

White House press briefing
03/20/23
2:15:02 p.m.
1 minute and 16 seconds

SIMON ATEBA: [SHOUTING]

KARINE JEAN-PIERRE: No, no, no, no, no. No. Nope.

ATEBA: [SHOUTING]

JEAN-PIERRE: That's not — we're not doing this.

ATEBA: [SHOUTING]

JEAN-PIERRE: We're not doing this.

ATEBA: [SHOUTING]

JEAN-PIERRE: We're not doing this.

ATEBA: [SHOUTING]

JEAN-PIERRE: We're not doing this.

ATEBA: — everyone from across the room. You've been dismissive against me, against some people in this Briefing Room.

REPORTER: Sir, stop.

ATEBA: And I'm saying this is the U.S. This not China. This not Russia.

KAREM: Let her start.

[GROANING]

ATEBA: This not Russia.

JEAN-PIERRE: Okay.

ATEBA: What you are doing — you are making a mockery of the First Amendment.

[REPORTERS SHOUTING]

KAREM: Respect her.

[REPORTERS SHOUTING]

KELLY O'DONNELL: Decorum, please! Decorum, please!

ATEBA: It's been seven months you have not called on me.

O'DONNELL: Decorum, please!

ATEBA: I'm saying that's not right. That's not right.

JEAN-PIERRE [TO SEDEIKIS]: Untimed welcome, guys!

[LAUGHING]

JEAN-PIERRE: Welcome to the Press Briefing Room.

ATEBA: I see you're trying to censor me and some people, but that's not right.

REPORTER: Sir, let her go.

JEAN-PIERRE: Are we ready? Are we going to behave?

REPORTER: Thank you.

ATEBA: [INAUDIBLE] respect the First Amendment.

O'DONNELL: Decorum, please!

TAMARA KEITH: Simon.

JEAN-PIERRE: Okay.

O'DONNELL: Sorry to our guests, we apologize.

JEAN-PIERRE: Yes. I apologize.

JASON SEIDEIKIS: No, it's good. It's fine.

JEAN-PIERRE: Okay, while many — while many folks here in U.S. are focused on March Madness or the World Baseball Classic — go, Team USA, tomorrow night, by the way — we at the White House today are going to focus on another sport which is soccer or football, as some of my guests might say, specifically AFC Richmond.

(...)

2:21:10 p.m.

2 minutes and 51 seconds

JEAN-PIERRE: Okay, I just got to say something before we start. I know some folks are probably going to leave the room. Um —

REPORTER: Any other actors?

JEAN-PIERRE: — make sure —

ATEBA: Karine, one thing is —

JEAN-PIERRE: — I —

ATEBA: — you can't keep — you can't keep discriminating against some people in the Briefing Room because you don't like them, you don't like the questions.

JEAN-PIERRE: — so you have a choice —

ATEBA: No, you've been discriminating —

JEAN-PIERRE: — you have a choice —

ATEBA: — against me —

JEAN-PIERRE: — you have a choice —

ATEBA: — and normal people in the Briefing Room.

UNIDENTIFIED REPORTER: Shhhh!

ATEBA: And I'm saying that that's not right. This not China. This not Russia. This is the United States.

FEMALE REPORTER: DECORRRRUUUUMMM!

ATEBA: This is the White House.

REPORTER: Come on.

ATEBA: It's been seven months.

JEFF MASON: Simon, Simon, the point is —

KAREM: Simon, and the rest of us are here too, pal.

ATEBA: It has been seven months. You guys have not done anything for me.

MASON: — come on, let her talk. If you have grievances, you should bring them to her later.

ATEBA: I have done that. I have done that.

MASON: Right now, this is for the entire press corps.

ATEBA: All my emails have been ignored.

MASON: And the press corps is tired of dealing with this.

KAREM: It isn't just about you, Simon.

ATEBA [TO MASON]: I have done that. All this time, you get questions all the time and you don't have to sit here for eight months —

MASON: The thing is —

ATEBA [TO MASON]: — and be discriminated against —

MASON: Eight —

ATEBA [TO MASON]: — all this time that you're in the front row.

MASON: — if you have legitimate questions, you can ask the press secretary at another time.

ATEBA: You have people in the back who don't get any questions.

KAREM: Don't make assumptions about what the rest of us do. Mind your manners when you're in here. If you have a problem, you bring it up afterwards. But you are impinging on everybody in here who's only trying to do their jobs. Sorry.

ATEBA: Okay, thank you. I'm saying that you shouldn't discriminate against some people because you don't agree with their question or you're offended by them.

KATIE ROGERS: You made your point. You made your point. We all heard it.

JEAN-PIERRE: Alright. Guys, as you all know, many of you know, this is the White House Press Briefing Room, a historic room, a room that should have decorum, a room where folks should respect their colleagues and respect the guests that are here. And I understand that there's going to be give and take. That's the way the press briefing has gone for — for decade before me. And I will always — always respect that, but what I will not — what I will not appreciate is disrespecting your colleagues and disrespecting guests who are here to talk — who were here, talk about an incredibly important issue, which is mental health. And what is just occurred this

last 10, 15 minutes is unacceptable. It's —

ATEBA: [INAUDIBLE]

JEAN-PIERRE: — it is unacceptable.

ATEBA: You've been discriminating against me for months.

JEAN-PIERRE: So we're going to — so, we're either going to continue the briefing or we can just end the briefing right here.

UNIDENTIFIED REPORTER: No.

JEAN-PIERRE: Okay. Well then let's go. Now, for my next guest, my colleague John Kirby is joining me here today to talk about President Xi's visit to Moscow and take any questions that you may have. Again, another guest that should be respected in this room and allowed to take questions from the front and from the back and that's what we do everyday and that's what we're going to continue to do.

(...)

3:02:15 p.m.

41 seconds

ZEKE MILLER: And, just first, a moment of personal privilege here. I just want to express our apologies to the press corps, to the folks watching at home for the display you saw earlier. Our responsibility is to them. We're here to ask questions on their behalf, to hold their government accountable because they can't all be here. And — this — this isn't about us. So, with that, for you, there's some calls over the weekend, the last couple days, from small, mid-size banks calling on the federal government to ensure deposits above \$250,000. Is that something that the President would be supporting?

JEAN-PIERRE: So, don't have any new announcement at this time for you — and appreciate that — I should say — I appreciate that. I think the American people appreciate that b/c that is an important message to send to all of them who are watching.

(...)

3:03:43 p.m.

2 seconds

ED O'KEEFE: And I'll join Zeke in what he said earlier.