

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2019

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Amir Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani of Qatar and an Exchange With Reporters

July 9, 2019

President Trump. Thank you very much. It's a great honor to be with the Amir of Qatar, a highly respected man, a real leader in a large part of the world and a very important part of the world. And we've known each other a long time. We've been friends for a long time.

And we're doing a lot of work now. They're investing very heavily in our country. They're creating a lot of jobs. They're buying tremendous amounts of military equipment, including planes. And they're buying commercial planes, as you know, very large numbers of commercial planes from Boeing. And we very much appreciate it.

We're going to be signing a document today, a very large transaction. You're going to be invited to the signing. It's a transaction that will be purchasing a lot of Boeing jets and a lot of money spent in our country, and that means a lot of jobs.

So we just appreciate everything. We have a great operation—military operation—right now in Qatar. They built one of the great military bases, I would say, anywhere in the world. And it's just been expanded, with runways and everything else. It's been really a great honor to work with my friend. Thank you very much for being here.

Amir Tamim. Thank you, sir.

President Trump. Thank you.

Amir Tamim. Thank you, sir. Mr. President, I am very happy and honored to be here. And thank you very much for your hospitality. As you mentioned, we enjoy a very great relationship between Qatar and the United States of America.

We're doing a lot together. As you mentioned, President, we're signing a few documents today. And we—our economic partnership has been more than \$185 billion, and we're planning to double this number. We have a lot of investments in the U.S. We trust the economy here. We do a lot in the infrastructure, and we're planning to do more investments.

Yes, we host at Al Udeid Air Base, and it's—we're working very closely together. You're invited to come and see Qatar and also to visit the base at any time, Mr. President.

And I really enjoy the personal friendship with you. Thank you very much for everything.

President Trump. Thank you very much.

And I will say the base is incredible. It's—what they've done there is absolutely—and a great place to have it, right in the middle of the Middle East. And so it's a—obviously, it's a very important location.

So thank you all very much. Yes.

Congressional Oversight of the Executive Branch

Q. Mr. President, do you have any reaction to the subpoenas, the new subpoenas of Jared Kushner and other members of your administration?

President Trump. I don't know anything about it.

Q. Congressional subpoenas?

Iran

Q. Mr. President, can I ask you about Iran? How long are you going to wait before you see the Iranian enrich—before you take that action?

President Trump. Well, we're going to see what happens with Iran. Iran is doing a lot of bad things right now, and they'd better be very careful.

Secretary of Labor R. Alexander Acosta

Q. Mr. President, do you have full confidence in Secretary Acosta right now and in the future?

President Trump. Well, you know, I met Secretary Acosta—this first time, I know—when I made the deal to bring him on into the administration. I can tell you that for 2½ years he's been just an excellent Secretary of Labor. He's done a fantastic job.

Now, part of it is our economy is so good; our unemployment numbers are at record lows. You know, so many good things are happening.

But the fact is, he's been a very good Secretary of Labor. What happened 12 or 15 years ago with respect to when he was a U.S. attorney, I think in Miami—is it Miami?

Q. Yes, Southern district of Florida.

President Trump. You know, if you go back and look at everybody else's decisions—whether it's a U.S. attorney or an assistant U.S. attorney or a judge—you go back 12 or 15 years ago or 20 years ago, and look at their past decisions, I would think you'd probably find that they would wish they'd maybe did it a different way.

I do hear that there were a lot of people involved in that decision, not just him.

I can only say this: From what I know—and what I do know is that he's been a great—really great Secretary of Labor. The rest of it we'll have to look at. We'll have to look at it very carefully. But you're talking about a long time ago. And again, it was a decision made, I think, not by him, but by a lot of people.

So we're going to look at it very carefully. We'll be looking at that very carefully. Okay?

Okay. Anything else?

Indictment of Financier Jeffrey E. Epstein on Sex Trafficking Charges/Secretary of Labor R. Alexander Acosta

Q. Do you still think Jeffrey Epstein is a "terrific guy"?

President Trump. Well, I knew him like everybody in Palm Beach knew him. I mean, people in Palm Beach knew him. He was a fixture in Palm Beach. I had a falling out with him a long time ago. I don't think I've spoken to him for 15 years. I wasn't a fan.

Q. What was the falling out about?

President Trump. I was not—yes, a long time ago. I'd say maybe 15 years. I was not a fan of his, that I can tell you. I was not a fan of his.

So I feel very badly, actually, for Secretary Acosta, because I've known him as being somebody that works so hard and has done such a good job. I feel very badly about that whole situation.

But we're going to be looking at that and looking at it very closely.

We're also going to be signing a big contract in a little while, so we're going to see you in a little while in a different room, in a different part of the White House where we're going to be signing up a big deal with Boeing. Thank you very much. We'll see you in a couple of minutes.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:12 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A reporter referred to White House Senior Adviser Jared C. Kushner.

Categories: Interviews With the News Media Exchanges with reporters : White House; Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Qatar, Amir Tamim.

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