

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025

**Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters Upon Arrival at Joint Base Andrews,
Maryland**

December 17, 2025

The President. All right. Well, that was a beautiful event for three great people, and they're now looking down. And their parents and wives and all of the people that were there were, I mean, devastated, but great people. Great people.

So thank you very much for being there.

White House Chief of Staff Susan Wiles

Q. Mr. President, is Susie Wiles going to remain your Chief of Staff, sir, in the wake of the——

The President. Yes, she's doing a great job.

Venezuela/U.S. Blockade of Sanctioned Oil

Q. Mr. President, is the goal of the blockade with Venezuela to regime change?

The President. Just to blockade. We're not going to let anybody going through that shouldn't be going through.

You remember, they took all of our energy rights. They took all of our oil from not that long ago, and we want it back. But they took it. They illegally took it.

Federal Bureau of Investigation Deputy Director Daniel J. Bongino

Q. Did Dan Bongino tell you why he's planning to leave the FBI?

The President. Oh, Dan did a great job. I think he wants to go back to his show.

Federal Bureau of Investigation Director Kashyap P. "Kash" Patel

Q. Do you have confidence in Kash Patel?

The President. Yes, I do.

Venezuela

Q. On Venezuela, sir, you mentioned getting land back from Venezuela. What land are you talking about?

The President. Getting land, oil rights, whatever we had. They took it away because we had a President that maybe wasn't watching, but they're not going to do that. We want it back.

Q. Which land are——

The President. They took our oil rights. We had a lot of oil there. As you know, they threw our companies out, and we want it back.

The President's Address to the Nation

Q. What's your message this evening?

The President. Well, I think the message this evening is, we inherited a mess, and we've done a great job, and we continue to, and our country is going to be stronger than ever before very soon.

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:57 p.m. on the tarmac prior to boarding Air Force One. In his remarks, he referred to Iowa National Guard members Sgt. Edgar B. Torres-Tova, USA, and Sgt. W. Nathaniel Howard, USA, and civilian interpreter Ayad Mansoor Sakat, were killed when their convoy of joint U.S. and Syrian forces was attacked in Palmyra, Syria, on December 13.

Categories: Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, Joint Base Andrews, MD.

Locations: Joint Base Andrews, MD.

Names: Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Bongino, Daniel J.; Howard, W. Nathaniel; Patel, Kashyap P. "Kash"; Sakat, Ayad Mansoor; Torres-Tova, Edgar B.; Wiles, Susan.

Subjects: Federal Bureau of Investigation; Maryland, Joint Base Andrews; Maryland, President's visit; News media, Presidential interviews; Syria, death of U.S. servicemembers in Palmyra; Venezuela, oil supply and refining; White House Chief of Staff.

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