

**Remarks in an Exchange With Reporters Prior to Departure for Middleton, Florida
May 1, 2026**

Q. Mr. President——

Q. On Cuba, Mr. President——

Iran/U.S. Diplomatic Engagement

Q. Can you tell us about the new Iranian proposal? Can you tell us about the new Iranian proposal, please?

The President. So they want to make a deal, but I don't—I'm not satisfied with it. So we'll see what happens.

Q. Did it move the needle? Did it move the needle at all?

The President. Iran wants to make a deal because they have no military left, essentially. And they want to make a deal, but I'm not satisfied with it.

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

U.S. Military Operations in Iran

Q. Would you consider the war with Iran over? Why are you not seeking congressional approval to extend it or to continue?

The President. Because it's never been sought before. There's been numerous—many, many times, and nobody's ever gotten it before. They consider it totally unconstitutional. But we're always in touch with Congress. But nobody's ever sought it before. Nobody's ever asked for it before. It's never been used before. Why should we be different?

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

Pakistan/Role in Iran-U.S. Diplomatic Engagement

Q. Are you willing to send anybody to Islamabad this time? Are you willing to send anybody to Islamabad—your Envoy?

The President. We have great respect for Pakistan and Islamabad and tremendous respect for the Prime Minister and the field marshal. And they're working with us. They continue to work with us.

But the trip is a very long one, and we're doing everything, in terms of negotiating—right now, in terms of the negotiation, telephonically. They've made strides, but I'm not sure if they ever get there.

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

Yes, there's tremendous discord. There's tremendous—they're having a tremendous problem getting along with each other in Iran. The leadership is very disjointed. It's got two to three groups, maybe four, and it's a very disjointed leadership. And, with that being said, they all want to make a deal, but they're all messed up.

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

Iraqi Elections

Q. [Inaudible]—Iraqi Prime Minister—

The President. I spoke with your—the winner, a very good man. As you know, I was very strongly in favor of him in Iraq. And we had a long conversation yesterday. I congratulated him. He won, and—with our help, he won. And we want him to do very well. And I told him that the United States is with him all the way. It was a great victory. The new head of Iraq is somebody that we support very strongly.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Pakistan/Iran

Q. Pakistan—Pakistan—thank you, Mr. President. Pakistan has opened the land route with Iran. Did they consult you before opening it up to Iran? And—

[The President swatted at a bee.]

The President. That was——

Q. —are you aware of it?

The President. That was a vicious bee. *[Laughter]* I know everything about it. Yes. I have—I have great respect. Are you——

Q. Did they consult you, Mr. President?

The President. Are you from Pakistan?

Q. No, I'm not from Pakistan. I'm American.

The President. I have great respect for Pakistan and for the field marshal and for the Prime Minister. But yes, I knew about it.

Europe/U.S. Troop Deployments

Q. Yesterday you talked about Italy and the withdrawal of troops from Europe, from Italy and Spain. Can you clarify your words, sir?

The President. Well, I'm not happy with Italy, and I'm not happy with Spain. And they've done—they don't—they feel it's okay for Iran to have a nuclear weapon.

Anybody that feels it's okay for Iran to have a nuclear weapon is not very smart. And it will be a terrible thing in the future. If they were ever allowed to have a nuclear weapon, you would have problems the likes of which the world has never seen before. And it's not going to happen.

Q. [Inaudible]

The President. And aside from that, right now they have no navy. It's been wiped out. No air force. It's been wiped out. They have no anything. They have no anti-aircraft. They have no radar. They have no leaders because, frankly, their leaders are very disjointed. They have a lot of problems right now. They're not getting along with each other.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Their leaders are not getting along with each other. So——

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

European Union/Trade With U.S./Tariffs

Q. The European Union. The European Union. The European Union tariffs. Why? Why did you put the tariffs today?

The President. We raised the tariffs on cars coming in from the European Union because the European Union was not adhering to the trade deal we have. So, based on that—now, when they build their plants, of which we're spending—they're spending over a hundred billion dollars—all countries, not just the Union. When those plants open, there won't be any tariffs.

But we raised the tariffs because they were not—as usual, they were not adhering to the agreement that we have. We have a trade deal with the European Union. They were not adhering to it, so I raised the tariffs on cars and trucks to 25 percent. That's billions of dollars coming into the United States. And it forces them to move their factory production much faster. We have——

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

We have right now in the United States over a hundred billion dollars of car plants being built. It's a record. We've never had anything like it. From all countries: Japan, South Korea, every—by the way, Canada, Mexico, they're all building plants in the United States. But the European Union was not adhering to the deal that we made.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

U.S. Military Operations in Iran

Q. What's in the proposal from Iran? What did you get from Iran? What did you get from Iran?

The President. Well, we're dealing with Iran. As you know, it's a very disjointed, unfriendly leadership—unfriendly to each other. They're not getting along. They're very, very confused by what's happened, because, essentially, most of their military has been wiped out. But we just had a conversation with Iran. Let's see what happens. But I would say that I am not happy.

Their leadership is very disjointed, very argumentative with each other. They come back, one says one thing, one says another. They're very confused.

Obviously, their country has been, frankly, decimated. Their navy is gone. Their air force is gone. Many of their soldiers, unfortunately, are gone. They've got to come up with the right deal. At this moment, I'm not satisfied with what they've offered.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Spirit Airlines Bankruptcy

Q. Did you decide against bailing—did you decide against bailing out Spirit Airlines?

The President. Well, I guess we're looking at it. If we could do it, we'd do it. But only if it's a good deal.

Q. They're claiming that they're preparing to shut down this weekend because they haven't gotten a deal.

The President. Well, we're looking at it, but if we can't make a good deal—no institution's been able to do it. I said, "I'd like to save the jobs," but we'll have an announcement sometime today. We gave them—we gave them a final proposal.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Go, Jon [Jonathan Karl, ABC News].

U.S. Military Operations in Iran

Q. Mr. President, it's day 60. Are you going to seek congressional authorization for——

The President. Well, no other country has ever done it. It's never been in—as you know, most people consider it totally unconstitutional. Also, we had a cease-fire, so that gives you additional time.

But no other country's done it. We're in the midst of a big victory. This is a victory like we haven't had since Venezuela—okay?—to be honest with you. We haven't had—but you know, we have a country that lost its way. It really lost its way. That's our country, in terms of the military.

Now we have a great military. We're on our way to another victory, a big victory. And I don't think that it's constitutional what they're asking for. These are not patriotic people that are asking.

You know, when they say—even the losers, even the ones that say all the wrong things admit that it's been amazing what we've done. The Strait is totally shut down. It's flawless. It's totally 100-percent shut down.

Now, we've been dealing with Iran. They want to make a deal. They're not there. They're not with a—not—they're sort of—they get close, and then a new group of people come in. They don't know who their leaders are. They have no idea who their leaders are. But they're very confused, and that's because of the success we've had militarily. They essentially have no military.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Just let me just tell you, on the war powers. So many Presidents, as you know, have gone and exceeded it. It's never been used. It's never been adhered to. And every other President considered it totally unconstitutional. And we agree with that.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

China-U.S. Relations

Q. Will Iran—will Iran affect your China trip, given the blockade and cease-fire?

The President. No, the China—the China—it's going to be amazing. The visit with China and Chairman Xi, that's going to be great.

We have the trip with China coming up——

Q. Yes.

The President. ——and it will be—I think it will be an amazing event.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Iran/U.S. Diplomatic Engagement

Q. Mr. President, if you can't get a deal on Iran, what next? What will you do?

The President. Well, right now we have negotiations going on. They're not getting there. They're—they are very disjointed. They're extremely disjointed. They're not able to get along with each other as leaders. They don't know who the leader is. Their military's been defeated.

We've had a—if we left right now, it would take them 20 years to build back that country. But we're not satisfied at this moment. We're not satisfied.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

U.S. Military Operations in Iran

Q. Mr. President, are you considering strikes on Iran? Are you considering new strikes on Iran?

The President. Why would I tell you that?

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Spirit Airlines Bankruptcy/Intel Corporation

Q. On Spirit Airlines, what has been the holdup on a deal? Are they balking?

The President. We're looking at it. We're looking at trying to help them. Something we're not looking to get involved with, but if we can, it's 14,000 jobs.

We are—I wish they were driving a tough deal, but it's one of those things. And we'll do it or we won't. We'll have something for you today or tomorrow. What?

Q. It seems like the other lenders are balking. They think they'll get bumped down in priority.

The President. Well, they will. You know, we come first. Hey, you know what it is? U.S.A. first. America first. That's my—including with airlines, including with Intel.

You know, we made an Intel deal. You know that, right? We made about \$40 billion on that. And someday, Fox and Peter [Peter Doocy, Fox News] is going to talk about it. But we helped out Intel, and we ended up making \$40 billion.

So we're looking at Spirit different—a different kind of a thing. But we're looking at Spirit, and if we can help them, we will. But we have to come first. We're first. It's America first.

Anthropic

Q. The CEO of Anthropic came to meet Susie Wiles a week or 2 ago. What is the latest on your position on that company?

The President. Well, only that they had a very good meeting.

U.S. Military Operations in Iran

Q. You had the CENTCOM Commander come in here——

The President. I did.

Q. ——yesterday. Was he briefing you on——

The President. Options.

Q. ——a different approach? Options. What kind of options? How would it look different?

The President. Well, there are options. I mean, do we want to go and just blast the hell out of them and finish them forever? Or do we want to try and make a deal? I mean, those are the options.

Q. Do you want to go blast the hell out of them and——

The President. I'd prefer not.

Q. ——finish them forever?

The President. On a human basis, I'd prefer not. But that's the option. Do we want to go in there heavy and just blast them away? Or do we want to do something?

They're a very disjointed—[inaudible]—as you can understand, Peter. Very disjointed. I mean, they're not getting along with each other, and it puts us in a bad position.

One group wants to make a certain deal. The other group wants to make a certain deal, including the hard-liners. The hard-liners want to make a deal too. Why wouldn't they? They have no navy. They have no air force. They have no anti-aircraft. They have no nothing, actually.

U.S. Munitions Supplies

Q. There were some reports—there were some reports this week that because of all the firepower required for Epic Fury, that there are people in the White House who are starting to worry about our inventory——

The President. No. Nope, that's false.

Q. ——of bomb and missiles. Are you worried?

The President. No. No, we have more than we've ever had, actually. Because, all over the world, we have inventory, and we can take that if we need it.

But all over the world, we have tremendous amounts of inventory. The best. For instance, we're stocked and locked and loaded. Right now we have more than double what we had when this started.

But, you know, we're all over the world. We're in many, many different countries, many different places, all backed up.

Now, what happened is Biden came in, like a stupid fool, and he did—he gave a lot of what we had to Ukraine.

Q. Right.

Ukraine/U.S. Security Assistance

The President. And \$350 billion, they spent. We don't do that. Everybody has to pay. The European Union pays us. But Biden didn't get money. He got nothing. He got nothing. But he gave a lot of the inventory away.

Now, relatively speaking, it's not that much, but it was a lot of inventory. He gave it to Ukraine. We built it up. But we have inventory from all over the world.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Group of Seven (G-7) Nations

Q. Are you going to go to the G-7? The G-7 is in France in June. Will you go to it?

The President. Probably, yes.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization/King Charles III of the United Kingdom

Q. Did the King change your mind about NATO—Britain and NATO? Did——

The President. What about NATO?

Q. Did the King change your mind—King Charles—about Britain and——

The President. No, no. The King and I had a great—just a—he's just a great person. He's a high-quality person. I love the job he did in Congress. He actually got the Democrats to stand. He's a wonderful person. She's a wonderful lady, a wonderful Queen. And we had a good time.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Lebanon/Israel

Q. Mr. President. Mr. President, will the Lebanese—will the Lebanese and Israeli leaders be meeting here soon at the White House?

The President. Yes, they're going to be coming.

The President's Personal Security

Q. President Trump, when you—when you go to a—this is going to be your first big public event since somebody tried to kill you on Saturday. Do you feel safe going to something like this today?

The President. I don't even think about it, Peter.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Former Major League Baseball Player Pete Rose

Q. What about Pete Rose? Do you still support a pardon for Pete Rose, sir?

The President. Oh, I think Pete Rose is great. I think Pete Rose should have been in the Baseball Hall of Fame a long time ago—a long time ago, before his death. I think baseball did a great disservice by not respecting his achievements on the field. He was a great player.

I knew him. I knew him well.

Q. And the pardon, sir?

The President. He was a great player.

Q. Will you pardon him?

U.S. Naval Blockade of Sanctioned Commercial Transit Through the Strait of Hormuz/Iran/U.S. Diplomatic Engagement

Q. It seems like—it seems like you're happy with your blockade and you don't have to restart the war, or you don't have to make a deal. Is that correct? Are you happy with the blockade?

The President. The blockade has been unbelievable—powerful, a hundred percent. It's been actually unbelievable. If we left right now, we had a great victory. But we're not doing that. We're——

Q. [Inaudible]

The President. We're negotiating with them. Their teams are unbelievably disjointed, but we are negotiating.

Stock Market/Inflation

Q. Mr. President, sir. The Nasdaq and the S&P 500 posted their biggest monthly gain since your first term, sir. Can you talk about what this means to you—the stock market performance—and do you believe that this is going to continue throughout the rest of your term?

The President. Thank you. The stock market is hitting record numbers. We have more people working in the U.S.A. today than we've ever had working, as you know. It's, in many ways—now, when this war ends, the gasoline and oil and everything is going to come tumbling down. But right now, as of this moment, the stock market has hit record highs. We have more people, again, working in the United States today than at any time in the history of our country. We are really doing well.

Now, gasoline's high. Other prices are way down, but gasoline's high. But when this is over, you'll have a world without a nuclear weapon with Iran. If you allow Iran to have a nuclear weapon, the world would be in great jeopardy. So it's not going to happen.

As soon as the—as soon as the war ends, the gasoline prices will come down.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Tax Code Reform/White House Ballroom Construction Project

Q. You're going down to the Villages. You're going to be talking to our seniors. You've delivered for seniors—no tax on Social Security——

The President. Right.

Q. ——most-favored nations. Can you talk about everything that you've done to help our senior population, sir?

The President. I will be. Well, no tax on tips. We have the largest tax cuts in the history of our country, also, and regulation cuts. And it's one of the reasons we're doing so well.

So we have no tax on tips, no tax on Social Security for our seniors. We have no tax on overtime. And you know, we—something that nobody talks about—if you buy a car, if it's American-made, you get a deduction on interest for income tax purposes.

Q. Mr. President——

The President. And by the way, very importantly, right over there. The greatest—you're going to have the greatest ballroom ever built. It's on time, on budget, and it's doing great. So——

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Ultimate Fighting Championship

Q. Mr. President, you're going to be hosting the first-ever UFC fight at the White House——

The President. Right here.

Q. ——in 45 days, sir. Can you preview the event? Can you talk about the card and what this will mean?

The President. Yes. Well, they have some of the greatest champions in the world. The arena—they're going to start building it over the next week. It's right here. It will be about 5,000 seats. They'll have 100,000 people down by the Ellipse with screens. And it's all free.

It's going to be great. I've got to go. Thank you.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Go ahead.

Gasoline Costs/Commercial Transit Through the Strait of Hormuz

Q. What's your message to Americans who are facing the pain of high gas prices?

The President. Well, we just—it was just announced—we have more people working in the United States today than ever before in history. Outside of the gasoline, prices are way down. Prices have come down. Groceries are—and I inherited that. We inherited the highest inflation in the history of our country—48 years—but in the history of our country.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Wait. And prices are down. When the war ends, which shouldn't be too long—they want to make a deal so badly, but they're not there yet. They're not there. In my opinion, they're not there.

When the war ends, gasoline prices are going to tumble, because there is so much, right now, on the seas already loaded into tankers—tankers that can't escape the Strait. There is so much—like, record-setting. But, when the war ends, gasoline prices will go down to below what they were before.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

I think it's very important. I think it's very important. The stock market just hit an alltime high. And, again, more people working today than at any time ever. And we just got the largest tax cut in history with the no tax on tips.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Q. Mr. President, you—*[inaudible]*——

The President. Do you know him? Do you like him?

Q. This guy? Yes. Yes.

The President. Go ahead.

Q. I love you, Mr. President. Mr. President——

The President. I like him too.

Iran/Kurds

Q. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, you said you sent weapons to help Iranian demonstrators. Some source claim these weapons are in Sulaymaniyah, in Iraqi Kurdistan. Do you confirm that? And as you said, they will pay a big price?

The President. I'm not happy with the delivery of the weapons. I'm not thrilled with it. But a small amount of weapons were sent, and we'll see who has them. But I'm not happy with what happened with the Kurds. The Kurds did not deliver the weapons like they were supposed to.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Domestic Oil Production

Q. Mr. President, Exxon and Chevron are refusing to increase oil production—Exxon and Chevron. What do you say about that?

The President. We're doing great production. We're producing more oil right now. That's the other thing. We have more oil production right now than any time in history. And if you take a look at the ships, they're all coming up to Texas, Louisiana, Alaska.

Did you see the line? What do they call it? The "tango." But that is some line of ships. They're all coming up. They're loading up. The biggest ships in the world are coming up to Louisiana, Texas, and to Alaska, and they're loading up.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

And I don't want to say it, but our country is getting stronger and stronger. This has been amazing. The amount of oil and gas that we're selling now is at a level that nobody's ever seen before.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Governor Ronald D. DeSantis of Florida

Q. Would you consider Ron DeSantis for a Cabinet position?

The President. Well, I like him a lot, so nobody—[inaudible]. I like him a lot.

Iran/U.S. Diplomatic Engagement

Q. With Iran, can you tell us—you said you're not satisfied with the plan right now. Can you tell us what specifically you're not satisfied with?

The President. They're asking for things that I can't agree to.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:27 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House prior to boarding Marine One. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chief of Defense Forces Syed Asim Munir Ahmed Shah of Pakistan of Pakistan; Prime Minister-designate Ali Falih Kadhim al-Zaydi of Iraq; Dario Amodei, chief executive officer, Anthropic; White House Chief of Staff Susan Wiles; Queen Camilla of the United Kingdom; President Joseph Aoun of Lebanon; and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel. A reporter referred to Adm. C. Bradford Cooper II, USN, Commander, U.S. Central Command.

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

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Amodei, Dario; Aoun, Joseph; Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Camilla, Queen; Charles III, King; DeSantis, Ronald D.; Munir Ahmed Shah, Syed Asim; Netanyahu, Benjamin; Sharif, Shehbaz; Wiles, Susan; Xi Jinping; Zaydi, Ali Falih Kadhim al-.

Subjects: Automobiles and automobile parts, tariffs on imports into U.S.; Baseball; China, President; European Union, trade with U.S.; Florida, Governor; Gasoline costs; Group of Seven (G-7) nations; Inflation; Intel Corp.; Iran, commercial transit through Strait of Hormuz; Iran, diplomatic engagement with U.S.; Iran, nuclear weapons development; Iran, U.S. military operations; Iraq, elections; Iraq, relations with U.S.; Iraq, security cooperation with U.S.; Israel, Prime Minister; Italy, defense relationship with U.S.; Lebanon, President; Manufacturing industry, domestic investment; News media, Presidential interviews; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Oil and natural gas, domestic production; Pakistan, Chief of Defense Forces; Pakistan, Prime Minister; Spain, defense relationship with U.S.; Spirit Airlines, bankruptcy; Stock market; Tariffs; Tax Code reform; Ukraine, U.S. assistance; Ultimate Fighting Championship; United Kingdom, King; United Kingdom, Queen; Venezuela, U.S. military capture and exfiltration of President Maduro; White House Chief of Staff.

DCPD Number: DCPD202600299.