

**Remarks on Public Safety in the District of Columbia and an Exchange With Reporters**

*September 9, 2025*

*The President.* Well, thank you very much, everybody. We wanted to take some of the members of the Cabinet out to dinner to say—and here we are.

We're standing right in the middle of DC, which, as you know about, over the last year was a very unsafe place. Over the last 20 years, actually, was very unsafe. And now it's got virtually no crime. We call it crime-free.

We're going to be announcing another city that we're going to very shortly. We're working it out. The Governor of a certain State would love us to be there. And the mayor of a certain city in that same State would love us to be there. We'll announce it probably tomorrow, and it's going to be something where we'll do like we did here.

But this city—here I am, standing out in the middle of the street. I wouldn't have done this 3 months ago, 4 months ago. I certainly wouldn't have done it a year ago. This was one of the most unsafe cities in the country. Now it's as safe as there is in the country.

So we're here with Cabinet members having dinner, and everybody should go out. The restaurants now are booming. People are walking.

*Bystander.* We love you, Mr. President! We love you!

*The President.* Thank you. Thank you.

The restaurants now—the restaurants now are booming. People are going out to dinner where they didn't go out for years. And it's a safe city.

And I just want to thank the National Guard. We loved working with the Mayor and the chief, and we all worked together, and the outcome is really spectacular. We have a Capital that's very, very safe right now.

*Israeli Airstrike on Hamas Headquarters in Doha, Qatar*

*Q.* Mr. President, can you tell us how you feel about the Israeli strike earlier today? There's been mixed—

*The President.* Well, I'm not thrilled. I'm not thrilled about it.

*Q.* Can you just tell us more about your conversation with Benjamin Netanyahu?

*The President.* I don't have to do that. I'm just—I'm not thrilled about the whole situation. It's not a good situation.

*Q.* Does it—

*The President.* But I will say this: We want the hostages back, but we are not thrilled about the way that went down today.

*Israel-U.S. Security Cooperation*

*Q.* Did they notify you in advance, Mr. President? Did Israel tell you in advance?

*The President.* No. Nope.

*Q.* So you were caught by surprise, sir? You were caught by surprise?

*The President.* I'm never—I'm never surprised by anything, especially when it comes to the Middle East.

*Israeli Airstrike on Hamas headquarters in Doha, Qatar*

*Q.* How did you learn about this happening?

*The President.* I'll be giving a full statement tomorrow, but I would tell you this: I was very unhappy about it—very unhappy about every aspect. And we've got to get the hostages back, but I was very unhappy about the way that went down.

*Russia/Ukraine/Gaza, Palestinian Territories*

*Q.* Mr. President, when do you plan to speak to Putin? I mean, you said "soon." Is that going to happen this week?

*The President.* Yes, it will happen. We have that one, and we have Gaza going on. We want to get them both solved, ended.

*Q.* So Putin is going to have—the call will happen this week?

*The President.* I think so. I think this week or early next week.

*Bystander.* [Inaudible]

*The President.* Thank you. Thank you. Enjoy it.

*Birthday Book for Deceased Convicted Sex Offender Jeffrey Epstein*

*Q.* Mr. President, did you sign the Jeffrey Epstein birthday letter that——

*The President.* It's not my signature, and it's not the way I speak. And anybody that's covered me for a long time know that's not my language. It's nonsense. And frankly, you're wasting your time. All you do is trying to get off the great success of DC and about 200 other things we've done that are so successful.

This is a great, great success, and we have so many—I don't think any President in their first 8 months has any—had anywhere near the success that we've had.

*Q.* So will you meet with the Epstein victims? Do you plan to meet with——

*The President.* I don't know about—nobody suggested that, but certainly——

*Q.* But would you be open to doing that?

[At this point, bystanders shouting "Free Palestine" could be heard in the background.]

*The President.* Certainly, I don't like that whole situation with respect to anybody being abused or hurt, but I haven't even thought about that.

*Bystanders.* Free, free Palestine. Free, free Palestine.

*The President.* Thank you all very much. Have a good time. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:31 p.m. at Joe's Seafood, Prime Steak, and Stone Crab restaurant. In his remarks, he referred to Vice President James D. "J.D." Vance; Secretary of State Marco A. Rubio; Secretary of War Peter B. Hegseth; and Mayor Muriel E. Bowser and Chief of Police Pamela A. Smith of Washington, DC. Reporters referred to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel; and President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on September 10.

*Categories:* Addresses and Remarks : District of Columbia public safety; Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, Washington, DC.

*Locations:* Washington, DC.

*Names:* Bowser, Muriel E.; Hegseth, Peter B.; Rubio, Marco A.; Smith, Pamela A.; Vance, James D. "J.D.".

*Subjects:* Department of Justice, investigation documents pertaining to deceased convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein; District of Columbia, law enforcement improvement efforts; District of Columbia, Mayor; Gaza, conflict with Israel; Gaza, hostages held by Hamas; Israel, military operations in Gaza; Israel, strikes on Hamas headquarters in Doha, Qatar; National Guard; Qatar, Israeli airstrikes on Hamas headquarters in Doha; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Secretary of State; Secretary of War; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Vice President.

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