

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025

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

October 19, 2025

The President. Okay.

The President's Weekend

Q. How are you doing, sir?

The President. We had a good weekend. We accomplished a lot. I think, really, a very lot. You probably just saw the piece on Steve and Jared. It was very good. "60 Minutes."

Any questions?

Do you want to give me a little room here, Jeff [Jeff Mason, Reuters]?

U.S. Cease-Fire Agreement Between Hamas and Israel

Q. Of course. Just following up on the "60 Minutes" story. What's your reaction to Israel's strikes on Gaza today?

The President. Well, we're going to have to see what's happening. We want to make sure that it's going to be very peaceful with Hamas. And, as you know, they've been quite rambunctious. They've been doing some shooting, and we think maybe the leadership isn't involved in that. You know, some rebels within. But either way, it's going to be handled properly.

Q. Is the cease——

The President. It's going to be handled toughly but properly.

Q. Is the ceasefire still in place?

The President. Yes, it is. Yes, it is.

Colombia-U.S. Trade

Q. Mr. President, on Colombia, Senator Graham——

The President. The country of Colombia.

Q. The country of Colombia. Senator Graham tweeted that you would be imposing tariffs on the country either today or tomorrow. Can you give any details as to how much those tariffs might be or what we can expect?

The President. Well, I read his—I read the statement of Senator Graham, and it's correct, yes.

Q. Do you——

The President. I was with him today. We were working today, and I read his statement. It is correct, yes.

Q. But how much the tariff rate—do you have a rate in mind?

The President. I'll let you know tomorrow. Yes. I'll let you know tomorrow.

Q. Tomorrow it will be announced?

The President. Yes.

Virginia State Attorney General Candidate Jerrauld C. "Jay" Jones/Federal Law Enforcement Support in U.S. Cities

Q. Mr. President, Jay Jones has repeatedly said that if he wins in Virginia that he can——

The President. Who said what?

Q. Jay Jones in Virginia has said——

The President. Jay Jones, you mean the one that wanted to kill somebody's children and——

Q. Yes, the Democrat.

The President. ——kill somebody—you mean the animal that wanted to kill somebody——

Q. Yes, he said he can't wait to see you——

The President. ——who should not be allowed to be running for that office?

Q. Yes. He said he can't wait to see you in court. I'm wondering if you have a response, and if you're considering getting involved in that race?

The President. Well, what is he saying?

Q. He said in the debate on Thursday night that he can't wait to sue your administration and see you in court.

The President. No, he's a third-rate intellect. He's a guy who—I've never seen anybody say what he said—that he wanted to kill his opponent's children. He wanted to kill his opponent.

No, I can't imagine anybody voting for Jay Jones. Look, you would think he's totally discredited. I would think he wouldn't even be allowed to do that. Anybody would be put in prison for what he said.

So he can join the long list of attorney generals that have been suing and losing. But the people of this country want law. They want order. They want safety. They don't want to be mugged or raped or shot, and that's what we provide.

We have tremendous numbers also. You see the crime numbers are coming way down. Way down. Then you take a look at a place like Washington, DC, which is now one of the safest cities in the country. It was one of the worst cities, most dangerous cities. We moved out 1,700 career criminals and people that came here through Biden and his open border policy.

And Washington, DC, is now one of the safest cities, and Memphis is doing fantastically also. We went in there a week ago.

This is a bumpy flight. I'd better say that, otherwise they'll say, "What's wrong with the President?" [*Laughter*] This is a bumpy flight.

But Memphis is doing really well. I think that Chicago will do very well. We're going to go into San Francisco at some point in the not too distant future and make that a great city again. It can only be a great city if it doesn't have crime. If it has crime, it can't be a great city.

Colombia/U.S. Assistance

Q. A question on Colombia. Are you concerned that if aid is cut to Colombia that would undermine Colombia's fight against drugs? A lot of U.S. aid is used to fight drugs.

The President. They don't have a fight against drugs. They make drugs. They refine drugs. They make cocaine. They have cocaine factories. They have no fight against drugs.

And I'm stopping all payments to Colombia because they don't have anything to do with their fight against drugs. And, in fact, even when they had better Presidents than they have right now, they were—they—that's how they were making a lot of money: drugs.

I used to complain about it when they had a very nice President, but he wasn't doing—it was—it was all talk.

They are a drug manufacturing machine—Colombia—and we're not going to be part of it. So we're going to drop all money that we're giving to them. They have—it has nothing to do with them stopping drug production. And you look at the fields, the fields are loaded up with drugs, and they refine the drugs, and they make tremendous amounts of cocaine, and they send it all over the world, and they destroy families.

No, Colombia is out of control, and now they have the worst President they've ever had. He's a lunatic who's got a lot of problems, mental problems.

U.S. Airstrikes on Suspected Tren de Aragua Vessels in the Caribbean Sea

Q. One more question on Colombia. The Colombian President says the U.S. killed a innocent Colombian fisherman in one of the strikes. Do you have a response to that?

The President. Yes, they said that when we shot down a submarine that they were just fishing. This is a submarine.

Q. No, this was a——

The President. This was a submarine that was meant—by the way, this was a submarine that was meant for one reason and made for one reason: to carry massive amounts of drugs.

Yes, go ahead.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—but that's not the right strike that he's talking about. He's talking about a previous strike.

Lapse in Federal Government Appropriations/Illegal Immigration

Q. Mr. President, on the shutdown. Do you want to see the premium tax credits extended if the Democrats vote to reopen the Government?

The President. Let me just tell you that there'll be no money given toward their crazy escalation of giving money to illegal aliens that came into the country totally illegally. I mean, they came in illegally. They want to spend \$1.5 trillion—with a "t"—trillion dollars, giving it to people that came into the country illegally. They shouldn't have come in. In fact, one of the reasons they came in was to get this money.

And California is a big culprit. I mean, California—they're out of control, and we're not going to pay California all of that money that they're giving away illegally. And that's another thing. Between California and Colombia, there's not that much difference. We're not going to be making those payments.

Q. Mr. President——

Q. One follow up to that. Sorry. You're—a July survey by——

The President. Who are you with, please?

Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

Q. The Washington Post. A July survey by your pollster, Tony Fabrizio, found that 70——

The President. Fabrizio.

Q. —Fabrizio—found that 72 percent of voters across political parties like the ACA tax credit. So are you worried that you might get blamed if you don't help get those through?

The President. Well, we want to have great health care, so we'll do whatever we can do to have great health care. But the Democrats want to destroy all health care, because they want to give \$1.5 trillion of this money, and they want additional money to go to people that came into our country illegally, many of them are from prisons and mental institutions, and we're not going to destroy our health care for the Democrats.

India/Russian Oil and Gas Supply

Q. Mr. President, there were reports, and you know, you even mentioned that in a recent phone call with Prime Minister Modi and—that Modi had said his country would stop purchases of Russian oil—

The President. Yes, he's going to stop purchases.

Q. —but India—but India said that they were not aware. So did you—

The President. Well, then they're going to just keep paying a lot of tariffs—

Q. —did you have the phone call or—

The President. —if they said that, but I don't believe they said that.

No, I spoke with Prime Minister Modi of India, and he said he's not going to be doing the Russian oil thing. So that's it.

Q. But why would they say—why would India say that they're not going to do—

The President. I don't know, but if they want to say that, then they'll just continue to pay massive tariffs, and they don't want to do that.

Ukraine/Russia

Q. Following up on—

The President. Yes, please.

Q. —on Friday, you said you had a cordial meeting with President Zelenskyy.

The President. I did.

Q. During that meeting, did you tell him he needed to cede all of the Donbas region to Russia?

The President. No, we never discussed it. We think that what they should do is just stop at the lines where they are, the battle lines. You have a battle line right now. The rest is very tough to negotiate. If you're you going to say, "You take this, we take that," you know, there's so many different permutations.

So what I say is, they should stop right now at the battle lines. Go home, stop killing people, and be done.

Q. What do you think should happen with the Donbas region then?

The President. Let it be cut the way it is. It's cut up right now. I think 78 percent of the land is already taken by Russia. You leave it the way it is right now. They can negotiate something later on down the line.

But I said: "Cut and stop at the battle line. Go home. Stop fighting. Stop killing people."

New York City Mayoral Candidate Zohran K. Mamdani

Q. What do you think of Mamdani's photo with the '93 World Trade Center bombing coconspirators?

The President. Yes. No, it's a shame. Look, the Mamdani thing is a—it's a disaster waiting to happen. We can't have a Communist in charge of a great, supposedly free enterprise, kind of a representative city.

So I think it's—if you have a communist mayor, I think it's going to be very tough for him and for the city.

Q. Do you think he should have posted something like this so close to the election?

The President. Oh, I think it's a shame that that particular man is endorsing him and very friendly with him. You can see there's a relationship.

Q. Mr. President—

The President. He blew up the World Trade Center, right?

Q. And, Mr. President, sticking with—

The President. Didn't the man you're talking about blow up the World Trade Center?

Q. [Inaudible]

The President. —and he's friends with Mamdani?

New York City Infrastructure Project

Q. Mr. President, sticking with New York City. You've talked about the Hudson River Tunnel, the—

The President. Yes.

Q. —infrastructure project. You've said that the funding has been terminated. But, you know, folks in New York have said that it's not terminated. So where does that stand?

The President. Well, as of now it's terminated, and that's up to me. And as of now, it's terminated, and it's terminated—

Q. So the funding—

The President. —because the Democrats are so foolish. What they've done to the country—I mean, we have the hottest country in the world. There's no country even close. And they just want to do this.

You know, there's nothing for them to do. All they have to do is just say, "Let everything continue." And I will say, a lot of Democrats want this to get over.

Q. So the administration right now is not sending funding?

The President. Right now there is no funding because it's up to me.

Q. What is your response to the protests over the weekend?

The President. Who are you with?

Q. I'm with the AP.

The President. With AP?

"No Kings" Political Protests

Q. What's your response to the protests over the weekend, the No Kings protests on Saturday?

The President. I think it's a joke. I looked at the people. They're not representative of this country. And I looked at all the brandnew signs paid for—I guess it was paid for by Soros and other radical-left lunatics. It looks like it was. We're checking it out.

The demonstrations were very small, very ineffective, and the people were whacked out. When you look at those people, those are not representative of the people of our country.

Q. Mr. President, besides San Francisco—

The President. By the way, I'm not a king. I'm not a king. I work my ass off to make our country great. That's all it is. I'm not a king at all.

Federal Law Enforcement Support in U.S. Cities/Deployment of Military Personnel to U.S. Cities

Q. Besides San Francisco, are there other cities you're actively looking at for the National Guard right now?

The President. Yes. What about it?

Q. I'm just wondering if you care to comment on that.

The President. Well, we've used the National Guard to be very successful in Memphis. You can see the numbers are falling like rocks. Washington, DC. Chicago is getting better, even though we're going through a lot.

And you know, we're trying to do it in a very nice way. I'm allowed, as you know, as President—like 50 percent of the Presidents have used the Insurrection Act. They can use that, and everybody agrees you're allowed to use that. And there's no more court cases. There's no more anything.

We're trying to do it in a nicer manner, but we can always use the Insurrection Act if we want. I mean, you take a look in the past. Some—one, in particular, President used it 28 times during the course of a Presidency.

So we're allowed to do that. We thought we could do it in a very nice way. All we want to do is have safe cities. We're not looking for anything that would be spectacular, other than crime-free—become spectacular. We want to have great crime-free cities.

So I'd be allowed to use, if I wanted, the Insurrection Act, and then all of this nonsense would go away. You have the absolute right. It's the strongest power a President has, and you have the absolute right to do it.

We wanted to go this route, but we get sued every time you look at somebody. You look at somebody the wrong way, and you end up getting sued. We just want no crime. We want to have crime-free cities.

That's not a big—I mean, it's pretty commonsense, I think, but that's all I want is crime-free cities. I campaigned on it. It's become, I think, even more successful than we thought, because of the tremendous success that we had, literally in 12 days, in Washington, DC. And it continues.

Washington, DC, we're so proud of it. People are eating in their restaurants. Restaurants are opening. All the stores and restaurants were closing. You couldn't walk down the street without being mugged or worse. And now it's a safe city. I mean, it's considered a very safe city, and it's safe because we took 1,700 people out of there and brought them back to where they came from.

Yes.

The President's Travel to Asia/China-U.S. Relations/Tariffs

Q. You said you're going to South Korea to eventually meet with Chinese President——

The President. I am. That's right.

Q. Can you tell us more about your goals for your trip to Asia, where else you may be going, your top priorities?

The President. I have a very good relationship with President Xi of China. We're having disputes on things. They're paying us a lot of money, tremendous amount of money in tariffs, and they'd probably like to have it be less. And we'll work on that, but they have to give us some things too.

Right now China is paying a tremendous amount of money in tariffs like they've never paid before. You know, they paid a lot during my first administration, my first term. Now they're paying an unbelievable amount of money to the United States. They probably can't pay that much, and I'm okay with that. We can lower that, but they have to do things for us too. It's no longer a one-way street.

Yes.

Q. What would you lower it to, do you think?

The President. Depends. I mean, we'll have to see what they want. One of the penalties we're having—because they're sending in fentanyl, we have a 20 percent—as you know, a 20-percent tariff on that, but they'd be paying about 157-percent tariff, which is, you know, record-setting-type tariff.

I don't want them to do that. I want to help China. I want to—not looking to hurt China.

Q. Sticking with China——

The President. But they have to give us things too.

China-U.S. Trade

Q. Sticking with China, Mr. President, on soybeans. Are you confident that you'll be able to get a deal?

The President. I want them to buy soybeans. One of the things I want is, China is going to buy soybeans. I want China to stop with the fentanyl. We—very, you know, normal things. I don't want them to play the rare earth game with us.

Q. But you want them to, but do you think they will make a deal on soybeans—[inaudible]?

The President. I do believe, yes, because, otherwise, I'm not going to make a deal. No, I want them to buy. Our farmers have been boycotted by China as a negotiating point. I don't want that.

Our farmers are great—and, in particular, our soybean farmers—and I want them to start buying soybeans, at least in the amount that they were buying before. And I believe they'll be able to do that.

Argentina-U.S. Trade

Q. One—sticking with soybeans and on Argentina. You're—you know, you're looking to do that deal with Argentina, the—[inaudible]—swap.

The President. With respect beef?

Q. Are we expecting a beef deal?

The President. No, no, with—you're—I assume you're talking about beef. Yes.

Q. No, I'm——

The President. To get beef prices down—the only price we have that's high is beef, and we'll get that down. And one of the things we're thinking about doing is beef from Argentina.

Q. But my question is: What do you have to say to U.S. farmers who feel that the deal is benefiting Argentina more than it is them——

The President. Look——

Q. ——as they are a top trading partner?

The President. Argentina is fighting for its life, young lady. You don't know anything about it. They're fighting for their life. Nothing is benefiting Argentina. They're fighting for their life.

Do you understand what that means? They have no money. They have no anything. They're fighting so hard to survive. If I can help them survive in a free world—I happen to like the President of Argentina. I think he's trying to do the best he can. But don't make it sound like they're doing great. They are dying. All right? They're dying.

Argentina-U.S. Trade

Q. What do you mean by a "beef deal," sir?

The President. We would buy some beef from Argentina. If we do that, that will bring our beef prices down, because our groceries are down. Our energy prices are down. I think we're going to have \$2 gasoline pretty soon. We're getting close. And everything's down.

The one thing that's kept up is beef. And if we buy some beef—no, I'm not talking about that much from Argentina—it would help Argentina, which we consider a very good country, a very good ally in a place—although, I must tell you, if you take a look now, South America is turning. Those South American countries are starting to turn very much toward us.

Q. And for U.S. farmers——

The President. They're getting away from socialism, and you can go right down the pack. But they are starting to turn. It's pretty amazing.

Gaza, Palestinian Territories

Q. May I ask you about Israel again? Were—do you feel that Israel was justified with striking when it did?

The President. Striking where?

Q. In Gaza today and overnight.

The President. I'd have to get back to you on that. I'd have to get back——

Q. What is the next step?

The President. Because we're going to be determined. You know, all of that's being—is under consideration right now. It's under review.

Harvard University

Q. Mr. President, on Harvard——

The President. Who are you with?

Q. I'm with the Washington Post.

The President. That's what I thought.

Q. On Harvard, you said the other week that you had reached a deal, but we haven't heard anything. What's the holdup?

The President. Well, we reached a concept of a deal, but it's pretty complicated, because it—under this deal, it would be \$500 million. They're going to open up trade schools, and I love the idea of trade and trade schools by Harvard. So, you know, they get into, like, a vocational-type school.

And the—one problem with it: It's very complicated. You know, when do they start? How do they start? Who do they use? You know, there's a thousand different things, and we may just charge them a fine. Big fine: \$500 million fine.

Virginia and New Jersey Gubernatorial Races

Q. Mr. President—

The President. And they won't do it again. And if they do, we'll have to just charge them another fine.

Q. You haven't weighed in on the Virginia gubernatorial race that's in a few weeks. Do you plan to endorse with the Lieutenant Governor?

The President. Well, I think the Republican candidate is very good, and I think she should—she should win, because the Democrat candidate's a disaster.

So I haven't been too much involved in Virginia. I love the State. I did very well in the State. But I will tell you, I think the Republican candidate is excellent, and I think the Democrat candidate is a disaster.

Q. So, is that—

The President. I mean, I watched her in the debate, she couldn't answer the most basic question.

And, you know, a big thing with that race and also the race in New Jersey is going to be energy. Both of the Democrats are going to drive the energy prices through the roof—through the roof. Your energy is going to double and triple. If the Republican gets elected, your energy is going to be coming down by 70, 80 percent.

Thank you very much, everybody. Vote Republican.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:43 p.m. in the press cabin. In his remarks, he referred to U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East Steven C. Witkoff; Virginia Republican attorney general candidate Christopher T. Gilbert; President Gustavo Francisco Petro Urrego of Colombia; President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine; Siraj Wahhaj, an imam named as an unindicted coconspirator in the 1993 World Trade Center bombings in New York City; George Soros, chairman, Soros Fund Management, LLC; President Javier Gerardo Milei of Argentina; Virginia Republican gubernatorial candidate Lt. Gov. Winsome Earle-Sears and Democratic gubernatorial candidate former Rep. Abigail D. Spanberger; and New Jersey Democratic gubernatorial candidate Rebecca M. "Mikie" Sherrill and New Jersey Republican gubernatorial candidate Jack Ciattarelli. He also referred to his son-in-law Jared C. Kushner. A reporter referred to Alejandro Carranza, who was killed in a U.S. airstrike on a suspected drug-trafficking vessel in the

Caribbean Sea on September 15. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on October 22.

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

Locations: Air Force One.

Names: Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Ciattarelli, Jack; Earle-Sears, Winsome; Fabrizio, Anthony; Gilbert, Christopher T.; Graham, Lindsey O.; Jones, Jerrauld C. "Jay"; Kushner, Jared C.; Mamdani, Zohran K.; Milei, Javier Gerardo; Modi, Narendra; Petro Urrego, Gustavo Francisco; Sherrill, Rebecca M. "Mikie"; Soros, George; Spanberger, Abigail D.; Wahhaj, Siraj; Witkoff, Steven C.; Xi Jinping; Zelenskyy, Volodymyr.

Subjects: "No Kings" political demonstrations; Agricultural production, strengthening efforts; Argentina, President; Argentina, trade with U.S.; Border security; China, President; China, synthetic opioid supply chain; China, trade with U.S.; Colombia, drug trafficking; Colombia, President; Colombia, trade with U.S.; Colombia, U.S. assistance; District of Columbia, law enforcement improvement efforts; Federal Government appropriations, lapse; Gaza, conflict with Israel; Hamas political-paramilitary organization; Health insurance exchanges; Illegal immigration; Illinois, crime in Chicago; India, Prime Minister; India, trade with Russia; Israel, military operations in Gaza; Massachusetts, Harvard University in Cambridge; National Guard; New Jersey, off-year elections; New York, infrastructure project in New York City, Federal funding suspension; News media, Presidential interviews; Opioid epidemic, efforts to combat; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Russia, oil supply and refining; Suspected drug-trafficking vessels, U.S. airstrikes in Caribbean Sea and Eastern Pacific; Tariffs; Tennessee, law enforcement improvement efforts in Memphis; U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East; Ukraine, President; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Virginia, off-year elections.

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