

## White House Correspondents Dinner

07/24/26

7:22:09 p.m.

2 minutes and 38 seconds

WEIJIA JIANG: Good evening, everybody. Let's try this again. Because the one thing about this press corps is we always have a follow-up. Welcome to the 2026 White House Correspondents' Dinner, a tradition spanning more than a century and when we are especially proud to continue tonight. President Trump, thank you. Thank you for being here again. Thank you for all your support as we reschedule this dinner. White House Press secretary Karoline Levitt and your team, thank you too. Cabinet members, members of Congress distinguished guests, welcome. And of course, WHCA members, thank you. Many of you are also with us in April. You came as guests, but within moments you went to work – please sit – you shifted into reporters taking notes, capturing videos, streaming live, even as uncertainty and anxiety filled the room. Law enforcement ran toward danger. Administration officials met backstage to gather facts, and Mr. President, you went straight to the podium in the White House Briefing Room to answer questions from journalists. All of us still in our gowns and tuxedos. That night will go down in history, and so will our response. During that news conference, President Trump said the ballroom was totally unified and that it was a very beautiful thing to see. Three months later, it still is. Whatever may divide us, we stand together against political violence. An assassination attempt on our President is an attack on democracy itself. Tonight – tonight, our message is this: We are back. We will not be intimidated. We refuse to let an act of violence have the final word. Later, we will honor people whose courage and grace in April prevented the evening from becoming much worse. We'll also celebrate the exceptional work of our colleagues, the students who want to join our ranks, and the First Amendment that protects it all, but first, enjoy dinner and be good to your servers. We'll see you soon.

(....)

8:16:10 p.m.

5 minutes and 52 seconds

JIANG: Since Calvin Coolidge became the first president to attend this event in 1924, nearly every sitting president has joined us at some point in their term. The tradition is rooted in a simple principle that a president and the press corps that covers him can share a meal and even a joke. This dinner has never lacked for opinions. I know everyone has a lot of feelings about it. Even in the normal circumstances and people ask, should it still exist, but every year we pack the room. In fact, we just did it twice. Whatever brought you here tonight this evening is dedicated to the First Amendment and the excellent work of our colleagues and scholars. President Trump, you are joining us tonight for the second time in three months, and we don't

take that lightly. Thank you. Thank you again to Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt and the White House press team. Thanks to the relentless WHCA board members, our executive director Steve Thoma, and our general counsel Simon Lackovich for your hard work and friendship. I have to say thank you again to my CBS News family for enduring a second round of dinner planning. And, of course, my family, I love you so much. Our entertainer, mentalist Oz Perlman is also back with us. Thank you, Oz. For the record, he did guess Karoline's baby's name right last time, and we can't wait to see what you reveal, but you can skip the part where you guess the President's phone number half the reporters in this room already have it. Finally, on behalf of the White House Correspondents' Association. I also want to thank supporters from around the world, across the political spectrum who sent well wishes after a shooting interrupted our event in April. Many of you are joining us on livestream and C-SPAN is the crew, as it was that night. Photographers and technicians were under the stairs where the shooter was, but they never stopped rolling their cameras and transmitting live footage despite the circumstances. Thank you. That night tested all of us, but it revealed something worth fighting for. While journalists in the ballroom were gathering facts and getting them to the public. I got a rare glimpse of something few of us ever see in real time. In a holding room, President Trump was huddled with members of his cabinet asking questions, finding the best way to share the answers with everyone, which is our job description too. I keep coming back to that split screen, not because it was dramatic, but because it quietly proved, no matter how complicated or tense the relationship is between the press and the presidency, what we share is far more important than anything else, and that is our duty to serve the American people. As our country continues to celebrate 250 years of its extraordinary story, this gathering is further proof that the American press endures with it.

DOKOUPIL: The White House Correspondents Dinner was to be a night celebrating the First Amendment. and 250 years of surviving, thriving, and overcoming our nation's many unthinkable challenges. [CHEERS]

JIANG: Welcome to the 2026 White House Correspondents Dinner.

DOKOUPIL: But that celebration was stopped by a single gunman in an apparent attempt to assassinate the President.

WOLF BLITZER: I heard the loud bangs that were going off. It was extremely frightening. I was only a few feet away.

NANCY CORDES: We were all told to just get under the tables and at first some of the White House officials did too.

PETER DOOCY: A whole rush of people started to come up towards the front door.

JIANG: On a night when we are thinking about the freedoms in the First Amendment, we must also think about how fragile they are, and that was very unexpected.

DOKOUPIL: The President and the White House press corps proved resilient.

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: This was an event dedicated to freedom of speech that was supposed to bring together members of both parties with members of the press, and in a certain way it did.

DOKOUPIL: So, we are together again tonight proving our resolve and on yielding fortitude. and to celebrate America at 250.

JAMES MADISON: Hello from 1789. I'm James Madison. Yes, that James Madison. I wrote the First Amendment. At the time, we worried a king might control the press. Turns out, you're now worried about tweets, algorithms, and people yelling on television. Let me clarify the rule. The government doesn't get to shut the press up, not when it's wrong, not when it's annoying and not when it's asking uncomfortable questions.

(....)

8:31:08 p.m.

9 minute and 13 seconds

JACQUI HEINRICH: Before anything else, I wanna recognize Weijia Jiang for her leadership, her unwavering commitment to this press corps. Weija, you have really represented this association with such professionalism. [CHEERS AND APPLAUSE] There we go. There we go. And she has, she has represented this association with such professionalism, integrity, grit, and I am so deeply grateful not just for your example, but also more so for your friendship. And to our members, I am humbled that you've put your trust in me to lead the White House Correspondents' Association for the next year, and I look forward to working alongside all of you as we continue our shared mission. Pursuing the facts without fear or favor. and exercising the freedoms protected by the First Amendment in service of the American people. The attempt on President Trump's life last April was a sobering reminder that democracy is not immune to violence, and the freedoms that we cherish can never be taken for granted. Political violence must have no home in America. [APPLAUSE] And journalism can serve us well to broaden understanding, to shed light, and to inform our decisions, especially in this age of fast-moving information that can reinforce our divisions, and we are grateful to have President Trump here tonight taking part in this tradition that recognizes the essential role of a free press in our democracy. Thank you, President Trump. The events of that night also revealed the resilience of this press corps. The all-American sense of resolve that no act of intimidation will silence us and the endurance of the First Amendment. And we're gathered here tonight because we believe that a free press always finds a way forward, and it is in that spirit that the WHCA Service Award

was established to recognize exceptional service to this association, and it is fitting that one of the two awards that we are giving tonight goes to the staff of the Washington Hilton. They are hospitality professionals who always put service first. As harrowing events unfolded that night, their courage was on full display. The kitchen workers, the ballroom wait staff remained at their posts when President Trump urged that the evening should continue. They prepared to serve more than 2600 guests while they were still processing the shock alongside all of us. And when the Secret Service made the necessary call to postpone the remainder of the program, they immediately pivoted, preserving every unserved meal and donating them to local shelters, and many of these dedicated professionals have worked dozens of White House correspondents' dinners since this event first moved to the Washington Hilton in 1968 and 58 years later, we are deeply grateful for their partnership. We are proud of the history that we've built together, and we are excited to return to the Washington Hilton next year, stronger than ever." Please welcome the Washington Hilton's general manager Ken Jarka, and catering manager Karen Fuketis to accept the WHCA President's Award for exceptional service on behalf of the entire Washington Hilton team. [CHEERS AND APPLAUSE]

JIANG: Congratulations and thank you, Jacqui. I also want to thank the staff and security team right here at the Waldorf Astoria for putting so much time – [APPLAUSE] – and care into helping us plan this event in a very short notice. That evening in April did not unfold as planned, but it ended exactly like it was supposed to. 2,600 guests plus hundreds of others who are working that night got to go home unharmed, and that was made possible by the brave men and women of law enforcement in the United States Secret Service. On behalf of every person who was inside that ballroom, and every family who got to hear their loved ones say, don't worry, I'm okay. We thank you. One officer placed himself directly in harm's way and engaged the armed suspect. Even after gunfire struck his protective vest. He stayed in the fight, and the attacker was stopped. I know many of us have wondered what if he hadn't acted in that exact way. What if he had waited a few more seconds. His courage that night reflects the core values of the Secret Service. Duty, justice, courage, honesty, and loyalty, and as a commitment to safeguarding his country and community. They also shaped his career first as an infantryman and section leader in the United States Marine Corps, and since 2022, as an officer of the Secret Service, protecting the White House complex and our nation's leaders. Ladies and gentlemen, it is my honor to present the WHCA President's Award for exceptional Service to Officer Victor Gonzalez of the United States Secret Service. [APPLAUSE] Thank you again, Officer Gonzalez, and to all the law enforcement officials who work around the clock to keep us safe. Democracy is defended in many ways, sometimes with a badge, sometimes with a notebook and a deadline. The White House Correspondents' Association started as a group of 50 reporters, and I am proud that our membership hit a record number in 2025, more than 1,000 people, including many from new media outlets. Our press corps covers the presidency at all hours of

the day in their personal lives. They miss out on a lot so that the world doesn't have to. If you're a past WHCA president here tonight, please stand. [APPLAUSE] Board members, please stand. [APPLAUSE] Our chief White House correspondents, please stand. White House correspondents, reporters, producers, photographers, visual and audio journalists, please stand. [APPLAUSE] And tonight, I also want to salute our colleagues in the Pentagon press corps. Your work is invaluable, especially as our nation is at war. Please stand. [APPLAUSE]

(....)

8:54:48 p.m.

10 minutes and 28 seconds

WOLF BLITZER: Each year, a panel of independent judges reviewed dozens of entries for the five major WHCA Journalism Awards, and it's my honor tonight to announce this year's winners. And I'd like to point out that this is really a special night for me. I don't know if many of you were at the first White House Correspondents Association dinner in April, but it was for me was very memorable indeed, and I can report this time after the first course, I did not go to the men's room. [APPLAUSE] [LAUGHTER] I've been to this dinner over these many, many years. I spent 7 years as a White House correspondent, and I just want to remember, with real excitement and passion who often came with me to these dinners over these many years, and that was the man who hired me at CNN, the man who created CNN, the late Ted Turner, who recently passed away. [APPLAUSE] And he was a not only a mentor and a good friend, but he loved, loved journalism. when he hired me, he said, Remember, Wolf, we're the cable news, news N-E-W-S Network. This is where the news comes first, and don't forget that. Forget about your own personal opinions, just report the news fairly and accurately, and if you can do it first, and that's what I've been trying to do over all of these years. So, let's remember Ted Turner, what he did for not just for CNN but for CNN and all of the news organizations over these many, many years. The Aldo Beckmann Award for overall excellence in White House coverage, named for the late *Chicago Tribune* correspondent and former association president Aldo Beckmann goes to – and let's give him a big round of applause – Josh Dawsey of *The Wall Street Journal*. The judges said Josh Dawsey shows us how power works inside the presidency and over the past year his reporting has revealed how decisions are made, who influences them, and how power is exercised at the highest levels. Josh Dorsey went far beyond the deluge of breaking news to offer invaluable insights that can only result from deeply sourced enterprise reporting. In the tradition of Waldo Beckmann, he exemplifies integrity, persistence, and a steadfast commitment to holding power to account. Ladies and gentlemen, the WHCA is pleased to give the Aldo Beckmann Award to Josh Dawsey. Let's continue with the awards. Thank you. The WHCA gives out two awards for reporting under deadline pressure. One for print and one for broadcast. This year's print winner is Aamer Mahani – Madhani, and Zeke Miller of the Associated Press. When

sources leaked that Trump administration officials were attempting to purge the National Security Council of staff deemed not sufficiently aligned with the president's agenda. Mahani and Miller quickly moved to verify the claim. They uncovered an unprecedented vetting process. NSC staffers were asked about their past political contributions, voting records, and social media posts as a gauge of loyalty to the president. Ultimately, more than 150 NSC aides were removed, resulting in the loss of considerable foreign policy expertise. The story that Madhani and Miller produced is as consequential as it is revelatory. Please welcome Zeke Miller, accepting the award on behalf of the team. [CHEERS AND APPLAUSE] Now the broadcast award for excellence under deadline pressure. and this year's winner is my colleague and very good friend Kaitlan Collins of CNN. Reporting by CNN's Kaitlan Collins on a historic showdown in the Oval Office between President Trump and Ukrainian President Zelensky launched a memorable day of nonstop insight and analysis, including her exclusive interview with the Secretary of State Marco Rubio. Judges were awed by the depth of knowledge, access, and context that Caitlin brought to coverage of a meeting that unraveled before the world's eyes. The WHCA is pleased to honor the deadline reporting of CNN's Kaitlan Collins. [CHEERS AND APPLAUSE] Let's give Kaitlan another big round of applause. And now the award for excellence in presidential news coverage by visual, visual journalists. This award recognizes a video or photojournalists for covering the presidency at the White House or in the field. And this year, this year's award goes to Andrew Harnik of Getty Images. He captured the moment an Oval Office visitor collapsed during an event, and from the judges – [LAUGHTER] – they say this: "Through sharp timing, layered composition and visual irony, this photograph expertly documents a true split screen moment in real time. The president's orientation and posture inadvertently echoed the statue to his right, while the other half of the frame is defined by movement, a truly striking image of contrast skillfully captured in a chaotic moment. Please join me in congratulating Getty Images photographer Andrew Harnik, who also represents still photographers on the WHCA board. There are more. And now the Katherine Graham Award for Courage and Accountability, named for the legendary *Washington Post* publisher, and it comes with a prize of \$10,000. This year's award goes to *The Wall Street Journal*. *The Journal's* courageous reporting on President Trump's past relationship with financier Jeffrey Epstein triggered the release of the so-called Epstein Files. Thousands of documents that might otherwise have remained hidden from the public, and despite the president's threat of a lawsuit, the Journal published a story about a provocative letter to Epstein bearing President Trump's signature. Trump quickly filed a \$20 billion lawsuit against the Journal revealing reporter Khadeeja Softdar's home address. Her family had to be relocated. *The Journal* was kicked off of Air Force One. But the reporters continue to file revelatory stories. Please welcome the winners of the Katherine Graham Award from *The Wall Street Journal*. Khadeeja Softdar, Sadie Gurman, Annie Linskey, Josh Dawsey again, Alex Leary, Rebecca Ballhaus and Ryan Barber. Their colleague Joe Palazzolo could not attend tonight. [CHEERS AND APPLAUSE]

(....)

9:07:26 p.m.

10 minutes and 42 seconds

BLITZER: The Center for Integrity in News Reporting Award honors the most fair, impartial, objective news reporting by a member of the WHCA that has the courage to not fear and the discipline to not favor. It sponsored and administered by the Arkansas-based Center for Integrity and News Reporting and comes with a prize of \$25,000. The award goes to Tyler Pager of *The New York Times*. The judges said that, "In his coverage of the first year of President Trump's second term, Pager demonstrates a disciplined, even-handed approach across a wide range of subjects, including supporters and donors, foreign policy, the Justice Department, and Energy. The stories take readers inside consequential presidential decisions while presenting the facts. The work is deeply sourced and carefully verified, reflecting a clear dedication to getting it right without bias. Taken together, this body of work stands as a strong example of fair, impartial, and objective journalism. Precisely the standard this award is intended to honor. Let's hear it one more time for this year's winners, ladies and gentlemen, thank you so much. But before we do that, I – let's give him another huge round of applause. and it's, it's now my pleasure to introduce my good friend, longtime colleague Jonathan Karl.

JONATHAN KARL: All right, the final award of the evening. It is a high honor to – to present the award created to recognize the fierce and fair women who covered the White House every day. But first, I – I – I just want to give a big thank you to Weijia Jiang. Weija, your leadership. was steady when steadiness was in short supply. You refuse to let an act of violence take this dinner away from us. And because of you, it has gone on. You insisted that happen. Thank you. Awesome, courageous. And Mr. President I want to say it matters that you came here tonight. Thank you. For more than 100 years, presidents have chosen to sit in a room of reporters who ask tough and often uncomfortable questions and who report without fear or favor. It's important. Thank you for being here. And, in that spirit I am thrilled to present award named after two women who didn't just cover history, they helped make it. In 1947, a woman joined the White House press corps and changed it forever. Her name was Alice Dunnigan. She was the first African American woman ever credentialed at the White House, and just a few years later, she was joined by Ethel Payne, and together they looked the most powerful man in the world in the eye, and demanded answers about civil rights for black Americans. President Eisenhower didn't always welcome those questions, but Alice and Ethel kept going and kept showing up and they kept asking. The WHCA Dunnigan Payne Award for Lifetime Achievement exists to honor their legacy and to recognize journalists who followed in their footsteps by breaking barriers for future generations. So, tonight, it is a privilege to present the award to two women who did exactly that. In a field long dominated by men, Melissa Young and Susan Walsh each built

extraordinary careers as photojournalists, not by waiting for doors to be opened, but by bursting through them again and again for decades. Melissa Young, this one I knew very well. She worked at ABC News for 44 years. She began in local television in Miami and worked her way to Capitol Hill and the White House, where she was one of the first female photojournalists in the press corps. Melissa documented the presidencies from Ronald Reagan to Donald Trump. She covered campaigns. Secretaries of State and Defense. She reported disaster zones, war zones all around the world. I worked side by side with Melissa for about half of those years, and I traveled to more than a dozen countries with her. I'm not going to mention the time I was briefly detained because that was on Capitol Hill and she came to my rescue. That kind of person. True. She's tireless and professional, and a lot of fun to be around. She did it all with persistence, resilience, and quiet determination, retiring just last year. Susan Walsh, her career was built on anything but luck. When a promised job fell through after a college internship. She called the AP's Boston bureau every single day for three weeks. Just saying, give me a shot, will you? Well, finally, they did just that. She came in, she said yes to every assignment. She worked her way up. She got to cover Super Bowls. Boston Marathons, five Olympic Games. She transferred to Washington in 1997 and from there she went on to photograph every U.S. president from Jimmy Carter to President Trump, traveling the world as part of the White House press corps. In 1999, she was part of the AP team that was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Feature Photography for her coverage of President Clinton's impeachment. She also served as the White House News Photographers Association, fighting for press access at every turn. Susan also retired just last year and traded the briefing room in for the ice rink, where she now plays hockey with her son. She's pretty good. Alice Dunnigan and Ethel Payne showed us what it looks like to refuse to be pushed aside so that they could keep bearing witness to what matters most. Melissa Young and Susan Walsh spent their careers doing exactly that. Two women, 80 years of combined service and a legacy that honors everything this award stands for.

[VIDEO TRIBUTE]

KARL: All right, please join me in welcoming Susan and Melissa to the stage.

(....)

9:20:58 p.m.

20 seconds

SUSAN WALSH: And then finally to all the journalists out there who are working incredibly hard to report the truth, despite access issues, insults, and subpoenas. Keep it up. Your work matters and we need you now more than ever. Thank you so much for all you do.

(....)

9:23:57 p.m.

18 minutes and 56 seconds

JIANG: I am confident that one day our scholarship winners could be the ones taking home awards. After all, not that long ago we were you: young people, passionate about journalism, and determined to make it work. I've been thinking a lot about my own journey to this podium tonight. I grew up in rural West Virginia, in a town at the foothills of the Allegheny Mountains, a town called Buchanan, Population 5,500. Those images of the devastating floods that you've been seeing are from my hometown. My heart, thoughts, and prayers are with everybody there. After my dad finished grad school at WVU, where he properly learned how to say let's go Mountaineers, my parents decided to stay in the state to open a restaurant. It was such a treat when hunters came in and left deer meat as a tip. On Sundays after church, families packed into the dining room, all dressed up. My mom learned every customer's name, their favorite dishes. I worked the cash register, topped off glasses of sweet tea and did my homework in the corner booth. A day like that seemed ordinary at the time. Looking back to think that days like that could be considered ordinary. It's the most powerful reminder of how extraordinary America is. My dad came to the U.S. as a student with just 67 bucks, or as Frankie might say, 6-7. My mom holding a small suitcase on one hand and a toddler me with the other, yet they built a new life, a successful business, and a real future. Our Chinese restaurant was the first in my town. Of those 5,500 residents, the Chinese American population of Buchanan was 3. My mom, my dad, and me. Growing up there was not always easy. Most folks had never laid eyes on people who looked like my family, but far more often than not, the community was welcoming and generous. Turns out deer meat is great in a stir fry. In Mandarin, the word for America is Měiguó. It literally means beautiful country, and I love that. America the Beautiful was never only about her landscapes or landmarks. It has always been about the promise that, no matter where you come from, you get a shot at chasing your dreams. My dreams began right there in that family restaurant, a small TV in the back was often turned to the news, my dad's go-to for learning more English. In the middle of dinner service, it was the *CBS Evening News* anchored by Dan Rather and Connie Chung. I was hooked. In middle school, I won a contest to be a student reporter for a national news show called Channel One. And when a local news crew came to cover it, they learned just how big my dreams really were. [Middle school Weijia: I hope to be the next Connie Chang and better, that's kind of hard, but that's my goal. And so, I'm going to work very hard at trying to be a broadcast journalist.] 30 years later, it's surreal to say that I've sat in Connie Chung's old chair to fill in on the evening news, and Connie and I have talked about how the White House beat and the White House Correspondents' Association used to be a little boy, bit of a boys club. For decades, women could be members, but they were not invited to sit at this dinner until 1962 when a woman who would become dean of the press corps insisted. Thank you, Mrs. Helen Thomas. So, tonight, it means everything to stand here is the

first woman of color ever elected president of this association in its 112-year history. I'm here because of the tenacious women who came before me, Melissa, Susan, and support from my family who are with us tonight. My husband Luther, not from West Virginia, but Arkansas, similar enough. My amazing daughter Frankie. little brother Jack, who's should be sleeping by now. I love you more than anything in the world. I love you the most. My parents came to a country with almost nothing to give their daughter everything, and now I have that because they could be with me in this moment. Mama baba shisha. And sitting with them, my middle school video production teacher, Mrs. Diane Williams, who spent countless hours on my submission for that contest. that changed my life. Like public school teachers across the United States, Mrs. Williams looked at a 13-year-old kid and said, you can be whatever you want when you grow up, and she meant it. My story is like that of so many in this room and in this country, only in America. Only in America could a little girl born in China and raised in Appalachian coal country, make her way to the Oval Office to ask questions of the President of the United States.

Because when this is your home, you inherit something remarkable, the protections in the First Amendment, free religion, free speech, free press, free assembly, free petition. This fundamental right belongs to everyone, and that's exactly who the Founders were thinking about when they protected a free press, everyone, all Americans. They were not thinking about reporters. A free press is not a favor to journalists because we're special. We are not special, but America is. No matter who you are, the freedom to criticize without fear of being destroyed, that's not a bug in our democracy. It's supposed to be the feature. In 1786, writing from Paris, Thomas Jefferson told his friend back in Virginia, "our liberty depends on the freedom of the press, and that cannot be limited without being lost." Five years later, that thought was enshrined in the Constitution after Jefferson urged James Madison to include a Bill of Rights. Many founders couldn't stand the press. Some things never change, but they understood if our access is restricted, it's really the people's access to information that is limited. If the media faces government pressure or censorship. It's the people who end up knowing less. That was true then and it's true now. But having press freedom comes with a tremendous responsibility. We can't demand accountability without practicing it. Criticism of the media can be unfair. It can also be legitimate We get a lot right, but sometimes we get things wrong. We mistake proximity to power for understanding it, and at times we get trapped in our own bubbles. There is a difference though, an existential difference between criticizing the press and trying to undermine it. One is healthy and it makes all of us better. The other is exactly what the founders hoped to prevent. Around the world, press freedom is not guaranteed. In many countries, reporters who criticize the government are detained without trial. Their stories erased in the worst cases, they never make it home. Tonight, we think about all of them, and we think about the protections that set us apart as a nation. Just 20 days ago, America turned 250 years old. The First Amendment is a big part of how she made it this far, and it falls on all of us to make

sure it carries her through to the next 250 and beyond. President Trump, I've covered you for a long time, and so have many reporters in this room. When we ask questions, you push back, you give us answers and we push back. You have always been a deal guy. Well, that's the deal. And the First Amendment is a done deal. And that's what we toast tonight, the freedoms that brought us back together even after they were threatened. So, let's raise a glass to what makes ours a beautiful country. And now, ladies and gentlemen, please join me in welcoming the 45<sup>th</sup> and 47<sup>th</sup> President of the United States. President Donald J. Trump.

DONALD TRUMP: Wow, that was very beautiful, but this has not been an easy evening, all these awards. Do I have a say in those awards or won those awards? But it's great to be back at a place that I know very well because I built it. And I'm very proud of it because I built it for \$2.9 billion less than the Federal Reserve Building, which is a lot smaller, by the way. Figure that one out. But I am delighted to be here at the White House Correspondents' Dinner. Amazing people, a lot of people that I like. Some I don't like at all, but I respect most of them. I must say that you do a great job, amazing job, and it's an honor. As I said three months ago, the show must go on. We were back – we were backstage and we both wanted to just have it go on, whether it was 2 o'clock, 3 o'clock in the morning. It didn't matter, but in the end, it made more sense to do it the way we're doing it. And we had a great news conference at the White House – at a very important room, and you did very well. I think we all did very well. It was a hell of an evening, I can tell you that. Won't soon be forgotten, and I think a lot was learned from that evening, tremendous amount was learned about security and about other things, the dangers of what we all do. But just like my presidency, the second time is always better. It's always better. And the third time we'll be better yet. I'm only kidding. From the earliest moments after the attack on our dinner last April. I knew we had to reschedule this event as soon as possible and do it very quickly and we met very quickly and we figured something out, but the attempted mass murder at the Washington Hilton, that's what it could have been, was an assault on our democracy itself, very serious situation.

Many of you were there with me and some showed extreme bravery like Pete Hegseth, Steve Miller, Tom Holman. Really. They were standing on tables and most of you were under the tables, okay? But they did, they showed, I saw every one of them that was standing up in those tables. I didn't know if they were brave. If they were smart, if they were stupid as hell. But they were on those tables in some cases and there were a lot of different feelings going on in the room at that moment.

But after hearing the gunshots, many people yelled, get down, get down. which caused Nicki Minaj to start twerking. Do you believe it? Get down. She's the only one that really understood what that meant. Quite an evening. But tonight we come back together to answer that heinous attack with unwavering resolve, and every one of us here this evening to show that in America

we do not yield to political violence. We don't, we can't do that. We can't do it. So, in this country, we believe in freedom of speech. We settle our differences not with bullets but with open and vigorous debate, and no deranged loser with a gun will ever change that. We can't let that ever happen. A lot of very dangerous people out there. We can't let it happen. I want to begin by expressing our gratitude to the incredible men and women who put their lives on the line every day to protect my family and myself, all presidents and lots of others. That's the United States Secret Service, so I appreciate it very much, Sean and the whole group, amazing job. Amazing job. In recent months, they've repeatedly responded to threats with speed and professionalism and extraordinary courage, and there is no better example of that than Officer Victor Gonzalez, who we just met. It was amazing. He – what he did was amazing. When the would-be assassin charge, the checkpoint at speed he was fast, you know, when you looked at that, you had to look at it about 10 times before you really saw what was going on. He was quick. Nasty. The gun made him nasty actually. But Officer Gonzalez engaged the attacker without hesitation, and took a bullet to the chest after his ballistic vest fortunately was on, saved his life, and Victor did not even want to go to the hospital for a checkup. We insisted – really, we wanted him to do it. We insisted, but he didn't want to go. So, to Officer Gonzalez, Secret Service, Metropolitan Police, law enforcement generally, and even all of the military surround us in the room tonight. We salute you and we thank you with all of our hearts. Thank you very much. Great job. Great job. These are great people.

So, this evening we're picking up right where we left off, so let's have a little bit of fun, you know, I said, what do we do here? Is this supposed to be fun? Am I supposed to be serious? Am I supposed to be a comedian? So, I guess you said maybe a little bit of everything. I know one thing I could never have done the speech that I had ready just a short while. Oh, that was going to be a doozy. I was so psyched. I was going to rip people. And I don't know, just something changed. It's really for the better, but I just wouldn't want to do that, but we'll do a little ripping if you don't mind. But it is true. I said, how do we handle? It's going to be a different kind of an evening, and it is, and, in many ways, it's a more beautiful evening actually. Everyone's looking really good tonight, and I know it was not easy finding shoes to go along with your bulletproof vests, which many people didn't want to wear because they'd rather die than look 20 pounds heavier, you know that, right?

We have that a lot. They put – they put one on me. I said, are you sure? I'm not wearing this. No, you gain, you look exactly 20. They say, sir, it's about 21 pounds. I said, not good. But I want to thank the outgoing President of the White House Correspondents' Dinner, Association, as she won't admit it, and she should not admit it, but we sort of became friendly, you know, in times of stress, on occasion you become friendly. I have a lot of respect for Weija, and I tell you – we – we went through a little bit of a war together. It turned out pretty good. It turned out pretty good because of a lot of good people. They – they stopped the tragedy, so I want to thank you

very much. Fantastic. And Weija worked extremely hard to ensure this dinner was rescheduled, and we wanna just thank her family. I just met her parents, her children, her husband. What a perfect family. So, it's a really great. Thank you very much all for, for putting up with this – for putting up with this, right?

But let me also thank the incoming president of the Correspondents' Association, Jacqui Heinrich. She could be very tough as a reporter, I will tell you. She can be nasty. She looks so beautiful, but she can be so nasty. How could that happen? But she just got married to a very successful congressman, very good congressman. I'd like to have a couple of more votes from it. That's okay. On occasion, you chose a little independence. We don't like that. But now he's a very professional guy and he's very – he loves our country, but that's a big thing. I – I just see what takes place. We're talking about what takes place to be in the position that you're leaving and that Jacqui's coming into and it's a lot of work, a lot of friendships, a lot of talent, and so Jacqui, congratulations. And congratulations are also in order for our favorite White House press secretary, Karoline Levitt, who just had her second child. You and your husband. He's great. She's done a fantastic job. We all love her. She's done a fantastic job. She's another one. She could be nasty. But sometimes she has no choice, right? But Karoline may have one of the hardest jobs in the White House. She has to deal with all of you. all of the time, and you can be very difficult. You can be very, very difficult people, but I'm probably being a little bit oversensitive. Sometimes, I really do think that some of you don't like me. In fact, I read a report, I get 93% negative publicity. 93. I – how the hell did I win the election by so much. Think of it, I don't think that's true. I can't believe it's 93. In the 80s, maybe, but not 90s. But this place is the really the largest group of Trump Derangement Syndrome people ever put together at one time, I suspect.

Some of you are lucky that our last dinner was cut short because I had brought with me what would possibly have been, I'm telling you, I had, I had something I was going to go after you. I was going to, I feel so badly doing this. It's got to be such a letdown. Oh yay yay, but your lives were really in danger the last time for an opposite reason. But on the plus side, your careers were saved, and we have a – we really do -- we have a complete and total – you know, I love the words complete and total. They say, but it means almost the same thing as that. I say it doesn't matter when you say it. It's called emphasis. It's called emphasis, but everyone is now really warming up. The new White House military centered, drone port, highly protected ballroom. It's – we have our ballroom. The windows are this thick. I said to the people, well, if a bullet hits, what happens? Nothing. Nothing. It bounces right off, sir. This is the greatest bulletproof glass. I said, AK-47, that's supposed to be a big one. I don't know so much about the guns. My sons know a lot. but I said, hey, I know it's big. What would happen? They go up, meaning it can take more. I said, so if I'm making a speech and I hear that pinging sound at a window. What would I do, sir? Leave the room right away, but – but you're going to be safe. We're building something

that's going to be amazing and in light of what we went through, I think people understand that it's going to be amazing, a phenomenal, one of the biggest drone ports anywhere in the world, right on the roof, right protecting the White House, not only the ballroom and what's underneath, you know, is supposed to be a top military secret what's underneath, but then you get sued as usual, and you have to reveal that you're building is unbelievable situation downstairs with room after room of very complex stuff. It was the military's dream to have it built. I want to have a ballroom because for 150 years they wanted it and then the generals came to see me and they said, sir, you're building something. This gives us an opportunity to do something that will be so unbelievable and never happen again, because there's very little built under the White House, very hard to build under a very fragile building like that. It's very fragile. It's old, and little different construction standards, frankly, and this is an opportunity for us to build something very powerful. I said, let's keep it secret. They said, no, no, we're telling you, sir, let's keep it secret. And then we get sued and we revealed every room, every.

We told the people that did the suing they're not good people. We told them, we said, you know, you're being very unpatriotic when you bring a suit like this, but it is what it is, but it's going to be, it's really going, it's moving fast. We're ahead of schedule. We're right on budget, and it's going to be something like, I think, no – no country has. I just visited China. They have this magnificent room, the great room they call it The Great Room. It's a Great Room, but what we have is going to blow. There won't be anything like it. It's going to be fantastic. And with all of the things that are going along with it for safety and security of future presidents, you know, I'm only going to be using it for about 6 months, assuming we finish it right on time, I get to use it. Somebody said he's building it for himself. I'm building it for the future. I'm not, I use it now. Had I not gone down six or seven stories, and then in that case, I would have been able to get a couple of years out of it, but that was far more complex than what we did downstairs than what we do upstairs. So, we're very proud of it. It's going to be amazing, and I think I was just telling the whole group sitting at the table, we were talking about and I said, I think, you know, it's a White House correspondents – so, I don't see any reason why you wouldn't be able to use that. It's going to be very large and very beautiful and very safe, and that's what you need.

So, I was thrilled to see that after witnessing the attack, even Democrat Senator John Fetterman told his fellow Democrats who drop the Trump Derangement Syndrome and build the White House ballroom, but it's much more than that. It's something that you're going to use, I predict that you're going to end up using it and a lot of people are going to end up using it. They're going to be as safe as you can possibly be, but despite everything that happened at the previous dinner and all of the dangers involved, I'm told that this is still the hottest ticket in town. This ticket to get in tonight because it's a smaller room, it's a beautiful room, it's a luxury room. See those beautiful chandeliers, I can tell you everything about them if you'd like to know. See that beautiful capital above? See the beautiful Capitol. See everything, the brass, those chandeliers

are great. I'm looking at them, I'm saying, I wonder if I could, you know, I sold this building. and uh they're doing a nice job, but they're nice people, but I'll tell you, I'm looking at them saying, I wonder if I could walk out with those chandeliers because you can't buy them. They're very special. I won't tell you the fact. I won't mention that they're Czech crystal because I'd like to say everything's made here, but they are Czech crystal. And they are beautiful and the Waldorf people are doing a really nice job.

We're proud of them actually, because, you know, when I left town, I was in an angry. I was a little bit angry. I was offered a nice price. I said, I'm getting out of that place. And then I said, let's make a comeback. And, but I was very proud of this building. This building was hot. Remember the lobby floor, 82,000 feet for those in the real estate business, 82,000 feet – that's a major, it's a major floor. That thing was packed every single night. It was packed mostly Republicans, I would say, but it was packed every single night. It almost brings back memories, but I left town and I have just had nothing but good experience, and this might be the best experience of all, having all of these incredible people in this room. It's a great, it's a great feeling, frankly, it's a great feeling.

But tonight's event is even crazier than the last time. In fact, it's so successful that I've been informed by CBS News's David Ellison, who's going to do offend – job. He's the owner. He's the owner. He bought it, spent a lot of money, and he's going to make, I think, fantastic changes and keep some of the great stuff going, but the next year they're going to call it the Trump White House Correspondents' Dinner. He told me that and I like that very much. We're going to change the name of it, okay? Well, it's going to be so hot, just like our country is hot. We are hot, by the way, but to be honest, it's just about the only way that they're going to ever get me back here. You're going to have to change the name of the dinner, but – how does that one? Not too good.

I hope that everyone finally got to enjoy their entire, very delicious beef tenderloins, very special beef, and I want you all to know that Bobby Kennedy is right here, personally ran over the cow in his car. Boom, and he cut it up and he brought it here for you to eat tonight, so it's very fresh. And Bobby also suggested an appetizer featuring his favorite cut of male raccoon roadkill, but we drew the line at that, Cheryl. We said no, we're not going to do that. We're not doing that. We love Bobby. I tell you, this is a piece of work. You think it's, it is fun, but he is a very different kind of a person. I will tell you. But he has what it takes and he's smart and he loves the country and he wants people to be made to feel good. Do you agree with that, Bobby? He wants people to feel good and uh he's doing a fantastic job. Thank you, Bobby. Thank you. We can joke all we want, but thank you.

(....)

9:58:15 p.m.

8 minutes and 51 seconds

TRUMP: Sloppy Chris Christie, Chris Christie, one of the sloppiest human beings you'll ever meet, fighting – I would say, I could mention the governor of Chicago, but I'm going to mention instead Jerry Nadler, and they're fighting for a big piece of cheesecake, big fat piece of cheesecake. Who the hell wrote that line? But it is true. And then you have a congresswoman, Alexandria Ocasio Cortez, AOC + 3. That's the three friends, right? AOC + 3 and I watched her give that answer when she was over in Europe. It was not a good answer. If I ever gave that answer, I would be out of politics. Remember, you cannot have a 19-second wait time to answer a sick, really, a very, quite simple question, but we'll then have a rematch against an extreme, simple question on a foreign policy from Munich Security Conference. It was a big security conference and this was her first time up in terms of that, and, we had a sort of little preview. And then Anderson Cooper, who is going to fight Lawrence O'Donnell. Not a— I'm not a fan of Lawrence O'Donnell. I like Anderson actually because he's covered me well for many years. Then he went bad as soon as I went for politics, but, but for years, he loved interview. I did so many interviews with him, and he was great, but you know, he's got a little different persuasion than me in many ways, actually. And Lawrence O'Donnell never liked him, never thought he had any talent, but he's still making a living, so I can't knock it. But we had a – contest for who had the lowest ratings and the lowest IQ on television, and that was actually Don Lemon, I think. You know, when I said that, he's the dumbest man on television. I said, you know, when you say some things, you never make a comeback. It's not like, oh gee, hey, Don, let's have dinner some night, but I know what I'm saying.

And then you have Bette Midler and Jane Fonda actually held a concert to protest the first UFC fight. They didn't want to see the fight very few people want. They had a -- they held a -- an event like 3 people showed up and given the choice between seeing some of the really beat up faces of the UFC. Almost everyone chose the people in the UFC. It was between the two of them and the UFC. And what about Bruce Springsteen? What the hell happened to that guy? He looks like hell. I don't care what anyone says. I'm not supposed to say, I'm sure he doesn't like the way I look, but I don't look so bad. But in a recent concert, Bruce, all he did was talk politics. He ought to run for office. That'd be interesting, but all he talked about, he made four political speeches in his three-hour show. The tour has been renamed Bored in the USA, and his new song was so bad that Chris Christie, who's like a fan, you know, he goes out and tells everybody how he hates Chris Christie, keep that guy out of my, and I see Chris Christie there again, high-fiving Bruce Springsteen in the aisle, and Bruce Springsteen saw him and didn't even lift his hand up, and I just wanted because I used to be friendly with Chris. Chris, when somebody doesn't like you write them off, forget it. You had billions of people in the world. You don't have to make a jerk out of yourself.

But usually, a comedian hosts this dinner, and I think we sort of changed it. So, tonight we're going to have somebody who I think is really spectacular, but I've watched comedians get up to the because I have been here actually quite a few times. People don't realize, and there's one time in particular when Barack Hussein Obama hosted it. Do you know who that is? And he hit me hard, but actually he hit me with respect. I was sitting with Melania at a table, and you had Brooklyn Decker, supermodel at a table right next to her, and she – I – I really always will like her. She's married to a great tennis player, Andy, and she was at the table, not at my table, and I have watched this clip thousands of times. They keep playing it because they think that was evening I decided to run for president. It was not. In fact, I loved the evening.

I looked at my wife. I said, can you believe it? all these people? That's all they're doing is talking about me. I love this dinner. It's true. And Obama was nice. He, you know, it's amazing how things work out. He actually showed a picture of the White House with a big Trump on top. Like I put a sign, and you know, I'm sort of doing that when you think about it, right? I mean he wasn't really wrong, but no, he was respectful. He was good and, and it had, but it had nothing to do. It had nothing to do. I just decided that I wanted to make America great again. This had nothing to do with that dinner. I've gotten so many – yeah. I've gotten so many calls and for years they've been saying, was that the moment you decided to run, really, no. I left that night and the press was there. A lot of the same people that I see, they said, did you have a good time? Unbelievable. And some thought I didn't have, but I did have. And, I really, I always remember though Brooklyn, she was so angry. She was much angrier than me. She was angry. She thought they were mocking me, and they really weren't. It was just one of those things and I had a great time, but I left and I sort of thought I was there three or four times before that, but I sort of thought, wow, that dinner is really something special.

And then I ran, I got elected. I thought the press treated me very, very unfairly, and I don't know. I think I made the right decision because you hate to go where maybe you're not wanted, but they did want me. They wanted me for ratings and they wanted me for other reasons, but not for love. And I said, you know, I'm not going to go. First time that ever happened, I think. Was that the first time just about presidents always came, and I didn't go for four years because I got treated terribly by the press and, you know, in my opinion, unfairly. I know unfairly because I know the facts, but I got treated unfairly I didn't go and this year I was called by your president and your chairman and all of the people, and they said we'd like to do it and I said, you know what, with time, time goes by, time passes, and you sort of look at life a little bit differently. I said, let's do it. And I didn't know it's going to turn out the way it did. It turned out to be the biggest event in the history of your day. That was by far the biggest, right, for all the wrong reasons, but as I said before, a lot was learned from that evening, so much having to do with so many different things, including security, but it's an honor to do it. This is my first. I mean, I've been to it numerous times, but as president, I haven't been here, and I'm glad, and I said, they

said, would you do it next year? I said I will be back next year. Now, if you get really, really nasty, maybe not. I don't know. But we're gonna be back next year and well, Jacqui will treat me very badly.

But this year the association decided not to have a comedian, so they considered using Jimmy Kimmel, Jimmy Fallon, these guys, they, they're terrible. They're terrible. Stephen Colbert, these are people without talent. They get a lot – they have talent, you know who has talent? Their agent getting them out – the money they get. They have no talent, but they are not comedians, they're not funny people. They're angry people. They're sick people. But the association really put on a big show, and they have somebody very special. I look forward to seeing him, and so they thought about going with a professional clown for entertainment, but Adam Shifty Schiff was not available. You know, he's known. I called him, I – I hate some people, you know, I shouldn't say this. I'm President. I'm not supposed to hate him. I'm supposed to love everybody, but he's a terrible person. He's a liar, and I called them watermelon-head because he has the largest head I've ever seen with the smallest neck, pencil neck. How does that big fat ugly head stand on a – on a little pencil – pencil – pencil neck. And then I'm told that even Rosie O'Donnell reached out from Ireland. She really wanted to be here in order to honor me. She loves me very much, and she was desperate to come back to the United States and pay her respect to Donald J. Trump, but that didn't work out, unfortunately, because nobody wanted her to come back. She actually – but she's one of the greatest sufferers of Trump derangement, and – she's a sick young woman – sick older woman, I guess now I have to say.

(....)

10:08:58 a.m.

2 minutes and 55 seconds

TRUMP: But of course, this evening, it's really all about the fake news media, and you're handling of prizes, writing, and producing, and performing made-up stories like the Academy Awards. You know, Academy Awards used to be the – the epitome of ratings. Outside of the Super Bowl, it got the second-most ratings. Now, it's down in the dumps. Nobody wants to watch it anymore because they took on Trump. They hit me all night long. They hit me. The winner is so and so. I want to talk about Donald Trump. I hate this man. Nobody wants to hear this stuff, right, Peter? Nobody wants to. You ever see the ratings? They used to have 48 million people. Now they have two people watching, but they'll learn their lesson.

But I want to personally congratulate CNN's Kaitlan Collins on receiving her award it was all about me. It's a fake, she shouldn't get the award. It was a fake, but I didn't mind. I said, Kaitlan, congratulations, but it was fake. There's no question about it, but she's a young, attractive woman. She never smiles. I said, Kaitlan, do you have a smile? Smile. You have a nice position.

You're at CNN fake news. You should be a happy person. So, smile, Kaitlan, just smile, but we attack and I thought Kaitlan had really made it big with a major new sponsorship, but then I informed her that it wasn't her on the Bud Light can. It was Dylan Mulvaney, and Dylan Mulvaney cost Bud Light \$35 billion in market cap. That was the worst commercial ever made, by the way, for those few people that want to hear that. Most people don't care, but I would. I wouldn't want to hire Dylan anytime soon. Think of it, they hired Dylan Mulvaney and their market cap has gone down by \$35 billion. Who wrote that commercial?

And then you have writer Josh Dawsey. He also received – he's been killing me for years now. He's been, and yet tonight he shakes my hand. He hugs me, everything nice. He kills me. Josh is amazing. He writes more stories than any human being. There's nobody that writes more than Josh. He'll write four stories about me a day, all different subjects. I mean, I had the other day three stories and one on the – I – but he was upset about this. One was on page seven, three were on page one. They were all written by Josh, but he's hit the big time and he's a workhorse, and yet he's almost unhireable, you know, you hired, he's just one of these guys, *Wall Street Journal's* lucky to have them, but you really, it's, it's unbelievable. He's almost unhireable. CNN is also here and I'm very disappointed they didn't bring Fake Tapper because he's had a rough couple of years, fake as, you know, he calls me up every once in a while, if I pick it up, you know, I pick up my phone.

(....)

10:26:29 p.m.

35 seconds

TRUMP: While I have all of the press here in one place. I have to say that we're having an amazing load of accomplishments that the media never talks about, for example, under my administration, a once feared and powerful regime that relentlessly attacked America has finally been toppled, their former leaders have been removed and they're now being run by a gay dictator facing internal divisions, but I, for one wish Bari Weiss, all the best at CBS News. She a wonderful woman.

(....)

10:30:38 p.m.

6 minutes and 56 seconds

TRUMP: But for all of the trouble that you give me, you give me a lot of trouble, a lot of heartache. I hope all of you know that I believe in the free press more than anyone in this room does. Ehh, maybe not quite. But that's why I'm proud to be the most open and transparent President in history. They called me that. You know who calls me that? Karoline. That's about it, so would anybody else call me that? I think Peter would call me that. Am I the most

transparent? Biden never used to answer your questions. He'd ask Biden 20 questions. He'd never get an answer. Who's the most transparent president, Peter? Who? Who? I look at him like it's the first time he's – he's tongue-tied. I cannot believe it. Oh, he's not going to be happy tomorrow. But you people have no idea how lucky you are. When I'm gone, you're all going to be broke. Your business model is going to be finished. No, it's true. When I'm not around, you're gonna be broke. There's not going to be anybody to report on. Nobody gives a damn about anybody else. The New York Times, the other day had five stories about me, you know, before I got into politics in my whole life, I had seven front-page stories. This is years of success. I think six were good, one was bad. I had five stories, seven – five good. Yeah, I had a total of seven stories on the front page of The New York Times. It's not bad. Now I average about three or four a day, all different topics, all bad. Everything bad. But here we are. I mean, here we are, in fact, when I'm finished, I'm going right back to the Oval Office, so I have to be doing okay, but we are all doing good together. That's why tonight, to show just how much I care about the press, and I want to save your ratings. I'm pleased to announce my intention to – and this is a somewhat of a scoopy intention to run for a fourth term as president of the United States. I will be doing that. I will be having an official. In fact, I think I have -- yeah. I won, I won three times. Now I'm gonna do it again. Thank you. I'm gonna do it. It should be easy. I'm getting very good at running for president. Now, I won three times, did very well the second time, by the way. It's a rigged election, but we don't have to talk about it, you know, it's interesting when you come back. and you do a good job like we did, and you don't care about it so much, but we do have to tighten up these elections because they really are in seriously bad shape. But on a serious note, I want to say once again, I just want to thank you all. It's been an interesting evening. I didn't really know what to expect, and it's far worse than I actually thought, but if you want to know that, but I didn't know exactly what to expect, and I've made a lot of friends tonight. I've made a lot of good friends tonight, probably made some enemies also, but it's been an experience that is something that we've all shared together because we're all in this room tonight because most of us went through a period of – of – trauma from just a short while ago, and you know, some people said they wanted to come but they were afraid to come and you people weren't afraid to come.

There were a lot of people that said, Jacqui, they don't really, you know, they didn't have the courage to come, and we don't want that to happen, and I'm sure it's not going to happen. We're going to do things again. I want to thank our law enforcement keeps us safe. All law enforcement, we have the greatest people on earth, you know, we had two years ago, we had the worst record of recruitment in, as an example of the military, Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, the Coast Guard, Space Force, I love Space Force. Look at all that shooting we're able to do from space. That was my baby, but all of the branches of you couldn't get people to join. This was three years ago, and last week, you probably saw some of you wrote the story. We

have the single best recruiting of people into our armed forces than we have ever had in the history of our country. We have – they are brimming over its great people, and that's a big statement. And that also goes for the police departments where they were having a tremendous problem recruiting. You can't get into a police department now if you're looking for a job, it's very tough, and that also includes our great fire departments because people forget about them. They're unbelievable the job they do. So, I just want to thank you. Look, we're on the – cusp of something big, and I call it, and there's – being very serious when I say this, that this is the golden age of America.

We have \$19.2 trillion being spent in our country. A record was China, I think it was 10 years ago, three trillion. Trillion is a lot. Four years, they went less than one trillion under Biden, and we have 19.2 trillion and this is a period of actually 13 months, not even current, because we hear a little bit longer than that, but that was, as of reporting dates, \$19.2 trillion is being spent. Factories are coming. Toyota just announced they're going to be building the biggest car plant in the world. They're leaving Mexico. They're coming here. Tariffs did that. Tariffs did that. And maybe November 5th did that to the election, but our country is doing things that nobody's ever seen before, and it is true we were, and you've heard me say this, we were a dead country two years ago. Other leaders would see me, and they'd say it's a miracle. President Xi told me that a few weeks ago in China, and he's coming here on September, I think, 24th, coming in September, the end of September, going to be exciting.

The king of Saudi Arabia said, and everyone said almost the same words. We thought you were a dead country. We never thought you had a chance. You were never going to make it back. And in a period of a year, a period of one year, you made it the hottest country anywhere in the world. We all did that together. It's not me. We all did it together. And we do, we have the hottest country anywhere in the world, and we're going to keep it going, and I just want to say it is a room I have tremendous respect for the people in this room. Sometimes I don't feel you treat me fair, or maybe you do. I don't know. I don't feel that, but sometimes you treat me very fairly, and I have a lot of respect for your profession, your profession's amazing, and I just want to thank you for having me, and it's been fun, and I've met a lot of great people and, you know, I used an expression, I've used it right from the beginning. I did this for one reason, to make America great again, and that's what's happening right before your very eyes. We have made America great again. It's going to get a lot greater. So, thank you all very much. It's an honor to be with you. Thank you. Thank you very much.