

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025

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

June 16, 2025

The President's Early Return to Washington, DC

Q. How's it going?

The President. It's going well. Did everybody have a good time? Huh? Reasonably.

Q. Did you have a good time?

Q. How about you?

The President. I did. I always have a good time.

Hello. Hi, Jennifer [Jennifer Jacobs, CBS News].

Q. Hi there.

Israel/Iran

Q. You just posted right before we took off that you're not leaving because of a cease-fire. Why are you——

The President. No, I'm not looking at a——

Q. Can you elaborate?

The President. ——cease-fire. We're looking at better than a cease-fire. We're not looking for a ceasefire.

I didn't say I was looking for a cease-fire. That was Emmanuel. Nice guy, but he doesn't get it right too often.

But we're not looking—we're looking for better than a cease-fire.

Q. What exactly——

Q. But you're not going to get into this more——

The President. Excuse me?

Iran/Nuclear Weapons Development

Q. You're not going to invest—pull the U.S.—in this conflict, at this stage, are you going to do anything more for Israel right now?

The President. We're doing pretty well. Right now we're doing pretty well. Remember, Iran cannot have a nuclear weapon. It's very simple. You know, we don't have to go too deep into it. They just can't have a nuclear weapon.

The President's Call for an Evacuation of Tehran, Iran

Q. What was the thinking on the call for Tehran to evacuate? Is there a threat or is there incoming, or what was the thinking on the—[inaudible]——

The President. No, not at all. I just think—I want people to be safe. And that's always possible a thing like that could happen. I just want people to be safe.

Middle East Security Concerns

Q. Is there any new concern about U.S. troops or assets in the region at all today?

The President. No. We have great people. They know how to protect themselves.

The President's Foreign Policy

Q. And when you say "better," what specifically do you mean?

The President. Oh, we'll come down so hard if they do anything to our people. We'll come down so hard. Then the gloves are off, so beautifully. No, they—I think they—I think they know not to touch our troops.

Q. Are you sending the Vice——

The President. We'll find out. But our troops are ready.

Q. When you say "better"——

Iran/U.S. Diplomatic Efforts

Q. Do you plan to send the Vice President and Steve Witkoff? There's reports that you want to send the Vice President and Steve Witkoff to meet with the Iranians and have discussions. Is that something you're considering?

The President. I may, but I'm not sure yet. I may. It depends on what happens when I get back.

Israel/Iran

Q. What specifically is "better than a cease-fire"? What are you looking for here?

The President. An end. A real end, not a cease-fire. An end.

Q. So something that would be permanent?

The President. Yes, or giving up entirely. That's okay too.

Iran/Israel

Q. Sir, are you close there? Is—are you possible—is that possible in the next 24, 48 hours?

The President. It's certainly possible. A complete give-up, that's possible. Yes.

Military Planning in the Event of an Attack on U.S. Assets Overseas

Q. Has the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and the Secretary of Defense drawn up plans for you if Iran were to attack U.S. bases or do any damage to U.S. bases?

The President. I can't tell you that. I just can't tell you.

Iran/Nuclear Weapons Development

Q. Can I ask you, because there's been some skepticism, is there any guarantee that if the U.S. did get involved militarily, that a U.S. bomb could destroy Iran's nuclear program and facilities?

The President. There's no guarantees on everything—or anything on life. You know that. Look at you, right? There's no guarantee.

But you're saying a guarantee on what?

Q. Do you think if the U.S. got involved militarily, it would actually wipe out Iran's nuclear program, or where is your assessment of that?

The President. I hope their program is going to be wiped out long before that, but they're not going to have a nuclear weapon.

Israel/Iran

Q. What are you—what are you hearing from Bibi's—do you have any reason to believe the Israelis are going to slow down? Or are they going to hit the accelerator right now, because they've got superiority?

The President. Well, we'll see. We'll find out over the next 2 days, right? You're going to find out.

Q. Has the Gang of Eight—

The President. Nobody's slowed up so far.

Q. Has the Gang of Eight been notified about what's coming in the next couple days?

The President. Well, we'll be talking to them.

Q. What can you do—

The President. It's not necessary.

The President's Early Return to Washington, DC/Group of Seven (G-7) Nations Summit

Q. What can you do in Washington that you couldn't do in Canada?

The President. Just be a little bit, I think, more well versed, not having to use telephones so much, because I don't believe in telephones because people like you listen to them, you know. And so being on the scene is much better. And we did everything I had to do on the G-7.

We had a good G-7. We signed the deal with the European Union—phase one of a deal. But we signed the deal with the U.K., and the U.K. is really great.

We're very far down the line with a lot of deals. I mean, look, we're actually finished with every deal, if you really think about it, because all I have to do is say, "This is what you're going to pay."

Q. Did Secretary Bessent—

The President. But it's nice to be nice.

Group of Seven (G-7) Nations Summit in Kananaskis, Canada

Q. Did Secretary Bessent stay behind as your representative or—

The President. Yes, he did.

Q. Okay. Anybody else?

The President. I think—yes. A couple of people.

Q. Can I ask you: Where—

The President. Here we go. Who else has a question, other than CNN, fake news?

Q. Mr. President—

Q. Did you see the Russian—

European Union

Q. Mr. President, you talked of the European Union. Can you tell us where—what the status is on talks on those? You signed with the U.K. today.

The President. Well, we're talking, but I don't feel that they're offering a fair deal yet. You know, they've been very tough over the years, if you look at European Union. They formed in order to hurt the United States on trade. And we're either going to make a good deal or they'll just pay whatever we say they have to pay.

Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba of Japan/Japan-U.S. Trade

Q. What about the Japanese, sir? You met briefly with Prime Minister Ishiba.

The President. We had a great conversation. I thought he was terrific, actually. You know, I was very friendly with Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister, and he was a great man. But I think this—I think he's going to do a very good job.

Q. Do you think you have a chance of a deal there?

The President. A little chance. They're tough. Japanese are tough. But ultimately, you have to understand, we're just going to send a letter and say: "This is what you're going to pay. Otherwise, you don't have to do business with us." But there's a chance of a deal.

Q. They want changes to the auto tariffs as well. Is that on the table?

The President. We'll see what happens.

Q. Did you see this drone——

The President. Is there anything else?

Ukraine/Russia

Q. Yeah, this drone attack in Kyiv. What's your response to that? It looks like 14 or so——

The President. When was that? When?

Q. A drone attack—a Russian drone attack in Kyiv.

The President. When?

Q. Very recently.

Q. Just now.

The President. Just now?

Q. Today.

Q. It seems 14 civilians, an apartment building——

The President. You mean as I'm walking back to see you, that's when it took place?

Q. Something like that.

The President. Sounds like it, huh? I'll have to look at it.

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

Group of Seven (G-7) Nations/Middle East

Q. The joint statement on the Middle East. What changed about that that convinced you to sign on to it? The G-7 joint statement.

The President. Well, I haven't seen the statement yet, but I authorized them to say certain things. I don't know whether or not they said them correctly, but I think they probably did.

We had a good meeting. I think that Canadian representatives were very good. He did a very good job.

Q. How were—how were the trade—

The President. Carney did a very good—

Prime Minister Mark Carney of Canada/Tariffs

Q. How was your meeting with him? How are the trade talks looking with the Canadians?

The President. I think it was good. I think we had a lot of good talks with a lot of people.

Q. You said he's looking for something more complex. Can you tell me what you mean by that?

The President. Well, you get too complex on the deals, and they never get done. And we need speed. You know, we're dealing with—really, if you think about it—probably 175 countries, and most of them are going to just be sent a letter saying, "It will be an honor to trade with you, and here's what you're going to have to pay to do it."

We're making a lot of money. You know, we took in \$88 million in tariffs. And I was called by Congress about 2 nights ago saying: "We don't understand. The numbers are so far off." And I said, "Is that good or bad?" He says, "Well, we're taking in so much more income than we thought. We've never seen anything like this. What is it?" I said, "Check the tariff column." And it's about \$88 million that they've never seen before, and that's nothing compared to what it's going to be.

Additional Sectoral Tariffs

Q. You've got other tariffs coming down the pipe here.

The President. I have a lot of them. Yes.

Q. What's the timing on those—things like lumber, copper—

The President. It will happen.

Q. —pharmaceutical drugs?

The President. Yes. We're going to be doing pharmaceuticals very soon. That's going to bring all the companies back into America.

Q. All of them or focusing on—

The President. It's going to bring—

Q. —[inaudible]?

The President. —most of them back in. At least partially back in.

You know, they left us because we had Presidents that didn't know what the hell they were doing.

We should have never lost our car business. We lost 52 percent of our car business over the years. Should have never lost it. All they had to do is say, "If you make—make a car—you're going to leave us, you're going to make a car, you're going to pay a 25-, 30-percent tariff," and they would have never left. Nobody said that to anybody until I came along.

Immigration Enforcement Actions

Q. Homeland Security is saying that ICE is going to start enforcing in hotels and farms again. Is that a change of course from last week?

The President. We're going to look everywhere, but I think the biggest problem is the inner cities. We're looking everywhere.

Look, what they let into this country—what Biden let in or allowed to—I don't think he knew what the hell he was doing, frankly, but whoever worked for him, what they let into this country, we're never going to forget it. They let prisoners in. They let gang members in, drug dealers in, the mentally insane into our country.

No, we're going to get them out. They have more—there are far more in the inner cities—Democrat-run cities, sadly—I mean, I'm just giving you a fact. There's far more there than you have on a farm or someplace.

Q. So no one's getting exemptions anymore? Everyone is——

The President. Everyone is being looked at, but the bigger problem is the cities right now. That's where your——

Q. Question about your——

The President. ——and that's—that tends to be where the really bad ones are, the murderers. You know, they've let it 11,888 murders, people that killed people. Biden allowed that to happen, so—the Democrats allowed it to happen. Biden didn't know he was even around.

Yes.

Senate Confirmation Process

Q. Question on your Senate confirmations. With all the military actions, there are only three of your six sub-Cabinet members at the Defense Department——

The President. Yes. I'd like to see the——

Q. ——and your Under Secretaries——

The President. ——nominations to go faster.

Q. Yes.

The President. The Democrats hold up our nominations.

Q. Are you going to talk to Senator—Senator Thune about that?

The President. Yes, I will. John Thune doing a very good job. You know, I've got a lot of people in, but he's doing a very good job.

The Democrats—if we had George Washington up for approval, the Democrats would take maximum time—every hour, every minute—to delay him as long as possible. If we had a combination of Abraham Lincoln and George Washington, they would go max—it's called "max time."

Iran/Nuclear Weapons Development

Q. Mr. President, you've always said that you don't believe Iran should be able to have a nuclear weapon. But how close do you personally think that they were to getting one, because Tulsi Gabbard——

The President. Very close.

Q. ——Tulsi Gabbard testified in March that—that the intelligence community said Iran wasn't building a nuclear weapon?

The President. I don't care what she said. I think they were very close to having one.

Canada-U.S. Trade/U.S. Missile Defense System

Q. Can I ask one on—you were at this beautiful scene for the meeting, and you said a lot about acquiring Canada as a State. What—did anybody talk to you about that? And where are you now?

The President. Well, I think it's a much better deal from Canada, but you know, it's up to them.

Q. Did that come up?

The President. They're going to have to pay a lot of tariffs and things.

They're going to have to pay a lot of money for the dome—for the Iron Dome. They want to be a part of it.

U.S. Missile Defense System

Q. Did you talk more about that?

The President. We may make a separate deal on that, by the way.

Q. On the dome?

The President. We discussed that. Yes, on the dome.

Q. [Inaudible]

The President. That may be a separate deal. They want to be—it's \$71 billion they're going to pay.

Q. It would be a dome thing separate from the tariff thing?

The President. They'll be in the dome. Yes, they'll be under the dome.

Iran/U.S. Diplomatic Efforts

Q. And will you—are you open to negotiating with the Iranians right now, or do you want to wait to——

The President. I don't know. I'm—I've been negotiating—I told them to do the deal. They should have done the deal. Their cities have been blown to pieces. They've lost a lot of people. They should have done the deal. I told them, "Do the deal."

So I don't know. I'm not too much in the mood to negotiate now.

The President's Schedule

Q. Do you think you'll be in the Situation Room tomorrow at any point?

The President. Yes. I'm going to be in tomorrow morning, early, while you're sleeping.
[Laughter]

Goodbye, everybody.

The President's Call for an Evacuation of Tehran, Iran

Q. Mr. President, why did you tell people to evacuate Tehran? You know how you posted "Evacuate"——

The President. Yes, being—I think it's safer.

Q. On Minnesota——

The President. There are a lot of bad things happening, and no, I think it's safer for them to evacuate.

Governor Timothy J. Walz of Minnesota

Q. On Minnesota. There were a lot of horrific details that came out today about the suspect who's been charged there. Have you called the Governor yet or been able to speak to any of them?

The President. I don't really call him. He's—look, he appointed this guy to a position. I think the Governor of Minnesota is so whacked out. I'm not calling him. Why would I call him?

I could call him, say, "Hi. How you doing?" The guy doesn't have a clue. He's a mess. So, you know, I could be nice and call him. But why waste time?

The President's Legislative Agenda

Q. On the "Big Beautiful Bill," sir. Can you talk about what the Senate——

The President. We're doing well with the "Big Beautiful"——

Q. How is it looking in the Senate? They proposed some change.

The President. The "Great Big Beautiful Bill," right?

Q. Are you okay with their changes?

The President. I hear, so far, it's going well.

Q. Are you going to extend the——

The President. It's—look, if it doesn't get approved, 68-percent tax increase, and I think the Democrats would have to—you know, they'd be—because we won't get Democrat support. Think of it. We're giving the biggest tax cut in history. Instead, you have the biggest tax increase in history: 68 percent.

TikTok

Q. Are you going to extend the TikTok deadline again that's coming up——

The President. Probably, yeah.

Q. ——in June?

The President. Yes. Probably have to get China approval. I think we'll get it.

Q. Do you have the legal basis to do that?

The President. I think President Xi will ultimately approve it. Yes.

Q. Do you have the legal basis to do that——

The President. Yes, sure.

Q. ——to keep extending it?

The President. Yes, we do.

Iran

Q. Two more on Iran. Is there any sign that North Korea is getting more involved in helping Iran, or is Russia getting more involved with military assistance?

The President. I haven't seen it, no.

Q. What about——

The President. I don't think anybody wants to get involved. It's a mess.

Middle East Security Concerns

Q. What about American citizens—U.S. citizens who are trying to leave the area with the airport shut down—Ben Gurion shut down?

The President. We're doing the best we can with it. We're working on that. We're doing the best we can.

Thank you, everybody, very much. Have a good time.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:33 p.m. in the press cabin. In his remarks, he referred to President Emmanuel Macron of France; and Vance Boelter, suspect in the stalking and murder of Minnesota State Rep. Melissa Hortman and her husband Mark in Brooklyn Park, MN, and the stalking and shooting of Minnesota State Sen. John Hoffman and his wife Yvette in Champlin, MN, on June 14. He also referred to H.R. 1. Reporters referred to U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East Steven C. Witkoff; Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. J. Daniel Caine, USAF; and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on June 17.

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

Locations: Air Force One.

Names: Bessent, Scott K.H.; Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Boelter, Vince; Carney, Mark; Gabbard, Tulsi; Ishiba, Shigeru; Macron, Emmanuel; Thune, John R.; Walz, Timothy J.; Xi Jinping.

Subjects: Automobiles and automobile parts, tariffs on imports into U.S.; Canada, Prime Minister; Canada, trade with U.S.; China, President; Director of National Intelligence; European Union, trade with U.S.; France, President; Group of Seven (G-7) nations; Illegal immigration; Immigration enforcement efforts; Iran, conflict with Israel; Iran, nuclear weapons development; Israel, conflict with Iran; Japan, Prime Minister; Japan, trade with U.S.; Manufacturing industry, domestic investment; Minnesota, assassination and attempted assassination of State lawmakers and spouses; Minnesota, Governor; Missile defense, modernization efforts; News media, Presidential interviews; Pharmaceutical supply chains, improvement efforts; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Secretary of the Treasury; Senate confirmation process; Senate majority leader; Tariffs; Tax Code reform; TikTok; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; United Kingdom, trade with U.S.

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