

The President's News Conference in Ankara, Turkey

July 8, 2026

The President. That's a lot of press. Wow.

Well, it's important stuff. And you know, our team out here, it all—they've all become stars—superstars, actually.

But we want to thank you very much. We've had a tremendous time and, I think, a great success. And we just concluded a very successful NATO summit here in Turkey.

And I want to thank President Erdoğan, who's a—really a great man. He's a great leader. He's a friend of mine. Been a friend of mine for a long time. He's a strong person, a very strong personality. And that's why he runs such a successful and good company—country and, really, a great—I would say a great country. Militarily, he's very powerful. People leave him alone. But he's really done a fantastic job.

And from the moment we got off the plane, you look at—you know, the airports were beautiful. He built—they built a new terminal for our arrival. Everything was beautiful.

And so I just want to thank President Erdoğan, who's done a fantastic job in Turkey.

And I also want to thank NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte. Mark is an extraordinary person—smart, great leader. It's not easy leading so many leaders like that. Got a lot of leaders, and they're strong personalities, every one of them. And Mark does an unbelievable job. Couldn't find anybody better.

I just want to say there was tremendous love in that room. The press got to see the sitting, but they didn't get to see the speaking. And I actually said, "It's too bad the press couldn't see this," because every one of them spoke for a little while, and I spoke for a little while, and it's a big—it's a lot of speeches. We kept it short.

But it's too bad the press couldn't have seen what we were doing in that room, because it was very smart people, and they have a lot of good in their heart—not evil; good—and they're doing a great job for their country. The world is doing well.

We have—as you know, the oil is down. We'll see whether or not we keep it down. We should keep it down. We're doing things that should have been done 47 years ago with Iran.

And I just want to say that throughout my first term and over the past 18 months, the United States has led a historic effort to dramatically increase the defense spending and to have equipment that no other country in the world has.

When you look at Venezuela, when you look at Iran—essentially demolished their military in a couple of weeks. They had a good military. They had a good navy. They had 159 ships. Every one's at the bottom of the sea. They had hundreds of airplanes. They're all gone. They're all lying burned up on the runways. They were totally decimated. Their radar is gone. Their—everything's gone. Their leaders are gone, frankly. And their combat capability is pretty low.

They have a small percentage of missiles left. They have some of the launchers—missile launchers left. Call them "launching pads." But most of that's been destroyed too.

So we are—we have the strongest military in the world by far. Not even close. Everybody admits it.

Last year's summit in the Netherlands was great also, and we achieved an unprecedented agreement to increase the annual defense spending—and it's the benchmark—raising it from 2 percent to 5 percent of GDP, which everybody said was impossible.

And now they're all thanking me. And most of the countries have agreed to it. We have a couple of—that didn't. But I have a feeling they're going to. And pretty quickly.

In fact, today they were very positive. One of them in particular was, I didn't think, a good team player, today was a great team player.

As all of the leaders understand very well, the United States remains by far the largest contributor to NATO monetarily—and maybe otherwise—and the strongest military anywhere in the world.

And they respect us as a country again. They didn't respect us 2 years ago. They laughed at us. NATO laughed at us. Everybody laughed at us. They don't laugh anymore. There's no more laughing.

This year, we invested a record \$1 trillion in our Armed Forces, and we're going to be asking for \$1.5 trillion coming up. We have the money being spent on the best equipment anywhere in the world.

In the working session this morning, we discussed the progress other members are making toward the 5-percent target, and they're making great progress.

Many of these countries are very rich, by the way. We don't have to feel sorry for them. But it doesn't mean they're properly protected. There's a big difference.

Some have truly answered the call, and others are making big changes. They will be answering the call. I think I can say, in all cases, they're going to be answering the call. And we'll be doing—we'll be taking in over a trillion dollars a year toward defense. And that's a tremendous amount of money. That's a big up.

There were at 2 percent. They were actually at 1 percent. I got them to 2 percent. Then I wanted to get them to 5, and we got up to 5 the last time.

And they're—you know, just again, if you could have seen the respect and the love in the room—and it's love, really, for the country—for our country.

I don't want to say me, because you'll say: "Oh, he's so conceited. He's such a conceited person." But they do.

I mean, you know, they like the job I'm doing. They said, "We love—sir, we love you." These are grown people saying that. Isn't that nice?

Maybe—I don't know, maybe they're trying to get to me. And, in a way, they did, because there was tremendous unity in that room.

And I urge all nations to accelerate their plans to get the benchmark as quickly as possible. The benchmark is going to be that 5 percent number. That's the number it should have been for years.

As a result of the commitment we achieved last year, defense spending of other NATO members surged by more than almost \$150 billion in 2025, and much of that money is being spent on American-made equipment. They all want American-made equipment.

We're pushing very hard to have the defense companies—and they're great. We make the best equipment. The Patriots and the Tomahawks and everything we have is considered to be the

best. Not by me, it's—everybody wants it. I wish we made it faster, because we could sell as much as we could make.

And, as you know, I had Lockheed and every one of the companies—all of the companies that we're—Raytheon, as an example; Boeing. So many of those great companies are now building plants. They had big plants, but they were using them 24/7. I said: "That's not the way to do it. You have to build more plants. You don't have to just go overtime."

No tax on overtime. Remember that, please. No tax on overtime. Those people are happy.

But they're going—they were doing literally 24 hours to get the Tomahawks done and the Patriots done and all of the other defensive and offensive equipment done. It's the most sought-after equipment in the world.

You saw that with Venezuela, where they had a lot of great equipment that wasn't ours. And it didn't work. Our equipment works, but we have to produce it faster for other countries. For everybody, including ourselves, we have to produce it faster.

So we think within a year—year and a half max—we'll be—instead of waiting for a year or 2 years, we'll be having it on a 2-week wait, maybe a 1-week wait. That's what I want. And it will do really well.

A lot of people are, you know, just waiting. They're waiting. They want to get this defensive equipment—maybe, in particular, the defensive equipment—but offensive and defense. And much of that money is being spent on American-made equipment. That's the money that the European—and Canada—are spending. European countries mostly and Canada.

And they're spending that with the United States, largely. And it's American-made. "Made in the U.S.A.," as we say. Weapons, munitions—supporting thousands of American jobs. This will increase—we have the highest number of jobs. Right now we have the most people working in the United States of—that we've ever had in the history of our country.

We have the biggest investment ever made: \$19.2 trillion. That's six times more than we've ever had. Think of it. Six times more. And what did that were tariffs. Without the tariffs, I think we would have done fine. Like, at about two or three.

The last administration had much less than \$1 trillion invested for 4 years. We have \$19.2 trillion invested in 1 year. We haven't gone into the extra almost a half a year—one and a half years. Those numbers won't come out for a little while.

So we have \$19.2 trillion—not billion, not million—trillion with a "t"—invested in plants and equipment that's being built all over the country.

Eli Lilly is building plants. Big drug. Merck. All of them. The drug companies are building.

The car companies are building like crazy. In fact, as you probably saw, big announcement yesterday: Toyota is leaving Mexico, and they're going to build one of the biggest car manufacturing plants in the world in Texas. That's because of the tariffs, because we don't mind if you build in Mexico, but if you build in Mexico, you have to pay 25-percent tariff.

If you build in Japan or if you build in any place—now, China is a much higher tariff. It's — a hundred percent tariff because we don't want to lose our jobs. We don't want to have our workers lose their jobs.

We have the—we have the largest number of plants being built for the most money ever in the history of our country. Car plants, AI plants, and all other plants—pharmaceutical plants, chips. We're not giving anything. All we're saying is, "If you don't start, if"—and we'll give them a year and a half to 2 years to build their plant. If they don't have that, they have to pay 100

percent, 200 percent, even 250 percent if they make a chip or if they make a car or if they make pharmaceuticals.

So the pharmaceutical companies are moving in at record levels. There's never been anything like what's happening. Let me put it a different—put it to you in a more broad fashion: There has never been anything like has happened with this country or any other country in the history of the world. There has never been growth. There's never been manufacturing plants being built. We have so many being built.

And in the big ones, like AI—some of the AI—we let them build their own electric plants. We force them to build. We don't want—because the old grid that we have wouldn't be able to supply it. They need, just as an industry, more energy than the entire country produces right now, when you think about it, which is incredible.

So take all of the energy that the United States produces, and that one industry, which is so big, so powerful, it needs more than that. In fact, some people say almost double.

So this was my idea. I said: "You can never service that. You can't reinvigorate the grid." You can make it better, but nothing like that. You wouldn't be able to build.

And we're leading China in AI—well, in most—just about everything. But we're leading China in AI.

Even in TikTok. You know, I was watching somebody say: "Oh, the TikTok deal. It's so bad for"—well, because they say the deal was incredible, but they think the word that gets out is bad.

Except the numbers just came out, and I'm number one on TikTok. And all I do is talk about communism, right? [*Laughter*] So it's sort of good. I used it to get elected too. But you know, it's—you have to get your word out.

But it just—the numbers came out just a little while ago, and I was number one. Some ridiculous number. I never heard of numbers like that. But number one. And all these entertainers, they're number 27, 29. It's crazy. I don't even understand, myself.

But that means that my word's getting out about how great our country is, how successful our country is, and how bad communism is, and how bad these lunatics are that are running for election that don't sound good, don't think good, and don't look good. I don't see any looker. I don't see anybody with the look. You know, you need the look, I guess. You need something, but they don't have it. And I think they'll fade fast.

And it's not "Social Democrats." This is not a social—these are Communists that are running. And they don't want God. They don't want successful things to happen for our country. They don't want to have a successful country. I think they're sort of crazy.

As European nations rebuild their militaries, American equipment will be the largest beneficiary. The defense companies are going to be making most of that equipment. They want the American equipment because it works better. It's not a question of anything else. We make the best equipment in the world.

And to that end, I provided other leaders with an update on the steps we're taking to rapidly scale up production in the United States, and they wanted to hear that because they don't really want to get it in 4 years, 5 years; they want to get it, like, in a week.

We'll actually be at a point like that in the not-too-distant future with the plants that are being built. The defense plants are—it's incredible.

Lockheed is building, I think, five. Some of them are building three, four, or five, and they're big ones. It's going to quadruple the output of—we have with the munitions and the basic

equipment itself, whether it's a Patriot or a Tomahawk missile or any of the missiles that we make. Make many missiles, different types for different occasions.

And just today, at the summit, we announced \$3 billion of new defense investments with U.S. companies, and Lockheed Martin will establish a world-class Patriot missile sustainment facility—a big deal—in Europe. They're given a tremendous incentive by Europe to do that. All goes to the benefit of us and Europe, because they're getting the best equipment.

Northrop Grumman is moving forward with the sale of advanced American drone technology. We're actually the leader in drone tech. A lot of people don't know that. We have the—we have the most sophisticated drones in the world, and we're a real—I guess we're the leader, but we're—we'll soon be the leader by many times over.

And Lockheed and Rheinmetall are announcing a partnership to build the Army Tactical Missile Systems, which is a big deal. And Anduril is announcing a deal to build their new Barracuda missiles, which is a very highly sophisticated, fast missile, and we're doing that for Poland.

Poland's doing very well, by the way, with a very, very good President. Great President, I think.

All of these agreements directly benefit the U.S. defense industry and base, and what it really does is, it means jobs.

And, again, I have to just say that when Toyota announced yesterday, I wasn't that surprised, but everybody wanted to get that. That's the largest—I think it's going to be the largest plant in the world—car plant. And they're moving into the United States.

And, again, they're doing that—to avoid paying their tariff, because if you build your product here, you pay no tariff. If you don't, you pay a 25-percent tariff, depending—35 percent sometimes, sometimes 100 percent, 200 percent, depending on what the product is.

As an example, we're doing great on steel because we charge tariffs. And now, all of a sudden, the steel industry, which was absolutely dead a few years ago—I revived it in my first term pretty good, and then they blew it in the Biden term, and what a shame. They just blew it right out the—they had no idea what they were doing. And I quickly revived it at the beginning of my—of this term, a year and a half. And we are—the steel business is through the roof.

We don't even make aluminum anymore. Now we're going to have the largest aluminum plant in the world being built in Oklahoma. I love Oklahoma. Seventy-seven out of seventy-seven counties, three times, and it's great. It's a great State.

They're going to be building the largest aluminum plant in the entire world in Oklahoma starting very soon.

Over the course of the past 2 days, I had a number of excellent discussions with other leaders at the summit and held productive bilateral meetings with essentially all of them. We had dinner last night. Just about all of them were there.

President Erdoğan of Turkey, as well as President Zelenskyy—and he just came in, as you probably saw. Had a little press conference.

And also, President al-Shara' of Syria, who's doing an unbelievable job in unifying Syria. What a job he's doing. Syria was a mess with what happened with their previous government. You know that. Very dangerous place. And now it's come—it's just come together. He's done a fantastic job.

People are talking about it.

In every conversation, it was clear that America is back, and we're stronger and bigger and better than ever before. We have more jobs, as I said, than ever before. And we're respected again like maybe never before. We are so respected as a country.

That's why I wish I told the Secretary General, Mark—I said, "It's too bad the press could not see what's happening in this room." You saw the big round circle with all of the leaders of all of those countries. And, I don't know, I think they should allow it.

The theory is that they won't be speaking quite as freely and it won't be quite as good. But who knows?

It was amazing, actually. The unity in that room was incredible. The, you know, really, love—it was sort of pretty wild. There was a love in that room that was great.

So this was a tremendously successful summit. And, again, I want to thank President Erdoğan—Turkey—and President—so many of the Presidents. Presidents, Prime Ministers—they were all here from NATO—the NATO countries. And, in particular, we have to thank the Secretary General, Mark Rutte, for doing a fantastic job. He really put on a tremendous—his was just something—he just—he's a unifier. He's a tremendous unifier.

So I could take a few questions.

We've done a few of these already today, so I don't think we should take too many. I don't think we should take——

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

Wait. So we're going to keep it a little bit short. And I know a lot of you are going home. Some are going with me.

So go ahead, please.

Q. Sir——

The President. Sir, yes. Yes.

Q. Mr. President——

The President. No, no, no. The gentleman right here. The very tall gentleman, who's very insecure. He doesn't want to ask the question. *[Laughter]* He's a handsome guy, but he's very insecure.

Q. Is there a mike?

The President. Go ahead. Do you want to shout it out? Give him a mic.

Q. I'll shout it out.

The President. How about giving him a—he—shout it out.

U.S. Military Operations in Iran/Oil Markets and Prices/Border Security

Q. Mr. President, your operation in Venezuela has been lauded as a military success, and yet the Iran war seems to be a strategic dead end for you. Why are you apparently unable to end the Iran war?

The President. So I think we're doing just the opposite. The Iran war has been a tremendous military success.

And you know, I can only answer the question by saying they're not going to have a nuclear weapon. I think it's been—I was there for one reason: that Iran cannot have a nuclear weapon. I call it—we denuclearized Iran, and that's happened. They will never have a nuclear weapon.

That stuff is so far down under a mountain. It's a granite mountain that collapsed on top of it. Take months to get it out.

I think it's a tremendous success—Iran. And you see the oil prices are lower than they were when I started.

And people like to say that, but look, they have no military left. Their air force is gone. As I said, their ships are gone. A hundred and fifty-nine ships are gone. They're at the bottom of the sea. Their radar is gone. Everything's gone.

So when you say "not a success," it's a tremendous success.

The fake news likes to say how well they're doing. They're doing terribly. They have 350-percent inflation. When the war started, they had, like, 6 percent, 5 percent.

They have—they want to make a deal, but they don't know how to make a deal, and then they go around shooting ships at night. I don't like that.

You know, they're dealing with very fine people. They're dealing with Steve Witkoff. They're dealing with Jared Kushner and J.D. Vance. And they're dealing with Marco and Scott. They're dealing with great people, but I don't know. I don't know. I think they're little loco. They're a little crazy.

But they told us they'd like to go to the funeral—the funeral of—of a very—a person who was—killed a lot of people. Khamenei killed a lot of people over the years and there for a long time.

Don't forget: What we did should have been done 47 years ago. It could have been done anytime within for—this has gone on for—they were the bully of the Middle East.

So they're a much different country.

Now, in 1 day, all of their anti-aircraft things are gone. That doesn't mean they're not going to get a plane at some point, but all of it's gone. Everything's gone. Their leaders are gone. They had leaders, they're gone. Then they had another set of leaders. They're gone. Now they have another set of leaders. They may be gone. Who knows?

And I—and you know what? I may be gone too, because I'm their number one target. It's out all over the place. I'm their number one, because they're scum. That's the way they act, and that's the way they've done it for 47 years.

But I'm doing what's right for the country. I'm doing, really, what's right for the world. They have to be stopped.

And they've killed thousands—hundreds of thousands of people. They killed 52,000 protesters over the last 3 months.

So when you say we're not doing well, I think we're doing phenomenally well. We—our military has been incredible.

Plus, we had a blockade. Did we have a blockade? Did you ever see a blockade work that way? You know, for you, that said we're not doing well there.

We did great in Venezuela. That was a one-day war, and they're a very good military. You know, it's a very military country. We took out one of the worst human beings in the world, Maduro. And we—he's in jail waiting for trial. But what he did to this country was incredible, including the fact—not only the drugs, but he had people pour into the country from prisons. They opened up their prisons; they allowed them to come in.

We're getting them out. We're getting them all out.

But we have—with the Biden open-border policy, with Kamala as your border czar—remember? She was the border czar, but she never called Border Patrol—never once—and she never went to the border. The border was a disaster.

Now it's fixed. It's fixed where we have nobody—and I don't do these numbers. Zero people come in through our border—through our southern border. Zero. And that's been announced now every month for the last 12 months. Zero.

We had millions of people come in under—25 million people—I think more than that—under Biden, and they weren't people that you want. And for the most part, they were drug dealers. They were escaped from—think of it: All the prisons—and I'm not just talking about from South America. I'm talking about from the Congo. I'm talking about from all over the world. The prisons were emptied out. They were emptied out into our country.

But they had the worst murderers. They had the—we had people allowed in our country that should never—and they walked in through an open-border policy.

And all I'm saying is that you're lucky we won this election.

Yes, please.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Go ahead. Go ahead.

Q. Mr. President, on communism——

The President. No. Yes, go ahead.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Iris Tao with NTD Television——

The President. Who are you with? Why don't you say your name and who you're with. That's always helpful.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President, for doing this. Iris Tao with NTD. We're the sister media with the Epoch Times.

The President. Okay.

The President's Perception of the Communist Threat/National Economy

Q. On communism, you've been issuing a wake-up call to Americans at home about the dangers of communism.

The President. Yes.

Q. And now you're speaking on the world stage. What's your message to people both living under communist and socialist regimes, but also people living under democracies, like in Europe and America, who might not have realized how close communism has come to home?

The President. Yes, that's a great question, actually.

But, look, I want to get the word out, because what's forming is a communism in the country. And communism's easy to sell. I would be the greatest Communist in history. I'd be right up there with Lenin. *[Laughter]* I'd be up—I'd be as good as anybody.

"You've got free rent for the rest of your life." What they don't say is that you'll be living in squalor in 12 months. "You've got a free house. Would anybody like to have a free house? We'll take it away from somebody, and we'll give it to you." You'll have murders all over the place.

Communism's a disaster. It's been proven to be for thousands of years under different names, but the same thing.

It's very important. And you know, it's funny. One of the reasons I do well—so well with Hispanic people—I set a record, Republicans. I get great numbers for the election. Helped me get elected in a landslide—the Hispanics. Because a lot of them came from countries that were essentially Communists. You know, whether you call them radical Socialists or Communists—there's not that much, but there is a little difference.

When they say "Social Democrats"—well, Social Democrats, it sounds so nice. It's not nice. It's a very dangerous term.

So I do talk about it, and I talk about it on TikTok, and I talk about it everywhere. I talk about it here. And you're right, it has become international, but it's never worked, and it's not going to work.

What is working is the United States. I mean, think of it, we have more jobs than we've ever had. People are making more money than they've ever made. I'm talking about workers now. I'm talking about workers. They're making higher salaries than they've ever made before. It's just the best system, and it's got flaws, but everything's going to have a little flaw. But it's been amazing.

And when I watch what's happening, and I see these lowlifes getting—I mean, they're lowlifes. I watch them. I know good people. I know quality people. These are, essentially, lowlifes. And when I see what they're talking, I think they're very dangerous. In many ways—and I've said it, and then I said, "Boy, that's a pretty big statement." Then I realized—you know, a couple of people said, "I think you're probably right."

I think this country with this thing that's going around is in more danger than it was during World War I, World War II. If you talk about September 11, if you talk about Pearl Harbor—that was big danger. I think this is—I think the concept of us going communist—because one thing that happens when you go communist: You never come back. Never comes back. You die in squalor. You die a horrible death. You die in squalor. And it gets very evil and very nasty.

Yes, please, go ahead.

Iran/Political Leadership

Q. Mr. President, Tyler Pager with the New York Times. Last month, you said Iranian leaders were very rational people, nice people to deal with, strong people, smart people. Today you said they were scum, sick people, and being led by sick people. What changed, and do you think they're—[inaudible]—

The President. I got to know them. So——

Q. Well, got to know them how?

The President. I've said that about a lot.

Now, when you say "rational," I think they're much more rational than level one, level two. Level one is gone. Level two is gone. This is level three. I think they are more rational, but based on their actions over the last week or two, they're not doing a service to the people. And I think, more than anything else, since I got to know them—and I'm not sure I want to make a deal with them. We can play games, but I'm not sure I want to make a deal. Let's just finish the job.

Yes, please. Go ahead. Go ahead.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Go ahead. Go ahead.

Iran/Nuclear Weapons Development

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Steve Sedgwick from CNBC. The oil markets are up today around about 7 percent for WTI and Brent as well. The world is taking you at your word, sir, that the MOU is over, that the cease-fire is over. What happens next, sir? Are we on the cusp of a full-scale return——

The President. No, what we——

Q. ——to full conflict?

The President. Well, I'll tell you what happens next. We're never going to see Iran have a nuclear weapon, because that's much more important than the numbers you're talking about.

The prices of oil are dropping like a rock. Now they'll be up a little bit, and this will end very quickly. We have a tremendous—we have an oil glut right now because we got all those boats out of the Strait. And it's going to drop.

And I've predicted everything. I've been right about everything, and I have been for a long time. That's how I got to be President three times. It's how I won three elections. I did very well in the second one—won it. It was a rigged election. But I've been right, and oil is coming down now.

Now, I got to—I have to make sure of one thing: that we don't have lunatics having control over nuclear weapons. So we have that now. There's no way they have a nuclear weapon.

We have cameras, as an example, on the site that those beautiful B-2s, at 1 o'clock in the morning, 10 months ago, blew up. They blew it up. We have cameras. That's called Space Force. They're in space. But we have cameras that can read the badge of the person going over to a site—"Mohammed Something" We say, "It's Mohammed Something—is there with shovels." Well, shovels won't get you there. The biggest machinery in the world probably won't get you there, if you want to know the truth. It's way, way below.

But we're watching that, and if anybody goes there, they get blown up. So nobody's going to touch that. Eventually, we'll take it. But what we do have is, we have that. That's gone. If we wouldn't have had that, they would have had a nuclear weapon, and they would have wiped out Israel. If I weren't President, Israel wouldn't exist.

Now, we did it two times. When the G—JCPOA, the Obama deal, when that was originally conceived, everything went to Iran—\$1.7 billion in cash, hundreds of billions of dollars. They thought they could buy peace with these people. You can't do that.

So the big thing we have is—more important than anything we can talk about, is you can't let lunatics have nuclear weapons. And we've stopped that.

And that should have been stopped on a couple of other occasions too, with different countries, but they didn't do that.

Yes, please.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

The President's Personal Security

Q. Thank you, President Trump. Steven Nelson from the New York Post. I'd like you to address speculation that you're leaving Ankara not in the new Air Force One because of security concerns involving Iran. You've spoken today twice about them possibly assassinating you and possibly being successful. Did that concern have something to do with——

The President. Well, I speak about it a lot because, you know, the life of a President is very dangerous. It's 5.2 percent. You know what a race car driver is? One-tenth of 1 percent. A bull

rider—that looks pretty dangerous to me—it's one-tenth of 1 percent. No, it's 5.2 percent is you don't make it.

You should have told me—you're an excellent reporter. You should have told me that years ago. Maybe I wouldn't have run. It's a very dangerous profession.

No, I'm number one on the kill list for Iran. They're lovely people. I'm number one.

So I don't know. I can't tell you that. But I don't really care, because I'm doing my job, and I'm doing it, I hope, better than anybody's ever done it, because we have a country that's hot and really, really successful.

But I mention it only because it's on the list, I mean, that came out. There was another list that came out yesterday, and I'm—number one on—I like being number one on TikTok better, but I'm number one on the list for—killing.

Go ahead. Go ahead.

Newly Refurbished Presidential Aircraft

Q. Hey. Shawn McCreesh, New York Times. But why aren't you flying the new plane home?

The President. Say what?

Q. Why aren't you flying on the new Air Force One home?

The President. It's flying to Europe, to one of the big bases, two or three of the big bases, where we can show it to the people, and we'll be going home by normal methods. But we have it going to Europe to a couple of bases—actually, one in particular, but it's going to go to a couple of bases, stop so the soldiers can see it, because it's truly magnificent.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Yes, please. Go ahead. You want to go? Okay. Go ahead.

U.S. Military Operations in Iran

Q. Mr. President, Harici Media, Tunç Akkoç, Türkiye. Mr. President, it seems that the war with Iran may start again. What do you expect from your European allies—

The President. No, I—no, I don't think it's going to start again. I think it's going to go very quickly. They hit a couple of ships, and so we hit them much harder. When they hit, we hit 10 times harder. You know, we hit much harder than they do. We have a lot better equipment than they do. We may even—somebody asked before, "Do you think you'll hit them tonight?" I said: "We might. Yes, we might."

But when they hit, we hit. You know, it's what they—we use their language. We speak their language. No, I don't think so. I think that anything that happens is going to be over very quickly. And we'll only—

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

—and we'll only make it safer, including for oil. Oil is going to be very free, very easy, and it's going to happen very fast.

We have the Hormuz Strait. The boats have pulled out. I mean, there's a gusher of oil right now. We have a lot of oil.

And no, anything that happens is going to happen very fast. We're not—

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

We're not looking—we're not looking for long term.

Okay. Go ahead. Red.

Spain/United Kingdom

Q. Mr. President, you said today—Ines de La Cuetara with MS NOW. You said today that countries——

The President. You're with who?

Q. MS NOW. You——

The President. MS NOW. What a—that's a failing network. Why would you want to work for them? [*Laughter*] MS NOW.

Q. You——

The President. Can you imagine? They wanted to get away. They took the name "NBC" because they were embarrassed by it. Go ahead. Let's go. Wait till——

Q. You said today that——

The President. Wait till you hear this question.

Q. You said today that countries like Spain, Italy, and the U.K. were not there for the U.S. in its war with Iran. Should those countries be attacked, will the U.S. be there for them?

The President. Well, I'll tell you what. Number one, Spain has been very bad, but, you know, the—Italy has been good. And almost all of the countries have been good. They just had a bad moment.

They didn't help us. We didn't need the help, but if we would have wanted the help—I said, "By the way, if I want help"—"Sir, we'd rather remain on the sidelines." And I didn't like that answer.

U.K. gave an answer that was sort of weirder than that. We—they went out—I said, "Would you like to help?" They said, "We do, but we want to wait until the war is over." This was not in the spirit of Winston Churchill.

So yes, I mean—I'll tell you what, I can only say if—there's one word that comes out of today, it's "unification." I've never seen anything like it. Every one of those countries, they love us, they love each other. That was tremendous unification. It was a nice thing to say. And it was a very fair question too.

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

Yes. Green. Green. Yes. You're wearing green, right? [*Laughter*]

Turkey-U.S. Relations/U.S. Military Sales/China

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Eda Tuğrul from Haber Global TV, Türkiye. Mr. President, after your meeting with President Erdoğan, can you tell us whether you and President Erdoğan reach an understanding on Turkey's return to the F-35 program and the future of U.S.-Turkey defense cooperation?

And do you believe U.S.-Turkey relations are entering a new chapter right now?

The President. Well, I had a great relationship in my first term. You remember Pastor Brunson. And he was put in jail for 35 years, and I called—he was an evangelical hero, actually. Very good man. And I called President Erdoğan, and he let him out.

I didn't pay anything, like Obama and Biden paid billions of dollars all the time. I didn't—I never paid any for anybody. I just tell them: "Let him out. Let him out!" But in this case, I didn't say it the second way, I said it the first way.

I said: "Look, he's been—he's a good man. He's highly respected, and the evangelical—and I'd like you to let him out." And he was in my office, in the Oval Office, the following day, Pastor Brunson.

I had a great relationship.

When Sleepy Joe Biden got in, bad things happened with a lot of things, between the border—everything was bad. We were laughed at all over the world, and we had a very bad relationship with a lot of countries. I think Turkey was one of those countries.

But that changed on November 5, when we had the election. And we've—I've—it—he's—it's one of our best relationships. We have a great relationship.

And they're talking about the F-35 airplane, and it's the best plane, and everybody wants it. And we have to make a decision who we give it to.

I mean, my inclination—because he—again, he stayed out of—he's not a huge fan of Bibi, and he's not a huge fan of Israel, but he stayed out of that war. He could have gone into that war very easily, and he didn't. At my request, he stayed out of that war. And he's been a very good ally. I mean, Marco could tell you. We have a very strong relationship with Turkey. You know, it's a very big country. It's a very powerful—militarily, it's a very—it's the second most powerful country in NATO. It's a NATO country.

So whether or not we do that—I haven't totally made up my mind, but my inclination is to say, "Look, he's done everything we were—he's helped us in so many different ways."

And you know who else has been good to us? China. China never came into the war. They get 50 percent of their oil from Hormuz Strait. They never came into the war. They never said, "I'm going to send a ship and five destroyers along each side of the ship." They never did. No, he was—he's been—President Xi has been great.

Everyone's been sort of great, to be honest. You know why? Because they respect our country again. They laughed at our country. They thought we were a bunch of fools. They saw a president that couldn't talk, he couldn't walk. He was a disaster. They lost respect for our country.

But now they have more respect for our country than they've ever had before.

Thank you all very much. We'll see you back. Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:05 p.m. at the Beştepe Presidential Compound. In his remarks, he referred to President Karol Nawrocki of Poland; U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East Steven C. Witkoff; Secretary of State Marco A. Rubio; Secretary of the Treasury Scott K.H. Bessent; former President Nicolas Maduro Moros of Venezuela, who was captured, along with his wife Cilia Flores, in a U.S. military operation in Caracas, Venezuela, on January 3 and exfiltrated to the U.S. for criminal processing in New York City; former Vice President Kamala D. Harris; Andrew C. Brunson, pastor, Dirilis (Resurrection) Church in Izmir, Turkey, who was detained by Turkish authorities on October 7, 2016, and returned to the U.S. custody on October 12, 2018; and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel. He also referred to his son-in-law, U.S. Special Envoy for Peace Jared C. Kushner.

Categories: Interviews With the News Media : News conferences, July 8.

Locations: Ankara, Turkey.

Names: Bessent, Scott K.H.; Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Brunson, Andrew C.; Erdoğan, Recep Tayyip; Harris, Kamala D.; Kushner, Jared C.; Nawrocki, Karol; Netanyahu, Benjamin; Obama, Barack; Rubio, Marco A.; Rutte, Mark; Shara', Ahmad Husayn al-; Vance, James D. "J.D."; Witkoff, Steven C.; Xi Jinping; Zelenskyy, Volodymyr.

Subjects: 2024 Presidential election; Anduril Industries, Inc.; Artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies; Automobile industry, strengthening efforts; Automobiles and automobile parts, tariffs on imports into U.S.; Boeing Co.; Border security; China, President; China, trade with U.S.; Defense contractors, delivery improvement efforts; Defense industrial base, supply chain improvements; Electricity capacity, expansion efforts; Eli Lilly and Co.; Europe, defense spending levels; Foreign nations, investment and business ventures in U.S.; Household income and wages; Illegal immigration; Iran, nuclear weapons development; Iran, U.S. airstrikes on nuclear facilities; Iran, U.S. military operations; Israel, Prime Minister; Job creation and growth; Lockheed Martin Corp.; Manufacturing industry, domestic investment; Merck & Co., Inc.; News media, Presidential interviews; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Northrup Grumman Corp.; Oil markets and prices; Poland, defense relationship with U.S.; Poland, President; Raytheon; Rheinmetall AG; Secretary of State; Secretary of the Treasury; Steel and aluminum, domestic production; Syria, President; Tariffs; Tax Code reform; TikTok; Toyota Motor Corp.; Turkey, President; Turkey, President Trump's visit; Turkey, relations with U.S.; U.S. Armed Forces, funding and equipment, improvement efforts; U.S. Border Patrol; U.S. Special Envoy for Peace; U.S. Special Envoy for Peace Missions; Ukraine, President; Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), improvement efforts; Venezuela, U.S. military capture and exfiltration of President Maduro; Vice President.

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