

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2019

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Theresa May of the United Kingdom in London, United Kingdom

June 4, 2019

Prime Minister May. This week, we commemorate the extraordinary courage and sacrifice of those who gave their lives for our liberty on D-day, 75 years ago. As leaders prepare to gather here from across the world, it is fitting that we begin with a celebration of the special relationship between the United Kingdom and the United States, enduring partners who stood side-by-side on that historic day and every day since.

For generations, at the heart of the transatlantic alliance has been our shared democratic values, our common interests, and our commitment to justice. It is that unity of purpose that will preserve the deep-rooted ties between our people and underpin our nations' security and prosperity for the next 75 years and beyond.

So I am very pleased to welcome the President of the United States of America on this State Visit to the United Kingdom.

President Trump. Thank you very much, Theresa.

Prime Minister May. For the past 2½ years, the President and I have had the duty and privilege of being the latest guardians of this precious and profound friendship between our countries. As with our predecessors, when we have faced threats to the security of our citizens and our allies, we have stood together and acted together.

When Russia used a deadly nerve agent on the streets of our country, alongside the U.K.'s expulsions, the President expelled 60 Russian intelligence officers, the largest contribution towards an unprecedented global response. And in Syria, when innocent men, women, and children were victims of a barbaric chemical weapons attack, Britain and America, along with France, carried out targeted strikes against the regime.

Since we spoke about NATO during my first visit to the White House, we have maintained our support for this crucial alliance. Thanks in part to your clear message on burden-sharing, Donald, we have seen members pledge another \$100 billion, increasing their contributions to our shared security. And I'm pleased to announce that NATO will soon be able to call on the U.K.'s Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carriers and F-35 fighter jets to help tackle threats around the world.

Today we've discussed again the new and evolving challenges to our security, our values, and our way of life. We share the same view about their origin and our objectives in meeting them.

But like Prime Ministers and Presidents before us, and no doubt those that will come after, we can also differ sometimes on how to confront the challenges we face. I've always talked openly with you, Donald, when we have taken a different approach, and you've done the same with me. I've always believed that cooperation and compromise are the basis of strong alliances, and nowhere is this more true than in the special relationship.

Today we've discussed again the importance of our two nations working together to address Iran's destabilizing activity in the region and to ensure Tehran cannot acquire a nuclear weapon. Although we differ on the means of achieving that—as I've said before, the U.K. continues to stand by the nuclear deal—it is clear that we both want to reach the same goal. It is important that Iran meets its obligations and we do everything to avoid escalation, which is in no one's interest.

Recognizing our nations are safer and more prosperous when we work together on the biggest challenges of our time, I also set out the U.K.'s approach to tackling climate change and our continued support for the Paris Agreement.

And we also spoke about China, recognizing its economic significance and that we cannot ignore action that threatens our shared interests or values.

As we've deepened our cooperation on security, including our joint military operations and our unparalleled intelligence-sharing, so our economies, too, are ever more tightly bound together. Every morning, 1 million Americans get up and go to work for British companies in America, and 1 million Britons do the same for American companies here.

Our trading relationship is worth over £190 billion a year, and we're the largest investors in each other's economies, with mutual investments valued at as much as \$1 trillion. Mr. President, you and I agreed the first time we met that we should aim for an ambitious free trade agreement when the U.K. leaves the EU. And from our positive discussions today, I know that we both remain committed to this.

I'm also sure that our economic relationship will only grow broader and deeper, building on the conversations we had and the ideas we heard from U.K. and U.S. businesses when we met them earlier today.

Tomorrow we will sit down in Portsmouth with our fellow leaders to reaffirm the enduring importance of the Western alliance and the shared values that underpin it. And as we look to the future, in the years and in the generations ahead, we will continue to work together to preserve the alliance that is the bedrock of our shared prosperity and security, just as it was on the beaches of Normandy, 75 years ago.

Mr. President.

President Trump. Thank you very much, Theresa.

Prime Minister May. Thank you.

President Trump. Well, thank you, Prime Minister May. Melania and I are honored to return to London as our nations commemorate the 75th anniversary of D-day in World War II. We want to thank Her Majesty the Queen, who I had a lovely dinner with the last night—a fantastic person, fantastic woman—for so graciously inviting us to this state visit. It was very, very special.

Our thanks as well to Prime Minister and Mr. May for the warm welcome they've given the First Lady and me, as we remember the heroes who laid down their lives to rescue civilization itself. On June 6, 1944, tens of thousands of young warriors left these shores by the sea and air to begin the invasion of Normandy and the liberation of Europe and the brutal Nazi occupation. It was a liberation like few people have seen before. Among them were more than 130,000 American and British brothers-in-arms. Through their valor and sacrifice, they secured our homelands and saved freedom for the world.

Tomorrow Prime Minister May and I will attend a commemoration ceremony in Portsmouth, one of the key embarkation points for the invasion. More than 1½ million American servicemembers were stationed right here in England in advance of the landings that summer. The bonds of friendship forged here and sealed in blood on those hallowed beaches will endure forever.

Our special relationship is grounded in common history, values, customs, culture, language, and laws. Our people believe in freedom and independence as a sacred birthright and cherished inheritance worth defending at any cost.

As the Prime Minister and I discussed in our meetings today and yesterday, the United States and the United Kingdom share many goals and priorities around the world.

I want to thank the people of the United Kingdom for their service and partnership in our campaign to defeat ISIS. As we announced a few months ago, ISIS's territorial caliphate in Syria and Iraq has been completely obliterated—defeated.

The United Kingdom is also a key partner in NATO. The Prime Minister and I agree that our NATO allies must increase their defense spending. We've both been working very hard toward that end. And we are very current, and some of them are not. We can't allow that to happen. But I appreciate everything you've done in that regard.

We expect a growing number of nations to meet the minimum 2-percent-of-GDP requirement. To address today's challenges, all members of the alliance must fulfill their obligations. They have no choice. They must fulfill their obligation.

Among the pressing threats facing our nations is the development and spread of nuclear weapons. Perhaps that's our greatest threat. The United States and the United Kingdom are determined to ensure that Iran never develops nuclear weapons and stops supporting and engaging in terrorism. And I believe that will happen.

In protecting our nations, we also know that the border security is national security.

Today the Prime Minister and I discussed our thriving economic relationship—both countries are doing very well—and participated in a roundtable with industry and business leaders, I can say, probably, the biggest business leaders anywhere in the world. Our nations have more than \$1 trillion invested in each other's economics.

The United Kingdom is America's largest foreign investor and our largest European export market. That's a lot of importance. As the U.K. makes preparations to exit the European Union, the United States is committed to a phenomenal trade deal between the U.S. and the U.K. There is tremendous potential in that trade deal, I say, probably, two and even three times of what we're doing right now. Tremendous potential.

Seventy-five years ago this Thursday, courageous Americans and British patriots set out from this island toward history's most important battle. They stormed forward out of ships and airplanes, risking everything to defend our people and to ensure that the United States and Britain would forever remain sovereign and forever remain free.

Following this press conference, Prime Minister May, Mr. May, the First Lady, my family, and I will visit the legendary Churchill War Rooms beneath the streets of London. I look forward to that. In his famous speech on this day in June 1940, Prime Minister Churchill urged his countrymen to "defend our island, whatever the cost may be."

As we mark this solemn anniversary of D-day, we remember that the defense of our nations does not begin on the battlefield, but within the heart of every patriot. Today let us renew our pledge, engraved at the American Cemetery in Normandy and inscribed by President Dwight Eisenhower in St. Paul's Cathedral right here in London, that "the cause for which they died shall live."

Prime Minister May, it's been a true honor. I have greatly enjoyed working with you. You are a tremendous professional and a person that loves your country dearly. Thank you very much. Really an honor.

Thank you for the invitation to memorialize our fallen heroes and for your partnership in protecting and advancing the extraordinary alliance between the American and the British people. It's the greatest alliance the world has ever known.

Thank you, Prime Minister. Thank you.

Prime Minister May. Thank you.

President Trump. Thank you very much.

Prime Minister May. Thank you very much, Donald.

Thank you. Now we're going to take two questions from the U.K. media and two questions from the American media. I'll start with Beth Rigby.

Mayor Sadiq Khan of London, United Kingdom/Labour Party Leader Jeremy B. Corbyn of the United Kingdom/Public Response to President Trump's Visit to the United Kingdom

Q. Thank you. Thank you, Prime Minister, President Trump. Beth Rigby from Sky News. For you, President Trump, as you hold talks with the current Prime Minister, the leader of Her Majesty's opposition has been addressing a protest rally against your visit in Trafalgar Square. He says he's disappointed you attacked the London mayor, and he criticized your record on refugees. What do you have to say to him? And is this man someone you could do a trade deal with?

And to you, Prime Minister, do you think that Sadiq Khan is a "stone cold loser"? Thank you.

President Trump. You're talking about the mayor of London. Is that who you said? Yes? Well, I think he's been a not very good mayor, from what I understand. He's done a poor job. Crime is up. A lot of problems. And I don't think he should be criticizing a representative of the United States that can do so much good for the United Kingdom.

We talked about it before: He should be positive, not negative. He's a negative force, not a positive force. And if you look at what he said, he hurts the people of this great country.

And I think he should actually focus on his job. It'd be a lot better if he did that. He could straighten out some of the problems that he has and probably some of the problems that he's caused.

Thank you.

Prime Minister May. Can I——

Q. [Inaudible]—the leader of the opposition——

President Trump. Jeremy—yes. Yes, he wanted to meet with me, and I told him no.

Q. [Inaudible]—Prime Minister——

President Trump. Yes.

Q. [Inaudible]—what do you say to him?

President Trump. Well, I don't know Jeremy Corbyn. Never met him. Never spoke to him. He wanted to meet today or tomorrow, and I decided that I would not do that. I think that he is— from where I come from—somewhat of a negative force. I think that the people should look to do things correctly as opposed to criticize. I really don't like critics as much as I like and respect people that get things done. So I've decided not to meet.

As far as the protests, I have to tell you, because I commented on it yesterday: We left the Prime Minister, the Queen, the Royal Family; there were thousands of people on the streets cheering. And even coming over today, there were thousands of people cheering. And then, I heard that there were protests. I said: "Where are the protests? I don't see any protests."

I did see a small protest today when I came, very small. So a lot of it is fake news, I hate to say. But you saw the people waving the American flag, waving your flag; it was tremendous spirit and love. There was great love. It was an alliance. And I didn't see the protesters until just a little while ago, and it was a very, very small group of people, put in for political reasons. So it was fake news. Thank you.

Prime Minister May. And I would say to both the mayor of London and to Jeremy Corbyn: The discussions that we have had today are about the future of this most important relationship between the U.S. and the U.K.

As the President described it: the greatest alliance the world has seen. It is this deep, special relationship and partnership between the United States and the United Kingdom that ensures our safety and security, and the safety and security of others around the world too. And it is this relationship that helps to ensure there are jobs that employ people here in the U.K. and in the United States that underpins our prosperity and our future. That is a relationship we should cherish. It is a relationship we should build on. It is a relationship we should be proud of.

Mr. President, would you like to——

President Trump. It's very big, and this really is a very big and important alliance. And I think people should act positively toward it, because it means so much for both countries. It means so much and it's been so good.

Steve Holland [Steve A. Holland, Reuters], yes. Go ahead, Steve.

British Exit From European Union

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you. Is that on? There. What is your current view on Brexit, sir? Should Britain leave the European Union if there is no agreement by October 31?

And for the Prime Minister, what would be the ramifications for the U.K. if there is not a deal?

President Trump. Well, I don't like to take positions in things that I'm not, you know, really—I understand the issue very well. I really predicted what was going to happen. Some of you remember that prediction. It was a strong prediction, made at a certain location, on a development we were opening the day before it happened. And I thought it was going to happen because of immigration more than anything else, but probably, it happens for a lot of reasons.

But I would say, yes, I would think that it will happen and it probably should happen. This is a great, great country, and it wants its own identity. It wants to have its own borders. It wants to run its own affairs. This is a very, very special place. And I think it deserves a special place. And I thought maybe for that reason—and for others—but that reason, it was going to happen.

Yes, I think it will happen, and I believe the Prime Minister has brought it to a very good point where something will take place in the not-too-distant future. I think she's done a very good job. I believe it would be good for the country, yes.

Prime Minister May. And from my point of view, I believe it is important for us to deliver Brexit. We gave that choice to the British people. Parliament overwhelmingly gave the choice to the British people. We should now deliver on that choice. I continue to believe that, actually, it's in the best interests of the U.K. to leave the European Union in an orderly way with a deal. I think we have a good deal. Sadly, the Labour Party and other MPs have, so far, stopped us from delivering Brexit and that deal.

But we will—but obviously, this is an issue that is going to continue here in the U.K. I think the important thing is we deliver Brexit. And once we're out of the European Union, we will be

able to do what we've been talking about today and develop not just that free trade agreement, but a broader economic partnership into the future.

United Kingdom-U.S. Security Cooperation

Q. If I could just follow up on a related matter: Mr. President, are you prepared to impose limits on intelligence-sharing with Britain if they do not put in place some restrictions on Huawei?

President Trump. No, because we're going to have absolutely an agreement on Huawei and everything else. We have an incredible intelligence relationship, and we will be able to work out any differences. I think we're not going to have it. We did discuss it. I see absolutely no limitations. We've never had limitations. This is a truly great ally and partner, and we'll have no problem with that. Okay?

Prime Minister May. Thank you. Francis.

United Kingdom-U.S. Trade

Q. Mr. President, Francis Elliott from the Times. Do you agree with your Ambassador that the entire economy needs to be on the table in a future trade talk—trade deal, including the NHS?

And, Prime Minister, are you tempted to take the Prime Minister up—take the President up on his word and stick around for a bit until the trade deal is done?

President Trump. I think we're going to have a great trade deal, yes. I think we're going to have a great and very comprehensive trade deal——

Q. With the NHS? With the NHS? Should the NHS be on the table, sir?

President Trump. I can't hear him. What?

Q. The Health Service. Should the Health Service?

Prime Minister May. It's the National Health Service. He says, "Should the National Health Service be on the table?"

President Trump. Look, I think everything with a trade deal is on the table. When you're dealing in trade, everything is on the table, so NHS or anything else. There are a lot more than that. But everything will be on the table, absolutely. Okay.

Prime Minister May. But the point about making trade deals is, of course, that both sides negotiate and come to an agreement about what should or should not be in that trade deal for the future.

And as regards to your second question, Francis: Nice try, but no. [*Laughter*] Look, I'm a woman of my word.

Mr. President, would you like to——

President Trump. John [John Roberts, Fox News], please.

Border Security/Mexico-U.S. Trade/Republican Party

Q. Mr. President, thank you. Mr. President, domestically, in recent days, Mexico has stepped up apprehensions and deportations of Central American migrants.

President Trump. That's good.

Q. This could possibly be in response to your threat of tariffs. Has Mexico——

President Trump. Not "possibly be."

Q. Has Mexico done enough to avoid tariffs, which will be imposed in some 6 days from now? And——

President Trump. No, we haven't started yet.

Q. But the threat is out there?

President Trump. Yes, the threat is out there, but we haven't really started yet. No, this will take effect next week, the 5 percent.

Q. And what do you think of Republicans who say that they make take action to block you imposing those tariffs?

President Trump. Oh, I don't think they will do that. I think if they do, it's foolish. There's nothing more important than borders. I've had tremendous Republican support. I have a 90-percent—94-percent approval rating, as of this morning, in the Republican Party. That's an alltime record. Can you believe that? Isn't that something? I love records. *[Laughter]* But we have a 94-percent approval rating in the Republican Party.

I want to see security at our border. I'm going to see great trade. I'm going to see a lot of things happening. And that is happening.

And as you know, Mexico called. They want to meet. They're going to meet on Wednesday. Secretary Pompeo is going to be at the meeting, along with a few others that are very good at this. And we are going to see if we can do something.

But I think it's more likely that the tariffs go on. And we'll probably be talking during the time that the tariffs are on and they're going to be paid. And if they don't step up and give us security for our Nation—look, millions of people are flowing through Mexico. That's unacceptable. Millions and millions of people are coming right through Mexico. It's a 2,000-mile journey. And they're coming up to our border.

And our Border Patrol, which is incredible, they're apprehending them, but our laws are bad, because the Democrats don't want to pass laws that could be passed in 15 minutes, that could be passed quickly. In 1 day, it could change.

But even beyond the laws, Mexico shouldn't allow millions of people to try and enter our country. And they could stop it very quickly, and I think they will. And if they won't, we're going to put tariffs on. And every month, those tariffs go from 5 percent, to 10 percent, to 15 percent, to 20, and then to 25 percent. And what will happen then is, all of those companies that have left our country and gone to Mexico are going to be coming back to us. And that's okay. That's okay.

But I think Mexico will step up and do what they should have been done. And I don't want to hear that Mexico is run by the cartels and the drug lords and the coyotes. I don't want to hear about that. A lot of people are saying that. Mexico has something to prove. But I don't want to hear that they're run by the cartels. You understand. You report on it all the time. A lot of people do. That would be a terrible thing.

Mexico should step up and stop this onslaught, this invasion into our country, John.

British Exit From European Union

Q. And, Prime Minister May, you tried three times to get a deal on Brexit. At this point, do you believe that a deal on Brexit is possible, or is this a Gordian knot? President Trump says that you didn't take his advice in terms of negotiation. Should you have? Would that have made a difference?

And, President Trump, if I could ask a follow-up: You had a conversation with Boris Johnson. Could we ask what you spoke about? And will you meet with Michael Gove today?

Prime Minister May. Well, first of all, on the first issue, as I said in answer to an earlier question, I still believe—I personally believe—that it is in the best interest of the U.K. to leave the European Union with a deal. I believe there is a good deal on the table. Obviously, it will be for whoever succeeds me as Prime Minister to take this issue forward.

What is paramount, I believe, is delivering on Brexit for the British people. And I seem to remember the President suggested that I sued the European Union, which we didn't do. We went into negotiations, and we came out with a good deal.

President Trump. Yes. That's not such a—I would have sued, but that's okay. [Laughter] I would have sued and settled, maybe. But you never know. [Laughter] She's probably a better negotiator than I am, Jeremy.

But you know what? She has got it, in a sense, John. That deal is teed up. I think that deal is really teed up. I think they have to do something. And perhaps you won't be given the credit that you deserve if they do something, but I think you deserve a lot of credit. I really do. I think you deserve a lot of credit. Okay?

Yes, John.

Member of Parliament Boris Johnson and Labour Party Leader Jeremy B. Corbyn of the United Kingdom

Q. And Boris Johnson and Michael Gove?

President Trump. So I know Boris. I like him. I've liked him for a long time. He's—I think he'd do a very good job. I know Jeremy. I think he'd do a very good job. I don't know Michael. But would he do a good job—Jeremy? Tell me. [Laughter]

Okay?

Prime Minister May. Okay.

President Trump. Good. Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 2:07 p.m. at No. 10 Downing Street. In his remarks, the President referred to Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Jeremy Hunt and Secretary of State for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs Michael Gove of the United Kingdom. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist organization. A reporter referred to U.S. Ambassador to the United Kingdom Robert W. "Woody" Johnson IV.

Categories: Interviews With the News Media : Joint news conferences :: United Kingdom, Prime Minister May.

Locations: London, United Kingdom.

Names: Corbyn, Jeremy B.; Elizabeth II, Queen; Gove, Michael; Hunt, Jeremy; Johnson, Boris; Kahn, Sadiq; May, Philip; May, Theresa; Pompeo, Michael R.; Trump, Melania.

Subjects: Armed Forces, U.S. : Servicemembers :: Casualties; Armed Forces, U.S. : Servicemembers :: Deployment; Arms and munitions : Nuclear weapons and material :: Nonproliferation efforts; Commerce, international : Free and fair trade; Communications : News media :: Accuracy and fairness; Defense and national security : Border security; Europe : European Union :: United Kingdom, membership status; Homeland Security, Department of : Customs and Border Protection, U.S.; Immigration and naturalization : Illegal immigration; Iran :

Nuclear weapons development; Law enforcement and crime : Trafficking in persons, efforts to combat; Mexico : Crime and narcotrafficking; Mexico : Immigration enforcement, cooperation with U.S.; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; State, Department of : Secretary; Terrorism : Counterterrorism efforts; Terrorism : Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist organization; United Kingdom : Defense relationship with U.S.; United Kingdom : Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs, Secretary of State for; United Kingdom : European Union, membership status; United Kingdom : Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Secretary of State for; United Kingdom : President Trump's visit; United Kingdom : Prime Minister; United Kingdom : Queen; United Kingdom : Relations with U.S.; United Kingdom : Trade with U.S.

DCPD Number: DCPD201900370.