

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025

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

April 13, 2025

The President. Hello, everybody.

Q. How you doing?

Q. Hi, sir.

The President. So I think most of you have seen they released my physical. I did—took the physical on Friday, and I understand it was a very good report. The numbers were perfect. And I took a cognitive exam, and I would challenge anybody here to beat those marks, because I have a perfect mark.

Were you impressed by that?

Q. I am impressed, and I'm not going to take that test. [*Laughter*]

The President. But you're not that surprised, right?

Q. Not surprised at all.

The President. You aren't. That's good, because I have a lot of respect for you as a reporter.

Q. Thank you.

The President. Do you have any questions?

Yes, Jeff [Jeff Mason, Reuters].

Q. Sir, could you——

The President. Go ahead, Jeff.

Q. ——give us a——

The President. You always have a question.

National Economy/Tariffs

Q. I always have a question, sir. What is your message to markets tomorrow? There's some ambiguity, or at least some questions about whether there——

The President. Well, there shouldn't be——

Q. ——were exceptions or exemptions.

The President. Yes, there shouldn't be ambiguity.

We have a tremendous country. We have a country that's much richer today than it was a few months ago. We have a financial system that's very respected, and we're going to do great. And we were taken advantage of and ripped off by every country all over the world—almost, just about. They laughed at us. We were run by foolish people, and they took advantage of our country, and we're just not going to let that happen anymore.

The President's Legislative Agenda/Tax Code Reform/Border Security

Q. In terms of the——

The President. Who else?

Q. —the big, beautiful bill—

The President. Right.

Q. —when do you expect that to get done?

The President. Well, I—

Q. When would you want that to get done?

The President. —I hope soon. The big, beautiful bill—it's the big, beautiful tax cuts, really, and regulation cuts and many other things. It passed its first test, as you know, the last couple of weeks, but particularly during last week, where we had a vote. We won in the House. We won in the Senate. And that was a big chunk of it, and now they're going to eventually take—pretty soon—a final vote, and the big, beautiful tax cuts and regulation cuts and all of the other things that are included in there will go into effect. And I think it will be, probably, the largest tax cuts in the history of our country, the most comprehensive regulation cuts in the history of our country, and many, many other things, including border wall money.

We built 571 miles of wall, but now we can add to it. As you know, we've just concluded a period of time where the border was the most secure it's been in the history of our country. We're very proud of that.

And the other week, a couple of weeks ago—last week, actually, five people came in. Five. And under Biden, it was 500,000 people came in.

What they've done to our country should never be forgotten. Never be forgotten. What they've done and that the news hasn't reported it correctly is a disgrace. But what they've done to our country to allow these millions and millions of people in from prisons and mental institutions, insane asylums should never be forgotten—

Q. Mr. President—

The President. —because we're going to be living with that for a long time.

This is tremendous work, tremendous effort. It's one thing they caused massive inflation and they caused a lot of problems, but what they've done to our border and to our country, you should never forget that, and you should never, as journalists, allow people to forget it.

Yes.

Tariffs

Q. Mr. President, can you talk a little bit about the semiconductor tariff that—

The President. Yes.

Q. —you posted on Truth Social today? What is the timeline for that? And I believe, as Jamieson Greer said today, that those will not be negotiable. Once those—

The President. Well—

Q. —tariffs are in place, they're nonnegotiable. Is that right?

The President. That's right. But the tariffs will be in place in the not-distant future, because, as you know—like we did with steel, like we did with automobiles, like we did with aluminum, which are now fully on—we'll be doing that with semiconductors, with chips, and numerous other things, and that will take place in the very near future.

Q. And all the things that—

The President. And what we did is, we want to uncomplicate it from a lot of companies, because that's really where it should be, ideally. And we wanted to uncomplicate it from a lot of other companies, because we want to make our chips and semiconductors and other things in our country.

And I will tell you, another one is pharmaceuticals—drugs and pharmaceuticals. We want to make our drugs in this country, and by placing a tariff on the companies that are not in this country, they're going to move into our country, and we're going to have our drugs made in the United States, so that in case of war, in case of whatever, we're not relying on China and various other countries to supply us with drugs, which is not a good idea. And it will happen very fast. It will all happen very fast.

Yes.

Q. Do you know what rate the semiconductor tariff will be?

The President. I'm going to be announcing it over the next week.

Social Security Program

Q. Can you confirm reports that the Social Security Administration has classified thousands of immigrants as dead, even though they're still living?

The President. That's what I hear. I mean, that's what has been reported to me—dead, and also very inaccurately.

And from the standpoint of Social Security, it's a horrible thing.

From the standpoint of the strength of Social Security, when you take dead people out and all of the people that they're talking about that should not be in there, it's going to make our system much stronger. We're making Social Security stronger.

The Democrats are destroying Social Security—Medicare and Medicaid also.

Yes.

Russia/Ukraine/The President's Foreign Policy/Inflation

Q. Do you have a reaction to Russia's Palm Sunday attack on Ukraine?

The President. Oh, I think it was terrible, and I was told they made a mistake. But I think it's a horrible thing.

I think the whole war is a horrible thing. I think the war is—for that war to have started is an abuse of power. This country would have never allowed that war to have started if I were President. That war is a shame. Millions of people are dead that should be alive. Cities are being destroyed all over Ukraine. The whole culture is gone. It's—or, very certainly, very severely hurt.

You know, the chapels, the churches, the spirals, all of the things they had in Ukraine were among the most beautiful anywhere in the world, and most of them are knocked down and blown up into a million pieces.

But most importantly, you have millions of people dead that shouldn't be dead.

Think of it. Think of what a rigged election means: We would have had—absolutely, we wouldn't have had the war in Ukraine. We wouldn't have had the Russia-Ukraine situation. We wouldn't have had October 7, Israel, the Middle East. We wouldn't have had inflation. We wouldn't have had the most embarrassing day or period in the history of our country—that's Afghanistan. One of the most embarrassing moments in the history of our country, Afghanistan.

All of these things wouldn't have taken place. Think of it. We wouldn't have had inflation. But millions of people would be alive, except for the fact that the election were rigged, because that war would have never started, and Putin never would have started that war.

Okay. Any other questions?

Q. Mr. President, do——

Q. When you said, they made a mistake—in the attack? You said they made a—you were told they made a mistake?

The President. They made——

Q. Do you mean it was unintentional?

The President. They made a mistake. I believe it was—look, you got to ask them. This is Biden's war. This is not my war. I've been here for a very short period of time. This is a war that was under Biden. He gave them billions and billions of dollars. He should have never allowed—if he had any brain, which he didn't have and doesn't have, and now it's being proven, he wouldn't have allowed that war to start. I would have absolutely not—that war would never have taken place.

But remember this: This is Biden's war. I'm just trying to get it stopped so that we can save a lot of lives. They happen to be Ukrainian and Russian lives. But all I want to do is get it stopped.

U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East Steven C. Witkoff/Iran

Q. Witkoff, sir. Did you meet with Mr. Witkoff today? How did——

The President. I did. I met with him, and he had some very good meetings on the Middle East, and he also had good meetings having to do with Russia-Ukraine.

Q. Can you give us an update on Iran—what he said on Iran?

The President. Well, we're going to be doing it very shortly. Iran, also. It was another way—I met with a different group of people on Iran, and we'll be making a decision on Iran very quickly.

Yes, please.

Russia/Ukraine

Q. Back on Russia-Ukraine. Resolving that war has taken a little longer than you predicted. Can you pinpoint the reasons why?

The President. Well, it's a deeply seated war. And, again, it's a war that people didn't expect would start. And in my administration, there was no chance that it would start—and it didn't, by the way. You know, I went 4 years, and it didn't start.

People say, "Oh, well, how do you know?" Well, I know because I went 4 years and it didn't start. You would have never had that war. It would have never started. Putin never would have started it.

I mean, I think, frankly, he had so little respect for Biden that he started it for that reason. And, obviously, he didn't get along very well with Zelenskyy or anybody else. And now you have millions of dead people. And those people, every one of them, should be alive right now.

[At this point, several reporters began asking questions at once.]

Tariffs

Q. Mr. President, are you going to announce tariffs on things like iPhones, tablets?

The President. Well, that's going to be announced very soon, and we'll be discussing it, but we'll also talk to companies. You know, you have to show a certain flexibility. Nobody should be so rigid. We will—you have to have a certain flexibility.

And we're doing really well. And financially, our country is going to be stronger than it's ever been.

Possible Exemptions From Tariffs

Q. So some products might—there's flexibility for some products?

The President. For some products, yes, maybe. Maybe.

Q. Could you say what kinds?

The President. No. I'll be announcing it in the not-too-distant future, but it's going to be separately announced.

Q. Mr. President, any reaction to——

The President. Very much like, if you look, automobiles—again, automobiles, we have a tariff. Nobody is complaining about it. It went through the process. We have the tariff. Steel, aluminum, and some other things.

So—and by the way, our country has taken in billions and billions of dollars on those tariffs—billions of dollars. And maybe almost as importantly, or maybe more importantly, automobile companies, steel companies—steel companies and factories and aluminum companies and factories are opening up in our country. But we're taking in billions of dollars on just those three categories.

U.S. Steel Corporation/Domestic Steel Industry/Tariffs

Q. Speaking of steel, can you talk about your conversations with Nippon Steel and what——

The President. Yes, we're talking about different things, but we think that—I think that the United States Steel, one of the great companies of the world, U.S. Steel, should remain in our country. I feel that. I've felt that for a long time. This was one of the greatest company—companies in the world. For a period of time—for a long period of time, it was the single greatest company in America, and I just don't think a foreign company should control it.

Q. Mr. President——

Q. Mr. President, do you have a reaction——

The President. And you know what? They're not going to have to, because the tariffs are going to make U.S. Steel do so well.

Mexico/Water Treatment Infrastructure

Q. I heard a report at your NRCC dinner, and I was at it. A guy was at my table. He said that Mexico has been dumping raw sewage in our treatment water.

The President. Yes.

Q. We can't keep up with it. Some of it's spilling in the ocean, forcing——

The President. It's true.

Q. ——Navy SEALs to train north of Coronado Island. Any——

The President. That's right. Well, and it floats up——

Q. And it floats up——

The President. ——past Los Angeles——

Q. Closes—yes.

The President. ——like everything else.

Q. Yes. Any talks of trying to——

The President. Yes. Well, Mexico has a faulty sewage system that's dumping sewage into our part of the ocean, and the Pacific Ocean is not looking too good on many occasions. Sometimes it stops, and sometimes it breaks, and when it breaks, very bad and disgusting things happen. And they shouldn't be doing that.

Q. Mr. President——

Fire at the Governor's Mansion in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Q. Any reaction to the Governor of Pennsylvania, his mansion was set on fire? Do you have any reaction to that?

The President. I just heard about it. No, I have to look into it.

The President's Health/News Media

Q. You got a perfect health report. All of our—all—everybody in the press wants to know this. How do you do it, Mr. President? I haven't stayed up to 2 a.m. in the morning since I was 25, and now we're 2:16 in morning having a press conference. How do you do it?

The President. Well, we had a couple of them at 2 o'clock in the morning now. Biden, I guarantee——

Q. You're wearing the press out.

The President. Biden was sleeping for 10 hours already. [*Laughter*] No, I have a lot of respect for the press. Really, I do. Some of it's fake news, but a lot of it's good, like you. And really, some of it's totally fake. And some—like "60 Minutes" tonight, I watched.

Q. How do you stay so healthy? How do you stay so energized?

The President. Because I enjoy what I'm doing, and I like the results. I think we are making America great again, and it makes me feel good——

Q. That fuels you.

The President. ——and probably keeps me happy.

Okay, thank you. That's a nice question. Give me——

[*The President shook the hand of Brian Glenn of America's Real Voice.*]

[*Laughter*] That's a—I like this guy.

Q. Well, I mean, everyone is wondering——

The President. Thank you.

Q. ——like, how in the world do you do it, Mr. President? Do it—2 o'clock in the morning. I'm 55 years old, and I can't keep up with you.

The President. Fifty-five. What a nice age that is. [*Laughter*] Have a good time, everybody. Thank you.

Masters Tournament in Professional Golf

Q. Did you catch the end of the Masters?

The President. Oh, what a game. Well, I have to congratulate Rory. That showed tremendous courage. He was having a hard time. *[Laughter]* But it showed great guts and stamina and courage.

People have no idea how tough that is. And he came back. He could be proud.

Q. Have you spoken to Bryson?

White House Communications Director Steven Cheung. We're landing soon.

The President. I mean, actually, it's better for him that it happened that way, because that showed real courage to have come back from what could have been a tragedy was amazing. Did you watch it?

Q. No, we didn't. We were in the press vans.

The President. Pretty amazing.

Q. We knew when you were pulling out when it was over.

The President. Oh, no. I needed to watch it. You knew there was no way. Even for you people, there was no way.

Q. Have you spoken to Bryson?

The President. That was—it's one of my favorite shows ever. The Masters is, to me, maybe my favorite sporting show.

And it showed—and you know, Justin Rose was great. They were all—look, they're—they're great athletes under tremendous pressure. But unless you're a golfer, you don't understand it. It's a hundredth of an inch makes a difference between a great shot and a horrible shot. Think of it, just a little tiny—a little small percentage of an inch, and literally, in some cases, a hundredth of an inch—

Q. Hey, Cheung—

The President. —is the difference between winning and losing. It's pretty amazing.

Q. Cheung is telling you to get out of here.

The President. Who is—

Q. Cheung wants you to be safe.

Director Cheung. *[Laughter]* We're landing.

Q. Let's go.

The President. How is he doing?

Q. He's doing a great job.

The President. But he's getting tired being down there.

Director Cheung. It's all right. I'll power through.

The President. Anyway, thank you very much, everybody. We're going to have some good time—and I hope you enjoyed the fights last night.

Q. Oh, I loved it. it was awesome.

The President. Now, those are tough cookies. You think anybody in the field here could take him in a fight?

Q. I can't take a punch to the head, Mr. President.

The President. No, no. We don't want that. But they're amazing. Dana White is amazing. Have a good time, everybody.

Q. You too, sir. Thank you.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Appreciate it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:31 p.m. in the press cabin. In his remarks, he referred to President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia; President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine; professional golfer Rory McIlroy; and Dana F. White, chief executive officer, Ultimate Fighting Championship. Reporters referred to U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson L. Greer; Gov. Joshua D. Shapiro of Pennsylvania; and professional golfer Bryson DeChambau. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on April 14.

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

Locations: Air Force One.

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Subjects: Automobile industry, strengthening efforts; Border security; China, trade with U.S.; Golf; Iran, diplomatic engagement with U.S.; Medicare and Medicaid programs; Mexico, water treatment infrastructure; News media, fairness and accuracy; News media, Presidential interviews; Pennsylvania, arson attack at Governor's Mansion in Harrisburg; Pharmaceutical supply chains, improvement efforts; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Russia, President; Semiconductor manufacturing; Social Security program; Steel and aluminum, U.S. tariffs on foreign imports; Tariffs; Tax Code reform; U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East; U.S. Steel Corp.; Ukraine, President; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Water treatment infrastructure; White House Communications Director.

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