



## Exclusive Interview with Trump | Kash's Corner



[Kash's Corner](#)

[Kash Patel and Jan Jekielek](#)

In this week's episode of Kash's Corner, Kash interviews former President Donald Trump. The interview will air on Monday, Feb. 7, at 8 p.m.

In this exclusive interview, Trump and Kash—who previously served as a top White House aide and Pentagon chief-of-staff—discuss the state of the country, the threat from communist [China](#), the U.S. pullout from [Afghanistan](#), the investigation by Special Counsel John Durham, and much, much more.

Tune in this Monday to watch the full interview.

**Below is a rush transcript of this Kash's Corner episode from Feb 7, 2022. This transcript may not be in its final form and may be updated.**

**Kash Patel**: Mr. President, thanks so much for joining us at Epoch Times and Kash's Corner. We're excited to have you and thank you for being with us today here at wonderful Mar-a-Lago. We're glad to be talking with you.

I want to jump right in, sir. We know what your administration accomplished against China, against the CCP, and how you made Xi Jinping respect you. And we saw how the last year has gone, sir. Mr. President, what does the next three years look like? How do we take on China? What does the next administration, the next president have to do not to just get us back to where we were, but even further along.

**President Donald Trump**: It is the saddest period of time that I've ever seen for our country. We had everything so good. You're a part of it. The borders, the relationships with other countries, they respected us. We made trade deals that were good deals. We broke bad deals and made great deals, like we got rid of NAFTA, (North American Free Trade Agreement) which was a horrible thing. And we have the USMCA (United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement) with Canada and Mexico.

But this is the saddest time for our country, and I think the most embarrassing time for our country. Look, the borders are a disaster with millions of people coming in. Everything's a disaster. There's nothing good, inflation. But the point that was the worst, I think, was that whole the way they withdrew from Afghanistan.

I got it down to 2000 soldiers. We were going to get out with strength and dignity and our equipment, no deaths. The way they withdrew from Afghanistan was like we were the gang that couldn't shoot straight. And to take out the military before you take out—now they're hostages, we'll call them the hostages, the Americans, and some others—but now they've just taken 1000's and 1000's of people out of Afghanistan. They don't even know who they are and where they come from. We are going to pay a big price later, you watch. You are going to pay a big, big price with terrorism and other things. But it is so sad to see it.

**Mr. Patel**: How do we reset China?

**President Trump**: It's got to be reset. China now is going to be on a rampage. I think after the Olympics, bad things will happen with respect to Taiwan. If the election weren't rigged, this stuff would have never happened. It was a rigged election and a disgraceful situation. And what's happening with Russia and Ukraine, what's happening with North Korea, what's happening with Iran, now they are renegotiating from weakness.

We would have had a deal with Iran in one week, after the election, it was going to be done. They were all set to make a deal. They would have made a deal in one week. Instead, this deal they're talking about now is a disaster for our country. It's just you need new leadership. I could give you 20 different things. I could say, "Do this, do that." They're not going to do it.

**Mr. Patel**: They're not going to do it, but I think what America wants to know is what should be done, because no one in a position of power like you, Mr. President, is saying "What should

be done?” It was great, I agree. I was part of your national security apparatus, and we took on Iran. We withdrew from Afghanistan smartly with conditions and put America first. But people are out there, and I talk to them. They want to know, “What do we do? We know it’s gotten so bad.”

**President Trump:** Well, you need leadership, though. It’s easy to say what you can do. You close the border, you go back to stay-in-Mexico, you go back to all of the policies that we had, catch-and-release, we ended it. It’s easy to say that’s what you have to do, but they’re not going to do that. I used to think they were just grossly incompetent. Now, it’s a combination of that and their policy is so bad. So, it’s easy for me to say you have to get strong with China, you have to do tariffs, you have to do a lot of different things. But they’re not going to be doing it.

**Mr. Patel:** If they don’t do it, what do we tell Americans? What do we tell the world? Tell them to wait three years?

**President Trump:** I’ll tell you that we have got a problem, because three years is a long time. Look, they have destroyed our country in one year, and they’re going to get three more years. They rigged an election, they’re going to get another three more years. I can’t tell you what’s going to happen. Because our country has never gone down so much, so fast.

We have never been in this position, what they’re doing to our country, in terms of criminal justice, in terms of trade, and in terms of our military. We have these woke generals that don’t know what the hell they’re doing, where they leave \$85 billion worth of equipment behind and they move the military out before they move the people out.

It’s easy to say. I could give you a list of things. I could give you a list of 10 to 15 items and every one would be perfect, but they’re not going to do them. They’re not closing the border. I used to think that they were just late. The wall could have been done and completed in three weeks. It was almost complete. It took two and a half years to get it started because I had to win 11 lawsuits, mostly from Congress and Democrats. I won all the lawsuits, and it was almost complete.

We had the lowest numbers ever, on our southern border. Now we have the worst numbers and that includes drugs. The drugs are 10 to 15 times more than they were one year ago. Think of that, 10 to 15 times, they say. So, we can give you everything to do, but it’s just a waste of time. Because unless you have the right people, they’re not going to do it.

**Mr. Patel:** So, speaking of the right people, sir, we have a midterm election. And it looks like the Republicans are poised well. Can leadership in the House and the Senate, like when Chairman Nunes and I were running the Russiagate investigation, can we have oversight investigations that help stall or pause the bad policies? And do we have that leadership coming into Congress?

**President Trump:** You have a lousy leader in Mitch McConnell, and he's proven that a lot. But having the Senate is a good thing. And getting the House is going to be like a stopgap. Because it will be able to stop a lot of the things that are being done to destroy our country.

So, getting the House is a very big thing, because you need the House majority, which we should be able to get. I mean, some people are saying by 45 votes. We could get them by a lot, maybe even more than that. And who wouldn't vote for the Republicans right now? And if we get the House, we can stop most of this stuff from happening, at least. That's so big.

But what they are doing in between now and November, that's a lot of time. They are going full speed to get as much as they can. They were never given a mandate, to use mandated as a different term. Because the mandates are bad, right? But they were never given a mandate in this election. Because even if you looked at it where they won, they didn't, they lost by a lot. But if you look at the number, it was so close. So that's not a mandate to destroy our country.

**Mr. Patel:** But Americans are seeing that it's going the wrong way.

**President Trump:** It's going the wrong way. If somebody won an election by 40 points, maybe could do whatever you want. But this was a thing that they just snuck over the line. And it's all coming out. Look, they lost the election. And now they're destroying the country. So, think of it. They're destroying our country; they're making us a different country. We're becoming like a socialist or a communist state.

We no longer have a press. The press is absolutely the enemy of the people. We don't have a press. If you do a story that is very important from your view, you can't get the story out. It's very hard to get the word out. That's why what you do is so important, because you will find a way. But we don't have a free press anymore. We don't have a fair press anymore.

Kash, you really have to wonder why they would want to have a weak military? Why would they want to have high interest rates and higher taxes? And why would they want to have no border? I mean, no border? Why would they want to have no voter ID, for example, or sanctuary cities that take care of criminals? All of these things—defund the police? Why do they want to defund our police? They want to take money away; they want to take our police away. Why? It can't possibly be good. So, either they're stupid, which I don't think they are, or they hate our country. Why do they want to do this stuff? Why does somebody want to defund the police? And you see the crime rates in these Democrat cities, it has gone through the roof, like it's never been before.

**Mr. Patel:** You're right, sir. Most of America, the overwhelming majority of Americans agree with you and your policies from the past administration. What I think Americans are missing right now is the solution. I know three years is a long time away. If you were back in, what is the first thing you would say to Xi Jinping?

**President Trump:** Back in? If I were back in, the wall. First of all, the wall—and finish it, even for him. You know why? Because when he sees millions of people pouring into our country, he

loses respect for our country. This is before the Afghanistan disaster. When he and Putin and Kim Jong-un and Iran leaders, when they're watching millions of people from 129 different countries walk into our country, just walk in, they lose respect.

It's so easy. You close it up, you have to close it up. That would send a big signal, a really big signal. And then you've got to get their respect again.

**Mr. Patel:** How do you do that?

**President Trump:** You do that by making sure that they know that this country is here, and it's here to stay, and we're not going to take any nonsense. Number one, our military budget, they cut the hell out of it. So, China's building a military like nobody's ever seen before, and we're cutting our budget. You can't let that happen. We have better everything than they do, if we are allowed to use it. And you have to gain their respect. Right now, Putin no longer respects our country. That's why they're doing what they're doing.

**Mr. Patel:** He's doing the same in Ukraine, over in Russia.

**President Trump:** These things would never have happened had I been President...

**Mr. Patel:** Would you call Putin today and say, "This just can't happen."

**President Trump:** If I were president, I'd call him. I wouldn't call him if I'm not President, because it wouldn't be appropriate. Look, I'm the one that set up their pipeline. Then they say, "Oh, Trump was easy." That's the biggest thing that's ever happened to them. I got along well with Putin. I had a very good relationship with him. But he understood and I understood, and we had an understanding. He would have never done Ukraine. And Xi would have never been doing what he's doing. Look, he's looking to do Taiwan. That would have never happened under my administration.

**Mr. Patel:** You set the posture. When I was a chief of staff for you at DOD, you set a very tough posture on the South China Sea and with Taiwan. And you're right, he didn't think for a second to come in and do anything.

**President Trump:** Never even thought about it.

**Mr. Patel:** Now he's taking shots at American dummy ships in the South China Sea. You're absolutely right. With Putin, during the Obama administration, he did the Crimea invasion. In the Biden administration, he's thinking about coming into either Kazakhstan or the Ukraine.

**President Trump:** You were there. I wiped out 100 per cent of the ISIS caliphate. Everyone said it couldn't be done in less than two or three years. I did it in one month.

**Mr. Patel:** I got to tell a story. I don't mean to interrupt the president here, but I was running counterterrorism for you. And you said "Kash, I have some very simple policies I would like to

get done. I want to kill al Qaeda senior leadership, I want to wipe out the Amir's of ISIS, and I want to make sure we shut down Iran."

Mr. President, I had an organizational chart for ISIS and al Qaeda on the back of my office door when I was head of counterterrorism for you. And we x'ed out 98 per cent of the people on the chart because you took the fight to them. That was a humbling and impressive experience. Do you think now with what happens in Afghanistan, that they're going to be back on the rise?

**President Trump:** They already are on the rise. Look, they were wiped out. 100 per cent. Remember, I wanted to leave because we were 95 per cent there. I said, "We can leave now. Let these other countries handle it. Let Russia handle it. Let Iran handle it." We're doing their work for them, like with ISIS, in particular. They hate ISIS. I said, "They can handle the rest. And then the press said, "Oh, it wasn't 100 per cent." I said, "Okay, I'll do 100 per cent." And I wiped it out in two weeks—100 per cent Isis-free, Iraq and Syria. Nobody could believe it. And I had great generals.

Here's the good news. We have great generals, not the guys like Milley that you see on television. We have really great generals. I know a lot of them. Look at the job they did for me. When I said, "Go get them," that was the end. And I didn't go through Milley. When I said, "Go get them," we did an incredible job with ISIS. People don't even believe it to this day.

We also had 1000's of soldiers on the border between Syria and Turkey. I said, "Why are we protecting Turkey or Syria? Why are we in the middle of these two armies that had been there for 1000 years more? Why are we doing that?" I took the soldiers out. So, we got down to like 50. I said, "I'm not going to let 50 soldiers be between these armies. I got them. Everyone said, "Oh, what a mistake." Nothing happened.

We had 5000 soldiers there. And I kept taking them out and taking them out. We can't protect our own border, our southern border, and yet we're protecting a border 1000's of miles away between Turkey and Syria. I said, "Bring them home." I took them out. You know what happened? Nothing. But you went back to where they've been for the last 2000 years.

**Mr. Patel:** With your foreign policy, you drew us out of wars, the "forever wars," as we call them. I ran that in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria. And you did that successfully. Do you see us going back the other way in the next year or so with the current leadership structure, and with the politicization of the national security apparatus? How do we stop us from going back into an Afghanistan with the rise of ISIS?

**President Trump:** I know people don't know, but we also fought Russia. We were being hit a little bit by Russia. And I said, "Don't do it again. Don't do it." I said it two times. And then we did something—people don't talk about it. And I'd rather have them not talk about it, but we hit them very hard. And they know it and we know it and and it was a level of respect that we developed. That was very good and even a relationship, but we developed a level of respect. We shouldn't be fighting with Russia. We shouldn't be fighting with these countries. We should get along and that includes China. We would have had a very good relationship with China.

COVID was too much to take, because when that came in, it came in from China, and it came in from the Wuhan labs. Now everyone agrees.

**Mr. Patel:** You and I knew it back then when Ric Grenell and I briefed you.

**President Trump:** Ric was great.

**Mr. Patel:** You shut down travel from China right after the briefing that Ric and I gave you when we were running the intel community. That was the right move.

**President Trump:** But people didn't want it done.

**Mr. Patel:** Now, two years later, the rest of the world still has travel bans in place. What do you say to them about all these travel bans and everything that they're still doing?

**President Trump:** I say this. I say China got away with something that's absolutely terrible, one of the worst things ever to happen to the world, maybe the worst thing, because the whole world has been so affected by the China virus. The world has been affected. But I had a great relationship with China up until that point. At that point, it was too much. How do you have a great relationship when you have millions of people all over the world dying?

And now Biden gets in, and he does such a horrible job with the COVID. It's like they don't know what the hell they're doing. He came in, "I'm going to solve COVID." They had more in his year. We developed therapeutics, vaccines, everything with all of the stuff they have, all of the knowledge that we learned, all of the gear that we bought, with the ventilators and with the outfits, the masks, and the goggles. We stocked up the whole country, we did a great job. I got very little credit for doing it, that was an incredible job. All the cupboards were bare, the states were bare, the United States government, our cupboards were empty, They were all empty and we stocked them up. And Biden comes in and they didn't know what they were doing.

**Mr. Patel:** Now we have tests coming in that are made in China.

**President Trump:** We have tests coming in made in China that don't work. They didn't have any tests for the new variant that came in, they are so unprepared. It's been terrible.

**Mr. Patel:** What do you tell the American public who are now sick and tired of being locked up for two years, who know your administration did all that successful stuff? What do you tell America now going forward? What do we do?

**President Trump:** We have to end the mandates. The mandates are horrible, and they have to be ended. They shouldn't have started. Initially, I closed it to China, but I let the governors make the decision on what they're going to do. Not every state closed, some did some didn't. Some absolutely remained open. You know the ones, and I know the ones. But I said, "You make your own decision." From a state standpoint, it was really the right thing to do.

The Democrats went crazy, and they just closed everything. New York, I don't know if it's ever going to be the same, what they did. It's just so sad what happened in New York. Look at what happened in Los Angeles, what happened in parts of California. But a lot of Republicans did a very, very great job in terms of that. But you know, I didn't close anything. I let the governors make that decision.

**Mr. Patel:** That's a distinction that's lost on a lot of people Mr. President. You respected the states' rights and powers.

**President Trump:** I said to the governors, you do what you have to do. But I did close our country to China and saved hundreds of thousands of lives. And I closed it to Europe too, when I saw what was happening in Italy, France and Spain. And then if you look at virtually every country, I closed them very early, a little bit after China, but we closed it to Europe. And those two closures Europe and China, they saved hundreds of thousands of lives.

**Mr. Patel:** Now we're past that, and you would tell the American people now?

**President Trump:** Get on with your life.

**Mr. Patel:** Move on, right?

**President Trump:** The whole concept of children, with the children going through all of this, masks and getting vaccinated, what they're doing is just absolutely crazy. They say they do it because they're on a power trip. It's hard to believe. What's the power trip? I don't get it. It's just wrong what they're doing.

**Mr. Patel:** I've only got two more things. I know you have to get going, Mr. President, but I definitely want to ask you about two things, and then a personal story if I may. One, we talked about it briefly—Iran. Okay, we have the Ayatollah rising, Iran, the largest state sponsor of terrorism. You took out Soleimani, rightly so. I was there with you, and you did it. An amazing day. Again, it was your march to eliminate, not just defeat, but eliminate terrorism flat out. What do you tell the American people about Iran marching towards a nuclear weapon now? How do we give them confidence to say that we won't let that happen?

**President Trump:** You can't let it happen, and I think Biden is letting it happen. You can't let it happen. You won't be able to talk. This is a religious ideology that is not going to be acceptable. You can't let it happen. If he lets it happen, it is going to be a horrible day for the world. Israel will not exist in my opinion, if they let that happen.

If you look back at Israel, and what I did with the capital of Israel, Jerusalem, and Golan Heights, but the biggest thing I did was ending the Iran nuclear deal. That was the biggest thing. You know, I did Golan Heights. I did the capital of Israel with Jerusalem moving the embassy. Not only did I move it there, I built it. I built the embassy. I built it for \$500,000. I took a building that we already had in Jerusalem, and I built the embassy. We built it, and it's beautiful. Its uses Jerusalem stone.



**Mr. Patel:** Would you tell Israeli-Americans and people in Israel that you think this administration is going to let Iran get a nuclear weapon?

**President Trump:** I think so. It looks like they are going to. Yes. It's not even conceivable. I think it's going to be one of the tragic moments of history.

**Mr. Patel:** How do we prepare for that? How do you give the American people, the so many people that backed you, how do you give them a little faith that in the next year or two with new leadership, we can get it back and make it better?

**President Trump:** There are different kinds of things. We can stop people from doing this horrible thing that's happening. Again, the election should have never been allowed to go through. The Supreme Court didn't have the courage to do what should have been done. A lot of very bad things happened, very bad things.

The House will help, but they won't be able to help very much. I think we're going to have a tremendous victory in the House, and we can win the Senate. But I think we're going to have a tremendous victory in the House. And that will be a blocker. But that doesn't stop Iran from having nuclear weapons. That's done through the administration. Right now, it almost seems like they don't mind if they have nuclear weapons. That seems to be their policy. And the problem they have is they are being decimated on so many fronts.

Look, I had no inflation. I had low gas prices. We were energy-independent. We were not affected by Russia. We were respected by China, respected by Kim Jong-un, North Korea, we were respected by Iran. We were really respected by Iran. I'm telling you—we would have had a deal. We were respected by everybody. Every single thing that I just said, multiply it by times three, it's a disaster now, even supply chain.

I never heard the term supply chain while I was in office. There was no such thing. Everything just worked out well. There was no supply chain issue, there was no problem. I leave office, and within less than a year, the stores are all empty. This past Christmas, it was only good if you didn't buy somebody a Christmas present, you could save the money, because if you went into a store, you couldn't buy anything. And that was the only time, Kash—I've never seen anything like it.

I don't want to take credit for supply chain. This was just happening routinely, and it had been for many, many years. These guys have destroyed our supply chain. I was in California where the boats come in with big cargo containers.

**Mr. Patel:** Yes, Long Beach.

**President Trump:** I have never seen anything like it. I've been passing it for 20 years; I have property out there. I've been passing it for 20 years, and I've seen it for 20 years. A container would come in, it would be on a truck, then it will be gone. They're stacked up like I've never seen before. There are thousands and thousands of containers. I said they'll never get rid of

these things. They will never get rid of them. This goes on for miles. By the way, that's a big port, and this is going on for miles. And I said, look at that. I just got to see it for the first time in a few years. And I said I've never seen anything like it. So, supply chain is a big problem.

**Mr. Patel:** You would take that on?

**President Trump:** Look, everything's fixable, but you need the right people to fix it. We don't have the people. I'd like to be optimistic, say, "Here's what you do." I can say what to do. And I've said a lot during this interview, I can say what to do, but they're not going to do it.

They're not going to freeze the border. They're not going to throw out murderers and drug dealers and terrorists that have poured into our country. We have terrorists coming in from Afghanistan and being flown in on planes. 3 per cent of the people that they've taken in are vetted and checked. Look, when you have a war, and that war ends—and I'm the one that really ended it—all I wanted to do is take it out very efficiently. But when that war ends, no country has ever taken in all the people. So, the war ends and now we take in tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands [without vetting them.] They have no idea who those people are. A big price will be paid.

**Mr. Patel:** I want to get one more personal story and then one last thing I think you and I always enjoy talking about, sir, when you and I get together. I was fortunate to head up a lot of your hostage rescue operations. What the world doesn't remember is that you, sir, brought home more Americans and citizens from around the world and all the previous presidents combined.

**President Trump:** 48 hostages.

**Mr. Patel:** Actually, I have to correct you, it's 54.

**President Trump:** Okay, I'll take that. I like that, good. 54 hostages and zero dollars. We never paid.

**Mr. Patel:** We never paid and it was such a priority for you, and then there was the taxing work that goes into getting just one. But I remember this moment, sir. We were in the Situation Room. I was heading up counterterrorism for you. It was the night of the Baghdadi strike. You ordered the raid. The absolute right call, even though some people were advising you not to do it, the absolute right call—take out Baghdadi—he's dead.

You, on a Saturday evening at the White House, looked at me and said, "Kash, I want the contact information of the Muellers, the Sotloffs, the Foleys and the (inaudible), and we know who they are. Their children were ravaged by Baghdadi, raped, tortured and killed. After killing the world's number one terrorist. Mr. President, I have to ask, why was it so important to you to call the families that you had avenged?

It was pretty emotional for the rest of us that were there that night when the commander-in-chief said, "I want to focus on these individuals." Then just two months later, you and the First

Lady had Carl and Marsha Mueller as guests, and you honored them at the State of the Union. And you reveal that we named the operation; “8-17,” which is Kayla Mueller’s birthday. Why was that always such a pressing issue?

**President Trump:** I didn’t know until you just told me that so many people were watching. But I felt it was very important. These are people that have been absolutely decimated, their families destroyed by Al Baghdadi and what he did. And what he did personally was on a personal basis. One of the first things I said is, “You have to get Al Baghdadi.” This was when I first got elected and first came in, and not easy.

They had been looking for him—for 16 years they had been looking for him. I said, “You got to get him.” I always say, “The guy with a fan behind him.” Remember, he always had that same picture of him with the little fan behind him as he was preaching? But we took out al Baghdadi. Yes, the first thing I did, I called the parents and the relatives and friends of the people that were just absolutely decimated.

**Mr. Patel:** Why was that so important to you?

**President Trump:** Because nobody suffered like they did at the hands of this animal. He was an animal. And he was rebuilding ISIS. He was building it and he was rebuilding, and he was going to rebuild it fast. If I weren’t president, you’d have ISIS all over the world right now. We knocked it out.

**Mr. Patel:** We wouldn’t have gotten our hostages back.

**President Trump:** You would have never gotten them back. No, we got them back. And we didn’t pay for it. If you start paying, if you say, “I’ll give you 5 million,” if you start paying, it’s no good, because then you’ll have plenty of negotiations. We got, as you say, 54, 55, 56, I hear different numbers, but whatever it may be, we got them back. And we never paid. If you start paying, everybody all of a sudden becomes a hostage. But when they know you’re not going to pay, it makes life a lot better.

**Mr. Patel:** There are still Americans that are hostages. What would you tell those parents?

**President Trump:** They have them in Afghanistan, you have hostages right now. And it could be in the thousands. Nobody is telling me the numbers. Nobody knows the numbers. People saying two or three hundred. That’s too many. One is too many, but it could be in the thousands. You have people there because we took our military out first. How stupid is that?

**Mr. Patel:** Actually, I’m going to add one on air. You came up with the conditions-based withdrawal for Afghanistan, and I was fortunate enough to be over at DOD and you said, “Kash, we’re not leaving until we get the Americans. We’re not leaving till we wipe out al Qaeda and ISIS. Bagram, we’re going to keep it. We’re going to leave Special Forces in the country. And we’re going to bring every American home.”

Fast forward, in juxtaposition to what they're doing now. They just left. People are falling out of the sky to their death. By the way, they were texting American citizens in Afghanistan saying, "Please come to Kabul, if you can, and we'll get you out." What kind of foreign policy is that?

**President Trump:** We gave the Taliban a list of all the people that we knew there were, Americans, as we were leaving. It was crazy. So now they know it, and they probably have them, and some are captured. There's no question about it. And some are living a very bad life. But we gave all of this to them.

The way they did that, number one, is not excusable. And the way they did it is just not even believable, that somebody could be so stupid, that they could be so weak and so stupid. We look like we surrendered.

Not one soldier was killed in 18 months. I spoke to Abdul, who was the leader of the Taliban, and still is. I had a very strong conversation with him, and we didn't lose one soldier in 18 months. And then we flee? There was not even any reason to go quickly. I would have said, "Take the people out, take the equipment out, and when everything's gone, get some of the people from Afghanistan that helped us, the interpreters, not tens of thousands, not hundreds of thousands. It's a small group, but get them.

People are fleeing Afghanistan. Hundreds of thousands of people are coming out. They're coming into our country. We have no idea who they are. It's a very sad day.

**Mr. Patel:** Do you think in the next three years we have to go back into Afghanistan? We as a convention military?

**President Trump:** I hope not. But I would have kept Bagram. It was always my plan to keep Bagram, not because of Afghanistan. They spent billions of dollars building it 20 years ago. It has the longest most powerful runway, it can handle anything. And it's right next to China. It's one hour away from where they build their nuclear weapons.

**Mr. Patel:** The world doesn't know that part. I don't think people know that.

**President Trump:** I don't know if they know it or not. How can you lose Bagram? It's one hour away from where China does its nuclear weapons. Now, to add insult to injury, they have a parade displaying all of the equipment that they got from us.

Think of it, 70,000 trucks, and these are armor plated, many of them, the most expensive, not like you can find them down at your local dealer. 700,000 machine guns, rifles, weapons. Helicopters, tanks, night goggles, out of the box, brand new, better than what we have, the new model, the newest model.

And here's the other part, China is now taking over Bagram. China is going to have Bagram. They also have a lot of our weapons, because they're re-engineering and going to build them for themselves. We made the greatest Apache helicopters. And they're now studying our helicopters, because they want to build them just like that.

This is one of the greatest catastrophes, and not only in terms of actual, but also in terms of psychological. I think it's the most embarrassing day or week in the history of our country. And the fake news media hardly wants to talk about it.

**Mr. Patel:** How do we get it back? Who does that? What does the next leader have to do?

**President Trump:** You need a leader. You need a leader. If you have the leader, it will all work out. But we don't have that right now.

**Mr. Patel:** Are we going to have that later?

**President Trump:** Right now you have nothing close to it. I hope we do. You're going to find out. I'm going find out. I will say this. We had the country better than it's ever been, the economy, everything. It was the best economy we ever had.

And then COVID came in from China. I call it the China virus, because it's a much more accurate term. But the China virus floated in, and then we rebuilt it again. And we handed over something that was incredible. And they blew it.

And he ran on the basis that I will stop COVID. He didn't stop anything. It was a disaster. And they weren't prepared. They didn't order the kits. They didn't order the tests. They didn't order the therapeutics that you need. The therapeutics are so important. We developed great therapeutics. They didn't know that. They were totally unprepared.

**Mr. Patel:** What I see is the difference, Mr. President, across the board, from a national security defense law enforcement position is you just did the mission. You ordered your priorities to be executed. Compared it to today, they politicize it. They want to know what the media is going to like. They want to take their cues from the media. That's just what I've been saying recently on TV—just because President Trump placed the priority against Russia, against China, against Iran, bringing hostages home, killing terrorists, they want to do the opposite. That's just a tragic day for America. What do you think?

**President Trump:** Actually, they're good at two things, politics and rigging elections. That's it. If they used the same genius on running our country, we'd have a country like no other. When I say Make America Great Again, I mean that, because we have to make America great again. They never talk about greatness. All they talk about is the same old stuff. You watch the news, it's COVID. It's global warming. They talk about global warming; they don't talk about nuclear warming.

**Mr. Patel:** Yes, the DOD's priority is global warming and climate change.

**President Trump:** Woke, everything's woke. Let's make sure that a guy can participate in women's sports. You see the records that are being broken now? A record that held up for 11 years in swimming was broken by 38 seconds. Weightlifting records are being broken up by numbers like nobody's ever seen. It's a disgrace.

**Mr. Patel:** When you and I get together, Mr. President, we always have to chat about Russiagate. What happened to you when you were running for president and then when you became president, was the biggest criminal enterprise. I don't want us to stew over the past.

But I do think our viewers are really interested in John Durham, and they want to know what you think about John Durham. You and I talked about it with me being a former federal prosecutor, national security guy, I think I know where John Durham is going. How do you think he's done, and where do you think he's going?

**President Trump:** I wish it were faster, because I think it could have been much faster. It would have been nice to have been done before the election because they cheated viciously and crazily, what they did was so criminal. It would have been good if the voters would have known that, but it didn't matter because I won the election by a lot anyway. So, it didn't. Honestly, I don't think that was the big defining moment.

But he did come up with some really interesting stuff with the lawyers and Sussman and all of these people, number one. I hear there's a lot coming. So, I think the jury is out. We're going to see what happens. But what he's doing is one of the most important jobs being done right now in America.

**Mr. Patel:** What do you say to the American people every time you're on TV or every time you do a rally—I'm sure you see this on a much greater level than I ever will—"Where's John Durham? Where's John Durham?" Do you have faith in him? I tell people he's on the right path, it takes time.

**President Trump:** You've said that, and that makes me feel good too. You know a lot about that. But I will say that he came out with that initial statement and report, and it was big. And that's felt like a foundation for very big things to come. So hopefully, who knows? We're going to see. I wish it were faster. We're going to see what happens.

But it was a criminal. I call it the crime of the century. It is really the crime of the century. And it changed everything, including the election, it changed everything. It was so disgusting, what took place. And all of the things they said about me and Russia—it was them and Russia. It was them and Russia, they worked with Russia. And they would lie.

I watched this Adam Schiff. I call him, respectfully, watermelon head, because his head is shaped just like a watermelon. I'd watch him go up to the microphone, and act as so hurt. He's so hurt, talking about Trump and Russia, when he knew it was a rigged deal, when he knew it was a fake. He knew it was fake. He was one of the people that made it up, along with Hillary Clinton and others.

**Mr. Patel:** Maybe they're looking at him.

**President Trump:** And they go out there and that act as though they're so hurt by what took place. These are bad people. So, I hope John Durham, for the good of the country, comes up

with everything that you know took place, and that everybody knows took place, because it has been exposed. It would be really nice to have it fully exposed. So, we'll see what happens. I will give you a really good answer, hopefully, in a year from now.

**Mr. Patel:** I'll take your word for it Mr. President. Look, I know your time is precious. Thank you for joining us on Kash's Corner. Thank you for inviting us into Mar-a-Lago and meeting the team, meeting my parents. It made my day, made my year, and I'm going to come back and see you soon, sir.

**President Trump:** Your parents did a great job with you, have a good time. Thank you very much.