

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters Prior to Departure From the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and an Exchange With Reporters
March 17, 2025

The President. We have a big announcement to make, so I'll make it now.

So we're at the Kennedy Center. It needs a lot of work. We're going to fix it, make it beautiful. It's a very big part of the fabric of DC and the Capital. We're bringing back the Capital. We're bringing back our country.

But while we're here, I thought it would be appropriate. We are tomorrow announcing and giving all of the Kennedy files.

So people have been waiting for decades for this. And I've instructed my people that are responsible—lots of different people, put together by Tulsi Gabbard. And that's going to be released tomorrow.

We have a tremendous amount of paper. You've got a lot of reading. I don't believe we're going to redact anything. I said, "Just don't redact. You can't redact." But we're going to be releasing the JFK files, and that would be tomorrow.

Do you have anything else to add to that, Karoline?

White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt. No, sir. Just released tomorrow.

The President. So that's a big announcement. They've been waiting for that for decades. And I said, during the campaign, I'd do it, and I'm a man of my word. So tomorrow you have the JFK files.

What time will they be released?

Press Secretary Leavitt. Tomorrow afternoon, sir.

The President. Tomorrow afternoon.

Press Secretary Leavitt. Yes.

The President. Okay?

Declassification of Records Concerning the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy

Q. Have you seen—have you seen what's in the files? Have you read them?

The President. I've heard about them.

Q. Was there—

Q. Anything interesting?

The President. It's going to be very interesting.

Q. Was there an executive summary supplied to you, Mr. President, regarding this?

The President. No, we—I'm not doing summaries. You'll write your own summaries. It's many pages. Is it 80,000 pages?

Press Secretary Leavitt. Correct.

The President. Approximately 80,000 pages. So it's a lot of stuff.

Q. Mr. President——

The President. And you'll make your own determination.

The President's Use of Autopen/NBC News

Q. You have criticized President Biden for using autopen in the last few days. Have you yourself ever used autopen, sir?

The President. Yes. Only for very unimportant papers. And I don't call them unimportant if you do letters where people write in and, you know, they'd love to have a response, and we'll write responses. And I'll sign them whenever I can, but when I can't, I, you know, would use an autopen.

But to use them for what they've used them for is terrible.

Q. Yes, sir. And when you signed the C.R., you were down——

The President. Who are you? Who are you with?

Q. Sir, I'm with NBC news, sir. When you signed the——

The President. Oh, that's the same—the same one.

Q. When you——

The President. I don't want to talk to NBC anymore. I think you're so discredited.

Q. President Trump——

Kennedy Center Honors

Q. Mr. President. Mr. President——

The President. Yes.

Q. ——when most people think of the Kennedy Center, they think of the Kennedy Center Honors. It takes place in December every year. Is that something that you anticipate hosting——

The President. Yes.

Q. ——at the White House? And what do you think that that will look like?

The President. We're going to have Honors. We're going to have—I think it's going to be a much bigger show than it has been in the past. It got tired, very tired. Very tired. Very boring. Very radical left. Unless you were a radical left, it just seemed that nobody was chosen.

There are a lot of people out there that can get the Honors, and we're going to do it. I think we'll have a very big show. It's going to be a very big show. We have some surprises on that show, some big surprises. But I think it has a chance to be a very big show.

That's a big part of the Kennedy Center: the Honors, that evening. And so I think you're going to be really surprised. I think it's going to get great ratings, actually.

Russia/Ukraine

Q. President Trump, there's been some discussion about potentially meeting with Putin in your administration. If there is a peace deal signed, would you consider——would you be open to inviting Putin to the White House?

The President. Well, I don't want to really even discuss it. I've got to get the deal. I've got to get the deal signed.

Two thousand people a week, sometimes, are killed, and we have to get that agreement signed. But that's the only thing I think about.

Q. Are you confident that that could happen tomorrow—as soon as tomorrow?

The President. We're going to have a very important call. You know, we've had calls, but we're getting down to a very critical stage, and we want to get the whole Russia-Ukraine thing done. And I think Ukraine wants it. I know they want it. Everybody wants it. It's tremendous death. The bloodshed is unbelievable, like few people have ever seen before.

Foreign Narcotics Traffickers

Q. And on the drug cartels. Do you have a red line for the drug cartels that, if crossed, it would automatically trigger a military response from the U.S.?

The President. Well, we'll see, but we're not going to put up with it. This country is not going to allow people to come in and dump drugs and kill our youth. And other than our youth too. Older people are very much affected. So it's—we're not going to let that happen.

Thank you very much.

White House aide. Thank you, press. Thank you, press.

Russia/Ukraine

Q. Mr. President, on the 30-day cease-fire, Mr. President. Is Ukraine has already committed to this. Would Russia commit to this as well, Mr. President?

Thank you, sir.

The President. They would.

Q. Thank you, sir.

The President. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:22 p.m. A reporter referred to President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on March 18.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, remarks prior to departure; Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, Washington, DC.

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