

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2024

Remarks in an Exchange With Reporters at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland
October 2, 2024

Hurricane Helene/Negotiations Between United States Maritime Alliance, Ltd., and the International Longshoremen's Association

Q. Sir, do you have a view on automation with the dockworkers strike?

The President. Well, I—look, we're going down to see what—the damage done. I'm going to be going back again to other States. But here's the thing, this natural disaster is incredibly consequential. The last thing we need on top of that is a man-made disaster: what's going on at the ports.

We're getting pushback already, and we're hearing from the folks recently that they're having trouble getting product they need because of the port strike.

And look, there's a consortium of basically six owners that control all the ports from all the way to the East Coast, down around the Gulf. And they've made incredible profits—over 800-percent profit since the pandemic, and the owners are making tens of millions of dollars in this.

The last thing they need is to profit off of this. It's time to—for them to sit at the table and get this strike done.

Negotiations Between United States Maritime Alliance, Ltd., and the International Longshoremen's Association

Q. Will you be communicating with them directly about any of this?

The President. Oh, we have. We have. I haven't personally, but we have.

Q. Can you—

The President. Okay?

Situation in the Middle East/International Diplomatic Efforts/Iran

Q. Can you tell us anything about Iran and Israel's possible—

The President. Yes. Look—

Q. —retaliation?

The President. I called a meeting of the G-7 today. We're working on a joint statement all of us agree on—from Japan to France to Germany to—et cetera. And what we're doing in that regard is, we're making it clear that there are things that have to be done. And it's—obviously, Iran has gone way out of—I mean, is way off board. We're going to—putting together a joint statement. Hasn't been done yet. It will be done before too long, probably by the time we land. And there's going to be some sanctions imposed on Iran.

Negotiations Between United States Maritime Alliance, Ltd., and the International Longshoremen's Association

Q. Sir, do—do you—

The President. And it—

Q. —sorry. Do you have a view on the workers' fight for restrictions on technology or automation for the dockworkers?

The President. No, look, they just need to sit down and talk, because I—remember, we negotiated a similar strike on the West Coast before, and they worked it out. It's time—they won't even talk. So let's get that done.

Q. Sir, and—sir—sir, could I ask you, what is your—

Iranian Missile Attack on Israel/Israel

Q. Would you support an attack on the—would you support an attack on Iran's nuclear sites by Israel?

The President. The answer is no. And I think there's things—we'll be discussing with the Israelis what they're going to do, but they—every—all seven of us agree that they have a right to respond, but they should respond in proportion.

Thank you.

Israel

Q. Sir, could I ask you: What is your advice to Israel as far as how they should respond to this right now?

The President. I'll leave that to—I'll—we're giving them that advice.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel

Q. Okay. When will you talk to Bibi?

The President. Well, I—we've been talking to Bibi's people the whole time. And it's not necessary to talk to Bibi. I'll probably be talking to him relatively soon, my guess.

Thank you.

Q. —war in the Middle East is now inevitable?

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:30 p.m. on the tarmac prior to boarding Air Force One en route to Greer, SC. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Justin P.J. Trudeau of Canada; President Emmanuel Macron of France; Prime Minister Keir Starmer of the United Kingdom; Chancellor Olaf Scholz of Germany; Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni of Italy; and Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba of Japan.

Categories: Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, Joint Base Andrews, MD.

Locations: Joint Base Andrews, MD.

Names: Ishiba, Shigeru; Macron, Emmanuel; Meloni, Giorgia; Netanyahu, Benjamin; Scholz, Olaf; Starmer, Keir; Trudeau, Justin P.J.

Subjects: Canada, Prime Minister; COVID-19 pandemic; France, President; Germany, Chancellor; Group of Seven (G-7) nations; International Longshoremen's Association; Iran, missile attack on Israel; Israel, Iranian missile attack; Israel, Prime Minister; Italy, Prime Minister; Japan, Prime Minister; Maryland, Joint Base Andrews; Maryland, President's visit; Natural disasters, Hurricane Helene; News media, Presidential interviews; Port dockworkers, labor dispute with ocean carriers; United Kingdom, Prime Minister; United States Maritime Alliance, Ltd., negotiations with International Longshoremen's Association.

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