

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

January 11, 2026

The President. Wow. What a nice grouping this is. This is really nice. Look at this. Any que—it's going to be very rough in about 10 minutes, so we'll have to go a little bit quickly. They just said very, very rough.

Iran/Political Demonstrations

Q. Sir, on Iran, have they crossed your redline yet to trigger a response?

The President. Well, no, they're starting to, it looks like. And there seem to be some people killed that aren't supposed to be killed. These are violent—if you call them leaders—I don't know if they're leaders or just a—they rule through violence.

But we're looking at it very seriously. The military is looking at it. And we're looking at some very strong options. We'll make a determination.

Q. Which options have you been briefed on? Are you meeting with senior officials on——

The President. Well, why would I tell you that? I'm going to tell you the answer.

Q. Are you meeting with your—[inaudible]——

The President. ——am I going to really—are you asking me to say what will I do, where will we attack, when and at what angle will we attack from?

Q. Are you considering more——

The President. Who are you with?

Q. I'm with the U.S. White House TV pool. I'm wondering: Are you being briefed on options——

The President. What network are you with?

Q. I'm with CNN, sir.

The President. Oh. Well, why don't you just say, "I'm with CNN"? She says, "I'm with the White House pool."

Q. Yes.

The President. And I say, "What"—you're with CNN. You're with——

Q. I'm with CNN, yes.

The President. You're with fake news.

Q. Iran said that——

The President. Because CNN is fake news.

Q. Iran said——

The President. Go ahead. Give me a—give me a question.

Iran/Political Demonstrations

Q. Can I ask how you're balancing and how you're deciding your response, the balance between helping protesters versus hindering them? Because I imagine that's a delicate balance to strike.

The President. Well, we're going to see. I mean, some of the protesters were killed through the stampeding. I mean, you know, there's so many of them. And some were shot. We're getting a full report. I'm getting an hourly report. And we're going to make a determination.

Yes, go ahead.

Iran

Q. Sir, the son of the deposed Shah——

[*At this point, the President made a hand gesture indicating for the reporter to speak up.*]

——the son of the deposed Shah and some military leaders are encouraging you to take action in Iran. Are you—are—is that a serious option, and are U.S.——

The President. Well, no, people have been shot, and we're looking at it.

Yes, please.

Venezuela

Q. Are you going to go to Venezuela? Or is Secretary Rubio going to go to Venezuela anytime soon?

The President. I may go at some point. Yes, sure. We're doing well. Venezuela is really working out well. We're working along really well with their leadership, and we'll see how it all works out.

Interim President Delcy Rodriguez Gomez of Venezuela

Q. How are you wanting the meeting with Delcy to go?

The President. At some point I'll meet. Yes. She's been very good. Look, she asked us can we take 50 million barrels of oil, and I said, yes, we can. It's 4 billion—\$4.2 billion. And it's on its way right now to the United States, by the way.

Q. When will you meet with Machado this week?

The President. I'm looking for something to grab here, because it's getting—it's going to get rough. And I don't seem to be in a very—I think you did this to me. You put me in a position where there's absolutely nothing to grab. So I'm looking for something to grab, and it's not going to be Karoline.

Q. Sir—sir, have any oil companies made commitments to you, sir?

The President. [*Inaudible*]

White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt. What about this? How's that?

The President's Meeting With Oil and Gas Executives

Q. Have any oil companies made commitments to the United States after your meeting on Friday, sir?

The President. A lot of them. Yes.

Q. Which has—have Exxon, Conoco?

The President. No, I don't want to say. No, I didn't like Exxon's response. I—you know, we have so many that want it. I'd probably be inclined to keep Exxon out. I didn't like their response. They're playing too cute.

Venezuela/Oil Supply and Refining

Q. What sort of backstops or guarantees have you—have you told the oil companies that you're willing to provide?

The President. Well, we're going to have guarantees that they're going to be safe, that there's going to be no problem, and there won't be. There's not going to be a problem. They had problems in the past because they didn't have Trump as a President. They had stupid people.

[Several reporters began asking questions at once.]

You, talk up.

Cuba

Q. What kind of deal are you looking for from Cuba? What kind of deal are you looking for from Cuba?

The President. You're going to find out pretty soon. We're talking to Cuba, and you'll find out pretty soon.

And one of the things I want taken care of and one of the groups I want taken care of, are the people that came from Cuba that were forced out or left under duress, and they're great citizens of the United States right now.

Q. [Inaudible]

The President. You have a lot of people forced out of Cuba unfairly.

So we're going to take care of—most importantly, right now, we're going to take care of the people that came from Cuba that are American citizens or in our country.

Venezuela/Oil Supply and Refining

Q. Do you plan to seize any oil tankers that are headed to Cuba?

The President. Well, we have a lot of oil people really interested. You saw that the other day. That was just a small group, because the room in the White House—we need it—we need the ballroom, actually. We could have filled up the ballroom, practically. We have so many people that want to go in for oil. So you saw the great—some great companies.

Iran/Satellite Internet Connectivity/SpaceX

Q. Are you going to send Starlink to Iran, sir, to help the people on the ground with the internet blackout for seventy—more than 72 hours?

The President. Well, we're going to—we're going to be talking about that. We may get the internet going, if that's possible.

Q. Are you talking to Musk about it?

The President. We may speak to Elon——

Q. Have you spoken to him?

The President. ——because, as you know, he's very good at that kind of thing. He's got a very good company. So we may speak to Elon Musk. And in fact, I'm going to call him as soon as I'm finished with you.

Iran/The President's Approach to Foreign Policy

Q. Just quickly. Iran said that they would consider military and commercial bases as legitimate targets if you struck. Are you concerned about——

The President. Well, if they do that, we'll consider things targets they wouldn't—that they wouldn't believe. If they do that, we will hit them at levels that they've never been hit before. They won't even believe it. I have——

Q. Do you think Iran takes——

The President. I have options that are so strong. So, I mean, if they did that, it will be met with a very, very powerful force.

Q. Do you think Iran takes your threats seriously?

The President. I think so. Don't you think so? CNN, don't you think so? Wouldn't you say that they probably do at this point? After going through it for years with me, being hit—Soleimani, al-Baghdadi, the Iran nuclear threat wiped out—don't you think—and then you just had Venezuela. Don't you think—she says, CNN, "Do you think they take your threat seriously?" Wouldn't you say they do after all of the things we've done? What a stupid question.

Go ahead.

Q. Sir, on Gaza——

Iran/U.S. Diplomatic Efforts

Q. Are you coordinating with allies on the response to Iran?

The President. I am. Yes. I am.

Venezuelan Opposition Leader María Corina Machado

Q. Mr. President, when will you meet with María Corina Machado this week?

The President. I don't know. I hear Tuesday or Wednesday. I look forward to that.

Board of Peace

Q. Have you named your Board of Peace for Gaza yet? Where do those plans stand?

The President. We have a Board of Peace that's being formed, but, essentially, it's the most important leaders of the most important nations. All nations, but the most important—you take the most important leaders and nations; that's who the Board of Peace is going to be. Everybody wants to be on it.

Greenland

Q. Sir, one group taking your threat seriously is Greenland—one area taking your threats——

The President. Who are you with?

Q. The New York Post.

The President. Well, I like the New York Post. New York Post treats me semifairly, so go ahead.

Q. One group taking your threats very seriously is Greenland. Are you still thinking of military action there? Or is anything they can——

The President. On where? Military action——

Q. Greenland.

Q. Greenland. Greenland. Is there anything they can offer you for a deal?

The President. Look, if we don't take Greenland, Russia or China will, and I'm not letting that happen. If we don't take Greenland, Russia or China will take Greenland, and I am not going to let that happen.

Q. Is there any deal they can offer you, either like——

The President. Yes, sure. I'd rather—I'd love to buy—make a deal with them. It's easier. But one way or the other, we're going to have Greenland.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization/Ukraine/U.S. Security Assistance

Q. Are you okay if that compromises NATO? If NATO effectively ceases to exist and Article——

The President. Well, I think I've done a great job. I'm the one that saved NATO. I'm the one that got them to pay 5 points—5 percent of GDP.

Q. But the——

The President. Wait a minute. It was 2 percent, and they didn't pay. Now they're paying 5 percent. I'm the one that saved NATO. You wouldn't have NATO if I weren't president.

Q. Would you pull the U.S. out of NATO? Would you consider doing that?

The President. Well, maybe NATO would be upset if I did it. Maybe NATO would—it would save a lot of money. But I like NATO, you know. I just wonder whether or not if we needed NATO, would they be there for us. I'm not sure they would. You know, we spent a lot of money on NATO, and I'm not sure they would.

Q. But what would you say——

The President. Now, what's happened is, as you know, Sleepy Joe Biden gave \$350 billion to Ukraine and got nothing for it. I got rare earth back. I got, I think, value back far greater than that. But—and that's what he should have done.

Now, if you look at what's going on with respect to NATO, we have a very good relationship, 5 percent GDP, and they pay us. We send them military equipment, and they pay us back the full cost of the equipment. The war is—we make money with the war, but I don't even want to talk about that.

I want to save the lives. They're Russian and Ukrainian lives. I want to save the lives. That's the only reason I'm doing it. This is Biden's war. It should have never happened. Would have never happened if I were President. This is Biden's war; it's not Trump's war.

All I can do is stop it, and I think we're making progress toward stopping it, which would be number nine and a quarter. You know what the quarter is, right? Right? Thailand and Cambodia went at it again, but I got it stopped very quickly. I consider that one quarter of a war.

Greenland

Q. Have you made a tangible offer to Greenland yet? Have you made an actual offer to Denmark?

The President. No, I'm not—I haven't done that. But Greenland should make the deal, because Greenland does not want to see Russia or China take over. They don't go there. It's very far away from Greenland. And Greenland—basically, their defense is two dogsleds. Do you know that? You know what their defense is? Two dogsleds.

In the meantime, you have Russian destroyers and submarines and China destroyers and submarines all over the place. We're not going to let that happen. And if it affects NATO, then it affects NATO. But, you know, they need us much more than we need them. I will tell you that right now.

Q. Are you going to increase the amount of military bases?

Q. Mr. President, the U.K. and Germany——

The President. That's a war that should have never happened with Ukraine.

Greenland/Arctic Security

Q. The U.K. and Germany are discussing plans for a joint NATO mission to protect Arctic security in Greenland. Does that change your calculus at all——

The President. No. Look——

Q. ——in terms of acquiring——

The President. Look, we're talking about acquiring, not leasing, not having it short term. We're talking about acquiring. And——

Q. Does that require U.S. boots on the ground?

The President. And if we don't do it, Russia or China will, and that's not going to happen when I'm President.

Q. Are you going to increase the amount of military bases on Greenland in the meantime?

The President. Well, we have bases on Greenland, yes.

Q. Are you going to make—do more?

The President. I could put a lot of soldiers there right now, if I want. But you need more than that. You need ownership. You really have—you really need title, as they say in the real estate business.

Death of Renee Nicole Good in Minneapolis, Minnesota/U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Q. Sir, on Minneapolis, your administration has advocated for absolute immunity for the ICE officer who shot Renee Good. How do you define absolute immunity? What does that mean?

The President. Well, everyone has seen it, and the woman was very violent. She's a, you know, very radical person. Very sad what happened. Her friend was very radical. You know, "go" or "drive, drive." And——

Q. But, for the officer—absolute immunity, how would you define that?

The President. Well, I'm going to let the people define it. But immunity—you know what immunity—what—knows is—means as well as I do.

Q. So that officer should be back on the force?

The President. But you know, people can't be treating law enforcement that way, whether it's ICE or Border Patrol or our police and—men and women. You can't—you can't do that.

We have—you know, the law enforcement in our country is doing really well, despite the fact that Sleepy Joe Biden allowed people to pour through an open border. Crime stats just came out. We have the best crime stats on record despite all the criminals he allowed into our country. We've gotten a lot of them out. We have to respect our law enforcement.

At a very minimum, that woman was very, very disrespectful to law enforcement. And you heard the same noises. You saw the same crunch that I saw. You can't do that with law enforcement, whether it's police or ICE or Border Patrol or anybody else.

Q. When it comes to ICE—when it comes to ICE officials, though—

The President. Yes.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement/Illegal Immigration/Border Security

Q. Mr. President, well, just to clarify on the absolute immunity: Do you believe ICE officers should have absolute immunity that they do?

The President. Well, no. If somebody is obviously crazy and does something wrong, no. But generally speaking—I mean, these people have been harassed; they're threatened every day. They had bands out playing so they couldn't sleep at the hotel. I see what they're doing to them. They're threatening them constantly. And all they're doing is doing what I got elected on.

We had millions of people that came into our country that are horrible people that shouldn't be in our country. They're murderers. They're drug dealers. They're people from mental institutions. They're the criminally insane. They're people from prisons. They were allowed to come into our country because Biden was a stupid person, and the people surrounding him—very smart, very vicious, but they have no common sense, and they're radicalized people. They're radical-left people, not radical-right. They're radical-left people.

And all they're doing is what I campaigned on. I won in a landslide. We won all seven swing states. We won the popular vote. We won the districts. We won everything. We won the counties—we won the counties by 79 percent, I believe. I campaigned on a great border, and now we have a great border.

But Biden let 25 million people come into this country, and many of those people are criminals, including 11,888 murderers. And we want them out. And I won on that.

Now, people don't talk about it because the border is so—so secure. Nobody wants to talk about it anymore. The border was one of the reasons I won the election. I've done such a good job on it that nobody wants to talk about it anymore. The border is totally secure.

And now, the crime stats just came out, and they're the best numbers since they were taken—and that's, like, 50 years ago. We have the best crime numbers despite the fact that a lot of criminals were allowed into our country.

Q. Do you think that—

The President. We have to respect our law enforcement.

Death of Renee Nicole Good in Minneapolis, Minnesota

Q. Sir, do you believe that deadly force was necessary? After watching all the footage, a few days have passed, what's your assessment there?

The President. It was highly disrespectful of law enforcement. The woman and her friend were highly disrespectful of law enforcement. You saw that. They were harassing. They were following for days and for hours. And I think, frankly, they're professional agitators.

Q. But does disrespect mean that deathly force—

The President. And I'd like to find out, and we are going to find out, who's paying for it.

Q. But does disrespect, sir—

The President. With their brandnew signs and all the different things. But these are professional agitators.

And law enforcement should not be in a position where they have to put up with this stuff. What that woman and what her friend and what their other friends were doing to law enforcement—not just ICE, law enforcement—is outrageous.

Q. Do ICE officials need more——

Domestic Manufacturing Investment

Q. Can you tell us about your trip to Detroit on Tuesday, what the message——

The President. I'm going to be making a trip to Detroit to talk about our unbelievable amount of factories that are opening up all over the country, many of which are car factories and car plants. We have manufacturing plants opening up at levels that nobody has ever seen before because of tariffs. If we didn't have tariffs, you wouldn't have them opening; although, they were very happy with the November 5 election.

But we have—from Canada they're coming, from Mexico they're coming, from Germany, from Japan, from all over Europe, and from Japan, other places, and from China. They're opening up car factories, car manufacturing plants at levels that we've never seen before.

So I'm going to Detroit because they're going to be opening up plants in Detroit or redoing plants, but they're really ripping down all plants and building new.

We are going to be—we're the hottest country right now anywhere in the world. I mean, think of it. A year and a half ago, we were a dead country, and now we're the hottest country anywhere in the world.

Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act/Premium Subsidies

Q. Mr. President, the House passed a 3-year extension of the ACA. It's in the Senate. If it passed the Senate, would you veto it or allow it to move forward?

The President. I might, yes. I might.

Palm Beach International Airport in West Palm Beach, Florida

Q. Sir, do you have any information about the suspicious object that was found at Palm Beach International Airport before takeoff?

The President. No. I know nothing about it.

Iran/Political Demonstrations

Q. Okay. And back on Iran, the Ayatollah said that he thinks that the protesters are trying to, quote, "please" you. Do you see it that way? What's your message to the Iranian people right now?

The President. I don't know that they're trying to please me. They named a boulevard after me, but—that's pretty pleasing—but I don't think they're trying to please. I think they just want peace. They want to have freedom. The protesters are after freedom. Iran has not allowed freedom for a long time. And the protesters, I don't think they're trying please—appease me. They're trying to get somebody to help them. They're under siege. And now it looks like they're being shot, which is a very bad thing.

Q. Sir, is the administration in contact with Iranian opposition leaders as this is unfolding?

The President. Yes.

Q. What's the message to them?

The President. Yes. You're going to find out pretty soon.

Q. You said that help is on——

Q. Mr. President——

The President. Yes, go ahead. With the beautiful red hair. [*Laughter*]

Documentary Film "Melania"

Q. Thank you. I appreciate that.

We're coming up with the premiere of "Melania." Have you seen the movie yet? And what are your thoughts on it?

The President. I've seen pieces of it. It's incredible, I tell you. I think it's——

Q. Are you going to the premiere?

The President. ——going to do very—you know, she did a book, and the book was a big, number-one bestseller. And this is a movie, and it seems to be captivating a lot of people's attention. It's very good.

Q. Will you be attending the premiere at the Trump-Kennedy Center?

The President. She goes, "Here we go again."

Yes, it's going to be doing the premiere at the Trump-Kennedy Center. Yes. It will be very exciting. It's a very hard ticket, I can tell you. Everybody—Wayne Gretzky and his wife Janet, beautiful wife, great wife, they said last night, "Gee, I want to go to"—a lot of—everybody wants tickets to the premiere. I think it's going to be great.

Mortgage Market Stabilization Efforts

Q. Mr. President, is there any timing on the mortgage bond purchases you announced last week?

The President. On the what? Mortgage?

Q. Mortgage bond purchases by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

The President. No, they're already doing it. They've started.

Q. They're already doing——

The President. Yes, they started the process, and it's having a great impact. Interest rates are falling very rapidly—not only for that reason, for other reasons too. But interest rates are falling very rapidly.

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

With no help from the Fed, because we have a total stiff at the Fed.

Credit Card Interest Rates

Q. Can I ask you, on the announcement on the credit—the cap on credit card interest rates——

The President. Yes.

Q. ——you put out on Friday: what happens if the credit card companies don't comply by the January date you set?

The President. Well, then they're in violation of the law. Very severe things.

Q. Did you have congressional support?

The President. No, I want a cap on credit card interest rates because, you know, some of them are 28, almost 30 percent. And that—the people don't know they're paying 30 percent. The people out there, you know, they're working. They have no idea that they're paying 30 percent. No way.

I—we're putting a 1-year cap at 10 percent, and that's it. They know it. They really—they've really abused the public. The credit card companies have totally abused. I'm not going to let it happen.

Iran/U.S. Diplomatic Efforts

Q. Do you sense any willingness from Iran to engage diplomatically with you, or perhaps negotiate on nuclear—their nuclear program?

The President. With Iran?

Q. Yes. Do you think they want to engage diplomatically with you?

The President. They do. They called——

Q. They called you?

Q. Is it still an option?

The President. ——yesterday.

Q. Is it still an option for them?

The President. Iran called to negotiate, yes.

Q. Yesterday?

The President. Yesterday. The leaders of Iran called. They want to negotiate. I think they're tired of being beat up by the United States.

Q. Still looking to negotiate?

Q. Can you share any details on that call?

The President. Iran wants to negotiate, yes.

Q. Negotiate what?

The President. We may meet with them. I mean, it's—a meeting is being set up, but we may have to act because of what's happening before the meeting. But a meeting is being set up. Iran called. They want to negotiate.

Thank you very much, everybody.

Q. Mr. President, what are you doing for East——

The President. Be careful. A lot of bumps.

East Potomac Golf Links/Federal Law Enforcement Support in the District of Columbia

Q. What's your plan for East Potomac? Are you going to renovate the golf course? Are you going to turn it——

The President. Yes, we're going to make it a beautiful, world-class, U.S. Open-caliber course. And ideally, we're going to have major tournaments there and everything else. It's going to bring a lot of business into Washington.

By the way, the crime stats just came out on Washington, DC. There is virtually no crime. It's gone from tremendous crime, murder and everything else. There's virtually no crime in Washington, DC. Thank you, President Trump.

Thank you very much, everybody.

Q. Sir, any announcement on Ozempic this week?

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:19 p.m. in the press cabin. In his remarks, he referred to Elon R. Musk, chief executive officer, SpaceX; Becca Good, wife of Ms. Good, who was killed in a confrontation with U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement officers in Minneapolis, MN, on January 7; former National Hockey League center Wayne Gretzky; and Chairman of the Federal Reserve System Board of Governors Jerome H. Powell. Reporters referred to Iranian opposition leader Reza Pahlavi; U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement officer Jonathan Ross; and Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Hoseini-Khamenei of Iran. A reporter also referred to H.R. 1834. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on January 13.

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

Locations: Air Force One.

Names: Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Good, Becca; Good, Renee Nicole; Gretzky, Janet; Gretzky, Wayne; Leavitt, Karoline; Machado, Maria Corina; Musk, Elon R.; Powell, Jerome H.; Rodriguez Gomez, Delcy.

Subjects: 2024 Presidential election; Arctic security, improvement efforts; Automobile industry, strengthening efforts; Board of Peace; Border security; Broadband and wireless technologies; CNN; Credit card interest rates; Cuba, human rights issues; District of Columbia, East Potomac Golf Links; District of Columbia, law enforcement improvement efforts; Documentary film "Melania"; Federal Reserve System; Greenland, ownership and administration; Illegal immigration; Interest rates; Iran, diplomatic engagement with U.S.; Iran, human rights issues; Iran, political unrest and violence; Israel-Hamas cease-fire agreement implementation; Joint Chiefs of Staff; Manufacturing industry, domestic investment; Maryland, Joint Base Andrews; Maryland, President's visit; Minnesota, death of protesters in Minneapolis; Mortgage market, stabilization efforts; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; U.S. Border Patrol; U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Ukraine, U.S. assistance; Venezuela, investment by foreign oil companies; Venezuela, oil supply and refining; Venezuela, relations with U.S.; Venezuela, Vice President; White House Press Secretary.

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