

The President's News Conference With White House Senior Adviser Elon R. Musk
May 30, 2025

The President. Well, thank you very much, everybody, for being here. And it's an honor to be with Elon, who's my friend, and he's done a fantastic job. He didn't need this. He didn't need it. And we find out Government is a little nasty on occasion.

Hello, Peter [Peter Doocy, Fox News].

Senior Adviser Musk. Yes, at times.

Q. Hello, President Trump.

The President. Government is a little bit nasty. Peter, you haven't noticed that. You have—you've had a charmed life, right?

Q. You tell me.

The President. Very charmed. I think you've had a charmed life.

I think what I'll do, if you don't mind—numbers have just come out which are rather extraordinary. And I thought I'd play a tape of one of the people who I've respected over the years, from—you know Joe Kernan and Rick Santelli. This just came out, and we'll just play that for a second.

[At this point, a White House aide placed a laptop computer on the Resolute Desk, and a video clip was played.]

Not bad.

[Senior Adviser Musk clapped.]

Senior Adviser Musk. Woo-hoo.

The President. Right? Not bad.

Senior Adviser Musk. Come on, guys. Yes.

The President. Thank you. Thank you. And I see Howard and Scott are here, so it's great. You guys want to stand over here? You might as well. You're the ones that helped produce those numbers.

And it will only get better. The tariffs are so important, and that's why we were so happy with the decision yesterday where the tariffs continue, because without the tariffs, our nation would be imperiled. We would really be imperiled. I think I can say that with great surety, Scott and Howard. And so, we were very happy to get that decision—that big decision yesterday.

And today it's about a man named Elon. And he's one of the greatest business leaders and innovators the world has ever produced. He stepped forward to put his very great talents into the service of our Nation, and we appreciate it.

And I just want to say that Elon has worked tirelessly, helping lead the most sweeping and consequential Government reform program in generations. And you know the kinds of things that he's found and his people have found. He's brought a group of very smart people in, and they found things that are pretty unbelievable.

I have to say that the numbers that we're talking about are substantial, but they're going to be very much more substantial with time, because many of the things that we're working on right

now, we're going to have to remember Elon as we find them. But the numbers could double and triple, because many, many things—and we don't want to go out with them until we're sure, but we've said—we've found things that are unbelievably stupid and unbelievably bad.

With the "Department of Government Efficiency," Elon has delivered a colossal change in the old ways of doing business in Washington. DOGE has installed geniuses with an engineering mindset and unbelievably talented people in computers.

I actually asked Elon one time, "What's their primary thing?" And they have a lot of primary things, all having to do with being smart, but he said the thing that they're really the best at is working with computers so that they can't be outsmarted by somebody that's not so honest, that happens to also be good with computers, but not as good as these people.

But the mindset in the senior ranks of every Federal department and—it's really changed. And with Elon's guidance, they're helping to detect fraud, slash waste, and modernize broken and outdated systems.

So, as you know, we're talking about various systems and changing systems. And you know, sadly, it takes a long time to do that. You'll change, let's say, a system at IRS and computerize it properly, where the job could be done in one tenth the time, but it takes, sometimes, years to rebuild those systems. But we've started. In many cases, we've started.

I will say that—this has less to do with Elon—but the air traffic control systems, we're bidding out to the best companies in the world those systems right now. They were horrible—what the previous administration—it was horrible what they did. They spent billions and billions of dollars. And in the end, it didn't even come close to working.

They tried to hook up wire to copper, and it can't be done. And they just spent billions of dollars and just wasted money. It actually made the system much worse.

So we're going to get a brandnew, modern system. Congress is working with us on that, and we're going to get it done as quickly as we can, but it's a—it's in the works. And once it's done, it will be good for 30 years.

But we have a system that's 48 years old and would have a modern computer hooked into a very outdated computer, and you—they don't hook up. I mean, they didn't hook up. So, after spending billions of dollars, they turned on the system, and it—in never—any cases, from local to countrywide, they never worked.

More than 75,000 bureaucrats have voluntarily left their taxpayer-funded jobs to come out and really do the job. Countless wasteful and unnecessary contracts have been terminated. And you know that we have terminated many, many contracts. And many contracts, Elon, are right now being looked at.

Senior Adviser Musk. Yes.

The President. And it may be 6 months, it may be almost a year, in some cases. We're going through procedures. We're going through courts. And we'll remember you as we announce billions of dollars of extra waste, fraud, and abuse.

Just as an example, DOGE canceled \$101 million for DEI contracts at the Department of Education—\$101 million. And that was just a small section of the Department of Education; \$59 million for illegal alien hotel rooms in New York City. And the landlord never made the kind of money that he made in the last short period of time; \$59 million to a hotel in New York City; \$45 million for diversity, equity, and inclusion scholarships in Burma. In Burma. Does anyone know about Burma? Forty-two million dollars for social and behavioral change in Uganda; \$40 million to improve the social and economic inclusion of sedentary migrants.

I can say it's \$2 billion to Stacey Abrams——

Senior Adviser Musk. Right.

The President. ——and her environmental movement. There was \$100 in the account, and all of a sudden, they found \$2 billion in the account. And I assume that's being looked at. I don't know. I'm not sure. But I assume that's being looked at. Two—think of that. Two billion dollars.

And then, Lee will tell you, there's another one over there for \$20 billion being spent on another environmental thing—\$20 billion. Not \$20 million, a lot. Not \$200,000, which is a lot.

So think of it. In her case, you have \$100. And now, all of a sudden, she gets hit with an infusion of \$2 billion just before I take office; \$20 million for Arab "Sesame Street" in the Middle East. Nobody knows what that's all about. Nobody has been able to find it; \$8 million for making mice transgender. So they spent \$8 million on making mice transgender.

And those are better than many of the others. I could sit here all day and read things just like that, but we have other things to do. So it's much, much more than just that.

We are totally committed to making the DOGE cuts permanent and stopping much more of the waste in the months to come. We want to get our "Great Big Beautiful Bill" finished and done. After that, we're going to be—we put some of this into the bill, but most of it's going to come later. We're going to have it coderized [codified; White House correction] by Congress—affirmed by Congress.

In some cases, we'll make cuts. In some cases, we'll just use it in a different layer to save the money, but it's hundreds of billions of dollars.

DOGE has also fully modernized the Federal retirement process and continues to work very hard on the IRS modernization. But we'll—we're taking that over with DOGE.

Many of the DOGE people, Elon, are staying behind too.

Senior Adviser Musk. Yes.

The President. So they're not leaving.

Senior Adviser Musk. Absolutely.

The President. And Elon is really not leaving. He's going to be back and forth, I think. I have a feeling. It's his baby, and I think he's going to be doing a lot of things.

But Elon's service to America has been without comparison in modern history. He's already running one of the most innovative car companies in the world—you look at his factories and compare them with some of the old factories we have, and it's a big difference; and the most successful space company in—I guess, in history, you would have to say; the largest free-speech platform on the Internet; et cetera.

Yet Elon willingly—with all of the success, he willingly accepted the outrageous abuse and slander and lies and attacks, because he does love our country. I know that very much. He knows—loves our country. He comes from another country, a country that's gone through trials and tribulations, I would say. But he's all about the U.S.A., and Americans owe him a great debt of gratitude.

So I just want to thank Elon for his time as a special Government employee—can you imagine, they call him an employee?—but it's a special Government employee—and for coming and helping us. And he really has changed the mindset of a lot of people. A lot of people thought, you know, maybe we'll cut 1 percent or 2 percent or 3 percent. Then they said, "Wow, we can cut

a lot more than that." And we're going to do it very surgically. We're going to continue on a—on the march. We're making America great again.

When I was in Saudi Arabia—and we were in, as you know, three really great countries. Predominantly, the three. Qatar was great. U.A.E. was great. Saudi Arabia, incredible. What in—like, such an incredible experience to be in those three countries. But the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia and—I must tell you, the leaders—the great leaders of the other two that we just mentioned, they all said the same thing—that the United States is the hottest country right now anywhere in the world.

And 6 months ago, we thought it was dead. It was like a dead country. And it would have been a dead country if we didn't have the right result on November 5. It would have been—a horrible, horrible situation was going on with the borders, with transgender for everyone, men playing in women's sports, and so much more.

But they were saying the hottest country anywhere in the world. And then I played that little clip, because that was one person who's respected, but—or two people, because Joe was in that one too. Joe's a good man. But that was one group of people saying something about the success of what we've done over the last 4 months. They cannot believe it.

In the one case, they said they've never seen anything like it, as long as they've been doing what they've been doing. They've been doing it for a long time.

So I just—I want to thank Elon for helping.

And, again, you know, the United States right now is the hottest country anywhere in the world. There's no country as hot, and we're doing really well. We're—we came—when I left, we had no wars, we had no problems, we defeated ISIS, we rebuilt our military, and we had no inflation. And when I came back, we had a lot of inflation. We had wars all over the place. We had the embarrassment in Afghanistan, where we gave up billions and billions of dollars of military equipment—the most embarrassing moment in the history of our country, I believe. I believe that strongly.

We have Russia with Ukraine. We had the attack on Israel in October—the horrible attack, October 7. Horrible, horrible attack. Nobody has ever seen anything like it.

And now, we have something where we're really healing a lot of that. We stopped India and Pakistan from fighting. I believe that could have turned out into a nuclear disaster. And I want to thank the leaders of India, the leaders of Pakistan. And I want to thank my people also. We talked trade, and we said, "We can't trade with people that are shooting at each other and potentially using nuclear weapons." And they were—they're great leaders in those countries, and they understood. And they agreed, and that all stopped.

And we're stopping others from fighting also, because, ultimately, we can fight better than anybody. We have the greatest military in the world. We have the greatest leaders in the world. We put one of them in charge of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as you know, General "Razin" Caine.

And we wiped out ISIS—completely wiped out ISIS—in 3 weeks. They said it would take five years, and we did it in 3 weeks. And that's the way it is.

But we don't want to have to use our military. We want to be peace through strength when we can, and that's the way we're going to have it.

So I just want to thank Elon and all of his people. Most of those people are staying. Almost all of them are staying.

Senior Adviser Musk. Yes.

The President. And they're going to be with us, and you're going to see the results coming long into the future. Even a year and 2 years later, you're going to see a lot of the results, and those hundreds of billions of dollars are going to be adding up, and they're going to continue to add. It will be interesting to see—really interesting to see what the final number is going to be.

But, again, Elon gave an incredible service. Nobody like him. And he had to go through the slings and the arrows, which is a shame, because he's an incredible patriot. The good news is that 90 percent of the country knows that, and they appreciate it, and they really appreciate what he did.

And I gave him a little special something. We have here——

Senior Adviser Musk. Thank you.

The President. ——a very special—that I give to very special people. I have given it to some, but it goes to very special people. And I thought I'd give it to Elon on——

Senior Adviser Musk. Thank you.

The President. ——as a presentation from our country.

[*The President presented Senior Adviser Musk with a golden key.*]

Senior Adviser Musk. Thank you.

The President. Thank you, Elon.

Senior Adviser Musk. Thank you.

The President. Take care of yourself.

Senior Adviser Musk. Thank you.

The President. Good.

Senior Adviser Musk. You can see the lock. [*Laughter*] The lock on this is amazing.

The President. [*Laughter*] That's right. Large—a large lock.

Senior Adviser Musk. Well, let me say perhaps a few words, that this is not the end of DOGE but really the beginning. My time as a special Government employee necessarily had to end. It was a limited-time thing. It's 134 days, I believe, which ends in a few days. So—so, that—you know, it comes with a time limit.

And—but the DOGE team will only grow stronger over time. The DOGE influence will only grow stronger. It's—I'd liken it to sort of Buddhism. It's like a way of life.

So it is permeating throughout the government, and I'm confident that, over time, we will see a trillion dollars of savings and a reduction in—a trillion dollars of waste and fraud reduction.

The calculations of the DOGE team thus far, in terms of an FY 25 to FY 26 delta, are over \$160 billion, and that's climbing. We expect that will probably—that number will probably go over \$200 billion soon.

So I think the DOGE team is doing an incredible job. They're going to continue doing to—doing an incredible job, and I'll be—and I'll continue to be visiting here and be a friend and adviser to the President. And I look forward to, you know, at times, being back in this amazing room.

By the way, isn't this incredible? Like, this incredible—like, the—I mean, it's stunning, I think, the way that the Oval Office—how the President has just completely redone the Oval Office. It's beautiful. And I love the gold on the ceiling.

The President. Thank you. It's pretty nice.

Senior Adviser Musk. Yeah. So——

The President. That's been there a long time. That was plaster. Nobody ever really saw it.

Senior Adviser Musk. Yes.

The President. They didn't know the eagle was up there, and we highlighted. It's a—essentially, it's a landmark, a great landmark. And that's 24-karat gold, and everybody loved it, and now they all see it when they come in. So it's been good.

Senior Adviser Musk. Yes. The Oval Office has—had—you know, finally has the majesty that it deserves, thanks to the President.

So I look forward to continuing to be a friend and adviser to the President, continuing to support the DOGE team, and we are relentlessly pursuing a trillion dollars in—in waste and fraud reductions, which will benefit the American taxpayer. So that's it, really.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you, Elon.

Senior Adviser Musk. All right.

The President. Great job. Fantastic job. Thank you.

Peter.

New York Times

Q. Thank you, President Trump.

The President mentioned that you had to deal with all the slings and arrows during your time at DOGE. There's this *New York Times*——

Senior Adviser Musk. Well, some of the people—you know, some of the media organizations in this room were the slingers. [*Laughter*]

Q. Well, so I—there is a *New York Times* report today that accuses you of blurring the line——

Senior Adviser Musk. Oh, wait, wait.

Q. ——between——

Senior Adviser Musk. Wait. Is the New York—is the New York Times, is that the same publication that got a Pulitzer Prize for false reporting on the Russiagate? Is it the same organization?

Q. I've got to check my Pulitzer——

Senior Adviser Musk. I think it is.

Q. ——my Pulitzer counter.

The President. It is.

Q. And so——

Senior Adviser Musk. I think that—I think the judge just ruled against *New York Times* for their—their lies about the Russiagate hoax and that they might have to give back that Pulitzer Prize. That *New York Times*? Let's move on.

Q. Okay. Then, President Trump——

Senior Adviser Musk. Next question.

[Several reporters began asking questions at once.]

Former President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.

Q. ——I've got one for—I've got one for President Trump.

So, President Trump, Biden aides who used to work here are in talks with Republicans in Congress to go and testify about what they did or didn't do to possibly conceal President Biden's decline. Do you think that Dr. Jill Biden should also have to come in and testify about what she did or didn't do?

The President. Well, I hate the concept of it. It's the wife of a man who was going through a lot of problems, and everybody that dealt with him understood that. And I guess it came out during the debate loud and clear. That was a big—that was the biggest signal of all.

They have to do what's right. The country was—there was a lot of dishonesty in the election, as you know, of 2020. That's been now caught. People understand it. It was a rigged election.

And when you go further out, when you see the autopen—I mean, I think the autopen is going to become one of the great scandals of all time, because you have somebody operating it or a number of people operating—because I knew Joe Biden. Joe Biden wasn't in favor of opening up borders, letting 21 million people into this—from prisons and mental institutions and gang members. He wasn't into that at all.

And you know, who signed the—who signed these orders, proclamations, and all of the different things that he signed that set our country so far back? That was so bad for our country.

The President's Executive Actions/The President's Preference for Personally Signing Documents

Q. But the autopen, how would it work? Like, we're in the Oval Office right now. If there was a group of rogue staffers that worked for you——

The President. Yes.

Q. ——who wanted to advance a bill or an Executive order without your knowledge, how could they do it? How do they go behind a President's back?

The President. Well, it's very hard because I'd read your newspapers or your media the next day, and I'd say, "Well, I didn't approve that," and I would find it. I mean, they wouldn't get away with it for a long because I'd say: "I never signed that. Who the hell signed that?"

Autopens, to me, are used to sign letters to people, because we get—I think they said 20,000 letters a week, and you like to be able—when somebody takes the time to write a letter, it's nice to sort of write back. And autopens are meant for that. Autopens are not meant to sign major proclamations or tax cuts or borders, anything having to do with the border, which is so important.

And if it happened on my watch, I would be able to see it, because, the next day or sooner, I'd be reading about something that I knew nothing about, and "who the hell signed this?" So I almost never use the autopen.

In fact, yesterday I was signing about 81—I think it was 81 proclamations and statements to people that I think should be signed by us.

I think when you write letters to foreign dignitaries or Presidents or Prime Ministers, you should be signing those letters, not done with autopens. I understand he signed almost everything with an autopen.

It's a very dangerous thing. It really means you're not President. Whoever operated the autopen—and we think we know who that is, and it was actually more than one person. But that's not what the Presidency is all about. I hardly used an autopen.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

China-U.S. Trade

Q. Mr. President, are you going to reinstate the tariffs on China? You said that they violated the agreement with the U.S.

The President. Well, they did. They were—they violated a big part of the agreement we made. You know, I—if you read that whole statement, I was very nice to them. I helped them, because they were in trouble with the stoppage of a massive amount of business.

But I'm sure that I'll speak to President Xi. And hopefully, we'll work that out.

Q. Is it on the table?

The President. But yes, that's a violation of the agreement.

Yes, please.

Cease-Fire and Hostage-Release Deal Between Israel and Hamas/Iran

Q. Mr. President, can you give us an update to the latest cease-fire agreement that Israel has agreed to, but Hamas still—is still considering?

The President. Well, they're very close to an agreement on Gaza, and we'll let you know about it during the day or maybe tomorrow, and we have a chance of that.

And I think we have a chance of making a deal with Iran also. They don't want to be blown up. They would rather make a deal. And I think that could happen in the not-too-distant future. That would be a great thing. If we could have a deal without bombs being dropped all over the Middle East, I—that would be a very good thing. They can't have a nuclear weapon.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

We want them—we want them to be safe. We want them to have a very, very successful nation. Let it be a great nation, but we can't have the—they cannot have a nuclear weapon. It's very simple.

And I think we're fairly close to a deal with Iran.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

U.S. DOGE Service

Q. Mr. Musk—a question for Elon.

The President. Yes, please.

Q. You said just now that you look forward to being a friend and adviser to the President. So——

Senior Adviser Musk. Well, I am.

Q. ——do you expect to continue——

Senior Adviser Musk. And I was before.

Q. —advising the President and DOGE informally, or are you going to sort of shift your focus entirely to your companies?

Senior Adviser Musk. Well, I expect to continue to provide advice whenever the President would like advice, if he——

The President. I hope so.

Senior Adviser Musk. —if he—[*laughter*]. I mean, I'm—yes, it's—I expect to remain a friend and an adviser. And certainly, if there's anything the President wants me to do, I'm at—at the President's service.

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

Q. Mr. Musk, on DOGE. You said that there was a trillion-dollar promise for cuts from DOGE.

Senior Adviser Musk. Yes, I think we do expect, over time, to achieve a trillion dollars.

Q. But what have you found in your time here was the biggest roadblock to getting those cuts? Was it the Cabinet or was it Congress or something else? What was the biggest roadblock for your work?

Senior Adviser Musk. It's mostly just a lot of hard work. It's really not any one person or Congress. It's going through, really, millions of line items and saying does each one of them make sense or does it not make sense.

Obviously, at times, when you cut expenses, those who are receiving the money, whether they receive—whether they were receiving that money legitimately or not, they do complain. And you won't—you're not going to hear someone confessing that they received money inappropriately. Never. They're going to always say that they received money appropriately for an important cause. Naturally. That's what you'd expect.

But—so we just have to—it's a—it's just a lot of work going through the vast expanses of the federal government and just really asking questions: What is this money for? Is—are you sure it's actually being used well?

Many times, we can't even find anyone who defends it. So, for a lot of the expenses, there's—there is actually no defender at all. And then we have to just go work through the process of stopping the—stopping the spending where there's often literally no defender. Nobody even knows why the money is being spent. It's truly absurd.

I mean, we find situations where there are—there are millions of software licenses where—with zero people using them. Zero. Exactly. This is the quizzical expression. You're like, "Surely, if there's millions of software licenses, someone should be using them." No.

And then we just—we've got to go through—through the process of saying, "Okay, look, if no one's using this software, we terminate this software license agreement." That's——

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

——that's everywhere in the Government, by the way.

Q. Mr. Musk, what do you think would be easier: colonizing Mars—[*laughter*]—or making the Government efficient? [*Laughter*]

Senior Adviser Musk. It's a tough call, but I think colonizing Mars and making life multiplanetary is harder.

And as I said, I—we do—the DOGE—we do expect to achieve, over time, the trillion dollars of savings. We can't do it in, like, a few months. But if you say by the—I think the official end of DOGE, which the president may choose to extend, is the middle of next year. Say, by the middle of next year, with the support of the President and Congress, could we achieve a trillion dollars of savings? I think so. We're on track to do so.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Q. Mr. Musk—Mr. Musk, right here.

The President. Go ahead.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

You had mentioned earlier in the week that DOGE had become a whipping boy. And as the president mentioned, you went through a lot to go through this process.

Senior Adviser Musk. Yes.

Q. Was it worth it for you? And what would you change?

Senior Adviser Musk. Yes. So what we found was happening was that if there were any cuts anywhere, then people would assume that was done by DOGE. And so we became like, essentially, the "DOGE bogeyman," where if—you know, any cut anywhere would—would be ascribed to DOGE.

You know, a friend of mine's daughter, who's at law school at Georgetown, thought that DOGE had cut the Senate—you know, the internships for—the legal internships for the Senate, and we have nothing to do with that. So, if they have been cut, it's not to do with us. Just as an example.

So, you know, it just became a bit ridiculous, where anything—any cut anywhere was—was somehow DOGE, including things that made no sense and we would agree made no sense.

So there are many things that occur in the Government because it's the banal evil of bureaucracy. It's sort of the, frankly, largely uncaring nature of bureaucracy. It's—as the great Milton Friedman said, money is spent most poorly when it is someone else's money being spent on people you don't know. And that's how Federal spending is.

And then, you can't really even blame the individuals because the way the Government works is complaint minimization.

So, when you do try to—when someone within the government tries to stop money being spent, there's usually someone that complains. And then their manager will say: "It's not worth the trouble. Just pay it anyway." That happens over and over again.

Q. So was it worth—*[inaudible]*——

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

The President. Peter.

Senior Adviser Musk. I think it was——

The President. Peter, yes.

Senior Adviser Musk. I think it was an important thing. I think it was a necessary thing. And I think it will have a good effect in the future.

Q. Thank you, President Trump.

The President. Peter.

President Emmanuel Macron of France

Q. This week, there was a video on board a plane that showed the First Lady of France slapping her husband, Emmanuel Macron. Do you have any world-leader-to-world-leader marital advice for the Macrons? *[Laughter]*

The President. Make sure the door remains closed. *[Laughter]* That was not good.

Senior Adviser Musk. Yes.

The President. That was not good.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

No, I spoke to him, and he's fine. They're fine. They're two really good people. I know them very well. And I don't know what that was all about, but I know them very well, and they're fine.

Senior Adviser Musk. And I've got a little shiner here. *[Laughter]* Or is it there? I don't know.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Democratic Party/2024 Presidential Election

Q. What do you think about the Democratic Party plan to avoid being swept in every battleground State again by spending \$20 million to study how to speak to American men? *[Laughter]*

The President. Well, you know, they spent—they spent \$2.8 billion. We spent 1.5. We spent much less. We spent about half of what they spent. And, at the end, they were \$28 million short. They had to be—they spent \$2.8 billion—that's a lot—but they couldn't get \$28 million at the end.

And now they want to spend—I read that. They want to spend money to learn how to talk. That's fake. You don't want to be fake. You shouldn't have to hire consultants to say what America needs, because, you know, then they should be—the consultants should be running the deal, not them.

But I read that. They want to spend a lot of money in each State.

So we won all seven swing States. Seven out of seven. We won a lot more than that. We won the popular vote. We won everything, and they want to spend money to find out what they did wrong.

And, I mean, I can tell you what they did wrong. I can tell you, every one of their programs—when they say men playing in women's sports, I would say that's not a winner. When they say transgender for everybody, I think that's not a winner. When they say open borders so the entire world population of criminals can pour into our country, I don't think that's a winner. I mean, I can—I just gave them that for free, but I don't know if they'll change their ways.

I see them—all the time, I see people that I know in Congress, Democrats—they're trying to justify some of the things I just said. You can't justify them. They're—you know, they—I always hear they're "80–20 issues." I say they're not 80–20, they're 97–3. They might be 99 to 1. They're not 80–20. They wish they were 80–20. And they're wasting a lot of money if they're going to continue with that nonsense.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Musician and Producer Sean "Diddy" Combs

Q. And this one is a little bit more of a page 6 question, but back when you hosted "The Apprentice," you mentioned once, in 2012, that Diddy was a good friend of yours back then.

The President. Yes.

Q. He has since found himself in some very serious legal trouble.

The President. Yes, that's true.

Q. Would you ever consider pardoning him?

The President. I—well, nobody's asked. You had to be the one to ask, Peter. But nobody's asked. But I know people are thinking about it. I know they're thinking about it. I think some people have been very close to asking.

First of all, I'd look at what's happening, and I haven't been watching it too closely; although, it's certainly getting a lot of coverage. I haven't seen him, I haven't spoken to him in years.

He used to really like me a lot, but I think when I ran for politics, he sort of—that relationship busted up, from what I read. I don't know. He didn't tell me that, but I'd read some—little bit nasty statements in the paper, all of a sudden.

You know, it's different—you become a much different person when you run for politics and you do what's right. I could do other things, and I'm sure he'd like me, and I'm sure other people would like me, but it wouldn't be as good for our country. As we said, our country is doing really well because of what we're doing. So I can't—it's not a popularity contest.

So I don't know. I would certainly look at the facts.

Q. Mr. President——

The President. If I think somebody was mistreated, whether they like me or don't like me, it wouldn't have any impact on me.

The President's Legislative Agenda

Q. Mr. President, on the "Big Beautiful Bill"—on the "Big Beautiful Bill." Would you like to see the Senate build in some support for your tariffs on the "Big Beautiful Bill," or should that be a stand-alone bill?

The President. I have great support on the tariffs. I mean, I was so honored that we got that ridiculous stay lifted, because that would have taken away Presidential power. It would have taken away everything that was granted by the Founders. It would have been a terrible thing. And it would have—most importantly, it would have left us vulnerable.

We have a lot of countries that use tariffs on us and use them viciously, actually. Viciously. And if we didn't have the power to use tariffs on them—and instantly, not when you go back to Congress and try and get hundreds of people to agree on something. You can't—that would take months to get just one simple proclamation. If we didn't have the power to counteract their powers, you wouldn't have a country left.

We have to act fast. We have to be fast and nimble, as they say.

And that was a really great moment, I think, yesterday, when that stay was lifted. And hopefully, now we'll go to court and just win that battle. Because if we don't have the power to do what they're doing to us, we are going to be a great nation no longer.

Senior Adviser Musk's Businesses/SpaceX/Starlink

Q. And quickly, Mr. President, Elon Musk was once idolized by folks on the left in this country, before joining your administration.

The President. That's true.

Q. Now, he's considered a hero by conservatives. Why do you think this man, what he's done in American life has been so politicized? Does it only have to do with you?

The President. Well, his life has been amazing. When I look at so many different things—I look at that rocket being, you know, guided back into position. I've never seen that before. I thought it was a space movie. I thought it was a movie. You look at what he's done in terms of communication, it's been unbelievable.

So many different—even tunnels going underground, not having to go through all the process of going—you know, he's got a company that does that. He's got so many different companies.

Starlink, as an example. He saved a lot of lives—probably hundreds of lives—in North Carolina. I don't even know if you remember, but I called you.

Senior Adviser Musk. Yes.

The President. They needed Starlink in North Carolina, and I didn't know what the hell Starlink was. I said: "What is it? Who owns it?" They said, "Do you know Elon Musk?" I said, "Yes, I happen to know the gentleman." This was before his Government stay. And they said, "We really need it," because North Carolina was—literally became an island. There was—people had no communication. They had no access to anything, and they were dying.

And I called up Elon—and you can't get it, because it's so successful. It's very hard to get. And he had so much of it brought over there, and they told me it was unbelievable. It saved a lot of lives.

So, you know, he's just done a lot of things. He—I don't think—frankly, I don't think he gets credit for what he's done. But he's—and he's a very good person too.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

You know what? If he—if he wasn't a good person—if he wasn't a—but he did the same things, you know, I'd probably, maybe, speak differently. He happens to be a really good person, who loves the country.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

The President's Legislative Agenda/Federal Deficit and National Debt

Q. Mr. President, on the "One Big Beautiful Bill." You had indicated this week that there were some things you didn't like about what had passed in the House. What changes do you want to see the Senate make?

And you had also indicated there were things you didn't like about the bill. What would you be suggesting he push Senators to change in their version—like, negotiate?

The President. Well, I'll tell you. I'll go first. It's an unbelievable bill. It cuts your deficits. It cuts—you know, it's a huge cutting, but there are things I'd like to see maybe cut a little bit more.

I'd like to see a bigger cut in taxes. It's going to be the largest tax decrease or cut in the history of our country. I'd like to see it get down to an even lower number. I was shooting for a slightly lower number. I would have liked to have done that.

But with all of that being said, when you look at the tax cut and the fact that the original tax cut, which made us so successful—we had the most successful 4 years in the history of our country, the economy, and this is going to be even better. And you see that by the reports that came out just yesterday—or tonight—I guess they were released this morning at 8 o'clock.

You see the kind of numbers, where somebody that's a pro is like: "Whoa. I haven't seen numbers like this since I've been doing this." You know, these are human emotions of professionals that have never seen numbers like—and we have just—we have just started.

The bill is a great bill. It's going to be jiggered around a little bit. It's going to be negotiated with the Senate, with the House. But the end result is it extends the Trump tax cuts.

If it doesn't get approved, you'll have a 68-percent tax increase. You're going to go up 68 percent. You—that's a number that nobody's ever heard of before. You'll have a massive tax increase.

If it does get approved, you'll have a large tax cut—the largest we've ever had, when you add the past tax cuts that we got you, the Trump tax—they call them the "Trump tax cuts." It's an amazing bill. It does amazing things.

With all of that, it's going to be adjusted a little bit over the next coming weeks, and I think it's going to be passed. The Republicans want to pass it. With all of the great things it does, including an extension of debt, it's—the extension—we have to extend the debt. If we don't extend debt, we're in default.

Now, the Democrats might like our country to be in default, but in 250 years, we've never been in default. That was handed to them by a very well-meaning man that gave it to them because he thought it was the right thing to do. It could have been their problem before the election, but this man thought it was the right thing to do, and he was well-meaning. I don't hold anything against him for that.

But that was put on our plate, when it should have been on the Democrats. September 28, a famous date. It should have been taken care of by the Democrats. But this person, a man of power, gave it to us so that, in June, that comes due. Well, we have to take care of that, because if we don't take care of it, we have a country in default. And we don't ever want to have a country in default.

You know, I'll tell you, a certain Senator, Elizabeth Warren, said that she would never, ever allow a default on our debt. She would never let—let it happen, and she would like to get rid of the debt ceiling—what's called the debt ceiling. I call it the debt extension, because we really need an extension—that she'd like to see that gotten rid of. And there are many people that agree. Many Democrats agree with that.

But we gave that through—and you know, I don't want to say an error. He did it well-meaning. They gave that to us. The—it was a Democrat problem just before the election. Would have had a huge impact on the election and—to our benefit. We won anyway, but to our benefit. But felt that, really, for the good of the country, we should extend that.

But Elizabeth Warren and various other people would like to see that—her whole career, she wanted to see it terminated, gotten rid of, not being voted on every 5 years or 10 years. And the reason was because it's so catastrophic for our country.

And I always agreed with her. That was one thing I agreed with her on. Now, I haven't spoken to her, but I would say that if you asked her that question, now, she would say, "No, no, it's their problem."

But it's a very unfortunate situation. It's a very unfair situation. And she happened to be right on that. It should be gotten rid of, or it should simply be extended. But that's one of the things that gets taken care of in this bill. That automatically gets extended for a 4-year period, and it should be.

But I agree with Elizabeth Warren on that. I think you should get rid of it. It's too catastrophic.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Q. Mr. Musk—Mr. Musk——

The President. Yes, please. Go ahead.

Q. What changes do you want to see, Mr. Musk——

International Students in the U.S./Harvard University/Federal Assistance to Colleges and Universities

Q. What message do you like——

Q. ——to the bill?

Q. ——to send to international students? Do—are they still welcomed to study in the United States? And one question for Mr. Musk. As you are——

The President. To students? Well, we want to have great students here. We just don't want students that are causing trouble. We want to have students. I want to have foreign students.

I think Harvard—you know, it's close to 31 percent. That's a lot. Our country has given \$5 billion plus to Harvard over a short period of time. Nobody knew that. We found that out. I wouldn't say that was a DOGE thing, but we found that out over a period of time. That was sort of a Trump thing.

We ended up in litigation for other reasons, because they're very anti-Semitic. And in finding out and in going through the books, we found out that the country gave them \$5 billion plus—much more than that, actually. And we're having it out with them, and let's see what happens.

I think we have a very good—well, it's a very sad case. It's a case we win. We can't lose that case, because we have the right to make grants. We're not going to make any grants like that.

But I don't think Harvard has been acting very nicely. I think Columbia wants to get to the bottom of the problem. They've acted very well. And there are other institutions, too, that are acting, but Harvard is trying to be a big shot. And all that happens is, every 3 days, we find another \$100 million that was given. Last—2 days ago, we found \$200 million more. The money is given to them like gravy.

I'd like to see the money go to trade schools, where people learn how to fix motors and engines, where people learn how to build rocket ships. Because, you know, somebody has——

Senior Adviser Musk. That's great.

The President. ——to build those rocket ships.

Senior Adviser Musk. Yes.

The President. And I'd like to see trade schools set up, because you could take \$5 billion, plus hundreds of billions more, which is what's spent——

Senior Adviser Musk. Absolutely.

The President. ——and you could have the greatest trade school system anywhere in the world. And that's what we need to build his rockets and robots and things that he's doing and to build lots of other things.

And you know, I went to school with people—in some cases, they weren't good students, but they could fix the engine of a car better than anybody I've ever seen. They could take it apart

blindfolded. They had an ability at that, and they did very well. They made a lot of money. You know, it's a very skilled job. It's great.

But I'd like to see a lot of money going into trade schools. I've always felt that. And we probably found our pot of gold, and that's what's been wasted at places like Harvard. And the money has been wasted.

Yes, please.

Senior Adviser Musk's Son X

Q. I wanted to ask quickly. Mr. Musk, what—is your eye okay? What happened to your—to your eye? I noticed there's a bruise there.

Senior Adviser Musk. Well, it wasn't—I wasn't anywhere near France, so—[laughter]—but I—[laughter].

Q. What does that mean?

Senior Adviser Musk. No, I was making a joke about the——

The President. I didn't notice his eye.

Secretary of Commerce Howard W. Lutnick. The First Lady of France.

The President. [Inaudible]

Senior Adviser Musk. ——getting slapped, you know?

The President. I didn't notice his eye.

Senior Adviser Musk. So yes, no, I was just horsing around with little X, and I said, "Go ahead. Punch me in the face." And he did. Turns out, even a 5-year-old punching you in the—in the face actually does——

The President. That was X that did that? [Laughter]

Senior Adviser Musk. Yes.

The President. X could do it.

Senior Adviser Musk. We were——

Q. Where is X?

The President. If you knew X, he could do it.

Senior Adviser Musk. He's with his mom right now.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

But I didn't feel—I didn't really feel much at the time, and then it—I guess it bruises up. But I was just horsing around with the kids, basically.

The President. I didn't notice it, actually.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Senior Adviser Musk. So——

Ukraine/Russia/News Media

Q. President Trump, I got one. I know that you try to stay pretty neutral, because not your war. But as you——

The President. Not—and by the way, not my war. I just want to solve the problem for people. This was not a war that was going to happen if I were President.

Q. Right. And so, not your war. But as you try to fix it and as you survey this hellscape of the Ukrainian front lines——

The President. It's horrible.

Q. ——and you guys—you and your team deal with a very stubborn Vladimir Putin——

The President. Yes.

Q. ——do you look——

The President. And Zelenskyy.

Senior Adviser Musk. Yes.

Q. But do you look at this conflict——

The President. Very stubborn Zelenskyy too.

Senior Adviser Musk. True.

Q. ——any differently now? Like, do you look at this and see Putin as the good guy or the bad guy?

The President. So I've known him very well, and I went through a lot of things with him because Russia was—you know, the "Russia, Russia, Russia" hoax turned out to be a total hoax. New York Times, they got a Pulitzer Prize.

Senior Adviser Musk. Yeah.

The President. They have to give back the Pulitzer Prize. That's my lawsuit. And they're doing very poorly in that lawsuit.

But, you know, they wrote stories about how it was true, and it was false. And, you know, a lot of—the Washington Post also.

I have gotten to see things that I was very surprised at: rockets being shot into cities like Kyiv during a negotiation that I felt was maybe very close to ending. We were going to solve a problem, and then, all of a sudden, rockets got shot into a couple of cities and people died.

I saw things that I was surprised at. So—and I don't like being surprised. So I'm very disappointed in that way.

With that being said, I'd like to see it end. Five thousand people. I think the number is at—even more than that, but 5,000 people a week are being killed. Mostly soldiers, but also people that live in little cities and towns throughout Ukraine. And I'd like to see that stop.

Q. President Trump, on Russia.

Legal Challenges to the President's Agenda/Inflation/The President's Foreign Policy/Tariffs/Border Security/Illegal Immigration

Q. And I asked Karoline this yesterday, but I want to ask you directly. So many of the things that you're trying to do are held up in court right now.

The President. Yes. Yes.

Senior Adviser Musk. They are.

Q. If the courts are going to have so much influence over U.S. policy, do you wish you would have just become a judge instead? [*Laughter*]

The President. Yes. Yes. Well, look, it wasn't meant to be that way. If you look at the Founders, the President had certain powers, and you have your three groups, and they all had—supposed to be equal—pretty equal powers.

But you can't have a judge in Boston running foreign policy in places all over the country because he is—he's got a liberal bent or he's a radical-left person. That's what the executive branch is for, and you have checks and balances.

But we had millions of people pour into our country. Many, many criminals poured into our country—murderers—murderers, mental institutions from all over the world being emptied out into our country. And if we don't get them out and get them out quickly, we're going to—you could lose your country very easily. These are—this is a bad—that anybody would allow this to happen to our country—you know, with all of the things—we took over inflation, we took over some wars, we took over a lot of problems that didn't exist when I was President. None of it existed. We wiped out ISIS. Other than that, we had no wars. Putin was never going to hit Ukraine. Israel would have never been attacked. That attack—as you know, Iran had no money. They didn't have money for Hamas. They didn't have money for Hizballah. They had no money whatsoever. That wasn't going to happen. All of these things that happened weren't going to happen. You wouldn't have had inflation.

So it's very sad, when I came back, but the thing that is the hardest is that they allowed 21 million people into our country, and many of those people are stone-cold criminals. They moved their criminal population into the United States.

And of all the things that, you know, are bad—I solved inflation, I believe, already. I got the fuel prices down. The fuel prices came down. That's one of the reasons—they screwed up the energy. They screwed up the cost of gasoline and oil and gas. And you had tremendous inflation—the greatest inflation probably in the history of our country—under Biden.

And when people said, "Oh, but the economy was great"—no, the economy was terrible for the people because they couldn't afford the energy, and the energy brought everything else up. Energy is the big deal.

But with all of that, we solved that already. In 4 months, we solved it. A dollar ninety-nine, a dollar ninety-eight gasoline. First time people have seen that in a long time, since my term.

But the hardest thing to solve is millions of people pouring into our country, many of whom are criminals. Because, remember, these countries are smart. Their leaders are very street-smart. They're sending the people that they don't want. They don't want the people that are there, that are law-abiding, that are productive, that are working hard. They want people that are in jails. They're—we have them. They allowed them to come in.

And I always look to the other side, like why would somebody do something. You know, in business, I'd try and study: Why would they want to do this? Why would they want to sell it? Why would they want to buy it?

One thing I can't figure out is what would an administration—what were they thinking when they allowed millions of people from prisons all over the world? Not just from South America, Venezuela—all over the world, from the Congo in Africa. Hundreds of people, thousands of people from the Congo. Rough, rough prisoners from Asia, from Europe—rough parts of Europe.

Why would they allow them to come into our country? Why would they do that? It's the one thing I can't figure out.

And I don't believe it was Joe Biden. I really don't. I mean, look, he's a—he's been a—sort of a moderate person over his lifetime. Not a smart person, but a somewhat vicious person, I will say. If you feel sorry for him, don't feel so sorry, because he's vicious. What he did with his political opponent and all of the people that he hurt. He hurt a lot of people, Biden. And so I really don't feel sorry for him.

But he wasn't a person that would allow murderers to come into our country. He wasn't a person that was in favor of transgender for anybody, that wanted to——

Senior Adviser Musk. Yes.

The President. ——take kids out of families, et cetera, et cetera.

So I just don't understand why—why a thing like this, how a thing like this could have been allowed to happen. Very sad. It's very—it's——

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Senior Adviser Musk. If I—if I could say something.

The President. It's very sad—very sad for our country.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Senior Adviser Musk. If I—if I could add something to that, which is——

The President. Go ahead, Elon.

Senior Adviser Musk. I think the fundamental moral flaw of the left is empathy for the criminals and not empathy for the victims—empathy for the criminals, but not empathy for the victims. And there's—there's been way too much of that. That needs to stop.

To the President's point, there's been immense judicial overreach that is unconstitutional, that was never intended. And it's undermining the people's faith in the legal system. It needs to stop. It's gone too far.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

The President. And I just—and just—and just today, we had—just a couple of hours ago, we had a great decision from the Supreme Court, thank goodness, that was very important.

We had two important decisions yesterday on the tariffs, because, again, we have to be able to fight a fair fight with other countries. Howard, would you say? I mean, we have to be able to use tariffs to fight people that use tariffs on us.

I mean, if we didn't have that power of tariffs, we wouldn't—we would economically be destroyed as a country, because they will destroy us. Other countries will destroy us with unchecked tariffs. We can check them when we have the use. They tried to take that power away from us. And if you take that power away, we're not going to have a country. We won't have an economically viable country.

But it's very important, on immigration, that we be able to get people out without having to go through a long court case. I mean, it was up to some of these judges, every single one of these millions of people—millions of people—criminals, prisoners that were let go from jails because they save a fortune when they do. They brought them into the United States. You know what they're saving, the money they're saving? But some are murderers. It's very important that we're able to get those people out of here fast, bring them back to their country where they belong.

And those countries take them, because if they don't take them, they have to go through the wrath of the United States. And they take them. But we have judges that don't want that to happen. And it would be—it's a terrible thing.

The—that's going through the court system right now, that whole situation.

But when ICE and—with Border Patrol, they've done an incredible job. When they do this incredible job and they capture 100 killers and drug dealers and—we can't keep them for years here as we go through trials. We have to get them out rapidly. And we know who they are. We know who they are. And we're very careful about who they are, but we have to get them out rapidly, or, again, we're not going to have a country. Okay?

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Maybe one or two more.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Go ahead, please.

Tariffs/U.S. Automobile Industry

Q. Are you concerned that tariffs may also affect companies like Tesla, which has parts manufactured abroad? And this is also to you, Mr. Musk.

The President. Well, he's going to end up building his whole car here. I mean, I thought he built his whole car—pretty much, he does. He's got incredible factories in—like, I looked at one in Texas. It's unbelievable.

No, all of the manufacturers will build their parts here too. I mean, I—it used to bother me: They'd make a part in Canada, a part in Mexico, a part in Europe, and it's sent all over the place, and nobody knew what the hell was happening. I think it was ridiculous—you build a car, make it in America.

And I gave them a little leeway on that. You know, I gave them some leeway, but over the next year, they've got to have the whole thing built in America. That's what we want.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

We want America to buy American-built cars.

Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Chairman of the Federal Reserve System Board of Governors Jerome H. Powell

Q. How was your meeting with Jerome Powell, sir? How was your meeting with Jerome Powell?

The President. Good meeting. Good meeting. It was a good meeting.

Q. President Trump, are you considering pardoning George Santos?

The President. Thank you. Thank you.

[Reporters begin to exit the Oval Office.]

Q. *[Inaudible]*

The President. *[Inaudible]* You're asking a tough question. I said—I was a little—I was surprised.

Q. I tried. Yes.

The President. That's good. You doing all right, Peter?

Q. Doing great.

The President. Yes, he—this guy is good.

[*The President referred to Senior Adviser Musk.*]

He's good, Peter.

Q. Well, thanks for an exciting 130 days.

Senior Adviser Musk. Yes. [*Laughter*]

The President. Yes.

Senior Adviser Musk. I mean, just—things will continue, just quietly. Yes.

Q. All right. Thanks.

The President. Say hello.

Q. I will. I will.

The President. Congratulations.

Q. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:56 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Joe Kernan, coanchor, CNBC's "Squawk Box" program; Rick Santelli, on-air editor, CNBC; Secretary of the Treasury Scott K.H. Bessent; Stacey Y. Abrams, Ronald W. Walters Endowed Chair for Race and Black Politics, Howard University; Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lee M. Zeldin; Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia; Amir Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani of Qatar; President Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan of the United Arab Emirates; and Brigitte Macron, wife of President Macron. He also referred to H.R. 1; and Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist organization. Reporters referred to White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt; and former Rep. George A.D. Santos. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on June 2.

Categories: Interviews With the News Media : News conferences, May 30.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Abrams, Stacey Y.; Bessent, Scott K.H.; Biden, Jill T.; Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Caine, J. Daniel; Combs, Sean "Diddy"; Kernan, Joe; Lutnick, Howard W.; Macron, Brigitte; Macron, Emmanuel; Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan; Muhammad bin Salman bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud, Crown Prince; Musk, Elon R.; Musk, X; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Santelli, Rick; Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Amir; Warren, Elizabeth A.; Xi Jinping; Zeldin, Lee M.; Zelenskyy, Volodymyr.

Subjects: 2024 Presidential election; Anti-Semitism; Automobile industry, strengthening efforts; Automobiles and automobile parts, tariffs on imports into U.S.; Border security; China, President; Constitutional roles and separation of powers; Education, foreign students at U.S. universities; Environmental Protection Agency; Federal deficit and debt; Federal spending, reduction efforts; France, President; Gasoline costs; Gaza, conflict with Israel; Government accountability and transparency, strengthening efforts; Hamas political-paramilitary organization; Illegal immigration; India, relations with Pakistan; Iran, nuclear weapons development; Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist organization; Israel, attacks by Hamas of October 7, 2023; Israel,

military operations in Gaza; Joint Chiefs of Staff; Lebanon, Hizballah political-paramilitary organization; Massachusetts, Harvard University in Cambridge; New York Times; News media, Presidential interviews; North Carolina, Hurricane Helene damage and recovery efforts; Pakistan, relations with India; Public debt limit; Qatar, Amir; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Russia, President; Saudi Arabia, Crown Prince; Secretary of Commerce; Secretary of the Treasury; Tariffs; Tax Code reform; U.S. Border Patrol; U.S. DOGE Service; U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement; Ukraine, President; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; United Arab Emirates, President; Universities and colleges, Federal assistance; Vocational and technical education programs; Washington Post; White House Senior Adviser.

DCPD Number: DCPD202500648.