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## Donald Trump. State of the Union address: “Great American comeback. The most incredible dreams come true”

(from New York) A show. No other words can better describe the State of the Union speech by the President of the United States, **Donald Trump**. From the very first remarks, the presidential speech turned out to be constructed as a show for TV viewers and his supporters.

**He made a spectacular entrance in the Senate Hall**, received by Republicans chanting "Four more years", bombastically dodging the handshake offered by Nancy Pelosi, with an enthralling live awarding of a scholarship to a girl from Philadelphia who couldn't afford tuition, and finally the astonishing sight of the presidential freedom medal hanging around the neck of a radio host standing very close to Trump. It was followed by the surprise entry of a soldier on duty in Afghanistan who embraced his wife and children unbeknownst to his arrival, while a long, standing ovation was given to the parents of a volunteer worker killed by Isis militants.

Finally, a coup de théâtre: as soon as Trump delivered the closing lines - "God bless America" - behind him, during the live broadcast, Nancy Pelosi ripped her copy of the presidential speech - a gesture symbolizing the deep and radical division of the Country, notably within its very institutions. A tear in the same House that refused to listen to key witnesses on the Trump-Ukraine case and that tomorrow will vote on the President's impeachment.

“Three years ago, we launched the great American comeback. Tonight, I stand before you to share the incredible results. Jobs are booming, incomes are soaring, poverty is plummeting, crime is falling, confidence is surging, and

our country is thriving and highly respected again!”

Trump starts out with optimistic tones and focuses the first part of his speech on the economy. Indeed, for the first time in over a decade, the US economy is back on track - low unemployment, rising wages, inflation under control, energy autonomy, low interest rates - in a country that has been far from normal standards for so long, these "normal" figures have an extraordinary impact. Although not all of the president's statistics and figures reflect actual facts, his nomination of the president of the Federal Reserve, the renegotiation of trade treaties and tax breaks, have provided strong incentives for growth.

But that centre-stage America applauded by Republicans numerous times does not correspond to "grassroots" America where millions of people have no access to food stamps, not because they found a job, as the president says, but because he restricted eligibility requirements. Moreover, the number of homeless people and US citizens with no insurance coverage is dramatically increasing, whereas deaths from drug overdoses remain unchecked.

**Trump takes advantage of the podium not only to portray his America but also to bolster his electoral battle horses**, namely the right to own weapons, the separation wall with migrants yet again defined as "aliens" and "criminals." On top of that, the rhetoric of bringing US troops back home from the Middle East, a broken promise of his predecessors, as well as his very own, as he will have to find other solutions placing greater emphasis on dialogue, indispensable to avoid the

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dismissive attitude with which his peace plan for Israel and Palestine was received. The President does not fail to take pride for having killed Al Baghdadi, Al Qaeda's leader, and Soleimani, the powerful Iranian general, whilst at the same time expressing harsh criticism of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, against whom Trump opposed a coalition of 54 countries. The closing remarks are a mixture of nostalgic rhetoric about the frontiers conquered by early pioneers, mirrored by those of today, "for America will be the first nation to plant its flag on Mars."

Trump's America is thus "the place where anyone can rise, where the most incredible dreams come true",

And where winning a second presidential mandate may not be impossible.

Maddalena Maltese, from New York