

# [***Jury Orders Trump To Pay $83.3 Million In Damages; Republican Governors Back Abbott In Standoff; Senate Struggling To Reach Border Deal; Republican Senators Place Blame On McConnell; Presidential Hopefuls Ratchet Up Rhetoric; Sen. Dan Sullivan (R-AK) And Sen. Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) Interviewed On Bipartisan Senate Support For Taiwan; Jury In Defamation Trial Orders Former President Trump To Pay More Than $80 Million In Damages To E. Jean Carroll; Large Numbers Of Migrants Continue To Cross U.S. Southern Border; National Football League Fans Prepare For Conference Championships***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B6B-D1X1-F072-X000-00000-00&context=1516831)

Fox News FOX SPECIAL REPORT WITH BRET BAIER 6:00 PM EST

January 26, 2024 Friday

Copyright 2024 Fox News Network LLC All Rights Reserved

**Section:** NEWS; Domestic

**Length:** 7479 words

**Byline:** Bret Baier, Alexis McAdams, Chad Pergram, Matt Finn, Peter Doocy, Rich Edson

**Guests:** Dan Sullivan, Tammy Duckworth, Shannon Bream, Byron York, Juan Williams

**Body**

HAROLD FORD J.R., FOX NEWS CHANNEL POLITICAL CONTRIBUTOR: Congratulations. God Bless us.

(CROSSTALK)

DANA PERINO, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: (INAUDIBLE).

FORD: Go Lions this weekend.

JESSE WATTERS, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: First thing he said is Kat (PH), let's get out of Philadelphia.

PERINO: Can't Dagen anywhere. And they also probably said, go Lions, right?

FORD: Go Lion.

PERINO: Time has told me to pick the Lions at the beginning of the year. Turns out pretty good bet.

I think, I hope, anyway. That's it for us.

JEANINE PIRRO, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: OK.

PERINO: Have a great night, everyone. Hey, Bret.

BRET BAIER, FOX NEWS CHANNEL ANCHOR: Tyrus knows how to pick --

PERINO: Of course, always. Don't argue with him.

BAIER: All right. Thanks, Dana.

Good evening. Welcome to Washington. I'm Bret Baier.

We're following two big stories tonight featuring some very big numbers. Customs and Border Protection says more than 300,000 people, Illegal immigrants, were encountered by Border Patrol, attempting to enter the U.S. illegally across the southern border in just the month of December.

We'll head to the border to report on the major showdown between Texas and the Biden administration.

But first, the other big numbers tonight, we begin in New York. A jury is ordering former President Donald Trump to pay more than $83 million in a defamation lawsuit brought by E. Jean Carroll, who a jury found previously was sexually assaulted by Trump in the 1990s.

The former president vigorously denied the allegations and what and how he did that was the subject of this defamation case.

Correspondent Alexis McAdams is outside the federal courthouse in Manhattan with the latest tonight. Good evening, Alexis.

ALEXIS MCADAMS, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CORRESPONDENT: Bret, good evening.

Yes, huge numbers here in that courtroom here in Manhattan. Carroll's team said throughout this trial that Donald Trump thinks he is above the law. And this verdict at $83.3 million is meant to show him that he's not.

So, take a look here. This was a smiling E. Jean Carroll, walking out of that courthouse here in New York just a short time ago. You can see it there after the author, Bret, was awarded almost $100 million. You can see her smiling and hugging her legal team.

The jury of nine people decided that Trump acted maliciously with the motivation to injure her. So, the jury took only three hours though to come out with that verdict, and it was a tense day in Court in New York City.

At one point, Trump walked right out of that courtroom, ignoring Carroll's lawyers during their closing remarks, as they said it's time to make the former president pay up for his actions.

Trump's team firing back. Telling the jury that this case had more holes in it than Swiss cheese. Again, saying that Trump never intended to hurt Carroll, but that he shouldn't have to pay up for other people's comments to her on social media.

During the trial, Alina Habba, Trump's lawyer was in hot water quite a few times, even just today alone. The judge telling her this afternoon he was going to put her in lockup if she kept talking out of line.

Habba, says this whole thing is one big hoax. Watch.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ALINA HABBA, LEGAL SPOKESMAN OF DONALD TRUMP: We will immediately appeal. We will set aside that ridiculous jury. And I just want to remind you all of one thing. I will continue with President Trump to fight for everybody's First Amendment right to speak. Why? Because President Trump is leading in the polls, and now we see what you get in New York.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MCADAMS: Carroll won a civil lawsuit against Trump last year. The jury ruled that Trump is liable for sexual abuse and said he did defame the author.

So, back out here live, in addition to this case, Bret, Trump has four criminal cases and were expecting the decision in the New York Attorney General's civil fraud case that could stop Trump and his family from ever doing business again in New York City. Bret.

BAIER: Alexis, you know, she originally wanted $10 million, and then raised $24 million. Have you talked to people there about this number, $83 million with the compensatory and punitive damages?

MCADAMS: Yes. I think this was a bigger number, Bret, than they thought was going to happen. As we heard earlier today, in that courtroom, her legal team, Carroll's legal team said it was going to go from $10 million, like you mentioned, to then $12 million for each of those comments he made in 2019. So, that was part of that too.

But then these other damages are basically to show him you can't keep talking about this case. It was just sending a message to him, because they kept saying he's a billionaire, he's got the money. So, what's it going to take to stop him from talking about her? So, that's why they came to that big number. Bret.

BAIER: Oh, and it's quite something. And more on this with the panel.

MCADAMS: Yes.

BAIER: Alexis, thank you.

Now, the breaking story, today is the deadline given by the Biden administration for the State of Texas to relinquish control of federal land it has seized near the border.

Texas Governor Greg Abbott has the support of more than two dozen red state governors and has shown no sign of complying, taking down that razor wire.

Correspondent Matt Finn is in Eagle Pass, Texas tonight with the latest on this showdown. Good evening, Matt.

MATT FINN, FOX NEWS CHANNEL NATIONAL CORRESPONDENT: Good evening, Bret. As you noted earlier, the United States saw a record high 302,000 migrant encounters here at the southern border last year.

That brings the total number of migrant encounters so far for the fiscal year two 785,000. That's larger than the population of the city of Detroit. And you may recall, up to 4,000 migrants a day we're crossing right here in Shelby Park.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

FINN (voice over): Texas's Acting Governor Dan Patrick, touring Shelby Park this afternoon, the sight of the showdown between the Biden administration and Texas. Today is the deadline the federal government issued to Texas to respond with whether it will reopen the border property to Biden's border agents. So far, Texas has not.

DAN PATRICK, LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF TEXAS: Why do they need to be here? They don't have enough Border Patrol people anyway. We got it covered.

Mr. President. Mr. President, you say you want to secure the border. Texas has secured it. Leave it alone. We don't need you down here.

FINN (voice over): In a statement to Fox News today, a senior U.S. Customs and Border Protection official says that border patrol does not want to go back into Shelby Park to remove Texas's razor wire, writing, "Border Patrol has no plans to remove infrastructure c-wire placed by Texas along the border. Our posture remains the same. If we need to access an area for emergency response, we will do so."

But it was Border Patrol cutting portions of Texas's razor wire that, in part, led to Governor Abbott, kicking border agents out of Shelby Park.

Fox asked Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick if Texas would be open to any scenario in which Border Patrol is allowed back into the park.

PATRICK: I'm not going to speak in hypotheticals of the future. I'll be respectful if the president wants to secure the border, send your people somewhere else. We've got this covered.

FINN (voice over): Today, South Dakota Governor Kristi Noem toward Shelby Park. Noem says she supports Texas his razor wire which is acting like a border wall.

GOV. KRISTI NOEM (R-SD): It's effective in places and it helps slow down people crossing illegally. And I defend Texas is right to keep it in place.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

FINN (on camera): And Bret, this evening, we have some fresh numbers for you. Last month, there were 19 people on the FBI terror watch list arrested here along the southern border. That brings the total for the fiscal year so far to 50 people arrested on that terror watch list. Bret.

BAIER: And Matt, those numbers are staggering. But the Border Patrol, are they saying they are not going to cut the wire, or they're not going to step aside? I mean, are we seeing the showdown develop here?

FINN: Yes. In a statement, U.S. Customs and Border Protection says Border Patrol does not want to come in here and remove the razor wire rather they want to remove it on an emergency basis.

But you just heard the acting governor of Texas, the lieutenant governor say they don't want Biden's border agents in here at all. Bret.

BAIER: OK. We're going to follow this closely more on with the panel. Matt, thanks.

The fight within the Republican Party over legislation to address the border crisis is accelerating tonight.

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell is taking severe criticism from conservatives in the Senate, loyalist of former President Trump over his tactics. And now, the House Speaker is expressing pessimism about the bill before anyone has seen the text as of yet.

Senior congressional correspondent Chad Pergram is on Capitol Hill tonight.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

CHAD PERGRAM, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENT (voice over): House Speaker Mike Johnson warns that a possible Senate border deal is "dead on arrival". Johnson reduced to relying on scuttlebutt. The Speaker only hearing "rumors" about the Senate plan. That's because no one still knows exactly what's in the bill.

SEN. PETE RICKETTS (R-NE): We got to see the text before we do anything else.

PERGRAM (voice over): Senate negotiators claim they are close.

SEN. CHRIS MURPHY (D-CT): We have the outlines of a deal. We've had it for several days, it's 90 plus percent written.

PERGRAM (voice over): But we've heard that since early January.

SEN. JAMES LANKFORD (R-OK): It's actually hopefully this week to be able to get that out everybody will have time to be able to read and go through it. No one is going to be jammed in this process.

PERGRAM (voice over): Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell still supports bipartisan border talks, but conservatives accused McConnell of playing for the wrong team in the border battle.

SEN. TED CRUZ (R-TX): I actually think, Mitch knows exactly what he is doing. He is just negotiating for the same objectives that Chuck Schumer has.

PERGRAM (voice over): Conservatives contend a border agreement could weaken the hand of the leading candidate for the GOP presidential nomination, former President Trump and House Republicans.

SEN. RICK SCOTT (R-FL): We should not be voting for anything as Republicans in the Senate, if the Republicans in the House don't support it.

PERGRAM (voice over): There is a long-standing feud between McConnell and Trump.

DONALD TRUMP, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: We have to get rid of Mitch McConnell, by the way.

PERGRAM (voice over): McConnell sidestepped questions about more Republicans supporting Mrs. Trump, but not him.

PERGRAM: Will that appear strange if you, the top Republican in the Senate are not endorsing him for president?

SEN. MITCH MCCONNELL (R-KY): And, in fact, you may recall I've stayed centrally out of it.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

PERGRAM (on camera): McConnell could quash dissent if most Republicans support the border plan. But if former President Trump wins, he could try to oust McConnell. Bret?

BAIER: Chad Pergram, live on the Hill. Chad, Thank you.

The U.N. World Court is calling on Israel to take all measures to prevent a genocide of the Palestinians in Gaza. The Court stopped short of -- objection of the truce requests. Saying, it had endorsed the country's right to self-defense.

Palestinians, however, welcomed what they considered an overwhelming rebuke of Israel's wartime tactics.

The U.S. is temporarily suspending donations of the United Nations Agency for Palestinian Refugees. This comes after the agency reports set Roll up its own employees may have been involved in the October 7th Hamas massacre inside Israel.

White House correspondent Peter Doocy has the latest tonight live from the North Lawn. Good evening, Peter.

PETER DOOCY, FOX NEWS CHANNEL WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT: Bret, good evening. White House officials tell us they are going to get us an exact amount of U.S. dollars that have gone to this group. But we know that over the last several years, it's been hundreds of millions of dollars.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

REAR ADM. JOHN KIRBY (RET.), COORDINATOR FOR STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS, NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL: It has suspended any outline or yet to be allocated funds for UNRWA.

DOOCY (voice over): UNRWA has been held up as the main way to get U.S. aid into Gaza.

ANTONY BLINKEN, UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF STATE: The work that the U.N. is performing in Gaza is quite literally, life-saving.

DOOCY (voice over): White House officials assured taxpayers this aid would not be diverted to Hamas by UNRWA.

KIRBY: You can't hold them accountable for the depredations of Hamas.

DOOCY (voice over): But now as many as a dozen UNRWA employees are being investigated for alleged involvement in the October 7th terrorist attack.

The state department says the United States is extremely troubled by the allegation. The House Foreign Affairs Committee chairman, not as surprised. Michael McCaul, writes, "For years, there has been extensive evidence that UNRWA is not a neutral arbiter and that their anti-Israel bias is widespread and systemic."

That's why the Trump administration suspended funding to UNRWA. The Biden administration resumed funding in 2021, and explained why.

NED PRICE, SPOKESPERSON, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE: We can help drive UNRWA in the ways that we think it is in our interests and consistent with our values to do.

DOOCY (voice over): Despite obvious problems with vetting, White House officials aren't ready to cast UNRWA aside forever.

DOOCY: Up until today, the U.S. policy then has been, we don't negotiate with terrorists, but we will give them hundreds of millions of dollars.

KIRBY: Come on, now, that's conflating here. This is not -- you're -- that's like saying the whole UNRWA is a terrorist organization. You know who is a terrorist organization? Hamas. Not UNRWA:

(END VIDEOTAPE)

DOOCY (on camera): Kirby also conceded, it would be bad if just one aid worker tied to UNRWA was possibly involved in a terrorist attack like the ones on 10/7.

But for now, pending the results of an investigation. Officials here are saluting UNRWA as doing what they call meaningful work in Gaza. Bret.

BAIER: Into another topic, Peter. President Biden pausing new U.S. exports of liquefied natural gas. Why?

DOOCY: Yes. It's because they think Liquid Natural Gas, LNG is bad for the climate.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOE BIDEN, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: Look, we have to fight for clean air in our communities. And to lower cost for American families, including energy costs. Today's pause on new natural gas export approvals recognizes the climate crisis for what it is: The existential threat of our time. It's a threat, a serious threat.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

DOOCY: This move is going to pause four projects in the U.S. at the moment.

But the impact on climate remains unknown right now, because some developing countries that suddenly won't be able to get liquid natural gas may soon have to turn to coal. Bret?

BAIER: OK. Peter Doocy, live in the North Lawn. Peter, thanks.

Stocks were mixed today. The Dow gained 60. The S&P 500 lost three. The NASDAQ fell 55.

For the week, the Dow was up two-thirds of a percentage point. The S&P 500 and the NASDAQ gained about one.

A U.S. warship shut down a missile fired at it by Yemen's Houthi rebels. The attack on the USS Carney marks an escalation in the conflict.

Britain reports one of its vessels was struck by a missile and was on fire in the Gulf of Aden. The USS Carney is attempting to provide assistance. Up next, former President Donald Trump, reportedly vowing revenge as he seeks to wrap up the Republican presidential nomination. We'll take a look at where that stands.

First, "BEYOND OUR BORDERS" tonight.

A court in Moscow extending the pretrial detention of Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich until the end of March. That means the journalist will spend at least a year in custody.

He was detained last March on espionage charges, which he denies.

NATO forces are engaged in what are called the largest military exercises since the Cold War. 90,000 service members from all 31 NATO countries and Sweden are participating.

That includes 26,000 U.S. troops. Russia is calling the maneuvers openly provocative.

And this is a live look at London. One of the big stories there tonight. Britain's King Charles is said to be doing well after having planned treatment to address an enlarged prostate, a royal source saying the prince was admitted -- the King, rather was admitted to the same hospital where his daughter in law Kate is recovering from abdominal surgery performed last week.

The King who entered the hospital with the Queen Camilla at his side visited Kate at the clinic after he arrived.

Just some of the other stories "BEYOND OUR BORDERS" tonight. We'll be right back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BRET BAIER, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: Welcome back to SPECIAL REPORT. Let's take a look at the election calendar now. If you look at February, Nevada will hold a primary on February 6th. Look at these two dates. February 6th, the primary. Nikki Haley is on this ballot.

However, there are zero delegates available there. That's because two days later in the Nevada caucuses, that's where all the delegates are. All 26 delegates will be awarded during the caucuses on February 8th. That is when former President Trump is a candidate, Nikki Haley has called this unfair and the Trump team working things on the ground.

Either way, she is going to focus on the South Carolina primary which is February 24th. And if you look at this, there are now 50 delegates available there, that is winner take all.

Now, right now, the realtor Real Clear ***Politics*** average polls has the former president up 30 points over Nikki Haley.

Another possible White House hopeful is meeting with South Carolina voters. Here's Senior National Correspondent Rich Edson.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

NIKKI HALEY, FORMER U.S. AMBASSADOR TO U.N.: It's a great day in South Carolina.

RICH EDSON, FOX NEWS CHANNEL SENIOR NATIONAL CORRESPONDENT (voice over): Vowing to stay in the race. Nikki Haley is ratcheting up her criticism of former President Trump.

HALEY: Election night, Trump gets on stage, he throws an absolute temper tantrum talking about revenge.

EDSON (voice over): Haley has accused Trump of being confused, implying he's too old to serve another term as president at 77 years old, especially after he appeared to confuse her last week with former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. Trump has called her birdbrain.

Haley's campaign is focusing on strong fundraising numbers this week. Though, when asked which of the 16 Super Tuesday primary states she'll win?

BILL HEMMER, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: I didn't hear a specific state mentioned but we'll leave that to the side now, continue Dana.

DANA PERINO, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: Well, I think one of the things I was pointing out --

HALEY: Well, you know, you can say that all you want, Bill, but I'll say this, right now, we're focused on South Carolina.

EDSON (voice over): Haley says she'll be stronger in her home state than she was in New Hampshire.

Some of the Republican National Committee would like this nominating race finished before that February 24th Primary, a draft resolution was circulating among RNC members that would have declared Trump the presumptive nominee.

Trump said the RNC should not go forward with it. The resolution was eventually scrapped. Also in South Carolina.

SEN. JOE MANCHIN (D-WV): I'm not here campaigning, OK?

EDSON (voice over): With a host of third party challengers in the race for president and even more considering a run, the retiring centrist Democratic Senator Joe Manchin is speaking with voters in South Carolina and Georgia this week.

MANCHIN: I'm here campaigning to let people know that if you feel hopeless and helpless, because you don't have a political home. What do you do? You have other options.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

EDSON (on camera): Manchin says the Democratic Party is no longer the same party, nor he says is the Republican Party. As to whether that means, Manchin views his potential candidacy is the answer. But he's non-committal and has offered no timeline on when he'll decide whether to run, Bret.

BAIER: He's not running but he was in New Hampshire, South Carolina.

EDSON: He's doing the tour.

BAIER: Yes. Rich, thanks.

Tonight we're learning that Hollywood entertainment lawyer and Hunter Biden friend Kevin Morris loaned the president's son about a million and a half dollars more than previously thought.

Lawyer from Morris tells the House Oversight Committee his client gave Hunter Biden about $6.5 million in loans. Morris says he expects to be paid back with interest.

Georgia's state senate is joining attempts to investigate the prosecutor in the election interference case against former President Donald Trump. Lawmakers voted to create a special committee to probe allegations. Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis misspent state money in pursuing the Trump matter.

Trump legal team is seeking to have Willis removed from the case. She is also facing allegations of having an inappropriate romantic relationship with a colleague.

Up next, we'll update you on the situation with China and Taiwan and that is the subject of tonight's Common Ground segment.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BAIER: Welcome back to SPECIAL REPORT.

Tonight, we examine the situation between China and Taiwan. In the last 24 hours, Taiwan's defense ministry says at least 23 Chinese aircraft were spotted off the coast of mainland China to the southeastern part there, in between China and Taiwan. There is this the island self-declared air defense identification zone. And there's this median line right here. There are about 13 aircraft crossed that median line in joint combat patrols with Chinese vessels.

China has also sent an increasing number of high altitude balloons into this region. Taiwan's defense ministry says they've recorded balloons almost every day this month, four were detected in the last day, two balloons were detected right over here, over Taichung city, the island's second largest city.

One was spotted nor of the island. It also kind of went east and then another was spotted just west of Taiwan and flew all the way across the island.

As Jennifer Griffin reported last night, the U.S. Navy confirmed it sailed a warship through the Taiwan Strait right here. And this escalation on both sides really comes after presidential and parliamentary elections on the island.

What you look at here is who is recognizing Taiwan? There are actually 12 countries recognizing Taiwan as an independent nation. But there are fears the number could be declining as dwindling, especially nations in the South Pacific.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Mr. President, do you have a reaction to the Taiwan election?

JOE BIDEN, (D) PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: We do not support independence.

ANTONY BLINKEN, U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE: We do not support Taiwan independence. We remain opposed to any lateral changes to the status quo by either side. We continue to expect the peaceful resolution of cross strait differences.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BAIER: The president asked there and saying we do not support independence.

Let's talk about the U.S. efforts to address the Taiwan situation with China. Joining us for our "Common Ground" segment, Illinois Democratic Senator Tammy Duckworth and Alaska Republican Senator Dan Sullivan. Thank you both for being here. Senator Sullivan, this is really important, this escalation that we have seen from China. How do you read it after this election?

SEN. DAN SULLIVAN, (R-AK), SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE: Well, it's not surprising. And we knew that on the eve of the presidential elections -- by the way, Bret, it's their eighth presidential election. And so we knew on the eve that the Chinese were going to be very aggressive, and they have been. The setup piece shows how aggressive they've been. But it's going to continue. The inauguration isn't until May. And so one of the things that Senator Duckworth and I did was we worked hard on a Senate resolution, 50 bipartisan supporters of that. It passed unanimously right before the election saying, hey, the United States is very focused and supportive of Taiwanese democracy, deterrence in the Taiwan Strait in making sure Beijing is not aggressively trying to undermine their democracy. So having the U.S. Senate on record, all 100 senators, we think is important, but there's a lot more work to do.

BAIER: Senator Duckworth, "Foreign Policy" magazine wrote this after this election, saying "What is Taiwan's new president going to do about China? The so-called porcupine strategy entails Taiwanese stockpiling of arms and munitions in quantities to resist an invasion. This strategy depends, however, on the assumption that the Taiwanese people will unify to resist and invasion. Fundamental to Taiwanese expectations of their future are their views on the likelihood of U.S. support. The majority of Taiwanese we surveyed do not expect the United States to come to their defense."

Thanks for being on. What do you think about that writeup and how we as the U.S. deal with that?

SEN. TAMMY DUCKWORTH, (D-IL) SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE: We need to make sure that we continue to send a very strong message that we support Taiwan democracy and that we support Taiwan. And one of the things that we are doing in the Senate, I passed a piece of legislation that I introduced with Senator Cornyn from Texas that established a training program between our National Guard and the Taiwan military. We have to send them more resources. We have to train them. And they are accepting more and more of this training.

But we can't take our foot off of the gas here because the Chinese are in there every single day, all day with their cyberattacks, with their messaging attacks. And we just can't let them have the field. We have got to stand up and support Taiwan. And that's why it is really important that all of the members of the Senate signed the resolution and we passed it before the election happened.

BAIER: We heard the president say after that election, we do not support independence, Senator Duckworth. And I understand strategic ambiguity. But we have really kind of been confused about the messaging from the White House sometimes. This is the president on "60 Minutes" about what happens if Taiwan is attacked.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: What should Chinese President Xi know about your commitment to Taiwan?

JOE BIDEN, (D) PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: We agree with what we signed on to a long time ago. And there is a one China policy, and Taiwan makes their own judgments about their independence. We are not moving, we're not encouraging their being independent. That is their decision.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: But would U.S. forces defend the island?

BIDEN: Yes, if, in fact, there was an unprecedented attack.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BAIER: And then it was kind of walked back, Senator Duckworth. So where do you think the U.S. is? Would we defend Taiwan?

DUCKWORTH: Well, what we need to do is make sure that the Taiwan people can make their own decision themselves. I certainly am very happy that we are sending warships down the straights and that we are sending resources and helping them be able to defend themselves so that they can make those decisions.

The problem that we have right now is that the Chinese don't want the people of Taiwan to make their own decision on their own future. And that is why we have to really push back against them. And I think this is where the unity on both sides of the aisle on Taiwan and standing with Taiwan is critically important.

BAIER: You all, Senator Sullivan, work on a number of things, veterans' issues, you're seeing on the Senate Armed Services Committee. But on this specific issue you have got a bill that I guess you want to get Senator Duckworth to sign onto.

SULLIVAN: This is about common ground, right? So my view on the Taiwan situation is we want to focus on deterrence. And deterrence is that porcupine strategy that has already been talked about where we are supplying weapons to the Taiwanese and training them. That's happening right now. The ability for us if called upon, if the president calls upon our own military to get there and help defend Taiwan, we have deployed our military for decades. Actually, my first deployment, Bret, was to Taiwan Strait as a U.S. marine during what's now referred to as the third Taiwan Strait crisis, the last time the Chinese really threatened to invade Taiwan on the eve of the first presidential election.

But the third area of deterrence is sanctions, the ability to say, hey, Xi Jinping, the Communist Party of China, if you militarily invade Taiwan, we will imposed massive economic, energy, financial sanctions.

BAIER: That's what the bill says?

SULLIVAN: That's what the bill says.

BAIER: What's it called?

SULLIVAN: It's called the Stand with Taiwan Act. Congressman Gallagher is the main sponsor in the House, and we are rounding up Republicans and Democrats. And I think Senator Duckworth is pretty darn close.

BAIER: Is that true, Senator Duckworth?

DUCKWORTH: Very, very close. We are just working out the details of the language right now. I certainly support the sanctions and I agree with Senator Sullivan that deterrence is the way to go. And massive sanctions and economic consequences for China, an attack on Taiwan is really one of the biggest deterrence that we can have.

BAIER: Last thing, Senator Duckworth.

DUCKWORTH: So we're working on it.

BAIER: For people who say that there is just so much partisanship up here that you just can't get anything done, what do you tell them?

DUCKWORTH: Well, we work on a lot of stuff together. Dan and I have passed quite a few pieces of legislation together. It's a little unfair to other folks because we're all military. I'm a soldier. I'm a retired lieutenant colonel. He outranks me, so I guess --

(LAUGHTER)

DUCKWORTH: He is a full bird colonel and I'm a life colonel. Joni Ernst and I work together all the time. Todd Young, who is another Marine, and so we do find common ground. We have worked on a lot of defense stuff, we've worked on Taiwan stuff. But also we have worked on the wellbeing of our troops as well. Dan has often been there for me, and when it comes to things like incentive pay for our troops who take on extra hazardous duty, even though I make fun of him for jumping out of perfectly good aircraft.

(LAUGHTER)

DUCKWORTH: But we get a lot done. His wife has said some wonderful things to my daughters. So it is more than just a working relationship. It's a friendship. And he's got three girls, I've got two girls. And that basis of friendship allows you to work together and get to a place where you can have common ground and pass legislation that defends our nation and establishes and keeps us as the leading democracy and the strongest power in the world. And that is why I spent my time in a uniform defending it, and so does Dan. He does that, he's still doing it.

BAIER: Well, we thank you both for your service, and thank you for coming on "Common Ground." We hope to have more of your colleagues on here.

SULLIVAN: Thanks, Bret.

BAIER: You can see all of the "Common Ground" segments on my podcast "Common Ground." You can find that and the "All-Star Panel" podcast under the Bret Baier podcasts at FOXNewspodcast.com, Spotify, or wherever you download podcasts. You can also see the extended discussion on the FOX News YouTube page.

Up next, the panel on the Trump defamation verdict, that unbelievable number that came out of that, plus, the unbelievable numbers coming from the border, border ***politics*** as well.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ALINA HABBA, ATTORNEY FOR FORMER PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: We will immediately appeal. We will set aside that ridiculous jury. We are in the state of New York. We are a New York jury, and that is why we are seeing these witch hunts, these hoaxes, as he calls them, and this is another one of them to be brought in New York, in states where they know they will get juries like this. It will not deter us.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BAIER: Trump attorney Alina Habba upset, talking to reporters about this jury verdict. These numbers are staggering, if you look at them. The jury said that former president Trump pass to pay compensatory damages to E. Jean Carroll $18.3 million, punitive damages of $65 million, cumulatively $83.3 million. She was all smiles, as you can imagine, walking out of court today, the writer there walking out of court with her lawyers.

"The New York Times" says "Jury orders Trump to pay Carroll damages for defamation. It's the second time Mr. Trump has been ordered to pay Ms. Carroll damages in less than a year. In May a different Manhattan jury awarded $5 million after finding Mr. Trump liable for sexually abusing her in the dressing room assault in the mid-1990s and for defaming her in posts on his Truth Social website in October 2022." The former president has denied all of those allegations all along.

Let's bring in the panel, FOX News senior political analyst Juan Williams, Byron York, chief political correspondent of "The Washington Examiner," and FOX News chief legal correspondent, anchor of FOX NEWS SUNDAY, Shannon Bream. Shannon, I mean those numbers just eye-catching.

SHANNON BREAM, FOX NEWS ANCHOR: Absolutely.

BAIER: Nothing has stopped the former president from talking about this. This may.

BREAM: And think about it, he has been able to take on his enemies at all different levels in many different business ventures and all things over time. But when you run up against a federal court, and a jury, and a judge, you find out you're going to hit a wall at some point if you're found guilty. I mean, $83 million has got to make him think twice about every single time he wants to bring up this case or talk about the plaintiff.

BAIER: She talks about an appeal. That's going to happen right away. But it's a process, right?

BREAM: It is. It can take months, it can take years. And maybe this is yet another Trump case that may end up at the U.S. Supreme Court.

BAIER: They are stacking up like planes coming into the Dulles here, Byron.

On Truth Social, that website, the former president responded, saying this, quote, "Absolutely ridiculous. I fully disagree with both verdicts and will be appealing the whole Biden-directed witch hunt focused on me and the Republican Party. Our legal system is out of control and being used as a political weapon. They have taken away all First Amendment rights. This is not America."

We saw in the exit polls, our FOX News voter analysis polls, that it was a unifying factor for Republicans and even some independents, these legal cases against the former president that a lot of people, voters, thought that were being targeted. Does this help or hurt him politically?

BYRON YORK, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT, "THE WASHINGTON EXAMINER": Every single Trump supporter that I have spoken to in Iowa, New Hampshire, and South Carolina all feel he has been unfairly pursued and unfairly targeted by the Justice Department, by prosecutors in New York and Georgia, and by others. And this come I think will just fit into that template.

If he has actually convicted in a criminal case, I don't know. But so far, all of these cases against him have really increased his support, and they have increased and hardened the belief of a lot of his supporters that he was unfairly targeted. And they start with the Russia affair and just go on from there.

BAIER: Yes. And obviously we talked about Alvin Bragg and that case. And then you've got the civil fraud case that could be decided as of next week in the hundreds of millions of dollars as well.

But there are questions about all of these cases. That case, the real estate estimate, there were experts down in Palm Beach who say $18 million for Mar-a-Lago, that may be the tennis court. But it wasn't a good estimate for that whole property. Anyway, you look at these case individually, what do you think overall politically this mean for the president?

JUAN WILLIAMS, FOX NEWS POLITICAL ANALYST: One of the realities, I think Byron pointed out, is that for his base, it adds to the notion that he is being unfairly handled by the system. Now, he says it is Biden. I don't know if people buy that, but they just think, oh, why are they picking on Donald Trump? And Trump says, they are really going after you. They're not going after me. And so he is their stand-in. He's their avatar, if you will.

But it goes somewhat beyond the base if you are thinking about a general election, and especially when you're talking about an assault on a woman. Whatever the award, nobody has challenged -- he was found guilty of sexual assault. And when you start to think --

BAIER: Liable, yes.

WILLIAMS: Yes. And when you think about the damage that does, you think about Nikki Haley talking about chaos around Trump, talking about exactly what does it mean to have him back and to have that chaos, I think it strengthens that argument. Not with a base. The base seems to be locked in. It's with people who are maybe Republicans, maybe lean Republicans but identify as independents. And we saw that in the vote in both Iowa and New Hampshire. Those people are not locked into this Republican candidate yet.

BAIER: Shannon, other crazy numbers today, these border numbers from December. Record-breaking migrant encounters, 302,000. If you look at other populations, Cincinnati, 309,000, Seattle, 749,000. That is the year-to- date, 785,000 of migrants coming across the borders. These are just encounters. These are not the got-aways. These are not the people we don't know, and now you have this battle with Texas that is really heating up.

BREAM: Yes, and you have hit a record now, a new all-time high with these December numbers. At the same time you've got the showdown in Texas and you've got a showdown on Capitol Hill as they try to put together a deal. Some in the House suggesting whatever the Senate puts together is absolutely dead on arrival, but we don't know the contours of it. I will have Senator Lankford on with us Sunday. He's one of the chief negotiators on this thing to try to give us some idea, fact and fiction with some of these rumors out there. We'll also have Senator Rick Scott on, who has been very opposed and said, I think it's a giveaway and we don't want to do it. I think it's a bad deal. So we don't know yet.

BAIER: No one has seen the text, we should point out, Byron.

BREAM: Exactly.

BAIER: But the other thing is that people are definitely blaming Republicans for killing the deal in the crib before it gets out. But the president could have gone back to remain in Mexico as an executive order. He could have stopped catch-and-release, an executive order that was flipped when he took office. So no matter what happens on Capitol Hill, there are other things the Biden administration could have done to stop this.

YORK: Absolutely. And one feature of this bill that nobody has seen that we have heard about is some sort of Title 42-like ability to turn migrants away. Title 42 without the COVID, to be able to turn migrants away if the seven-day rolling averages more than 5,000 per day. Remember that back in the Obama administration, 1,000 was thought to be a crisis.

BAIER: Jeh Johnson said that.

YORK: And now you sort of normalize 35,000 a week, $1.8 million a year. It's no wonder that Republicans think this is a terrible bill and it ain't going to happen.

BAIER: All right, we're going to follow all of that.

Up next, the Friday Lightning Round, plus Winners and Losers, and later, yes, it's Friday, "Notable Quotables."

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BAIER: We are back with the panel. It is the Friday Lightning Round. We are going to go around, winners and losers first. Juan, for the week, you have a winner and then a loser.

WILLIAMS: My winner is football. Americans love football, set records. More than 50 million people watched the Chiefs versus the Bills this past weekend. And this coming weekend you have the championships. So I think the numbers are going to be even greater. If there is one thing we agree on in America, watch the football game.

The loser, I think the fashion critic known as Donald Trump. I think his thumbs down on Nikki Haley's dress after the New Hampshire primary, I think a lot of people felt it might have been bad taste and a sort of personal, whiny attack on a political opponent.

BAIER: OK, Shannon, winner then loser?

BREAM: I want to tell you about Jeff Capps. He's a 33-year-old mechanic at a car dealership. He put in for an exotic new job. He gets paid $80,000 and only has to work six months out of the year. There is a private chef on site. He is the winner for finding this job, but also the loser, because the location is the South Pole. And it's negative 60 degrees there, and it's dark for at least half of the year. And he's 9,000 miles away from his family and friends. So Jeff, you are our winner and loser.

(LAUGHTER)

BAIER: That was a good one. Byron, winner and loser?

YORK: I'm all ***politics*** tonight. The winner is Texas Governor Greg Abbott. I don't know if he is going to win this standoff with the federal government, but he has done more than anybody else to draw attention to emergency at the U.S.-Mexico border.

My loser is Andrew Cuomo. Maybe people didn't hear it. Today the Justice Department concluded that the former New York governor sexually harassed 13 women, state employees, during his time in office. Cuomo has been thought to be considering a comeback, and maybe he will reconsider that.

BAIER: OK, I'm going to call an audible. Super Bowl, two teams, who is your winner?

WILLIAMS: Baltimore Ravens over San Francisco 49ers.

BAIER: Wow.

BREAM: Whatever Juan said.

(LAUGHTER)

BREAM: I'm a college football fan, not so much the NFL.

BAIER: Come on, you have to be in the game.

BREAM: I have to know the teams, that is a problem.

BAIER: Detroit, San Francisco, Kansas City, Baltimore.

BREAM: You've got to pull for the Lions, because when was the last time they have a chance at this?

BAIER: Nice. See, you landed on your feet.

BREAM: There you go.

BAIER: All right, Byron?

YORK: This would be historic for Detroit. I'm going for them.

BAIER: Detroit, OK. I like Detroit, too. Panel, thanks.

You know that sound. It's Friday. Time for "Notable Quotables."

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GOV. RON DESANTIS, (R-FL): I am today suspending my campaign.

TRUMP: Ron De-sanctimonious. I said that name is officially retired.

(APPLAUSE)

NIKKI HALEY, (R) PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: They are falling all over themselves saying this race is over.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: If this was a victory in New Hampshire for Nikki Haley, this means that my Buffalo Bills can still go to the Super Bowl.

TRUMP: You must really hate her.

SEN. TIM SCOTT, (R-SC): I just love you.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: We need to open up a bottle of tequila to talk about this.

JOE BIDEN, (D) PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: Used to make beer brewed, used to make the, brewed beer here --

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Who is my favorite president?

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Why don't we let the American people guess?

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: You don't have any words of assurance for customers who were too scared to fly on a Boeing plane?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: We believe in our airplanes.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: But one of your planes fell apart in the sky.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: The hypocrisy abounds.

SCHUMER: Zyn is the next battle.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Just another huge overreach by the nanny state.

SCHUMER: Chill flavor, what is chill flavor? Chill is not a flavor, is it?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Chill is a vibe.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: The Biden administration has really, truly abdicated its responsibility to secure the border.

GOV. KRISTI NOEM, (R) SOUTH DAKOTA: I will drive in more razor wire from South Dakota if I have to.

BIDEN: Don't mess with the men and women of America unless you want to get the benefit (ph).

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: He may be a fool, but I hope he's not an idiot.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BAIER: That's one week covering this place, New Hampshire, everything.

Monday on SPECIAL REPORT, the French ambassador to the U.S. will be with us to talk about the Middle East and other global hotspots. It's a big weekend. Don't forget to tune into FOX NEWS SUNDAY.

Remember, if you can't catch us live, set your DVR, 6:00 p.m. in the east, 3:00 p.m. on the west coast.

And here is that FOX NEWS SUNDAY tease. Please join Shannon Bream. Her guest are the lead Republican negotiator on the border security issue, Senator James Lankford, and Senator Rick Scott of the Homeland Security Committee. They might be on different sides of the issue. House Foreign Affairs Chairman Michael McCaul, and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg.

Thanks for inviting us into your home tonight. That's it for this SPECIAL REPORT, fair, balanced, and still unafraid. "THE INGRAHAM ANGLE" is next.

**Load-Date:** January 26, 2024

**End of Document**