

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters Aboard Air Force One En Route to Joint Base Andrews, Maryland

March 16, 2025

The President. Hello, everybody.

Q. Hello, Mr. President.

The President. Nice to see you all.

Q. Likewise. Congratulations on the golf game, sir.

The President. Oh, thank you. It was a lot of fun. It's good. It's good. We had a good time, and we learned a lot.

We're doing pretty well, I think, with Russia. And we'll see if we have something to announce maybe by Tuesday. I'll be speaking to President Putin on Tuesday, and a lot of work has been done over the weekend. We want to see if we can bring that war to an end. Maybe we can, maybe we can't, but I think we have a very good chance.

Russia/Ukraine

Q. What sort of concessions will you be seeking to have Putin make to get a deal done?

The President. Well, I think we'll, you know, be talking about land. There's a lot of land that's a lot different than it was before the war, as you know. And we'll be talking about land.

We'll be talking about power plants, because that's up—you know, that's a big question. But I think we have a lot of it already discussed very much by both sides.

Q. You'll ask him to——

The President. Ukraine and Russia.

Q. You'll ask him to give up some land?

The President. We're already talking about that—dividing up certain assets. Yes, and they've been working on that.

U.S. Airstrikes in Yemen

Q. Mr. President, are you concerned at all about any retaliatory cost from the strikes in——

The President. About what?

Q. About the air strikes——

The President. Louder.

Q. ——in Yemen. Are you concerned about any retaliatory measures taken at all by them?

The President. No, I'm not. I'm not. Really, I'm not.

Federal Workforce Reduction Efforts

Q. Mr. President, do you plan to comply with the judge's order regarding rehiring the Federal workers?

The President. What you—what are you talking about?

Q. The Clinton-appointee judge that ruled that the Federal Government has to rehire the fired Federal workers. Do you plan to comply with that?

The President. Well, I think it's—I think it's—I have nothing to do with that, other than I heard about the decision. I think it's absolutely ridiculous. Absolutely.

It's a judge that's putting himself in the position of the President of the United States, who was elected by close to 80 million votes. And you have that. You're having more and more of that. It's a very dangerous thing for our country, and I would suspect that we're going to have to get a decision from the Supreme Court. But that's a very dangerous decision for our country.

These are people—in many cases, they don't show up for work. Nobody even knows if they exist, and a judge wants us to pay them even if they don't know they exists—if they exist. And I don't think that's going to be happening, but we'll have to see. I don't know. Have—you have to speak to the lawyers about that.

U.S. Deportation Activities

Q. Sir——

Q. Mr. President, did the—did the administration actually, speaking of orders, violate Judge Boasberg's order in sending back the Venezuelan gang members and not——

The President. Well, you'd have to speak——

Q. ——bringing the plane back?

The President. I don't know. You have to speak to the lawyers about that.

Q. Are you planning to do more deportations this way?

The President. I can tell you this: These were bad people. That was a bad group of, as I say, hombres.

Q. Were you—were you racing——

The President. That was a bad group. When you look at them, and you look at the—the crimes that they've committed. You take a look. You don't get any tougher. You don't get worse than that. You understand that, so——

Q. Mr. President——

The President. ——but you'd have to ask the lawyers.

Yes.

The President's Invocation of the Alien Enemies Act/Immigration Enforcement Actions/Former President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.

Q. Sir, there's been some criticism that the Alien Enemies Act has only been invoked three other times. They were all during times of war. Do you feel that you're using it appropriately right now?

The President. Well, this is a time of war, because Biden allowed millions of people—many of them criminals, many of them—at the highest level. They emptied jails out—other nations emptied their jails into the United States. That's an invasion. And these are criminals—many, many criminals: murderers, drug dealers at the highest level, drug lords, people from mental institutions. That's an invasion. They've invaded our country. So this is a—in that sense, this is war.

In many respects, it's more dangerous than war because, you know, in war, they have uniforms. You know who you're shooting at. You know who you're going after. These are people that came out. They're walking our streets.

We have thousands of murderers that Biden and his incompetence—he—first of all, he's grossly incompetent—but that Biden and his people and his, probably, autopen, which—it looked like we had an autopen for a President. And we would have been better off if we had, probably. But it looks to me like—you know, that's a big subject. I'm sure you won't ask about that, but the—the whole subject of autopen. Did he know what he was doing? Did he authorize it? Or is this somebody in an office, maybe a radical left lunatic, just signing whatever that person wants? It's—that's not what the—you know, it's all about.

I never use it. I mean, we may use it, as an example, to send some young person a letter, because it's nice. You know, I—we get thousands and thousands of letters and letters of support for young people, for people that aren't feeling well, et cetera. But to sign pardons and all of the things that he signed with an autopen is disgraceful.

Tariffs/Stock Market

Q. Mr. President, as markets and consumers continue reacting to tariffs——

[At this point, the President motioned for the reporter to speak louder.]

Sorry, as markets and consumers react to tariffs, do you have any inclination to create exceptions or to ease up on any of them?

The President. About what?

Q. To create exceptions for steel and aluminum tariffs?

The President. No, I have no intention of it. No.

Q. Is this your——

The President. April 2 is a liberating day for our country. We're going to be getting back some of the wealth that very, very foolish Presidents gave away because they had no clue what they were doing.

And April 2—I would have made it April 1, but you know what April 1 is. April Fool's Day. I figured, you know, I don't like doing it, but I made it April 2. But it's a liberation day for our country, because we're going to be getting back a lot of the wealth that we so foolishly gave up to other countries, including friend and foe.

Yes, go ahead.

Tariffs

Q. You've talked about the hangover from the Biden economy. Is this your economy now?

The President. Certain things are. Certainly, tariffs are, which we've already taken in billions of dollars. You know, we've taken in, already, billions of dollars, and we haven't even really started the program other than certain areas—certain pinpointed areas, as you know. And many billions of dollars have already come into our country.

The big money is coming in on April 2—from April 2. But I will tell you what is smart. When I took it over, eggs were through the roof, and now eggs are down 35 percent over a short period of time. And other things—fuel, gasoline, energy is down, way down. Oil is down to \$65 a barrel. It was \$82 a barrel. And when energy comes down, pricing is going to come down. Prices for groceries, et cetera are going to come down.

So yes, I think we have—we're setting a good table.

Tariffs

Q. Sir, on April 2's tariffs, are you planning to do sectoral and reciprocal tariffs? Will you do sectoral tariffs too?

The President. Well, we're going to do, in certain cases, both. It's going to be reciprocal.

In other words, whatever they're charging, we're charging. Very simple. If they're charging us, we're charging them. It's no longer they charge us and we don't charge them.

It's foolish Presidents in—Biden, but others also. In all fairness, look, Biden is the worst President we've ever had. He made Jimmy Carter look like a good President. But, on this, a lot of other Presidents were guilty also. Some very good Presidents were guilty.

They charge us, and we charge them. Then, in addition to that—on autos, on steel, on aluminum—we're going to have some additional tariffs.

Q. Mr. President—

The President. Yes.

Pardons and Commutations/Former President Biden's Executive Actions/House Select Committee To Investigate the January 6th Attack on the U.S. Capitol

Q. So, to follow up on the Biden autopen, are those Executive orders, those pardons from the former President now null and void?

The President. I think so. It's not my decision. That will be up to a court, but I would say that they're null and void, because I'm sure Biden didn't have any idea that it was taking place. And somebody was using an autopen to sign off and to give pardons to, as an example—it's just one example—but the J6 Unselect Committee. They—gave—think of it, they gave pardons with an autopen. I don't think Biden knew anything about it. And what they did is they deleted and destroyed all of the information that took them over a year to get.

And the reason they did that is because the information was very incriminating about them, like Nancy Pelosi. It was determined conclusively that she knew about 10,000 soldiers and turned it down. And if we used 500 soldiers, you would've had no problem, let alone 10,000.

The young lady that said that I grabbed these powerful young Secret Service agents by the neck. Okay? You know that was a big hoax. It was a lie, and she admitted it. And they deleted everything. So, you know, what they did is criminal.

White House Communications Director Steven Cheung. We're about to land.

The President. I think we're about to land, everybody.

Director Cheung. Thank you, guys.

The President. Okay, have a good time. We'll see you very soon for the—

John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

Q. Are you going to the Kennedy Center tomorrow?

The President. I am.

Q. What will you be saying there?

The President. I'll see you at the Kennedy Center. You know, we have to straighten it out. It's not a good situation, like everything else in this country.

Vice President James D. "J.D." Vance

Q. Do you worry——

The President. But we're going to straighten it out.

Q. ——because Vice President Vance was booed there a couple days ago——

The President. No.

Q. ——that you may be——

The President. No.

Q. ——driving away patrons?

The President. No, and he's doing a great job. He's doing a great job.

Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:35 p.m. in the press cabin. In his remarks, he referred to William H. Alsup, judge, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California; Rep. Nancy Pelosi, in her former capacity as Speaker of the House of Representatives; former White House aide Cassidy Hutchinson; and U.S. Secret Service agent Robert Engel. A reporter referred former President William J. Clinton; and James E. "Jeb" Boasberg, chief judge, U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on March 17.

Categories: Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, Air Force One.

Locations: Air Force One.

Names: Alsup, William H.; Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Cheung, Steven; Engel, Robert; Hutchison, Cassidy; Pelosi, Nancy; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Vance, James D. "J.D.".

Subjects: 2024 Presidential election; Egg prices; Federal workforce, reduction efforts; Gasoline costs; Golf; House Select Committee To Investigate the January 6th Attack on the U.S. Capitol; Inflation; John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; News media, Presidential interviews; Pardons and commutations; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Russia, President; Tariffs; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Undocumented immigrants, deportation of criminals; Vice President; White House Communications Director; Yemen, U.S. airstrikes.

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