent towards some of you—[laughter]—but not bad.

So we did a design that is being, you know, just lauded for the—for the ballroom. Showed it to the top people. One of the things that I like the most, I came in and I said to the people in the building, I said, "So"—I said, "If I make it back, I want to build a ballroom for the country"—really, because this is really, they call it the "people's house." It's the country's house. "I want to build a ballroom. It needs it badly, and a ballroom that could seat 6- or 700 people, so that when you have state dinners—or more of it's possible."

And I said, "How long would the process take?" Because I'm so used to zoning. And I've gone—I've gotten a lot of zoning over the years to these two guys, these two genius—like movie stars. And they have a good brain, besides. That's pretty nice, huh? Nice to have you guys both with us.

So they said, "How long?" I said, "How long would it take?" They said, "Sir, you can start tonight." I said, "What are you talking about?" "You have zero zoning conditions. You're the president of"—I said, "You've got to be kidding." [Laughter] "You mean I can actually do something that I really want?"

Because I'm used to sitting with heads of community boards and politicians—and it's fine. It's part of the—the beauty of—if you want to call it that, or sometimes it's not so beautiful—of being a real estate developer, especially in New York. It takes you years and years. And it's, you know—it's heartache.

And they say, "Well, sir, we'd like you to cut off 40 stories." I had one where I had it—67 stories was approved. And we go to the end, and I get an emergency phone call from the head of the board. "Sir, may we see you?" "Yes."

They come in: "Sir, we're going to really not be able to approve it. We want you to cut off 42 stories." Cut off. In other words, I'm going to lose 42 stories. I said, "There's no way you're doing it." So we fought it out for 2 years. You end up getting what you want. But it's a brutal process.

So, over here I said, "How long will it take me, sir?" "You can start tonight. You have no approvals." I said, "You got to be kidding." I said, "Sir, this is the White House. You're the president of the United States. You can do anything you want."

So, with that, came great responsibility, and we did something that was really appropriate to the White House. We didn't want to dwarf anything. We didn't want to make it so that it's inappropriate. And I was watching them very carefully, and that's what we did.

And so we're going to have a phenomenal ballroom. There's going to be one of the best anywhere in the world. There won't be anything like it, actually. And it's four sides of glass—all glass, beautiful glass—but totally appropriate in color and in window shape and everything else with the White House—moldings. So it's going to be very much in keeping with the White House.

You know, a new thing is, you build a supermodern building next to an old-fashioned building. And I think that's good, but I don't have the courage to do that with the White House. [Laughter] It's good for a lot of places. It's not good—it's not good for here. So everything's very much in keeping, and we'll be able to have state dinners, the kind we—we would literally not even have state dinners because it's not set up. But for all those years, they wanted it, and now they're going to get it.

And because of you, they're going to get it. And me too. We're all in this together. And, I mean, I have so many friends and so many of you have been really, really generous. I mean, couple of you, I'm sitting here saying, "Sir, would \$25 million be appropriate?" I said, "I'll take it." [Laughter] You know, it doesn't take too many twenty-fives to get it done.

But a lot of—I mean, a lot of you were—have been really fantastic. I—thank you very much. You were great. You were great. Ike Perlmutter.

And they just felt it was something that's really good. It's the preservation of something—that's—there's nothing like it. To me, there's nothing like the White House.

Even after I won the first night, I went up, and I'm standing in the residential hallway with Melania, and we're—I'm looking into the Lincoln Bedroom. I said—that was a surreal experience. I'm saying: "Do you believe this? We're in the White House, and that's the Lincoln Bedroom." And it takes a while to get used—I'm still not, probably, really used to it.

It's just a special place. What can I say? So we have to take care of it. And we have little things like at the Lincoln Bedroom, the bathroom was done by the Truman family and—you know, long time ago, and it's done in green tile, and it's done as a—in a style that was not exactly Abe Lincoln. It's a style that's not good. [Laughter]

So we—it's actually art deco. And art deco doesn't go with, you know, 1850 and civil wars and all of the problem. But what does do is statuario marble. So we—I ripped it apart and we built a bathroom. Is—it's absolutely gorgeous and totally in keeping with that time. Because the Lincoln Bedroom is so incredible, for those of you that have seen it.

We have so many different—downstairs, we have the Palm Room. And they had, one by one, tiles that were put there probably 20 years ago by somebody. And they were broken and bad. It's embarrassing. And I took it out and we did a magnificent book-matched, statuario marble floor. We fixed the room. We put up the right, you know—the proper lighting and chandeliers. It looks incredible—people walk up, they can't believe how beautiful it is.

And so we like to fix it up. And it's a little bit of my heritage: fix up and clean up and make it nice. And we're doing that with the White House.

So the largest room in the White House was the East Room. That's this room right here, by far. And it currently holds, let's say—as we said, a hundred.

And for this reason, during major functions and events, administrations, going back many, many decades, were forced to severely limit the number of events they had and certainly limit the number of people. And they had some catastrophic events. Some of the biggest events were a tent being built on the lawn and the rain started, and it got—for some reason, every time they put up a tent here, it rains. And that's not good. *[Laughter]*

And they tended to use a lower level, which is—you know, they have pretty big land here. But they use a lower level where the rain would just seep into the ballroom.

And it wasn't pretty when you're sitting down having dinner, talking about—"Hello, President Xi." And "How have you been?" And, "Hello, Emmanuel," from France—*[laughter]*—and all the different people that we've had here. And you've got about 4 inches of water. Literally, it's going over your shoes. And you're trying to pretend that it's not happening, but it's happening. *[Laughter]*

So we won't have that stuff anymore. And it will be great. We really need it. The United States is the greatest and most powerful nation on earth and American Presidents need to be able to host events at the White House that reflect the demands of the time and that can be—carry out the prestige of what we're all doing.

I mean, we're a country that, a year ago, was dead. We were a dead country a year ago, as many of you know. And today, we're the hottest country anywhere in the world by far. Everybody admits it. King of Saudi Arabia told me that, you've heard me say it. But Qatar, U.A.E., the European Union came in—every country. They said, "It's unbelievable what's happened with the United States." We're hot.

And I'll tell you what, had this other group of lunatics been elected, this country would have—I think you would have actually failed. So we went from being a country that was dead, a country that was really in trouble—open borders, everything they did wrong—men in women sports, transgender for everybody. Every single thing they did was wrong. Just go the opposite, and you couldn't miss.

And we had an election that was a landslide. It was so big. We won the popular vote by a lot. We won all seven swing states—or seven swing states, as you know. And if you win three or four, you do great. But to win seven is very rare that you see that happen. We won all seven.

We won the Electoral College by a lot. We're at 312. Remember they said, "Well, I don't know if he can get above 250." No, we didn't. We got 312, and it was great. We beat them by a lot.

But we have another where we—you would call it districts or you would call it the—there's a map split up beautifully, split up in tiny little quarants [quadrants; White House correction]. They call them districts. They call them just areas. And we were 2,750 to 525.

That's why, when you look at a map of the election, it was all red with two blue stripes down on one end and the other. And even them I worry about because I don't—I don't believe it. I don't believe it. I think we did great there.

And so we've had an amazing time. It's the most powerful nation on Earth now. You see that. You see the weaponry. We have the greatest weapons, the greatest manufacturer of weapons. Some of you are in that world, and some of you—*[applause]*. Yes, the greatest in the world.

We have the greatest in the world. I wish we could make them faster, if you want to know the truth. Everybody—all of our allies want them—and they want them as quick as they can.

The American Presidents need to be able to showcase our country. So we'll begin the historic—a really historic effort to add the—we'll call "Presidential Ballroom," that will expand the space for—tens of thousands of people will be able to come during the course of a year, if you add it all up.

And have the kind of space that you need—is very exciting to me. It's exciting as a person in real estate, because you'll never get a location like this again.

Even contracts—I gave—I give out the contracts myself. Can you believe it? And we had—we just gave out the excavation contract, and I guess he was in for \$3.2 million. I said, "Can you do it for 1.5?" *[Laughter]* "No, I can't do that, sir. I can't." I said: "This is once in a lifetime. This is the excavation of the White House grounds for what will be one of the best, most beautiful ballrooms in the world." "Sir, I can't, I can't." So, but I got him down to \$2 million, so it's not terrible. *[Laughter]* So we got it.

And so many people were so great. Carrier—it's a great company, air conditioning. He called. He said, "Sir, we'd like to donate the air conditioning." I said, "That's a beautiful thing." I appreciate that. Donating it to the—not giving it to me, giving it to the country. The—donated the air conditioning.

A steel company. A great steel company. Great man, actually. He said, "Sir, I'd like to donate the steel for your ballroom." I said: "Whoa. That's nice." And I found out—"How much is the steel?" I called the contractor. "Sir, it's down for \$37 million." I said, "This is a nice donation, right?" He wants the steel. And he wants to make it great steel as opposed to garbage steel, because they dump a lot of garbage around. You know, steel is like everything else, including human beings. Steel could be high-quality, and it can be low-quality. He wants to make sure it's high-quality.

But—and so many different people are donating services, and they're donating products to the ballroom. It's amazing. If we keep going like this, I may be able to build it for nothing. *[Laughter]*

You know, we'll get it built for nothing. But we're going to be projecting a cost that's going to be—we're going to come in under budget.

We started with a much smaller building, and then I realized—I mean, we have the land, let's do it right. And so we built a larger building that can really hold just about any function that we want.

It will be done with really exquisite taste, the finest designers. And I—you know, I consider myself an important designer, because they come in with things that—they may be good designers, but boy, the things they can recommend are horrible. *[Laughter]*

And we wanted classic, the utmost respect for the historic beauty and grandeur of one of the most iconic buildings anywhere in the world.

I mean, you go to the White House, and you see that picture when—when you ride up in the drive—like tonight, probably some of you realize you drive up that drive and you're looking at that building all lit up and gorgeous and perfect, and we take good care of it too.

Wasn't taken good care of. The Oval Office is now at a level that it's never seen before. We take really great care of it. They weren't taking good care of it for 4 years, I'll tell you that.

This addition will be completed in the classical style that complements everything else around it, including the Treasury Department, which is right next to it.

We have been working very closely with the incredible people of the National Park Service—they really are—they love this place; they're very proud of it—the architects, historians,

and everyone else and many others to ensure that the project will be beloved and loved for years to come—for centuries to come. It's going to be up for a long time, I hope.

To the cherished White House staff and everyone else that worked so hard, I want to thank you very much.

And it's from James Monroe, who added the South Portico—I don't know if you know, the South Portico; to Andrew Jackson, who added the North Portico; to Theodore Roosevelt, who added the West Wing—did you know that?—Theodore Roosevelt, long time ago; and Harry Truman, who added the Truman Balcony—he wanted the Truman Balcony that's right up here, so you have the balcony off the residential—chief executives throughout the history have contributed to making the White House special.

And nothing of this magnitude has been done, but the first—real—the really big recent renovation was the West Wing and the Oval Office, and that's pretty major, in terms of what it stands for. It's actually not big, but it's really big in another way. It's the biggest, I would say, in another way. And that was around 1900. So, that's a long time ago. That's a long time ago.

And this is going to be something that's going to make you all very proud. So now we have the Presidential Ballroom. We're ensuring that the "people's house" will continue to serve the American people properly. And we can have all the people in the world come, and they'll say, "Boy, what a place that is."

But I want to thank and just leave it by thanking everybody in this room. You've been unbelievable. Some of you have been just incredible.

You really felt it was very important to do this, and it happened so quickly. I mean, I thought I'd have this dinner like in a year from now, a year-and-a-half from now. And we have it already, because it's fully taken care of. And I just want to thank you all. You're very special people, really.

But somehow, the—the ballroom at the White House, it really hit a nerve with a lot of people. They wanted it. You love the country.

You know, this country has spirit again. This country didn't have a lot of spirit two years ago, three years ago, four years ago. It developed spirit on November 5, where a lot of you were with me. Some of you weren't, but you quickly became with me. *[Laughter]* It's amazing the way a victory can change the minds of some people. But most of you were with me.

And, Pepe, you were fantastic. He's got a little sugar business. He has a monopoly—*[laughter]*—he has a monopoly on the world sugar. I would say that's a good business. I know nothing about sugar, but I would say a monopoly on sugar is pretty good, Pepe. Thank you both very much. *[Laughter]* Thank you, darling, for being.

Well, thank you both for—*[laughter]*—yes, that's right. He's—ends up with good real estate. It starts off with sugar, then all of a sudden, he's in the middle of a city, and he ends up—but he's been great and a supporter right from the beginning, for years. And I see you sitting out there, and I appreciate it, and so many others. So I just want to—I just want to say thank you all.

Simply behind me—so—is a knockout panel. This panel, the next time you come here, will be opened up and gone. No problem with any of the surrounding areas. These—this room will be fixed.

This will be like a cocktail—the whole floor will be cocktails or pre-briefings or whatever it may be. Lots of different things.

So the entire floor—so you come in—the entire floor sets up. We didn't have to do any of that. Usually, you have to do that. You need different rooms to go along with the ballroom.

They're already built, and they're built better than anybody would ever build, because this is beautiful stuff. It doesn't get better.

So we have this one, we have another one similar on the other side, and then we have various meeting rooms and rooms in between that are served for, you know, different dinners for different people. And all of this is utilized just the way it is. It'll be enhanced, it'll be even more beautiful, but it'll be—and really brought into the future a little bit from the standpoint of life and lifespan.

So this will be your area. Then, you get the bell—bing, bing, bing—and you walk into the ballroom, and you'll have close to a thousand seats, if you need them, or much less. We have separating panels, so it can be less or it could be actually even more than that.

So I think it will be something you'd be very proud of. And what we're going to do is, when we open up, you'll be among the first groups—maybe the first group, if we—if I still like you at that time—[*laughter*]*—*which I'm sure I will. But you'll be here. It will be here, and you're going to be very happy. You're going to be very impressed. We get it done.

So I want to thank everybody very much, and it's so many friends in the audience. And I just want to thank you all. You're very special people. You love the country, you love the White House, and what you've done is very important. And we'll have a little dinner, and we'll ask the press to now go home to your wives, family—say hello to them. If I don't like you, don't even bother. [*Laughter*]

But you've been great. Thank you very much.

And, Doug, thank you very much and congratulations on a great career.

Thank you. Thank you, everybody. Thank you very much.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:40 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Xi Jinping of China; architect James C. McCrery II; Chairman of the Federal Reserve System Board of Governors Jerome H. Powell; Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India; Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif of Pakistan; Isaac "Ike" Perlmutter, former chairman and chief executive officer, Marvel Entertainment; President Emmanuel Macron of France; King Salman bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia; David Gitlin, chairman and chief executive officer, Carrier; and J. Pepe Fanjul, vice chairman, chief operating officer, and president, Fanjul Corp. and Florida Crystals Corp., and his wife Emilia. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on October 22.

*Categories:* Addresses and Remarks : White House Ballroom dinner.

*Locations:* Washington, DC.

*Names:* Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Creery, James C., II; Fanjul, Emilia; Fanjul, J. Pepe; Gitlin, David; Macron, Emmanuel; Modi, Narendra; Perlmutter, Isaac "Ike"; Powell, Jerome H.; Salman bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud, King; Sharif, Shehbaz; Xi Jinping.

*Subjects:* 2024 Presidential election; Border security; China, President; Economic improvement; Federal Reserve System; France, President; Gaza, conflict with Israel; Gaza, hostages held by Hamas; India, Prime Minister; India, relations with Pakistan; Israel, military operations in Gaza; National Park Service; Pakistan, Prime Minister; Pakistan, relations with India; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Saudi Arabia, King; Suspected drug-trafficking vessels, U.S. airstrikes in Caribbean Sea and Eastern Pacific; Tariffs; Tax Code reform; U.S. diplomatic efforts, expansion; U.S. military

readiness, improvement efforts; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Venezuela, drug trafficking; White House Ballroom construction project.

*DCPD Number:* DCPD202501018.