

*Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025*

**Remarks in an Exchange With Reporters Prior to an Opening Night Performance of "Les Misérables"**

*June 11, 2025*

*John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts*

*Q.* Mr. President, how is it to be here at the Kennedy Center? *[Inaudible]*

*The President.* It was great. We brought it back a long way. We're, I think, on the way to greatness. They raised, I just heard, over \$10 million tonight to the center itself. We want to bring it back and bring it back better than ever. As you know, it needs a little help from the standpoint of age and fitness, but it's going to be fantastic.

*Former White House Senior Adviser Elon R. Musk*

*Q.* Are you feeling any better—*[inaudible]*—Elon Musk after the apology that he made last night—*[inaudible]*?

*The President.* I really haven't looked—*[inaudible]*.

*Opening Night Performance of "Les Misérables"*

*Q.* *[Inaudible]*

*The President.* Oh, I love "Les Mis." We've seen in many times. We love it. One of my favorites.

*Iran*

*Q.* If Iran walks away from a nuclear deal, can you talk about some of the other options on the table?

*The President.* Well, let's not talk about that. It's a very serious subject. It could be—it could happen. Strangely—*[inaudible]*.

*Q.* Mr. President, can you come to the pool camera, sir?

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

*Q.* *[Inaudible]*—tonight?

*The President.* I believe so. As far as I know, yes.

Hello.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*Q.* Mr. President, Corey Lewandowski says that you love "Les Mis". Is it true?

Say it.

*Q.* *[Inaudible]*

*The President.* We'll see what happens, yes.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

We're going to meet with a lot of people. I look—forward it, actually.

*Middle East Security Concerns*

*Q.* Why are Americans being asked to return home from the Middle East, sir?

*The President.* Say it.

*Q.* Why are Americans being asked to return home from the Middle East, sir?

*The President.* Well, you're going to have to figure that one out yourself.

*Opening Night Performance of "Les Misérables"*

*Q.* [Inaudible]

*The President.* Oh, I have—I would say every one of them, which is rare. It's truly great. Great talent. And this is a great production tonight. First class.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*Q.* Mr. President, can you tell us about the reception?

*John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts*

*Q.* [Inaudible]—includes money to renovate the Kennedy. At the same time, you want to defund the National Endowment for the Arts. So why continue funding the Kennedy Center?

*The President.* Well, we're going to save the Kennedy Center. We're going to make it incredible. We have all the funding. We raised a lot tonight. And we'll put in a lot of money to bring it back to the highest level, higher than it was ever before.

It's got great sound. You know, the bones are very good. The sound is great. You'll see that tonight. But we look forward to do a real job.

So I—it's a great honor, actually, to be the Chairman. They asked me to be Chairman. It's a great—I have a lot of other things going, I will tell you, but it's a great honor to be Chairman.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Yes, ma'am.

*Q.* Mr. President, a question from Newsmax——

*Q.* Thank you so much.

*The President.* I hope you've got a good one. She's got a good one. I'll bet she does. I'll bet you do.

*Q.* Mr. President, what would you say to Democrats who don't want to come here because you're in charge?

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*Deployment of Military in Los Angeles, California*

*Q.* [Inaudible]—military presence in Los Angeles and California soon. What's——

*The President.* Well, if they need it. We're going to be there. Absolutely.

If we weren't there, if we didn't bring in the National Guard and the marines, you would probably have a city that was burning to the ground, just like it was a number of months ago with the housing. You would have had a big problem there if we weren't there. In fact, the police chief said so much, if you look at what his statements were. He said, "We're very lucky to have had them." If we weren't there, that city would have been burning to the ground. It would be burning right now.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*Q.* Mr. President, what do you think of actors who are thinking about boycotting tonight?

*Political Protests in Los Angeles, California/National Guard*

*Q.* Mr. President, if this turns into another summer of unrest, what are you prepared to do, sir?

*The President.* About what?

*Q.* If this turns—well, the protests has spread now to 16 cities across the U.S. Are you concerned—

*The President.* Well, I don't know. That's what you're saying. Do I believe you? I don't think so.

*Q.* Well, I got that from—[inaudible].

*The President.* I can tell you that what we have is a situation in Los Angeles that was caused by gross incompetence. They didn't have the police to handle it. The police were asking us to come in. They were very late. We had to go in to save a lot of ICE officers, as you know, who were held up. They were holed up in a building, and they were being attacked. And the military went in, the National Guard went in and got them. The police weren't able, unfortunately, to move fast enough, but we moved fast enough.

And while we were there, we stayed there, and we stopped tremendous destruction and death. We stopped death. We stopped a lot.

And if you look at them cutting up and breaking up the sidewalk and getting it and using it as a weapon—did you see that, with the curb?—where they're breaking up the curb, nice curb—and they break it up with a hammer because they couldn't get the bricks in.

You know, they got caught with the bricks. We have them under arrest. They—they were bringing bricks in to throw at our police, to throw at our National Guard, and to throw at people. And they couldn't get them in because we got them. And after we got them, they went and took a big hammer and started breaking up the concrete sidewalk and curb, and they were handing it out to people to throw and drop on cars. You saw what they did, the damage.

So, if you don't do something about that, there's something very wrong. We are going to have law and order in our country.

Thank you.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*Opening Night Performance of "Les Misérables"/National Economy*

*Q.* [Inaudible]—boycotting tonight?

*The President.* Who is?

*Q.* There—it's been reported that some actors may be boycotting tonight.

*The President.* I couldn't care less. Honestly, I couldn't. [Laughter] All I do is run the country well.

The economic numbers, you saw them today, they're setting records. We took eight—\$88 billion in tariffs in 2 months, far beyond what anybody expected. There's no inflation. People are happy. People are wealthy. The country is getting back to strength again. That's what I care about.

And we're going to have a safe country. We're not going to have what would have happened in Los Angeles. Remember, if I wasn't there, if I didn't act quickly on that, Los Angeles would be burning to the ground right now.

Thank you.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*Q.* Mr. President, could you provide an update on Iran?

*The President.* Go ahead.

*U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Special Missions Richard A. Grenell*

*Q.* How excited are you for the new era under your great new leadership with Ambassador Grenell?

*The President.* Well, he's a great guy. Ric is great. He's done—always done well for me.

And the new era right here is going to be something. The bones of this facility are incredible. We're going to make it really great.

*Opening Night Performance of "Les Misérables"*

*Q.* How excited are you for "Les Mis" tonight?

*Q.* Is "Les Mis" your favorite show?

*The President.* Tonight is going to be great.

Thank you.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*Iran*

*Q.* A question from Newsmax. Could you give us an update on Iran?

*The President.* Say it again.

*Q.* Yes. A question from Newsmax. Could you provide an update on Iran? We're hearing reports that U.S. personnel are being moved out of the region within striking distance.

*The President.* Well, they are being moved out because it could be a dangerous place, and we'll see what happens. But they are being—we've given notice to move out. We'll see what happens.

*Q.* Is there anything that could be done to dial the temperature down in the region?

*The President.* They can't have a nuclear weapon. Very simple: They can't have a nuclear weapon. We're not going to allow that.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*The President's Identification With Characters From "Les Misérables"*

*Q.* President Trump, on the musical. Have you seen the musical before? And do you identify more with Jean Valjean or Javert.

*The President.* Oh, that's a tough one. [Laughter] That last part of that question, that's tough, I think. You'd better—you'd better answer that one, honey. I don't know.

The—I've seen it. We've seen it a number of times. It's fantastic. I thought it was just about our first choice, and that's what we got. And we have others coming. Other great ones are coming.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Q. Mrs. Trump, what are you looking forward to tonight?

*The President.* Why are you so quiet, Jeff [Jeff Mason, Reuters]? [Laughter]

#### *China-U.S. Trade/United Kingdom/Tariffs*

Q. I have a—my question is on trade. Would you be willing to extend the deadline for trade talks with these countries——

*The President.* I would, but I don't think we're going to have that necessity. We made a great deal with China. We're very happy with it, where we have everything we need. And we're going to do very well with it. And hopefully, they are too. That was a very big one. We—as you know, we did with the U.K. And—I tell you what, we are—we're rocking in terms of deals.

Now, at a certain point, we're just going to send letters out—and I think you understand that—saying, "This is the deal. You can take it, or you can leave it. You don't have to use it. You don't have to shop in the United States," as I say.

So, at a certain point, we'll do that. We're not quite ready. We're dealing with quite a few countries, and they all want to make a deal with us, every one of them.

#### *Trade Negotiations*

Q. Who's next? Who do you expect to get a deal with next?

*The President.* Well, we're dealing with Japan. We're dealing with South Korea. We're dealing with a lot of them. We're dealing with about 15 countries.

But, as you know, we have about 150-plus, and you can't do that. So, we're going to be sending letters out in about a week and a half, 2 weeks to countries, telling them what the deal is, like I did with EU.

#### *European Union*

Q. And are you happy with the EU right now? You were unhappy with them about 10 days ago?

*The President.* Well, I'll let you know in about a week. They do want to negotiate, I will say that.

Thank you.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

#### *Opening Night Performance of "Les Misérables"*

Q. Mr. President, we're making theater great again, aren't we, tonight? We're making theater great again.

*The President.* We are. We are, Brian [Brian Glenn, Real America's Voice], and I'm glad you're here.

#### *National Economy/Political Protests in Los Angeles, California*

Q. Glad to be here. What does it mean to be here tonight? Now this is under your administration. You're bringing class back. The golden era of theater.

*The President.* We are. We have a golden era here in the country. You see the trade numbers came in today. They're fantastic. The deficit was cut in half over a period of 2 months. We cut what—they've—they tried to destroy our country. They were destroying our country. And you

saw how good the numbers were. We took in \$88 billion in tariffs in 2½, and that—we didn't even start yet.

No, we're bringing the country back fast, and I'm very proud to have helped Los Angeles survive. Los Angeles right now, if we didn't do what we did, would be burning to the ground. And that's not over yet.

You know, these are radical-left lunatics that you're dealing with, and they're tough. They're smart. They're probably paid, many of them, as you know. They're professionals. When you see them chopping up concrete because the bricks got captured—they're chopping up concrete, and they're using that as a weapon. That's pretty bad.

And thank you very much for your question.

### *The President's Experience With Theater*

*Q.* You're a New Yorker. You've been to a million theaters. Do you remember your first theater production that you attended?

*The President.* Well, a long time ago. I would say maybe it was "Cats." [Laughter]

*Q.* "Cats."

*The President.* A long time.

*Q.* First Lady, do you remember your first theater production you saw?

*The First Lady.* "Phantom of the Opera."

*The President.* Ah.

*Q.* Are you a "Les Mis" fan, Mrs. Trump?

*The President.* That was great.

*The First Lady.* I am. I am.

*The President.* We'll be bringing a lot of them right here.

### *Opening Night Performance of "Les Misérables"*

*Q.* Are we going to be munching on some popcorn and Diet Coke tonight while we watch the production?

*The President.* I think so. I think I will. [Laughter]

*The First Lady.* No. [Laughter]

*The President.* Thanks. Thanks, Brian.

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

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

*The President.* Thank you very much.

*Q.* Thank you very much. Have a good night.

*Q.* [Inaudible]—sir.

*The President.* Pulitzer. What a man, huh? Pulitzer Prize.

### *U.S. Army 250th Anniversary Parade in the District of Columbia*

*Q.* Your big military parade is this weekend. Can you share with us your thoughts on the parade coming up? Are you excited.

*Q.* Thank you, sir.

*Q.* Are you excited for the parade?

*The President.* Oh, the parade is going to be incredible. It will be a parade like we haven't had in many, many decades here. And it's a celebration of our country. It's a celebration of the Army, actually.

You know, the Army was 1 year earlier than the Union itself, than the—founding of our country itself. One year. And it's going to be a celebration of the Army and the military. It's going to be incredible.

I'll tell you, we have the greatest weapons in the world and the greatest people in the world. It's going to be a big parade.

Thank you.

*Q.* You guys look amazing tonight. You guys look amazing.

*The President.* It's going to be great.

*Q.* Thank you.

*The President.* Thanks.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 6:35 p.m. at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. In his remarks, he referred to Los Angeles Police Department Chief Jim McDonnell. A reporter referred to former 2016 Donald J. Trump Presidential Campaign Manager Corey R. Lewandowski. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on June 12.

*Categories:* Addresses and Remarks : Opening night performance of "Les Misérables"; Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, Washington, DC.

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