# Former President Trump's Claim to Secure Journalist's Release Sparks Controversy



On May 23, 2024, former President Donald Trump claimed he could secure the release of Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich, detained in Russia since March 2023, if re-elected. Trump posted on his Truth Social platform that Gershkovich would be released "almost immediately after the Election, but definitely before I assume Office," attributing this to his relationship with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

However, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov stated there were no contacts with Trump regarding Gershkovich. Gershkovich has been charged with espionage, accusations denied by Gershkovich, his employer, and the U.S. government.

Trump's comments drew criticism from Biden's campaign, with spokesman T.J. Ducklo asserting Trump uses imprisoned Americans as political leverage, unlike President Biden, who treats them as human beings with families. The Biden administration has actively worked on securing Gershkovich's release, deeming him "wrongfully detained."

The Kremlin stressed that discussions around detainees must be conducted discreetly. U.S.-Russia relations remain tense, with previous proposals for swap deals, like the one involving Paul Whelan, a former Marine, being rejected.