

Press Releases: Interview With KTRK Houston and Southeast Texas News

Interview
Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

Houston, Texas
March 12, 2019

QUESTION: Given what's happening in Venezuela, what's your biggest concern on what's happening right now?

SECRETARY POMPEO: The tragedy in Venezuela is deep and deepening. The people of Venezuela don't have food, they'll soon struggle to get water, and we've seen the power outages. Anybody who's suffered an electrical outage knows what that ultimately means. We need to restore these services. The first step along the way is for Maduro to leave, for the regime to depart and allow democracy to flourish and let Interim President Juan Guaido take charge. And then the world – the United States, Europe, the neighbors of the region in South America and Central America – can begin to help the Venezuelan people restore democracy. And this is a once-wealthy country; we can make it so again.

QUESTION: Okay. Are you at all concerned that this might affect gas prices here in the U.S. (inaudible)?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So there's always that risk, but we've certainly not seen that affect so far. There's enough capacity; there's enough room. We're confident that we can work through this crisis, but frankly, we didn't cause it, the Maduro regime did. And so if there's an impact on gas prices, it's a result of actions that another leader took. We're working hard to make sure that there's refined product gasoline – all the steps along the refinement process adequate so that we don't see big price spikes here in the south part of the United States, or frankly, anywhere in the country.

QUESTION: Great. So what are you going to talk about today in your speech?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So I want to tell folks, really, three things. First, the incredible importance of what we're doing here in the United States and the energy world. We'll be the world's largest exporter of crude oil before too terribly long, and that matters to American national security. It keeps people in Texas and Kansas and all across America safe.

The second thing I want to talk about is what it is we do for the people of Texas at the State Department. Sometimes out of mind, out of sight, are – they go along with each other. I want to convince them and show them what it is we're doing on their behalf.

And then finally, I want to make sure that young people understand that being an American diplomat is an incredibly noble calling and see if I can't convince a few of them to come join the United States Department of State.

QUESTION: All right. Anything else you can think of that I missed?

SECRETARY POMPEO: No, sir. That's it.

The Office of Website Management, Bureau of Public Affairs, manages this site as a portal for information from the U.S. State Department. External links to other Internet sites should not be construed as an endorsement of the views or privacy policies contained therein.