

*Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025*

**Remarks in an Exchange With Reporters Prior to Departure for New York City  
September 11, 2025**

*The President.* Hello, everybody.

*The President's Personal Safety/Political Violence in the U.S.*

*Q.* Are you concerned for your own safety, Mr. President? Are you concerned for your own safety?

*The President.* Not really. I'm really concerned for our country. We have a great country. We have a radical-left group of lunatics out there—just absolute lunatics. And we're going to get that problem solved. I'm only concerned for the country.

Yes.

*Turning Point U.S.A. Founder and Executive Director Charles J. Kirk*

*Q.* Mr. President, how do you want to see your supporters respond to this? Charlie Kirk was a big advocate of nonviolence and free speech on campus. How do you want your supporters to respond, sir?

*The President.* I think that way. He was. He was an advocate of nonviolence. That's the way I'd like to see people respond.

*The President's Telephone Conversation With Erika Kirk*

*Q.* Did you speak to his family? Did you speak to his family this——

*The President.* Say it?

*Q.* Did you speak with his family this afternoon?

*The President.* I did. I spoke to Erika, his wife. And we had a long talk, and she's devastated. She's absolutely devastated, as you can imagine.

*Q.* Mr. President, Charlie Kirk, sir. Have you any—[inaudible]—intervention of Charlie—behind Charlie Kirk's assassination?

*The President.* I don't know what you're saying.

*Democratic Republic of the Congo/Rwanda*

*Q.* Mr. President, when, Mr. President, are you planning to bring both Presidents—the President of Congo, Felix Tshisekedi, and president of Rwanda to be at—to——

*The President.* Yes. They're coming soon.

*Q.* ——to Washington?

*The President.* They're coming soon. And, as you know, I spoke to their Foreign Ministers. They were here a couple of weeks ago, as you remember. And they'll be coming soon. The Presidents are coming very soon.

*Q.* Mr. President, this week—this week, Mr. President, I witnessed more than 60 people in D.R.C. Congo were killed. Various people affiliated with ISIS terrorist group are taking advantage because of the situation going on because of the war. So what is your word for Congolese people?

*The President.* Well, we're going to be talking to them. As you know, we are talking to them. It's a very violent place. It's very, very violent. For a long time, it's been going on—for 30 years, 35 years, even, they say. But we're going to handle it. Thank you.

*Russian Military Operations/Poland*

*Q.* Mr. President, any reaction on the drone incursion, Russian drones in Poland? Any reaction on the Russian drones in Poland? Any reaction?

*The President.* Can't understand.

*Assassination of Turning Point U.S.A. Founder and Executive Director Charles J. Kirk in Orem, Utah*

*Q.* Mr. President, what do you think about the media that justified the murder of Charlie Kirk?

*The President.* I think it's terrible. They ought to be ashamed of themselves. It's terrible. It's terrible.

*Investigation Into the Assassination of Turning Point U.S.A. Founder and Executive Director Charles J. Kirk in Orem, Utah*

*Q.* Why haven't they found the shooter yet, Mr. President? Are you concerned that it's been 24 hours?

*The President.* Well, I hear they're making big progress, and we'll have to see what happens.

*Q.* Do you have any—do you have any indication of the shooter's motivation, sir?

*The President.* I have an indication, yes, but we'll let you know about that later. Thank you.

*Kazakhstan*

*Q.* Last week, you spoke with Uzbekistani President. And this last Sunday, you sent greetings to Kazakhstan. U.N. General Assembly is upcoming. Are you going to meet with the presidents of Central Asian countries?

*The President.* The President where?

*Q.* Central Asian countries. Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan.

*The President.* I will be, yes. They're very good people. And I will be doing that, yes.

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

*Assassination of Turning Point U.S.A. Founder and Executive Director Charles J. Kirk in Orem, Utah*

*Q.* Do you believe the killer was a trained assassin? Usually, your instincts are always on.

*The President.* I'd rather not say. I think progress is being made. He's an animal. A total animal. And hopefully, they'll have him, and they'll get him. What he did is disgraceful.

Charlie Kirk was a great person, a great man, great in every way, especially with youth. And what he did—what this man did was disgraceful. So, hopefully, we'll have him, and we will deal with him very appropriately.

*Russian Military Operations/Poland*

*Q.* What's your reaction—what's your reaction to Russian drone incursion into Poland?

*The President.* It could have been a mistake. Could have been a mistake. But regardless, I'm not happy about anything having to do with that whole situation. But hopefully, it's going to come to an end.

*Prosecution of Former President Jair Messias Bolsonaro of Brazil*

*Q.* Mr. President, in Brazil—in Brazil, Bolsonaro was just found guilty by the Supreme Court. You've been very clear that you would apply sanctions. Are you thinking further sanctions to Brazil because of this—Bolsonaro?

*The President.* Well, I watched that trial. I know him pretty well. A foreign leader, who was a good—I thought he was a good President of Brazil. And it's very surprising that that could happen. That's very much like they tried to do with me, but they didn't get away with it at all.

But I can only say this: I knew him as President of Brazil. He was a good man, and I don't see that happening.

*Death of Turning Point U.S.A. Founder and Executive Director Charles J. Kirk*

*Q.* Mr. President, I'm very sorry for your loss—for everybody's loss.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*The President.* Say it?

*Q.* I'm very sorry for your loss, first of all.

*The President.* Thank you.

*Israeli Airstrikes on Hamas Headquarters in Doha, Qatar*

*Q.* How do you think Israel's attack in Doha will affect the hostage deal?

*The President.* You'd better say it a little bit more——

*Q.* Okay.

*The President.* Where are you from?

*Q.* I'm from Israel, Channel 14. It's like the Israeli Fox.

*The President.* Go ahead. Do it again. Do it again.

*Q.* Okay. How do you think Israel's attack in Doha will affect the hostage deal?

*The President.* Well, hopefully, it won't affect it at all. We want the hostages out, and we want them out soon. Hopefully, it won't affect it.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*White House Ballroom Construction*

*Q.* Mr. President, my condolences to you, sir. My condolences on the loss of your friend, Charlie Kirk. May I ask, sir, personally, how are you holding up over the last day and a half, sir?

*The President.* I think very good. And by the way, right there, you see all the trucks? They've just started construction of the new ballroom for the White House, which is something they've been trying to get, as you know, for about 150 years. And it's going to be a beauty. It'll be an absolutely magnificent structure. And I just see all the trucks. We just started. So it will get done very nicely, and it will be one of the best anywhere in the world, actually.

Thank you very much.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*Mayor Eric Adams of New York City*

*Q.* Will you get to meet with Mayor Adams when you're in New York? Will you get to meet——

*The President.* Yes, Maggie [Maggie Haberman, New York Times].

*Q.* Will you get to meet with Mayor Adams when you're in New York? Do you expect to?

*The President.* I don't expect to. I would, but I don't expect to. Okay?

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*Turning Point U.S.A. Founder and Executive Director Charles J. Kirk*

*Q.* Do you have one favorite memory of Charlie?

*The President.* Many favorite memories. He was just a great guy. I've never seen a person that was a little bit older get along so well with youth. He got along with young people. I've never seen anything like it. And he really helped me a lot. I did very well, as you know, with young people, and he was a big factor.

How are you? All right?

*Funeral Service for Turning Point U.S.A. Founder and Executive Director Charles J. Kirk*

*Q.* Mr. President, are you going to go to——

*Q.* I'm well, thanks. How are you?

*Q.* Are you going to go to Charlie Kirk's funeral, sir?

*The President.* I will be.

*Q.* You will?

*The President's Schedule*

*Q.* Do you know when that will be?

*The President.* I believe it's in Arizona, and they've asked me to go, and I think I have an obligation to do that.

*Q.* Do you know when that will be?

*The President.* I'm hearing the next—I hear next weekend. Whenever it is, I'll be going.

*Q.* Is it after your trip? After your trip?

*The President.* I'm hearing next weekend.

*Assassination of Turning Point U.S.A. Founder and Executive Director Charles J. Kirk in Orem, Utah*

*Q.* Are you frustrated that they have not caught the perpetrator yet?

*The President.* Well, I hear they're making great strides, Maggie. I hear they're making great strides. You know, they have pictures and some other things. And they found the weapon. Big factor. So they're very talented people. Let's see what happens. Certainly, we hope——

*Q.* Mr. President——

*The President.* We hope we can do it soon.

*Former President Jair Messias Bolsonaro of Brazil*

*Q.* —do you have a reaction to the Brazilian supreme court convicting Bolsonaro?

*The President.* Yes, I'm very unhappy about it. I know President Bolsonaro—not so well, but I know him as a leader of a country, and I always found him to be very straight, very outstanding—actually, as a man, a very outstanding man. I think it's a terrible thing. Very terrible.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

I think it's very—actually, I think it's very bad for Brazil.

*Russian Military Operations/Poland*

*Q.* Do you condemn Russia flying drones in Poland?

*The President.* Well, I hear that what happened, as you know, were—they were taken down, and they went a little berserk. But regardless, yes, I would—I would condemn even for being near that line. I don't like it. I'm not happy about it. That whole thing I'm not happy about.

*Q.* Thank you very much.

*The President.* Thank you.

*Tariffs*

*Q.* Mr. President, if the Supreme Court says that tariffs aren't constitutional—if—if the—if the Supreme Court says tariffs are unconstitutional, will the 550 [billion dollar; White House correction] investment agreement with Japan be canceled?

*The President.* Well, we have a great case, and everyone thinks we're going to be very successful. It's a great case. I don't see how anybody could be successful on that.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*Threat of Political Violence*

*Q.* Great speech today. What is your message to other conservative influencers, podcasters, TV hosts that they might be targeted by some of these radical groups?

*The President.* Well, we have to be brave in life. You know? In all fairness, we have a life, and we have to be brave. I probably shouldn't be out here talking to you, in all fairness. But we will be brave.

And we have a great country. We have radical-left lunatics out there, and we just have to beat the hell out of them.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*Turning Point U.S.A. Founder and Executive Director Charles J. Kirk*

*Q.* Charlie—Charlie was my boss.

*Q.* She works for Charlie Kirk. She's with Turning Point U.S.A.

*Q.* Charlie Kirk was my boss, and we're absolutely devastated. So, I'm wondering if you have a message for our Turning Point USA family.

*The President.* I do. It's a great family. They're great friends of mine. He was—I would say nobody stronger for me than Charlie Kirk. This is a devastating moment for the country.

And, as you know, I'm giving him the Presidential Medal of Freedom, which is the biggest award outside of the congressional Medal of Honor. That's the civilian version of the

congressional Medal of Honor. And he deserves it, and I'll look forward to it. I'll be going to his funeral.

*The President's Affection for Turning Point U.S.A. Founder and Executive Director Charles J. Kirk*

*Q.* Do you have a favorite moment—do you have a favorite moment with Charlie Kirk?

*The President.* I think the overall person, the persona of Charlie Kirk. I mean, he was unbelievable, especially with youth. Now, he was a young guy but older than the people he was even catering to. I've never seen anybody have such an impact on young people.

*Assassination of Turning Point U.S.A. Founder and Executive Director Charles J. Kirk in Orem, Utah*

*Q.* What was going through your mind today delivering the speech at the Pentagon? What was going through your mind?

*The President.* Well, I felt so sad. Charlie was on my mind, even though the speech was initially about Charlie, and then we went on to, you know, September 11. But more than anything else, Charlie was on my mind. You know, it's very fresh and a very horrible thing. He was a great man.

*Q.* Mr. President——

*The President.* Yes, please.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*Mission of Turning Point U.S.A.*

*Q.* What is your message to the millions of—what's your message to the millions of young Americans who feel like their voice, their political voice, was snuffed out in a brutal——

*The President.* All I can say is: Hang in there. And I think Turning Point—I spoke with Erika, wife, and they have great people in Turning Point, and I think they're going to carry it forward. And they're going to make Charlie very proud, looking down on us all.

But he was incredible. He really helped me with the election too. We won youth. We did great with young people, which really doesn't happen very often with Republican candidates. You take a look at Mitt Romney and some of these others—they did so badly, and I did so well, and Charlie was a big factor.

Thank you all very much.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:41 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House prior to boarding Marine One. In his remarks, he referred to President Felix-Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombohe and Minister of State of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation, and Francophonie Therese Kayikwamba Wagner of the Democratic Republic of the Congo; President Paul Kagame and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Olivier J.P. Nduhungirehe of Rwanda; and former Sen. W. Mitt Romney, in his capacity as the 2012 Republican Presidential nominee. Reporters referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist organization; and President Shavkat Mirziyoyev of Uzbekistan. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on September 12.

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

*Locations:* Washington, DC.

*Names:* Bolsonaro, Jair Messias; Kagame, Paul; Kayikwamba Wagner, Therese; Kirk, Charles J.; Kirk, Erika; Nduhungirehe, Olivier J.P.; Romney, W. Mitt; Tshisekedi Tshilombohe, Felix-Antoine.

*Subjects:* 2024 Presidential election; Congo, Democratic Republic of the, Minister of State of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation, and Francophonie; Congo, Democratic Republic of the, President; Congo, Democratic Republic of the, relations with Rwanda; Deaths, Charles J. Kirk; Israel, airstrikes on Hamas headquarters in Doha, Qatar; Medal of Freedom; News media, Presidential interviews; Poland, Russian drone incursion in airspace; Qatar, Israeli airstrikes on Hamas headquarters in Doha; Russia, drone incursion into Polish airspace; Rwanda, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; Rwanda, President; Rwanda, relations with Democratic Republic of the Congo; September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks; Tariffs; Utah, assassination of Charlie Kirk in Orem; White House Ballroom construction project.

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