

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2026

Remarks in an Exchange With Reporters Aboard Air Force One En Route to Anchorage, Alaska

May 15, 2026

The President. Hello, everybody.

Q. How are you, Mr. President?

The President. So we had a great stay. It was an amazing period of time. President Xi is an incredible guy. We got along.

Made a lot of great trade deals, including over 200 planes for Boeing, with a promise of 750 planes, which will be by far the largest order ever, if they do a good job with the 200, which I'm sure they will. And that's General Electric also—the engines. So they're buying General Electric. So it's approximately 400, 450 engines and 200 planes, and a promise of up to 750 if they do a good job.

We had an amazing time. It was a very historic—oh, look who we have. Hello, David [David Sanger, New York Times].

That was a very historic couple of days, I think. Really amazing.

Iran/U.S. Diplomatic Engagement

Q. Sir, I know there'll be a lot of questions around the China trip, but just first, on Iran. Have you rejected the latest proposal from Iran? Or where does that stand?

The President. Well, I looked at it, and if I don't like the first sentence, I just throw it away.

Q. What was the first sentence?

The President. An unacceptable sentence. Because they have fully agreed no nuclear, and if they have any nuclear of any form, I don't read the rest of their letter.

Iran/Disposition of Nuclear Material

Q. So 20 years is not enough for you? It's got to be a perfect——

The President. No, 20 years is enough, but the level of guarantee from them is not enough. In other words, it's got to be a real 20 years, not a thing where they—[inaudible]——

Q. It means you've got to—well, get all the fuel out and no more production?

The President. No, we have to get everything. But we're not even talking about—I call it the nuclear dust. I don't know. I came up with the term, which seems to have caught on.

Q. But I was talking about it because they would not remove the——

The President. They said that they can't remove it because they don't have the technology to remove it.

Q. Well, you could remove it for them.

The President. They don't have the type of tractors.

Q. Yes.

The President. They say the only one—they told me directly: They said, "The only one that can remove it is China or the U.S." We're the only ones with the equipment. They said: "You were right. It is a complete obliteration."

With that being said, I want to get it. And they agreed to it, but then they took it back. But they'll agree to it eventually.

China/Political Status of Taiwan

Q. Sir, can I ask you about Taiwan? What did President Xi say to you about Taiwan? And are——

The President. What?

Q. What did President Xi say to you about Taiwan? And are you still going to approve the arms sales?

The President. So President Xi and I talked a lot about Taiwan. He thinks they cannot have anything to do with what they're doing. I mean, he's, you know, against very much what they're doing.

We talked about Taiwan. We talked about Iran a lot. And I think we have a very good understanding on both.

On Taiwan, he does not want to see a fight for independence, because that would be a very strong confrontation. And I heard him out.

Q. Are you——

The President. I didn't—I——

Q. ——going to change your wording—[inaudible]?

The President. No, I didn't make—I didn't make a comment on it. I heard him out. I have a lot of respect for him.

On Iran, it's very interesting. He feels strongly they can't have a nuclear weapon. He said that very strongly. They cannot have a nuclear weapon. And he wants them to open up the Strait. But as he said, "They closed it, and then you closed them," with a smile.

And it's true. We—control the Strait, and they've done no business—literally, they've done no business in the last 2½, which is approximately \$500 million a day.

So we have—we've been doing very well on all fronts.

Q. But, sir, just before—before we leave——

China-U.S. Relations/Political Status of Taiwan

Q. On Taiwan, Mr. President. President Xi said that there was a risk of conflict with the U.S. over Taiwan. What's your response to that—[inaudible]?

The President. I don't think there's a conflict, other than we don't need their—Strait. We don't need the Hormuz Strait.

Q. So, on Taiwan, Mr.—on—Mr.—President Xi said there was a risk of conflict with the U.S. over Taiwan.

The President. [Inaudible]

Q. Is that——

The President. No, no, I don't think so. I don't think so. I think we're going to be—I think we'll be fine. He doesn't want to see—he doesn't want to see a war.

And you have two things. You have the Iranian situation. On that, I think we agree almost entirely, other than he's a buyer, and we're not. We don't need it.

And, on Taiwan, he doesn't want to see a movement for independence. He says: "Look, you know, we've had it for thousands of years, and then, at a certain period of time, it left. Then we were going to get it back." They had the Korean war. A lot of things happened. We have the whole history.

But no, on Taiwan, he feels very strongly. I made no commitment either way. We'll see what happens.

Taiwan

Q. What about the arms sales to Taiwan?

The President. I'll make a determination over the next fairly short period.

Q. But you're not necessarily going to go ahead on this? You're proposing——

The President. No, I'm going to make a determination. I'm going to see. I have to speak to the person that right now is—you know—who he is—that's running Taiwan.

Commercial Transit Through the Strait of Hormuz/China-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, did President Xi make any firm commitment to put pressure on the Iranians to reopen the Strait of Hormuz?

The President. I'm not asking for any favors, because when you ask for favors, you have to do favors in return. We don't need favors.

We've wiped out their armed forces, essentially. We may have to do a little cleanup work because we had a little monthlong cease-fire, I guess you'd call it. But we have a blockade that's so effective. That's why we did the cease-fire.

We really did the cease-fire at the request of other nations. I wouldn't have really been in favor of it, but we did it as a favor to Pakistan, who are terrific people—the field marshal and the Prime Minister.

But, no, I mean, President Xi and I agree on many things, and we agree very much on trade. We're going to be doing a lot of trading. Our farmers are going to be taking in—I mean, our farmers are going to be very happy with the deal we made.

U.S. Military Operations in Iran

Q. Is your instinct that he will put pressure, that he will try and get them to do more?

The President. I didn't ask him to put pressure because, you know, I don't—I don't need favors. I think he will. I think automatically he'd like to see it opened up. He gets about 40 percent of his energy or his oil from that—you know, from the Strait. We get none. We get none. We don't need it.

China-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, on Truth Social, you said that President Xi had made a reference to the decline——

The President. Yes.

Q. —of the U.S.

We didn't hear him say that. Maybe it was something he said——

The President. No, it was——

Q. —in private to you.

The President. Yes.

Q. So what was it, first of all, that he said that prompted you to—[*inaudible*]?

The President. He made a statement.

Q. In private?

The President. It might not have been from him. It was somebody. But they talked about the decline. But he said today, and he said it very publicly—he said the U.S. was declining—for the last 4 years. And he said, "What President Trump has done in the last 15, 16 months has been virtually a miracle." He said we have the hottest—he said we have the hottest country anywhere in the world.

But he said that it was a declining country for—under Joe Biden. He said we had a declining—a seriously declining country, which we did, with people pouring in from all over the world, from prisons and everything else.

He said, "What President Trump has done has been a virtual miracle. It's the hottest country anywhere in the world." And it is.

Yes.

Cuba

Q. Mr. President, on a different subject. On Cuba.

The President. Yes.

Q. There's reporting that Raúl Castro could be indicted by the DOJ, I believe. What does that mean for—[*inaudible*]?

The President. Well, I don't want to comment on that. I'll let DOJ comment on it.

But they need help, as you know. And you talk about a declining country, they are really a nation or a country in decline. So we're going to see. We have a lot to talk about on Cuba but not, maybe, for today.

China-U.S. Trade

Q. On tariffs, Mr. President. Did you agree with President Xi to extend that yearlong truce on tariffs?

The President. No, we didn't discuss tariffs. I mean, they're paying tariffs. They're paying substantial tariffs, but we didn't discuss it. You know, before I came along, it was the opposite.

We didn't discuss tariffs.

Q. How come?

The President. It wasn't brought up.

Global Nuclear Disarmament Efforts/Group of Twenty (G-20) Nations

Q. Mr. President, you said in January to us that you were going to bring up the expansion of their nuclear program. Obviously, they've got 600 weapons now, by the Pentagon's estimate,

going to 1,500. Did that come up? Did you succeed in getting them into any form of arms control or the—remember we discussed New START——

The President. You're talking about China?

Q. China.

The President. Yes.

Q. Yes.

The President. We—brought it up. The denuclearization—I talk about it all the time with Russia and with China. And it did come up. We did discuss that.

Q. And what did you conclude?

The President. I don't know. I got a very positive response. It's a beginning.

So, you know, we're going to be together four times, potentially, this year. We have the G-20, which he wants to come to, which I'd like him to come to. It's going to be in Miami. It's going to be at Doral, and it's going to be, I think, very good. Much more important if he's there. And so you have the G-20.

We have one that he has, as you know, in November——

Q. Right.

The President. ——in China. He's asked me to be there. I'm going to try to be there.

And then we have another one on September, I guess, 26th or 24th, where he's coming into the White House.

Q. But I'm trying to understand what it is he committed to, if he committed to anything.

The President. Well, I don't want to say anybody committed, but we have a very good understanding.

Q. So are you going to move—[inaudible]——

The President. You know, the concept of denuclearization.

Q. Denuclearization, or just a new—an extension of New START?

The President. Well, no, a denuclearization.

Q. In other words, building down?

The President. And you bring Russia into it also. But the concept of that is something that would be very good.

China/Human Rights Issues

Q. Sir, can I ask about the—the political prisoners in China? Did you bring up with President Xi any of the political prisoners in China?

The President. I did. I did.

Q. Are any going to be released? Any progress?

The President. I think he's giving very serious consideration to the pastor. The pastor is—he said he's giving very serious considerations on that.

Q. What about Jimmy——

The President. I discussed it.

Q. What about Jimmy Lai, Mr. President?

The President. It's a tougher one. That's a—I did bring it up. That's a tougher one. For him, it's a tougher one.

Q. What did he say about Jimmy Lai?

The President. I mean, I understand it. It's—for him, it's a very—he told me—and I don't want to mislead anybody—he said Jimmy Lai is a tough one for him to do. You know, he—you know, they went through a lot. And right or wrong, they went through a lot.

So he told me that would be a tough one. He said he's going to strongly consider the pastor.

Semiconductor Manufacturing/Artificial Intelligence

Q. Sir, can I ask you two on technology?

The President. Yes.

Q. First, computer chips—advanced computer chips, like the H200s——

The President. Yes.

Q. ——that Jensen has. Did that come up at all with—with Xi?

The President. It didn't come up, but, as you know, Jensen was there. He's an amazing guy. Nvidia. And he would be inclined.

You know, they have much higher level than the H200, but the H200 is good. China needs it. And so, yes, it came up.

But—we have a much——

Q. But they haven't bought any so far?

The President. No, because they chose not to. They want to try and develop their own.

But it did come up, and I think something could happen on that.

Q. Okay.

The President. Okay.

Q. And then on artificial intelligence——

The President. You know, they have quite a bit higher level, but the H200's a good—it's a great chip.

Q. And then on artificial intelligence.

The President. Yes.

Q. What is it that you want to get done? Did you bring up the—the COTS——

The President. We did.

Q. ——and all those things?

The President. We—talked—you know, we're leading by a lot, but they're second and they're very strong. And we talked about possibly working together for guardrails.

Q. And what kind of guardrails——

The President. And he's—very——

Q. What kind of guardrails do you want?

The President. Well, the standard guardrails that we talk about all the time.

AI is fantastic. So many things can happen in terms of health and medicine and operations, everything—the military. I mean, so many things can happen. But it's also got some drawbacks.

And we're talking about—we probably will. We're going to work together. We had a very good conversation about a lot of subjects.

Q. So, biological, nuclear, cyber?

The President. Could be, yes. Could be.

Q. Well, did you specifically discuss those risks?

The President. We discussed, I would say, almost everything you can discuss, except for a reduction of tariffs.

Iran/U.S. Diplomatic Engagement

Q. [Inaudible] On—Iran, Mr. President. Just to be clear, I mean, what—what's next? Are you—is—the threat of the bombing starting again—how realistic is that?

The President. Well, I don't want to say that.

Q. Sure.

The President. I mean, I'd like to tell you.

Q. Sure. But——

The President. I'd like to say, "On a certain hour of a certain day, the bombing's going to start"—I don't want to say that.

I can only say that Iran—I could say this with very, very strong conviction: Iran will never have a nuclear weapon. Not going to happen.

Q. Mr. President, what would the use be——

The President. They have no chance.

U.S. Military Operations in Iran/News Media

Q. What was the—what would the use be of repeating the bombing? You did it for 38 days.

The President. Well, no—we did.

Q. You—and you——

The President. We did.

Q. ——did not get the political changes in Iran that you were hoping——

The President. No, I got, I had a total military victory.

Q. But not a political one.

The President. But the fake news, guys like you——

Q. Ah, okay.

The President. ——write incorrectly. You're a fake guy, and guys like you write about it incorrectly.

We had a total military victory. We knocked out —their entire navy. We knocked out their entire air force. We knocked out all of their antiaircraft weaponry. We knocked out all of their

radar. We knocked out all of their leaders, number one, and then we knocked out all of their leaders in the second division. And we knocked out numerous of their leaders in the third division. And they're very confused.

We've had a total victory except by people like you that don't write the truth. You know, you should write—I actually think it's sort of treasonous what you write. But you and The New York Times and CNN, I would say, are the worst.

All right. Go ahead.

Q. Sir, on another—on another war——

The President. And you should know better, David. You know, you're a professor.

Q. Mr. President——

Q. On the subject——

Q. The question was——

The President. You know better. Your editors tell you what to write, and you write it. You should be ashamed of yourself.

Q. [Inaudible]

Q. Mr. President, on another war.

The President. I actually think it's treason when you write like, "They're doing well militarily," and they have no navy, no air force, no anti anything.

By the way, we knocked out 85 percent of their manufacturing for the missiles. We knocked out everything. We haven't knocked out—other than one bridge, and we did because they misbehaved. But we have bridges we could knock out. We could knock out their bridges and their electrical capacity within 2 days. We could knock out the whole thing.

Q. Mr. President——

The President. And then I read The New York Times, and they act like they're doing well.

Q. Mr. President——

The President. And everybody knows that that's why your subscribers are way down.

You know, the Times subscribers are way down because it's fake news.

Q. The Times subscribers—[inaudible]——

Ukraine/Russia

Q. Did you discuss Ukraine?

The President. Way down. Way down.

Q. [Inaudible]

Q. Did you discuss Ukraine at all with President Xi?

The President. I did.

Q. And is there any movement on that?

The President. I did.

Q. What did you say?

The President. We had—we discussed it. Well, it's one that we'd like to see settled. And until last night, it was looking good, but they took a big hit last night.

Q. Yes.

The President. So it's going to happen, but it's a shame.

Q. So that——

The President. Twenty-five thousand people died last month.

Yes.

U.S. Military Operations in Iran/News Media

Q. Mr. President, Admiral Cooper of CENTCOM was asked yesterday about the strike on the girls' school on the first day of the war.

The President. Oh, that's under investigation. You're talking about the original? Yes.

Q. Yes, and it's—it was the only case of—investigation at the moment into civilian casualties.

The President. No, I think we have a couple of things under investigation. But that is——

Q. For war crimes?

The President. ——that is under investigation.

Q. Are you—able to confirm yet that it was a U.S. missile?

The President. Who—who're you with?

Q. BBC, for the radio.

The President. Fake BBC. You mean the ones that put AI in my mouth? The ones that gave me—that had me saying a statement that they now admit was not true? That—the ones that put terrible words in my mouth and then had to admit that it was fake? The ones that are being sued now for \$5 billion and don't know what to do? You're with BBC?

Q. Mr. President——

The President. They're another fake outfit.

Yes.

China-U.S. Trade

Q. Can I ask about the deals in China? Did you get a deal on soybeans? You know, the farmers are——

The President. I did. The farmers are going to be very happy. They're going to be buying billions of dollars of soybeans. Yes.

Prime Minister Keir Starmer of the United Kingdom/U.S. Military Operations in Iran

Q. You mentioned—well, we were—we were talking about Britain, the—Keir Starmer, the Prime Minister there, is in a lot of trouble.

The President. He's in a lot of trouble.

Q. I know you were asked about this the other day. What's your——

The President. Well, he's in trouble for two reasons: energy and immigration. He's very bad on energy. He should open up the North Sea. He's got a gold mine, and he should open up oil in

the North Sea, and he doesn't. They have a tremendous value in—it's—you know, they buy their oil, a lot of it, from Norway. Norway gets it from the North Sea. Not as good an area as Scotland and the U.K. has.

So they're paying Norway a fortune for oil that they take out of the North Sea.

Q. Do you think Starmer is going to survive as Prime Minister?

The President. It's a tough thing. Unless he can straighten out immigration, where he's weak, and if he doesn't start drilling and stop with the windmills all over the place that are causing havoc—they're causing havoc—most expensive form of energy. They kill the birds. They're unsightly. They're ruining the landscape. If he doesn't stop with the windmills—he's got to do energy. He's got to open up the North Sea. You know, he's got one of the greatest oil finds anywhere in the world, and he's not using it. And I tell him that he's not using it.

Q. Should he quit?

The President. The oil companies call me every day, "Please, please, we want to go to the North Sea." He doesn't allow it to happen. It's—

Q. Should he quit?

The President. I—don't say that. He's a—I think he's a nice man, actually. But, I mean, I didn't like when he said, "We're going to send ships as soon as you're finished with the war, as soon as you"—well, we're sort of finished militarily pretty much.

But we—you know, David, we are—we finished probably 70, 75 percent. We didn't finish every one of the things. We'll go back and finish them off.

Q. Sir—

The President. And by the way—and more than that.

U.S. Military Operations in Iran

Q. You saw the reporting on the missile capability, missile launchers that have remained.

The President. Yes. That's—

Q. Does that seem accurate to you?

The President. Yes, no, it's New York Times fake news. The missile launchers are probably 80-percent gone. The New York Times said it's like we haven't—we were hitting them like—like piñatas.

The missile launchers are largely gone. The manufacturing of missiles is about 80 percent—80 to 85 percent gone. And we know where the rest of it. So, if we go in, we'll take that out very early.

Q. The intelligence reports seem to indicate, though, there were 40—

The President. There are no intelligence reports. Not for the—they weren't intelligence reports. They were New York Times fake news.

China/Iran

Q. Sir, would you consider lifting the sanctions on Chinese oil companies that buy Iranian oil?

The President. Well, we talked about that, and I'm going to make a decision over the next few days. We did talk about that.

Q. Do you—do you think Xi feels—felt stronger in his dealings with you than he did the last time that you went to China?

The President. We had a great relationship last time, until COVID came along.

You know, I blamed them for that. I—said it was Wuhan, and it was. I was right. And, you know, look, that was a strain on everybody—COVID. And so, I—you know, it—it affected our relationship at the time.

But we always had a great relationship before that and after that, and now it's as strong as ever.

I mean, I went over to where he lives, which is something that rarely happens. Were you there? I don't know if you were——

Q. Yes, it was beautiful. I know.

The President. It's amazing. I mean, people have never seen it before. It's amazing, actually. We had lunch.

We have a great understanding.

Q. You don't think he feels he has the upper——

The President. I mean, it's a very positive thing to have these two nations getting along, David.

China/Taiwan Political Status

Q. Mr. President, on Taiwan again. You said you were going to check with the President of Taiwan. But the 1982 Assurances that President Reagan gained said you would not—said the United States would not consult with China on arm sales to Taiwan. Are you—so are you—it sounds to me like you have consulted with China.

The President. Well, I think 1982 is a long way.

Q. It was. It was.

The President. That's a big, far distance away.

Q. So you've dispensed with them?

The President. No, I didn't say anything about it. But certainly, you—know, he brought that up. He talked about that to me, obviously. So what am I going to do? Say, "I don't want to talk to you about it because I have an agreement that was signed in 1982."

No, we discussed arms sales too.

Q. And what's his request? That you—[inaudible]?

The President. We discussed the Taiwan—you know, the whole thing with the arms sales. It was in great detail, actually. And I'll be making decisions. But——

Q. What was his request?

The President. But, you know, I think the last thing we need right now is a war that's 9,500 miles away. I think that's the last thing we need. We're doing very well.

Q. Would the U.S. defend Taiwan if it came to it?

The President. I don't want to say. I mean, I'm not going to say that. There's only one person that knows that. Do you know who it is? Me. I'm the only person.

That question was asked to me today by President Xi. I said, "I don't talk about those things."

Q. He asked you that?

Q. He asked you today?

The President. Yes. A lot of—he asked me a lot——

Q. He asked you if you would send troops? If you would defend?

The President. He asked me if I'd defend them. I said, "I don't talk about that."

Q. You told him that?

The President. Yes, I don't talk about it.

China/Cyber Activities

Q. Did you talk to him about the cyberattacks that he's done in the United States or the MSS has tried——

The President. I did. And he talked about attacks that we did in China. You know, what they do, we do too. It's like the spying. They're talking about, "Oh, the spying." I said, "Well——

Q. The spying or destroying——

The President. ——we do it too."

Q. ——the infrastructure.

The President. Look—no, I'm talking about spying.

Q. But they want——

The President. The—question was asked to me yesterday, I guess, "What about the fact that China's spying in the United States?" I said, "Well, it's one of those things, because we spy like hell on them too."

So it's one of those——

China-U.S. Relations

Q. What about the fact that China is putting in the U.S. infrastructure code that they could use if we—if you ever decided to come to the—[inaudible]?

The President. Well, you don't know that. I mean, I'd like to see it, but it's very possible that they do. And we're doing things to them. I told them, "We do a lot of stuff to you that you don't know about, and you're doing things to us that we probably do know about."

But we do plenty. It's a double-edged sword.

Former President Joseph R. Biden, Jr./President Xi Jinping of China

Q. Sir, again, on President Xi. In—a couple of years ago, when President Biden met him in San Francisco, he was asked if he thought President Xi was a dictator. Do you think President Xi is a dictator?

The President. No, but I think that President Biden was an incompetent President. He gave us the Iran nuclear deal, which allowed Iran to have a nuclear weapon within a matter of years from the time they said—I terminated it. If I didn't terminate that, Iran would have a nuclear weapon, and they would have used it within—probably 2 years ago, 3 years ago.

If I didn't go in with the B-2 bombers 9 months ago, Iran would have a nuclear weapon and nobody would be able to talk to them.

By the way, they would have used it already.

Q. But do you think President Xi is a dictator or not?

The President. I don't think about it.

Q. Right.

The President. He's the ruler. He's the—President of China. I don't think about it. I don't.

Q. You said they would have had a——

The President. You deal with what you have. I respect him. He's very smart. He loves his country. I respect him. Whether he's a dictator, that's for you to figure out.

Yes.

Q. Sir——

Fentanyl

Q. Mr. President, you said you didn't talk about tariffs, but did you talk about fentanyl at all? And—[inaudible]——

The President. I did. I talked about fentanyl. As you know, I put a tariff on because of fentanyl, and they discussed that. But I—put a penalty. It's a penalty. Very—a lot of money we take in because of that. I'd prefer not taking it in. I'd prefer that we don't have—but we did talk about fentanyl.

Q. What kind of agreement did you come to?

The President. We always—well, you know, the fentanyl is down—way down from where it was. And it could be because of the tariff penalty.

Texas Republican Senatorial Campaign

Q. Sir, domestic issue, if I could. Where are you on the Texas Senate race?

The President. Well, I'll maybe make a decision. I know them both very well. I like them both a lot. And you know, my record of endorsements is extraordinary. You look at what happened with Indiana, and out of all those races, the one that won was—there were three Trump people in the race. If they had one, he would have won in a landslide.

But I took out all of these candidates that had—you know, long-time candidates with big leads against people that never ran before. And the people that never ran before won virtually all the races.

And, as you know, 2 nights ago, I won every single endorsement. A week ago, before that, I won every single endorsement. There's never been a record of endorsements like this, which is a great honor, as far as I'm concerned.

Q. But you might not endorse?

The President. No, MAGA is a movement the likes of which our country has never seen before. There's never been——

Q. But you might not endorse, sir, in Texas?

The President. I don't want to say that. I mean, I'm looking at it very strongly. I like them both.

I mean, I'll tell you what I do think: I think the Democrats have a weird candidate. Six genders. A real hit on Jesus. I mean, this guy is bad news, with his mask from relatively recently, and he's a vegan. He's a vegan; all of a sudden, he's not a vegan. He was a vegan the whole—now, all of a sudden, he's not. Texas doesn't like vegans.

I do believe either one of them will easily win the race. I think that the candidate the Democrats have in Texas is a very flawed, very weak, very—I think he's a pathetic candidate, especially for Texas.

Okay?

Secretary of State Marco A. Rubio

Q. Did you see Secretary Rubio in the briefing room the other day? And what did you think?

The President. Are you talking about his outfit? [*Laughter*]

Q. Yes, that too. [*Laughter*]

The President. I thought his out—I thought he looked very good in the outfit. Sweatsuit. I don't know if I'd do it, but I thought he looked very good.

I think he's outstanding. I thought he was great. I mean, I saw every word of it. I thought he was great.

Iran/Nuclear Weapons Development

Q. Mr. President, back to what you were saying before about the enriched uranium——

The President. Yes.

Q. ——at Isfahan. So what would your logic be in having just a 20-year deal? I mean, they—the——

The President. Now it's "just."

Q. ——the deal that you pulled back was 15 years.

The President. Yes.

Q. Whether, you know, they would have gotten it faster or not is up to you. But what would the difference be here if, in 20 years, they reach——

The President. Well, Obama had virtually no deal. Obama had a road to a nuclear weapon, and I terminated that deal. And if I didn't terminate—Barack Hussein Obama—if I didn't terminate that deal, Iran would have had a nuclear weapon 2 years ago. As you know, that deal long expired—would have expired.

Iran/Disposition of Nuclear Material

Q. They've also taken the most years doing it, and after you're bombing, they're not in a position there to do it.

The President. You know what? I'll tell you what, I know you backed Obama, which shows what a fraud you are, because that was the worst deal. They would have had a nuclear weapon within a period of a year and a half after I terminated it. If I didn't terminate that and if I didn't send the B-2 bombers in 9 months ago to obliterate—you know, one thing that did happen, which was very nice, the top person in Iran, representing them—he's the top person—he said I'm the only one—meaning the United States is the only one, along with possibly China, that would be able to get the nuclear dust out of that disaster that we created with the B-2 bomber.

Q. Are you willing to do that? And why do you call it "dust" when it's—[inaudible]?

The President. Yes, no, at the right time—at the right time, we'll either go in or we'll get it. I think we'll probably get it. But if we don't get it, we'll go in.

Q. But you're willing to mount the operation, to take the risk?

The President. Well, no, I think they'll be totally defeated, and we won't have any risk. Yes.

We have the equipment to take it out. Nobody else does. China might have the equipment. They said, "You're the only one." They said, "You and China." But they weren't sure.

We have the equipment to take it out.

North Korea

Q. Sir, did you discuss North Korea with Xi?

The President. I did.

Q. What—came out of that?

The President. Just—you know, I have a very good relationship with Kim Jong Un. He's been pretty quiet.

Q. Have you had any communications with him?

The President. Yes.

Q. Of what kind?

The President. Doesn't matter. I mean, I'm—I don't tell you about that.

But I have a good relationship with him. He's been respectful of our country. I want him to be respectful. He's been respectful of our country.

Hey, thank you very much. Enjoy the flight, everybody.

Q. Thank you.

Q. I was going to ask you a soccer question.

The President. I heard you didn't have cameras back here. In fact, I loved it. I heard they had no camera. [Laughter] And now they got a camera. I heard that you were shut out for 2 hours until we leave the airspace. But he's got a camera. This guy never misses a trick.

You'd better make me look good with that camera. All right?

Thank you very much, everybody. Have a good time.

Q. Thanks, Mr. President.

Q. Good to see you.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. in the press cabin. In his remarks, he referred to President Lai Ching-te of Taiwan; Chief of Defense Forces Syed Asim Munir Ahmed Shah Asim Munir of Pakistan and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif of Pakistan; Jin "Ezra" Mingri, pastor, Zion Church of Beijing, China, who was detained by Chinese authorities in 2025; Hong Kong democracy activist and businessman Jimmy Lai; Jensen Huang, founder, president, and chief executive officer, NVIDIA Corp.; Texas Republican senatorial candidates Sen. John Cornyn III and State Attorney General W. Kenneth Paxton, Jr., and Democratic senatorial candidate James D.

Talarico; and former President Barack Obama. A reporter referred to former President Raul Castro Ruz of Cuba.

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

Locations: Air Force One.

Names: Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Cornyn, John, III; Huang, Jensen; Kim Jong Un; Lai Ching-te; Lai, Jimmy; Mingri, Jin "Ezra"; Munir Ahmed Shah, Syed Asim; Obama, Barack; Paxton, W. Kenneth, Jr.; Rubio, Marco A.; Sharif, Shehbaz; Starmer, Keir; Talarico, James D.; Xi Jinping.

Subjects: 2026 midterm elections; Artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies; China : President; China, human rights issues; China, President; China, relations with U.S.; China, trade with U.S.; COVID-19 pandemic; Cuba, political and economic stability; Group of Twenty (G-20) nations; Hong Kong, political status with respect to China; Illegal drugs, interdiction efforts; Iran, commercial transit through Strait of Hormuz; Iran, diplomatic engagement with U.S.; Iran, nuclear weapons development; Iran, U.S. airstrikes on nuclear facilities; Iran, U.S. military operations; News media, Presidential interviews; North Korea, State Affairs Commission President; Nuclear disarmament, international efforts; Pakistan : Prime Minister; Pakistan, Chief of Defense Forces; Pakistan, Prime Minister; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Secretary of State; Semiconductor manufacturing; Taiwan, political status with respect to China; Taiwan, President; Taiwan, trade with U.S.; Tariffs; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; United Kingdom, energy sources; United Kingdom, Prime Minister.

DCPD Number: DCPD202600343.