

# [***Donald Trump Accused of 'Editing' Notes for Allies' Speeches During Trial***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6C1M-2KJ1-DY68-1002-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Highlight:** A journalist attending the New York trial said he saw Trump editing the quotes his allies would give to the press about the case.

**Body**

*New York Magazine* journalist Andrew Rice has said that [*Donald Trump*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/donald-trump?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) was "making notations" and "editing" quotes that his allies would make to the press even as his former fixer [*Michael Cohen*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/michael-cohen?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) took the stand at the Manhattan Criminal Court in the hush money trial.

"In court yesterday, actually, I was sitting close enough that I could look over Trump's shoulder and see what he was reading," Rice said on [*MSNBC*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/msnbc?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) Live on Tuesday night. "At one point he was actually reading the quotes that these individuals were [going to say to the press]... and going through and making notations with a pen on the paper."

According to Rice, this was happening "while testimony was going on." He said: "While Michael Cohen was testifying against him, he was actually going through and annotating and editing the quotes that these people were going to say."

Under a gag order imposed by Judge Juan Merchan and upheld by a New York appeals court on Tuesday, Trump is currently unable to publicly take aim at the judge or the witnesses testifying against him. This hasn't stopped his closest allies from "doing the dirty work for him," [*a political scientist previously told Newsweek.*](https://www.newsweek.com/judge-merchan-powerless-stop-republicans-doing-trump-dirty-work-1900300?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)

"Whether it's carrying out shady business deals or trying to contaminate a jury pool, Trump always relies on his surrogates to do the dirty work for him," Thomas Gift, founding director of the Center on U.S. ***Politics*** at University College London, U.K., said.

"The remarkable thing is just how many GOP underlings he has lined up eager and willing to do his bidding. For some [*Republican*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/republican?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) politicians, there seems to be no limit in how far they're willing to go in defending the leader of their party who's consistently scorned the very idea of the rule of law," he said.

Beside Rice's personal testimony, there's no proof that Trump is giving directions to his allies on what to tell the press about the trial. *Newsweek* contacted Rice and Trump's 2024 campaign for comment by email early on Wednesday.

Ohio Senator J. D. Vance, who was among Trump's allies attending the New York court this week to show support to the former president, told [*Fox News*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/fox-news?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) on Tuesday that the prosecution doesn't have "much of a case" as their star witness, Cohen, is a "serial liar."

He called the trial "a sham," repeating Trump's allegations that the case is part of a political "witch hunt" to sway the 2024 presidential election. The former president is currently facing 91 felony counts across four states. He has pleaded not guilty to all charges and denied any wrongdoing.

Vivek Ramaswamy, who endorsed Trump after dropping out of the Republican primary race, [*told*](https://twitter.com/VivekGRamaswamy/status/1790441474653368453) reporters on Tuesday that the New York trial was a "weaponization of justice."

Both Vance and Ramaswamy complained that the gag order imposed by the New York court on Trump was a violation of the former president's freedom to talk about the trial, parroting complaints that Trump has repeatedly expressed.

The gag order was put in place by Merchan to ensure that the former president does not intimidate or threaten witnesses taking the stand. On Tuesday, a New York appeals court denied Trump's attempt to end the gag order, siding with Merchan.

Trump is allowed to talk about the trial and respond to testimony should he decide to take the stand, though he has the right not to testify in his own trial.

[*Link to Image*](https://d.newsweek.com/en/full/2393158/donald-trump.jpg)

**Graphic**

Donald Trump

Craig Ruttle - Pool/Getty Images

Former President Donald Trump, standing with defense attorney Todd Blanche, speaks to the media at the end of the day's proceedings in his trial for allegedly covering up hush money payments linked to an extramarital affair with Stormy Daniels, at Manhattan Criminal Court on May 14, 2024 in New York City.

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