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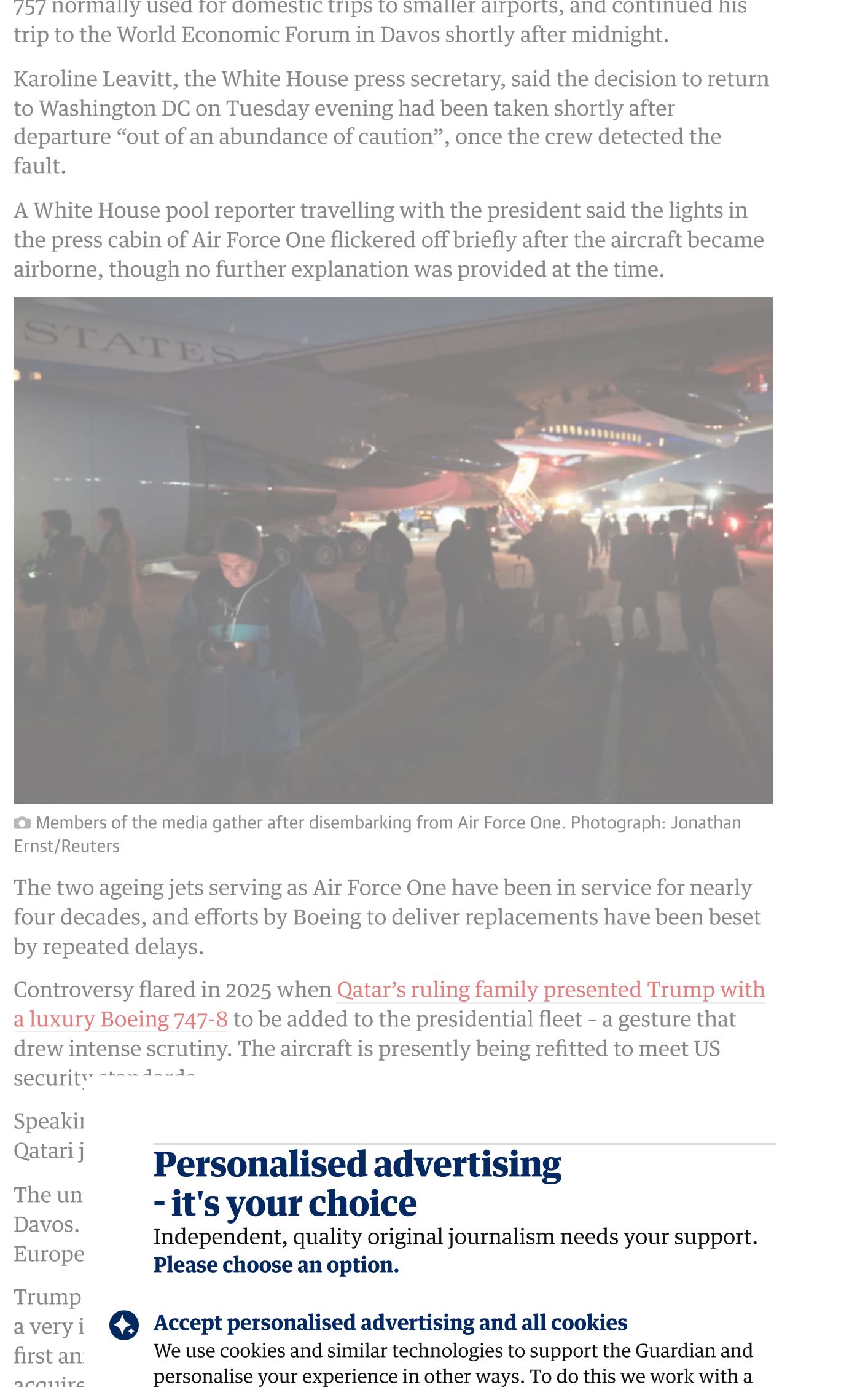
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Donald Trump

Trump's Air Force One turns back to Washington after 'minor electrical issue'

US president boards another aircraft to continue trip to World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland



Donald Trump boards Air Force One on his way to Davos, Switzerland, at Joint Base Andrews. The plane later returned to Washington. Photograph: Jonathan Ernst/Reuters

David Smith in Washington

Wed 21 Jan 2026 05.40 CET

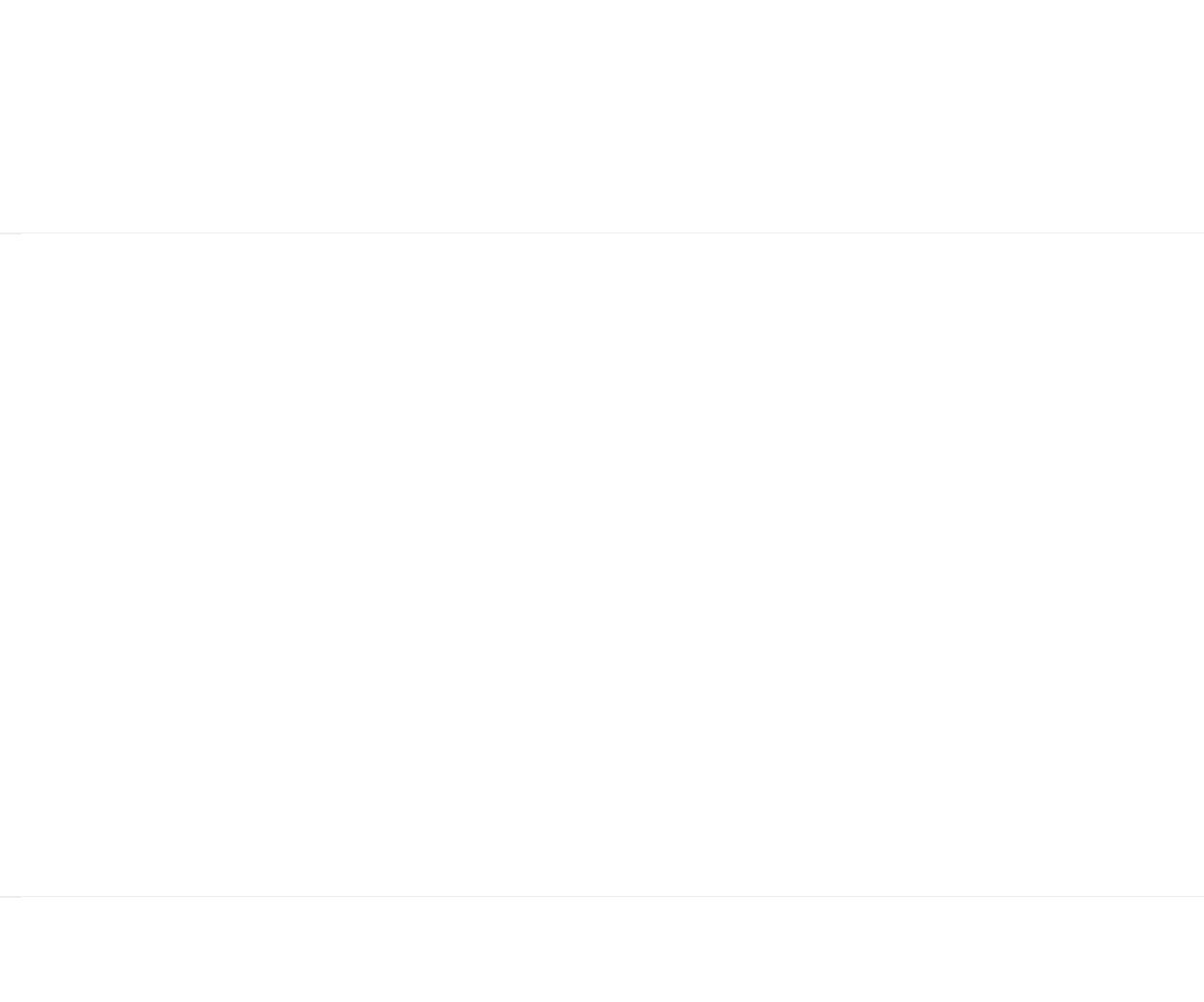
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The US president's plane, Air Force One, has been forced to abort its flight to Switzerland and turn back after what officials described as a "minor electrical issue".

Donald Trump boarded another aircraft, an Air Force C-32, a modified Boeing 757 normally used for domestic trips to smaller airports, and continued his trip to the World Economic Forum in Davos shortly after midnight.

Karoline Leavitt, the White House press secretary, said the decision to return to Washington DC on Tuesday evening had been taken shortly after departure "out of an abundance of caution", once the crew detected the fault.

A White House pool reporter travelling with the president said the lights in the press cabin of Air Force One flickered off briefly after the aircraft became airborne, though no further explanation was provided at the time.



Members of the media gather after disembarking from Air Force One. Photograph: Jonathan Ernst/Reuters

The two ageing jets serving as Air Force One have been in service for nearly four decades, and efforts by Boeing to deliver replacements have been beset by repeated delays.

Controversy flared in 2025 when [Qatar's ruling family presented Trump with a luxury Boeing 747-8](#) to be added to the presidential fleet - a gesture that drew intense scrutiny. The aircraft is presently being refitted to meet US security

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In February 2015, US president Barack Obama had to make an emergency landing in Britain due to a crack in the windshield. In October a military plane carrying the defence secretary, Pete Hegseth, had to make an emergency landing in Britain due to a crack in the windshield.

Technical problems on the presidential jet are rare due to meticulous maintenance. In 2006 the primary Air Force One suffered a mechanical malfunction while in the tarmac in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, forcing George W Bush to board the backup aircraft, a Boeing 757, to fly to his next destination in Indonesia.

The Associated Press contributed to this report

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