

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025

Remarks in an Exchange With Reporters Prior to the White House Easter Egg Roll
April 21, 2025

Death of Pope Francis

Q. Mr. President, about the Pope? [*Inaudible*]

The President. It's very sad. He was having a hard time, so obviously you see what the end result is. But he was a good man. He worked very hard. He loved the world. He really did. He loved the world. So it's an honor to mention. It's an honor we're—flags of the country, as you know, have been taken to half-mast, and they'll be that way for about four days.

Q. Do you have any favorites? Any American Pope that you would like to see?

The President's Impression of Past Popes

The President. Well, I met two of them. And look, these are great gentlemen. They're great. If they weren't, they wouldn't be Pope. It'd be very hard.

Secretary of Defense Peter B. Hegseth

Q. President Trump, do you remain confident in Hegseth? Do you remain confident in Pete Hegseth?

The President. Oh, total. Why do you even ask a question like that? We have—recruitment is at—it's at an alltime high. The spirit in the Armed Forces is fantastic. No, great confidence.

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

Signal Messaging Application

Q. Mr. President, can you explain why you're comfortable with Secretary Hegseth using Signal to discuss those military plans?

The President. Are you bringing up Signal again? I thought they gave that up 2 weeks ago.

Q. There was a new report this weekend that he used it in a separate chat that included some family members, a personal lawyer.

The President. It's just all—it's all just the same old stuff from the media. That's an old one. Try finding something new.

Death of Pope Francis

Q. Sir, your message to Catholics, sir, mourning the loss of Pope Francis? Your message to Catholics, sir?

The President. We love you all. We're with you all. They were with me during the election, as you know, very strongly, and it's just an honor to have the support of the Catholics. And I feel very badly for them, because they loved the Pope.

The President's Thoughts About a Future Pope

Q. No matter who the next Pope is—sir, no matter who the next Pope is elected, whoever that may be, what relationship do you hope to have with an incoming Pope?

The President. I think very good. I've had that. But I think very good.

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

Q. [Inaudible]—on Austin Tice—is there anything on Austin Tice?

Russia/Ukraine

Q. Do you think Russia and Ukraine can get in a deal this week? Do you think Russia and Ukraine can get a deal—cease-fire——

The President. There's a chance. There's a very good chance.

European Union

Q. Are you happy with how the European Union is handling the tariffs right now? Are you happy with Europe right now?

The President. They've been fine. We'll end up having a deal.

Trade Negotiations/National Economy

Q. Can you get a deal with Japan?

The President. We'll end up—we're going to ultimately have a deal with anyone. If we don't, we're going to make it anyway, but we're going to ultimately have—the economy is very good. We don't have inflation. Energy is down at the lowest it's been in years. We hit, actually, \$1.98 recently in a couple of states.

I think we're doing really well. We're all set. There's a little transition, and that's going to happen, but ultimately, we're going to be the strongest that we've ever been as a nation.

Thank you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:09 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. Reporters referred to Jennifer Hegseth, wife, Phil Hegseth, brother, and Timothy Parlatore, personal attorney, of Secretary Hegseth; and Austin B. Tice, a U.S. freelance reporter who was abducted outside Damascus, Syria, on August 14, 2012. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the audio was incomplete.

Categories: Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, White House.

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