

IMPEACHMENT OF PRESIDENT
DONALD JOHN TRUMP

THE EVIDENTIARY RECORD
PURSUANT TO H. RES. 798

VOLUME X, PART 7

Transcript of December 11-13, 2019 Committee on the
Judiciary Markup of: H. Res. 755, Articles of Impeach-
ment Against President Donald J. Trump, Volumes
I-XI



Printed at the direction of Cheryl L. Johnson, Clerk of the House of
Representatives, pursuant to H. Res. 798, 116th Cong., 2nd Sess. (2020)

JANUARY 23, 2020.—Ordered to be printed

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MARKUP OF: H. RES. 755,
ARTICLES OF IMPEACHMENT AGAINST
PRESIDENT DONALD J. TRUMP
VOLUME VII

HEARING
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION

DECEMBER 11–13, 2019

Serial No. 116–69

Printed for the use of the Committee on the Judiciary



Available <http://judiciary.house.gov> or www.govinfo.gov

U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE
WASHINGTON : 2020

39–407



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NEWSROOM

Pelosi Remarks Announcing Impeachment Inquiry

SEPTEMBER 24, 2019 PRESS RELEASE

Washington, D.C. – Speaker Nancy Pelosi delivered remarks announcing the House of Representatives is moving forward with an official impeachment inquiry. Below are the Speaker's remarks as delivered:

Speaker Pelosi. Good afternoon. Last Tuesday, we observed the anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution on September 17.

Sadly, on that day, the Intelligence Community Inspector General formally notified the Congress that the Administration was forbidding him from turning over a whistleblower complaint. On Constitution Day. This is a violation of law.

Shortly thereafter, press reports began to break of a phone call by the President of the United States calling upon a foreign power to intervene in his election. This is a breach of his constitutional responsibilities.

The facts are these: the Intelligence Community Inspector General, who was appointed by President Trump, determined that the complaint is both of 'urgent concern and credible,' and its disclosure, he went on to say, that it 'relates to one of the most significant and important of the Director of National Intelligence's responsibilities to the American people.'

On Thursday, the Inspector General testified before the House Intelligence Committee, stating that the Acting Director of National Intelligence blocked him from disclosing the whistleblower complaint. This is a violation of the law.

The law is unequivocal. The DNI, it says, the Director of National Intelligence 'shall' provide Congress the full whistleblower complaint.

For more than 25 years, I have served on the Intelligence Committee – as a Member, as the Ranking Member, as part of the Gang of 4 even before I was in the Leadership.

I was there when we created the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. That did not exist before 2004.

I was there ever earlier in 90's when we wrote the whistleblower laws and continue to write them, to improve them to ensure the security of our intelligence and the safety of our whistleblowers.

I know what their purpose was, and we proceeded with balance and caution as we wrote the laws. I can say with authority, that the Trump Administration's actions undermine both: our national security and our intelligence and our protections of whistleblowers – more than both.

This Thursday, the Acting DNI will appear before the House Intelligence Committee.

At that time, he must turn over the whistleblower's full complaint to the Committee. He will have to choose whether to break the law or honor his responsibility to the Constitution.

12/20/2019

Pelosi Remarks Announcing Impeachment Inquiry | Speaker Nancy Pelosi

On the final day of the Constitutional Convention in 1787, when our Constitution was adopted, Americans gathered on the steps of Independence Hall to await the news of the government our Founders had crafted.

They asked Benjamin Franklin, 'What do we have: a republic or a monarchy?' Franklin replied: 'A republic, if you can keep it.'

Our responsibility is to keep it.

Our republic endures because of the wisdom of our Constitution, enshrined in three co-equal branches of government, serving as checks and balances on each other.

The actions taken to date by the President have seriously violated the Constitution – especially when the President says, 'Article II says, I can do whatever I want.'

For the past several months, we have been investigating in our Committees and litigating in the courts, so the House can gather 'all the relevant facts and consider whether to exercise its full Article I powers, including a constitutional power of the utmost gravity – approval of articles of impeachment.'

And this week, the President has admitted to asking the President of Ukraine to take actions which would benefit him politically. The action of – the actions of the Trump Presidency revealed the dishonorable fact of the President's betrayal of his oath of office, betrayal of our national security, and betrayal of the integrity of our elections.

Therefore, today, I am announcing the House of Representatives is moving forward with an official impeachment inquiry. I am directing our six Committees to proceed with their investigations under that umbrella of impeachment inquiry.

The President must be held accountable. No one is above the law.

Getting back to our Founders – in the darkest days of the American Revolution, Thomas Paine wrote: 'The times have found us.' The times found them to fight for and establish our democracy. The times have found us today, not to place ourselves in the same category of greatness as our Founders, but to place us in the urgency of protecting and defending our Constitution from all enemies, foreign and domestic. In the words of Ben Franklin, to keep our Republic.

I thank our Chairmen – Chairman Nadler, Chairman Schiff. Chairman Nadler of Judiciary. Chairman Schiff of Intelligence. Chairman Engel of Foreign Affairs. Chairman Cummings of Oversight and Chairman Cummings I have been in touch with constantly. He is a master of so much but including, Inspectors General and whistleblowers. Congressman Richie Neal of the Ways and Means Committee. Congresswomen Maxine Waters of the Financial Services Committee.

And I commend all of our Members, our colleagues for their thoughtful, thoughtful approach to all of this – for their careful statements.

God bless them and God Bless America. Thank you all.



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**PRESS BRIEFINGS**

Press Briefing by Press Secretary Sarah Sanders and National Security Officials

Issued on: August 2, 2018



James S. Brady Press Briefing Room

1:15 P.M. EDT

SANDERS: Good afternoon. Since the beginning of his administration, President Trump has implemented a whole-of-government approach to safeguard our nation's elections. The President has made it clear that his administration will not tolerate foreign interference in our elections from any nation-state or other dangerous actor.

Last year, the President signed an executive order to strengthen and review the cybersecurity of our nation and its critical infrastructure. Last week, the President chaired a meeting of his National Security Council to address ongoing threats. He asked the officials standing next to me to brief the American people on the work being done to protect the integrity of our elections.

Efforts are underway to provide cybersecurity assistance to state and local authorities, and actions to investigate, prosecute, and hold accountable those who illegally attempt to interfere in our political and electoral process.

To address these matters further, I want to welcome Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats, FBI Director Christopher Wray, Secretary of Homeland Security Kirstjen Nielsen, Director of the National Security Agency General Paul Nakasone, and National Security Advisor Ambassador John Bolton to make some comments and take questions on this topic.

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As you all know, we've addressed what occurred during the 2016 election numerous times and rather extensively. The purpose of today's briefing is about what we are doing now and in the future to protect the integrity of our elections moving forward, and we ask that you stay on that topic.

In order to help this run smoothly, we'd also ask that you direct your questions to a specific person. And with that, I'll turn it over to Ambassador Bolton to open up and make some comments.

AMBASSADOR BOLTON: Well, thank you very much, Sarah. What we'd like to address today is election security in the 2018 election and in the future. The President has made it very clear, I think, what his priority is. We've had obviously a number of inquiries from Congress on this, including a letter to me, the past couple days from five senators, signed by Senator Schumer and four others.

I have responded to that letter today. We've made copies available to you. And it forms a kind of framework for the briefing that the four heads of operating department and agencies are going to give you here today. They are the ones who are implementing and operationalizing the policy that we have developed. There are other agencies involved, but these are the four primary ones.

And I think it's important that we address the question of the President's involvement in this, his leadership, his determination to prevent Russian and other foreign influence in elections. We meet on this constantly, the senior staff here at the White House. We meet with the heads of the different agencies involved and we discuss it quite regularly.

In my tenure as National Security Advisor — less than two months — we've already had two full National Security Council meetings chaired by the President and, as I say, countless other discussions as well.

Since January 2017, the President has taken decisive action to defend our election systems from meddling and interference. This includes measures to heighten the security and resilience of election systems and processes to confront Russian and other foreign malign influence in the United States, to confront such aggression through international action, and to reinforce a strong sanctions regime.

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Press Briefing by Press Secretary Sarah Sanders and National Security Officials | The White House

Now, as you know, elections are administered by state and local governments, so the federal role is to assist them. We'll be addressing that through the comments of the heads of the operating agencies.

I might also say, by way of introduction, that many federal government actions to protect elections in the United States, such as those implemented by the intelligence community or law enforcement agencies, are necessarily sensitive and highly classified. We do not wish to make the efforts of our adversaries any easier through injudicious public disclosures. Nonetheless, we have offered to do before, and continue to offer, briefings to members of Congress in secure facilities.

So what I'd like to do here, as Sarah said, is turn the briefing over to the people whose agencies have this responsibility. We'll start off with Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats. He'll be followed by the Secretary of Homeland Security, Kirstjen Nielsen. She'll be followed by the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Christopher Wray, and then finally, the Director of the National Security Agency, General Paul Nakasone.

So, Dan.

DIRECTOR COATS: Well, as Director of National Intelligence, I would like the American people to know that the intelligence community and all of its agencies are postured to identify threats of all kinds against the United States. The President has specifically directed us to make the matter of election meddling and securing our election process a top priority. And we have done that, and are doing that, and will continue to do so.

We have incorporated the lessons learned from the 2016 election, and implemented a broad spectrum of actions to share more information across the federal government, as well as with state and local governments, and also with the public and the private sector. The intelligence community continues to be concerned about the threats of upcoming U.S. elections, both the midterms and the presidential elections of 2020.

In regards to Russian involvement in the midterm elections, we continue to see a pervasive messaging campaign by Russia to try to weaken and divide the United States. These efforts are not exclusive to this election or future elections, but certainly cover issues relevant to the election.

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We also know the Russians tried to hack into and steal information from candidates and government officials alike. We are aware that Russia is not the only country that has an interest in trying to influence our domestic political environment. We know there are others who have the capability and may be considering influence activities. As such, we will continue to monitor and warn of any such efforts.

I am committed to making sure that the intelligence community is working together in integrating across organizations and missions, and seeking greater transparency with the public. The ODNI has instituted a broad spectrum of actions covering collection, analysis, reporting, education, and partnerships all designed to provide the best threat assessments to federal, state, and local officials, as well as to the public and private sector when necessary.

For example, my office leads the interagency working group — now meeting weekly, as a push towards November — with the Department of Justice, FBI, Department of Homeland Security, the CIA, and NSA inclusive of regional, cyber, and counterintelligence experts, all focused on ensuring election security and integration of our efforts.

The intelligence community's focus right now is persistent support to the FBI, to the Department of Homeland Security, and other agencies in their election responsibilities. And my office is ensuring these organizations receive timely and proactive intelligence community support.

SECRETARY NIELSEN: Well, good afternoon. Thank you all for joining us. I want to start by briefly mentioning that, on Tuesday, DHS hosted the first national cybersecurity summit. This brought together government, industry leaders, and academia to discuss opportunities to join forces to counter threats to our nation's critical infrastructure.

I want to thank all of those who joined us from academia, government, and the private sector; all who participated; and those who signed up to concrete actions to confront cybersecurity challenges.

Across every critical infrastructure sector, from energy to financial services, to transportation, to communication, and so many others, a single attack can have widespread and cascading consequences. I look forward to working with the nation's leading minds in the digital realm as we stand up the National Risk Management Center.

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But it's not just risk to our prosperity, privacy, and infrastructure we have to worry about, and that's why we're here today. Our democracy itself is in the crosshairs. Free and fair elections are the cornerstone of our democracy, and it has become clear that they are the target of our adversaries, who seek, as the DNI just said, to sow discord and undermine our way of life.

I fully share the intelligence community and the ODNI's assessments of past efforts and those today to interfere with our election and of the current threat. Our adversaries have shown they have the willingness and capability to interfere in our elections.

DHS has and continues to work closely with state and local election officials throughout the country by offering a range of services to help identify weaknesses in their election systems. Whether it's offering no-cost, voluntary technical assistance or sharing best practices for securing online voter registration databases, or providing technical advice on ransomware and destructive malware, our department stands ready to provide tailored support based on each jurisdiction's unique needs. This is yet another example where one size does not fit all.

I am pleased to inform you that, to date, all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and over 900 local governments have partnered with DHS in order to bolster the resilience of the nation's election infrastructure. Various states also have organic capabilities, and are engaging with the private sector and academia to improve the security of elections.

Election infrastructure is not a destination. It requires aggressive and ongoing vigilance. Everyone must play their role to ensure that every vote is counted, and is counted correctly — all of us up here today, members of Congress, state and local election officials, and the public.

As all of us up here today gain new insights into potential adversaries and campaigns, we are committed to providing our partners with the government's best intelligence and information available. The progress we have made is real, and the nation's elections are more resilient today because of the work we are all doing. But we must continue to ensure that our democracy is protected.

Thank you for being here. And I'll turn it over to Director Wray.

DIRECTOR WRAY: Good afternoon, everybody. Last fall, after I — shortly after I became Director, I stood up a new foreign influence taskforce at the FBI, which was designed to identify and

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Press Briefing by Press Secretary Sarah Sanders and National Security Officials | The White House

counteract the full range of malign foreign influence operations targeting our democratic institutions and our values.

The taskforce now brings together, across the waterfront, of FBI expertise who are talking counterintelligence, cyber, criminal, and even counterterrorism designed to root out and respond to foreign influence operations.

For their part, our adversaries' influence operations have encompassed a wide range of activities. So just like we have a multidisciplinary response, that's because the threat is multidisciplinary.

So just a few examples of some of the things we've seen over the past: targeting U.S. officials and other U.S. persons through traditional intelligence tradecraft; criminal efforts to suppress voting and provide illegal campaign financing; cyberattacks against voting infrastructure, along with computer intrusions targeting elected officials and others; and a whole slew of other kinds of influence, like both overtly and covertly manipulating news stories, spreading disinformation, leveraging economic resources, and escalating divisive issues.

But it's important to understand this is not just an election cycle threat. Our adversaries are trying to undermine our country on a persistent and regular basis, whether it's election season or not.

There's a clear distinction between, on the one hand, activities that threaten the security and integrity of our election systems, and, on the other hand, the broader threat of influence operations designed to manipulate and influence our voters and their opinions.

With our partners, we're trying to counteract both threats. We have three pillars to our operational strategy. The first pillar is our investigations and our operations. And for a variety of reasons, which I hope are obvious, including operational sensitivities — I'm not going to be able to describe the full extent of those efforts, but I will tell you that our foreign influence taskforce works with FBI personnel in all 56 FBI field offices. And even as we speak, we've got open investigations with a foreign influence nexus spanning field offices — FBI field offices across the country. So make no mistake, the scope of this foreign influence threat is both broad and deep.

The second pillar — I said there were three pillars — the second is focused on information sharing and intelligence sharing. We're working closely with our partners in the intelligence community

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and in the federal government, as well as with our state and local partners, to establish a common operating picture.

Just last week, as an example, we disseminated a list to our state and local law enforcement partners of various foreign influence indicators for them to be on the lookout for — things like malicious cyber activity, social abnormalities, and foreign propaganda activities. The idea is to marshal additional eyes and ears in the fight.

We're also working with our international partners to exchange intelligence and strategies for combatting the threat. Because this is, after all, a shared threat with our allies.

The third pillar of our approach is based on our strong relationships with the private sector. Technology companies have a frontline responsibility to secure their own networks, products, and platforms. But we're doing our part by providing actionable intelligence to better enable them to address abuse of their platforms by foreign actors.

So this year, we've met with top social media companies and technology companies several times. We've given them classify briefings. We've shared specific threat indicators and account information, and a variety of other pieces of information so that they can better monitor their own platforms.

The reality is, it's going to take all of us working together to hold the field, because this threat is not going away. As I have said consistently: Russia attempted to interfere with the last election, and continues to engage in malign influence operations to this day.

This is a threat we need to take extremely seriously, and to tackle and respond to with fierce determination and focus. And together, with our partners, both those here and some of the other partners we've talked about, I'm confident that we can protect the integrity of our democratic institutions and maintain public confidence in our electoral process.

Thank you.

GENERAL NAKASONE: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for joining us this afternoon. I appreciate the leadership and support from the President, the Secretary of Defense, the Director of National Intelligence.

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I believe our mandate is clear. As part of its mission to defend the nation, the Department of Defense is providing intelligence, information support, and technical expertise to the Department of Homeland Security for use by state and local officials to prevent foreign interference in our elections.

This is a vital mission for us and the nation. It draws on our deep experience and expertise in continuing work on this area. Our support has been ongoing and will continue through the midterm elections. We are also providing intelligence and information leads to the Federal Bureau of Investigation on foreign adversaries who are attempting to sow discord and division within the American public. This information is shared with appropriate entities to alert them to malicious cyber actors.

U.S. Cyber Command and the National Security Agency are tracking a wide range of foreign cyber adversaries, and are prepared to conduct operations against those actors attempting to undermine our nation's midterm elections.

These type of operations are sensitive and require confidentiality for success. I won't discuss the specifics, except to state that our forces are well trained, ready, and very capable. I have complete confidence in the forces under my command. We will work in conjunction with other elements of our government to ensure we bring the full power of our nation to bear on any foreign power that attempts to interfere in our democratic processes. I'll turn it back over to the moderator.

SANDERS: Thank you. As I said at the beginning, if we could stay on topic. And also, if you could, when asking a question, direct it to a specific person. And as always, after we finish this part of the briefing, I'll be back to answer other questions on news of the day.

John, go ahead.

Q Thank you, Sarah. Director Coats, if I could direct a question to you?

DIRECTOR COATS: Sure.

Q Let me take you back, if I could, to Helsinki. The President seemed to indicate that he may believe Vladimir Putin, when he says he doesn't — didn't have any influence in the 2016 election. What is your belief about the Russian government involvement in meddling in 2016? And if, as you

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say, Russia continues to try to influence our electoral process, does that mean that nothing much came of the meeting with Putin? Or is it other-than-government actors who are involved here?

DIRECTOR COATS: Well, in relationship to the 2016 election — of course, none of us were in office at that particular time — but both the President, the Vice President, and I think everyone on this stage has acknowledged the fact that the ICA was a correct assessment of what happened in 2016.

We have subsequently made the determination to make this a top priority, that it doesn't happen again. And we're throwing everything at it. And we will have and will be discussing that here today.

Relative to my discussions with the President on whatever issue it is, those — I do not go public with that. I don't think that's the right — the proper thing to do. So our focus here today is simply to tell the American people: We acknowledge the threat, it is real, it is continuing, and we're doing everything we can to have a legitimate election that the American people can have trust in.

In addition to that, it goes beyond the elections. It goes to Russia's intent to undermine our democratic values, drive a wedge between our allies, and do a number of other nefarious things. And we are looking at that also.

Today we are here to talk about the elections coming up and what we're doing in ensuring the American people we're going to have a legitimate —

Q If I could just clarify, because both you and Director Wray said that Russia continues to try and meddle in our elections —

DIRECTOR COATS: They do.

Q — and influence voters. Are we talking about rogue Russian individuals or are we talking about the Kremlin?

DIRECTOR COATS: I'm thinking you can — both. And even add to that. Russia has used numerous ways in which they want to influence through media — social media, through bots, through actors that they hire through proxies. All of the above and potentially more. I can't go into any deep, deep details on what is classified. But it is pervasive. It is ongoing with the intent to achieve their intent, and that is drive a wedge and undermine our democratic values.

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SANDERS: Toluse.

Q Thank you. I have a question for Director Wray. Thank you. Special Counsel Robert Mueller has indicted more than 20 Russian officials based on work by the FBI for meddling in the 2016 elections.

Now the President has tweeted that that investigation by the Special Counsel is a hoax and should be shut down. I know you've said that you don't believe it is a hoax. But why would the American people believe what you're saying about the FBI when the President says that the investigation by the Special Counsel is a hoax, and when the Press Secretary, yesterday, said that there was a lot of corruption within the FBI? Do you have any response to those statements coming from the White House?

DIRECTOR WRAY: Well, I can assure the American people that the men and women of the FBI, starting from the Director all the way on down, are going to follow our oaths and do our jobs.

SANDERS: Saagar.

Q Thank you, Sarah. I have a question for Director Coats. Director Coats, how would you characterize the current efforts — Russian efforts — to meddle in the 2018 election relative to 2016? Is it more intense? Do you see those efforts focused on a particular party? And, in general, is the pace of those operations in any way relative to 2014, 2012? Or is it more intense?

DIRECTOR COATS: Relative to what we have seen for the midterm elections, it is not the kind of robust campaign that we assessed in the 2016 election. We know that, through decades, Russia has tried to use its propaganda and methods to sow discord in America. However, they stepped up their game big time in 2016. We have not seen that kind of robust effort from them so far.

As I mentioned publicly sometime — just a few weeks ago, we're only one keyboard click away from finding out something that we don't — haven't seen up to this particular point in time. But right now, we have not seen that.

Q To follow up sir, do you see it directed to any particular party? In its current 2018 efforts, is there any particular party that is benefitting from current 2018 Russian efforts?

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DIRECTOR COATS: What we see is the Russians are looking for every opportunity, regardless of party, regardless of whether or not it applies to the election, to continue their pervasive efforts to undermine our fundamental values.

SANDERS: Jeff. Go ahead.

Q Thank you, Sarah. Also for Director Coats. In the run-up to the —

DIRECTOR COATS: I'm trying to get off here. (Laughter.)

Q — and perhaps Ambassador Bolton could weigh in this as well. But in the run-up to the Helsinki Summit, U.S. officials, ambassadors to NATO, ambassadors to Russia said that the President would raise the issue of malign activity with President Putin. But he didn't discuss that, at least, at the press conference.

You're saying, today, that the President has directed you to make the issue of election meddling a priority. How do you explain the disconnect between what you are saying — his advisors — and what the President has said about this issue?

DIRECTOR COATS: I'm not in a position to either understand fully or talk about what happened at Helsinki. I'll turn it over to the National Security Director, here, to address that question.

AMBASSADOR BOLTON: The issue was discussed. And, in fact, President Putin said — I thought at the press conference, but certainly in the expanded bilateral meeting when the two leaders got together with their senior advisors — President Putin said the first issue that President Trump raised was election meddling.

Q I guess the question is, at the press conference, the President didn't highlight any of the malign activities that you have and that his advisors have. And so, should Americans believe that he is listening to your advice, or that he is going his own way when he's having meetings like he did with the President of Russia?

AMBASSADOR BOLTON: I think the President has made it abundantly clear to everybody who has responsibility in this area that he cares deeply about it and that he expects them to do their jobs to their fullest ability and that he supports them fully.

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SANDERS: Blake.

Q Thank you, Sarah. I believe this is either for Director Coats or Director Wray. I'll let either of you choose. Since social media was brought up, there is a recent case with Facebook, how they just shut down some 32 accounts believed, potentially, to be from Russia.

Can you give us an idea, is that a large amount? Is that a — just kind of the tip of the iceberg? And then, generally speaking, with these social media companies — Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram — how much have they progressed, or have they not progressed, and what you would like to see in terms of progression from 2016 and identifying the threat?

DIRECTOR WRAY: So first, I'm not going to discuss any specific ongoing investigation. But what I will tell you is that activity of the sort you're describing is a good reflection of the fact that we have to have a public-private partnership in this particular threat. And that's why, when I talked about our three pillars of the FBI's foreign influence taskforce, we're spending so much of our effort trying to engage with the social media and technology companies, because there is a very important role for them to play in terms of monitoring and, in effect, policing their own platforms.

So what we have to have happen, which has started happening in a way that's much more robust — much more robust than in before the 2016 election — we're sharing with them actionable intelligence in a way that wasn't happening before. We understand better what they need; they're sharing information back with us based on what they find. There are things that they can do on their platforms voluntarily, in terms of terms of use and things like that that the government doesn't have a role in.

But, in turn, we learn things from them and we can use that to have our investigations be more effective. So I do think progress is being made. We got to keep getting better at it. We got to keep staying on the balls of our feet, but I think that's what we're seeing.

SANDERS: Jennifer.

Q Ambassador Bolton, in your letter you talk about ordering the closure of the consulates in San Francisco and Seattle; these are two tech hubs. What happened there that led you to do that?

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AMBASSADOR BOLTON: Well, I'm not going to discuss the background of that decision, which actually occurred before I came to this job, but the purpose of expelling the Russian individuals that were expelled was to send a signal to Russia that their conduct in conducting a chemical weapons attack in Great Britain was unacceptable. And this was a mode of retaliation designed to show that we will not tolerate that kind of activity on the territory of the United States or any of our allies. And we expelled a lot of the people who we think had knowledge of it or had other activities in the United States that we considered unacceptable.

SANDERS: Mike Shear.

Q This, I guess, would be for maybe Secretary Nielsen or Mr. Wray. These meddling campaigns seem to fall into two broad categories: the, sort of, information campaigns, which challenge the information upon which American use to make their determinations, and then the more physical interferences into the machinery of voting; the tabulation of voting, the voter roles, the machinery that the states run.

Can you guys describe what you're seeing specifically in the run-up to this coming election? In both of those areas, do you worry more about one than the other? Do you have — are there specific threats that maybe you can't even talk about but that you can say there have been specific threats in both of those categories? And how should Americans process that where we're going to go to the polls in a few months? Should people be confident that when they pull the lever, they're secure?

DIRECTOR WRAY: Well, I think we've said this fairly consistently, that in the context of 2018, we are not yet seeing the same kind of efforts to specifically target election infrastructure — voter registration databases, in particular.

What we are seeing are the malign influence operations — in effect, information warfare that we talked about. And that didn't really — that's a 24/7, 365 days-a-year phenomenon that doesn't turn, necessarily, on whether or not we're in the middle of an election season or not.

But, as Director Coats said, any moment is just a moment before, you know, the dial can be turned up one, much as we saw in 2016. Again, not in terms of affecting the vote count, but in terms of potential penetration of voter registration databases or something like that. And that, in turn, can be a vehicle for them to try to sow discord or undermine confidence. And we have to make sure we're pushing back on it, which is what we're doing.

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SECRETARY NIELSEN: So just to add, so the way that we're splitting it, we're all partnering together, but your question just shows a little bit of the division of labor. So DHS is focused on the election infrastructure in support of state and locals that have the primary responsibility. And then we support the FBI's efforts in countering foreign influence.

But with respect to the infrastructure piece, we had seen a willingness and a capability on the part of the Russians, and so we are working very closely with state and locals to ensure that we're prepared this time round.

Part of that is encouraging states to have auditability. So to get to that one part of your question, whatever happens, we want to assure Americans the day after that their vote was counted and it was counted correctly.

So regardless of what might happen, we will be prepared, but we also want to make sure we have that audibility.

SANDERS: (Inaudible.)

Q Secretary Nielsen, would a government shutdown on October 1st affect any of these efforts?

SECRETARY NIELSEN: So what we have done, as you know, is — in 2017, DHS designated election infrastructure a critical infrastructure subsector. So we prioritize efforts, so any state that requests a vulnerability assessment, a hunt team, best practices, hygiene scans, et cetera, we will continue to prioritize within our budget.

So, thank you.

SANDERS: We'll take one last question.

Q Sarah, this is for the Director and for the General. Can you unpack a little bit more about what you said there? You said there was — a question for the Director and a question for the General, separately. Can you give us a better sense of who specifically has been targeted? We know at least two senators have said that they've been targeted by hacking or by people impersonating government officials. Is it members of the Senate, members of the House? Is it Democratic and Republican campaigns?

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And then a separate question for the General.

DIRECTOR COATS: We follow a procedure that's been agreed on some time ago, in terms of — when we see this type of information, it is processed through the leadership of the respective house or chamber, Senate chamber, and then disseminated down to the individual member who was targeted. So we have taken that action that is in place, but I'm not in a position right now to release those names.

Q And would you support legislation imposing sanctions on Russia now that you're saying they have, in fact, interfered, or attempted to interfere?

DIRECTOR COATS: Well, we already have some of the — a lot of sanctions in place. And I would support any efforts that we can, collectively put together, to send a signal to Russia that there is a cost — a price to pay for what they're doing. And if we want to have any kind of relationship whatsoever in dealing with things of mutual interest, the Russians have to stop doing what they're doing, or it's simply not going to happen.

Q General, have you been ordered at all to — or authorized to conduct any offensive cyber operations in response to this?

GENERAL NAKASONE: So my guidance and the direction from the President and the Secretary of Defense is very clear: We're not going to accept meddling in the elections. And it's very unambiguous.

SANDERS: Thank you all very much. We really appreciate you being here today.

We'll take a couple more questions on other topics today.

Jill, go ahead.

Q Thank you. I want to ask about the President's tweet on North Korea. He was addressing Kim Jong Un. And he said, quote, "I look forward to seeing you soon." Are there plans in place right now, any discussion, about a second meeting? And also, he said he received a letter from Kim. What did the letter say? And did it address any of the reports that appear to show that Kim is not actually working towards denuclearization?

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SANDERS: That's a lot of questions rolled into one. I'll try to address each one. And if I miss something, I'm sure you guys will point it out.

He did receive a letter. I believe he received it on August 1st. There is not a second meeting that is currently locked in or finalized. Certainly open to that discussion. But there isn't a meeting planned.

We have responded to Chairman Kim's letter; the President has. And that letter will be delivered shortly. Beyond that, I can't get into any further details.

Q Can you say whether he addressed the concerns about potentially building new nuclear sites?

SANDERS: I can say that the letters addressed their commitment from their joint statement that was made at the Singapore summit. And they're going to continue working together towards complete and total denuclearization.

Q Did the President's letter specifically address that?

SANDERS: Again, I can't go any further than what I just told you.

Q Ivanka Trump made two statements this morning at odds with positions of her father. She said the media are not the enemy of the people, and also called family separation at the border a low point. But what does the President think of the statements?

SANDERS: Certainly the President himself has stated that he doesn't like the idea of family separation. I don't think anybody does. We also don't like the idea of open borders. We don't like the idea of allowing people into our country if we don't know who they are, where they're going, and why they're coming.

The President wants to secure our borders, which is why he has asked Congress to fix the law. We haven't been unclear about what our position is here. We want to secure the borders. We want to change the law. It's Congress's job to do that. We'd like them, particularly Democrats, to stop playing political games and step up and do their jobs.

Q And on the press being an enemy of the people or not being?

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SANDERS: The President is rightfully frustrated. Ninety percent of the coverage on him is negative, despite the fact that the economy is booming, ISIS is on the run, and American leadership is being reasserted around the world.

Just this week, the media refused to cover his remarks in Florida, highlighting efforts on workforce development. In fact, the pooler for the press said that there was no news made, despite the fact that the governor of the state joined with dozens of businesses across the state of Florida to announce thousands of new jobs.

That may not be news in Washington, D.C., but I can assure you that it's news in the state of Florida, that people that didn't have a job before this President took office have better opportunity and the opportunity to have a job moving forward. That's actually real news and something that people in the state of Florida and across this country appreciate. And that was totally ignored.

Not only that — before, a journalist on CNN claimed that the President hadn't taken questions in over a week, despite the fact that same journalist did a live shot from the two-and-two press conference that the President had with the Prime Minister of Italy just moments after making that accusation.

With this sort of misinformation and lack of interest that's so pervasive in the media, it's completely understandable for the President to be frustrated.

Jon Decker. Sorry, Jon Decker, go ahead.

Q Thanks a lot, Sarah. I wanted to ask you about the conference call that took place yesterday, involving U.S.-China trade relations. Is there a timeline as to when, or if, the President may pull the trigger and impose harsher sanctions on China, harsher tariffs on China?

SANDERS: We're continuing to monitor that process. And when we have an announcement on that, we'll certainly let you know.

Jonathan.

Q Is the goal at the end of the day —

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SANDERS: Sorry —

Q Really quickly. Is the goal at the end of the day to get China back to the negotiating table the way they were at the negotiating table with American trade officials just a few months ago?

SANDERS: The goal at the end of the day is to end the unfair trade practices that China has engaged in for decades and that the administrations before this President have ignored.

Jonathan.

Q Returning to the question of election security, the President has said other people also may have been involved in the efforts to interfere with the 2016 election. To any of the people that we saw up here, has there been any evidence from the intelligence community that there were others, besides Russia, that were involved in election meddling?

SANDERS: Certainly we know there are others, and we know that there are others that are considering making attempts in 2018, which is what our focus is moving forward. As you know, none of us were here in 2016, but we're here now. And the individuals that were standing up here just moments ago, the focus and the full weight of the government, asked by the President and directed by the President, is to protect the election infrastructure in 2018 and moving forward, and that's exactly what we're going to do.

Q But who were the others that were involved in interference in 2016?

SANDERS: I can't get into specific details. But our intelligence shows that there are a number of others that are looking at and considering engaging, particularly in 2018.

Q And he also said that they're trying to help Democrats. He suggested that the Russians would be trying to help Democrats in the midterm elections. Has there been any evidence whatsoever that Democrats are — that Russians are trying to help Democrats in the 2018 election?

SANDERS: Well, I think you can see just from what took place over — in the Facebook. I know Director Wray wasn't at liberty to speak about the specifics, and I can't get into a lot of them. But I can tell you that a number of them were anti-President Trump. And that certainly isn't helping Republicans.

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Jon. Oh, I'm sorry, I did — I called on you before. Sorry. Go ahead, Blake.

Q I wanted you to respond, if you could, to the CAFE Standards rule that was proposed by the administration today. The 20 states' attorneys general have already said that they would sue this administration, and this is part of their complaint. They say, "Freezing or weakening these standards put the health of our children, seniors, and communities at risk." It also "increases the rising cost of climate change for our states." The administration's response would be what?

SANDERS: That the reporting that we're reversing Obama-era fuel efficiency standards and preempting the tougher California standards is simply false. What the EPA released yesterday was a notice of proposed rulemaking, not a final rule. The notice lays out a series of options for how to go forward with CAFE Standards, and the notice asks for comments on the range of options. We're simply opening it up for a comment period, and we'll make a final decision at the end of that.

Q (Inaudible) 10 to 25 percent?

SANDERS: I'm sorry?

Q On the move on tariffs, potentially, from 10 to 25 percent, what was the thing that made the President say this is why I want to do it?

SANDERS: Again, the President has been clear he's going to hold China's feet to the fire, and he wants to stop the unfair trade practices.

Emerald.

Q Sarah, since you attacked our news organization, can I get a question from you before this —

SANDERS: Emerald, go ahead. I'll come to you next, Jim.

Q Okay, thank you.

Q Going back to election security, the other night in Tampa, the President mentioned voter IDs for elections. Moving forward with election security, is the administration looking at proposing a voter ID law, or ID law, or pushing a voter ID law?

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SANDERS: I'm sorry, what was the last part of your question? There's a lot of feedback, so I'm having a hard time hearing in the back.

Q Sorry. Is the administration, as part of this election security push, also looking to do a voter ID law to try to push something like that through Congress?

SANDERS: Look, we're looking to do everything we can at this point to protect the 2018 elections, the integrity of those elections. And moving on, beyond 2018 to 2020 and after, we haven't made a final decision, but certainly looking at every option available to us.

It's not unreasonable — if I return something to a department store, if I have to cash a check, I have to show my ID in order to do those things — it's not outrageous that if you're going to vote to decide on who the leaders of the local communities, your state, and the federal government are going to be, that you would be asked to show an ID.

Jim.

Q I just wanted to follow up on Sara's question from NPR. She asked you about Ivanka Trump's statement that the press is not the enemy of the people. And she asked you whether or not the press is the enemy of the people.

You read off a laundry list of your concerns about the press, and things that you feel like are misreported, but you did not say that the press is not the enemy of the people. And I think it would be a good thing if you were to say, right here, at this briefing, that the press, the people who are gathered in this room right now, doing their jobs every day, asking questions of officials like the ones you brought forward earlier, are not the enemy of the people. I think we deserve that.

SANDERS: If the President has made his position known, I also think it's ironic —

Q Would you mind telling us, Sarah, if you don't —

SANDERS: I'm trying to answer your question. I politely waited, and I even called on you despite the fact that you interrupted me while calling on your colleague.

Q Well, you attacked our news organization —

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SANDERS: I said it's ironic —

Q — which is why I interrupted.

SANDERS: I'm trying —

Q But if you finish, if you would not mind letting me have a follow-up, that would be fine.

SANDERS: It's ironic, Jim, that not only you and the media attack the President for his rhetoric when they frequently lower the level of conversation in this country. Repeatedly — repeatedly — the media resorts to personal attacks without any content other than to incite anger.

The media has attacked me personally on a number of occasions, including your own network; said I should be harassed as a life sentence; that I should be choked. ICE officials are not welcome in their place of worship, and personal information is shared on the Internet. When I was hosted by the Correspondents' Association, of which almost all of you are members of, you brought a comedian up to attack my appearance and called me a traitor to my own gender.

Q We didn't try to do that, Sarah.

SANDERS: In fact, as I know — as far as I know, I'm the first Press Secretary in the history of the United States that's required Secret Service protection.

Q Tell that to the five dead people in Annapolis.

Q Brian, let her finish.

SANDERS: The media continues to ratchet up the verbal assault against the President and everyone in this administration, and certainly we have a role to play, but the media has a role to play for the discourse in this country, as well.

Q And, Sarah, if you don't mind — hold on, if I may follow up. If I may follow up —

Q (Inaudible.)

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Q — excuse me. You did not say, in the course of those remarks that you just made, that the press is not the enemy of the people. Are we to take it, from what you just said — we all get put through the wringer, we all get put in the meat grinder in this town, and you're no exception. And I'm sorry that that happened to you. I wish that that had not happened.

But for the sake of this room, the people who are in this room, this democracy, this country, all the people around the world are watching what you're saying, Sarah. And the White House, for the United States of America, the President of the United States should not refer to us as the enemy of the people. His own daughter acknowledges that, and all I'm asking you to do, Sarah, is to acknowledge that right now and right here.

SANDERS: I appreciate your passion; I share it. I've addressed this question. I've addressed my personal feelings. I'm here to speak on behalf of the President, and he's made his comments clear.

Go ahead.

Q On another matter — the National Archives told the Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman today that they probably aren't going to be able to finish up the document collection regarding Brett Kavanaugh until October. That's obviously later than the timetable I know you guys and Senate Republicans are hoping for. Any comment on that, or any potential assistance that the White House can give the Archives in accelerating that?

SANDERS: Certainly we want to be as helpful as possible in turning over as many documents. Several senators have stated there will be up to an over a million pages of documents to review, including over 300 judicial opinions. His documents as Staff Secretary tell us the least about his judicial thinking than the million pages from his other work, including his judicial opinions.

We want a thorough evaluation. We've asked for that. But we don't want a taxpayer-funded fishing expedition. We want to continue to be cooperative, and that's exactly what we're going to do.

I'll take a last question. Jordan.

Q Thanks. Thanks, Sarah. I want to follow up on the third part of Jill's questions from earlier on North Korea. We're nearing now the two-month mark from the Singapore summit. So is the President satisfied with the progress North Korea is making towards denuclearization?

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SANDERS: The President won't be completely satisfied until all of Korea has been denuclearized. We're going to continue moving forward. We've seen steps of progress and continued cooperation. We're incredibly grateful and thankful for the remains of the servicemembers that were returned yesterday. And we're going to continue to work with North Korea.

I think that's a great place to close out. Thanks so much, guys. Have a good day.

END

2:00 P.M. EDT

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Speech

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SECRETARY OF DEFENSE SPEECH

Secretary of Defense James Mattis Remarks with President Petro Poroshenko

AUG. 24, 2017

Remarks as Delivered by Secretary of Defense Secretary of Defense James Mattis

Presidential Palace, Kyiv, Ukraine

Mr. President, it is an honor to stand alongside you on Ukraine's Independence Day as a tangible demonstration of our unity and solidarity.

Have no doubt, the United States stands with Ukraine. We support you in the face of threats to your sovereignty and territorial integrity, to international law, and to the international order

We do not, and we will not, accept Russia's seizure of Crimea.

And despite Russia's denials, we know they are seeking to redraw international borders by force, undermining the sovereign and free nations of Europe.

Russia put its reputation on the line when it accepted the call for an immediate ceasefire, withdrawal of heavy weapons, and to grant the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe unfettered access under the Minsk Agreement.

In 1994, Russia signed the Budapest Memorandum – alongside the United States, United Kingdom and Ukraine – providing Ukraine with assurances that all parties would respect its independence, sovereignty and existing borders.

In that memorandum, Russia also promised to refrain from the threat or use of force in exchange for Ukraine's relinquishment of nuclear weapons.

Once again, under the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act, Russia agreed to refrain from the "threat or use of force against each other or any other state, its sovereignty, territorial integrity, or political independence."

Unfortunately, Russia is not adhering to the letter, much less the spirit, of these international commitments

The U.S. and our allies will continue to press Russia to honor its Minsk commitments and our sanctions will remain in place until Moscow reverses the actions that triggered them.

As President Trump has made clear, the United States remains committed to diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict in eastern Ukraine.

I am especially pleased to be here today with Ambassador Kurt Volker, the U.S. Special Representative for Ukraine Negotiations. Ambassador Volker is coordinating carefully with our allies on these efforts.

As Secretary Tillerson said in July, the United States' goals are to restore Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to seek the safety and security of all Ukrainian citizens, regardless of nationality, ethnicity, or religion.

We in the United States understand the strategic challenges associated with Russian aggression.

Alongside our allies, we remain committed to upholding the widely accepted international norms that have increased global stability since the tragedy of World War II.

Mr. President, we continue to support Ukraine and remain committed to building the capacity of your armed forces.

We applaud Ukraine's commitment to reform and modernize its defense sector according to NATO standards. This will make Ukraine's forces more operationally effective as well as more effective protectors of the Ukrainian people. We look forward to full implementation of NATO standards.

The United States and Ukraine are cultivating a lasting strategic partnership, already twenty-five years in the making, built on common security interests and shared principles.

I look forward to continuing to build on that partnership, which we strengthened when President Trump hosted you at the White House in June and reinforced during our meetings here today.

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Release

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DOD Announces \$250M to Ukraine

JUNE 18, 2019

The Department of Defense announced today plans to provide \$250 million to Ukraine in security cooperation funds for additional training, equipment, and advisory efforts to build the capacity of Ukraine's armed forces.

This reaffirms the long-standing defense relationship between the United States and Ukraine and will bring total U.S. security assistance to Ukraine to \$1.5 billion since 2014.

The new funds will provide equipment to support ongoing training programs and operational needs, including capabilities to enhance: maritime situational awareness and operations as part of ongoing U.S. efforts to increase support for Ukraine's Navy and Naval Infantry; the defensive capacity and survivability of Ukraine's Land and Special Operations Forces through the provision of sniper rifles, rocket-propelled grenade launchers, and counter-artillery radars; command and control; electronic warfare detection and secure communications; military mobility; night vision; and, military medical treatment.

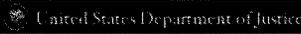
This security cooperation is made possible by Ukraine's continued progress on the adoption of key defense institutional reforms to align Ukraine's national security architecture with Euro-Atlantic principles.

The United States remains committed to helping Ukraine implement provisions of Ukraine's 2018 Law on National Security to strengthen democratic civilian control of the military, promote command and control reforms, enhance transparency and accountability in acquisition and budgeting, and advance defense industry reforms. These reforms will bolster Ukraine's ability to defend its territorial integrity in support of a secure, prosperous, democratic, and free Ukraine.

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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Southern District of New York

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, October 10, 2019

Lev Parnas And Igor Fruman Charged With Conspiring To Violate Straw And Foreign Donor Bans

Defendants Orchestrated Scheme to Advance Their Business Interests and the Political Interests of At Least One Ukrainian Government Official Through Contributions and Donations to Multiple Candidates and Campaign Committees in Violation of Campaign Finance Laws; Two Others Charged in Foreign Donor Scheme

Geoffrey S. Berman, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and William F. Sweeney Jr., the Assistant Director in Charge of the New York Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI"), announced that LEV PARNAS, IGOR FRUMAN, DAVID CORREIA and ANDREY KUKUSHKIN were charged in a four-count indictment alleging that each of the defendants conspired to violate the ban on foreign donations and contributions in connection with federal and state elections. In addition, PARNAS and FRUMAN were charged with conspiring to make contributions in connection with federal elections in the names of others, and with making false statements to and falsifying records to obstruct the administration of a matter within the jurisdiction of the Federal Election Commission ("FEC"). PARNAS and FRUMAN were arrested yesterday evening at Washington Dulles International Airport and will be presented at 2:00 p.m. this afternoon before U.S. Magistrate Judge Michael S. Nachmanoff in the Eastern District of Virginia. KUKUSHKIN was arrested yesterday in California and will be presented at 10:30 a.m. Pacific Time before U.S. Magistrate Judge Jacqueline Scott Corley in the Northern District of California. CORREIA remains at large. The case is assigned to U.S. District Judge J. Paul Oetken in the Southern District of New York.

U.S. Attorney Geoffrey S. Berman said: "As alleged in the Indictment, the defendants broke the law to gain political influence while avoiding disclosure of who was actually making the donations and where the money was coming from. They sought political influence not only to advance their own financial interests but to advance the political interests of at least one foreign official – a Ukrainian government official who sought the dismissal of the U.S. ambassador to Ukraine. Protecting the integrity of our elections – and protecting our elections from unlawful foreign influence – are core functions of our campaign finance laws. And as this Office has made clear, we will not hesitate to investigate and prosecute those who engage in criminal conduct that draws into question the integrity of our political process."

FBI Assistant Director William F. Sweeney Jr. said: "Campaign finance laws exist for a reason. The American people expect and deserve an election process that hasn't been corrupted by the influence of

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Lev Parnas And Igor Fruman Charged With Conspiring To Violate Straw And Foreign Donor Bans | USAO-SDNY | Department of Justice

foreign interests, and the public has the right to know the true source of campaign contributions. These allegations aren't about some technicality, a civil violation, or an error on a form. This investigation is about corrupt behavior and deliberate law breaking. The FBI takes the obligation to tackle corruption seriously – there are no exceptions to this rule.”

According to the Indictment[1] unsealed today in Manhattan federal court:

Through its election laws, Congress prohibits foreign nationals from making contributions, donations, and certain expenditures in connection with federal, state, and local elections. The election laws also prohibit individuals from using straw donors to make legal contributions in their own names, rather than in the name of the true source of the funds. The purpose of these laws is to prevent the electoral system from illegal foreign influence, and to further inform candidates, their campaign committees, federal regulators and the public of the true sources of contributions. In or about 2018, the defendants violated these laws by, among other things, agreeing to facilitate foreign donations to federal and state candidates, and agreeing to make straw donations to federal candidates in an effort to conceal true sources of the funds.

The Straw Donor Scheme

In or about March 2018, PARNAS and FRUMAN began attending political fundraising events in connection with federal elections and making substantial contributions to candidates, joint fundraising committees, and independent expenditure committees with the purpose of enhancing their influence in political circles and gaining access to politicians. PARNAS and FRUMAN, who had no significant prior history of political donations, sought to advance their personal financial interests and the political interests of at least one Ukrainian government official with whom they were working.

In or about May 2018, to obtain access to exclusive political events and gain influence with politicians, PARNAS and FRUMAN made a \$325,000 contribution to an independent expenditure committee (“Committee-1”) and a \$15,000 contribution to a second independent expenditure committee (“Committee-2”). Despite the fact that the FEC forms for these contributions required PARNAS and FRUMAN to disclose the true donor of the funds, they falsely reported that the contributions came from Global Energy Producers (“GEP”), a purported liquefied natural gas (“LNG”) import-export business that was incorporated by FRUMAN and PARNAS around the time the contributions were made. In truth and in fact, the donations to Committee-1 and Committee-2 did not come from GEP funds. Rather, the donations came from a private lending transaction between FRUMAN and third parties, and never passed through a GEP account. PARNAS and FRUMAN deliberately made the contributions in GEP’s name in order to evade federal reporting requirements and to conceal that they were the true source of the contributions, including so as to hide from creditors the fact that they had access to funding. When media reports about the GEP contributions first surfaced, an individual working with PARNAS remarked, “[t]his is what happens when you become visible . . . the buzzards descend,” to which PARNAS responded, “[t]hat’s why we need to stay under the radar. . . .”

Among other donations alleged to have been made in furtherance of the scheme, in or about May and June 2018, PARNAS and FRUMAN committed to raise \$20,000 or more for a then-sitting U.S. Congressman (“Congressman-1”). At and around the same time PARNAS and FRUMAN committed to raising those funds for Congressman-1, PARNAS met with Congressman-1 and sought Congressman-1’s assistance in causing the U.S. Government to remove or recall the then-U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine (the “Ambassador”). PARNAS’s efforts to remove the Ambassador were conducted, at least in part, at the request of one or more Ukrainian government officials. Moreover, in an effort to reach their contribution commitment to Congressman-1 and further their political goals, in or about June 2018, after FRUMAN had already made a maximum \$2,700 contribution to Congressman-1, FRUMAN paid for another maximum \$2,700 contribution to Congressman-1 that was made and reported in PARNAS’s name.

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In response to a complaint filed with the FEC regarding the \$325,000 contribution to Committee-1, and to further conceal the true source of the funds used to make certain of their donations, in or about October 2018, PARNAS and FRUMAN submitted sworn affidavits to the FEC that contained false statements, including that the contribution to Committee-1 "was made with GEP funds for GEP purposes" and that "GEP is a real business enterprise funded with substantial bona fide capital investment; its major purpose is energy trading, not political activity."

The Foreign Donor Scheme

Beginning in or around July 2018, PARNAS, FRUMAN, CORREIA, and KUKUSHKIN made plans to form a recreational marijuana business (the "Business Venture") that would be funded by Foreign National-1, a Russian national, and required gaining access to retail marijuana licenses in particular states, including Nevada (the "Business Venture"). To further the Business Venture, PARNAS, FRUMAN, CORREIA, and KUKUSHKIN planned to use Foreign National-1 as a source of funding for donations and contributions to state and federal candidates and politicians in Nevada, New York, and other states to facilitate acquisitions of retail marijuana licenses.

In or about September and October 2018, CORREIA drafted a table of political donations and contributions, which was subsequently circulated to the defendants and Foreign National-1. The table described a "multi-state license strategy" to make between \$1million and \$2 million in political contributions to federal and state political committees. The table also included a "funding" schedule of two \$500,000 transfers. Foreign National-1 then arranged for two \$500,000 wires on or about September 18, 2018, and October 16, 2018, to be sent from overseas accounts to a U.S. corporate bank account controlled by FRUMAN and another individual.

PARNAS, FRUMAN, CORREIA, and KUKUSHKIN then used those funds transferred by Foreign National-1, in part, to attempt to gain influence and the appearance of influence with politicians and candidates. For example, on or about October 20, 2018, PARNAS, FRUMAN, and KUKUSHKIN attended a campaign rally for a candidate for a statewide office in Nevada ("Candidate-1"), at which a different Nevada state candidate was present ("Candidate-2"). Following that event, on or about November 1, 2018, a donation in the amount of \$10,000 was made to Candidate-2 in FRUMAN's name, but it was funded with funds from Foreign National-1. On or about November 1, 2018, a donation in the amount of \$10,000 was made to Candidate-1 in FRUMAN's name, but it was funded with funds from Foreign National-1. On or about November 4, 2018, PARNAS asked KUKUSHKIN to arrange for additional funding from Foreign National-1 to make an additional donation to Candidate-1, to which KUKUSHKIN responded that the \$1 million Foreign National-1 had already provided to GEP was "in order to cover all the donations whatsoever." Further communications confirm the defendants' use of foreign funds – and, in particular, funds from Foreign National-1 – to make the donations described above. For example, on or about October 30, 2018, Foreign National-1 wrote to PARNAS, FRUMAN, and KUKUSHKIN that he had "fulfilled all my obligations completely," including "500 [for] Nevada" in order to "work on obtaining licenses [in] these states." KUKUSHKIN similarly noted in response that "Money transferred by [Foreign National-1] to [GEP] was to support the very specific people & states (per [FRUMAN's] table) in order to obtain green light for licensing."

Although PARNAS, FRUMAN, CORREIA, and Foreign National-1 continued to meet into the spring of 2019, the Business Venture did not come to fruition.

* * *

PARNAS, 47, FRUMAN, 53, CORREIA, 44, all Florida residents, and KUKUSHKIN, 46, a California resident, are each charged with one count of conspiring to violate the ban on foreign donations and contributions in connection with federal and state elections, which carries a maximum sentence of five years in prison. PARNAS and FRUMAN are also each charged with one count of conspiring to make contributions in connection with federal elections in the names of others, which carries a maximum sentence of five years in

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prison; one count of making false statements, which carries a maximum sentence of five years in prison; and one count of falsifying records to obstruct the administration of a matter within the jurisdiction of the FEC, which carries a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison.

The statutory maximum and mandatory penalties are prescribed by Congress and are provided here for informational purposes only, as any sentencing of the defendants would be determined by the judge.

Mr. Berman praised the outstanding investigative work of the FBI.

This case is being handled by the Office's Public Corruption Unit. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Rebekah Donaleski and Nicolas Roos are in charge of the prosecution.

The charges contained in the Indictment are merely accusations. The defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

[1] As the introductory phrase signifies, the entirety of the text of the Indictment, and the description of the Indictment set forth herein, constitute only allegations, and every fact described therein should be treated as an allegation.

Attachment(s):

[Download U.S. v. Lev Parnas et al Indictment](#)

Topic(s):

Financial Fraud

Component(s):

[USAO - New York, Southern](#)

Press Release Number:

19-331

Updated October 25, 2019

(/)

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Three House Committees Launch Wide-Ranging Investigation into Trump-Giuliani Ukraine Scheme (/press-releases?ID=D365D32B-D9D1-4A68-B07E-28B95DA593B0)

Engel, Schiff, and Cummings Demand Records about Efforts to Pressure Ukraine's Government to Assist Trump's Reelection Campaign

September 9, 2019

Washington, DC—Today, three House Committees launched a wide-ranging investigation into reported efforts by President Trump, the President's personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani, and possibly others to pressure the government of Ukraine to assist the President's reelection campaign.

In letters to the White House

(https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/_cache/files/6/f/6f135e40-a0ea-48bf-807c-94b39f48cfc6/96A366857ACD1BC5208F912FAD80CEAF.ele-schiff-cummings-letter-to-cipollone-on-ukraine.pdf) and the State Department

(https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=AD1E0561-2252-4F7C-97AD-F649DB558C83), Chairmen Eliot L. Engel of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Adam B. Schiff of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and Elijah E. Cummings of the Committee on Oversight and Reform demanded records relating to President Trump's and Mr. Giuliani's attempts to manipulate the Ukrainian justice system to benefit the President's re-election campaign and target a possible political opponent. These initial requests represent a first step in a broad investigation into this matter.

“A growing public record indicates that, for nearly two years, the President and his personal attorney, Rudy Giuliani, appear to have acted outside legitimate law enforcement and diplomatic channels to coerce the Ukrainian government into pursuing two politically-motivated investigations under the guise of anti-corruption activity,” **wrote the Chairmen**. “As the 2020 election draws closer, President Trump and his personal attorney appear to have increased pressure on the Ukrainian government and its justice system in service of President Trump’s reelection campaign, and the White House and the State Department may be abetting this scheme.”

It was also recently reported that the Trump Administration is threatening to withhold security assistance to Ukraine in defiance of explicit congressional direction. The Committees will investigate whether this is part of President Trump’s effort to coerce the Ukrainian government into pursuing politically-motivated investigations, including of former Vice President Joe Biden and his family—all in service of President Trump’s 2020 reelection campaign.

The Trump Administration’s decision to withhold vital security assistance to Ukraine is only the latest in a series of actions in which President Trump appears to undermine U.S. foreign policy to placate Russia and place his personal interests above the national interest.

Full text of the letters follows and can be found

(https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/_cache/files/6/f/6f135e40-a0ea-48bf-807c-94b39f48cfc6/96A366857ACD1BC5208F912FAD80CEAF.ele-schiff-cummings-letter-to-cipollone-on-ukraine.pdf) here

(https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=14542A39-5FA2-4289-8D26-8024FB7A7569).

Mr. Pat Cipollone
Counsel to the President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20002

Dear Mr. Cipollone:

The Committees on Foreign Affairs, Intelligence, and Oversight and Reform jointly request documents related to reported efforts by President Trump and his associates to improperly pressure the Ukrainian government to assist the President's bid for reelection.

A growing public record indicates that, for nearly two years, the President and his personal attorney, Rudy Giuliani, appear to have acted outside legitimate law enforcement and diplomatic channels to coerce the Ukrainian government into pursuing two politically-motivated investigations under the guise of anti-corruption activity. The first is a prosecution of Ukrainians who provided key evidence against Mr. Trump's convicted campaign manager Paul Manafort. That investigation aims to undercut the Mueller Report's overwhelming evidence that Russia interfered in the 2016 election to support Trump's campaign. The other case targets the son of former Vice President Joseph R. Biden, who is challenging Mr. Trump for the presidency in 2020.

As the 2020 election draws closer, President Trump and his personal attorney appear to have increased pressure on the Ukrainian government and its justice system in service of President Trump's reelection campaign, and the White House and the State Department may be abetting this scheme.

According to the Ukrainian government, in a July 25, 2019 call with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President Trump apparently focused on these investigations, telling President Zelenskyy that he is "convinced the new

Ukrainian government will be able to quickly improve [the] image of Ukraine, [and] complete [the] investigation of corruption cases, which inhibited the interaction between Ukraine and the USA.” The next day, Ambassador Kurt Volker, U.S. Special Representative for Ukraine, was dispatched to meet with President Zelenskyy. Days later, the President’s personal attorney met Andriy Yermak, an aide to President Zelenskyy, in Spain, where the President’s personal attorney, who has no official administration or diplomatic position, reportedly suggested a “possible heads of state meeting” between Presidents Trump and Zelenskyy and tweeted an accusation about former Vice President Biden’s son. The State Department subsequently acknowledged that Ambassador Volker used his office to facilitate the meeting between the two. Although the State Department has insisted that President Trump’s attorney is “a private citizen” who “does not speak on behalf of the U.S. Government,” Mr. Yermak publicly stated that “it was not clear to him whether Mr. Giuliani was representing Mr. Trump in their talks.”

President Trump has also threatened to withhold more than \$250 million in security assistance that Congress has appropriated, the Pentagon supports, and Ukraine desperately needs. Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity are under assault from Russia and its proxies in illegally-occupied Ukrainian territory. If the President is trying to pressure Ukraine into choosing between defending itself from Russian aggression without U.S. assistance or leveraging its judicial system to serve the ends of the Trump campaign, this would represent a staggering abuse of power, a boon to Moscow, and a betrayal of the public trust. That the State Department has apparently acted as a broker between President Trump’s personal attorney and Ukrainian officials raises serious concerns that the Department is complicit in a corrupt scheme that undercuts U.S. foreign policy and national security interests in favor of the President’s personal agenda.

Congress has a constitutionally-mandated obligation to conduct oversight, protect the sanctity of our elections, and ensure that the nation's diplomatic resources and foreign assistance are being deployed for the benefit of the United States, not the personal interests of the President. In order to fulfill this obligation and determine what legislative reforms may be required, we request that the White House preserve all documents, communications, and other data ("records"), regardless of format, that may be required for the Committees' oversight and investigative duties relating to this subject. The term "records" is broad and includes both paper and electronic records. Specifically, the White House should:

1. identify and notify all current and former employees and contractors, subcontractors, consultants, and Special Government Employees who may have access to such records that they are to be preserved;
2. identify, record, and preserve any records which have been deleted or marked for deletion but are still recoverable; and
3. if it is the routine practice of any employee or contractor to destroy or otherwise alter such records, either halt such practices or arrange for the preservation of complete and accurate duplicates or copies of such records, suitable for production, if requested.

In addition, we request that your office produce to the Committees the following, no later than Monday, September 16:

1. Any and all records generated or received by any White House staff from January 20, 2017 to the present related to or referring in any way to the potential or suggested investigations/legal cases referred to in this letter. This includes, but is not limited to, correspondence regarding or referring to Paul Manafort,

Serhiy Leshchenko, the “Black Ledger,” Hunter Biden, Burisma Holdings, former Ukrainian Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko, or Presidential Aide Andriy Yermak in the context of these potential or suggested investigations/legal cases.

2. The transcript of President Trump’s July 25, 2019 call with Ukrainian President Zelenskyy (the “July 25 Call”).

3. Any and all records generated or received by any White House staff in connection with, or that refer or relate in any way to the July 25 Call.

4. A full list of all White House staff who participated in, assisted in preparation for, or received a readout of the July 25 Call.

5. Any and all records generated or received by White House staff with or referring to President Trump’s personal attorney, Rudy Giuliani.

6. Any and all records generated or received by any White House staff in connection with, or that refer or relate in any way to the actual or potential suspension of security assistance to Ukraine.

The Committees are prepared to work with your office to facilitate the production of these documents.

Sincerely,

ELIOT L. ENGEL

Chairman

House Foreign Affairs Committee

ADAM SCHIFF

Chairman

House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence

ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

Chairman

House Committee on Oversight and Reform

The Honorable Mike Pompeo

Secretary of State

U.S. Department of State

2201 C Street NW

Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The Committees on Foreign Affairs, Intelligence, and Oversight and Reform jointly request documents related to reported efforts by President Trump and his associates to improperly pressure the Ukrainian government to assist the President's bid for reelection.

A growing public record indicates that, for nearly two years, the President and his personal attorney, Rudy Giuliani, appear to have acted outside legitimate law enforcement and diplomatic channels to coerce the Ukrainian government into pursuing two politically-motivated investigations under the guise of anti-corruption activity. The first is a prosecution of Ukrainians who provided key evidence against Mr. Trump's convicted campaign manager Paul Manafort. That investigation aims to undercut the Mueller Report's overwhelming evidence that Russia interfered in the 2016 election to support Trump's campaign. The other case targets the son of former Vice President Joseph R. Biden, who is challenging Mr. Trump for the presidency in 2020.

As the 2020 election draws closer, President Trump and his personal attorney appear to have increased pressure on the Ukrainian government and its justice system in service of President Trump's reelection campaign, and the White House and the State Department may be abetting this scheme.

According to the Ukrainian government, in a July 25, 2019 call with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President Trump apparently focused on these investigations, telling President Zelenskyy that he is "convinced the new Ukrainian government will be able to quickly improve [the] image of Ukraine, [and] complete [the] investigation of corruption cases, which inhibited the interaction between Ukraine and the USA." The next day, Ambassador Kurt Volker, U.S. Special Representative for Ukraine, was dispatched to meet with President Zelenskyy. Days later, the President's personal attorney met Andriy Yermak, an aide to President Zelenskyy, in Spain, where the President's personal attorney, who has no official administration or diplomatic position, reportedly suggested a "possible heads of state meeting" between Presidents Trump and Zelenskyy and tweeted an accusation about former Vice President Biden's son. The State Department subsequently acknowledged that Ambassador Volker used his office to facilitate the meeting between the two. Although the State Department has insisted that President Trump's attorney is "a private citizen" who "does not speak on behalf of the U.S. Government," Mr. Yermak publicly stated that "it was not clear to him whether Mr. Giuliani was representing Mr. Trump in their talks."

President Trump has also threatened to withhold more than \$250 million in security assistance that Congress has appropriated, the Pentagon supports, and Ukraine desperately needs. Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity are under assault from Russia and its proxies in illegally-occupied Ukrainian territory. If the President is trying to pressure Ukraine into choosing between defending itself from Russian aggression without U.S. assistance or leveraging its judicial system to serve the ends of the Trump campaign, this would represent a

staggering abuse of power, a boon to Moscow, and a betrayal of the public trust. That the State Department has apparently acted as a broker between President Trump's personal attorney and Ukrainian officials raises serious concerns that the Department is complicit in a corrupt scheme that undercuts U.S. foreign policy and national security interests in favor of the President's personal agenda.

Congress has a constitutionally-mandated obligation to conduct oversight, protect the sanctity of our elections, and ensure that the nation's diplomatic resources and foreign assistance are being deployed for the benefit of the United States, not the personal interests of the President. In order to fulfill this obligation and determine what legislative reform may be required, we request that the White House preserve all documents, communications, and other data ("records"), regardless of format, that may be required for the Committees' oversight and investigative duties relating to this subject. The term "records" is broad and includes both paper and electronic records. Specifically, the State Department should:

1. identify and notify all current and former employees and contractors, subcontractors, consultants, and Special Government Employees who may have access to such records that they are to be preserved;
2. identify, record, and preserve any records which have been deleted or marked for deletion but are still recoverable; and
3. if it is the routine practice of any employee or contractor to destroy or otherwise alter such records, either halt such practices or arrange for the preservation of complete and accurate duplicates or copies of such records, suitable for production, if requested.

In addition, we request that the Department produce to the Committees the following, no later than Monday, September 16:

1. Any and all correspondence sent to or received by the State Department from January 20, 2017 to the present related to or referring in any way to the potential or suggested investigations/legal cases referred to in this letter. This includes, but is not limited to, correspondence regarding or referring to Paul Manafort, Serhiy Leshchenko, the "Black Ledger," Hunter Biden, Burisma Holdings, former Ukrainian Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko, or Presidential Aide Andriy Yermak in the context of these potential or suggested investigations/legal cases.
2. Any copies in the State Department's, custody, or control of the transcript of President Trump's July 25, 2019 call with Ukrainian President Zelenskyy (the "July 25 Call").
3. Any and all records generated or received by the State Department in connection with, or that refer or relate in any way to the July 25 Call.
4. A full list of any Department officials who participated in, assisted in preparation for, or received a readout of the July 25 Call.
5. Any and all records generated or received by Department officials with or referring to President Trump's personal attorney, Rudy Giuliani.
6. Any and all records generated or received by any State Department staff in connection with, or that refer or relate in any way to the actual or potential suspension of security assistance to Ukraine.

Relevant custodians for responsive records include, but are not limited to:

1. the Office of the Secretary, including the Policy Planning Staff, the Counselor;
2. the Office of the Deputy Secretary;
3. the Office of the Undersecretary for Political Affairs;
4. Ambassador Kurt Volker and the office of the Special Representative for Ukraine;
5. The Bureau of European Affairs; and
6. U.S. Embassy Kyiv.

The Committees are prepared to work with the Department to facilitate the production of these documents.

Sincerely,

ELIOT L. ENGEL

Chairman

House Foreign Affairs Committee

ADAM SCHIFF

Chairman

House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence

ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

Chairman

House Committee on Oversight and Reform

#

Permalink: <https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/2019/9/three-house-committees-launch-wide-ranging-investigation-into-trump-giuliani-ukraine-scheme> (<https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/2019/9/three-house-committees-launch-wide-ranging-investigation-into-trump-giuliani-ukraine-scheme>)

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Chairmen Warn President to Stop Attacking Whistleblower and Witnesses to His Misconduct and to Halt Efforts to Obstruct Impeachment Inquiry

Washington, September 26, 2019

Washington, D.C. (Sept. 26, 2019)—Today, Rep. Eliot L. Engel, the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Rep. Adam Schiff, the Chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, the Chairman of the Committee on Oversight and Reform issued the following statement in response to President Trump's attacks on the intelligence community whistleblower and other witnesses:

"President Trump is fully aware that our Committees are seeking testimony from this whistleblower and others referenced in the whistleblower's complaint released today as part of the House's impeachment inquiry, and our nation's laws prohibit efforts to discourage, intimidate, or otherwise pressure a witness not to provide testimony to Congress. No officials with knowledge relevant to the Committees' investigation, including knowledge of the subject of the whistleblower complaint, may be subject to any intimidation, reprisal, or threat of reprisal, and all witnesses must be made available for congressional testimony.

"The President's comments today constitute reprehensible witness intimidation and an attempt to obstruct Congress' impeachment inquiry. We condemn the President's attacks, and we invite our Republican counterparts to do the same because Congress must do all it can to protect this whistleblower, and all whistleblowers. Threats of violence from the leader of our country have a chilling effect on the entire whistleblower process, with grave consequences for our democracy and national security."

###

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House Intelligence Committee Releases Whistleblower Complaint

Washington, September 26, 2019

Washington, DC – Today, the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence released the declassified whistleblower complaint. The complaint can be viewed [here](#), and the Intelligence Community Inspector General letter regarding the complaint can be viewed [here](#).

Chairman Adam Schiff (D-CA) made the following statement:

"The Committee this morning will be releasing the declassified whistleblower complaint that it received late last night from the ODNI. It is a travesty that it was held up this long.

"This complaint should never have been withheld from Congress. It exposed serious wrongdoing, and was found both urgent and credible by the Inspector General.

"This complaint is a roadmap for our investigation, and provides significant information for the Committee to follow up on with other witnesses and documents. And it is corroborated by the call record released yesterday.

"I want to thank the whistleblower for having the courage to come forward, despite the reprisals they have already faced from the president and his acolytes. We will do everything in our power to protect this whistleblower, and every whistleblower, who comes forward.

"The public has a right to see the complaint and what it reveals."

###

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Three House Committees Launch Wide-Ranging Investigation into Trump-Giuliani Ukraine Scheme

Engel, Schiff, and Cummings Demand Records about Efforts to Pressure Ukraine's Government to Assist Trump's Reelection Campaign

Washington, September 9, 2019

Washington, DC—Today, three House Committees launched a wide-ranging investigation into reported efforts by President Trump, the President's personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani, and possibly others to pressure the government of Ukraine to assist the President's reelection campaign.

In letters to the White House and the State Department, Chairmen Eliot L. Engel of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Adam B. Schiff of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and Elijah E. Cummings of the Committee on Oversight and Reform demanded records relating to President Trump's and Mr. Giuliani's attempts to manipulate the Ukrainian justice system to benefit the President's re-election campaign and target a possible political opponent. These initial requests represent a first step in a broad investigation into this matter.

"A growing public record indicates that, for nearly two years, the President and his personal attorney, Rudy Giuliani, appear to have acted outside legitimate law enforcement and diplomatic channels to coerce the Ukrainian government into pursuing two politically-motivated investigations under the guise of anti-corruption activity," **wrote the Chairmen**. "As the 2020 election draws closer, President Trump and his personal attorney appear to have increased pressure on the Ukrainian government and its justice system in service of President Trump's reelection campaign, and the White House and the State Department may be abetting this scheme."

It was also recently reported that the Trump Administration is threatening to withhold security assistance to Ukraine in defiance of explicit congressional direction. The Committees will investigate whether this is part of President Trump's effort to coerce the Ukrainian government into pursuing politically-motivated investigations, including of former Vice President Joe Biden and his family—all in service of President Trump's 2020 reelection campaign.

The Trump Administration's decision to withhold vital security assistance to Ukraine is only the latest in a series of actions in which President Trump appears to undermine U.S. foreign policy to placate Russia and place his personal interests above the national interest.

Full text of the letters follows and can be [found here](#).

Mr. Pat Cipollone
Counsel to the President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20002

Dear Mr. Cipollone:

1/3/2020 Three House Committees Launch Wide-Ranging Investigation into Trump-Giuliani Ukraine Scheme | Permanent Select Committee on Inte...

The Committees on Foreign Affairs, Intelligence, and Oversight and Reform jointly request documents related to reported efforts by President Trump and his associates to improperly pressure the Ukrainian government to assist the President's bid for reelection.

A growing public record indicates that, for nearly two years, the President and his personal attorney, Rudy Giuliani, appear to have acted outside legitimate law enforcement and diplomatic channels to coerce the Ukrainian government into pursuing two politically-motivated investigations under the guise of anti-corruption activity. The first is a prosecution of Ukrainians who provided key evidence against Mr. Trump's convicted campaign manager Paul Manafort. That investigation aims to undercut the Mueller Report's overwhelming evidence that Russia interfered in the 2016 election to support Trump's campaign. The other case targets the son of former Vice President Joseph R. Biden, who is challenging Mr. Trump for the presidency in 2020.

As the 2020 election draws closer, President Trump and his personal attorney appear to have increased pressure on the Ukrainian government and its justice system in service of President Trump's reelection campaign, and the White House and the State Department may be abetting this scheme.

According to the Ukrainian government, in a July 25, 2019 call with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President Trump apparently focused on these investigations, telling President Zelenskyy that he is "convinced the new Ukrainian government will be able to quickly improve [the] image of Ukraine, [and] complete [the] investigation of corruption cases, which inhibited the interaction between Ukraine and the USA." The next day, Ambassador Kurt Volker, U.S. Special Representative for Ukraine, was dispatched to meet with President Zelenskyy. Days later, the President's personal attorney met Andriy Yermak, an aide to President Zelenskyy, in Spain, where the President's personal attorney, who has no official administration or diplomatic position, reportedly suggested a "possible heads of state meeting" between Presidents Trump and Zelenskyy and tweeted an accusation about former Vice President Biden's son. The State Department subsequently acknowledged that Ambassador Volker used his office to facilitate the meeting between the two. Although the State Department has insisted that President Trump's attorney is "a private citizen" who "does not speak on behalf of the U.S. Government," Mr. Yermak publicly stated that "it was not clear to him whether Mr. Giuliani was representing Mr. Trump in their talks."

President Trump has also threatened to withhold more than \$250 million in security assistance that Congress has appropriated, the Pentagon supports, and Ukraine desperately needs. Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity are under assault from Russia and its proxies in illegally-occupied Ukrainian territory. If the President is trying to pressure Ukraine into choosing between defending itself from Russian aggression without U.S. assistance or leveraging its judicial system to serve the ends of the Trump campaign, this would represent a staggering abuse of power, a boon to Moscow, and a betrayal of the public trust. That the State Department has apparently acted as a broker between President Trump's personal attorney and Ukrainian officials raises serious concerns that the Department is complicit in a corrupt scheme that undercuts U.S. foreign policy and national security interests in favor of the President's personal agenda.

Congress has a constitutionally-mandated obligation to conduct oversight, protect the sanctity of our elections, and ensure that the nation's diplomatic resources and foreign assistance are being deployed for the benefit of the United States, not the personal interests of the President. In order to fulfill this obligation and determine what legislative reforms may be required, we request that the White House preserve all documents, communications, and other data ("records"), regardless of format, that may be required for the Committees' oversight and investigative duties relating to this subject. The term "records" is broad and includes both paper and electronic records. Specifically, the White House should:

1. identify and notify all current and former employees and contractors, subcontractors, consultants, and Special Government Employees who may have access to such records that they are to be preserved;
2. identify, record, and preserve any records which have been deleted or marked for deletion but are still recoverable; and
3. if it is the routine practice of any employee or contractor to destroy or otherwise alter such records, either halt such practices or arrange for the preservation of complete and accurate duplicates or copies of such records, suitable for production, if requested.

In addition, we request that your office produce to the Committees the following, no later than Monday, September 16:

1. Any and all records generated or received by any White House staff from January 20, 2017 to the present related to or referring in any way to the potential or suggested investigations/legal cases referred to in this letter. This includes, but is not limited to, correspondence regarding or referring to Paul Manafort, Serhiy Leshchenko, the "Black Ledger," Hunter Biden, Burisma Holdings, former Ukrainian Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko, or Presidential Aide Andriy Yermak in the context of these potential or suggested investigations/legal cases.
2. The transcript of President Trump's July 25, 2019 call with Ukrainian President Zelenskyy (the "July 25 Call").
3. Any and all records generated or received by any White House staff in connection with, or that refer or relate in any way to the July 25 Call.
4. A full list of all White House staff who participated in, assisted in preparation for, or received a readout of the July 25 Call.

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5. Any and all records generated or received by White House staff with or referring to President Trump's personal attorney, Rudy Giuliani.

6. Any and all records generated or received by any White House staff in connection with, or that refer or relate in any way to the actual or potential suspension of security assistance to Ukraine.

The Committees are prepared to work with your office to facilitate the production of these documents.

Sincerely,

ELIOT L. ENGEL

Chairman
House Foreign Affairs Committee

ADAM SCHIFF

Chairman
House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence

ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

Chairman
House Committee on Oversight and Reform

The Honorable Mike Pompeo
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The Committees on Foreign Affairs, Intelligence, and Oversight and Reform jointly request documents related to reported efforts by President Trump and his associates to improperly pressure the Ukrainian government to assist the President's bid for reelection.

A growing public record indicates that, for nearly two years, the President and his personal attorney, Rudy Giuliani, appear to have acted outside legitimate law enforcement and diplomatic channels to coerce the Ukrainian government into pursuing two politically-motivated investigations under the guise of anti-corruption activity. The first is a prosecution of Ukrainians who provided key evidence against Mr. Trump's convicted campaign manager Paul Manafort. That investigation aims to undercut the Mueller Report's overwhelming evidence that Russia interfered in the 2016 election to support Trump's campaign. The other case targets the son of former Vice President Joseph R. Biden, who is challenging Mr. Trump for the presidency in 2020.

As the 2020 election draws closer, President Trump and his personal attorney appear to have increased pressure on the Ukrainian government and its justice system in service of President Trump's reelection campaign, and the White House and the State Department may be abetting this scheme.

According to the Ukrainian government, in a July 25, 2019 call with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President Trump apparently focused on these investigations, telling President Zelenskyy that he is "convinced the new Ukrainian government will be able to quickly improve [the] image of Ukraine, [and] complete [the] investigation of corruption cases, which inhibited the interaction between Ukraine and the USA." The next day, Ambassador Kurt Volker, U.S. Special Representative for Ukraine, was dispatched to meet with President Zelenskyy. Days later, the President's personal attorney met Andriy Yermak, an aide to President Zelenskyy, in Spain, where the President's personal attorney, who has no official administration or diplomatic position, reportedly suggested a "possible heads of state meeting" between Presidents Trump and Zelenskyy and tweeted an accusation about former Vice President Biden's son. The State Department subsequently acknowledged that Ambassador Volker used his office to facilitate the meeting between the two. Although the State Department has insisted that President Trump's attorney is "a private citizen" who "does not speak on behalf of the U.S. Government," Mr. Yermak publicly stated that "it was not clear to him whether Mr. Giuliani was representing Mr. Trump in their talks."

President Trump has also threatened to withhold more than \$250 million in security assistance that Congress has appropriated, the Pentagon supports, and Ukraine desperately needs. Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity are under assault from Russia and its proxies in illegally-occupied Ukrainian territory. If the President is trying to pressure Ukraine into choosing between defending itself from Russian aggression without U.S. assistance or leveraging its judicial system to serve the ends of the Trump campaign, this would represent a staggering abuse of power, a boon to Moscow, and a betrayal

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of the public trust. That the State Department has apparently acted as a broker between President Trump's personal attorney and Ukrainian officials raises serious concerns that the Department is complicit in a corrupt scheme that undercuts U.S. foreign policy and national security interests in favor of the President's personal agenda.

Congress has a constitutionally-mandated obligation to conduct oversight, protect the sanctity of our elections, and ensure that the nation's diplomatic resources and foreign assistance are being deployed for the benefit of the United States, not the personal interests of the President. In order to fulfill this obligation and determine what legislative reform may be required, we request that the White House preserve all documents, communications, and other data ("records"), regardless of format, that may be required for the Committees' oversight and investigative duties relating to this subject. The term "records" is broad and includes both paper and electronic records.

Specifically, the State Department should:

1. identify and notify all current and former employees and contractors, subcontractors, consultants, and Special Government Employees who may have access to such records that they are to be preserved;
2. identify, record, and preserve any records which have been deleted or marked for deletion but are still recoverable; and
3. if it is the routine practice of any employee or contractor to destroy or otherwise alter such records, either halt such practices or arrange for the preservation of complete and accurate duplicates or copies of such records, suitable for production, if requested.

In addition, we request that the Department produce to the Committees the following, no later than Monday, September 16:

1. Any and all correspondence sent to or received by the State Department from January 20, 2017 to the present related to or referring in any way to the potential or suggested investigations/legal cases referred to in this letter. This includes, but is not limited to, correspondence regarding or referring to Paul Manafort, Serhiy Leshchenko, the "Black Ledger," Hunter Biden, Burisma Holdings, former Ukrainian Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko, or Presidential Aide Andriy Yermak in the context of these potential or suggested investigations/legal cases.
2. Any copies in the State Department's, custody, or control of the transcript of President Trump's July 25, 2019 call with Ukrainian President Zelenskyy (the "July 25 Call").
3. Any and all records generated or received by the State Department in connection with, or that refer or relate in any way to the July 25 Call.
4. A full list of any Department officials who participated in, assisted in preparation for, or received a readout of the July 25 Call.
5. Any and all records generated or received by Department officials with or referring to President Trump's personal attorney, Rudy Giuliani.
6. Any and all records generated or received by any State Department staff in connection with, or that refer or relate in any way to the actual or potential suspension of security assistance to Ukraine.

Relevant custodians for responsive records include, but are not limited to:

1. the Office of the Secretary, including the Policy Planning Staff, the Counselor;
2. the Office of the Deputy Secretary;
3. the Office of the Undersecretary for Political Affairs;
4. Ambassador Kurt Volker and the office of the Special Representative for Ukraine;
5. The Bureau of European Affairs; and
6. U.S. Embassy Kyiv.

The Committees are prepared to work with the Department to facilitate the production of these documents.

Sincerely,

ELIOT L. ENGEL

Chairman
House Foreign Affairs Committee

ADAM SCHIFF

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Chairman
House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence

ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

Chairman
House Committee on Oversight and Reform

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Grassley Statement Regarding Intel Community Whistleblower

Oct 01, 2019

Butler County, Iowa – Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) made the following comments regarding the intelligence community whistleblower and related issues.

"This person appears to have followed the whistleblower protection laws and ought to be heard out and protected. We should always work to respect whistleblowers' requests for confidentiality. Any further media reports on the whistleblower's identity don't serve the public interest—even if the conflict sells more papers or attracts clicks.

"No one should be making judgments or pronouncements without hearing from the whistleblower first and carefully following up on the facts. Uninformed speculation wielded by politicians or media commentators as a partisan weapon is counterproductive and doesn't serve the country.

"When it comes to whether someone qualifies as a whistleblower, the distinctions being drawn between first- and second-hand knowledge aren't legal ones. It's just not part of whistleblower protection law or any agency policy. Complaints based on second-hand information should not be rejected out of hand, but they do require additional leg work to get at the facts and evaluate the claim's credibility.

"As I said last week, inquiries that put impeachment first and facts last don't weigh very credibly. Folks just ought to be responsible with their words."

Grassley is the chairman and co-founder of the Senate Whistleblower Protection Caucus and has authored and co-authored many of the nation's whistleblower protection laws.

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1/1/2020

Press Release | Press Releases | Press | U.S. Senator Richard Burr of North Carolina

07.16.18

Senate Intel Chairman Richard Burr on Trump-Putin Summit

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Chairman Richard Burr (R-NC) today released the following statement:

“The Senate Intelligence Committee has reviewed the 2017 IC assessment and found no reason to doubt its conclusion that President Putin ordered an influence campaign aimed at the 2016 U.S. elections with the goal of undermining faith in our democratic process. Russia has conducted a coordinated cyberattack on state election systems, and hacked critical infrastructure. They have used social media to sow chaos and discord in our society. They have beaten and harassed U.S. diplomats and violated anti-proliferation treaties. Any statement by Vladimir Putin contrary to these facts is a lie and should be recognized as one by the President.

“Vladimir Putin is not our friend and never has been. Nor does he want to be our friend. His regime’s actions prove it. We must make clear that the United States will not tolerate hostile Russian activities against us or our allies.”

Portman, Durbin, Shaheen, and Senate Ukraine Caucus Reaffirm Commitment to Help Ukraine Take on Corruption

portman.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/portman-durbin-shaheen-and-senate-ukraine-caucus-reaffirm-



February 12, 2016 | Press Releases

Washington, D.C. – Today, U.S. Senators Rob Portman (R-Ohio) and Dick Durbin (D-Ill.), co-chairs of the bipartisan Senate Ukraine Caucus, and Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on European Affairs spearheaded a letter expressing concern to Ukrainian President Poroshenko regarding the recent resignation of Minister of Economy Aivaras Abromavičius, who has alleged that corruption remains a dire challenge within the Ukrainian political system. In the letter, Portman, Durbin, and Shaheen said they recognized the challenges facing the Ukrainian government two years after the Maidan brought positive change to Ukraine. They also reaffirmed their commitment to help President Poroshenko confront the dual threat posed by Russian aggression in Ukraine as well as entrenched corruption in the government and to create a transparent and democratic government. The letter was also signed by Senators Ron Johnson (R-WI), Chris Murphy (D-CT), Mark Kirk (R-IL), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), and Sherrod Brown (D-OH).

"We recognize that your governing coalition faces not only endemic corruption left from decades of mismanagement and cronyism, but also an illegal armed seizure of territory by Russia and its proxies," the senators wrote. "Tackling such obstacles to reforms amidst a war and the loss of much of southeastern Ukraine's economic productivity is a formidable challenge -- one which we remain committed to helping you overcome."

Full text of the letter can be found below.

Dear President Poroshenko,

As members of the U.S. Senate Ukraine Caucus and strong supporters of your government, we write to express our concern regarding the recent resignation of Minister of Economy Aivaras Abromavičius and his allegations of persistent corruption in the Ukrainian political system.

During the past year, Mr. Abromavičius and his team implemented tough but necessary economic reforms, worked to combat endemic corruption, and promoted more openness and transparency in government. He was known to many of us as a respected reformer and supporter of the Ukrainian

cause. Minister Abromavičius's allegations raise concerns about the enormous challenges that remain in your efforts to reform the corrupt system you inherited.

We recognize that your governing coalition faces not only endemic corruption left from decades of mismanagement and cronyism, but also an illegal armed seizure of territory by Russia and its proxies. Tackling such obstacles to reforms amidst a war and the loss of much of southeastern Ukraine's economic productivity is a formidable challenge -- one which we remain committed to helping you overcome.

Succeeding in these reforms will show Russian President Vladimir Putin that an independent, transparent, and democratic Ukraine can and will succeed. It also offers a stark alternative to the authoritarianism and oligarchic cronyism prevalent in Russia. As such, we respectfully ask that you address the serious concerns raised by Minister Abromavičius. We similarly urge you to press ahead with urgent reforms to the Prosecutor General's office and judiciary. The unanimous adoption by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Basic Principles and Action Plan is a good step.

We very much appreciate your leadership and commitment to reform since the Ukrainian people demonstrated their resolve on the Maidan two years ago, and we look forward to continued cooperation in the future.

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NEWSROOM

Pelosi Remarks Announcing Impeachment Inquiry

SEPTEMBER 24, 2019 PRESS RELEASE

Washington, D.C. – Speaker Nancy Pelosi delivered remarks announcing the House of Representatives is moving forward with an official impeachment inquiry. Below are the Speaker's remarks as delivered:

Speaker Pelosi. Good afternoon. Last Tuesday, we observed the anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution on September 17.

Sadly, on that day, the Intelligence Community Inspector General formally notified the Congress that the Administration was forbidding him from turning over a whistleblower complaint. On Constitution Day. This is a violation of law.

Shortly thereafter, press reports began to break of a phone call by the President of the United States calling upon a foreign power to intervene in his election. This is a breach of his constitutional responsibilities.

The facts are these: the Intelligence Community Inspector General, who was appointed by President Trump, determined that the complaint is both of 'urgent concern and credible,' and its disclosure, he went on to say, that it 'relates to one of the most significant and important of the Director of National Intelligence's responsibilities to the American people.'

On Thursday, the Inspector General testified before the House Intelligence Committee, stating that the Acting Director of National Intelligence blocked him from disclosing the whistleblower complaint. This is a violation of the law.

The law is unequivocal. The DNI, it says, the Director of National Intelligence 'shall' provide Congress the full whistleblower complaint.

For more than 25 years, I have served on the Intelligence Committee – as a Member, as the Ranking Member, as part of the Gang of 4 even before I was in the Leadership.

I was there when we created the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. That did not exist before 2004.

I was there ever earlier in 90's when we wrote the whistleblower laws and continue to write them, to improve them to ensure the security of our intelligence and the safety of our whistleblowers.

I know what their purpose was, and we proceeded with balance and caution as we wrote the laws. I can say with authority, that the Trump Administration's actions undermine both: our national security and our intelligence and our protections of whistleblowers – more than both.

This Thursday, the Acting DNI will appear before the House Intelligence Committee.

At that time, he must turn over the whistleblower's full complaint to the Committee. He will have to choose whether to break the law or honor his responsibility to the Constitution.

12/20/2019

Pelosi Remarks Announcing Impeachment Inquiry | Speaker Nancy Pelosi

On the final day of the Constitutional Convention in 1787, when our Constitution was adopted, Americans gathered on the steps of Independence Hall to await the news of the government our Founders had crafted.

They asked Benjamin Franklin, 'What do we have: a republic or a monarchy?' Franklin replied: 'A republic, if you can keep it.'

Our responsibility is to keep it.

Our republic endures because of the wisdom of our Constitution, enshrined in three co-equal branches of government, serving as checks and balances on each other.

The actions taken to date by the President have seriously violated the Constitution – especially when the President says, 'Article II says, I can do whatever I want.'

For the past several months, we have been investigating in our Committees and litigating in the courts, so the House can gather 'all the relevant facts and consider whether to exercise its full Article I powers, including a constitutional power of the utmost gravity – approval of articles of impeachment.'

And this week, the President has admitted to asking the President of Ukraine to take actions which would benefit him politically. The action of – the actions of the Trump Presidency revealed the dishonorable fact of the President's betrayal of his oath of office, betrayal of our national security, and betrayal of the integrity of our elections.

Therefore, today, I am announcing the House of Representatives is moving forward with an official impeachment inquiry. I am directing our six Committees to proceed with their investigations under that umbrella of impeachment inquiry.

The President must be held accountable. No one is above the law.

Getting back to our Founders – in the darkest days of the American Revolution, Thomas Paine wrote: 'The times have found us.' The times found them to fight for and establish our democracy. The times have found us today, not to place ourselves in the same category of greatness as our Founders, but to place us in the urgency of protecting and defending our Constitution from all enemies, foreign and domestic. In the words of Ben Franklin, to keep our Republic.

I thank our Chairmen – Chairman Nadler, Chairman Schiff. Chairman Nadler of Judiciary. Chairman Schiff of Intelligence. Chairman Engel of Foreign Affairs. Chairman Cummings of Oversight and Chairman Cummings I have been in touch with constantly. He is a master of so much but including, Inspectors General and whistleblowers. Congressman Richie Neal of the Ways and Means Committee. Congresswomen Maxine Waters of the Financial Services Committee.

And I commend all of our Members, our colleagues for their thoughtful, thoughtful approach to all of this – for their careful statements.

God bless them and God Bless America. Thank you all.

 (<https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?>

 ([mailto:?subject=Pelosi Remarks Announcing](mailto:?subject=Pelosi%20Remarks%20Announcing)

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Impeachment

<https://www.speaker.gov/newsroom/92419-0>

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U.S. Embassy in Ukraine

Ambassador Yovanovitch's Remarks at a Women of Courage Reception in Honor of Kateryna Handziuk

April 24, 2019

TRANSCRIPT

Good evening! Доброго вечора всім!

Thank you for joining me tonight to celebrate Ukraine's women of courage.

Some of you may know that Mrs. Trump, Secretary Pompeo, and others marked International Women's Day in Washington, D.C. with a ceremony to announce the recipients of our annual International Women of Courage Award.

Our Embassy here in Kyiv nominated Kateryna Handziuk to be recognized as a Woman of Courage. The Department of State agreed that Kateryna's courage exemplified the spirit of the award and gave her a special honor during the March 7 ceremony.

Although Kateryna's father, Victor, and her husband, Serhiy, were not able to attend the Washington ceremony, we are so grateful that Victor could join us tonight. And we salute Serhiy for his valor on the front lines defending Ukraine.

I did not have the honor of knowing Kateryna, but I know from so many of you that she was a woman of courage who committed herself to speaking out against wrongdoing and public waste.

She co-founded the news source Most [Bridge], which has monitored state expenditures and anticorruption investigations.

She courageously highlighted the questionable dealings of officials entrusted with public funds.

And she contributed to UN and other efforts to support Ukrainian children displaced by war.

1/2/2020

Ambassador Yovanovitch's Remarks at a Women of Courage Reception in Honor of Kateryna Handziuk | U.S. Embassy in Ukraine

Tragically, Kateryna paid the ultimate price for her fearlessness in fighting against corruption and for her determined efforts to build a democratic Ukraine.

In the wake of Kateryna's untimely death, we stand – and I think I speak for all of us – we stand with the Ukrainian people in calling for a thorough investigation and justice for Katya and her family. And we will continue to stand with those engaged in the fight for a democratic Ukraine free of corruption, where people are held accountable.

Ukrainians – both women and men – have demonstrated to the world that they are willing to fight for a better system.

Katya was not only a brave woman. She was also an exemplary representative of Ukraine's vibrant civil society, which sets this country apart from so many of its neighbors.

In the wake of the Revolution of Dignity, civil society formed a vital partnership with government to advance the goals of the Ukrainian people. That partnership enabled many of the important achievements of the last five years and shows what Ukraine is capable of when the government, civil society, and the Ukrainian people work together.

It's important that at this moment of change in Ukraine, that vital partnership is renewed and strengthened.

For our part, the United States will continue working to support equality for all in Ukraine and to further empower women – and men – who bravely lead Ukraine forward towards this country's Euro-Atlantic future.

I want to ask everyone here today to take some time – in honor of Kateryna Handziuk – to think about how you personally can support Ukrainian men and Ukrainian women of courage as they build Ukraine's democratic future.

And now, I would like to share with you brief footage from the Women of Courage ceremony that was held in Washington, D.C.

[Video tribute to Kateryna Handziuk]

And now I would like to ask Victor Handziuk to come up here and join us.

Because in addition to the ceremony in Washington, we have our own Women of Courage recognition here in Ukraine.

And this year, we are honoring Kateryna as the 2019 Ukrainian Woman of Courage.

I would like to give you this plaque in honor of your daughter and the way she has inspired us over the last many years, but especially over the last year.

I would like to ask you to say a few words.

[Remarks by Victor Handziuk, father of Kateryna Handziuk]

It's hard to know what to say after such a moving speech.

Because, and I think that what we would all agree is that Katya and her family and the Ukrainian people deserve justice. And we look forward to seeing the day that justice is done.

We want to celebrate Katya Handziuk's life today.

And we thought there was no one better to speak than Oleksandra Matviychuk, who founded and chairs the Center for Civil Liberties, one of Ukraine's leading human rights groups.

She also established EuroMaidan SOS to provide injured and arrested Euromaidan protesters with emergency legal assistance. And Oleksandra was our Ukrainian Woman of Courage in 2017.

Please come on up, Oleksandra.

[Remarks by Oleksandra Matviychuk, 2017 Ukrainian Woman of Courage]

Thank you, Oleksandra.

Justice is, I think, what everybody wants. And whether it is politicians, or people in civil society, or those in the police force – I think everyone has a role to play.

So, we wanted to invite Vadim Lisnychuk – who is the Patrol Police Academy Director – to say a few words as he is a leader who works with uniformed women and uniformed men to protect the Ukrainian people.

[Remarks by Vadim Lisnychuk, Patrol Police Academy Director]

I think we can all see what a remarkable woman Kateryna Handziuk was, but she continues to inspire all of us to fight for justice.

1/2/2020

Ambassador Yovanovitch's Remarks at a Women of Courage Reception in Honor of Kateryna Handziuk | U.S. Embassy in Ukraine

She was a courageous woman, who wanted to make Ukraine a better place. And she is continuing to do

And I'll just leave you with one thought that was expressed in Washington at the ceremony – that courage is contagious. I think we saw that on the Maidan in 2014, we see that on the front lines every day in the Donbas, we see it in the work that Kateryna Handziuk did here in Ukraine. And we see it in the work of all of you – day in, day out – fighting for Ukraine and the future of Ukraine.

So, I want to thank all of you for your part in making Ukraine a better place and ensuring Ukraine's European future, where the promise of the Maidan that there will be dignity, that there will be equality before the law, is realized.

So, I want to thank everybody and I want to just remind you that courage is contagious.

I am sure that Victor Handziuk would love to talk to all of you, so please don't be shy and introduce yourselves.

And please return to talking to each other and hopefully enjoying the evening, because although I did not know her personally, I think that's what Kateryna would have wanted.

Thank you.

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1/3/2020

Press Briefing by Acting Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney | The White House



PRESS BRIEFINGS

Press Briefing by Acting Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney

Issued on: October 17, 2019



James S. Brady Press Briefing Room

12:39 P.M. EDT

MR. MULVANEY: Hey, guys. How are you all?

First thing's first: I want to comment very briefly on Mr. Cummings's passing. For those of you who know, I was in Congress for a couple years with Mr. Cummings, and — on the committee with him. I had a chance to work with him on a day in, day out basis. And he will be missed. He was — he was a classy guy, and I enjoyed much working with him. And the condolences from my family and all of the White House group to his family today. He will be — he will be sorely missed.

Now, getting on to the business at hand, I understand it's been a fairly slow news week — (laughter) — so I thought we'd introduce a couple of things.

I did want to come out here with my Nationals hat on, but they told me that that would violate some type of rule, so I couldn't do that. I was also going to wear my Montreal Expos hat, and then they said that would be foreign interference in the World Series, so I can't do that either.

So we're going to talk about the G7. We're going to talk about where we're going to do it. We're going to announce today that we're going to do the 46th G7 Summit on June 10th through June 12th at the Trump National Doral facility in Miami, Florida.

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The focus of the event will be global growth and challenges to the global economy, specifically dealing with things like rejuvenating incentives for growth and prosperity; rolling back prosperity-killing regulations; ending trade barriers; and re-opening energy markets. So, taking a lot of what we have been doing here domestically with such success and trying to encourage the rest of the world to get onboard as we sit here and our economy does so well. You look all across the world right now, and the rest of the world is either at or near recession. And we really do think that we have hit on a formula that works not only here but that would work overseas, where we take the G7 as the opportunity to try and convince other nations that they can have the same successes by following the same model.

Now, let's talk about the site selection process because I know you folks will ask some questions about that. How do we go about doing this? First of all, we use a lot of the same criteria that have been used by past administrations. There's a long list of the accommodations on site: the ballrooms, bilateral rooms, the number of rooms, the photo ops, the support hotels that are there, the proximity to cities and airports, helicopter landing zones, medical facilities, et cetera.

So we use the same set of criteria that previous administrations have used. We started with a list of about a dozen, just on paper. And we sent an advance team out to actually visit 10 locations in several states. We visited California, Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, Michigan, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Utah. Now, we got that list down to just under 10, and the advance team went out to visit those. And from there, we got down to four finalists that our senior team went out to look at. They looked at — I think it was one in Hawaii, two in Utah, and then the Mar-a-Lago facility in Florida.

And it became apparent at the end of that process that Doral was, by far and away — far and away — the best physical facility for this meeting. In fact, I was talking to one of the advance teams when they came back, and I said, "What was it like?" And they said, "Mick, you're not going to believe this, but it's almost like they built this facility to host this type of event." If any of you have been there, you know that there's separate buildings with their own rooms, separate and apart from each building, so that one country can have a building, another country can have another, you folks could have your building for the press. And obviously, the common areas are going to be perfect for our needs down there.

Again, anticipating your questions: How is this not an emoluments violation? Is the President going to profit from this? I think the President has pretty much made it very clear since he's got here that

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he doesn't profit from being here. He has no interest in profit from being here. It's one of the reasons that he's not taken a salary since he's been here. He's given that salary to charity. Will not be profiting here.

We had talked about the possibility of whether or not the President could actually do it at no cost, to understand there's difficulties with doing it that way. But we'll also have difficulties, obviously, if they charge market rates. So they're doing this at cost. As a result, it's actually going to be dramatically cheaper for us to do it at Doral compared to other final sites that we had.

So we're looking forward to that meeting. Again, June 10th through 12th of next year for the 46th G7.

Now, my guess is, with that official part of the briefing finished, there's going to be some questions about a variety of things that are going on in the world. So if we can do something together, that would be great. Can we take the questions about the G7 first, go through those, and then take a chance to maybe ask a couple questions about the other stuff before the end of the day?

Eamon?

Q Yeah, thank you. So, how is this not just an enormous conflict of interest for the President to host the G7 at his own resort? And how will the President continue to criticize the Biden family for self-dealing at the same time he's doing this?

MR. MULVANEY: Okay, a couple different things. First off, you're not making any profit. I think we've already established that. I think some —

Q There's marketing and branding opportunities (inaudible).

MR. MULVANEY: It's a huge — I've heard — you know, I've heard that — I've heard that before. You know, I guess I've been the Chief now for about 9 or 10 months, and I always hear: Whenever we go to Mar-a-Lago, it's a huge branding opportunity; whenever he plays at Trump Mar-a-Lago. We play golf at Trump Bedminster. He goes to play golf at Trump, up at Sterling. And everybody asks the question: Is it not a huge marketing opportunity?

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I would simply ask you all to consider the possibility that Donald Trump's brand is probably strong enough as it is and he doesn't need any more help on that. This is not like it's the most recognizable name in the English language and probably around the world right now. So, no, that has nothing to do with it.

That's why — listen, I was skeptical. I was. I was aware of the political, sort of, criticism that we'd come under for doing it at Doral, which is why I was so surprised when the advance team called back and said that this is the perfect physical location to do this.

So, I get the criticisms; so does he. Face it: He'd be criticized regardless of what he chose to do. But, no, there's no issue here on him profiting from this in any way, shape, or form.

What's the difference between this and what we're talking about the Bidens? Well, first of all, there's no profit here. Clearly, there's profit with the Bidens. And, second of all, I think if there's one difference that you look at between the Trump family and the Biden family: The Trump family made their money before they went into politics. That's a big difference.

Yes, sir.

Q You said it's going to be done at cost. Do you have any idea of the cost estimate, how much money you're looking at? And also, will it remain a G7, or do envision Russia joining?

MR. MULVANEY: Yeah, I don't have the numbers in terms of the cost. I do know that it was — it was — one of the ones I saw was it was almost half as much here. I don't want to butcher the numbers, but it was millions of dollars cheaper by doing it at Doral than it was at another facility. And that was roughly 50 percent savings.

As to the G7, G8 — look, that discussion is ongoing. The President has been very candid about that, about whether or not he wants to have Russia join the G7 again, that used to be members of that organization. And I think he's been fairly straightforward not only to you folks, but to other leaders around the world, which is we go to the G7 and what dominates so much of the discussion? Russia. Okay? Russian energy. Russian military policy. The Russian economy. It dominates a lot of the discussion. Wouldn't it be better to have them inside as part of those conversations? But I think that decision will be made later, and we'll continue to review it.

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Yes, ma'am.

Q Thank you very much. G7 summits have been held for decades, so how can you make the argument that this is the best place to hold it? Surely there were other places that this could be held. And you can't make the argument that the President is not going to profit because we can't know how much he might profit in the future, right?

MR. MULVANEY: Yeah. To your first point, again, I think (inaudible) the profit one. Again, he's not making any money off of this, just like he's not making any money from working here. And if you think it's going to help his brand, that's great. But I would suggest that he probably doesn't need much help promoting his brand, so we'll put the profit one aside and deal with a perfect place.

I mean, who was here for the last time it was at Camp David? Was that the perfect place? In fact, I understand the folks who participated in it hated it and thought it was a miserable place to have the G7. It was way too small. It was way too remote. My understanding is this media didn't like it because you had to drive an hour on a bus to get there either way.

Q I take your point. But there have been other G7 summits; I've attended numerous —

MR. MULVANEY: Yeah.

Q — G7 summits that have been completely fine, according to the leaders who attended them.

MR. MULVANEY: Well, look, we looked at —

Q How can the White House really make the argument that this was the only place the G7 Summit could (inaudible)?

MR. MULVANEY: It's not the only place; it's the best place. Those are two different things. Okay?

But we had dates —

Q There had to be other good places without the President's (inaudible).

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MR. MULVANEY: There's plenty of other good places in this country to hold a large event. There's no question about it. Some of the limitations: We wanted it at a specific time; we wanted it in early June. So that limits it a little bit. Then there's other — there's difficulties with going to various places. Some places don't have the transportation that you need.

I mean, there was one place — I won't say where it was — where we actually had to figure out if we were going to have to have oxygen tanks for the participants because of the altitude. So, yeah, there's just — there's limitations in other places.

We thought, of the 12 places that we looked at — and you'd recognize the names of them if we told what they were — that this was by far and away the best choice.

Yes, ma'am.

Q Very quickly. This is a business optics. How is the President going to stand on the debate stage — if, in fact, Vice President Biden wins the nomination — and try to make an argument that he profited off of his vice presidency, or his family did, when he's hosting the G7 (inaudible)?

MR. MULVANEY: He's going to do that extraordinarily well.

Yes, ma'am. Yeah.

Q Thank you, Director Mulvaney. So you were talking about how this is the best place —

MR. MULVANEY: Yeah.

Q — or one of the best places. Okay. So is this going to be self-contained just at Doral? Are there other hotel rooms you think you'll have to get? Or is there anywhere else that you'll have to (inaudible)?

MR. MULVANEY: Yeah. One of the advantages — I understand that one of the advantages that the advance team came back with about Doral was the fact that it could be sequestered off from the rest of the city, and that nearly all or all of the operations could be on that one piece of property. I think there's — I think the President said there's almost 900 acres there. So it's a huge facility. And

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we'll be able — with a lot open space. I think there's three golf courses. So there's a lot of space available to us. And we do anticipate the entire thing being on that campus.

Now —

Q Including the hotel — including hotels? I'm talking about additional hotel rooms. Do you think you'll have to get additional hotels involved in that?

MR. MULVANEY: Yeah, I would — well, again, I'm not sure about the su- — when we talk about the delegations — for example, when we went to — where were we? — Biarritz, and I think we were at two or three different hotels around that city — that would not be the case here.

The American delegation would stay on campus. The British delegation will stay on campus. The Germans will stay on campus. Whether — and you folks will be there. Whether or not there'll be other folks who are using up hotel rooms in the Miami area, I can't speak to that.

Q And then a quick question about local authorities. What local authorities have you been in contact with about this?

MR. MULVANEY: Yeah, I haven't asked that question, but we do that as part of — the advance team will do that with each of the groups that we work with. But I'm not familiar with those.

Yes, ma'am.

Q Yeah. A video shown last weekend at that resort — actually, a doctored video — showed the President killing members of the news media and his political opponents. Why do you think he hasn't spoken directly about the sentiment behind that video?

MR. MULVANEY: Have you asked him?

Q I'm sure —

Q We have asked him. Yes.

Q We've asked. We've asked for comment over and over again, yes.

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MR. MULVANEY: But we put out a statement. And you had a chance to ask him that question yesterday and you asked him something else, which is fine. But —

Q But to be clear, he's been asked multiple times and hasn't responded.

MR. MULVANEY: Hold on a sec. Hold on a second. Her question was why he hasn't answered. We did, as a White House, we listened to that. We didn't like that. I think we condemn that. That's not

Q But he's the President.

Q (Inaudible) Twitter with 65 million followers, sir.

MR. MULVANEY: Do you — we didn't. We did not. Did you think that we would?

Q What has the President said about it, Mr. Mulvaney?

Q I mean, that doesn't sound like a very strong condemnation.

MR. MULVANEY: Oh, come on, Jon.

Q This was a —

MR. MULVANEY: I mean, it was — it was awful. I mean, I've never seen the movie. No, no — we — that has no place here. I think we've condemned that.

Q Has he watched the video?

MR. MULVANEY: I don't know if he's seen it or not. I have.

Q Will the President go before the cameras and say the same, Mr. Mulvaney?

Q I understand that you're trying to put it in a place that you think is the best.

MR. MULVANEY: Yeah.

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Q And maybe save the taxpayers some money, which is important for all of us. But sometimes you — because of the appearance of impropriety, you don't make that call. Can you at least understand and acknowledge that just the appearance of impropriety makes this wince-inducing and maybe this is something that you want to reconsider? How did that conversation go in the room?

MR. MULVANEY: Yeah. The President knows that. Listen, the President — we know the environment we live in. You all know the environment that we live in. And he knows exactly that he's going to get these questions and exactly get that reaction from a lot of people.

And he's simply saying, "Okay, that's fine. I'm willing to take that." The same way he takes it when he goes to Trump Mar-a-Lago. The same place when he goes to play at Trump Bedminster. He got over that a long time ago. We absolutely believe this is the best place to have it. We're going to have it there. And there's going to be folks who will never get over the fact that it's a Trump property. We get that. But we're still going to go there.

Yes, ma'am.

Q Thank you, Mr. Mulvaney. Aside from what your advance team did to look for the perfect place, what role did the President play in selecting Doral, including getting it on the initial list of 10 or 12 places in the first place?

MR. MULVANEY: Yeah. I think we — that's a fair question. We sat around one night. We were back in the dining room and I was going over it with a couple of our advance team. We had the list, and he goes, "What about Doral?" And it was like, "That's not the craziest idea. It makes perfect sense."

Q So he's the one that initially brought it up.

MR. MULVANEY: We're all familiar with it, so it's not like he said, "Oh, this is what Doral... Do I have to explain..." He said, "No, what about Doral?" Like, you know what, that's not the craziest idea we ever heard. And we sat down and went to go look at it.

Yes, sir.

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Q Yes. Thanks, Mick. I wanted to ask you as it relates to this decision that you've made. As the host country, couldn't the President simply, as the host country, invite President Putin to represent Russia at the G7?

MR. MULVANEY: Yeah, I think we can, because I think we — as I understand how the G7 works, there will be other leaders there anyway. For example, I met with Scott Morrison, the Prime Minister of Australia, at the G7, even though they're not there. I assume he came at the invite of President Macron. And we could do the same thing. But in terms of — I think the question I got originally was turning it from the G7 into the G8.

Q That's not my question.

MR. MULVANEY: Okay.

Q My question was: Could he simply invite President Putin to attend?

MR. MULVANEY: I think he probably — yes. If the question is, can he physically do that? Yeah. I think he can.

Q It's not about whether he can. Of course, he can; he's President. But would he consider doing that?

MR. MULVANEY: That has not come up. I think the conversation we've had about whether or not we'd turn it from the G7 to G8, that could be an intermediate step.

Yes, sir.

Q You mentioned that the President is willing to take the criticism on this. But what about the country itself? Is there any value to sending a message to the world, especially given that all that's happened with foreign interference and attempts at foreign interference in our country, that this President and this country is not open for the kind of self-dealing that happens in other countries? Is that not an important message to send when you're inviting the world to come here to the United States?

MR. MULVANEY: No.

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What's your question?

Q I have a non-G7 question.

Q Yeah, so do I.

MR. MULVANEY: Any G7 — any last G7 questions?

Q I got one more.

Q About the G7 property — a couple of things. One, you say it's the best property for this to take place. So the first question is: Why has no other G7 ever been held there before?

MR. MULVANEY: Because they didn't go look at it. So —

I don't know, why did they have it at Camp David? I mean, seriously. I mean, for those of you who were there, I'm a little bit familiar with it; I've talked with the folks up at Camp David because I was up there recently and asked. I said, "Didn't you guys go up..." — I think it was a G8 back then. 2004, something like that. And they said it was a complete disaster. I'm like, "Okay, I wonder how that happened. How did that decision get made?"

Q Last — last G7 question then, if I can. You were talking about the President's — this video, where the President was seen shooting members of the media and others that was played at the Doral property there that said that we haven't had the chance to ask him that question yet, which we have. But broadly, the President has tweeted 45,000 times. Forty-five thousand times. How come the President hasn't used that Twitter account to more than 60 million followers to condemn it? You're his Chief of Staff.

MR. MULVANEY: Yeah. The White House put out a statement about it. I mean, that's —

Q But why hasn't the President? Because he's tweeted 45,000 times.

MR. MULVANEY: I'll tell you what, the next time you ask him — again, it's not like the man hides from you folks, okay? I think he's done almost 100 face-to-face interviews with you.

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Q We've asked him and he's ignored the question, sir.

MR. MULVANEY: Okay. Anybody else on G7?

Q I got one more. Is there any precedent in your studying of the G7 of a G7 Summit being held at a property owned by the President or a President?

And my second question is: As you're looking at the content of what you want to do next year, it's probably going to be hot in Florida in June. Will climate change be one of the issues that you discuss?

MR. MULVANEY: The first question is, no. I don't know if another President has ever done it. I don't know if another President has owned a property that was even considered for G7. So, no, we haven't — I don't know the answer to that question.

Climate change will not be on the agenda.

Yes, sir.

Q Thank you. President Trump has called for the exposure of the whistleblower on Ukraine —

MR. MULVANEY: Are we done on G7 then? Is that the collective — is that the collective will?

Q Yes. That was (inaudible), sir.

MR. MULVANEY: I've got one gentlemen — yes, sir. Go ahead. Last one on G7.

Q Well, you began your remarks talking about the passing of Mr. Cummings. Just to show the American people that this is above board, are you going to share documents that show how you arrived at this decision with the Congress?

MR. MULVANEY: No. But I would imagine we would share dollar figures with you afterwards. I mean, that's — that's ordinary course of business.

Q (Inaudible) paper exists that shows the merits of (inaudible)?

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MR. MULVANEY: By the way, you're going to get this answer a lot, okay? I don't talk about how this place runs on the inside. So, if you ask if us — if you want to see our paper on how we did this, the answer is: Absolutely not.

Yes, sir.

Q Yes. There will almost certainly be a House Judiciary Committee hearing about this site selection.

MR. MULVANEY: You think so?

Q Jerry Nadler has already talked about that. Will —

MR. MULVANEY: Do you, though? Do you really think so? Do you think they have time to do that?

Q I really think so. Yeah. Will the administration participate, cooperate, with that?

MR. MULVANEY: You know, that's a — by the way, that's a fascinating question. I had not thought that — that this would prompt a Judiciary Committee investigation. On one hand, I'm thinking to myself, "They don't have time to do it because they're too busy doing impeachment." Right. And then I think to myself, "No, this is entirely consistent with how they've spent the first 18 months in office." Right? Or 12 months — however long they've been here. I guess it's been a year, right?

That, yeah, they'd rather do that than talk about tax policy, than talk about drug policy, than talk about opioids; talk about healthcare. So, that's a fascinating question. I don't know if there will be a Judiciary Committee inquiry into this. My guess is there probably will be. And we look forward to participating in it.

Is anybody — this is all — these are all G7 questions that are out now? Okay. Now we're moving on to something else.

Q Yes.

MR. MULVANEY: So, who hasn't asked me? Jon Karl has not asked a question yet.

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Q So, actually, a clarification on your first statement on the G7. You said five finalists, and you said Mar-a-Lago was one of the finalists?

MR. MULVANEY: Yeah, it was — yeah, four finalists, I think. We started with 12 on, sort of, a list. The team visited, sort of, a — a first team visited 10 of those. And I think I identified the states. We then got our senior team down and they visited four, of which Mar-a-Lago was one. There was one in Hawaii and two in Utah.

Q So, you're telling me that in the entire United States, you came down to four finalists, and two of them were Trump properties?

MR. MULVANEY: No, one.

Q Well, Mar-a-Lago.

Q You said Mar-a-Lago.

MR. MULVANEY: I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

Q Okay, so you misspoke.

MR. MULVANEY: No, I'm sorry, Jon.

Q Okay. Okay.

MR. MULVANEY: Doral. Doral. Doral.

Q Just want to (inaudible) —

MR. MULVANEY: Yes, I'm sorry. Yes.

Q Okay, so —

Q So Mar-a-Lago was not involved.

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MR. MULVANEY: No, Mar-a-Lago was not involved. Mar-a-Lago is not close to being sufficient for the G7. I'm sorry that I —

Q Thank you. Thank you for clarifying.

MR. MULVANEY: If I said Mar-a-Lago about where we visited, it was Doral. I apologize.

Q Okay, the record is corrected.

MR. MULVANEY: All right.

Q So, to the question of Ukraine.

MR. MULVANEY: Yeah.

Q Can you clarify — and I've been trying to get an answer to this: Was the President serious when he said that he would also like to see China investigate the Bidens? And you were directly involved in the decision to withhold funding from Ukraine. Can you explain to us now definitively why? Why was funding withheld?

MR. MULVANEY: Sure. I'll — let's deal with the second one first, which is — look, it should come as no surprise to anybody — the last time I was up here — I haven't done this since I was Chief of Staff, right? The last time I was up here, some of you folks remember, it was for the budget briefings, right?

And one of the questions y'all always asked me about the budget is, "What are you all doing to the foreign aid budget?" Because we absolutely gutted it, right? President Trump is not a big fan of foreign aid. Never has been; still isn't. Doesn't like spending money overseas, especially when it's poorly spent. And that is exactly what drove this decision.

I've been in the office a couple times with him, talking about this. And he said, "Look, Mick, this is a corrupt place." Everybody knows it's a corrupt place. By the way, put this in context: This is on the heels of what happened in Puerto Rico, when we took a lot of heat for not wanting to give a bunch of aid to Puerto Rico because we thought that place was corrupt. And, by the way, it turns out we were right. All right? So put that as your context.

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He's like, "Look, this is a corrupt place. I don't want to send them a bunch of money and have them waste it, have them spend it, have them use it to line their own pockets. Plus, I'm not sure that the other European countries are helping them out either."

So we actually looked at that, during that time, before — when we cut the money off, before the money actually flowed, because the money flowed by the end of the fiscal year — we actually did an analysis of what other countries were doing in terms of supporting Ukraine. And what we found out was that — and I can't remember if it's zero or near zero dollars from any European countries for lethal aid. And you've heard the President say this: that we give them tanks and other countries give them pillows. That's absolutely right, that the — as vocal as the Europeans are about supporting Ukraine, they are really, really stingy when it comes to lethal aid. And they weren't helping Ukraine, and then still to this day are not. And the President did not like that. I know it's a long answer to your question, but I'm still going.

So that was — those were the driving factors. Did he also mention to me in pass the corruption related to the DNC server? Absolutely. No question about that. But that's it. And that's why we held up the money.

Now, there was a report —

Q So the demand for an investigation into the Democrats was part of the reason that he ordered to withhold funding to Ukraine?

MR. MULVANEY: The look back to what happened in 2016 —

Q The investigation into Democrats.

MR. MULVANEY: — certainly was part of the thing that he was worried about in corruption with that nation. And that is absolutely appropriate.

Q And withholding the funding?

MR. MULVANEY: Yeah. Which ultimately, then, flowed. By the way, there was a report that we were worried that the money wouldn't — that if we didn't pay out the money, it would be illegal, okay? It

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would be unlawful. That is one of those things that has the little shred of truth in it, that makes it look a lot worse than it really is.

We were concerned, over at OMB, about an impoundment. And I know I just put half of you folks to bed, but there's — the Budget Control Act — Budget Control Impoundment Act of 1974 says that if Congress appropriates money, you have to spend it. Okay? At least that's how it's interpreted by some folks. And we knew that that money either had to go out the door by the end of September or we had to have a really, really good reason not to do it. And that was the legality of the issue.

Q But to be clear, what you just described is a quid pro quo. It is: Funding will not flow unless the investigation into the Democratic server happens as well.

MR. MULVANEY: We do that all the time with foreign policy. We were holding money at the same time for — what was it? The Northern Triangle countries. We were holding up aid at the Northern Triangle countries so that they would change their policies on immigration.

By the way — and this speaks to an important —

Q (Inaudible.)

MR. MULVANEY: I'm sorry? This speaks to an important point, because I heard this yesterday and I can never remember the gentleman who testified. Was it McKinney, the guy — was that his name? I don't know him. He testified yesterday. And if you go — and if you believe the news reports — okay? Because we've not seen any transcripts of this. The only transcript I've seen was Sondland's testimony this morning.

If you read the news reports and you believe them — what did McKinney say yesterday? Well, McKinney said yesterday that he was really upset with the political influence in foreign policy. That was one of the reasons he was so upset about this. And I have news for everybody: Get over it. There's going to be political influence in foreign policy.

Q What about the Bidens, Mr. Mulvaney?

MR. MULVANEY: I'm talking to Mr. Karl. That is going to happen. Elections have consequences. And foreign policy is going to change from the Obama administration to the Trump administration.

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And what you're seeing now, I believe, is a group of mostly career bureaucrats who are saying, "You know what? I don't like President Trump's politics, so I'm going to participate in this witch hunt that they're undertaking on the Hill." Elections do have consequences and they should. And your foreign policy is going to change. Obama did it in one way; we're doing it a different way. And there's no problem with that.

Yes, sir.

Q I just —

Q Mr. Mulvaney, what about the Bidens, though, Mr. Mulvaney? Did that come into consideration when that money was held up?

MR. MULVANEY: I'm sorry, I don't know your name, but he's being very rude. So go ahead and ask your question.

Q Just to clarify, and just to follow up on that question: So, when you're saying that politics is going to be involved —

MR. MULVANEY: Yeah.

Q — the question here is not just about political decisions about how you want to run the government. This is about investigating political opponents. Are you saying that —

MR. MULVANEY: No. The DNC — the DNC server —

Q Are you saying that it's okay for the U.S. government to hold up aid and require a foreign government to investigate political opponents of the President?

MR. MULVANEY: Now, you're talking about looking forward to the next election. We're talking —

Q Even the DNC. The DNC is still involved in this next election. Is that not correct?

MR. MULVANEY: So, wait a second. So there's —

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Q So are you saying —

MR. MULVANEY: Hold on a second. No, let me ask you —

Q But you're asking to investigate the DNC, right?

MR. MULVANEY: So, let's look at this —

Q Is the DNC political opponents of the President?

MR. MULVANEY: There's an ongoing — there's an ongoing investigation by our Department of Justice into the 2016 election. I can't remember that person's name.

Q Durham.

MR. MULVANEY: Durham. Durham, okay? That's an ongoing investigation, right? So you're saying the President of the United States, the chief law enforcement person, cannot ask somebody to cooperate with an ongoing public investigation into wrongdoing? That's just bizarre to me that you would think that you can't do that.

Q And so you would say that it's fine to ask about the DNC but not about Biden? So, Biden is now — Biden is running for the Democratic nomination, right?

MR. MULVANEY: Yeah.

Q That's for 2020. So are you drawing that distinction?

MR. MULVANEY: That's a hypothetical because that did not happen here.

Q No, no, but — the President —

MR. MULVANEY: But I would ask you —

Q No, no. On the call, the President did ask about investigating the Bidens. Are you saying that the money that was held up, that that had nothing to do with the Bidens?

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MR. MULVANEY: No, the money held up had absolutely nothing to do with Biden. There's no question. And that was the point I made to you.

Q And you're drawing a distinction?

MR. MULVANEY: Yeah.

Q You're saying that it would be wrong —

MR. MULVANEY: Three — three factors.

Q — to hold up money for the Bidens?

MR. MULVANEY: Again, I was involved with the process by which the money was held up temporarily, okay? Three issues for that: the corruption of the country; whether or not other countries were participating in the support of the Ukraine; and whether or not they were cooperating in an ongoing investigation with our Department of Justice. That's completely legitimate.

Yes, sir.

Q Thank you. Regarding the Secretary over at the State Department, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Asian — for European and Eurasian Affairs, George Kent, reportedly testified that you asked him to step down from any issues regarding Ukraine. Is that true? Do you —

MR. MULVANEY: Who said that?

Q It was George Kent.

MR. MULVANEY: I'm sorry. I don't know who that is. Is that somebody who testified this week?

Q Yes.

MR. MULVANEY: I don't believe I've ever talked to anybody named George Kent in my life, nor have I asked anybody to resign their position over this.

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Q Okay. And also, another thing is, is that there have been reports that you had been conducting a review of the phone call with Volodymyr Zelensky, the Ukrainian President. And the question is: What are you — what are you — is that true? Do you acknowledge that you've been conducting that review?

MR. MULVANEY: Well, we're certainly —

Q Or was the call just perfect, as the President has said?

MR. MULVANEY: Again, no one here had any difficulty with the call. We do think the call is perfect. We don't think there's any difficulty with the call at all. I read it several times. By the way, I was not on the call; someone from my office was on the call. No one raised any difficulty with me on the call at all. I understand that, in fact, no one on the call in here thought there was any difficulty with it.

Let's get to your point about what we're doing inside.

Q So was this an attempt to actually uncover the whistleblower? Was that what this is about?

MR. MULVANEY: No. No, no. Here's what it is: It was like, look, if you get — if you're having the House do what they're going to do, doesn't it simply make sense for us to sort of try and find out what happened?

This is one of the questions I don't understand from you folks that we get all the time, which is: Some of you have criticized us for having a war room — okay? — which we don't, by the way. You don't have a war room when you haven't done anything wrong. Clinton certainly had a war room. I think Nixon did. But they actually did something wrong. We didn't. So we don't have a war room.

But, at the same time, then when we say that, you say, "Well, you're not taking it seriously." Yeah, we are. I mean, we do. It's part of what we do. Look, when you work for the Trump administration, you're used to this kind of attention, right? We know how to do this, and we do this and we're preparing for it. Yes, we're having lawyers look at it. Yes, we're having our PR people looking at it. If we didn't — if we weren't doing that, we would be committing malpractice. But I don't think there's anything extraordinary that we're doing.

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We've been dealing with oversight from the Democrats since they took office. In fact, it's all we've been dealing with the Democrats since they took office because we certainly haven't been doing much legislating since they've been here.

Yes. Yes, ma'am. I'm trying to get folks who haven't asked a question yet.

Q Chief, in light of the depositions that we've heard, do you believe that Rudy Giuliani's role as an outside advisor to the President is problematic?

MR. MULVANEY: No, that's the President's call. I mean, I — actually, Steve Scalise got asked a similar question today on television. I thought his answer was great, which is: Look, you may not like the fact — in fact, I think — I understand, from reading his opening testimony, that Gordon Sondland didn't like the fact that Giuliani was involved and said that in his testimony.

Okay, that's great. You may not like the fact that Giuliani was involved. That's great. That's fine. It's not illegal. It's not impeachable. The President gets to use who he wants to use. If the President wants to fire me today and hire somebody else, he can.

Q Even if he's operating separately from the actual, like —

MR. MULVANEY: The President gets to set foreign policy and he gets to choose who to do so. As long as he doesn't violate any law — okay? — and he doesn't violate laws regarding confidential information or classified material or anything like that, the President gets to use who he wants to use.

Q A follow-up? A follow-up on that?

Q Did the President direct you or anyone else to work with Rudy Giuliani on Ukraine?

MR. MULVANEY: Um, yeah. The — when was it? It was the May meeting, and I think this has been widely reported. In fact, I think Sondland mentioned it in his testimony, and I'm pretty sure that Rick Perry mentioned it in his interview yesterday with the Wall Street Journal, that in the May meeting in the Oval Office that I was in — I think Senator Johnson was there, as well as Mr. Volker was there — the President asked Rick Perry to work with Mr. Giuliani.

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Q And did you think that that was appropriate when you were asked as well?

MR. MULVANEY: I wasn't asked.

Q You were not asked?

MR. MULVANEY: No.

Q That was my question: Were you or anyone else asked?

MR. MULVANEY: And I think the answer to your question is that —

Q So, you were not asked? Just Rick Perry?

MR. MULVANEY: The President told Rick Perry, who I think was sort of — you know, he was — the issue — one of the reasons they were in there, obviously talking about energy — they were very interested in trying to get Ukraine as an energy partner. That's why Mr. Perry — Secretary Perry — was so heavily involved. And that's when the President said to Mr. Perry, "Go ahead and talk to Rudy."

Q Fiona Hill said that was a shadow foreign policy.

MR. MULVANEY: Yes, you haven't asked a question yet. Yes.

Q Was that a shadow foreign policy?

MR. MULVANEY: Shadow? Hold it. A shadow foreign policy? Look, that's a term you're using. That's a pejorative. That's — what is a shadow foreign policy? The President —

Q Operating outside the normal channels.

MR. MULVANEY: Normal chan- — who else was in the room? Rudy Giuliani — who's in the room when the President is having this conversation, okay? It's Gordon Sondland, our Ambassador to the EU; Kurt Volker, who is our Special Designated Envoy to the Ukraine. I sat next to Mike Pompeo — Mike Pompeo yesterday at the meeting with the congressional leaders, and I said, "Look, I understand I

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coordinated a coup against you by putting — by putting Sondland and Volker in charge of Ukraine policy.” And he leans back to me, and he goes, “You know they both work for me?”

There’s not a shadow policy here. The President is entitled to have whoever he wants to work.

Q You were comfortable with Rudy Giuliani’s role?

MR. MULVANEY: I’m 100 percent comfortable with that.

Yes, sir.

Q You called on me. Director Mulvaney, you called on me.

MR. MULVANEY: Oh, I’m sorry. I did. I did. Yes, I’m sorry. I’m sorry. Yes.

Q No problem. First, to follow on that question, can you describe the role that you played in pressuring Ukraine to investigate the Bidens?

And secondly —

MR. MULVANEY: Yeah, none.

Q — can you walk us through the meeting that President Trump was dangling over Volodymyr Zelensky to happen right here at the White House? What were the preconditions of that meeting? And was investigating Burisma one of them?

MR. MULVANEY: The first question to your answer — the first answer to your question is: None. I didn’t have any — what was your question? What did I do to Ukraine or something? Nothing.

Q Did you do anything to pressure Ukraine to investigate the Bidens?

MR. MULVANEY: No. So what’s the second question?

Q The second question is about the meeting —

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MR. MULVANEY: That he “dangled”? That’s an interesting —

Q — that was supposed to happen here at the White House between the two Presidents?

MR. MULVANEY: Yeah —

Q Can you walk us through the discussions for that meeting? What was on the table for a precondition? And was the investigation of Burisma ever brought up as a condition to meet with President Trump?

MR. MULVANEY: No. Not to me. And not to anybody I know of. I was never in a conversation that had the word “Burisma” in it. But as to —

Q I’m sorry, investigating the Bidens, then?

MR. MULVANEY: Okay. Or the Bidens. That never happened with me in there.

But to the larger point about the meeting, I think one of the things that you all have missed is the President didn’t want to take the meeting. The President didn’t want to have a phone call. That was mis- — Rick Perry was pushing for that.

Q On the phone call, he said, “I’ll see you here at the White House,” didn’t he?

MR. MULVANEY: At the end. Yes. But that’s — I think that was a courtesy that he was extending at the time. And he’s not been here yet. But the —

Q So he was never realistically entertaining a meeting with President Zelensky?

MR. MULVANEY: I mean, I think — we get asked by foreign leaders all of the time to either come visit their country or to have them come visit here. And we try to be courteous and say yes, and some of them we’re able to accommodate, and some of them we are not. But I do not remember —

Q (Inaudible.)

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MR. MULVANEY: Excuse me. I'm going to answer her question. That — I don't remember a serious conversation about setting up an actual meeting. There were no dates discussed. There was not — I saw that as one of the typical pleasantries that we have. And I don't think it was dangling a meeting or anything like that.

Yes, sir.

Q Is the President still planning to welcome President Erdoğan at the White House on November 13th?

MR. MULVANEY: Yeah. I think that — I think that depends on how the next couple of days go. It's still on the schedule. And I understand that Vice President Pence's meeting is going much longer than it's expected today. I hope it's not going — I hope they're not having a press conference right now. But I think that's one of those wait-and-see things.

The President has been very clear about what he wants to see out of President Erdoğan. He wants a ceasefire now. He wants prisoners protected. He — I think, go down the long list of the things the President has mentioned to President Erdoğan. And if we're able to get that, then I think that meeting can go forward. If not, then I think the President will review that possibility.

Yes, ma'am.

Q You just said you were involved in the process in which, you know, the money being held up temporarily. You named three issues for that: the corruption in the country; whether or not the country — they were assisting with an ongoing investigation into corruption. How is that not an establishment of an exchange, of a quid pro quo? You just seem to continue to be establishing this, and then —

MR. MULVANEY: It's quid pro — those are the terms that you use. I mean, go look at what Gordon Sondland said today in his testimony — was that I think, in his opening statement, he said something along the lines of they were trying to get the deliverable. And the deliverable was a statement by the Ukraine about how they were going to deal with corruption. Okay? Go read his testimony if you haven't already.

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And what he says is — and he's right — that's absolutely ordinary course of business. This is — this is what you do when you have someone come to the White House, when you either arrange a visit for the President, you have a phone call with the President, a lot of times we use that as the opportunity to get them to make a statement of their policy or to announce something that they're going to do. It's one of the reasons we then — you can sort of announce that at the — on the phone call or at the meeting. This is the ordinary course of foreign policy.

Yes. I'm sorry.

Q Mr. Mulvaney, is it appropriate for any President or this President to pressure a foreign country to investigate a political opponent?

MR. MULVANEY: You know, every time I get that question, that's one of those things about —

Q It's a simple question.

MR. MULVANEY: It is, but so is, "When did you stop beating your wife?"

Q So what's the answer?

MR. MULVANEY: It assumes that the President has done that.

Q Well, what's the answer? I said "any President."

MR. MULVANEY: We haven't done that.

Q I said Mr. Trump or any President.

MR. MULVANEY: I'm not — I'm going to talk about what this President did.

Yes, ma'am.

Q The other thing I have is: The President's personal attorney, Rudy Giuliani, said he sees his work as the President's personal attorney as intertwined with the President's national agenda when it

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comes to Ukraine. Do you see those issues as intertwined? Is his political interest as a President, as a political candidate, is that intertwined with the national interest?

MR. MULVANEY: You know, I don't know how to answer that question except that — I mean, Mr. Giuliani is his personal lawyer, and if the President wants to use him —

Q So is it appropriate for a personal attorney to be working in Ukraine on issues that are supposed to be national issues? Mr. Giuliani says there's an attorney-client privilege issue because he was working in the President's interest. Is that appropriate for his personal attorney to be working in his interest —

MR. MULVANEY: I don't know of anything inappropriate about that.

Yes, sir.

Q Thank you, Mr. Mulvaney.

MR. MULVANEY: Oh, yeah. I'm sorry, the lady in the back is very nice. Yes, ma'am.

Q Thank you, Mr. Mulvaney. You say that the U.S. foreign policy will change, not like in previous administrations. How does the President respond about the North Korea's break-off talks with the U.S. (inaudible)?

MR. MULVANEY: If the question is responding to breaking off talks, is there news in the last couple of days on that?

Q Yes. October 5th, Stockholm, in Sweden.

MR. MULVANEY: Okay. I'm sorry. I'm not — I'm just not briefed on that, and I apologize.

Yes, sir.

Q Thank you, Mr. Mulvaney.

MR. MULVANEY: Yeah. And I'll take one more after this.

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Q There have been published reports that you are objecting within the President's official family to the appointment of Ken Cuccinelli to head up the Department of Homeland Security. Is that so? And if so, what is your objection to his possible appointment?

MR. MULVANEY: I have none. And I think Ken would be good at the job.

Yes, ma'am. I'm sorry. Did I really ignore you the whole time? You're sitting in the front row and I haven't asked you a question yet?

Q (Inaudible.)

MR. MULVANEY: I'm sorry.

Q Same with me, Mr. Mulvaney.

Q So, if there was no quid pro quo on the call, if it was routine, if he didn't even want to do it, and, you know, it's all — is on the up and up, why didn't it have to go into this more restricted server? Why was it moved from the one server to the other?

MR. MULVANEY: All right. Let's — let's — I'm glad we got that. It's a good one to finish on.

I'm not going to answer your question the way you want me to, but I'm going to answer your question. So give me just a second.

I am not going to sit here and talk about how we handle classified information in this building, okay? I got a couple questions before about my private conversations with the President; I don't talk about those either.

I'm not going to talk about that, but I do want to address it. And here's why: There's only one reason people care about that, right? And it's because they think there's a cover-up. They hope there's a cov- — some of them hope that there's a cover-up; that, "Oh my goodness gracious. There must have been something really, really duplicitous. Something really underhanded about how they handled this document, because there must be a cover-up" — because there's always a good cover-up when we've got an impeachment, right? Nixon had a cover-up of the tapes; Clinton had a cover-up of the relationship with Lewinsky. There must be a cover-up here, right?

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Let me ask you this: If we wanted to cover this up, would we have called the Department of Justice almost immediately and have them look at the transcript of the tape? Which we did, by the way. All right? If we wanted to cover this up, would we have released it to the public? And, by the way, I'm glad that now all this concern about, "Oh, the document has been edited and what do these ellipses stand for?" Because I heard Adam Schiff go on television yesterday and — or, yesterday or the day before — and say, "You know, we don't need to hear from the whistleblower anymore because now we have the transcript," or the memorandum of communication, memorandum of document, okay?

Everyone wants to believe there's a cover-up. You don't give stuff to the public and say, "Here it is" if you're trying to cover something up. So I'm not going to answer your question by explaining how we handle documents in this building. All I'm telling you is that you can stop asking the questions there, because there's no cover-up. And I can prove it to you by our actions.

Look, I know we can do this all night. No, I'm not going to take any more. But it's nice — it's nice to see everybody. Thanks again.

END

1:18 P.M. EDT

**REMARKS****Remarks by President Trump and President Niinistö
of the Republic of Finland Before Bilateral Meeting****— FOREIGN POLICY**Issued on: **October 2, 2019**

Oval Office

12:08 P.M. EDT

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, thank you very much. It's a great honor to have a man that's become a friend of mine — we've gotten to know each other well — the President of Finland. And we have many things to discuss, including trade and military and purchases, and lots of different very exciting events.

So we'll have a long time together today. We'll then be having lunch. And I think we're going to be seeing the media right afterwards and say a few words.

But it's an honor, Mr. President, to have you with us. Thank you.

PRESIDENT NIINISTÖ: Thank you. Thank you very much. I'm waiting for our discussions.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Yes. Yes. See? He's made a few words, and he gets it done. (Laughter.) That's what I like about him.

PRESIDENT NIINISTÖ: (Laughs.) Hope so.

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PRESIDENT TRUMP: That's what I like about him.

Anyway, okay, thank you all very much.

Q How do you respond to concerns that you are putting the whistleblower's life in danger?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, the whistleblower was very inaccurate. The whistleblower started this whole thing by writing a report on the conversation I had with the President of Ukraine. And the conversation was perfect; it couldn't have been nicer.

I saw Rick Scott, I saw many of the senators talking about it, many of the congressmen talking about. Not a thing wrong. Unless you heard the Adam Schiff version, where he made up my conversation. He actually made it up. It should be criminal. It should be treasonous. He made it up — every word of it, made up — and read to Congress as though I said it.

And I'll tell you what: He should be forced to resign from Congress — Adam Schiff. He's a lowlife. He should be forced to resign. He took a perfect conversation, realized he couldn't read it to Congress because it was perfect; it was a very nice conversation. I knew many people were on the phone. Not only were many people on the phone, we had stenographers on the phone taking it down, word for word.

He took that conversation, which was perfect; he said, "I can't read this." So he made up a conversation and he reported it and said it to Congress and to the American people. And it was horrible was he said. And that was supposed to be coming from me, but it was all fabricated.

He should resign from office in disgrace. And, frankly, they should look at him for treason because he is making up the words of the President of the United States. Not only words, but the meaning. And it's a disgrace. It should not be allowed to happen.

Q But your own DNI said the call transcript was consistent with the complaint. So, should only whistleblowers —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: No, no, no, he didn't say that. You have to take a look.

Q He did say that.

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PRESIDENT TRUMP: No, no, no. He did not say that. And, in fact, if you look at what he said, he found everything to be very normal. He's a good man, and — Joe. And he found it to be very normal. I saw Schiff trying to go 15 — you know, we call him “Shifty Schiff.” We don't call him “Shifty Schiff” for nothing. He's a shifty, dishonest guy — who, by the way, was critical of one of the great Secretary of States. Graduated number one in his class at West Point. Graduated top of — one of the top in his class at Harvard Law School. The most honorable person, Mike Pompeo. And this guy was negative on Mike Pompeo.

He can't — you know, there's an expression: He couldn't carry his “blank” strap. I won't say it because they'll say it was so terrible to say. But that guy couldn't carry his “blank” strap. You understand that?

So, you're dealing with bad people. And, you know, I watched China over the last few days, and I watched some of these other countries build up, build up, build up. And we've built up more than any of them because of me, but no help due to the Democrats. They're a disaster. They're the “do-nothing” Democrats. They don't do any work. All they want to do is try and win the election in 2020, so they come up with this impeachment nonsense.

And everyone knows the conversation — all based on a phone call that I had, where I'm talking to the President of Ukraine. You'll hear from our ambassadors, you'll hear from some of the folks that know all about the call — why the call was set up and everything else. It's perfect. The call was perfect.

In fact, Lindsey Graham said, “I didn't know you could be so nice.” There was no quid pro quo. Remember, before they saw — the only reason I put that out — and I did it with the approval of Ukraine, by the way; otherwise, I couldn't have done it — was because the whistleblower was so dishonest. The whistleblower said terrible things about the call, but he then — I then found out he was second-hand and third-hand. In other words, he didn't know what was on the call.

No, these are bad people. These are dishonest people. And when the American people find out what happened, it's going to be a great day. And you know what? We have to go back to building our country, because 99 percent of Nancy Pelosi's time is spent on this. She should worry about lowering the price of drugs, which I've done. But it's hard to do it without the help of Congress — about creating border security, which I've done.

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We've built — we now have hundreds of miles of wall under construction on the southern border. She should worry about infrastructure. She should worry about the USMCA. She's not doing it. I just saw a part of her press conference before the President came. And I'm sorry to bother you with this, Mr. President, because we have other things to talk about.

PRESIDENT NIINISTÖ: (Inaudible.)

PRESIDENT TRUMP: But I will tell you, I just watched part — she says, "Oh, drug prices..." Well, she's been trying to get drug prices down for — how long has she been in Congress? For years. She should focus on her own district. Do you see what's happening to her district? We call it "tent city." It's terrible. In fact, we just sent a violation to the city of San Francisco: unsafe water, unsafe conditions, environmental — EPA.

Our EPA, which is doing a great job, is sending Nancy Pelosi, with all the talk about EPA — there's needles and drugs all over the street. There's tents. There's people that are dying in squalor in the best location, in San Francisco. It used to be a great city. Now, you have to see what's happened to San Francisco. You happen to see what — what's — what the Democrats have allowed to happen. As an example, what they've allowed to happen, just take a look, to Los Angeles. Great cities.

One other thing: Yesterday, as you know, I was sued by the Governor, Gavin Newsom — he's another beauty. I was sued by him. He's a do-nothing. Sued by him so that I can't get on the ballot in the state of California. It was a massive story. It was the biggest story, Mr. President. It was headlines all over the place: "Trump gets sued by this do-nothing governor in California." It was big.

Here's what happened: Yesterday, I won the case, very convincingly. A very tough, smart, highly respected judge — not a Trump person at all — not appointed by Trump; appointed by somebody that you would call the opposition — came out with a scathing and tough opinion. I won the case. I didn't see one story that I won that case — not one story — from the fake news. I didn't see Steve write it. I didn't see you write it. I didn't see anybody write it.

So, let me just tell you, just to finish: Nancy Pelosi and Shifty Shiff [sic] — who should resign in disgrace, by the way — and Jerry Nadler and all of them, it's a disgrace what's going on. And we should be focused on making America great again and keeping America great, because that's what we have to do.

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And when I look at that parade with military and millions of people and everything else, we better get smart. We better start focusing on the right things. Because what they did with this nonsense — think of it: You have a perfect — I mean, perfect, conversation with a President of another country — Ukraine, in this case — and they try and say, “Oh, let’s impeach him.”

They’ve been trying to impeach me from the day I got elected. I’ve been going through this for three years. They’ve been trying to impeach me from the day I got elected. And you know what? They failed. And this is the easiest one of all, because this one is based on one conversation.

What about Obama’s conversation with the President of Russia, where he says, “Hey, hey, tell Vlad I’ll talk to him after the election is over. I’ll talk to him...” Nobody reports that, right? That’s stuff you should report.

But you people should be ashamed of yourself. We have the most dishonest media that you can imagine. And you should be ashamed of yourselves.

Okay, I think I’ve answered most of your questions. What do you think?

Yes?

Q Finnish media here. Finland is the happiest country in the world.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Finland is a happy country.

PRESIDENT NIINISTÖ: Yeah, for sure.

Q What can you learn? What can you learn from Finland, which has a social-democratic (inaudible)?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, you got rid of Pelosi and you got rid of Shifty Schiff.

PRESIDENT NIINISTÖ: We have time to discuss about that.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Finland is a happy country. He’s a happy leader, too. (Laughs.)

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Q Some Republicans have raised concerns —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: No Republicans have raised concerns.

Q — about the whistleblower, that their name — that the identity of the whistleblower should be protected.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I don't care. Look, I think a whistleblower should be protected if the whistleblower is legitimate. But when the whistleblower makes a big report on the conversation I had with a President, of Ukraine, and it was a great conversation. It was per- — we talked mostly about “congratulations on your win.” We talked about corruption. And we're really referring mostly to 2016, because what the Democrats did in 2016 was corrupt.

And let's see what happens. They're more concerned with that than they are with me and impeachment. They're trying to hide what maybe is coming. I let our great — if you look — I'll let our great law enforcement take care of it. Okay?

Attorney General Barr, I guess, is working on it. And I hope he's working on it. Because what happened in 2016 is a disgrace to this country. And they're more worried about that because they know they're guilty as hell. All right? They're much more worried about that.

Q Is the whistleblower immediately illegitimate if they are reporting misconduct about you?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: When a whistleblower —

Q About you, sir?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Okay. Are you ready?

I heard the whistleblower's report from you people, and how bad it was about just a simple conversation.

By the way, this whole thing revolves around a simple conversation. And if you remember at the beginning, it was “quid pro quo.” That's all you heard about. And I think he said seven or eight

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times: “quid pro...” — in other words, “You’re going to that or we’re not going to give you money. You’re going to do this or we’re not going to...” I never said it.

But when I heard these horrible stories come out, I had no choice but to release a conversation — which I hate to do, and I hope I don’t have to do it again — with the leader of a country. I asked a certain person to call up a certain person in that country to get permission to do it; otherwise, I wouldn’t have been able to do it. And if I didn’t do it — and I appreciate Ukraine for allowing us to release the conversation. But it was so innocent, it didn’t hurt them. If anything, it helped them because it was a very innocent conversation.

But when a whistleblower takes that very nice, innocent — Lindsey Graham said, “I never knew you were that nice a person.” He said, “You never asked him for anything. You were really, really nice.” Lindsey was saying, “I never knew you were so nice. That was a perfect conversation.”

I heard Rick Scott today say, “That was a perfect conversation. How can they impeach him on that conversation?” He read it. He’s a very smart guy from Florida — Rick Scott — and he said, “That was a perfect conversation. How can you impeach somebody on that conversation?”

But the whistleblower wrote not that conversation. He wrote a vicious conversation. In other words, he either got it totally wrong, made it up, or the person giving the information to the whistleblower was dishonest. And this country has to find out who that person was, because that person is a spy, in my opinion.

Are you ready? So, when a whistleblower, purposely or not, gives something that’s totally erroneous — now, here’s where I fooled them. They never thought I’d release the conversation. They never thought in a million years that I’d release the conversation.

When “Liddle” Adam Schiff saw the text, when he read it, he couldn’t believe it. When Nancy Pelosi, who worked a day early — Nancy Pelosi called for essentially impeachment — “Let’s impeach the President” — before she saw the transcript. And this is an exact word-for-word transcript of the conversation, right? Taken by very talented stenographers.

Q Well —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Listen to me.

So when she saw that, she was — she — I heard she went crazy. She said, “We can’t impeach him on this conversation. That’s a great conversation.” She went by the whistleblower. And the whistleblower was so bad, I would even think about it.

But here’s what happened: The whistleblower was wrong. The only thing that matters is the transcript of the actual conversation that I had with the President of Ukraine. It was perfect. We’re looking at congratulations. We’re looking at doing things together. And what are we looking at? We’re looking at corruption.

And, in, I believe, 1999, there was a corruption act or a corruption bill passed between both — and signed — between both countries, where I have a duty to report corruption. And let me tell you something: Biden’s son is corrupt, and Biden is corrupt. And I’d rather run against Biden than almost any of those candidates. And I think they’re all weak. But I think Biden has never been a smart guy, and he’s less smart now than he ever was.

Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you.

Q Sir, have you actually wanted a moat on the border, sir? Sir, did you suggest a moat?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Oh. Let me do that again; it’s a fair question. So this morning and last night, my comms people came to me. Listen to this one, President. I’m glad they’re interested in Finland, but what can you do? I’m interested in Finland much more.

But my comms people came to me, and they said, “Sir, there’s a book or something being written.” It’s written by Washington Post people, so you know it’s inaccurate. You know it’s probably a fraud.

So two reporters from the Washington — and they said, “President Trump started screaming, ranting, and raving, that on the southern border...” — where we are right now building a tremendous wall; it’s unbelievable what’s going up. Army Corps of Engineers. It’s — we’re doing a lot. We have — we’ll soon have over 100 miles under construction and completed. We’re going to end up with over 400 to 500 miles.

Okay, ready? That I wanted a wall, but I wanted a moat. A moat — whatever that is. It’s not a word I used, but they used it. A moat. And in the moat, I wanted alligators and snakes. And I wanted the wall to be a fence, and I wanted it to be electrified. And I wanted sharp spikes at the top, so if

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anyone gets it, it goes piercing through their skin — is somewhat the way they said it. Skin-piercing spikes. But I want the whole wall to be electrocuted.

And, “Sir, you never said that.” They came to me — the comms people. They came to me yesterday. And they said, “Did you say this?” I said, “Why are you asking that stupid question?” “Because the fake news media is saying that you said this in a book.” I said, “What book?” And they said, “Washington Post.” I said, “Well, obviously it’s fake because almost everything the Washington Post does is fake.”

It’s a fake newspaper. It’s owned by a rich guy for the purposes of giving him power in Washington. It’s really — I mean, it’s a lobbyist — I call it the “Lobbyist Washington Post” — for Amazon. And he ought to be ashamed of himself, because what they do to his reputation — I think maybe it’s probably no good anyway. But what they do to his reputation with the Washington Post is a disgrace.

So these two reporters wrote this book, and they said I want a moat with alligators, snakes, electrified fences so people get electrocuted if they so much as touch the fence, and spikes on top. Never said it. Never thought of it. And I actually put out something on social media today. I said, I’m tough on the border, but I’m not that tough.

Okay. It was a lie. Just so you have it — you asked the question. It was a total lie. It was corrupt reporting. Okay?

Q Did you suggest —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I don’t even “fake” anymore; I call the fake news now, “corrupt news.” Because “fake” isn’t tough enough, and I’m the one that came up with the term — I’m very proud of it — but I think I’m going to switch it largely to “corrupt news.” Because the media in this country — not everybody; we have some great reporters, some great journalists. But much of it is corrupt. It’s corrupt. You have corrupt media in this country. And it truly is the enemy of the people.

Thank you very much. Thank you. Have a good day, everybody. Go write some phony stories. Go write some phony stories. Go write a Schiff-like story.

Just another day in paradise.

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PRESIDENT TRUMP: Thank you, Steve. I hope I answered all your questions.

Q I didn't get — I didn't get one in.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Come here. Come here. Come here. What?

Q I was going to ask you (inaudible) limit the number of people who are listening on those phone calls —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I might. I might. Yeah. I — and, by the way, I assume many people. I always do. When I speak to a leader — if I speak to Finland, I always assume that many people are listening.

Q Yeah.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: And the other thing is that Nancy Pelosi's account of my phone call is a total lie. I called her about guns, and then I heard her — she's talking about impeachment. I said, "What are you talking about — impeachment?" I called her to say I'm making big progress on guns, okay?

Fellas, I don't know if you're with us, here.

Q (Inaudible) not here.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: But I'm saying that — and I think you have to put that out. That would be the only thing. All right. Good.

Q Thank you, sir.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Good. Thank you, Steve. It was a lie. Her statement was a lie. But, you know, what else is new?

Thank you, everybody.

END

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REMARKS**Remarks by President Trump at Turning Point
USA's Teen Student Action Summit 2019**

Issued on: July 23, 2019



Marriott Marquis Washington
Washington, D.C.

11:34 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you.

AUDIENCE: USA! USA! USA!

THE PRESIDENT: So, let's have a good time, right? (Applause.) Let's have a good time.

I'm excited to be here today with thousands of proud, young American patriots. You're great people. You're great people. (Applause.) You're the future. You're the future.

On behalf of my entire administration, thank you to everyone at Turning Point USA's Teen Student Action Summit. What a group. (Applause.) What a group. They don't realize there's more of you than there is of them. They just haven't figured that out yet. (Applause.) They'll understand. They'll figure it out someday. They're still trying to figure out what the hell happened. What happened? (Applause.) How did this happen?

You've come to our nation's capital from cities and towns across America. You've given up a big part of your summer, which many young people are not willing to do, and we understand that too.

But what you're doing is fun and it's important. So important.

You've paid and paved your own way to get here. And, in some cases, it wasn't easy. And you've done it for all of us. You've done it for one simple reason: You are loyal to our nation, you are devoted to your fellow citizens, and you will always put America first. (Applause.)

I want to thank my great friend — and he's a young friend; he's a pretty young guy — Charlie Kirk. (Applause.) I said, "How old are you, Charlie?" He's a young one. He gave me a number; I won't say. But he's younger than he even looks. But I want to thank Charlie. He's an incredible guy. His spirit, his love of this country. He's done an amazing job. He's done something that is just incredible for somebody, really, of his age. You need tremendous talent to do what he's done, building one of the most powerful youth organizations ever created, Turning Point USA. And I want to thank you, really, Charlie. Incredible job. (Applause.)

The young leaders here today are part of a movement unlike anything in the history of our nation. There's never been anything like this. And the fake news doesn't even talk about it because —

AUDIENCE: Booo —

THE PRESIDENT: No, but when I say it, they don't correct me. They don't say, "Oh, he gets a Pinocchio." They can't because it's true. It's true. You know, they can find fault with anything, but they never — they never talk about that because we won. You know, there have been some pretty good movements. And they won New Hampshire, or they won a state someplace. (Laughter.) But they didn't win the whole ballgame.

And you saw what we won, and you could see it; we could feel it. We knew it was going to happen because it's a movement about reclaiming your future, rebuilding your country, and restoring your destiny, and renewing the values that are the true source of American greatness. We lost those values, and we're getting them back rapidly. We're getting them back rapidly.

Just backstage, a gentleman — very rich gentleman, in this case — came up, sitting in one these rows, I assume. Yeah. There he is. He said, "Sir, thank you for saving our country." (Applause.) I said, "Thank you very much." And, you know, I said, "Thank you very much." And I looked at Charlie and I said, "Charlie do you have any idea how many people say that?"

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I gave the commencement address at the Air Force Academy recently, and at Annapolis the year before. (Applause.) And they said, "Sir, would you like to shake the hands of all the cadets?" I said, "How many are there?" "One thousand one hundred." I said, "Yeah, that sounds okay." (Applause.) I say, "Do other Presidents do it?" "Yes, they do." "Do all of them?" "Yeah, they do."

What they didn't say is they start and then they peter out and they go back. Because it's — it's tough. It was really hot. That sun was beaming down. And I'm just one hand. And some of these guys are great athletes. And some of the women — they had some women in the class that were — their hands were very strong, okay? (Laughter.) And they're all shaking. And, you know, they're a little nervous, maybe; they're meeting the President. They're shaking strongly and — "Sir." But, you know, with shaking 1,100 hands and saluting. We're saluting, shaking, turning, spinning. They're coming at all different directions. (Laughter.) I felt like a great fighter pilot. (Laughter.)

But I stood up there for the whole thing. I said, "There's no way that other Presidents have done that." He said, "No, no, they do it but they leave after about 50 or 60 people." I said, "Why didn't you tell me that?" But I'm glad I did it. (Laughter.) But I did the same thing — I did the same thing at Annapolis the year before. Great place. Just great. (Applause.) And I shook the hands of, I think, 1,011 at Annapolis. And it's really something great.

But so many of these young, incredible people — they're like you — so many of these young, incredible people, they come, "Sir, thank you for saving America." "Sir, thank you for saving America." "Sir, thank you for saving our country." So many of them — it's not rehearsed; it's just — that's what they feel.

And you know what? Somebody had to do what I did. It's not pleasant. We have a deep state. We have bad people. We have sick people.

I watched, just this morning, this Tlaib — Tlaib.

AUDIENCE: Booo —

THE PRESIDENT: From Michigan, right? It's a great state. We won Michigan. There is no way she stands for the values of the people of Michigan.

But I watched her this morning; she vicious. She's like a crazed lunatic. She's screaming. This is before she got into Congress. Who elected her? She's screaming like a total lunatic at one of our rallies. It's like I'm giving a little rally, and she starts screaming. And this was — this is not a sane person, folks, when you look at that. (Laughter.) And this is what we're up against. You have some of that.

Now, the Democrats, I guess, are forced to embrace her. And I called it "AOC Plus 3." Okay? AOC — "AOC Plus 3." (Applause.) Not that AOC is a bargain, because she's not. I mean, she's no bargain. Look, I mean, I — we'll go into it at some point. I'll tell you all about AOC. I got more on AOC. (Applause.) AOC. AOC.

But it's — you know, what's going on with that Party having to embrace them. And your other friend from an incredible state, right? A state that I'm going to win: Minnesota. You know that one, right? (Applause.) And you know why I'm going to win the state? Because of her. I almost won it last time. We came within just about a point. That's a very — because Minnesota is a very hard one for a Republican to win. And when we almost won it — one more night — I wanted to go there one more time. I said, "I'm telling you, "We're going to win Minnesota."

You know who thought I was going to win Minnesota? You know who thought I was going to win Michigan and Wisconsin and North Carolina? Bill Clinton. He was telling everybody, "You better be careful." He told people — from what I hear, he said, "The one you don't want to run against is Trump." And they would say, "Why? Oh, no, that's good. We want to run against..." "No, no, you don't." You know, I actually knew him pretty well. We got along very well until I decided to run for office. (Laughter.) We actually got along.

But they didn't want to listen to him. But he was the only one with the instinct the rest didn't have. So he came back and he said, "You know he's doing very well in Michigan. You could have a problem." They said, "No, don't worry about Michigan. We haven't lost Michigan in decades." And he came back, he said, "You know..." — he was in Wisconsin or something — but he said he hears that I'm doing well in Wisconsin. They say, "Forget it. A Republican can't win Wisconsin." And then we won Wisconsin. Then he came back — (applause) — he came back.

And I say this with a certain old-time affection because I had a very good relationship with him before doing this. You know, now it's a little harder for him to have a good relationship. But he

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said, "You don't want to run against Trump. Don't run against Trump." And they were saying, "No, no, that's okay. We like that."

Remember, President Obama, "He will not win. He will not win."

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Liar!

THE PRESIDENT: Okay, this is — he goes, "Liar." (Laughter.) That's — yeah. (Applause.) Hey, did Obama get a Pinocchio? That's right, Obama said, "He will not win. He will not be your President." The anger was unbelievable. You know, what? He's right. He was a liar. Did you give Obama a Pinocchio, Washington Post? He said, "He will not win." (Applause.)

AUDIENCE: Booo —

THE PRESIDENT: These papers — these papers are so bad.

So yesterday we had a story in one of the papers that I thought was good but they're really not, you know, when you analyze it. There's almost not too many of them that are. The wall. We're building a lot of wall. But we — (applause) — well, let me just finish. But there are areas where they have walls that are falling down, walls that are in such bad shape. We're trying to renovate as much as we can.

And we have a provision: We can renovate but we can't build new. So we're taking all these areas. And generally speaking, when you have an old wall that's falling down, it's in a better location for a wall. That's why they had it there in the first place as opposed to an area that's empty. You know, typically that will be true.

So these walls are old, they're crumbling, they're of no use. They're falling down. So we rip it up, build brand new foundations, pour brand new, beautiful footings, and take a wall that's two or three feet high, mostly laying on the ground, some of it only for cars — you know, to stop cars from cars from coming across. Just a metal spike.

So we'd rip it out; it would take about a minute. And we'd put in deep foundations seven feet deep, and we put in 30-foot bollards, and they're loaded up with concrete. Because inside, you know, I like doing — one of the reasons they said, "But you said you're going to build a concrete wall." So

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actually, inside the steel we have — so we have both. We have steel and we have concrete.
(Applause.)

And I was saving that for later because the only thing they could do is, “He’s building a steel wall. It’s not concrete.” “Oh, sorry about that, folks.” (Laughter.) You know. And you do have to have vision. It’s very important. You know, it’s — you can’t just have a blank wall. You have to have vision. It’s much better for the security to have the vision.

Anyway, so we’re building the wall. So they come out with saying, “Donald Trump has built almost no wall.” What a lie that is. And we’re building — (applause) — we’re building 50 miles here, 50 miles there. Fifty — all in the right locations, because there used to be walls but then we had to take them down.

In some cases, if they’re good enough, we’ll renovate it because we can do it for a lot less money. But generally, some of these walls are worthless. I mean, literally, you just drive right over them. They’re laying down on their side.

They gave me no credit. But if you read the story, they’ll say, “While he has renovated a lot of wall...” Well, that’s not even a renovation, let’s face it. That’s a brand new wall. It’s all brand new wall. It just shows you how dishonest this fake news is. And this is what we have to deal with. This is really what we have to deal with. But get used to it. Many of you are going to be in politics. Just get used to it, okay? Get used to it.

Together — is this true? — we believe in the American Constitution and we believe judges should interpret our Constitution as written. You’ll be seeing this. (Applause.) We believe in religious liberty, the right to free speech, and the right to keep and bear arms. (Applause.) Second Amendment. What a group.

AUDIENCE: USA! USA! USA!

THE PRESIDENT: Look, look. Look, they are in the process of trying to take your arms away. You have the Second Amendment. They will —

AUDIENCE: Booo —

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THE PRESIDENT: They will do damage to the Second Amendment the likes of which nobody even thought of. That's where they're coming from. Just remember I said it. Hopefully they never get the chance. And that's why the election coming up — I always said this is the most important election — 2016 — most important election that we've ever had. And it was certainly the coolest. That's for sure. (Applause.) But it was, I believe, the most important election because our country was going wrong. It was going wrong.

And when you see all the incredible numbers coming up and all the success that we're having, and all the fact that we're respected all over the world. We have a really good man who's going to be the Prime Minister of the UK now, Boris Johnson. (Applause.) Good man. He's tough and he's smart. They're saying "Britain Trump." They call him "Britain Trump." And people are saying, "That's a good thing." They like me over there. That's what they wanted. That's what they need. (Applause.) That's what they need. He'll get it done. Boris is good. He's going to do a good job.

I think Nigel is someplace in this audience. Where is Nigel? Where is he? Nigel Farage. He's here someplace. I saw him. I said, "What is he doing here? He's a little older than most of you." Where is he? Nigel. Nigel. I'll tell you what: He got 32 percent of the vote from nowhere, over in UK. Nigel — thank you, Nigel. (Applause.)

I said, "What's Nigel doing here?" He's a little older than you folks, but he did a great job. And I know he's going to work well with Boris. They're going to do some tremendous things.

But we believe in the American Dream and not a socialist nightmare that these people are trying to put on our shoulders. (Applause.)

And we know that strong nations must have strong borders. And we're building a strong border against so much. You have no idea. Every time I announce, as an example, a section of wall, I get lawsuits. They sue me. You know who sues me? Congressmen. Congressmen. I get sued by Nancy Pelosi. We won that suit. Can you believe it? I won that. I won that. (Applause.)

We won a couple of them. But we have suits on the border. We had one judge — they always sue in the Ninth Circuit. You know what that means, right? They sue in the Ninth Circuit, which is sort of like an automatic victory. Although we did win one last week in the Ninth Circuit. Nobody can even believe it. Can you — you know what's happening, right? Do you know what's happening?

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So, as of today — this is so important. There are those that say it's the most important. I would say war and peace and security — that's the most important. But they say the most important thing a President can do is the selection of Supreme Court justices, right? (Applause.) Gorsuch and Kavanaugh. We have two. Already, we have two. Some have gone a long time, and they haven't had many. And they haven't had any, in some cases. So we have two already. And they're great, and they're good.

But, you know, what people don't talk about: I've just signed the 124th federal district judge — federal judges — under me. (Applause.) And within a couple of months, I'll be up to 147. Think of that: 147. Because, normally, when you become President, you go in and you say, "Do I have any judges to appoint?" "No." You know, they're all — because it's such an important thing.

Because these district judges — they're the ones who do the trials. I mean, this is big stuff. And then you have Court of Appeals judges. Then you have the Supreme Court judges.

So we have two in the Supreme Court. We have many appeals court judges — many — that we'll have appointed. The courts are a whole different thing.

But I was up to — I will be up to 147, not including the 2 Supreme Court justices. Now, percentage-wise, I blow everybody away except one person. One person I'll never beat. You know who the one person is?

AUDIENCE: George Washington!

THE PRESIDENT: Who?

AUDIENCE: George Washington!

THE PRESIDENT: George Washington. He's got 100 percent. George Washington. (Applause.)

But we're going to have a tremendous percentage. And after six more years, it'll go to a level that nobody will even be close. (Applause.)

But George Washington is hard to beat because he put in 100 percent. He was there first, so he had (inaudible). (Laughter.) But I have many more than George Washington. Remember that. George

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Washington didn't put in too many, but he had certainly the highest percentage. He'll never — that will be a record that will never be broken.

We believe that every young American should love our country, honor our history, and always respect what? Our great American flag. (Applause.)

How about the Betsy Ross? You know, isn't that terrible, where they're trying to take your heritage away from you like that? Isn't that terrible?

AUDIENCE: Boo —

THE PRESIDENT: Isn't that terrible? And then you see the picture of President Obama with the same exact flag up. He should have taken it down. Why didn't he take it down? It's, really, very unfair what they do. They try and demean and belittle, and they're very good at it. They're better at that than they are at politics. They're better than that than they are at policy.

Look at their policy. They want open borders, which means crime, which means drug —

AUDIENCE: Boo —

THE PRESIDENT: — drugs and human trafficking, which is a phenomena that you would think is thousands of years old, and that would have been their prime. No, their prime is now because of the Internet. Women — mostly women — are being trafficked. And they go not only in this country, all over the world. It's never been like this before. Human trafficking — they snatch women and they traffic women and they sell women.

And we can't get the Democrats to even give us a modicum of the money we need at the border, especially for the wall. I'm taking money from here and there and there and there. Let's take it from here. We have all these different sources coming from all over the place because they won't approve it.

And five years ago, they all wanted it. Six years ago, seven years ago, they all voted for it. They never got it built, but they all voted for it. And today, they make it so tough. You have to see. I'm doing everything I can. And we're doing well with it. But there should just be one nice, fat sum

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where I can get the best four or five contractors — not worry about “I gave it out, but I have a lawsuit. And if the lawsuit happens, I have to undo it.”

How do you give a contract out where you have a contractor and he’s going to build 67 miles of wall — we have one case — but we’re being sued, our funding source, because we’re taking it from a certain area? And so we’re being sued. So we have to wait for the suit. I mean, how would you like to be building like this? It’s not good. It’s not good.

But we’re getting it done anyway. But they should say, “It’s not working without the wall.” You got to have — when they bum-rush you — they did that last week; they rushed in, a tremendous, large number of people. By the way, you know why they’re coming up, right? Because we have created the strongest economy in the history of our country. So they’re coming up because they want a piece of the economy. (Applause.) They’re not coming up for safety and this and that.

Do you ever see these people? They fly their flag. They come up from Guatemala — who, by the way, went back on their word to us. They were all set to sign a safe third agreement, and then today, or yesterday, they announced they can’t do it because they got a supreme court ruling — their supreme court. Right? They got a — in other words, they didn’t want to sign it.

So they’re supposed to sign what’s called a safe third. That’s a good thing for us, okay? That’s all I have to tell you. And they went back. So we’re going to do either tariffs or we’re going to do a form of tax, or we’re going to use our ban. You know, we — people don’t realize we won the ban.

You know, I saw one of the journalists — we’ll call him — who happens to be back there, I believe. One of — look at those cameras. Isn’t that terrible, or good or whatever?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Fake news!

AUDIENCE: Booo —

THE PRESIDENT: Look at all those cameras. Wouldn’t it be great if they told the truth? (Applause.) They have such a low credibility. They started off very high, and then I ran and their credibility is so low you wouldn’t believe it. But that’s okay. But wouldn’t it be nice if they — think of it — think of it: What would be — what would be if we had an honest — I don’t want a media that’s for me or — I just want an honest media.

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So we have our best poll numbers today that we've ever had. Can you imagine how good our poll numbers — with all the things that we've done — how good our numbers would be if we had just a fair media?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: One hundred percent!

THE PRESIDENT: Because they can take any — (laughs) — he goes, "A hundred percent." (Applause.) Who said that? Stand up. Huh? Yeah. He goes, "One hundred percent." And, you know, what? I like your long hair. It's very nice, actually. (Applause.) Good. Thank you. Thank you. That's funny.

So, above all else, we know this: That, in America, we don't worship government, we worship God. (Applause.) Right? (Applause.)

AUDIENCE: One squad under God! One squad under God! One squad under God!

THE PRESIDENT: No, I'm not disavowing that. They'd like me — "Would you disavow that?" No, thank you. (Laughter and applause.) The squad. No, it's very good. Very true.

These are the values that unite everyone in this room. These are the values that inspire hundreds of thousands of Turning Point USA members at more than 1,400 college and high school campuses in all 50 states. It's incredible what's been done with Turning Point and the job Charlie and everybody — I've met all of the people backstage just a little while ago. These are people that love our country. It's amazing what they've done — the job they've done. And in a pretty short period of time.

And I was telling Charlie, too — and I said it before — remember, you are not in the minority. Most people are with you. There is a young woman today — I saw her on a beauty pageant — and she has conservative values.

And the pageant, which used she used to compete against my pageant. Mine did much better, but that's okay. (Applause.) I had the Miss Universe. This is a different company. But I sold it. I figured, when you run for office — I sold it to IMG. Great company. You know, when you won — worked out a very nice deal, too.

But when you run for office, owning a beauty pageant is not the greatest idea. Do we agree? (Laughter.) Owning the Miss Universe and Miss USA and Miss Teen USA, by the way, was not exactly good with, maybe, running for President. So we sold it to IMG.

But what they did to this young lady was terrible. And because — and she was on “Fox & Friends” this morning, wearing a “Make America Great Again” hat, which was pretty cool. (Applause.) Which was pretty cool.

Each of you is coming of age at a time of unlimited possibility. It's true. Better than I think, ever before. We have the hottest economy on the planet Earth. (Applause.)

And I was elected — we've created more than 6 million new jobs. More than 7 million Americans have been lifted off of food stamps. Think of that. (Applause.) Unemployment for young Americans, age 16 to 19, has reached the lowest rate in over half a century. (Applause.) The unemployment rates for African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Asian Americans have all reached their lowest levels ever recorded. (Applause.) Wages are rising and they're growing fastest for blue-collar workers. Isn't that great, though? (Applause.) People don't talk about that. Young people have seen their wages rise by more than 10 percent. That's a lot. Quickly, too.

Our economic revival is incredible. And it's incredible news for everyone graduating from college or joining the workforce. This is the best time in the history of our country for young people like yourself to join the workforce because America is thriving, America is booming, and America is winning again and winning like never before. It's never been winning like this. (Applause.)

And we did it through a lot of hard work. It's not luck. I will tell you, if our opponent — if my opponent won, instead of having record stock markets and record employment numbers, you would have been in, in my opinion, a major recession, if not a depression. You would have gone down like a rock. Look what happened right after the election. The stock market was like a rocket ship because of enthusiasm. People wanted to have us win. It's not me; it's us. It's all of us. It's a movement. It's us. And the market went up. (Applause.)

We cut a record number of job-killing regulations. We passed historic tax cuts so that our industries can compete and win against anyone in the world.

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We are revising decades of ruinous trade deals that ravaged our communities and pillaged our factories. We were sending companies out of country — great companies. They were leaving us — going to Mexico, going to China, going to so many other places. The deals we made were the dumbest deals in the history of this world. It was unbelievable. Sixty thousand factories and plants and businesses closed up. Think of it: Sixty thousand. You would say, “How is that possible?” You’d get a map, you take 60,000 — you would say it’s impossible.

Sixty-thousand factories, plants, companies destroyed. Not destroyed — they went a different way. They were given no incentives to stay here. Some of the dumbest legislation ever passed — NAFTA.

The World — the World Trade Organization has been a horrible thing for us. That’s what built China. That, and the fact that our former Presidents did nothing about the fact that China was making hundreds of billions of dollars a year. And I guess they didn’t see it. I mean, 25 years, they didn’t see it. But we see it. And right now, they’re paying us billions and billions of dollars, folks. (Applause.) Billions. And they want to — they want to make a deal badly. And we’ll see whether or not we make a deal. We’ll see. We’ll see.

But our farmers are being helped. I said to our Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue — you know, because the — China, very smart. I don’t blame them. Look, I’m not blaming them. I blame our past leaders for allowing it to happen. I’m not blaming China. We should have done that to them. I blame our past leaders. I said that to President Xi of China. I said it. But I said to Sonny Perdue, “So, Sonny, they’re targeting us.” They said. They actually took ads in the Des Moines Register, anti-Trump —

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Iowa loves you!

THE PRESIDENT: I love Iowa, too. She says, “Iowa loves you.” I love Iowa. Well, ethanol is doing pretty well in Iowa too, right?

But — but, they took ads in the Iowa papers and it was anti-Trump ads, right? And then they stopped buying a lot of the product — almost everything. They stopped buying from our farmers because they knew that was my strength. The whole middle of the country is red. You saw that in that clip. That clip was fantastic. (Applause.) By the way, Charlie, that clip was so good, I would have rather seen it a second time and I could have come on a little bit later. I like it. But, that clip was great.

But you see what — the whole center is all bright red, meaning Republican. All red. And there's — those little edges are blue. And so they targeted the red. Nobody said China is stupid. And they said, "We're not going to buy product." And, essentially, they really closed it up.

So we're taking in billions of dollars in tariffs from China. They never gave us 10 cents. And I said to my Secretary of Agriculture — Sonny Perdue, who is great — I said, "Sonny, what's the biggest year that we've ever had with China? How much money did they spend in the United States?" "Sir, I'll get back to you." He gets back to me the next day: "Sir, \$16 billion." I say, "All right. We'll take \$16 billion out of our tariffs" — which are many times that amount that they're paying us in tariffs. They never paid us 10 cents.

"We'll take \$16 billion out" — that's the highest they've ever paid — "and we'll use that toward the farmers and distribute it. This way, nobody gets hurt." (Applause.) And no other President is doing that for the farmers, or no other President is going to save the miners and save energy. You know, we're the number-one producer of energy now in the world? (Applause.) And when I came, it was heading in the wrong direction. It was heading in a very bad direction. Right now, we're bigger than Russia and bigger than Saudi Arabia and bigger than anybody. (Applause.)

And we know that our first duty and our one true allegiance is to the American nation and to the American citizen — the USA. Loyalty to our people is our guiding light, it's our North Star, and our unwavering conviction.

We have secured record funding to build up awesome might for the United States Military because we know the best way to prevent conflict is to be prepared for it. So, you know, when you're strong, strong, strong, it's okay. They're going to leave you alone. They'll say, "Let's pass."

We had a depleted military. We built up our military. We had jets that were so old, they didn't fly. We had a large percentage of jets — fighter jets — that were out. We had an old Navy. We're building brand new submarines, brand new ships. We're building tremendous F-35s, F-18s. (Applause.) We're building a military the likes of which even we have never had because we have to. New missiles. We make the greatest equipment in the world.

We're — I hate to mention this word, but we're renewing and renovating our nuclear arsenal like never before. And hopefully — hope — (applause) — and we hope to God — we hope to God that we never have to use it. That's what I say. "We hope to God we never have to use it." (Applause.)

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But we have to have it ready. We have to have it as a — horrible — to me, the most horrible alternative that can happen is that. But we have nuclear the likes of which has — nobody has ever had like we have. And all pray that we never have to use it.

Our agenda is pro-worker and pro-family. We're making childcare more affordable, expanding access to vocational education — so important. (Applause.) And our pledge to America's workers had secured commitments to provide more than 9 million apprenticeships and job opportunities for industries all over the — the country. We're helping people get jobs. We're helping Walmart and so many companies. They went out — all out. They went all out.

And they're working — and they're working with a person you may have heard of, perhaps not: Ivanka Trump. She loves this. (Applause.) She loves it. She loves it.

I'll tell you, she didn't need it. She loves it. More than anything, that's what she loves. Because she says, "We're providing so many jobs and they're training people." And you know, the government can't really train them. When you go into these big companies — the Caterpillars and all of these — you got to, sort of, be trained by the people that do it — the complexity, the aerospace. Lockheed Martin has been great. Boeing has been great. (Applause.) There are so many.

And they can train much better than the government. The government really wouldn't know where to begin. So they're training. We're going to have close to 10 million very shortly. And Ivanka really has done an incredible job on that, so. (Applause.)

I might as well give her credit because the media will never give her credit. So, she's my daughter; I'll give her credit. But it's true. And you know what? If she didn't do a good job, I don't know that I'd say that, but I wouldn't be talking about her. That I can tell you. I wouldn't. I just — I'd probably just fluff over it. She's done an incredible job.

There's truly never been a better time to be young and American. There's never been a better time. (Applause.) Because our future is the brightest that it's ever been.

A new poll only — you got to hear this. How about this whole witch hunt that's going on? Should I talk about it for a second?

AUDIENCE: Yeah!

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THE PRESIDENT: The Russian witch hunt, okay?

AUDIENCE: Boo —

THE PRESIDENT: First of all, it's very bad for our country. Makes it very hard to deal with Russia. And we should be able — they're a nuclear power. They have a big country. And we should be able to deal with them without having this artificial stuff. But think of it: Only 11 percent, in a new poll, favor the starting of this ridiculous impeachment hearings that are going on. You hear about it.

So I said this morning — I said — I wrote it out. I said, "Let's see..." — because I'm watching. It goes on for years and years. No collusion, no obstruction. "Oh, that's not good enough. Let's go more." Forty million dollars, interview 500 people — they got nothing.

I could find something — I could take anybody in this audience. Give me \$40 million. Give me unlimited FBI, unlimited interviews, unlimited — they interviewed 500 people. Listen to this: Two thousand five hundred subpoenas. They did everything. Their collusion; no collusion. They have no collusion. (Applause.)

Then I have an Article 2, where I have the right to do whatever I want as President. But I don't even talk about that because they did a report and there was no obstruction. After looking at it, our great Attorney General read it. He's a total professional. He said, "There's nothing here. There's no obstruction." So they referenced, "No obstruction." So you have no collusion, no obstruction, and yet it goes on.

And they think this is helping them. I personally think it's hurting them. A lot of people think it's very bad for them. But it just goes on. But I wrote something out this morning on a thing called Twitter. (Applause.) Whether we like it or not, it is a good way — it is a good way of getting the word out. Because I saw Mueller is testifying tomorrow, again. How many times? Two — two and a half years. And, actually, it started practically from the time I came down on the escalator.

They said, "You know, he's got good numbers. We better start looking at him right away. Maybe he's dealing with a foreign country." I'm saying, "What are you talking about?" Listen to this. So I wrote this out this morning. I said, on Twitter, "Well, let's see: We have the best economy in history." And it used to be, "It's the economy, stupid." Right? It's the economy — nothing else. "It's the economy, stupid."

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So we have the best economy in history, the best employment numbers in history. The most people working — almost 160 million — in the history of our country. The most people working. That's a big number. So we have the best economy, best unemployment numbers, most people working.

On Thursday, we had the highest stock market in the history of our country. (Applause.) And a lot of you with 401(k)s — and that's not a rich-people thing. The people that own that stock are people with 401(k)s and everything else. We have the best stock market in the history of our country. We just got the biggest tax and regulation cuts in the history of our country.

We got rid of the individual mandate from Obamacare, which was the worst part of Obamacare. (Applause.) We got perhaps the biggest site — energy site — in the world approved in Alaska, called ANWR. Nobody could do it. From Ronald Reagan to present, they said, "We can't do it." We got ANWR approved.

We have the best and newest military that we've ever had, almost totally rebuilt from the depleted military that I inherited two and a half years ago. Our military was totally depleted from these ridiculous, endless wars.

So we have the best, newest military in history, and the VA — you don't hear any problems anymore, do you? Remember? You'd hear so many problems. (Applause.)

We have the best VA in history, and I got Choice so that — that's one of the big things that's working — so that if a person has to wait for three weeks, four weeks, five weeks — can you imagine you go to a doctor and they say, "Come back in six weeks?" People were coming back — they were sick, and they were coming back and they were terminal. They could've been saved. They were waiting so long.

So I got Choice. You go out. If you have to wait, you go out and you see a doctor. We pay the bill. Okay? We actually — the least important thing is we save money. That's the least important thing, in that case, but we do save money. But we also have a very happy VA. They love it.

Those are just a few of those things. So we have all of this: the best economy, best market, best military, best VA, best everything, and much, much more. And then I see, in this statement this morning, "Gee, let's impeach the President." (Laughter.) I mean, you figured these people have

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gone totally crazy. They've gone totally crazy. (Applause.) It is sort of nuts. It's true. I guess that was a Clinton statement, right? "It's the economy, stupid." Was that Clinton?

But it's about — you know — but it's not everything about the economy. It's not everything. A lot of other things. But, you know, we have — we're like at the top of every single thing that we do, when you think our military and you look at — and let me tell you something I didn't put: We are respected as a country again. They respect us. (Applause.) Because other countries have been ripping us off so badly, and some of the worst offenders are our so-called allies. They rip us off on trade.

European Union is worse to us on trade than China, okay? Nobody would think that. You know, a lot of us come from European Union. We come from Europe — our grandparents, our great-grandparents. So you think, "Oh, isn't that nice?" Except, they kill us — the European Union. It was formed in order to beat us economically, and yet we protect them with NATO. So they rip us off on trade, and we protect them with military.

But here's the problem with the protection: They're not paying their bills. So the United States — I got \$100 billion more in the last two years — \$100 billion. I got them to pay. I said, "You got to pay." (Applause.) Nobody else has ever done that.

It's like this. It was like this with every other President. President Obama would go meet them, he'd talk nice — you know. I don't know, to me, not so nice. Some people would say, "Oh, isn't it (inaudible) a wonderful speech?" I said, "No, I fell asleep during that speech." (Laughter and applause.) "I fell asleep. I don't get it. I don't get it." And he never got crowds like we get, that I can tell you. Huh? (Applause.) So we got to be doing something right.

But think of this. So they weren't paying their bills. So we're paying for close to 100 percent of NATO. So here's the story: They rip us off on trade. They have trade barriers that make it impossible for certain groups, like farmers and others, to go in. They rip us on trade, and then we protect them and they rip us on that too. And they don't pay their bills. Other than that, it's a wonderful deal.

So we're getting it straightened out, folks. We're getting it straightened out. Somebody said, "President Obama is much more popular in Germany than Donald Trump." Well, he should be. He should be. (Laughter and applause.) Because Germany is the biggest offender. They don't pay.

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They're paying 1 percent; we're paying 4.3 percent of a much bigger GDP. Germany doesn't want to pay. They're supposed to pay 2 percent. They're paying 1 percent. And I say, "You got to pay, Angela. You got to pay, Angela. Please pay, Angela."

And then they say, "Who do you like better: Obama or President Trump?" "Oh, I like President Obama. He was a nice..." Look, if I start getting good poll numbers over there, I'm not doing my job, okay? That's the way it is. (Applause.) It's true. I'm not doing my job. But they still like me. And I have a good relationship and a great relationship with some.

But somehow, even in this era of unprecedented prosperity and peace, the timeless traditions and values that make the American Dream possible are under attack like no one has ever seen before. These people have lost all control. And even the Democrats — they're Left, but now they're getting dragged into a radical Left position. I can't imagine who's doing that. But they're being dragged — they're being dragged radical Left with these people that I believe — honestly, I believe they hate our country. Okay? I believe they hate our country. (Applause.)

And it's true. When I watch this maniac Tlaib screaming and shouting — and this was before she was a congressperson. Can you believe it? But screaming and shouting — out of control. And then you see, they have now another clip where she's even worse. This is representing us? This is not what we want representing us, I don't think. And I think it's why we're going to have a tremendous victory in 2020. These people are crazy. (Applause.)

AUDIENCE: USA! USA! USA!

THE PRESIDENT: And, you know, when I have one of the others — I guess this is Cortez. You know, I said, "I'm not going..." "Sir, her name is Alexandria." (Laughter.) And the guy couldn't figure out her second name. It was so funny. I'm being interviewed by one of — "Her — her name is Alexandra. Um, wait a minute. Wait a minute, sir." (Laughter.) Okay. He never got it out. He never found his notes.

I said, "That's okay." I told him, "Just call her 'Cortez.'" Because I don't have time to call her by the whole name. It's too long. It's true. You know, you're doing an interview. (Laughter and applause.)

But she called our country and our people "garbage."

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AUDIENCE: Boo —

THE PRESIDENT: She said “garbage.” That’s worse than “deplorable.” Remember “deplorable”? Oh, yes, you do. Huh? Remember Hillary? “The deplorables.” She actually said a word that was worse. She said “deplorables.” And what was the second word? Go ahead.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Irredeemables!

THE PRESIDENT: Irredeemables. That’s right. She said, “irredeemable.” She said —

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Lock her up!

THE PRESIDENT: (Laughs.)

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Lock her up!

THE PRESIDENT: Ooh —

AUDIENCE: Boo —

THE PRESIDENT: She said “deplorables” and “irredeemables.” And when she said it, I said, “Boy, that ‘irredeemables’ is really a bad...” Well, that was not the one. You never know in politics, right? This is a tough business. You say a word and you’re gone. One wrong word. You can make 20 great speeches. Brilliant. They say, “He’s great. The greatest orator. The greatest orator of our times. He’s the great.” One word and you’re gone. Except for Trump — (applause) — because we represent you. Because we represent you.

AUDIENCE: Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Thank you.

No, but it’s true. It’s a tough business. One word and you’re gone. It’s an incredible kind of a profession to have. It’s a very — that’s why they’re scared. You know, they go around — they’re petrified. They’re petrified that they’re going to insult 15 people and lose an election.

By calling out these four people, the “squad.”

AUDIENCE: Booo —

THE PRESIDENT: By calling them out — because we don't like when they talk about “evil Jews.” We don't like when they say horrible things about Israel. They say — they say — you know, people are opposed to Israel and they can express what their opposition. But when they say it with venom hatred and language that nobody would use — nobody would use — it's incredible. And then you don't have the Democrats fighting for Israel, and they end up passing things that have nothing to do with what the original problem was. You saw that.

So I don't know what they're going to do. I don't know. They have a big problem, because they have others than these four. I could name another 20 right now without looking at a note. I could name another 20 that I think are, in many way ways, worse. They're worse. They're not in this group. But they're worse than this group, and they're Democrats. And at some point, we will be naming them if you don't mind, because we want to get the word out. We have to get the word out. (Applause.)

As conservatives, we're grateful for the great heritage that we have, the heritage of being an American. So important to all of us. We know that America is the most just and virtuous republic ever conceived. I mean, we fight for other countries. I was with other countries two weeks ago, and we had the G20. And I'm talking to different people: “Who do you fight for?” “Just our country.” “Who do you fight for?” “Just our country.” “Who do you fight for?” And we fight for all these countries, and it costs us a fortune. And some of the countries are wealthy.

By the way, I've gone to all of them and said they have to now pay for their military. Okay? If you don't mind that, okay? (Applause.) They haven't done it.

I mean, we're fighting for countries that are so wealthy, some have nothing but cash. Nobody ever asks them, “Why aren't you paying us for this? Why aren't you reimbursing us for the cost?” But we now ask those questions.

On the Straits — so we get very little oil from the Straits anymore. In fact, yesterday was very interesting. They said, “It's very interesting there are no USA tankers here. They're all from China,

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from Japan.” China gets 65 percent of their oil from the Straits, right? Japan gets 25 percent. Other countries get a lot.

And I said, “So let me ask you just a really stupid question.” We hardly use it. We’re getting 10 percent, only because we sort of feel an obligation to do it. We don’t need it. We have — we’ve become an exporter. Can you believe it? We’re an exporter now. We don’t need it. (Applause.) And yet we’re the ones that for many, many decades, we’re the ones that policed it. We never got reimbursed. We police it for all these other countries.

And I said, a while ago, I said, “Why are we policing for China? Very rich. For Japan? Very rich. For all these others?” And we’re policing also for countries, some of whom we’re very friendly with, like Saudi Arabia and others — UAE, others too. But why are we doing it without getting — why do we have our ships there and we’re putting our ships in the site?

And we did shoot down their drone the other day. You know, it’s funny, for religious people, they lie a lot. They lie a lot. (Applause.) You can see it laying right down on the bottom of that beautiful bed of water. (Laughter.) No, they said, “They never shot down a drone.” And then they say about, “We have captured 17 American spies.” I say, “No, no that’s...” First thing I did, I call up the CIA — true — “Sir, totally false.” “Okay.” By the way, totally false. But they make up stories. I just say, for religious people, they lie a lot. (Laughter and applause.)

We know the story of America is the story of good defeating evil. We protect so many people, and in some cases we shouldn’t have been doing it. It’s right overcoming wrong, and it’s freedom smashing tyranny. Americans are the patriots who threw off an empire, won an independence, settled the Wild West, ended slavery, secured civil rights, pushed the boundaries of science, vanquished the Nazis, brought communism to its knees, and put a man on the moon many, many years ago, right? (Applause.) And we will become the first nation to land astronauts on Mars, where they will proudly plant a very beautiful American flag. (Applause.)

Yet despite all we have achieved — despite the glory and grandeur of our nation — the radical Left has nothing but contempt for America’s heritage. And I’m talking about the radical Left among us. I’m not talking about the radical Left that are looking over failed countries, like Venezuela and others. I’m talking about the radical Left among us.

They see our history as a source of shame; our traditions and our victories as relics to be replaced; our values as obstacles to be removed; our citizens as subjects to be controlled; and America as a menace to be constrained. That's what they see. That's what they see.

The agenda of the radical Left is one of division, discord, and demolition. You know, when I see her running and ranting and screaming like a total lunatic — this is what we're dealing with, okay? You can never have a country with values like that. Just look at it. There's no reasoning. The language she uses. I mean, she was throwing a certain F-bomb, right? Do we know the F? (Laughter.) She was throwing that out about the presidency and about the President. And it's just such a sad thing to see, how low have we gone.

The far-left has one fundamental objective and that's the objective of power — the power to control you, the power to control your family, and the power to destroy the foundations of our great republic. But we will not let them. It will never happen. It will never happen. (Applause.) It will never happen.

And they're right now destroying themselves and they're going after everything. They're doing things that nobody can believe. The people that I'm looking — they said, "Who's your toughest opponent?" I said, "So far, I dream about — I dream about these people that I'm looking at." There is no Winston Churchill in the midst. There is nobody that we look at. But you have to be very careful. Socialism is not as easy to beat as you think.

When you're wealthy and you're doing record stocks and you have 401(k)s, and you have all of the things that you have, and everybody is doing well, and somebody comes along and says, "We're going to give you free everything. Everything is going to be free. Oh, by the way, we're going to raise your taxes to 75 percent." But they don't mean that because it can't nearly pay 95 percent, and that won't pay for it either. Won't even come close.

"We're going to do the Green New Deal," which is the craziest thing I've ever heard, okay? It's crazy. But don't kid yourself. Not as easy — when I'm up there on the debate, all alone with some maniac that they chose — (laughter) — and that maniac is saying, "We're going to do this for you. We're going to do that for you. We're going to give you everything. We're going to give you — everybody gets a free Rolls-Royce" — (laughter) — "every family. And we're going to take better care of illegal immigrants than we take care of our citizens." They tell you that.

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AUDIENCE: Booo —

THE PRESIDENT: And when they're saying all of this stuff, and then those illegals get out and vote — because they vote anyway. Don't kid yourself, those numbers in California and numerous other states, they're rigged. You got people voting that shouldn't be voting. (Applause.) They vote many times, not just twice, not just three times. They vote — it's like a circle. They come back; they put a new hat on. They come back; they put a new shirt. And in many cases, they don't even do that. You know what's going on. It's a rigged deal.

For example, the radical Left is waging an unprecedented assault on the rule of law in America. They are. They want to eliminate our borders and totally abolish ICE. And now they want to abolish a thing called "Homeland Security."

AUDIENCE: Booo —

THE PRESIDENT: That means going on airplanes without any security. That means doing all of the things that you do, and you appreciate it, but you don't even see what's going on. But they now want to abolish Homeland. They started off with ICE. And let me tell you, these ICE people are great patriots. That's a tough job. (Applause.) They go into these MS-13 gangs and, you know, even your local law enforcement — and we love our law enforcement. We love our law enforcement. (Applause.)

But these gangs are mean, they're tough, they deal in a medieval style. They cut people up medieval-style because it's more painful. These are sick people. We don't want them. We're taking them out by the thousands, out of our country. By the thousands. (Applause.)

So with raging anger, ignorance and malice, the far-left has slandered, libeled, and smeared our law enforcement heroes. They just go after our law enforcement; it's so sad to see. They're so respected and yet they don't know it because all they do is they see the negativity put on by the media.

But the American people forcefully reject these hate-filled attacks. And that's what they do. They're hate-filled, and they are indeed attacks on our very brave public servants. Americans will always stand with the courageous men and women of ICE and Border Patrol and law enforcement. Always. (Applause.)

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The hard-left is also waging war against freedom of speech. The greatest threat to this radical Left agenda is the truth. And the problem is, we're not getting the truth from the media, for the most part. Some, yes. But for the most part, we don't get the truth.

I can tell you stories where I'll do something — and let's say it's good; they'll make it look bad. Let's say it's great, things that you can't look bad; you can't — they'll make it look okay.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Liars!

THE PRESIDENT: And if it's bad — that is correct. That is correct. (Applause.)

What they're doing — what they're doing is unthinkable. And they've hurt themselves so badly. They'll say, "Seven sources have said that this took place in the White House," or something. There are no seven sources. They make them up. You know what? They make them up. There are no — they have gone — they used to call up and say, "We'd like to just verify this statement or verify a quote for..." They don't even call up anymore. We don't hear from the New York Times, which is totally crooked. We don't hear from the New York Times. The Washington Post, which is the Amazon — I always say, "It's the Amazon lobbyist." We don't hear from these people.

They don't call up and say, "We'd like to check a quote." I don't see anymore where they say, "Jim Smith of the White House made the following statement." It's always "a source who decided to remain anonymous from the White House." Sometimes they'll say, "Seven people from the White House." They don't exist. It's a lie. They do it; they don't check. They don't do anything. They're really, really dishonest people. And I'll tell you, when I say, "The enemy of the people." When I say, "The fake news." When I say these things, I'm not kidding: It's really dishonest. They have become — you know, they like the word "unhinged." They have become — the media has become unhinged.

They used to call. When I was a — I used to get the greatest publicity. When I was doing buildings, I was happy. No problems. I was doing buildings. I didn't have to worry about North Korea, Iran. (Laughter.) I didn't have to worry about China and trade. You think it's easy beating China on trade? Guess what? We're beating them on trade. We're beating them on a lot of — we're beating everybody. (Applause.) But it's not easy.

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But I used to get the best publicity. Now, I haven't had a good story in two and a half years. I'm dying for my first good story. They're going to give me one someday. I think when I get one, it will be time. I'll say, "I've just achieved something." I got — I'll say, "First Lady..." — they love our First Lady. They said, "First Lady..." — (applause) — they love our First Lady. "Hey, First Lady, I just got a good story. It's time to hang it up." (Laughter.) It's time.

Someday we're going to get them. We're going to get them, because nobody has done what we've done in two and a half years. Nobody even close. We've done in the first two and a half years more than any President in the history of our country. (Applause.)

So anyone who speaks the truth is shouted down, censored, de-platformed, fired, expelled, harassed, intimidated, abused, and even, in many cases, assaulted. But they don't go after certain of our people. Bikers for Trump — you ever see these guys? The Bikers for Trump. (Applause.) They leave them alone. Our construction workers, they leave them alone. Our law enforcement, they leave them alone. Anybody that looks real tough and real nasty, they leave them alone.

They only go after somebody that stands there and is not a fighter. Nothing wrong with that. And they beat the hell out of them and they pummel him, like what happened two weeks ago. They pummel him. That's the only one they go after. They'll go after that. They say, "Is he a fighter?" "No." "Let's hit him over the head with sticks and bats." What they do, it's a horrible thing. But hey, they don't do it to many of our people. But they look for the people that aren't the fighters.

These dangerous behaviors are the hallmarks of socialism. But socialism cannot survive when people are free to think for themselves. That's why America will never be a socialist country. It's never going to happen. (Applause.) So, thank you. Thank you.

Because as patriots, we cherish our First Amendment. We believe that every American has the God-given right to speak his or her mind. And no one can ever take away that right. (Applause.)

For centuries, Americans freely exchanged their ideas in the public square. Now, the public square exists online, and massive, multi-national tech companies have gained enormous power to censor opinions, shape public perception, and really, to decide what information citizens are going to be given. And I see it all the time. I see it on social media — for me. And I have people coming up all the time, "We want to follow you, sir. They make it so hard to follow you." And I have millions and millions of people. But it should be much more.

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I know exactly what's happening. I knew it when it started. But the only thing I do say is this: It's happened from the beginning — you know, Facebook, Twitter, Google, all of them, right? And they come to me when they want help. They want help because the Democrats want to shut them down. Can you believe it? How stupid is that for them? But maybe they don't have the power that we think because they were totally against me in the election. And I'm standing now, before you, as the President of the United States. (Applause.) So maybe they don't have the power. Maybe they don't. I don't know.

Everyone tells me, when you read — they talk about this tremendous power. And I'm saying, "That's right. They're making it impossible." And then somebody will look at me, "But sir, you won." But, they're gaining more and more and more. And we're looking at a lot of things because they have not treated us, as Republicans and conservatives — even when you get into religion, they have not treated us fairly. They haven't treated us fairly.

A free society cannot allow social media giants to silence the voices of the people. That is why I've asked my administration to explore every possible regulatory and legislative solution because you have to have free speech. You have to have free speech.

I've also instructed federal agencies to hold our public colleges and universities accountable. When they do numbers — you go up to speak, and what they do to our people is just — and, by the way, I'm President of all the people — everybody. Everybody. I love everybody. I have people maybe I shouldn't love. I love this nation. This nation is made up not only of us, it's made up of everybody.

But what they do is so unfair. Any college that refuses now to respect your First Amendment rights will be asking for billions and billions of dollars, and they won't be getting it. They won't be getting it. Signed. (Applause.) All signed up.

Anyone can become a target of the Left's brutal campaign to punish dissent. Hey, I'm the number-one target in the world. And here we are. But I'm the number-one target. Who's more of a target than me? No matter what you do, I'm the great target for these people. These people are crazy.

Earlier this year, in Park City, Utah, a leftist released pepper spray into a high school auditorium to shut down a Turning Point USA meeting.

AUDIENCE: Booo —

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THE PRESIDENT: Twenty students and teachers had to immediately seek major medical attention. Think of that. One of the students from that school joins us today — Ryan Zink. Ryan? Where are you, Ryan? (Applause.) Get over here, Ryan. Come on up here. Come on. Come up here, Ryan. (Applause.) Say a few words.

MR. ZINK: Hi, everybody. (Applause.)

AUDIENCE: Ryan! Ryan! Ryan!

MR. ZINK: I do believe the free speech in our schools is currently at stake. Us conservative students — there are many cases: myself, some other people that I've met here, and across the country — are being silenced, are being shut down by — whether it be their schools, teachers, friends. We're not being listened to properly. And our voices need to be proudly expressed. And we cannot be silenced. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: You know, he had no idea that was going to happen. But he started to like it. I said, "You know, this could be a long time." (Laughter.) He'll be in office someday or doing something fantastic. Thank you, Ryan. Great job. (Applause.)

In May, faculty at West Haven High School in Connecticut tried to ban the local chapter of Turning Point USA because students hung up a sign that read "America is the best country in world." Can you believe that? It is the best country in the world.

One Board of Education member viciously smeared the students as "racist, sexist, bullies who are brainwashed by their Republican parents." But the attacks have only strengthened the group's resolve, and membership has skyrocketed since then. (Applause.)

We are winning. We are winning.

With us today is that Turning Point USA chapter president, Dan Gallipoli. And Dan, I want to just thank you for that fight. Where is Dan? Dan. Do you want to come up, Dan? Come on up, Dan. He wants to come up. (Applause.) Come on up. Come on up. Come on up here, Dan. (Applause.)

MR. GALLIPOLI: Hi, everyone. It's great — (applause) — it's so great to be here. It's such an honor. Thank you all so much. Thank you, Turning Point USA, for all of your support and your — for helping us with the fight for free speech on campus, no matter what. No matter what they say!

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(Applause.) No matter the teacher, no matter the student, no matter the faculty, we will stand up for what we believe in! (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Whoa! That's fantastic, Dan. Now I see why he's president of his chapter. Who wants to fight him? Thank you, Dan. Great job.

Last year, Hunter Richard — where's Hunter? Hunter. You want to come up, Hunter? Do you want to? Come on up, Hunter. (Applause.)

Hunter is a high school sophomore in San Antonio, Texas. Great place. He just wanted to get a hamburger with a couple of his friends. And Hunter happened to be wearing a beautiful, red cap that said, "Make America Great Again." (Applause.) And a 30-year-old man flew into a rage, stole Hunter's hat — oh, I knew that. That was a pretty famous deal. That was all over the place, right? Threw a drink at him and called him a racial slur.

Thankfully, it was all captured on video and the assailant was arrested and wished he didn't do it. (Applause.) And we all watched that event many times — that scene many times.

And Hunter, thank you for your courage. That was fantastic the way you handled it. Thank you. (Applause.) Please.

MR. RICHARD: Every day I go to school, I always wear a red MAGA hoodie. If you follow my Instagram, you'll definitely see it all the time. I proudly wear my Make America Great Again hat every time I go out of my house. Although, I will say this, Mr. President, I do have one problem with you, and that's that I only get to have you as my President for six more years. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Wow. Thank you. (Applause.) Great future. Thank you. Boy, I'll tell you.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: President for life!

THE PRESIDENT: (Laughs.) Thank you very much. That's what they're afraid of, you know. Did you see the other side? Did you see they have some comedian — third-rate comedian? He's going — and he really means it: "You know he's going to win, don't you?" They go, "Well, maybe." "You know he's going to win. And you know that, in six years, you know it's going to happen. He's not

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leaving, you know that. He's never going to leave, you know it. He's not leaving." These people are insane. (Laughter.) And he believes it.

Thank you, Hunter. That was great. Great job. (Applause.)

You know that our movement stands for patriotism, confidence, excellence, liberty, justice, support for our military, love for America, and loyalty to our nation and all of its people. We're together. We all stand together for American greatness.

And even at such a young age, the members of your generation are proving that our hearts and souls are all wound together. We are unbridled in our love for our country. We are truly American patriots. Remember that.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Keep America great!

THE PRESIDENT: Keep America great. (Applause.) That's right. (Applause.)

AUDIENCE: USA! USA! USA!

THE PRESIDENT: The forces of political correctness want to silence conservative students to make you feel alone, marginalized, and isolated. And you are not. But just look around you at this incredible, record-setting crowd. Many, many people outside, too. I hate to tell you. I hate to tell them. They didn't do as well, but they have a screen. It's not as good. Not quite the same, right? But we do the best we can.

But you're not alone. The silent majority is silent no more. Your moment in the sun is just beginning. (Applause.)

The story of America has always been written by everyday citizens who loved their country so much they could not help but speak out. That's what happens. That's why these three young, incredible people came up here. "Would you like to speak, Hunter?" "Yes, sir!" (Laughter.) You know, most people go, "Oh, well, I don't know, sir. Oh, maybe not." But these people — it's like all three of them.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'll do it!

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THE PRESIDENT: "Ryan — you want to speak again, Ryan?" "Yes, sir. I do." Right? No, this is — we — these are great people. These are people with courage.

Many of them were young — barely older than all of you. George Washington was just 21 years old when he received his first military command. Decades later, he chose a 20-year-old Alexander Hamilton to be his top aide. (Applause.) Betsy Ross was 24 when she began sewing the first American Flag. (Applause.) If you think about it, she's probably more important now than she was two or three weeks ago when this stupid thing by Nike was done.

AUDIENCE: Booo —

THE PRESIDENT: And they're a tenant of mine. They pay me a lot of rent. I probably won't see those checks anymore, but I don't care, because I'm President. I don't care about that. (Applause.)

Amelia Earhart was only 23 when she took her first flying lesson on her way to becoming an aviation pioneer. Martin Luther King was 26 when he marched for justice through the streets of Montgomery, Alabama. (Applause.)

General Dwight Eisenhower and General Douglas MacArthur were both in their early twenties when they graduated from West Point, never imagining they would someday save the world from tyranny. (Applause.)

From the very beginning, America has been lifted even higher by the daring dreams of young Americans like each and every one of you. (Applause.)

Now it is your turn to inspire our country, your chance to choose greatness for America, because your time has come. Your time is now. (Applause.)

The choices you make over the next few years will shape much more than your own future — they will forever shape America's destiny. Your choices, your leaders — you're great leaders, you will be. Some of you in this room will be the great leaders of our country. A couple of you may be standing, essentially, here someday, in a position where you can do so much.

In mere months, some of you may take your first steps down a path that someday lead to discovering new breakthroughs in science, saving lives in medicine, leading a revolution in

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technology, upholding our values in public service, protecting our communities in law enforcement, defending our freedom in the military, or leading humanity into the stars.

As long as you are confident in our values, as long as you are loyal to our citizens, as long as you keep faith in God above, there is no limit to what you will achieve. (Applause.)

AUDIENCE: One squad under God! One squad under God! One squad under God!

THE PRESIDENT: You are the ones who are lifting our nation, in the very near future — and I have no doubt you will do it — to soaring new heights. I have no doubt. I see the people in this room. There's greatness in this room. There's greatness in this room. Remember I said it. Someday, you're going to think back to this day, and you're going to say, "You know, I remember President Trump saying there's greatness in this room." And you're going to be not only speaking about yourself, you're going to be speaking about others in the room who you know who are going to rise to great heights with you.

You are the ones who are bringing about the incredible rebirth of the American spirit. You are the ones who will make this moment a turning point — a true, historical moment.

This generation — your generation — will make the light and the glory of America shine brighter and longer and prouder than ever before.

I want to congratulate you. You've had a long journey, but your journey has just begun. I want to thank you for being here. May God bless you. And may God bless America. Thank you. (Applause.)

END

12:53 P.M. EDT

1/1/2020

Press Release | Press Releases | Press | U.S. Senator Richard Burr of North Carolina

05.16.18

Senate Intel Completes Review of Intelligence Community Assessment on Russian Activities in the 2016 U.S. Elections

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Senator Richard Burr (R-NC), Chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, and Senator Mark Warner (D-VA), Vice Chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, today held a closed hearing to complete its review of the Intelligence Community Assessment (ICA) on “Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent US Elections.” The testimony of former Director of National Intelligence James Clapper, former Director of CIA John Brennan, and former Director of NSA Mike Rogers will inform the Committee’s final report on this “chapter” of its Russia inquiry.

Chairman Burr said, “The first task in our inquiry was to evaluate the Intelligence Community’s work on this important piece of analysis. Committee staff have spent 14 months reviewing the sources, tradecraft, and analytic work, and we see no reason to dispute the conclusions. There is no doubt that Russia undertook an unprecedented effort to interfere with our 2016 elections. I look forward to completing the Committee’s inquiry and issuing our findings and recommendations to the American people.”

“Despite the short time frame they had to prepare it, the intelligence community did a very good job with the ICA,” **said Vice Chairman Warner**. “After a thorough review, our staff concluded that the ICA conclusions were accurate and on point. The Russian effort was extensive, sophisticated, and ordered by President Putin himself for the purpose of helping Donald Trump and hurting Hillary Clinton. In order to protect our democracy from future threats, we must understand what happened in 2016. And while our Committee’s investigation remains ongoing, one thing is already abundantly clear – we have to do a better job in the future if we want to protect our elections from foreign interference.”

Today’s closed hearing is a bookend to the hearing the Committee held in January 10, 2017, on Russian Active Measures. Staff will finalize this chapter of the report on the Intelligence Community’s work and submit it for a classification review.

**United States Mission to
the United Nations**

Remarks at a UN Security Council Briefing on Ukraine

**Ambassador Nikki Haley
U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations
U.S. Mission to the United Nations
New York City
May 29, 2018**

AS DELIVERED

Thank you, Mr. President, and thank you to our briefers.

Two weeks ago, the President of Poland convened a very important debate in the Security Council on holding international law. Many of us talked about the purposes and goals of the United Nations. It was an opportunity to ask ourselves why we are here and what we hope to accomplish. Today's debate effectively answers these questions.

The conflict in Ukraine is a textbook example of the direct violation of the sovereignty of one Member State by another Member State. It is precisely the kind of flagrant misconduct this body was created to address.

When Russian forces entered the Crimean capital in 2014, it was a direct violation of the UN Charter. Russian forces seized the parliament building and imposed an illegitimate referendum on the people. Since then, Russia has pushed into eastern Ukraine, creating a humanitarian crisis that threatens millions. In response to the resulting outcry, Russia signed the Minsk agreements; committed to a ceasefire; committed to countless truces; committed to a withdrawal of heavy weapons; and committed to monitors to guarantee all of its commitments.

Unsurprisingly, Russia has serially disregarded all of these promises. And it has permitted – if not instructed – its forces to detain, threaten, and even shoot at monitors, their vehicles, cameras, and observation drones. In short, Russia has created a catastrophe of suffering in Ukraine.

This is not a frozen conflict – the month of May has seen security conditions worsen with increased ceasefire violations, higher civilian casualties, and growing military casualties. Adding to its complicity, the Kremlin has neglected every one of the dozens of previous ceasefire agreements.

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Mr. Tillerson has neglected every one of the dozens of previous ceasefire agreements.

Russia insults our intelligence by telling us that this is a home-grown, internal conflict. But everyone in this room knows better.

The militants in eastern Ukraine report directly to the Russian military, which arms them, trains them, leads them, and fights alongside them. Russia's combined forces in eastern Ukraine include thousands of tanks, armored vehicles, and heavy artillery.

Despite its transparent denials, there is no doubt Russia is driving the Ukrainian conflict. How do we know? Because the Russian forces work hard to conceal who's directing their actions and paying their wages. They strip patches and insignia off of their uniforms and equipment. They hide their identities behind facemasks. But we know why they're there, and we know who sent them. Russian soldiers have been captured by Ukrainian Armed Forces.

Journalists have identified numerous examples of Russian military equipment being used by Russian-led forces in eastern Ukraine.

Tragically, this includes the Russia-supplied missile system that shot down the Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 in July of 2014, a civilian aircraft flying from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur, killing all 298 onboard. The victims include nationals of our Security Council colleagues – 193 citizens of the Netherlands, 10 British citizens, and a dual national American, among others. The families of these victims deserve answers, and we welcome last week's update from the international investigative team. They have handled this case with professionalism and independence.

We strongly support Australia's and Netherlands' call on Russia to acknowledge its role in the tragedy and cooperate in bringing to account those responsible for shooting down MH-17.

And like its role in the MH-17 tragedy, we ask Russia to acknowledge another reality that everyone here knows to be true: Russian soldiers are in Ukraine. Not to "protect" Russian-speaking Ukrainian nationals, but to impose Russian control on the country.

And let me emphasize that there is an urgent reason for making this request. The Russian government holds the key to solving the crisis in Ukraine. Resolution of this conflict is not only possible, it is profoundly straightforward. Russia needs to withdraw its military forces and equipment, call on its proxies to honor a ceasefire, and fulfill its commitments under the Minsk agreements.

In Crimea, Russia needs to withdraw from the peninsula and restore it to Ukrainian control in line with Moscow's multilateral and bilateral commitments.

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Russia can unilaterally fix this wrong. And the first step is acknowledging it.

Until Russia ends its outrageous actions in Ukraine, the position of the United States will not waver. We condemn, in the strongest terms, Russia's involvement in eastern Ukraine and its purported annexation of Crimea. Until Russia returns the Crimean Peninsula to Ukrainian control, U.S. sanctions related to the invasion of Crimea will continue. And until Russia pulls its forces out of eastern Ukraine and honors its Minsk commitments, our sanctions in response to its flagrant misconduct in the eastern part of the country will stay in place.

The United States – in close partnership with France, Germany, and Ukraine – are weighing options to bring peace to eastern Ukraine. However, Russia has refused to engage meaningfully, and our efforts have been stalled since January.

On April 23, 2017, Joseph Stone, an American, was working as a paramedic in eastern Ukraine. He was serving with the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in an area under Russian control. His vehicle was hit by an anti-tank mine. Joseph was killed. The tragedy of Joseph is joined by many others in Ukraine. We will not forget his sacrifice, just as Ukrainians will not forget the death and suffering of so many of their people. All those who respect and are committed to defend the United Nations and its Charter must join us in demanding justice for Joseph and for all of the victims in Ukraine.

Thank you.

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Remarks by President Trump After Tour of Apple Manufacturing Plant | Austin, TX | The White House



REMARKS

Remarks by President Trump After Tour of Apple Manufacturing Plant | Austin, TX

— ECONOMY & JOBS

Issued on: November 20, 2019

★ ★ ★

Flextronics International Ltd.
Austin, Texas

3:52 P.M. CST

THE PRESIDENT: Well, thank you very much. It's an honor to be here. We're seeing the beginning of a very powerful and important plant. And anybody that followed my campaign, I would always talk about Apple — that I want to see Apple building plants in the United States. And that's what's happening. And having — Tim Cook is somebody that I greatly respect — a great leader, a great businessman. And it's a very special day. For me, this is a very special day.

Our country is doing well, probably better than ever before, certainly from the standpoint of the economy. And we're in a state that I love: Texas.

And Tim has a couple of things to say, not only about this incredible product that is made right here — very, very unique product — but also about their expansion from this point forward. We've already done it up to here. But from this point forward. And the nice part: He doesn't have to worry about tariffs. Because when you build in the United States, you don't have to worry about tariffs. It sort of helps people make a decision to come in.

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But he's a very special person, as far as this country is concerned, because of the great job potential and the great job that he's done. Apple is the first trillion-dollar company, and that was about a year ago. Now it's about a trillion-three, I think you said. But Apple is doing fantastically well.

So we're honored that you're doing what you're doing. We're honored to be here with you at this special occasion. And we'll be back. We'll be back. Thank you, Tim. Thank you very much.

MR. COOK: Thank you. I'd like to thank everybody for coming and joining us. And I particularly would like to thank President Trump, Secretary Mnuchin, and Ivanka, and the other members of the administration. I'm grateful for their support and pulling today off and getting us to — this far. It would not be possible without them.

What you're seeing here — the product, the Mac Pro — is 15,000 times more powerful than the original Mac, and it can perform 56 trillion tasks per second. That's 56 trillion tasks per second. It's absolutely blow-away.

We cannot be more proud of the product. It's an example of American design, American manufacturing, and American ingenuity. We want to thank everybody for coming.

And I turn it back to — oh, one other thing: This morning, we also announced a one-billion-dollar investment, groundbreaking — Rebecca was there with me for this — for a three-million-square-foot site in Austin, about 10 minutes or so away from here. So we view Austin as a very key place for the future of our company. It's the second-largest site in the world for us, next to our home base in Cupertino.

So — and I'm hoping for, obviously, more investments to come. Thank you very much.

THE PRESIDENT: So Tim was saying, just a little while ago, that he's starting this massive, new development also in Texas — Austin. But he's also said something to me about the American economy because he's, you know, all over the world. I would say there's probably nobody that's more over the world than Apple.

And what would you say about our economy compared to everybody else?

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MR. COOK: I think we have the strongest economy in the world right now.

THE PRESIDENT: The strongest in the world.

Congressmen, please come over. Our great congressmen. And it's great to have you. I just see you in the audience here.

REPRESENTATIVE CARTER: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: So if anyone has any questions, go ahead.

Steve, go ahead.

Q What did you make of Ambassador Sondland's testimony this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think it was fantastic. I think they have to end it now. He said there was no quid pro quo. "The President did absolutely nothing wrong." If you look at it — I guess you've seen me — I took down exactly what he said. He called and he said — he asked me where we — what should he do. I said, "I want nothing." Then I repeated it: "I want nothing. I want no quid pro quo. Tell the President" — as you know, of Ukraine — "to do the right thing."

And then, he finished off and he said, "This is the final word from...the President of the United States." So what did the President want? "I want nothing." Okay? "I want nothing."

And let me tell you, it's a hoax. It's a disgrace. It's an embarrassment to our country. Nancy Pelosi has done a terrible job as Speaker. There's never been a Speaker that's done so little. And she's totally incompetent. And Shift Schiff, he stands up and he tells lies all day long. And even with that — so we have no due process, we can't have anything. And yet, not only did we win today — it's over. And some of the fair press — of which there isn't too much — said this thing is over.

So the President of the United States told this guy, who is no — I mean, the question I asked — and it's the same question that a number of the congressmen have asked: Why didn't he put this statement into his opening remarks? It's the most important — important statement there are.

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For this country, for our country to be playing this — we're opening up massive Apple plants. We have the greatest economy in the world. We have the greatest economy that we've ever had in the history of our country. We have the best unemployment numbers that we've ever had.

But we have a fake press. We have a phony press. We don't have freedom of the press in this country. We have a phony press. They're dishonest, most of them. We have some fine people from — fine journalists and reporters and companies. But most of them are fake and phony. CNN, NBC, ABC, CBS, The Washington Post, New York Times — these are fake papers. They are fake press. And there is — they should be ashamed of themselves, and they hurt our country.

And, to be honest with you, I think it's a great tribute to all of those people in swing states and all of those people in this country. We had an Electoral College — as you know, Congressman, we had a landslide — 306 to 223. We had a landslide. And they're trying to take it away because they can't do it fairly.

But these are bad people. Nancy Pelosi is incompetent. She's gotten nothing done in Congress. And now, with their big star witness — this was going to be their star witness. Now, just so you know, I don't know him very well. He's a guy that got put there. He wasn't even on my side. He came over to me — I didn't even know that. He came over to me after I defeated other people. I defeated them all.

But you know what? What — what, really, we have to learn from this whole thing is the press. They ought to straighten out their act. Because we have the greatest country in the world but we have room to get even greater. But with a fake press, with the media the way it is, they should be ashamed of themselves.

Q Mr. President, have you considered taking any action against the whistleblower?

THE PRESIDENT: The whistleblower is not a whistleblower. He's a fake. And everybody knows —

Q Would you fire the whistleblower? Or —

THE PRESIDENT: Excuse me. Everybody knows who the whistleblower is. And the whistleblower is a political operative. These gentlemen know it. He's a political operative.

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And, frankly, the IG should have never brought this. Because if he would have compared what the whistleblower said, if he would have compared it to what I said in the conversation — two conversations, really — but to what I said in the conversation with the President — who I think is a terrific person — of Ukraine, he would have said, “Well, wait a minute. The whistleblower said this.” And that wasn’t the conversation because we have the transcribed conversation.

And also, Shifty Schiff — he’s a dishonest — he’s a corrupt politician. When he imitated or tried to copy my conversation, he didn’t copy it. He made up a conversation. Went before Congress, and made up a phony conversation, just like he does every time he talks. He’s a phony. He’s a very dishonest, very corrupt politician.

So, instead of — and, look, the big upset, as you folks know, was when I released the transcript. Because I don’t like doing that because you have to keep this very, very classified and confidential when you’re speaking to heads of state. But I released it because Schiff and the whistleblower made up a phony deal.

And I’ll tell you what: You ought to be ashamed of yourself. The press should be ashamed and they ought to end the witch hunt right now.

Q What did you mean — what do you mean Zelensky should “do the right thing”?

Q Would you take some kind of action against the whistleblower?

Q When you say Zelensky should “do the right thing,” what did you mean by that?

THE PRESIDENT: I didn’t say that.

Q When you told Sondland that —

THE PRESIDENT: He’s already done the right thing, because —

Q When you told Sondland that —

THE PRESIDENT: — the President — the President — if you look — of Ukraine, and his spokesman, the Foreign Minister, they put out: “There was no pressure whatsoever.” “None whatsoever.” And

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you knew that. You knew that very well. But you're fake news and you should be ashamed of yourselves, and you should change, because it's a very bad thing for our country.

Q Do you still want Ukraine to investigate the Bidens, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: The Bidens is a whole different story. When you talk about corruption, when you have a guy that made no money, his father becomes Vice President, and all of a sudden he's getting millions and millions of dollars from Ukraine, from China, from all of these countries — you just see two of them. This guy made nothing. He got thrown out of the Navy. He couldn't get a job. And then his father becomes Vice President and the press doesn't want to report it because the press is dishonest.

So I think it's a disgrace. I think the whole thing with Biden is a disgrace.

Steve, go ahead. Go ahead.

Q Should Apple be exempt from China tariffs?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we're looking at that. And, you know, the problem we have is you have Samsung — it's a great company, but it's a competitor of Apple, and it's not fair if — because we have a trade deal with Korea. We made a great trade deal with South Korea, but we have to treat Apple on a somewhat similar basis as we treat Samsung.

Now, with all of that being said, we're doing very nicely with China, but I like it the way it is now, because we're taking in billions and billions of dollars, and we're giving some of that money to farmers and others. But we are looking at Apple. When I wanted Apple to do, from day one — from before I got elected — I said, "Someday we're going to see Apple building plants in our country, not in China." And that's what's happening.

It's all happening. It's all the American Dream. Our country has never done better. It's doing better than it's ever done.

Unemployment, the lowest levels. The numbers just came out today. African American, Hispanic American, Asian American, the lowest they've ever had in the history of our country. So we're very happy.

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Thank you very much.

Q (Inaudible) other Apple products?

Q (Inaudible.)

THE PRESIDENT: Say it?

Q Will there be a trade deal in place before the end of the year?

THE PRESIDENT: So, I can tell you this: China would much rather make a trade deal than I would.

Q Then why haven't they?

THE PRESIDENT: Because I haven't wanted to do it yet.

Q And why haven't you wanted to yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Because I don't think they're stepping up to the level that I want.

Q I spoke earlier today with Mr. Cook and he said, "Another round of tariffs would be bad for business. It would be bad for the United States."

THE PRESIDENT: I know, but, you know —

Q Will the tariffs take effect —

THE PRESIDENT: Here — here's what I say —

Q — December 15th?

THE PRESIDENT: Here's what I say — here's what I say: What do you know?

I put in tariffs, everyone said, "Oh, gee, you're taking in billions — hundreds of billions of dollars we will be taking in." And everybody said, "Oh, that's going to be bad for the economy." Well, as

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you just heard from Tim Cook, we have the strongest economy, by far, in the world, and we're taking in billions and billions of dollars. So we'll see what happens.

We are dealing with China. I have a great relationship with President Xi. They're a great country, but we're a greater country than China.

If I didn't win, right now China would be a bigger economy than the United States. But because I won, we picked up — reported on your network — \$11 trillion in worth, in value. And China has lost probably \$25 trillion. We are much bigger than China right now, and we're going to keep it that way.

Thank you all. Thank you very much.

END

4:06 P.M. CST

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REMARKS

Remarks by President Trump and President Buhari of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in Joint Press Conference

— FOREIGN POLICY

Issued on: April 30, 2018



Rose Garden

1:39 P.M. EDT

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Thank you very much. Thank you. Today, I'm honored to host President Buhari of Nigeria at the White House, right here in the beautiful Rose Garden.

President Buhari, I want thank you very much for traveling to Washington for these important discussions. It's a true pleasure to welcome you to our nation's capital.

Nigeria is the largest democracy in Africa. As I conveyed to President Buhari in our discussions, the United States deeply values and appreciates Nigeria's role as a strong, democratic leader in the region.

The United States is currently working to expand trade and commercial ties with African nations, including Nigeria, to create jobs and wealth in all of our countries. We hope to be the economic partner of choice for nations across the continent and all around the world. And you see what's happening with respect to trade and the United States. We are being respected again.

I hope all African countries, and countries throughout the world, that we also will be supporting you and that they will likewise support us in our bid, along with Canada and Mexico, for the 2026 World Cup. We will be watching very closely, and any help that they could give us in that bid we would appreciate.

I'm pleased that Nigeria is one of our largest trading partners in the region, and we look forward to growing our trade relationship based on the principle of fairness and reciprocity. But we give Nigeria well over \$1 billion in aid every year. And we have already started talking with the President about taking down the trade barriers — very substantial barriers to the United States trading with Nigeria. So we think that we are owed that.

President Buhari has also taken several steps to fight corruption and improve the Nigerian business climate. And most of all to me — and again — is ripping down those trade barriers. These measures will make it easier for Nigeria and the United States companies to invest. And we will be investing substantially in Nigeria if they can create that level playing field that we have to very much ask for, and maybe demand.

I especially want to thank President Buhari for Nigeria's partnership and leadership in the fight against terrorism. He's been a real leader. Nigeria was one of the first African nations to join the coalition to defeat ISIS, and Nigerian forces are currently leading regional efforts against ISIS in West Africa, and doing very well, as we have.

Nigeria is also leading African nations in the fight against Boko Haram, and — another ruthless jihadist terrorist group. You've been reading about them. They kidnapped the young girls and young women, many of whom never are seen again. It's tough stuff. This summer, it was my honor to meet with two brave young women, Joy Bishara and Lydia Pogu, who were kidnapped by Boko Haram in April of 2014 at the secondary school in Nigeria. I was deeply moved by their inspiring stories of courage, resilience, and survival. They really were two amazing young women.

I told Joy and Lydia, my administration is committed to combatting both jihadist terrorism and the scourge of human trafficking and smuggling. In the world today, there is more human trafficking than there has ever been — if you can believe this. They use the Internet better than almost anybody is able to use the Internet. So think of it, in a modern world, in this world, there's more human trafficking and slavery than at any time in the history of this world. It's hard to believe.

To protect Americans from these menaces, I have called on Congress to close deadly immigration loopholes that are exploited by terrorists, traffickers, and criminals. Just look at our southern border and our weak and obsolete immigration laws. They are obsolete and they are weak, and they are pathetic. And there's no country in the world that has laws like we do. They've got to change, and they've got to change now for the safety of our country.

We're also helping our Nigerian partners by facilitating intelligence cooperation, and providing training and military equipment to Nigerian forces. For example, we recently sold Nigeria 12 U.S. A-29 Super Tucano aircraft — it's a great aircraft — and the first-ever [major] sale of American military equipment to Nigeria. These new aircraft will improve Nigeria's ability to target terrorists and protect civilians.

Finally, we're deeply concerned by religious violence in Nigeria, including the burning of churches, and the killing and persecution of Christians. It's a horrible story. We encourage Nigeria and the federal, state, and local leaders to do everything in their power to immediately secure the affected communities and to protect innocent civilians of all faiths, including Muslims and including Christians.

Mr. President, thank you again for visiting the White House and being with us today. Nigeria is a valued partner and a good friend. I look forward to working closely with you to deepen our cooperation and forge an even closer partnership. The United States is committed to working alongside Nigeria as we seek a future of strength, prosperity, and peace for both of our countries.

Mr. President, thank you very much. Thank you. (Applause.)

PRESIDENT BUHARI: Mr. President of the United States of America, ladies and gentlemen of the media, it has been a pleasure and honor to visit Washington, D.C. at the kind invitation of President Donald Trump.

Nigeria and the United States share a long history of close and cordial relations which encompass political, economic, military, social, and cultural cooperation. Our two countries maintain a strategic partnership for peace and security, conflict resolution, as well as a global fight against terrorism. We also share common features at secular, federal, state — practicing a similar democratic model of governance, and committed to the universal values of fundamental human rights and freedoms: free enterprise, social justice, and rule of law.

President Trump and his team, and myself and the Nigerian team, discussed issues related to security, trade, governance, human rights, and humanitarian crises. We congratulated the leaders of the North and South Korea on their historic summit, and we applaud them for the positive commitment they have made towards denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

President Trump deserves a great deal of credit for his statesmanly role in transforming so dramatically the cause of events in that region.

We also congratulated the United States government on the important role it played in the defeat of ISIS, although some of the remnants have found their way to the Sahel region.

We recognize the strong United States support in our fight against terrorism and also appreciated very much the United States agreement to sell 12 Super Tucano A-29 warplanes and weapons to Nigeria to effectively fight terrorism.

To contain the spate of insurgency in Nigeria, the federal government has adopted a multi-sectorial approach involving related government agencies to address the socio-economic and political damages, while the armed forces of Nigeria assist civil authority to provide security and maintain law and order.

As part of efforts to address emergent cases of insurgency in the country, the Nigerian military adopted — the Nigerian military adopted counterterrorism insurgency approach, codenamed “Operation Safe Corridor,” to de-radicalize, rehabilitate, and reintegrate willingly surrendered Boko Haram members into the larger society.

This program is currently embarking on a number of projects, including skill acquisition centers and integrated farms comprising poultry, fish farms, and greenhouse farming, among others.

A number of international partners, including the International Organization for Migration, have contributed to the success of Operation Safe Corridor. We indicated that we will appreciate whatever support we could also get from the United States.

We express gratitude to the United States support in the reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts in the northeast of Nigeria, as well as humanitarian assistance to the internally displaced persons,

through agencies such as the United States Agency for International Development, and other international partners.

The United States of America has been, to date, the biggest contributor to the humanitarian response. And last year, I gave approximately half-a-billion United States dollars in cash and in-kind contributions through the United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations. This has mainly supported protection activities — health, food assistance, and shelter.

We are doing all we can to secure the release of the remaining abducted schoolgirls from Dapchi and Chibok. In this context, we will continue to welcome United States collaboration in intelligence gathering, hostage negotiations, and information sharing. The government is taking necessary steps to promote the peaceful coexistence of herdsmen and farmers by focusing on boosting security and enforcing legislation that will guarantee borders and farmers' access to land.

I extend sincere congratulations to President Trump and his government on the impressive performance of the United States economy under his watch.

Our aim is to diversify our own economy by focusing on agricultural and food security, power and infrastructure. We have cut the importation of rice by 90 percent, thereby saving a significant amount of money.

We very much welcome increased United States investment in Nigerian economy, especially the non-oil sector. Economic relations between Nigeria and the United States are anchored on three major instruments, namely the Bi-National Commission, Trade and Investment Framework Agreement, and the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act. The Bi-National Commission, in particular, comprised of bilateral, political, economic, governmental, and humanitarian partnership, is a basic economic framework for engagement between our two countries.

Nigeria's trade volume with the United States stood at 6.07 billion United States dollars according to 2016 statistics, and comprised 4.76 billion United States dollars, also, of Nigerian exports to the United States, and 1.894 billion United States dollar exports to Nigeria. We urge greater effort to increase these figures substantially.

We thank the United States government very much for cooperation we have received in our effort to recover stolen funds. Our two governments have put the machinery in place for their respective

attorney generals to collaborate in ensuring the return to Nigeria of over 500 million United States dollars of looted funds siphoned away in banks around the world.

In this connection, we congratulate the United States government on launching a Kleptocracy Asset Recovery Initiative, which was spearheaded by the United States Department of Justice's Asset Forfeiture and Money Laundering. We hope that we could continue to come to United States support in this area.

The government of Nigeria remains deeply committed to the principles of human rights, as well as promotion and protection of people's freedom, even in the process of fighting terror. We commit to ensure that all documented cases of human rights abuses are investigated, and those responsible for violation held responsible.

I thank you very much (inaudible).

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, thank you, Mr. President. Thank you very much. (Applause.) Thank you, sir.

Steve Miller of the Washington Times, please. Washington Times. Thank you, Steve.

Q Thank you, Mr. President. I had a two-parter on immigration. Last week, in the Supreme Court case over your travel ban, the lawyers for the opponents said that if you would simply apologize for some of your rhetoric during the campaign, the whole case would go away. And I was wondering if you would be willing —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I don't think it would, number one. And there is no reason to apologize. Our immigration laws in this country are a total disaster. They're laughed at all over the world. They're laughed at for their stupidity. And we have to have strong immigration laws.

So I think if I apologize, it wouldn't make 10 cents worth of difference to them. There's nothing to apologize for. We have to have strong immigration laws to protect our country.

Q And looking to the future: The caravan has arrived at the U.S. border.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: We've been watching it. We've been watching it, Steve.

Q And I'm just wondering, in your opinion — or of your estimation — what percentage of those people do you believe are deserving of asylum in the U.S.?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, I won't get into percentages. But we are a nation of laws. We have to have borders. If we don't have borders, we don't have a country.

And I've been watching for weeks as the caravan came up. And, you know, the Mexican laws are very tough on immigration. Extremely tough. And it started out with way over 1,000 people — I guess now it's down to about 100 — going all through Mexico. People don't realize what a big country Mexico is. But it came down by a lot.

And now we're working on the border with the worst laws any country — no matter where you go, all over the world, they can't even believe it. And we're doing the best we can with it. But we have to have changes in Congress, and we have to have it quickly.

We need a wall, number one. And you see that right now. You know, where they are — even though it's not a particularly good wall and even though a small percentage can climb to the top, they have to be in extremely good shape. But a small percentage can climb that particular wall. We have a wall that's much more difficult.

But if you didn't have that, you would have thousands of people just pouring into our country. You got to have a wall. And we need border security, and we will have border security.

As you know, we're sending many, many National Guardsmen down to the border — most of them are already there — and that's having a big impact. But we need a change in the law. Catch-and-release is ridiculous. If they touch our property, if they touch our country, essentially you catch them and you release them into our country. That's not acceptable to anybody. So we need a change in the law.

Q Mr. President, when you were sitting down in the Oval Office with President Trump, who ran on not wanting to be the policeman for the world, what kind of arguments did you make to convince him to continue a military presence for the U.S. in your country? And what arguments did you make to him? How receptive was he?

PRESIDENT BUHARI: I can't answer what you mean by United States presence in my country. They sent a training team, based on their experiences, to train our officers at some of our training institutions, and move to the graded area to see how well (inaudible) are performing. I think this is one of the best things the United States could do for us to stabilize the country.

Q And he agreed with that?

PRESIDENT BUHARI: I do, very much so. That's why I thank him for it.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, we more and more are — because it's a very fair question — we more and more are not wanting to be the policeman of the world. And we're spending tremendous amounts of money for decades on policing the world, and that shouldn't be our priority. We want to police ourselves, and we want to rebuild our country.

And the President understands that. And they've come a long way. They're doing a great job. We're contributing to that job, but they have done a great job.

What we do want to do, though, is open Nigeria and other countries up to trade, because we have spent, over the last decade, a number that's so large you wouldn't even believe it. And I think we'll be treated in a reciprocal fashion now, as of today. So I think that's going to happen.

And I have great respect for the President. Okay?

How about Jordan Fabian. Where's Jordan? Jordan. The Hill.

Q Thank you.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Thank you.

Q Thank you. Thank you, Mr. President. I want to ask you about Iran. The Israeli Prime Minister just gave a speech very critical of their nuclear program. I wanted to ask if you have made up your mind to pull out of that deal. And if you do pull out of that deal, do you think — are you worried that it sends the wrong message to North Korea, as you seek to enter nuclear talks with Kim Jong-un?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: No, I think it sends the right message. You know, in seven years that deal will have expired and Iran is free to go ahead and create nuclear weapons. That's not acceptable. Seven years is tomorrow. That's not acceptable.

So, no, if anything, it's proven right what Israel has done today with the news conference. And Prime Minister Netanyahu just gave a very — I don't know if everybody has seen it, but I got to see a little bit of it. And that is just not an acceptable situation. And I've been saying that's happening. They're not sitting back idly. They're setting off missiles, which they say are for television purposes. I don't think so:

So we'll see what happens. I'm not telling you what I'm doing, but a lot of people think they know. And on or before the 12th, we'll make a decision. That doesn't mean we won't negotiate a real agreement. You know, this is an agreement that wasn't approved by too many people. And it's a horrible agreement for the United States, including the fact, Mr. President, that we gave Iran \$150 billion and \$1.8 billion in cash. Nigeria would like some of that. \$1.8 billion in cash and \$150 billion. You know what we got? We got nothing. We got nothing.

So that doesn't mean I wouldn't negotiate a new agreement. We'll see what happens. But I think, if anything, what's happening today and what's happened over the last little while, and what we've learned, has really shown that I've been 100 percent right.

Q And, President Buhari, I want to ask you: You're the first leader from Sub-Saharan Africa to visit President Trump here at the White House. Did you address his reported comments from early this year when he reportedly used vulgar language to describe African nations?

PRESIDENT BUHARI: Well, I'm very careful with what the press says about other than myself. I'm not sure about, you know, the validity or whether that allegation against the President was true or not. So the best thing for me is to keep quiet.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: We didn't discuss it, and you do have some countries that are in very bad shape and very tough places to live in. But we didn't discuss it because the President knows me, and he knows where I'm coming from. And I appreciate that. We did not discuss it.

Mr. President, you can ask a question.

PRESIDENT BUHARI: Yes, that lady is already up. Yes.

Q Thank you, Mr. President. My name is Giuliana (ph). Mr. President Trump, I would like to know: Nigeria is in dire need of the Tucano aircraft to tackle the problem back home. Will you be kind enough to release at least two before 2020 to enable the country to tackle the situation in the country? And how soon will you be visiting Nigeria?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, I would like to visit Nigeria. I'd like very much to visit Nigeria. It's an amazing country. And in certain ways, I hear from the standpoint of the beauty of a country, there's no country more beautiful. So I would like to.

And the first part of your question — I couldn't hear what you were saying. Go ahead.

Q The helicopters.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Oh, helicopters?

Q Yes.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Oh, oh. We love helicopters. He likes them more than I do. He likes buying helicopters. But he is — and they're buying a lot of helicopters. Helicopters —

Q We want to know how soon —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Very soon.

Q — will you be releasing them to the country?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Yes, very soon. We're getting it approved. Part of the problem was that you weren't allowed to buy helicopters in our country, and now you are. I worked that out so that now you can buy the helicopters that you want. They weren't allowed to buy the helicopters in our country for various reasons, which, frankly, were not good reasons. But now they get them, and they get them very quickly. And they are the best helicopters anywhere in the world. We make the best military equipment in the world. And our friends can now buy that equipment.

Mr. President.

PRESIDENT BUHARI: Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Did you have a question for the President?

Q President Trump — my question is to President Trump.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Thank you.

Q The fight against corruption is one of the major achievements that the Nigerian government has presented to the world. And the record show that United States of America is one of the major destination countries of illicit fund and assets from Nigeria. To what extent did you discuss the need to repatriate these funds back to Nigeria to fund critical infrastructure, to cut down funding for terrorism, and also to reduce our illegal immigration from Nigeria to your country?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Yes. We have actually discussed all of those topics at length over the last period of time. And in terms of corruption, Nigeria has a reputation, as you understand very well, for very massive corruption. I also know that the President has been able to cut that down very substantially. We talked about it; he is working on it. And they have made a lot of progress, and I think they will continue to make a lot of progress.

We have a lot of people in this country and, frankly, the country itself, that invests in Nigeria. So cutting down on that corruption element and a corrupt element is very important to us. And the President will be able to do that.

President.

Q To President Buhari: The United States import of crude oil from Nigeria has considerably gone down. Did you discuss the need for the U.S. to increase the import of crude oil from Nigeria?

PRESIDENT BUHARI: No, I can't tell the United States what to do. But lately for us, we have good market for our crude oil elsewhere. But the progress made by United States in technology is actually (inaudible) for our mono-economy. I hope technology will allow them to use our crude for its quality for petrochemicals (inaudible) vis-à-vis they are getting from shale.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I think maybe more than anything else, what we discussed today was agricultural products going into Nigeria, which Nigeria wants. But we have certain barriers that don't allow that to happen. So for the good of our farmers — U.S. farmers — and for the good of Nigeria and all of Africa, it's very important that we are able to sell our great agricultural products into Nigeria. And that will happen, and we're going to be working on that right away. Okay?

Thank you all very much. Thank you, everybody. Thank you.

Q Mr. President, will you meet Kim at the DMZ, sir?

Q (Inaudible.)

PRESIDENT TRUMP: It's possible. It's very possible.

Q Is the DMZ another location (inaudible)?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, it was an interesting thought. And I had that thought. We're looking at various countries, including Singapore. And we are also talking about the possibility of the DMZ — Peace House/Freedom House.

And there's something that I thought was intriguing. I think that some people maybe don't like the look of that, and some people like it very much. I threw it out today as an idea. I also told President Moon, and through President Moon we connected with North Korea. There's something that I like about it because you're there. You're actually there — where, if things work out, there's a great celebration to be had on the site, not in a third-party country.

So we are looking at the possibility of doing it in that location. We're also looking at various other countries, including Singapore. I will say this, the good news: Everybody wants us. It has the chance to be a big event. And the United States — I was talking to John Bolton about this a little while ago — the United States has never been closer to potentially having something happen with respect to the Korean Peninsula that can get rid of the nuclear weapons, can create so many good things, so many positive things, and peace and safety for the world.

So we'll see what happens. You know, I often say, "Who knows?" Who knows? Maybe a lot of things change. But Kim Jong-un, who has been very open and very straightforward so far — I can only say, again, "so far." But he's talking about getting rid of the site, which was their big site. He's talking about no research, no launching of ballistic missiles, no nuclear testing. And he has lived up to that for a long period of time — a longer period of time than anybody has seen.

So we are looking at that as a potential site, yes. I think it would be very interesting. I think it would be a great celebration if it works out well. And if it doesn't work out well, that's the way it goes.

Q Are you still confident the summit will happen? Is there anything that can —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Oh, yeah, I think the summit is going to happen. They very much want it. We certainly would like to see it. I think the summit will happen. And personally, I think it's going to be a success. But we'll see. I will say this: If it's not a success — if it's not a success —

Q How do you define success?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Got to get rid of the nuclear weapons. If it's not a success, I will respectfully leave. It's very simple.

Thank you all very much. Thank you.

END

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REMARKS

Remarks by President Trump and President Bukele of El Salvador Before Bilateral Meeting | New York, NY

Issued on: September 25, 2019



InterContinental New York Barclay
New York, New York

3:24 P.M. EDT

PRESIDENT TRUMP: It's a great honor to be with the President of El Salvador. We've had a tremendous success because, two weeks ago, we signed a cooperation agreement, which is a big thing — great for El Salvador, great for the United States. And we worked very, very well with our people. And I have great respect for you, and I really appreciate what you're doing.

The President has done an incredible job with MS-13. He realizes what a threat they are. And they have been very, very tough, and we all appreciate that. And thank you very much for the agreement.

PRESIDENT BUKELE: Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Please.

PRESIDENT BUKELE: Thank you, Mr. President. Well, we're very happy to be here. It's an honor to be with the President of the United States and with his team. It's — we're very impressed and — the

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Remarks by President Trump and President Bukele of El Salvador Before Bilateral Meeting | New York, NY | The White House

whole team being here.

And actually, for us, the United States is not only a partner and an ally, but also a friend. And we're going to show that friendship — that's one of the reasons we signed the agreement is because we want to show that friendship to our most important ally, which is the United States. And for us, this is very, very important.

And looking forward, I mean, we have been a little more than 100 days in office, but we look forward to be working with President Trump for the next five years. So I think that will be very good for us.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I thought you were going to say longer than that. (Laughter.) Tell them a little bit longer, they'll love that. That'll be breaking news.

PRESIDENT BUKELE: I'm only going to be — I'm only going to be for five years.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I know. (Inaudible.) (Laughter.)

PRESIDENT BUKELE: You would need to talk with — to talk with the next President.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Yes.

PRESIDENT BUKELE: So for — we're very happy to be here and we're hoping that this meeting will only strengthen our relationship even more. And I think it will, because, you know, we're — President Trump is very nice and cool, and I'm nice and cool, too. (Laughter.) So — we both use Twitter a lot, so, you know, we'll get along. And we're very honored. We're very honored, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, it's our honor. Thank you very much. And we're working together very well. And the relationship has been excellent.

Mr. Secretary, would you like to say something?

SECRETARY MCALEENAN: Thank you, Mr. President. And thank you, President Bukele. It's been a tremendous partnership in the first 100 days you've had in office, with all of your team: Minister

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Hill, Minister Rivas, your security minister. And I really see the advances that you're making on ending forced migration. It's very productive for the region, and we'll be there alongside supporting you. Thank you.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: And I think, importantly, we met with Honduras, as you know, and we also had meetings previous to this, but with Guatemala, and had tremendously successful meetings. We also signed agreements with them — cooperation agreements. Some people use different terms, but we use the word “cooperation agreement,” and at the highest strength, and yours also. And that's good for all of us. It's really good for all of us.

Mexico has been fantastic on the border. Today we have 27,000 soldiers. The numbers are way down. What are the numbers you were just telling me?

SECRETARY MCALEENAN: Yeah. We're going drop again this month, Mr. President. It will be an over 60 percent reduction from the peak in May. And from Central America, it will be closer to 75 or 80 percent reduction.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Yeah. About an 80 percent — I heard that before. Eighty-one percent. The catch and release is gone, as of almost now.

SECRETARY MCALEENAN: That's right.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: And there won't be catch and release. We're not releasing anybody into the country. And especially, we focus on the bad ones, but the bad ones get taken out. We're removing them from our country. We're moving them fast. And they are the ones that go first. You might want to discuss that a little bit.

Go ahead.

SECRETARY MCALEENAN: Absolutely. So we announced the end of the court-mandated catch and release of families from Central America. And we've been able to do that because of our partnerships with the region, like with El Salvador, on streamlining repatriation for those who don't claim asylum, and working with Mexico through the migrant protection protocol for families if they do claim asylums so that they can get an expedited court hearing. And that's been a very productive approach.

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We reduced the overall flow, and we're taking profits away from criminal smugglers, and we're making great progress with our international partners under your leadership.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: And Mexico, frankly, is doing a great job, with respect to the cartels, by having 27,000 soldiers on our border. They're decimating a lot of the cartels that were just really coming in. There's so many people now. There's so many bodies and really strong, tough, hardened soldiers there that it's very hard for the cartels to break through. And a lot of bad were — if you have a cartel, it has not been a good situation for you. So Mexico really is doing themselves a big favor, too.

But the President of Mexico has been outstanding in working with all of us, really.

PRESIDENT BUKELE: Yeah. (Inaudible.)

PRESIDENT TRUMP: And we're very happy.

The people that aren't working with us are the Democrats. The Democrats in Congress are a disaster. We could solve so many more problems with the loopholes, which could be done literally in 15 — I always say it — 15, 20 minutes — maybe 30, if we're a little bit slower. But we could solve the loophole problem in a short period of time.

Despite that — and we have asylum also, which we could solve immediately. But we've sort of solved asylum by going through different countries. Can you believe it? Where we go to El Salvador, Honduras; we go to Mexico; we go to Guatemala to solve problems of asylum because we can't go to the United States Congress because the Democrats are playing games. They don't have any time to do anything else. They don't have time to do gun safety. They don't have time to do infrastructure. They have time to do nothing else.

I'll tell you what: A lot of people are very angry at what's going on. They view it as — you could never use the word "joke," because it's too serious. But they view it as something that should never take place. They're never going to see anything done with this group in Congress — the Democrats. And that's why I really think the Republicans will take over the House. We might even increase in the Senate. And we'll keep the presidency and we'll do something that — like this country has never seen before.

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But Nancy Pelosi has been taken over by the radical left. I watched it. I just find it hard to believe. But she's been totally taken over by the radical left. And she does exactly as they want her to do. And a lot of her members now are having second thoughts. They're saying they're in a very bad position. They're in a very bad position.

We were just with the President — the new President of Ukraine — and it was a fantastic meeting. He said, "No pressure. No nothing." It's all a hoax. I call it "the hoax." And this is just a continuation of the witch hunt. And that's all faded; that's all gone. And they had to come up with something else. The same players — Adam Schiff, Nadler — all the same players.

But now Nancy Pelosi was forced into a position that she didn't want to be in, and unfortunately she wasn't tough enough to stop it.

So thank you very much everybody. I think we're going to be doing a news conference in a little while. And that'll be the end. Thank you very much. Thank you.

END

3:32 P.M. EDT

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REMARKS

Remarks by President Trump and President Duda of Poland Before Bilateral Meeting

— FOREIGN POLICY

Issued on: September 23, 2019



InterContinental New York Barclay
New York, New York

2:22 P.M. EDT

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, thank you very much. It's a great honor to be with President Duda of Poland. And we've become friends over the last fairly short period of time. But it's been — it was quite a day in Poland, when we made the speech. You said some nice remarks, I said some nice remarks, and a lot of people remembered what we said. And that was a big — that was a big afternoon, a big weekend, and it's something we — that I will never forget, frankly. And I know the United States was very well received.

The people of Poland loved the United States. We love the people of Poland. We love Polish people. I think it's — you can tell me: How many Polish people — ancestry — do we have in the United States right now? What is it approximately?

PRESIDENT DUDA: How many people —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Yes.

PRESIDENT DUDA: — we think is living here in the United States?

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PRESIDENT TRUMP: It's a tremendously large number.

PRESIDENT DUDA: Oh, it's about 10 million.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Yeah. It's one of the largest. They're great people. They're fantastic people. So, thank you.

We're going to be discussing trade —

PRESIDENT DUDA: I met them yesterday in New Britain.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: That's right. That's right. I know exactly what you're saying. We'll be discussing trade and many other things. We have some long meetings set up over the next two weeks. But Poland has been a very, very great country, as far as the United States is concerned. We do a lot of business with Poland.

And they also make product and they sell a lot of us product — a lot of us really very good product. You have great craftsmen. And that's what we like, is great craftsmen. But so do we. So, we've had a great trading relationship.

The visa waivers are in store; it's already approved. And we're doing it mechanically now so that we get them done as soon as we can, so it's much easier to get to Poland and to the United States for the people that want to get there. It's something that's very important. It was very important, I think, for the President to get that done. And he was able to do it. Through a lot of hard work, he was able to do it.

So I congratulate you, and that's something that's going to be great for a lot of — as you say, for the 10 million people living in the United States that want to travel easily to Poland. It's our honor.

PRESIDENT DUDA: (Inaudible) to visit United States more Polish people as tourists.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: That's true. That's true. That'll work both ways.

Thank you very much, Mr. President. Thank you.

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Okay, thank you.

Q Could you talk about that defense cooperation agreement you just signed? What were the details of that?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: We're going to be cooperating in so many different ways, and militarily, primarily. We'll be moving soldiers there. Poland has borne the expense. They're going to be building us facilities that I'm sure will be very beautiful. They're — it's being worked out right now.

But Poland came to us; they asked us if we would put some troops there. And they will bear the entire expense, and we appreciate that. And we worked out a deal.

Perhaps, Mike, you'd want to say something about that?

SECRETARY POMPEO: We'll put out the full document shortly. You can see all the hard work that both our teams have done. Both our Department of Defense and the Poland Ministry of Defense have done great work to (inaudible) and to do better information sharing — all the things that friendly partner countries do to keep each other secure.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: And we'll most likely be moving troops from other places in Europe, as opposed to new troops going over there.

Q Are you considering more troops to Poland in the future? Are you considering —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, we'll talk to the President and the others about that. Yeah.

Q Mr. President, did you order a review? Did you initiate a review of Ukraine's aid in order to encourage them to investigate Joe Biden?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: No, I think what happens, if you look at Ukraine — and very important to me — why isn't Europe — in fact, I was speaking about this to the President — to President Duda. Why isn't Europe spending more money? Why is it always the United States spending money? I've been complaining about this to my people for a long time.

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We spend so much money not only to Ukraine, but to other places. And why isn't Germany spending more money? Why isn't France? Why aren't other countries in Europe helping Ukraine more? Why is it always the United States? And I've been saying that from the beginning. And I don't like it that it's only us.

Despite that, we've given far more than the Obama administration. He used to send sheets and pillows, and we sent anti-tank guns and weapons. But we really do.

And when I spoke with — I had a great conversation with the new President of Ukraine. And during that conversation, we discussed it. Perhaps you'll see it, perhaps you won't see that. It depends on what we want to do. But we had a great conversation. A very, very — a very nice conversation, too. But one of the things we discussed is why isn't Europe helping Ukraine more? Why is it always the United States? That's bothered me from day one. It's not fair to the United States.

Q Mr. President, when are you going to visit Poland?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Say it?

Q When are you going to visit Poland?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I'll be there fairly soon. We've had a very open standing invitation, and I'll be there very soon. That was something — I really love doing that. We made a speech. Even the fake news gave me great reviews on that speech. (Laughter.) So I was very happy. So in that case, it wasn't fake. It was real. That was real news.

Q Why have you decided to increase U.S. military presence in Poland? Is it because of Russian threat?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: No, I don't think so at all. I think it's just because we have a President of Poland who I like, who I respect. And he asked whether or not we'd be willing to do that. And I said, "Well, you know, there'll have to be installations built." And they said they're willing to do that. And we worked out a deal, and it's my honor.

Again, we have 10 million Polish — in terms of heritage — Polish people in the United States. Certainly special parts of the United States. And they're great people. It's a great country. They've

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done very well, and their economics are very good. They've had an economy that's been very strong — stronger than most.

So we worked out a deal. And I think it's great for Poland and it's very good for us.

Q Sir, is visa waiver a done deal already? Will citizens of Poland be able to come to the United States soon without —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Very soon. Yeah. We have to work out structurally. In other words, from the — we have to get it done. But they qualify. We worked together very hard on that. But now they qualify, Georgetown, and we're going to be able to work that out very quickly. I think over the next couple of months we could have it done. And I know Poland has been looking for that. How many years have you been looking for that — the waivers? How many years have you? How many?

PARTICIPANT: Thirty.

PRESIDENT DUDA: Thirty. (Laughs.)

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Thirty? (Laughter.) Thirty is a long time. I didn't know it was that long. But we got it done. Trump gets it done. Other people don't get it done. We get it done. And that was a good one. That's good for everybody.

Q Mr. President, on the aid question — aid — from a moment ago. Did you tell the Ukrainian leader that they would have the aid only if they investigated Joe Biden and his family?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: No, I didn't. No, I didn't. I didn't do it at all.

Q Can you elaborate as to what you did say, sir?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: But Joe Biden said it about his son. Joe Biden was very dishonest, what he did. What he did is he said if they don't do this or that and get rid of a certain prosecutor — Joe Biden said it. But because you're a faker — you in particular; you're a fake-news group of people — you don't want to report that.

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I didn't do it. And you can — and I hope you're going to be able to see a call, because I didn't do it. You know everybody is looking for that call. And keep going the way you're doing because when you see the call, you're going to be very surprised.

No, but Joe Biden —

Q Are we going to see that call?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Let me just — let me just — be quiet. Joe Biden is the one that did a very, very bad thing when he said that. And I think it was \$1.2 billion he wasn't going to give unless they got rid of the prosecutor who was investigating his son and the company that his son works for. Then you also say: How much did his son make from the Ukraine? And then ask another question: How much money did his son make from China, based on energy?

He knows nothing about energy, so why did he leave China? Why did he leave the Ukraine with all of this money?

So, Joe Biden was very dishonest. Now, when you see the call — if you see it; I hope you see it, frankly — you will find out that I did not do that at all. And you'll be very disappointed when you see it.

It's really a disgrace. It really is a situation where — it just shows, the press, you've had such a bad week between Justice Kavanaugh and this and other things. It's showing how dishonest so many members of the press are. Not all of you, but so many members of the press are so totally dishonest.

But this is a case — I hope you get to see the call because your question, you will see, I did not ask for — I did not make a statement that "you have do this or I'm not going to give you aid." I wouldn't do that. I wouldn't do that.

With that being said, what I want is I want — you know, we're giving a lot of money away to Ukraine and other places. You want to see a country that's going to be not corrupt. The President is a good man. He got elected on the fact that he was going to get rid of corruption in Ukraine. That's, I think, the primary reason he got elected. So he gets elected on the basis of ending corruption in Ukraine.

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Well, I think that's good, and that's what I want to see. But when Biden does a thing like that, then there's still corruption, and that's not good.

Q Sir, you can release — you can authorize a release of the transcript. Will you do that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I can do it very easily. But I'd rather not do it from the standpoint of all of the other conversations I have. I may do it because it was a very innocent call on both his part and mine. We had a very nice call. It was really a congratulatory call because he had just won. It was just confirmed. And he's the new President. And I think he's going to do an excellent job.

But remember, he got elected on the basis of — the biggest part was corruption, in his campaign. And so he wants the same thing, and he's looking for the same thing as I am. He did a very good job. It was a very nice call. I hope you get to see it. And I hope you get to see it soon.

Q (Inaudible), question, sir.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: What?

Q On Iran. The Iranian Foreign Minister —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Boris Johnson. You were going to say Boris Johnson?

Q No, no. No, I'm talking about the Iranian Foreign Minister.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: No, you mentioned Boris Johnson at the beginning of the —

Q No, the Iranian Foreign Minister, sir.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Because he wants a new deal with Iran.

Q Sure.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Right?

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Q But the Iranians are saying now that they're willing to negotiate to end the war in Yemen. Do you take this seriously?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Say it again.

Q The Iranian Foreign Minister —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Talk up, please.

Q The Iranian Foreign Minister is saying that they are willing to negotiate to end the war in Yemen. Do you take this statement seriously?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, I think that's a very big, positive statement, if they said that. I haven't heard it. I've been here and having lots of different meetings. We just had a very good meeting with Pakistan, by the way. We had a great meeting on religious liberty, I think, when you get right down to it, Mike. That was pretty much incredible. It was the first time that the President of the United States was involved in a meeting such as that.

No, I think that Boris Johnson made a strong statement saying that he'd like to see a new agreement. And I think that's good. And if what you're saying about Yemen is true, I like that also. We haven't heard that yet. That's a very positive thing if that's the case.

Q Mr. President, on the whistleblower — on the whistleblower, you say you want the transcript of the call released. Do you also want the whistle- —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I didn't say that at all.

Q Do you also want the whistleblower's complaint —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I didn't say that at all. It may get released. I didn't say that at all. I don't think it's a great precedent to be releasing calls with foreign countries — heads of foreign countries. So I don't think it's a great precedent, so I didn't say I was going to release it at all.

I will tell you, it's a great call. It's a very honorable call. It's a nice call. The Ukrainian government, last night, very strongly, they announced that this call was a very nice call. There was — and they

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also said there was no pressure put on them, like the character over to your left. There was no pressure put on them whatsoever. I put no pressure on them whatsoever. I could have. I think it would probably, possibly, have been okay if I did. But I didn't. I didn't put any pressure on them whatsoever. You know why? Because they want to do the right thing. And they know about corruption. And they probably know that Joe Biden and his son are corrupt. They probably know that.

Joe Biden and his son are corrupt. All right? But the fake news doesn't want to report it because they're Democrats. If that ever happened — if a Republican ever did what Joe Biden did, if a Republican ever said what Joe Biden said, they'd be getting the electric chair by right now.

Look at the double standards. You people ought to be ashamed of yourself. And not all. We have some great journalists around. But you got a lot of crooked journalists. You're crooked as hell.

Okay. Thank you very much. I hope you enjoyed it. Thank you. Thank you very much.

END

2:34 P.M. EDT

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REMARKS

Remarks by President Trump and President Niinistö of the Republic of Finland in Joint Press Conference

— FOREIGN POLICY

Issued on: **October 2, 2019**



East Room

2:25 P.M. EDT

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Thank you very much. Thank you. Look at all the press that you attract. Do you believe this? That's very impressive.

PRESIDENT NIINISTÖ: I guess they are not after me. (Laughter.)

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I hope not. You're lucky.

Thank you very much. Today, it's my honor to welcome President Niinistö of Finland to the White House. And, Mr. President, it's wonderful to host you once again in Washington. We've gotten to know each other over the last period of time, and it's been — it's been a great experience.

The President and I have just concluded very productive discussions on a number of exciting opportunities for our two nations.

Before going further, I want to express our deep condolences over the horrific stabbing attack that took place yesterday at a college in Finland. America is praying for the victims and their families, and we send our unwavering love and support.

PRESIDENT NIINISTÖ: Thank you.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: The American and Finnish people are linked by an abiding commitment to self-government, individual rights, democracy, and the rule of law. This past May, our countries celebrated the 100th anniversary of America's recognition of the independent nation of Finland in 1919. As President Wilson wrote at the time, our recognition was "prompted by [the] sympathies for a cause similar to that which caused our own declaration of independence in 1776."

A century after we established diplomatic relations, the United States and Finland remain united by those same cherished values.

Central to this effort is our nations' close cooperation on matters of security and defense. Although Finland is not a member of NATO — you save a lot of money — Finland participates in many NATO missions and exercises. And I'm pleased that Finland is substantially increasing its military budget.

America and Finland are also working together to advance stability, freedom of navigation, and respect for national sovereignty in the Arctic. Both of our nations are committed to a secure Arctic region — free from external intrusion, interference, and coercion. Simply put, we believe that the affairs of the Arctic should be governed by the actual nations of the Arctic. And, as you know, there are other people coming into the Arctic, and we don't like it. And we can't let it happen, and we won't let it happen.

The United States and Finland are likewise partnering to ensure the security of 5G networks. It is critical that we use safe and trustworthy technology providers, components, and supply chains. We welcome the establishment of the UROS Innovation Center in Finland. Qualcomm has done a fantastic job with that. This Innovation Center will greatly expand American and Finnish businesses and cooperation in 5G.

We're also glad that the Finnish company, Nokia — it's a great company — a global leader in 5G technology, is developing its cutting-edge products right here in the United States at Bell Labs in New Jersey.

Across the United States, foreign direct investment from Finland totals over \$10 billion. Each year, Finnish-owned companies invest more than \$120 million in research and development in America, and expand our exports by more than \$1 billion.

Just today, Finnish Nokian Tyres opened a new manufacturing plant in Dayton, Tennessee — a \$360 million investment that is creating hundreds of brand new, beautiful jobs for a great state: Tennessee. We love Tennessee. So, they made a wise choice. You never lose when you go to Tennessee.

I encourage other Finnish companies to increase their investments in the United States. There has simply never been a better time to do business in America. We have passed the largest tax cuts and reform, and also regulation cuts, in the history of country. We slashed business tax. And we're fueling job growth through our record-setting campaign to abolish all of those really terrible, unnecessary regulations. We have plenty of regulations, but many of them we didn't need, and we got rid of them.

The American economy is booming, wages are rising, incomes are soaring, and unemployment has hit its lowest level in more than half a century. We want Finnish companies to join in America's extraordinary economic revival. So many countries are coming in. It's the hot place. We have the hottest economy in the world, and it's the hot place to be. They all want to be here.

The President and I are also working on a way to improve international trade based on the principle of fairness and — my favorite word — reciprocity. I hope that Finland, which now holds the rotating presidency of the EU Council, will support our efforts to achieve a mutually beneficial agreement with the European Union. We're going to have to start doing something with the European Union because they have not been treating this country right for many, many years. And they know it. And I tell them, and they know it.

America's trade deficit with the EU has been averaging \$160 billion a year for many, many years. Achieving more balanced and robust trade flows would greatly benefit both Finland and the United States. We also appreciate Finland's strong partnership in combatting predatory trade practices worldwide, including the theft of intellectual property.

From trade to security, from travel to commerce, we are immensely grateful for our close and deeply valued friendship with the people of Finland. Great people. And we're now working on a deal to sell a large number of airplanes, fighter jets — hopefully to Finland. We'll see how that works out. But we make the greatest jets in the world. We make the greatest missiles and military equipment anywhere in the world. Nobody is even close.

Mr. President, I want to thank you again for visiting the White House. The history of our two nations is a profound testament to the importance of our independence and resolve to defend it. I look forward to continuing to work alongside of you as we safeguard our precious sovereignty and build a bright future of hope, harmony, and peace for the American and Finnish people.

And thank you very much for being with us at the White House and the Oval Office. We had a very special number of hours. Appreciate it very much. Thank you, sir.

PRESIDENT NIINISTÖ: Thank you, Mr. President. First of all, I will deliver your condolences to —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Please.

PRESIDENT NIINISTÖ: — Finnish people. They do appreciate that. Thank you.

Ladies and gentlemen, before meeting, I had some spare time, so I visited a couple of museums here — Museum of American History, Museum of American African History, and Museum of American Indian History. And in addition to that, I had a possibility of attending ceremony in Arlington.

Mr. President, you have here a great democracy. Keep it going on. We were — we had a very good discussion with the President. Like you mentioned, our diplomatic relations are 100 years old. During that time, we have developed our cooperation a lot, not only in official meetings like this, but American and Finnish people, scientists, for example, need each other cooperating, working together.

We have quite a lot of cooperation in security sector, also in defense, because I think that we share the feeling that the most important thing for the nation is to guarantee security to its citizens. And that is the starting point for Finland, also, to this cooperation.

I wanted to take up with the President the importance of transatlantic cooperation. Well, we all know Europe needs USA. But I say that USA needs also Europe. We know the price of everything. We should recognize also the value of everything. We share the same values: democracy, human rights, rule-based order. And in that, we are very similar.

Europe has, in a way, awakened during the couple last years to understand also more about security point of view. And I just want to tell you that, in my opinion, the stronger Europe you have, the stronger partner you have.

The Arctic area — you know Finland is in very north — is becoming more and more interesting, like the President said. We both, alongside with six countries, form the Arctic Council. And we are working heavily. There are, surely, possibilities. Like we have heard, the maritime routes are being opened. Maybe there are also resources, but there are huge risks. One of them is that we should keep the low tension we are used to have there. And that is what we have been discussing, and I do appreciate President's position to emphasize that. It is not a place for military.

But an even greater challenge is the environment, and I'm very glad that we started to talk two years ago in this very house about black coal. It is not, maybe, the worst which causes climate problems, but it is — everybody can understand that if black comes down to ice and to snow, when the sun meets it, it melts down. And melting of sea ice in Arctic is very crucial. I used to say that if we lose the Arctic, we lose the globe.

We had a couple of words — very important ones — on arms control. We — some of us remember the worst years of Cold War in 1960s. There was no agreement at all. Just Cold War. We can't let the situation return no agreement at all about arms control. And that is why it is important to try to negotiate new agreements and to continue the New START Agreement. That will be a good new start for international cooperation on that.

To end up with — you, Mr. President, referred to 5G, the EU use of ICT as a whole. We are very proud to have the excellence of — the Centre of Excellence of Hybrid in Helsinki. The USA has been very helpful in that. Very many countries are working there together to fight against the future danger of hybrid warfare.

When comes to providers in that area, I am not very willing to point out any country or company here now. It may be a bit late from USA, in EU, making a risk assessment. It will be prepared in one, two weeks' time. And after that, we are in a place that we have to choose the tools to protect us.

Mr. President, I want to thank you very much for having a possibility of meeting you here. It is very valuable, and I found our discussions very open, very interesting, and giving a lot to my little country. Thank you, sir.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Thank you.

Before we take questions, something happened that's been — it's been going on for many decades and we came to a conclusion. Could I ask Ambassador Pence to just come up for one second and explain the importance of what just took place? Because this has been going on for —

PRESIDENT NIINISTÖ: Wonderful.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: — many, many years. And this is Ambassador Pence. No relationship to our great Vice President. Hard to believe. Nobody believes that, but that's true. (Laughter.)

PRESIDENT NIINISTÖ: (Inaudible) one.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Right?

AMBASSADOR PENCE: But I have been introduced as his father, his brother, his cousin, and his uncle. (Laughter.) We are friends.

Good afternoon. When I arrived in Helsinki about a year and a half ago, there were stack of papers on the desk, one of a couple of which concerned indigenous peoples from the southwestern United States — Arizona, Colorado — including probably most predominantly, but generically I will refer to them as Hopi Indians. They were one of the group. In 1895, a lot of their remains had been excavated and removed along with about 500 artifacts to Finland. And there they've remained despite a lot of activity to get them back.

And I'll just jump to the end and say: Through the good offices of our State Department, but in particular, President Niinistö and his entire team, we've secured a mutual agreement whereby all of those remains, including a number of petrified bodies, will be going back to be put back where they were buried.

So it's special to us, and I think it's probably special to indigenous peoples everywhere around the globe that we're all concerned about paying appropriate respect to those who have departed before us. So, thank you. Thank you both of the Presidents for supporting this.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Thank you. Fantastic job. Thank you. Be careful.

Thank you. That's a great job, Mr. Ambassador. That's been going on for many, many decades. So, I just want to thank you. Outstanding.

John Roberts?

Q Mr. President, thank you. President Niinistö. If I could, sir, I've got two pertinent questions to ask you. Maybe I could ask them separately to get a fresh answer out of each one.

The three House Intelligence — the three House committees that are looking into the impeachment inquiry gave notice today that they will be sending a subpoena to the White House for documents and other materials. Will you cooperate with those subpoenas?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, I always cooperate. This is a hoax. This is the greatest hoax. This is just a continuation of what's been playing out, John, for the last — since my election, I would say. If you wanted — probably, we'll find out soon, but probably even before my election.

This is a fraudulent crime on the American people. But we'll work together with Shifty Schiff [sic] and Pelosi and all of them, and we'll see what happens, because we did absolutely — I had a great call with the President of Ukraine. It was 100 percent. You have the transcript.

And then, Schiff went up and he got — as the chairman of the committee, he got up and related a call that didn't take place. He made up the language. Hard to believe. Nobody has ever seen this. I think he had some kind of a mental breakdown.

But he went up to the microphone and he read a statement from the President of the United States as if I were on the call, because what happened is, when he looked at the sheet — which was an exact transcript of my call, done by very talented people that do this — exact, word for word — he said, "Wow, he didn't do anything wrong." So he made it up. He went up to a microphone, and, in front of the American people and in Congress, he went out and he gave a whole presentation of words that the President of the United States never said. It has to be a criminal act. It has to be. And he should resign. And some people even say it was treason. But it was a very sad thing.

And just so you know, the call was perfect — the real call; the call I made. Many people were on the line. I knew that because, usually, when I speak to foreign country leaders — you can name any one of them — but when I speak on the phone, I know that we have many people listening from various

intelligence agencies. My knowledge — I know all about it. And so this isn't something like, "Oh, gee, I'm on the line. Let's talk about a big secret." This is many people on the line. I don't even know how many. We'll find out, I guess. But many people. Mike Pompeo was on the line. He didn't say anything. He just — because they listen for both knowledge and for security reasons and for lots of reasons.

But the President of Ukraine, at the United Nations the other day — and previous to that — he announced through his spokesperson — said there was absolutely no pressure put on him. There was no quid pro quo, at all. And if you look at this whistleblower's — which I have a lot of respect for whistleblowers, but only when they're real — his report of the phone call was totally different than the fact.

But what got them was they never thought I was going to release the call. Because I don't like doing that. I don't want to do it. I hope I don't have to do it again — release phone calls to foreign dignitaries, to foreign leaders. I don't want to do that, John. I don't want to do it again. But I did it with the permission of the Ukrainian government. We got permission. We called up their representatives and asked them, "Would it be okay?" Otherwise, I couldn't have done it.

And if I wouldn't have done it, I would have been exposed to a lie, because the whistleblower report — didn't he say, seven or eight times, I said "quid pro quo"? In other words, "You're going to do this or you're not going to get money."

Now, in all fairness — Biden said it, and he's on tape. In all fairness, you have at least four United States senators — Democrats — that said it. And they said it a lot stronger than even Schiff and his made-up story said it.

Obama, when he was dealing with the President of Russia — not Putin — he said, "Hey, tell Vladimir I can do a lot more after the election." You remember that? You didn't make a big deal out of that. Everybody thought, "Oh, isn't that cute? Isn't that cute?" My talk and my response — Lindsey Graham said, "I never knew you were that nice. I can't believe you were that nice." He said that loud and clear. It was perfect. It was perfect. Not a thing wrong with it.

To impeach a President over a fraud that was committed by other people that want to win an election in 2020 — which they won't — is incredible. This is the greatest hoax. Now, it's gone on for a long time. We had the Mueller collusion delusion, okay? That went on for years. And that's finally

done. No collusion, no obstruction, no nothing. It was a joke, and everyone knows it. And it was from the day one. Now I get three days of peace, and I'm walking into the United Nations, going to meet with the biggest leaders in the world, and I hear about the word "impeachment." I said, "What did I do now?" And it was about a beautiful conversation that I had.

And just remember this: The Ukrainian new President, a fine man, said, "I don't know what you're talking about. There was no pressure." And he said it a number of times.

Okay, what's your second question? Well, you shouldn't be asking two questions.

Q Well, you're going to want to answer them.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Do me a favor: Ask one of the Finnish —

Q I will. But I think you'll want —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: John. John.

Q I think you'll want to ask — answer this question, sir.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: John, ask one of the Finnish President.

Q And then can I come back to you? Because I think you'll want to answer this.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: We'll talk later. Sure. Well, it sounds like it might be a good question. Let me see if I like the question. Go ahead. (Laughter.) Maybe for the first time in three years, I'll have a good question, and I'll love it.

Q There is a report that came out just before you and President Niinistö walked out here that the whistleblower met with a staff member of Adam Schiff, prior to —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Oh, I love that question.

Q — the complaint being filed.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: It shows that Schiff is a fraud.

Q And I —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I love that question. Thank you, John.

Q So can I finish asking it? (Laughter.)

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Yes. There's nothing to finish.

Q So the whistleblower, according to this report, met with a member of staff — of Adam Schiff's staff. You've got it right there. You know it.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I hate to say it's the New York Times. I can't believe they wrote it.

Q Your response to the fact that —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Maybe they're getting better.

Q Your response to the fact that that happened and that Schiff may have learned some of what the whistleblower knew prior to the complaint being filed?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, I think it's a scandal that he knew before. I'd go a step further: I think he's probably helped write it. Okay? That's what the word is. And I think it's — I give a lot of respect for the New York Times for putting it out.

It just happened. As I'm walking up here, they handed it to me. And I said to Mike — I said, "Whoa, that's something. That's big stuff." That's a big story. He knew long before, and he helped write it, too. It's a scam. It's a scam.

Just to finish on this — I appreciate it. I love that second question, by the way. Should have asked it first. (Laughter.) But — but, let me just tell you: The whole thing is a scam. The Mueller deal was a scam. The Russian collusion was a scam. You can ask Putin. Nobody has been rougher on Russia than Donald Trump, okay?

Now, with that being said, it would be great to get along with Russia. And we will get along with Russia, because it's smart. But nobody has been tougher on Russia than Donald Trump.

Okay. Ask one, please.

Q Yes. President Niinistö, good to see you again. You had a conversation with President Trump about 5G, and how Nokia, Finland's big company, could fill in that space. You also met with Chinese President Xi during the summer, in which you renewed the ties of friendship between the two nations. Do you believe that countries, particularly western countries, that put Huawei equipment in their 5G cores are at risk of national security?

PRESIDENT NIINISTÖ: Thank you. Like I told you already: In Europe, the situation is maybe a bit different from that here, because the main company you mentioned is inside Europe — partly, at least.

What European Union is now doing is making a risk assessment, asking each country what kind of experience, what kind of — what you have seen and found out. And that will be well-finished in week two — or two weeks' time. And after that, we have to decide together, in European Union, which kind of tools we need to protect ourselves.

You referred to my discussions with President Xi. We didn't talk about 5G while meeting. And we all know Nokia is a major factor in this area. They will answer for themselves. Thank you.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Yeah, please. Pick somebody who is really nice from Finland.

PRESIDENT NIINISTÖ: No more Finnish —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Do you have a really nice person?

Q — Finnish —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I think they're all nice in Finland.

PRESIDENT NIINISTÖ: Are there Finnish reporters? Just two. Okay.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Uh oh.

Q Hi.

PRESIDENT NIINISTÖ: Did I — wait a minute. Yes?

Q I'm Mari Karppinen from MTV News Finland and I have one question for President Trump and one question for President Niinistö. First, Mr. Trump, how will this political storm affect U.S. foreign policy, especially its relationship with Finland?

And second, for President Niinistö — because this is the biggest issue here at the moment, I have to ask: What kind of favors has Mr. Trump asked from you? (Laughter.)

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Or the other way around, you mean?

PRESIDENT NIINISTÖ: What favors I asked or was asked?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I think you mean the other way around.

PRESIDENT NIINISTÖ: Both ways. Okay.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: So the political storm — I've lived with it from the day I got elected. I've done more — and this administration has done more than any administration in the history of this country in the first two and a half years. I'm used to it. For me, it's like putting on a suit in the morning.

People have said to me, "How does he handle it?" Rush Limbaugh said, "I don't know of any man in America that could handle it." Sean Hannity said the same thing. Others have said the same thing, "I don't know any man in America..." Because it's all a fraud.

And because of that, and because I know that I'm right, and because I'm doing a great job for the American people, I'm very, very happy living the way I'm living. I thought that I would finish off the first term without the threat of people making false claims, but this one turned out to be incredible. All because they didn't know that I had a transcript done by very, very talented people — word for word, comma for comma. Done by people that do it for a living. We had an exact

transcript. And when we produced that transcript, they died. Because you look at the whistleblower statement, and it's vicious. Vicious. And that whistleblower, there's no question in my mind that some bad things have gone on, and I think we'll get to the bottom of it. I think it's going to be a total reversal.

But I've lived with this. I've lived with this cloud now for almost three years — more than that, because it probably started even before. And I think nobody has done what I've done when you look at tax cuts and regulation cuts, and rebuilding our military, and Right to Try. Right to Try. That means people that are terminally ill and very sick have the right to use our medicines — our great medicines — because we're so far ahead of every other country.

So many things that we've done. Our vets are now taking care of. We've got Choice. Nobody thought we could ever get Choice. That's when you have to wait on line as a vet. You go outside, you get a doctor, we pay the bill. You don't have to wait for three weeks to see a doctor if you're a vet. We cherish our vets — at least this administration does. But for many years, they didn't. But I take care of the vets.

No administration has done — and I've lived with it from the day I got elected, so I'm just fine with it. Okay?

PRESIDENT NIINISTÖ: Yes. We had a conversation and discussion on a very equal basis, which is, I really appreciate that.

Well, I had one request specifically. I wanted the President to take more notice on transatlantic relations because I consider it's useful both for USA and Europe.

While we were discussing also trading, I told the President that the big purchase we are doing on fighters will be finished in two years' time. We have five different candidates: three from Europe and two from United States. He answered that, "Ours is best." (Laughs.)

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Jeff, go ahead.

Q Thank you, sir. Jeff Mason from Reuters. Mr. President, I'd like to ask you about your use of the word "treason." You used it repeatedly in the last few days. Do you consider anyone who opposes you treasonous?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: No. No. I consider when they lie; when they stand before our great body in our great chamber, and they make up a story that's fiction, like Schiff did. He took that perfect conversation I had with the Ukrainian President, and he made it into a total lie. It was a total fabrication. And you do admit that. It was a total fabrication.

He said, "This is what..." — and the only ones that don't like my conversation are the ones that never read it. But they heard Shifty Schiff. That's what I call a lie. And because of the fact that he's — he's lying about the President of the United States and as to what the President says — you know, I — believe it or not, I watch my words very carefully. There are those that think I'm a very stable genius. Okay? I watch my words very, very closely. And to have somebody get up and to totally fabricate a conversation that I had with another leader and make it sound so bad — it was so evil. And now I see this that just came out minutes ago, where he met at a time that was impossible to have done unless there's corruption involved.

And just so you know, we've been investigating, on a personal basis — through Rudy and others, lawyers — corruption in the 2016 election. We've been investigating corruption, because I probably will — I was going to definitely — but I probably will be bringing a lot of litigation against a lot of people having to do with the corrupt investigation, having to do with the 2016 election.

Q For example?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: And I have every right to do that. Because the way they've treated me and other people — they've destroyed people. They've destroyed their lives with a phony charge that never existed. And that was collusion. Never existed. And you had 18 people that hated Donald Trump. And you had Bob Mueller that hated Donald Trump. And in the end, they couldn't find one damn thing. I could find it on you. They couldn't find one thing about Donald Trump having to do with collusion. This is after two years and spending \$42 million.

And I've been looking at that long and hard for a long period of time — how it started, why it started. It should never happen to another President ever. But I've been talking about it from the standpoint of bringing a major lawsuit, and I've been talking about it for a long time.

We've been investigating the corruption, having to do with what they did to my people. They destroyed many of peop- — many people. They came down to Washington to do a great job, and they left home. They left Washington dark. They were dark. They came down here, I say, bright-

eyed and bushy-tailed. They wanted to do a great job for the people. They wanted to do a great job. We won the election. And then, they get served with subpoenas. All these subpoenas.

Now, look at Nancy Pelosi. Nancy Pelosi hands out subpoenas like — you know, she has to approve it. She hands out subpoenas like they're cookies. "You want a subpoena? Here you go. Take them." Like they're cookies. Paul Ryan would never give anybody a subpoena. He wouldn't give them when Mark Meadows went in to talk. He wouldn't give them when Jim Jordan went in. When Devin Nunes — he would go in, and they'd see Paul. I'm not saying wrong or right, but Paul Ryan: "No, let's talk about it. That's a big thing, to give a subpoena. Let's talk about it." Two weeks later, they're still talking. They wanted subpoenas to investigate the corrupt Democrats and the corrupt people on the other side. Paul Ryan would not give subpoenas.

Nancy Pelosi? "Here you go. Take it. Who wants a subpoena?" Every day, you get subpoenas. And Paul Ryan was actually right, probably, because they should never, ever allow a thing like this to happen to our country again.

Thank you very much. Please.

Q Mr. President, can you just make clear, right here: What do you or what did you want President Zelensky to do with regard to Joe and Hunter Biden?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: If you look at what he said — okay? And he brought it up. I think he brought up the name, "Rudy Giuliani." What I want is the following: And I've said this loud and clear. We have our ambassadors here. We have Mike Pence here. Why are we the only ones that give the big money to the Ukraine?

We give money to Ukraine, and it's bothered me from day one. And you have plenty of people — just here. I say, "How come it's always the United States that gets ripped?" Frankly, Ukraine — we want to help them. And I do like the new President. You know why I like him? Because he was honest, because he said, "There was no pressure at all exerted on me" — meaning him — "by the President of the United States." He said it. By the way, that one sentence should stop this. But he said there was no pressure exerted.

But you don't have to ask him; all you have to do is read the transcript. Read the telephone call.

But what I was having a problem with are two things. Number one, Ukraine is known — before him — for tremendous corruption. Tremendous. More than just about any country in the world. In fact, they're rated one of the most corrupt countries in the world. And I don't like giving money to a country that's that corrupt.

Number two, I said —

Q You don't like giving money?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Excuse me. Number two, I said the following — and I said this loud and clear to everybody. And, in fact, Rob Portman backed me up, and there's nobody more honorable than Rob Portman of Ohio. Because he called up: "Please, let the money go." I said, "Rob, I hate being the country that's always giving money when Ukraine helps Europe and the European countries far more than they help us." They're like a wall between Russia and Europe. They're like a wall. They're a big, wide, beautiful wall.

And he said, "You know what? But it's important." And he — in fact, he came out and he said that. That was my only reason. Because I don't like being the sucker country. We were the sucker country for years and years. We're not the sucker country anymore.

But I gave the money because Rob Portman and others called me and asked. But I don't like to be the sucker. And European countries are helped far more than we are, and those countries should pay more to help Ukraine.

Go ahead. Ask a question, please.

Q Thank you, sir. Mr. —

Q What about Biden? What about Mr. Biden?

Q What did you want about Biden? What did you want him to look into on Biden?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Look, Biden and his son are stone-cold crooked. And you know it. His son walks out with millions of dollars. The kid knows nothing. You know it, and so do we.

Go ahead. Ask a question now.

Q The question, sir, was: What did you want President Zelensky to do about Vice President Biden and his son, Hunter?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Are you talking to me?

Q Yeah. It was a just a follow-up of what I just asked you, sir.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: (Inaudible) finish with me. Listen. Listen. Are you ready? We have the President of Finland. Ask him a question.

Q I have one for him. I just wanted to follow up on the one that I asked you, which was —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Did you hear me?

Q — what did you want him to —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Did you hear me?

Q Yes, sir.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Ask him a question.

Q I will, but —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I've given you a long answer. Ask this gentleman a question. Don't be rude.

Q No, sir. I don't want to be rude. I just wanted you to have a chance to answer the question that I asked you.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I've answered everything. It's a whole hoax. And you know who's playing into the hoax? People like you and the fake news media that we have in this country. And I say, in many cases, the "corrupt media" — because you're corrupt. Much of the media in this country is not just fake, it's corrupt.

And you have some very fine people, too — great journalists, great reporters. But, to a large extent, it's corrupt and it's fake.

Ask the President of Finland a question, please.

Q Okay. I'll move on now. Mr. President, in your opening remarks, you said to President Trump that you had been to some museums today and that you respected the U.S. democracy and encouraged him to continue it. Are you concerned that that's not happening?

And my second question to you, sir, is: The WTO ruled today in favor of the United States, saying that the United States can now impose tariffs on European goods because of illegal subsidies against Airbus.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: That was a big win for the United States, right?

Q It was a big a win for the United States.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: You never had wins with other Presidents, did you? But we're having a lot of wins at the WTO since I became President.

Q This was a case that started, I think, 10 or 15 years ago.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Yeah. Okay.

Q But it —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Excuse me. Your wins are now, because they think I don't like the WTO, and they want to make sure I'm happy. Because all of those countries were ripping off the United States for many years. They know that I'm wise to it. We've had a lot of wins.

This was a \$7 billion win. Not bad. Go ahead.

PRESIDENT NIINISTÖ: But I think the question is for me.

Q So the question, sir, is if you're concerned that the President will impose those tariffs and the effect that that may have on the economy.

PRESIDENT NIINISTÖ: Yes. First of all, when I referred to your democracy, I just wanted to tell that I'm impressed what American people have gained during these decades — a hundred-so years — building up very impressive democracy. So, keep it going on.

To WTO: I have a lot of respect to multilateralism and to international institutions. So, WTO has given now a decision which is, well, quite tough with Europe. But I just say that the WTO has set its opinion, and that's that.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: And I just want to finish by saying it's an honor to be with the President of Finland. He's done a fantastic job. Very popular, beloved over in Finland.

The WTO has been much better to us since I've been President because they understand they can't get away with what they've been getting away with for so many years, which is ripping off the United States.

And please remember the President's last remarks: that we are a great democracy. We are a great — the United States is a great democracy. And I'm airing what I'm airing because we are, in fact, a democracy. And if the press were straight and honest and forthright and tough, we would be a far greater nation.

Q We are, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: We would be a far greater when we don't have the CNNs of the world, who are corrupt people. Thank you very much, everybody.

END

3:05 P.M. EDT

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REMARKS

Remarks by President Trump and President Salih of Iraq Before Bilateral Meeting | New York, NY

— FOREIGN POLICY

Issued on: September 24, 2019



Lotte New York Palace
New York, New York

3:32 P.M. EDT

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, thank you very much. We're glad to be joined by the President of Iraq and his representatives. And I will say that we've had a very good couple of meetings with Iraq. We're doing well with Iraq. It's been a very long and complicated but friendly relationship, especially over the last little while. I was in Iraq a little while ago, as you know. And it's fascinating what's taking place.

So we're going to — we have a lot to talk about. There's things to talk about that we can't talk about in front of you, but we have a lot of good things to talk about. And you're doing a fantastic job. Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT SALIH: Thank you.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Thank you.

PRESIDENT SALIH: Thank you.

12/20/2019

Remarks by President Trump and President Salih of Iraq Before Bilateral Meeting | New York, NY | The White House

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Please.

PRESIDENT SALIH: It's an opportunity, Mr. President, to reaffirm our gratitude to the United States and the international coalition that has come to help us overcome the tyranny of ISIS and terrorism.

This was an amazing battle. And Iraqis were in the forefront of this battle, but your support has been absolutely crucial, and we appreciate it. Now, the task of rebuilding Iraq, reconstructing Iraq, affirming the sovereignty of Iraq, and being a partner in the neighborhood for a more stable Middle East is a hope and an aspiration that we look for the help of the United States and the help of the international community.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, I understand. And it has been a great achievement. We took 100 percent of the caliphate from ISIS. And ISIS — now we have thousands and thousands of people that we've captured. These people have done a lot of destruction, not only in that area, in a lot of other areas. But, as you know, we have thousands of people. We'll talk about that also because we're going to have to do something — put them on trial, et cetera, et cetera.

But we've captured thousands of ISIS fighters and taken back 100 percent of the caliphate. And when I first became President, it was a mess. It was a big mess. And we — we all worked together and we got it done, but it was a great achievement, so we appreciate that. And we look forward to our discussion.

Thank you. Thank you very much.

Q Thank you. Mr. President, good to see you. Iraq has declared that it won't allow its territory to be used as a launching pad against its neighbors. Can you assure us that you can control all the rogue elements, especially with the (inaudible), especially that we have two rockets landing?

PRESIDENT SALIH: It's our sovereign responsibility. It's our sovereign responsibility to abide by our constitution, not — Iraq not to be used as a base for any threat against our neighbors. It is work in progress, and Iraq has been a constructive player in the neighborhood, trying to assure all our neighbors that the stability and sovereignty of Iraq is a common interest.

12/20/2019

Remarks by President Trump and President Salih of Iraq Before Bilateral Meeting | New York, NY | The White House

And a lot of things, in that regard, is happening, and I'm looking forward to talking to the President about it.

Q Mr. President, the French President just now said that it's time to negotiate with Iran. Do you believe that the time is now to negotiate with Iran? And are you going to meet with him today?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, they would like to negotiate. We haven't really worked that out. They're here, we're here, but we have not agreed to that yet. But they would like to negotiate. And it would certainly make sense, but we have not agreed to that yet.

Q Are you meeting with Mr. Macron?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: He's also talking to us. A number of people are. So is Prime Minister Khan of Pakistan and a lot of people; Chancellor Merkel — just left Chancellor Merkel. And she's very much involved. We have a lot of people involved. A lot of people would like to get us to the table. We'll see what happens. But, so far, we have not agreed to a meeting.

Q President Trump —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Say it?

Q Have you asked Prime Minister Khan to mediate with Iran?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, he'd like to do that, and we have a very good relationship. And there's a chance that that could happen. But, no, I haven't spoken. He actually asked me. He thought it would be a good idea to meet.

And we're here. We're in New York together. And we have the time to do it, although we've done a lot of bilats in the last two days. We've had tremendous success. I was treated very nicely on the speech. A lot of good reviews on what we had to say. And so, I appreciate that. The media was actually very good on the speech.

Q Mr. President, your reaction to Speaker Pelosi saying today that she is moving toward an impeachment announcement later this afternoon?

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PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, I haven't heard this. Look, it's just a continuation of the witch hunt. It's the worst witch hunt in political history. We have the strongest economy we've ever had. We have the best unemployment numbers we've ever had. African American, Asian American, Hispanic American, lowest in history. Best numbers we've ever had. Our country is doing phenomenally well.

We have rebuilt our military to the tune of \$2.5 trillion. We have the strongest military on Earth. If you look at the vets, if you look at any group, they're doing fantastically well.

So the country is doing the best it's ever done, and I just heard that she'd like to impeach. We also just had Rasmussen, as you heard, just came out with a poll. We're at 53, and they say 53 plus maybe 10. A lot of people say that, because you add about 10 percent to the Trump polls because some people don't want to talk; they just want to go out and do it, and they know what's good.

Our country is doing the best it's ever done. They're going to lose the election and they figure this is a thing to do. This never happened where we're in the election, and — I mean, if she does that, they all say that's a positive for me, for the election. You could also say, "Who needs it?" It's bad for the country. Then they wonder why they don't get gun legislation done. Then they wonder why they don't get drug prices lowered. Because all they do is talk nonsense. No more infrastructure bills. No more anything. All they do — that's all they do.

You watch Jerry Nadler and Schiff — you know, Schiff has been doing this stuff for three and a half years. It's the craziest thing anybody has ever seen.

And other countries — like today we're with Iraq and we were with other countries during the day, and every one of them says how crazy it is. We have the strongest country in the world, the best economy we've ever had. And she's talking impeachment. So I think that — and, by the way, she hasn't even seen the phone call. The phone call was perfect. The call that wasn't perfect and the words that weren't perfect were Joe Biden with respect to his son. And his son takes away millions of dollars out of Ukraine, and millions of dollars out of China, and you don't talk about that. It's a real disgrace.

But the good news is, the voters get it. This is why they say it's good for the election. But you know what? It's bad for the country. What she's doing is very bad — if it's true. I can't even believe that it's true. How can you do this and you haven't even seen the phone call?

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Remarks by President Trump and President Salih of Iraq Before Bilateral Meeting | New York, NY | The White House

The whistleblower, they say, was second-hand or third-hand. And it was reported — I have no idea who the whistleblower is. I guess I could find out. Maybe I couldn't find out. But they say it was a very partisan person — the whistleblower. But it was second- or third-hand. Never heard the call.

But I have better than that. We have the whole transcript of the call, which will be released tomorrow. And comments will be put with respect. It was a perfect call. There was no quid pro quo, unlike Biden. There was no nothing. It was a perfect call. A very nice call. And, in fact, I thought this was very nice. Ukraine just came out. It made a very good statement. It was a very good call. There was no pressure put on them whatsoever.

Thank you all very much. Appreciate it.

END

3:39 P.M. EDT

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REMARKS

Remarks by President Trump and President Zelensky of Ukraine Before Bilateral Meeting | New York, NY

— FOREIGN POLICY

Issued on: September 25, 2019



InterContinental New York Barclay
New York, New York

2:19 P.M. EDT

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, thank you very much, everybody. We're with the President of Ukraine, and he's made me more famous, and I've made him more famous. (Laughter.) I will say he's got a great reputation. He's very, very strongly looking into all sorts of corruption and some of the problems they've had over the years. I think it's one of the primary reasons he got elected. His reputation is absolutely sterling. And it's an honor to be with you.

And we spoke a couple of times, as you probably remember. And they'd like to hear every single word, and we give them every single word, and then they'll say, "Well, about today?" I think the press would like to stay in the meeting, but we have lots of witnesses, if you'd like to have it.

But the country of — our country is doing phenomenally well. We are — we have the best economy we've ever had. We have the best employment numbers that we've ever had. We have now almost 160 million people working, which is more than we've ever had. So we're doing very well in every

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Remarks by President Trump and President Zelensky of Ukraine Before Bilateral Meeting | New York, NY | The White House

respect. And I have a feeling that your country is going to do fantastically well. And whatever we can do. You just take care of yourself. Thank you.

PRESIDENT ZELENSKY: Thank you very much. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

Thank you very much. It's a great pleasure to me to be here, and it's better to be on TV than by phone, I think.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Yeah. (Laughter.)

PRESIDENT ZELENSKY: And, Mr. President, thank you very much. And I'm not the first time to stay in New York —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Right.

PRESIDENT ZELENSKY: — but I know that you've never been in Ukraine.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: That's right.

PRESIDENT ZELENSKY: And your predecessor also — how do you say it in English? — didn't find time; I mean that. (Laughter.)

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Right.

PRESIDENT ZELENSKY: So, can you give me a word that you will come to our great country?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, I'm going to try. (Laughter.) And I know a lot of people — I will say this: I know a lot of people from Ukraine. They're great people. And I owned something called the Miss Universe pageants years ago, and I sold it to IMG. And when I ran for President, I thought maybe it wouldn't be the greatest thing to own the Miss Universe and Miss USA pageants. But it's a great thing. And we had a winner from Ukraine, and we've really had — we got to know the country very well in a lot of different ways. But it's a country, I think, with tremendous potential.

PRESIDENT ZELENSKY: Yes, I know it, because I'm from this country.

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PRESIDENT TRUMP: Right. (Laughter.)

PRESIDENT ZELENSKY: And I want to thank you for the invitation to Washington.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Right.

PRESIDENT ZELENSKY: You invited me. But I think — I'm sorry, but I think you forgot to tell me the date. (Laughter.) But I think in the near future.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: They'll tell you the date.

PRESIDENT ZELENSKY: (Laughs.) Yes, they know before us. And I want to thank you — to thank you, especially, Mr. President, to USA, to your government. Like I said, I know many people, many faces, like the Second Family, after you — my Ukrainian family, we know each other.

Thank you for your support, especially now when — you know, when we have two — really, two wars in Ukraine. The first one is with corruption, you know. But we'll fight — no, we'll be winner in this fight, I'm sure. And the priority — my priority is to stop the war on Donbass and to get back our territories: Crimea, Donbass, Luhansk.

Thank you for your support in this case. Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, thank you very much, Mr. President. If you remember, you lost Crimea during a different administration, not during the Trump administration.

PRESIDENT ZELENSKY: Yeah. So you have chance to help us.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: That's right. I do. But that was during the Obama administration that you lost Crimea, and I didn't think it was something that you should have. But that was done a long time ago, and I think it was handled poorly. But it's just one of those things.

One of the elements that we discussed is the United States helps Ukraine, but I think that other countries should help Ukraine much more than they're doing — Germany, France, the European Union nations. They really should help you a lot more. And I think maybe, together, we'll work on that. They have to feel a little bit guilty about it because they don't do what they should be doing.

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You're very important to the European Union. You're very important — strategically, very important. And I think they should spend a lot more in helping Ukraine. And they know that also, and they actually tell me that, but they don't seem to produce. So I'm sure you'll talk to them, and I'll certainly be talking to them.

PRESIDENT ZELENSKY: Thank you very much, Mr. President. And, you know, now we need — I want to tell you that we now (inaudible) the new country. And, I'm sorry, but we don't need help; we need support. Real support. And we thank — thank everybody, thank all of the European countries; they each help us. But we also want to have more — more. But I understand, so only together, America and EU — only together we can stop the war. And, you know, we are ready. We just want to tell that we are — remember that we are the biggest country in Europe, but we want to be the richest one. It's true; it's in my heart.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, you know, you have great people in Ukraine, and you have very talented people —

PRESIDENT ZELENSKY: Very smart.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: — in terms of manufacturing, in terms of some of the things they do. And we'll be doing — we're doing trading already, but we should be doing a lot more trading with Ukraine. But you have very talented people. They make great things. You're at the top of the line, really. So that's very important.

And the other thing is I've heard you actually have — over the last fairly short period of time, you've really made some progress with Russia. I hear a lot of progress has been made. And just keep it going. It'd be nice to end that whole disaster.

PRESIDENT ZELENSKY: First of all, I want to tell you, before — before the relations with Russia — I will prolong, just one minute — I mean, you have to know — I want world to know that now we have the new team, the new parliament, the new government.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Right.

PRESIDENT ZELENSKY: So now we (inaudible) about 74 laws, new laws, which help for our new reforms: land reform, big privatization. They did the law about concessions. Did — we (inaudible)

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Remarks by President Trump and President Zelensky of Ukraine Before Bilateral Meeting | New York, NY | The White House

general for security, and we launched the Service Secretary.

Is it right Service Secretary?

AIDE: Yes. Anti-corruption court, as well.

PRESIDENT ZELENSKY: An anti-corruption court. As we came, we did — we launched the anti-corruption court. It began to work on the 5th of September. It was — you know, it was — after five days, we had the new government.

So, we are ready. We want to show that we — we just come. And if somebody, if you — if you want to help us, so just let's do businesses cases. We have many investment cases. We're ready.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: And stop corruption in Ukraine, because that will really make you great. That will make you great personally, and it'll also be so tremendous for your nation, in terms of what you want to do and where you want to take it.

Thank you very much. It's a great honor.

PRESIDENT ZELENSKY: Thank you very much, Mr. President.

Q President Zelensky, have you felt any pressure from President Trump to investigate Joe Biden and Hunter Biden?

PRESIDENT ZELENSKY: I think you read everything. So I think you read text. I'm sorry, but I don't want to be involved to democratic, open elections — elections of USA.

No, you heard that we had, I think, good phone call. It was normal. We spoke about many things. And I — so I think, and you read it, that nobody pushed — pushed me.

Yes.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: In other words, no pressure.

Q President Trump, would — President Trump, would you like Mr. Zelensky to —

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PRESIDENT TRUMP: Because you know what? There was no pressure. And you know there was — and, by the way, you know there was no pressure. All you have to do it see it, what went on on the call. But you know that. But you can ask a question, and I appreciate the answer.

Go ahead.

Q Mr. President, would you like President Zelensky to do more on Joe Biden and investigate (inaudible)?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: No. I want him to do whatever he can. This was not his fault; he wasn't there. He's just been here recently. But whatever he can do in terms of corruption, because the corruption is massive.

Now, when Biden's son walks away with millions of dollars from Ukraine, and he knows nothing, and they're paying him millions of dollars, that's corruption.

When Biden's son walks out of China with \$1.5 billion in a fund — and the biggest funds in the world can't get money out of China — and he's there for one quick meeting, and he flies in on Air Force Two, I think that's a horrible thing. I think it's a horrible thing.

But I'm going far beyond that. I know the President, and I've read a lot about Ukraine. I've read a lot about a lot of countries. He wants to stop corruption.

He was elected — I think, number one — on the basis of stopping corruption, which unfortunately has plagued Ukraine. And if he could do that, he's doing, really, the whole world a big favor. I know — and I think he's going to be successful.

Q Mr. President, on Rudy Giuliani, why do you think it's appropriate for your personal attorney to get involved in government business?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, you'd have to ask Rudy. I will tell you —

Q You mentioned it to the President here.

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PRESIDENT TRUMP: I will tell you this, that Rudy is looking to also find out where the phony witch hunt started, how it started. You had a Russian witch hunt that turned out to be two and half years of phony nonsense.

And Rudy Giuliani is a great lawyer. He was a great mayor. He's highly respected. I've watched the passion that he's had on television over the last few days. I think it's incredible the way he's done.

What he's at is he wants to find out where did this Russian witch hunt that you people really helped perpetrate — where did it start. How come it started? It was all nonsense. It was a hoax. It was a total hoax. It was a media hoax and a Democrat hoax. Where did it start?

And Rudy has got every right to go and find out where that started. And other people are looking at that, too. Where did it start? The enablers — where did it all come from? It was out of thin air. And I think he's got a very strong right to do it. He's a good lawyer; he knows exactly what he's doing. And it's very important.

Q Mr. President, do you believe that the emails from Hillary Clinton — do you believe that they're in Ukraine? Do you think this whole thing originated —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I think they could be. You mean the 30,000 that she deleted?

Q Yes.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Yeah, I think they could very well — boy, that was a nice question. I like that question. (Laughter.) Because, frankly, I think that one of the great crimes committed is Hillary Clinton deleting 33,000 emails after Congress sends her a subpoena. Think of that. You can't even do that in a civil case; you can't get rid of evidence like that. She deleted 33,000 emails after — not before — after receiving the subpoena from the U.S. Congress.

I mean, I have never heard — now, she's done far worse than that. Although, I don't know how much worse it can be. But there were many other things she did that were wrong. But that's so obvious. She gets a subpoena from the United States Congress and she deletes them. And then she said, as I remember it, that, "Oh, well, they had to do with the wedding and yoga." She does a lot of yoga, right? So they had 33,000 emails about the wedding of her daughter and yoga. I don't think so.

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How she got away with that one is just — but it's one of many. And it's corrupt government. Because we have corruption also, Mr. President. We have a lot of corruption in our government. And when you see what happened with Hillary Clinton, when you see what happened with Comey, and McCabe, and all of these people — we have a lot of things going on here too. Hopefully, it's going to be found out very soon. But I think that a lot of progress has been made. A lot of progress has been made.

Q Will the military aid continue? Can you assure that it will continue in the future?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, we're working with Ukraine. And we want other countries to work with Ukraine. When I saw "work," I'm referring to money. They should put up more money. We put up a lot of money. I gave you anti-tank busters that — frankly, President Obama was sending you pillows and sheets. And I gave you anti-tank busters. And a lot of people didn't want to do that, but I did it.

And I really hope that Russia — because I really believe that President Putin would like to do something. I really hope that you and President Putin get together and can solve your problem. That would be a tremendous achievement. And I know you're trying to do that.

Q President Zelensky, in the phone call, you said that you would look into Joe Biden — you would ask your prosecutor to look into the matter. Have you had that conversation —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, I think — no, I haven't. But I think that — I think this —

Q I'm asking President Zelensky.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I think that somebody, if you look at what he did, it's so bad — where his son he goes to China, he walks away with a billion and a half dollars. He goes to Ukraine and he walks away with \$50,000 a month and a lot of money in addition to that. And the whole thing with the prosecutor in Ukraine.

And he's on tape. This isn't like "maybe he did it, maybe he didn't." He's on tape doing this. I saw this a while ago. I looked at it and I said, "That's incredible. I've never seen anything like that." Now, either he's dumb, or he thought he was in a room full of really good friends, or maybe it's a combination of both, in his case.

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Q President Zelensky —

PRESIDENT ZELENSKY: I heard your question. Thank you very much. Don't cry.

I mean that we have independent country and independent general security. I can't push anyone, you know? That's it. That is the question — that is the answer. So I didn't call somebody or the new general security. I didn't ask him. I didn't push him. That's it.

Q Do you feel obligated to fulfill your promises to President Trump?

PRESIDENT ZELENSKY: Just — sorry.

Q (Speaks Ukrainian.)

PRESIDENT ZELENSKY: (Speaks Ukrainian.)

(As interpreted.) Obligated to do what? (Speaks Ukrainian.)

Q (Speaks Ukrainian.)

PRESIDENT ZELENSKY: (Speaks Ukrainian.)

Q (Speaks Ukrainian.)

PRESIDENT ZELENSKY: (Speaks Ukrainian.)

PRESIDENT TRUMP: You want to just —

PRESIDENT ZELENSKY: I'm sorry.

(As interpreted.) Concerning the investigation, actually, I want to underscore that Ukraine is an independent country. We have a new prosecutor general in Ukraine — a highly professional man with a Western education and history to investigate any case he considers and deems appropriate.

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While we have many more issues to care about and to tackle, we have (inaudible), we have Maidan, we have corruption cases, as President Trump rightly mentioned about that. So we know what to do, and we know where to go and what to tackle.

Q President Trump, is it appropriate to ask the Attorney General to be involved in this matter?

THE PRESIDENT: Go ahead.

Q Did you ask House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to find a way out of impeachment yesterday?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Not at all. No. Look, she's lost her way. She's been taken over by the radical left. She may be a radical left herself, but she really has lost her way. I spoke to her about guns yesterday. She didn't even know what I was talking about. She's not interested in guns.

Q Did it even come up or no?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I'll tell you what: Nancy Pelosi is not interested in guns and gun protection and gun safety. All she is thinking about is this. She's been taken over by the radical left, the whole Democrat Party. And you take a look at what's happening in the media today. The whole party is taken over by the left.

And thank you very much. My poll numbers have gone up. But I don't want it to go up for this reason. When they look, and when you see what's happening, people are really angry at Democrats. They're really angry at the Democrat Party.

And things like, as an example, drug pricing — getting drugs down — things like gun safety, infrastructure, the Democrats can't talk about that because they've been taken over by a radical group of people. And Nancy Pelosi, as far as I'm concerned, unfortunately she's no longer the Speaker of the House.

Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you. Thank you very much.

END

2:36 P.M. EDT

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REMARKS

Remarks by President Trump and Prime Minister Orbán of Hungary Before Bilateral Meeting

— FOREIGN POLICY

Issued on: May 13, 2019



Oval Office

2:14 P.M. EDT

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Thank you very much. It's a great honor to have with us the Prime Minister of Hungary. And Viktor Orbán has done a tremendous job in so many different ways. Highly respected. Respected all over Europe. Probably, like me, a little bit controversial, but that's okay. That's okay. You've done a good job and you've kept your country safe.

We'll be discussing NATO. As you know, Hungary is a proud member of NATO, and we are — we've really gotten to know each other a little bit. We'll be discussing trade, very much so, and lots of other subjects. We'll be meeting with representatives of Hungary later on, and with the Prime Minister. And we'll spend some very good time together.

So, Mr. Prime Minister, thank you very much for being at the White House. Thank you very much. It's a great honor. Thanks.

PRIME MINISTER ORBÁN: May I have a word?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Yes, please.

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PRIME MINISTER ORBÁN: So, President, thank you very much for the invitation.



PRESIDENT TRUMP: Thank you.

PRIME MINISTER ORBÁN: May I just say here that we are proud that so many Hungarians contributed to the tremendous progress of United States. I'm very happy to be here again, and, may I say, to be young again. It was 20 years ago, first time here.

I have some expectations for this meeting this afternoon. First of all, to strengthen our strategic alliance. Then, to discuss global political issues because so many changes are going on, and we have some similar approaches. And I would like to express that we are proud to stand together with the United States on fighting against illegal migration, on terrorism, and to protect and help the Christian communities all around the world.

So, President, thank you very much for the invitation.



PRESIDENT TRUMP: And you have been great with respect to Christian communities. You have really put a block up, and we appreciate that very much.

So we're going to have some meetings now. A lot of subjects under discussion. And the relationship is very good with Hungary. Thank you all very much.

Q Mr. President, what's your reaction to China's decision today to retaliate on tariffs, and the market reaction to that?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, the reaction is very simple. China has been taking advantage of the United States for many, many years. I'm not just talking about during the Obama administration. You can go back long before that. And it's been taking out four hundred, five hundred, six hundred billion dollars a year out of the United States. And we can't let that happen.



We're in a very strong position. Our economy has been very powerful; theirs has not been. We've gone up a lot since our great election in 2016. And if you look at the numbers, they've gone down quite a bit.

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We're dealing with them. We have a very good relationship. Maybe something will happen. But we're going to be meeting, as you know, at the G20 in Japan. And that will be, I think, probably, a very fruitful meeting.

But we're taking in, right now, hundreds of billions of dollars. We're taking in billions of dollars of tariffs. And those tariffs are going to be tremendously — if you look at what we've done thus far with China, we've never taken in 10 cents until I got elected. Now we're taking in billions and billions.

Now, it went up, as of Friday, very substantially. It's 25 percent on \$200 billion. So now the total is 25 percent on \$250 billion. In addition to that, we have another \$325 billion that we can do if we decide to do it.

So we are taking in tens of billions of dollars. We've never done that before with — with China. We've never done that before with anybody, frankly, because we've been taken advantage of on all of our trade deals, practically.

This is a — a very positive step. I love the position we're in. There can be some retaliation, but it can't be very, very substantial, by comparison. And out of the billions of dollars that we're taking in, a small portion of that will be going to our farmers because China will be retaliating, probably, to a certain extent, against our farmers.

We're going to take the highest year, the biggest purchase that China has ever made with our farmers, which is about \$15 billion, and do something reciprocal to our farmers so our farmers can do well. They'll be planting. They'll be able to sell for less, and they'll make the same kind of money until such time as it's all straightened out.

So our farmers will be very happy. Our manufacturers will be very happy. And our government is very happy because we're taking in tens of billions of dollars. I think it's working out very well.

Again, we do much less business with China than they do with us. If you take a look at \$100 billion versus \$600 billion — and just so you understand, we don't have to pay any tariffs if you're a manufacturer in this country. You pay nothing. Open your division or open up your product. Have it made in this country as opposed to made in China. Or, if you don't want to do that — and that would be the ideal; that's what it used to be a long time ago when we were smart, when we had an

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economy that was really something very special. Now we're having a period of tremendous growth and tremendous success like we haven't seen for a long time.

But in the old days, we made our product and we took our product, and that's what it was. Now we go to China, and we buy it — not anymore.

And if they don't want to pay tariffs, make it here or buy it from another country that's a non-tariffed country. So whether you go to Vietnam or so many others, you can do that.

So, the bottom line is we are taking in a tremendous amounts of money. It already started as of last Friday, but it really started seven months before that. It's in the form of tariffs or taxes, and it had a tremendous impact.

If you looked at the first quarter — which is always, historically, the worst quarter — we were at 3.2 percent. People were very surprised. Well, a lot of that was the tariffs that we were taking in from China. So we're in a very good position and I think it's only going to get better.

Q Can you guarantee a trade deal with China by June 1st?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: We're in a great position right now, no matter what we do. Yeah, I think China wants to have it because companies are already announcing that they're leaving China because they can't do that. They can't compete if they're in China, with the tax.

So what a lot of companies are going to be doing, quite naturally, is leaving China and going to other countries so they don't have to pay the tariff. That's something that's a problem for China. They don't want to have that. And we don't want to have that necessarily happen to China.

But we had a deal with China; it was 95 percent there. And then, my representatives — as you know, Secretary Mnuchin and Bob Lighthizer — Ambassador Lighthizer — they went to China and they were told the things that were fully agreed to we're not going to get anymore; they're going to un-agree to them. That's not acceptable.

I said, "Good. That's fine. Put on the tariffs." And again, so we have tens of millions of dollars pouring into our coffers — the coffers of the U.S. Treasury.

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Q Are you at war with Iran? Are you seeking regime change there?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: We'll see what happens with Iran. If they do anything, it would be a very bad mistake. If they do anything, I'm hearing little stories about Iran. If they do anything, they will suffer greatly. We'll see what happens with Iran.

Q Mr. President, will you meet with President Xi directly at G20?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I'll meet with him directly, yes. I'll be meeting with President Xi of China. Yes.

Q What about President Putin? Will you also meet with him at G20?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Yes, I'll be meeting with President Putin also.

Q On Russia: Secretary Pompeo is there — or is heading there. What message do you have for him to send to Putin?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I think the message is that there has never been anybody that's been so tough on Russia but, at the same time, we're going to end up getting along with Russia. It makes sense to get along with Russia.

Nobody has sanctioned Russia like I have. Nobody has talked about the pipeline going to Germany and various other places like I have. I said it's very unfair — having to do with the United States and NATO. There has been nobody that's ever done — and if you really look at something big, our energy business — we're now the biggest in the world. We're bigger than Russia. We're bigger than Saudi Arabia. We're bigger than anybody. That it all happened since I've become President because I've made it so that you can do that. And we're taking in a lot of money.

Look, our country is doing really well. We've probably never done this well before, and it's going to continue. We have tremendous signs. As far as the deal with China is concerned, believe it or not, it's very important, but it's a very, very small part of the kind of numbers that we're doing right now, since my election.

Q Will you pursue the \$325 billion in tariffs? The additional tariffs — are you going to pursue that?

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PRESIDENT TRUMP: I haven't made that decision yet. We have the right to do another \$325 billion at 25 percent in additional tariffs. That is a tremendous amount of money that would come into our country. I have not made that decision yet.

Q Should Don McGahn be held in contempt of Congress?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I don't know anything about what's going on. I can tell you that there has never been anybody so transparent as the Trump administration. And it was no collusion and no obstruction. And we're wasting a lot of time with that stuff. But the Mueller report came out; it was a very good report for us.

Q Mr. President, are you concerned about democratic backsliding in Hungary under this Prime Minister?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, people have a lot of respect for this Prime Minister. He's a respected man. And I know he's a tough man, but he's a respected man. And he's done the right thing, according to many people, on immigration. And you look at some of the problems that they have in Europe that are tremendous because they've done it a different way than the Prime Minister. But I'll let him speak to that question.

Mr. Prime Minister, please.

PRIME MINISTER ORBÁN: "From the people, by the people, for the people." This is the basis for the Hungarian government. So, it's a government which is elected by the Hungarian people several times, so we are happy to serve our nation.

Q What about democratic reforms, sir?

PRIME MINISTER ORBÁN: We have a new constitution accepted in 2011, and it's functioning well.

Q Mr. President, you talked about —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Don't forget they're a member of NATO, and a very good member of NATO. And I don't think we can really go into too much of a discussion unless that's mentioned.

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Remarks by President Trump and Prime Minister Orbán of Hungary Before Bilateral Meeting | The White House

Yeah.

Q You talked about transparency, sir. If you're so transparent, why continue to block these House Democrats who are looking for information from Secretary Mnuchin and others?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Because they're asking for things that they're not entitled to. I could ask them. I assume, if they ask me, I could ask them for the same kind of thing. They wouldn't want to do it. All they're doing is trying to win an election in 2020.

And I think we're in very good shape. We're have the strongest economy we've ever had. We have the single best employment numbers we've ever had — and unemployment numbers.

You know, it's very interesting, but, Mr. Prime Minister, as of today, we have the most number of people working in the United States than we have ever had at any time in the history of our country. Almost 160 million people —

PRIME MINISTER ORBÁN: Congratulations.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: — are working. So, that's a big — that's a big number.

PRIME MINISTER ORBÁN: Congratulations.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I just saw the final number. We're close to 160 million people. If you look at African American, Asian, Hispanic unemployment, it's the lowest number it's ever been.

So we're doing really well. And all the Democrats want to do is find any way they can to stop it. They're putting their own personal goals ahead of the country, and you can't do that. You just can't do that.

And we have a wonderful Attorney General. He's done a very, very good job. And I'm sure it'll all work out.

Q On your campaign, sir: Will you commit to not using any information stolen from a foreign adversary? Will you make that commitment?

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PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, I never did use, as you probably know. That's what the Mueller report was all about. They said, "No collusion." And I would certainly agree to that; I don't need it. All I need is the opponents that I'm looking at. I'm liking what I see.

Q Mr. President, are you concerned about the attacks on oil tankers in the Middle East?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: We'll see what happens. It's going to be a bad problem for Iran if something happens, I can tell you that. They're not going to be happy. They are not going to be happy people. Okay?

Q What do you mean by that?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: You can figure it out yourself. They know what I mean by it.

Okay, does anybody else have a question other than these two? Any questions for the Prime — are there any questions for the Prime Minister, please?

Q Mr. President, what can you tell us about this American citizen that was rescued by the French in Africa?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Yes, the French did a great job.

Q Who is she? Was it coordinated with your administration?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: The French did a great job and we appreciate it very much. And I've already communicated that feeling. We worked with them on intelligence, and we were able to get that person back. And we thank the French very much. Great job.

Q Who is she? Who is she? What work was she doing there?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I don't want to — I don't want to tell you that now. I'll tell you at some later date, I'm sure.

Okay?

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Q The farmer aid package, sir — the \$15 billion — can you elaborate on what that looks like or where that's coming from?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, it's being devised right now. It's something that has taken place over the years. And if you would like, speak to Sonny Perdue, Department of Agriculture.

We love our farmers. We take care of our farmers. Our farmers have been incredible. No country can get in the way of our farmers. Our farmers are great patriots and they've done a fantastic job. So our farmers are going to be very well taken care of.

Thank you all very much. Thank you.

END

2:29 P.M. EDT

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REMARKS

Remarks by President Trump and Prime Minister Trudeau of Canada Before Bilateral Meeting | London, United Kingdom

— FOREIGN POLICY

Issued on: December 3, 2019



Winfield House
London, United Kingdom

3:33 P.M. GMT

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, thank you very much, everybody. A question was asked just a little while ago about supporting the people protesting in Iran and are going through a very tough period. And we do support them totally and have supported them from the beginning.

The question was asked: “Do we support them” — I thought — “financially?” And we haven’t supported them. I don’t know that we’ve ever been actually asked to support them, financially. And I — you know, if somebody asked, maybe we would. But we support them very, very seriously. The people that are protesting in Iran, they’re looking for their freedom, and we are fully in support of them.

So I wanted to — just in case anybody had any questions. We haven’t been asked to support them, financially, which I assume that’s what the question was. But just to make sure everybody understood it.

It's an honor to be with a friend of mine who just had a great election victory. Congratulations.

PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU: Thank you, Donald.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: And done a very good job. And we actually have a very good relationship and a good relationship, in terms of our countries.

We're working on the USMCA. We're trying to get Nancy Pelosi to put it up for a vote. You know, if it gets put up for a vote, it passes. But, so far, she hasn't decided to do that. It's up to her. It's actually — a single individual has the — the Speaker of the House — it's that person's decision, and she's the Speaker of the House.

And it's a great deal for Mexico and for Canada and for the United States. And it's a lot of jobs for everybody, and it replaces a deal that's really a lousy deal, a bad deal, for — I can tell you — I can't refer to you, but I would say, for the United States, that the deal that we have right now is terrible — NAFTA. Terrible. Been a terrible deal for the United States.

So we look forward to being able to vote on — take the vote on USMCA. It's been there for a long time. And at some point, perhaps the President of Mexico — we have a wonderful man there, you know. He really is. He's been a wonderful man. They'll get tired and the Prime Minister will get tired and he'll say, "Look, let's forget this deal." And I could understand it if you did. It's been sitting in Congress now for six or seven months. And it's a great deal for everybody.

So, hopefully, they can get it done and get it done fast. And it's one of the few transactions, I think, where all three countries benefit, really, as a unit against the world, if you look at it. It really is a unit against the world. And that's the way we looked at it right from the beginning. So we hope that's the case.

Again, congratulations. We're going to be talking about a number of subjects, including additional trade to that, and the military and the military presence. And it's great being at NATO. We had some real success, I think, and some very successful talks having to do with NATO.

As you know, a lot of the countries have stepped up and they're putting in at least 130 [billion] — probably the exact number is \$131 billion — more. And that's great. And they have commitments for \$400 billion. So it really has become a force.

And as we've discussed in the past, there's going to be great flexibility shown now with NATO. We can go to other parts of the world, not just one focus; it's a lot of focuses. And we need a lot of focuses. We need a lot of focus.

We'll be looking at other forms of terror. We'll be looking at other countries. We'll be looking at countries that are aggressive, and not just one particular part of this world.

So, I think NATO has become a very big factor over the last two or three years. You've been involved. I've been involved. And a lot of good things have happened. And it's great to have you here. Thank you very much. Thank you. Congratulations.

PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU: Thank you. It's a real pleasure to be sitting down with President Trump. The relationship between Canada and the United States is incredibly strong. I don't think it's ever been stronger.

Our work together on the USMCA, as we move forward towards ratification, has been really tremendous. It's been — it's been a great process working with — between your team and our team, working with the Mexicans, as well.

We know that we're here for NATO — the 70th anniversary, extremely important. The American strength in ensuring that people are stepping up, in terms of their military investments, is certainly something we've recognized in Canada. We're increasing our defense investments by 70 percent over these 10 years because we know that making sure that everyone is there to step up and deliver is really important.

We have an enhanced forward battle group in Latvia. We're leading the command mission in Baghdad. Canadians are a strong part of this Alliance, and we'll continue to be.

But this is just a great opportunity for me to sit down with the President and talk about the many issues in which we align and we work together.

(Speaks in French.)

PRESIDENT TRUMP: That sounded very good. (Laughter.) Any questions, please?

Q Yeah. Mr. President, climate change is a top priority for the Prime Minister here, as well as for President Macron earlier. We've not heard you talk about it on this trip, and it doesn't appear to be on your agenda. Are you thinking about that issue? And why is it not —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I think about it all the time, Phil. And, honestly, climate change is very important to me. And, you know, I've done many environmental impact statements over my life. And I believe in — I believe very strongly in very, very crystal clear, clean water and clean air. That's a big part of climate change.

I also see what's happening with our oceans, where certain countries are dumping unlimited loads of things in it. They float — they tend to float toward the United States. I see that happening, and nobody has ever seen anything like it, and it's gotten worse.

But, no, it's very important to me also. But I want clean air and clean water. That would be number one and number two. Very important.

Yes.

Q Are you concerned about rising sea levels at all, sir?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: You know, I'm concerned about everything. But I'm also concerned about nuclear proliferation, which I think is a very important topic, and it's a topic that we're going to discuss today.

I'm — you know, the whole situation with nuclear, to me, is very, very important, as we've been discussing today at the various meetings that we've had. I think that's something that has to be taken care of and it has to be dealt with very strongly.

Okay?

Q Mr. President, are you happy with Canadian defense spending as it is right now?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Say it?

Q Are you happy with Canadian defense spending as it is right now?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, they're moving up, and they're moving up substantially. And they're starting to do very well, economically. And that has something to do with it. And, yeah, they're getting up to a level that's getting to be very acceptable. They have been under the 2 percent, obviously, but they're moving up. We discuss it. I'm satisfied with it.

Q Do you plan to discuss Huawei, Mr. President?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Excuse me?

Q Do you plan to discuss Huawei?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: We'll discuss that. Yes, we'll discuss that. We'll be discussing that, yes.

Q What's your message to the Prime Minister about Huawei and using it in the next generation of cell phone networks in Canada?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, we find a security problem with it. And, you know — and Canada is going to make a decision at some point. But we find — I just speak for the United States, and we have ability to do a lot of things. We've actually advanced very far on 5G — much further than anyone really knows. Ajit Pai has headed it up, and he's very good. And we have a lot of — a lot of action going on, with respect to 5G.

We're not using Huawei. And we're — we're really — some of the — some of our great companies are getting much involved with 5G right now.

But, no, we find a tremendous security problem with respect to Huawei.

Q Mr. President, on the nuclear issue: Your comments a little earlier about Russia — the governments of Russia and China trying to come to the table on some sort of agreement on nuclear nonproliferation — your description of those conversations that you've had with those leaders doesn't really mesh with what they've said publicly. I was hoping you might be able to elaborate when was the last time you —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Is not what they said publicly?

Q Yeah. Can you talk about when —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, look, we've had — we've had discussions and we've also had communications. And I can tell you, on behalf of both, they'd like to see something done with it.

Now, does that mean they'll agree to do some- — I'm the one that terminated the agreement. And I terminated it because they were not living it — up to it. And we don't want to be living up to an agreement and they don't. And so it wasn't fair. But it was also a very obsolete agreement. You know, it covered things that, frankly, didn't matter anymore.

We are looking at doing a new agreement with Russia, and we're looking at doing a new agreement with China. And maybe the three of us will do it together. And they do want to do it.

I can tell you that, with China, we were at a trade meeting, and the subject — I broached the subject, and they were very excited about it. No, they'd like to do it.

We may do it with Russia first and then go to China, or we may do it altogether. Or it may not happen. I mean, to be honest with you, maybe it won't happen. But we are spending a lot of money on nuclear. And we have new nuclear and we have tremendous renovations of our older capability.

And I have to tell you, I see the kind of damage that we're talking about and the kind of power that we have, and it's a very — it would be a very sad day if we ever had to use it. It's a very good thing if we could do something to stop making that, fixing that. We'll see what happens.

Now, there are other countries. But, in terms of the world, we're number one, by far. Russia is number two. And China would be number three. China is not — you know, China will be pretty even over a period of four or five years.

But it's a tremendous expense for them and for us — for everybody. The destructive capability is really unacceptable.

So we'll see if we can do something. I think Russia and I think China would like to do it very much.

Q President Trump, on NATO spending, you called member countries and the Allied countries in the past “delinquent” for not meeting the 2 percent standard. Where would you put Canada in that, as they’re not —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Slightly delinquent, I’d say — Canada. But they’ll be okay. I have confidence. Just slightly delinquent. But, no, some are major delinquent. Some are — some are way below 1 percent, and that’s unacceptable.

And then, if something happens, we’re supposed to protect them, and it’s not really fair. And it never has been fair. And they’re paying up — we are talking to Germany tomorrow. And they’re — they are starting to come along. They have to. They have to. Otherwise, if they don’t want to, I’ll have to do something with respect to trade.

Q So Canada is okay for now?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: And with trade, I have all the cards. We’ve built a — we have built something in the last three years that’s been incredible. You’ve seen it. We’re up \$21 trillion, and China is down about \$32 trillion.

And as you know, for years, I’ve been hearing that it was “2019.” “In 2019, China’s going to become the largest economy.” Well, that didn’t happen. We’re much larger than China now, because we’ve gone up and they’ve gone down. And they’ve had their worst year in 56 or 57 years now. By far, they’ve had the worst year that they’ve had, that they know of. And — and we don’t want that, frankly. But what they were doing was wrong. And I think they’re going to stop it. And they want to — and they want to make a deal very badly.

Yes.

Q On that question, would you commit — if there’s a country that’s “delinquent,” as you put it, in paying for their defense spending, will you commit, as President of the United States, to defend them if they were attacked?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, you know, I’m going to be discussing that today. And it’s a very interesting question, isn’t it? And, you know, it also depends on what your definition of “delinquent” is.

For instance, if you have a country that's paying only 1 percent — and you have some that are paying less than 1 percent, and they shouldn't be — you have some that are paying less than 1 percent, and they're wealthy countries, on top of everything. Now we go to a new year, and they don't pay. And now we go to yet another year, and they don't play. Well, now, I ask you: Do they have to pay for the back years? Okay?

Now, so why is it that they owe us for this year, but every time a new year comes out, they don't have to pay? It's wrong. It's not right.

So, I mean, you have — I could say that you could go back 25 years. I won't do that with Canada, of course. But, no, but you could go back — you can go back, you know, right from the beginning, where they were short of whatever goal it was at the time. It's 2 percent now. Two percent is very low. It should be 4 percent. Two percent is very low. But you have some that are well short of that. But they were short of it last year, the year before, the year before, the year before, right? So they're short all these years. Well, in theory, you don't just say, "That's okay. You don't have to have ever pay." I mean, they really owe all that money from the past. That's the way I look at it.

If Germany, as an example, is paying 1 percent and they're supposed to be paying 2 percent — you're talking about billions of dollars — well, that means that last year, the year before, the year before — all of those years, they would owe us money.

You're talking about — really, you're talking about trillions of dollars. Nobody has ever brought that up. They just keep talking about the present. So if they're short one year, and then you go into the new year, they never talk about the year that they didn't pay. But they actually, in theory, owe us that money. It's not fair. It's not fair.

Q Mr. President, just regarding China. When you met the Prime Minister in June, you talked about being — or trying to help with the two prisoners that are Canadians, that are in China.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Yeah.

Q Have you made any —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, I have. And I think we've made progress. And I had mentioned that to President Xi, as you know, because it was a big subject at the time. And I just hope they're be

treated well. But I put in a very, very strong word for those two prisoners.

PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU: There's still more to do.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Now, I haven't spoken to him recently, to be honest with you. I don't think he likes me so much anymore, but that's okay.

Q So, Mr. President, Canada does not meet the 2 percent standard. Should it have a plan to meet the 2 percent standard?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, we'll put them on a payment plan, you know? We'll put Canada on a payment plan, right? I'm sure the Prime Minister would love that.

What are you at? What — what is your number?

PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU: The number we talk about is a 70 percent increase over these past years, including — and for the coming years — including significant investments in our fighter jets, significant investments in our naval fleets. We are increasing significantly our defense spending from previous governments that cut it.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Okay, where are you now, in terms of your number?

PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU: We're at 1.35

AIDE: (Inaudible.)

PRESIDENT TRUMP: 1.3.

AIDE: 1.4

PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU: 1.4. And we're continuing to move forward.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: They'll get there. They're getting there. They've — they've — they know it's important to do that. And their economy is doing well. They'll get there quickly, I think.

And look, it's to their benefit.

PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU: And the President knows well, as well, that Canada has been there for every NATO deployment. We have consistently stepped up, sent our troops into harm's way. We're leading in Iraq. We're leading in NATO — in Latvia. We continue to step up, like — like most of our Allies. There are some countries that, even though they might reach the 2 percent, don't step up nearly as much. And I think it's important to look at what is actually being done.

And the United States and all NATO Allies know that Canada is a solid, reliable partner. We'll continue to defend NATO and defend our interests.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: And we do have tremendous coordination with radar, with all of the different things that, you know — technologically, we have tremendous coordination between Canada and the United States. So, that's good.

Yes.

Q Mr. President, to turn back to impeachment, you met with Clinton advisor Mark Penn last month. What did you learn from that meeting? And what advice are you getting on impeachment?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: We are winning so big. We had our biggest fundraising month ever. We've had — last quarter was unbelievable. I have my best poll numbers that I've ever had.

The impeachment hoax is going nowhere. The Republican Party has never been so unified as it is right now. I have never seen anything like it.

You know, I used to tell you — I said: The one thing — the Republicans are better politicians, they have better policies. But the Democrats do stick together.

The Democrats like open borders. They like sanctuary cities. They like a lot of things that are not good. But they do stick together. Well, the Republican Party, on this whole impeachment hoax has been like glue, because they know it's a hoax. It's a way of hurting the Republican Party — beyond me. It's a way of trying to hurt the Republican Party and a lot of great people.

And the — the people aren't standing for it. And a lot of these Democrats went back over the weekend and over the last week and a half — you know, they talk about how — how much of an emergency everything is and then they go away for two weeks. They went back to their districts and they are getting hammered in their districts. I mean, I see what's going on, especially the Trump districts where I won by a lot. I have districts where I won by a lot. You people know it better than anybody.

And we had a lot of great elections recently. We had the two big victories in North Carolina, I told you before. We had — in Kentucky, we won everything other than the governorship. And the governor I brought up almost 19 points. He won by just — he lost by just a few votes. And Louisiana was a long shot. It was less than 1 percent. He came up 12 or 14 points — a lot.

We've — and we won everything else. And we won everything else — and, by the way, in Mississippi, we won the governorship. Very close race. And it was tied going in two days before. I went up, we made a speech. We had a rally, and he won by a lot. And we have a wonderful governor in Mississippi, and everybody else won. So, other than the two races. But they both — both candidates went up a lot.

We have never had the spirit that we've had. I really believe — I think I can honestly say I don't think we've ever had the spirit that we have right now in the Republican Party. And the impeachment hoax is what's done it. So, that's the way it is.

But you people — you know what? Honestly, I think you people know that better than I do. Please.

Q Mr. President, the Dow is down more than 400 points right now, in part over the comments you made earlier in this room about the China trade deal extending past 2020.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: That's okay. Well, it's up — let me tell you, we took it up — it was about at 16,000 or 15,000, and now it's almost at 30,000. It's going to be at 30,000.

No, I have to tell you, if it's not going to be a good deal, I'm not signing a deal. It's peanuts compared to what — we have picked up record numbers in our stock markets. So, that's okay. I mean, that's the way I feel. I have to make the right deal. I'm not going to make a deal that's not going to be great for our country. And it can't be an even deal. If it's an even deal, it's no good, because China — other Presidents and leaders of our country have really let us down because they

let China get away with — get away with something that should have never been allowed to happen. Billions and billions of dollars a year were lost in dealing with China, by — by foolish people, or by people that didn't care or by people that didn't know how.

We rebuilt China. And I give China great credit. And I don't even blame China because our people should have done what they did. But what they've done is — we've lost \$150 billion, then \$200 billion, then \$400 billion to China. They rebuilt China with the money that they took out of the United States. And that's where they were and that's where it is. And now we're taking in billions of dollars in tariffs. And, by the way, they're eating it. You know, remember, you used to tell me how it will cost us — they're eating that money because they don't want to lose their supply chains. And I don't want them to lose their supply chains, but if it happens, it happens.

And that's where it is. They want to make a deal, but I like the deal that we have, and the deal that we have could get even better. And I could do it all by myself. So we'll see what happens. We're at a critical stage.

They've called us today and they've called us yesterday. We're having ongoing discussions. And we'll see what happens.

But if the stock market goes up or down — I don't watch the stock market. I watch jobs. Jobs are what I watch. I watch making the proper deal.

We've been taken advantage of, the United States, by China for so many years at numbers that if you were doing this, you wouldn't have believed it. I came in, I looked at numbers for — I mean, ever since the founding of the China's entrance into the World Trade Organization, the WTO, the numbers are astronomical that we've given to China, because of Presidents that didn't know, didn't care, or weren't smart. So that's over.

As to whether or not we make a deal: They want to make a deal. We'll see what happens.

Q Mr. President, a point of clarification on your answer earlier where you talked about the “delinquent” countries and whether you would commit to defending them if they were attacked. In your answer, does that signal that you're wavering about Article 5 of the NATO Charter?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: It doesn't signal anything.

Q Is that something you're contemplating?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: It's just that when a country is delinquent — they don't pay — and then something happens — now, usually, we look at it as a group, and I think I have to look at it as a group, Phil. So I would look at it as a group. But I think it's very unfair when a country doesn't pay. So, most likely, I'd do something with respect to trade. But that's one of the things we'll be discussing today.

I have to look at it as a group. You can't say, "Well, gee, this country sitting right in the middle is delinquent" — they're not paid — and something happens to that country. I think it's an unlikely circumstance, but I would do something having to do with trade much more so than what you're suggesting.

Q Back to impeachment — back to impeachment for a second. Is it your belief now that there will be a Senate trial, sir?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I have no idea. I think they're making a mistake if they do that, but that's okay. If they do it, they do it. I think it's a disgrace. I think the Democrats should be ashamed of themselves.

If you look at impeachment — and the word "impeachment" — here, there was nothing wrong. Nothing done wrong. It was a perfect conversation with a very nice gentleman, the President of Ukraine. The conversation was perfect. It was two conversations; they were both perfect. They were transcribed. They were both perfect. And this is what you're going to impeach the President of the United States on?

The Republicans have never been stronger, never been more unified. The Democrats have gone crazy.

And you know what? They have to be careful, because when the shoe is on the other foot, and some day — hopefully in a very long, distant future — you'll have a Democrat President and you'll have a Republican House, and they'll do the same thing, because somebody picked an orange out of a refrigerator and you don't like it, so let's go and impeach him.

It's no good. That's not the way our country is supposed to be run.

Q Mr. President, have you selected a new site for the G7 Summit next year?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: We really have. And I think it's been more or less announced. We're going to do it at Camp David. And we'll be doing some very special things at Camp David. It's nearby. It's close. We're going to give very good access to the press. You'll have great access.

And we'll have a little bit of a Washington, I think, deliverance. We're going to have — but it will be Camp David, which is a place that people like.

Q (Inaudible) that your decision to leave Syria and leave the Kurds will affect NATO Allies (inaudible) —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: No, not only have we not left the Kurds, we're working with the Kurds. We have a very good relationship with the Kurds. And we've taken the oil. I've taken the oil. We should have done it in other locations, frankly, where we were. I can name four of them right now. But we've taken the oil. And that oil is what — what they lived off of. And that was going to be taken away from them, but now our great soldiers are right around the oil. We're — we've got the oil.

But if we didn't have it, they wouldn't be able to survive. The Kurds wouldn't be able to survive.

Q In the impeachment inquiry, you've maintained, in a number of these sessions today, that you've done nothing wrong in your conduct with Ukraine. Why won't you permit the Secretary of State or the Acting White House Chief of Staff to testify on your behalf?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Well, I would. I'd like them to testify. But these are very unfair hearings. And this gives these unfair, witch-hunt hearings — as an example, I just heard today, they get three constitutional lawyers — it's all nonsense; they're just wasting their time — and we get one. Okay, now nobody has to know anything about constitutional law, but they get three and we get one. Uh, that's not sounding too good. But that's the way it is.

For the hearings, we don't get a lawyer. We don't get any witnesses. We want Biden. We want the son, Hunter. Where is Hunter? We want the son. We want Schiff. We want to interview these people. Well, they said, "No, you can't do it. We can't do it."

So when it's fair — and it will be fair in the Senate. I would love to have Mike Pompeo. I'd love to have Mick. I'd love to have Rick Perry and many other people testify. But I don't want them to testify when this is a total fix. You know what a fix is? This is a fix.

Just think of it: Tomorrow — I don't think anybody is going to watch — I'm not going to watch, but I'm going to be doing this; it's much more exciting. But you know what? Tomorrow — think of it — they get three constitutional lawyers and we get one. That's not even smart, because it's not going to matter. And they take three and they give us one. Who ever heard of anything like that?

No, but I want them to testify, but I want them to testify in the Senate where they'll get a fair trial.

Q What do we want to learn from the Adam Schiff testimony?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: From which?

Q From Adam Schiff.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I learn nothing from Adam Schiff. I think he's a maniac.

Q What would you — what would you want to learn if he testifies?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I think Adam Schiff is a deranged human being. I think he grew up with a complex, for lots of reasons that are obvious. I think he's a very sick man and he lies. Adam Schiff made up my conversation with the President of Ukraine. And one of the reasons people keep talking about it is that's what they saw.

We have a perfectly beautiful, three-to-four-page transcription, and then, in the other case, a two-page transcription of the conversation. But a lot of people didn't read that. How many people call you — a friend of mine called up — a top person in New York called up, great friend of mine, very successful: "Gee, I didn't like what was said." I said, "Oh, where did you see it? Did you read it?" "No, I didn't read it. I heard Adam Schiff give it." I said, "Well, that's not what was said." And I sent him a copy of what was said. He said, "This is like — this is great. This isn't what he said."

This guy is sick. He made up the conversation. He lied. If he didn't do that in the halls of Congress, he'd be thrown into jail. But he did it in the halls of Congress, and he's given immunity. This is a

sick person. He's a liar.

And, by the way, Nancy Pelosi knew he was lying and she went on a show — Stephanopoulos — and she said he told the truth. So she was lying too.

These people are deranged.

Okay, anybody else?

Q Mr. Prime Minister, the President has suggested that Canada might pull out of USMCA if the U.S. Congress doesn't ratify a deal. Have you ever made that suggestion directly to the President?

PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU: We've had lots of great conversations about how we're going to keep moving forward to benefit workers in all three of our countries and we are very confident that we're going to be able to get there. I know Ambassador Lighthizer and Deputy Prime Minister Freeland and the Mexican negotiators are engaged very closely on this issue. We've very, very hopeful that we're going to have good news — news, soon.

Q (Speaks in French.) (No translation provided.)

PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU: (Speaks in French.) (No translation provided.)

Q Mr. Prime Minister, is it your plan to have discussions about Turkey and its role in NATO with your meeting with the President?

PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU: I think there's a range of discussions that we're going to have during this meeting. I look forward to having an opportunity to chat with the President —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: That will come up in the meeting. Yeah.

PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU: — on a range of things. But including — including the various challenges and reflections we have to have on how we move forward as NATO and how we make sure that we're responding to the real challenges the world sees right now.

Q And do you have any plan to talk about the extradition of Meng Wanzhou?

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PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU: We will absolutely be bringing up — bringing up the issue of China and the detained Canadians.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Okay? Thank you very much, everybody.

END

4:03 P.M. GMT



REMARKS

Remarks by President Trump at Signing of Executive Orders on Transparency in Federal Guidance and Enforcement

LAW & JUSTICE

Issued on: October 9, 2019



Roosevelt Room

3:38 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Well, thank you very much. I'll start by saying I just spoke with Boris Johnson, and we had a good talk about a number of subjects, and we'll maybe talk about it a little bit later. But we had an extended conversation and some pretty good ideas, I think. They want to see if we can do a couple of things, and they'll be doing certain things for us.

I want to also thank the Minneapolis Police Department. They have been so incredible, what they've done. Tomorrow, we have a tremendous amount of people planned to go. I know the requests have been incredible. So, I think it's a great state and we're going to have a lot of fun tomorrow night. I think a lot of you are going to be with us. And then, on Friday night, we'll be going to Louisiana, and there's a big election on Saturday to see whether or not there's a runoff, most likely. And I think we'll do very well. The Republicans are doing very well despite the witch hunt that they have on Republicans.

So I just want to thank everybody for being here and coming to the White House on this important occasion. In a few moments, I'll be signing two executive orders to expand our record-breaking

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regulatory reduction campaign that is helping to fuel our incredible economic boom. I guess the stock market is up close to 250 points today, and this is despite lots of trade deals that are getting done one by one.

We did a deal with South Korea — a big one, a really big one. And we did one yesterday with Japan. And that now goes into effect, and it's tremendous for our farmers.

As you know, we have China coming. They'll be coming tomorrow. We have the Vice Premier of China coming. So we have a lot of big things happening. We have some tremendous deals under negotiation. So despite all of that, we have a great economy and a great market. Our housing market is on fire, and things are really doing well.

You look at Asia, they're not doing well. Look at China; China is having a hard time at this moment, and I think they'd like to make a deal very badly.

And so we have a lot of things that are really exciting. And to be in the midst of negotiating some of the worst trade deals ever made, and to be breaking them up and changing them for the good of the American taxpayer and for our country, and to still be doing so well. We had over 100 record-breaking stock markets. I think 121 or something. I'll get you the exact number. But many, many days, we broke the record. And we continue to do well.

And when these trade deals are done, and when certain other things that we're doing are done, it's going to be at a level that's incredible.

(Baby coos.)

That was the cutest noise. What was that? (Laughter.) I heard this — see, I'm used to hearing them. (Laughter.) And there's nothing cute about them. (Laughter.) So beautiful. And don't feel bad, he can — just do whatever you want, okay? (Laughter.) That's a beautiful sound.

Today, we take bold, new action to protect Americans from out-of-control bureaucracy and stop regulators from imposing secret rules and hidden penalties on the American people.

We're delighted to be joined on this occasion by Acting Director Russ Vought, who has really done a fantastic job; Deputy Attorney [General] Jeffrey Rosen. Are you busy enough, Jeff? (Laughter.)

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Huh? And Congressman Mark Meadows. Mark, fantastic that you're here. Louisiana Solicitor General — oh, I'll be there — Liz Murrill. Where's Liz? I'll see you on Friday.

MS. MURRILL: Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know if you'll be there, but we have a big crowd, so it's going to be great. Thank you very much, Liz.

And several other state and local officials. We want to thank you all for being here.

For many decades, federal agencies have been issuing thousands of pages of so-called "guidance" documents — a pernicious kind of regulation imposed by unaccountable bureaucrats in the form of commentary on how rules should be interpreted.

All too often, guidance documents are a backdoor for regulators to effectively change the laws and vastly expand their scope and reach. Guidance has frequently been used to subject U.S. citizens and businesses to arbitrary and sometimes abusive enforcement actions. Ha! It sounds like they're talking about me. (Laughter.) I think they're talking about me. I might have a conflict in signing this deal.

Because of these materials and the fact that these materials are too often hidden and hard to find, many Americans learn of the rules only when federal agents come knocking on the door.

This regulatory overreach gravely undermines our constitutional system of government. Unelected, unaccountable bureaucrats must not be able to operate outside of the democratic system of government — wow — imposing their own private agenda on our citizens. A permanent federal bureaucracy cannot become a fourth branch of government, unanswerable to American voters. In America, the people must always reign.

With us today is Andy Johnson from Wyoming — great place — whose family is one of many that suffered from the absurd redefinitions and interpretations of federal bureaucrats. And Andy is here to say a few words. I'd like to hear that Andy because I think you might be speaking about me or to me. Thank you very much. Where's Andy? Come on up here with that beautiful baby. Beautiful. That's great. Thank you, Andy.

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MR. JOHNSON: Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Go ahead, please.

MR. JOHNSON: Well, thank you for having me, today, and my wife Morgan and my son, Roaman. I work as welder in Wyoming, and about five years ago, when I applied for a stock pond permit for my private property, I had no idea that the EPA would come knocking at my door and threaten me and my family — civilly, criminally, and a fine of \$37,500 per day. The fines were up to \$16 million when Pacific Legal Foundation stepped in and sued the EPA on my behalf, and my family.

And, at that point, the EPA changed their attitude; we were able to come to an agreement. We won our case, but unlike a lot of other middle class Americans, that's not the case. They — we could have never fought. The litigation was way, way too expensive. So I'd just like to thank the President today for signing this executive order, which will hold the EPA and other government agencies more responsible for their actions. Thank you. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: That's fantastic. Thank you.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: So they had you up to \$16 million. But that's peanuts for you, right? (Laughter.) That's great. Glad it worked out and it's working out even better.

We're also joined by Richard Schok, who was prevented from expanding his business because of the obscure regulatory guidance on a rule from the 1980s — an old rule. And, Richard, please come up and talk about it. Thank you. Thank you, Richard. Please.

MR. SCHOK: Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Thank you.

MR. SCHOK: Thank you.

Mr. President, I'd like to thank you for the invitation to speak and bring much-needed attention to the reform to the rulemaking process used by the regulatory agencies.

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I operate a family-owned business in Fairbanks, Alaska. We purchased some land for our business about 20 years ago so we could move operations out of town to the new facility and expand our facilities. We've spent the better part of 10 years and over \$300,000 fighting with the regulatory agencies over the arbitrary and capricious nature of the Army Corps of Engineers wetland designation and their use of the Alaska supplement versus the 1987 congressionally-mandated Wetlands Manual.

This effort is also — this effort does not include the time and energy put forth by the Pacific Legal Foundation on our behalf. I'd like to thank those folks as well.

The last straw for us is when we lost our appeal in the Ninth Circuit Court when they held that the agencies can make the regulations they want and require without congressional approval or oversight.

I'm hopeful that the changes made today — with this executive order, other land owners will not be negatively impacted as we have. Thank you again for this opportunity.

THE PRESIDENT: It's great. Thank you, Richard. (Applause.)

Well, thank you very much, Richard. You know, you mention the Ninth Circuit. So, we have a lot of great new judges in the Ninth Circuit, and we're going to be very close to 182 new judges over the next very short period of time. So that'll be — we are in record territory by a lot.

So we're going to have 182 new federal judges, not including two Supreme Court judges. And I guess we're already at the 156 number. Jeff and Mark, I think we're at about 156 judges now signed and sitting and doing a great job. But we'll be at about 182 before we normalize — normalize, meaning retirement and various other reasons that they leave. And we could average about 40 or so a year from that process. So we'll have a — probably, a very big record number of judges — federal judges in this administration.

And I want to thank President Obama for leaving us 138 empty slots, because that's a first. (Laughter.) That's a first. I said, "How many do we have?" He said, "Sir, you have 138 to 142." I said, "You've got to be kidding." So I want to thank you, President Obama.

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And again, Richard, thank you very much for your nice words. When Americans and their businesses are sued by government agencies, they are sometimes not even given an explanation of what they do wrong, and how they can fix it.

With us today is Kevin Lunny, whose company was forced out of business through the terrible practice of a certain way of government handling of things. Not fair; not right. Kevin, please come up and discuss it. Thank you. Thank you, Kevin. Thank you very much.

MR. LUNNY: My name is Kevin Lunny. I'm a third-generation cattle rancher at the Point Reyes National Seashore in California.

About several years ago, we also were the owners of the Drakes Bay oyster farm — a sustainable family business where we produced nearly half of all the oysters in the state of California.

THE PRESIDENT: Wow.

MR. LUNNY: In 2014, the National Park Service launched a National Environmental Policy Act process that costs millions of dollars and lasted over eight years. And the National Park Service forced our oyster farm out of business. And if that wasn't enough for our family and our community, today the rest of agriculture, which includes about another 24 ranching family farm businesses within the National Seashore, are facing the exact same process.

Our fear is that that process could ultimately be facing — and those families may be facing what the oyster farm faced. And so I'm here, Mr. President, thanking you for calling this meeting together so we can have this discussion. We urge you to continue your good work in following these policies and making sure these federal policies are managed in a way that family farmers and ranchers like us can actually benefit and survive these procedures and — so they're not just for federal agencies that have pre-decided what they want before the process has begun and for professional litigants that abuse the process.

Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Well thank you, Kevin. (Applause.) (Applause.) Thank you. And the business is — is the business gone now?

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MR. LUNNY: The business is gone. Twenty million oysters destroyed.

THE PRESIDENT: Wow. They forced you out of business?

MR. LUNNY: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: So, I have to say, Kevin, I really — I know what you've been through. I read a little bit about it. And I've heard about it, also. And it's very sad. But we thank you both for being here, very much. Really, thank you very much.

No American should ever face such persecution from their own government — except, perhaps, your President. (Laughter.) Don't feel bad, Kevin. (Laughter.) They treated you better than they treat me. (Laughter.) I do believe that's true, huh? I do believe that's true, Meadows.

Today, I am taking action to stop it. My first executive order will require agencies to publish guidance documents online, so that small businesses and everyday citizens can easily find them.

Agencies will have to seek public input on the most important guidance, and the whole process will be closely overseen by the White House. We're going to have somebody right here in the White House looking at it, Kevin, so this doesn't happen to other people. You're very brave to be here. I really think it's incredible. I really mean it. Americans will no longer be subject to the rules of hidden games that are played on the public.

The second order I will sign today will protect American citizens from secret interpretations of regulations, unexpected penalties, and violations of their rights. From now on, agencies will be required to inform individuals about any case against them and respond to their arguments. It will be the agency's duty to fully educate small businesses about new regulatory changes.

Today's action is just the latest step in my administration's tireless fight to curtail job-killing, soul-crushing regulations. I want to thank Jeff for doing the great job. The Justice Department worked very hard with all of our people over here. They did a fantastic job and I want to thank you very much, Jeff.

We ended the war on American energy. We're cancelling restrictions that devastated American autoworkers. We're stopping regulations that micromanaged our great farmers. We're bringing

major companies back to our country. They want to be here. We're the hot economy. We're the place they want to be. And we are reversing the last administration's ridiculous attack on, as an example, incandescent lightbulbs.

We're also working, as you know — cars are very expensive. Far too expensive. And we're going to be able to bring the price of cars down about \$3,500 — and, at the same time, make the car a lot more affordable and a lot safer. So we're going to have affordability, safety, and we'll also be getting some of the old cars off the roads, because people now have an incentive to buy a new car that's a lot less of a problem, from an environmental standpoint. It's really an amazing thing.

We're going against California. And they make their cars so light, it's papier-mâché. And you get in an accident; it's very, very dangerous. So we're coming out with a whole new standard, and I think it's going to be something very special. It's gotten tremendous receptivity.

Same thing with the lightbulb, the incandescent lights. Aside from the fact you look better — of course, who cares about looks? But you do look better with incandescent. They weren't allowed. And you have the privilege of buying now a much more expensive bulb under the past rules — much more expensive bulb that doesn't have a good-looking light. But maybe, very importantly, when the bulb is out and no good, it's literally considered a hazardous waste site, because it's all the gasses. And if it breaks, you're supposed to bring it to a certain location. And I say, "Who does that?" Nobody. Nobody does. It's very dangerous.

So we have a — we're allowing people to choose. They can buy a much less expensive bulb that looks better, or they can spend a lot more money on what they were doing, and that's fine, too. They might like it. It might last longer, and that's okay. But it is still a hazardous situation when you have to dispose of these things, whereas in the old system, you don't have. So we're bringing the incandescent bulb back for those that want it. We're going to have both alternatives. We like to have alternatives.

At the start of my presidency, I imposed a two-for-one rule on new regulations, requiring that for every new regulation, two old regulations must be eliminated.

In the first two years of the Obama-Sleepy Joe Biden administration, the cost of regulatory compliance went up by \$245 billion. Can you believe that? And in our administration, we've taken it down by more than that. So it's \$245 billion up, and we've taken it down by much more than that.

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According to the Economic Council of Advisers, our regulatory reductions will save the average American household over \$3,000 — think of this — every single year. Thanks to these regulation cuts, as well as our tax cuts and pro-American trade policies, our economy is stronger than it's ever been. Stronger than ever before. And that's despite all of these negotiations that we're doing to really make us into something that we've never seen before — meaning, fair trade deals.

We've created 6.4 million new jobs. Just last month, unemployment reached the lowest rate in over 50 years. The African American, Hispanic American, Asian American unemployment rates have hit record lows. We have more people working in the United States today — almost 160 million people — than at any time in the history of our country. Wages are rising very fast, and twice as fast for low-income workers. The biggest beneficiary, actually, is the low-income worker. Their wages are rising at a rate that we haven't seen in many, many decades.

When I first started campaigning — many of you were with me — I used to talk about workers that would make more, years ago, 21 years ago, than they made a few years ago, because now it's gone up a lot. But a few years ago. And they'd have two jobs and three jobs, and yet they did better 21 years before.

With today's executive order, we continue this incredible economic success and we defend American liberty for generations to come.

I would like to now invite Acting Director of OMB Russ Vought to say a few words about the exciting news. And I want to thank Russ for doing an incredible job. And when Russ is finished, we're going to sign the executive orders. Thank you very much.

ACTING DIRECTOR VOUGHT: Thank you, Mr. President. As a result of your leadership, today we're making a major step forward in the effort to drain the swamp and to get our arms wrapped around the administrative state. We can't do that until we know all of the dark, regulatory, stealth regulation that is out there, and that's one of the reasons why we're asking all agencies to be putting on their website — on a searchable website — all of these regulations, so that we can understand what it is, and anything that's not put up there is rescinded.

Secondly, we want to make sure that the American people — families and small businesses — are no longer bullied by their federal government. We've all had to deal with the motor vehicle department down the street from us. Think about dealing with the federal government; it's an

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entirely different situation. And the people that are here today, who have flown in on their own dime to be a part of this celebration, can attest to that.

We want to make sure that there are no stories ever again of people being bullied by their federal government. So we're thrilled that you took this on, Mr. President. Looking forward to these executive orders. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. (Applause.)

Come on, folks. Gather around.

(The executive orders are signed.)

Where's Kevin?

MR. LUNNY: Right here.

THE PRESIDENT: Come here. (Hands over pen.) (Applause.)

Plenty to go around. Okay. Thank you very much everybody. Congratulations. (Applause.)

Q Are you going to take any action regarding the Turkish attacks in Northern Syria? And have the Kurds, as Senator Graham said, been shamelessly abandoned?

THE PRESIDENT: So, we have no soldiers in the area. We've been talking to Turkey for three years. They've been wanting to do this for many years, as you know. They've been fighting each other for centuries. They've been fighting each other for — hundreds of years, this has been going on.

We were put into this battle — interjected. It was supposed to be a 30 — a 30-day period. And we've been there for many, many years. And it's time to get out. We're speaking to both sides. We've told President Erdoğan how we feel. But we are speaking to both sides, and we're seeing what can be made out of a situation.

But we have no soldiers in the area, you know. We're getting out of the endless wars. We have to do it. And eventually somebody was going to have to make the decision. And, frankly, we're

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getting a lot of praise from that decision. We — people are saying, “Got to sometime bring our people back home.”

We’re really serving and we were serving as a police force. We had defeated ISIS. We defeated the caliphate, 100 percent. Erdoğan and the existing groups of people, including Kurds — but you have the PKK, which is a natural enemy with Turkey, and likewise and opposite, they’ve been fighting, again, for many, many years. They have — they’re bitter enemies; have been always. Probably, possibly always will be.

So we are — we are out of there. We’ve been out of there for a while. No soldiers whatsoever.

We are taking some of the most dangerous ISIS fighters out. We’ve taken them out and we’re putting them in different locations where it’s secure. In addition, the Kurds are watching. And if the Kurds don’t watch, then Turkey is going to watch because they don’t want those people out any more than we do. But we have taken a certain number of ISIS fighters that are particularly bad. And we’ve wanted to make sure that nothing happened with them, with respect to getting out. And I think we’re doing a great job.

I think the people of this country — I campaigned on ending the endless wars. We’re all over the world, fighting wars. Half the places, nobody even knows what they’re doing over there. And I feel that we are doing the right thing, and I think the country feels that, too.

We’ve had tremendous support outside of the Washington — little Washington area. And even in Washington, people are saying, “You’re doing the right thing.” It has to be done; otherwise, you’re never going to do it.

At the same time, we’re dealing with both sides. We’re going to see what we can do.

Q In a statement this morning, you cautioned Erdoğan. Since then, it appears as though there have been casualties on the Kurdish side. Are you concerned about escalation? And are you concerned that Erdoğan will try to wipe out the Kurds?

THE PRESIDENT: I will wipe out his economy if that happens. I’ve already done it once, with Pastor Brunson. I’m sure that he — I hope that he will act rationally. You do have to understand: They’ve

been fighting each other for many, many decades. Actually, for centuries, they've been fighting each other. And it was time for the Americans — we did a great job.

We took care of ISIS. We captured 100 percent. Do you remember I was thinking, John, of leaving at 97 and 96 percent? And that last 3 or 4 percent was the hardest part. And they told me it would take a year to two years to do it, and I did it in a month. Remember that?

I flew to Iraq and I met with a lot of great generals there. Great generals. They said, "Sir, we can do it in two weeks to a month." And we did it in two weeks to a month, and we took it. And, in the meantime, we've been watching over a lot — with the Kurds — watching over a lot of prisoners. Some very bad — some very bad people. A few, in particular, are very bad. Really bad. And some of those people we've already taken. We've taken them out.

They should go back, by the way. They should go back to Europe. Many of them came from Europe, but they should go back to Germany, to France, to — I spoke with Boris Johnson a couple — to UK. Some to UK, actually. But they came from various parts of Europe. They didn't come from our country, and we did them a big favor.

And we said to France, we said to Germany, we said to various countries in Europe: "We'd like you to take your people back." "Well, we don't want them. We don't want them. How about you taking them?" I said, "We don't want them either. Nobody wants them; they're bad. But somebody has to watch over them." I said, "Look, we did you a big favor. You take your people back. You take them back."

They're citizens, in many cases, of those countries — of France, Germany. They didn't want to take them back. I gave them one chance, I gave them another chance, I gave them a third chance, and I even gave them a fourth chance. They didn't want to take them back. Not that I blame them too much; they're used to this with the United States — taking advantage of the United States, whether it's on trade or NATO — to take advantage of the United States.

But we think that maybe the Kurds will do a job. And if not the Kurds, we think Turkey will do a job. But we have thousands of people. Thousands. I don't know if you know that. We have thousands of captured fighters, and thousands and tens of thousands of family members. And we did a big favor to a lot of countries, and those countries didn't want to take them back. So that's the way it goes.

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Steve.

Q What if some of these ISIS fighters escape and pose a threat elsewhere?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, they're going to be escaping to Europe. That's where they want to go. They want to go back to their homes, but Europe didn't want them from us. We could have given it to them. They could have had trials. They could have done whatever they wanted.

But as usual, it's not reciprocal. You know my favorite word, "reciprocal." That's all I want. I don't want an edge; I just want reciprocal. And it's not reciprocal, Steve. It's not a fair deal for the United States.

And when President Obama took the PKK — you know, where they bring in PKK — that's a tough deal because that's been a mortal enemy of Turkey. So when you bring them in into a partnership, it's a tough situation because it's tough for Turkey; it's probably tough for them. They've hated each other for many, many years — for hundreds of years. I mean, it's amazing, when you look at history and you look at culture. But you look at the length of the time and the fighting for so long.

So we imposed ourself into it. And look, I've said it — I said it just yesterday: The single worst country the United States — if you take a look at, you know, what we're doing with countries and the relationships we have with countries —

But maybe putting it a different way: The worst mistake that the United States has ever made, in my opinion, was going into the Middle East. It's a quagmire. We are up to close to \$8 trillion, and we're bringing our folks back home. We have great, talented military. We're bringing them back home.

Our military has never been stronger, but we're now acting as police. We're — we're policing areas. We're doing jobs that other countries should be doing. We're doing jobs, frankly, that Europe should be doing. We're doing jobs that Russia should be doing, that Iran should be doing, that Iraq, Turkey, Syria should be doing. They should be doing this. We shouldn't be doing it. We're 7,000 miles away.

Q Lindsey Graham is talking about imposing economic sanctions on Turkey over this incursion into Syria. What do you think about that? Would you support that?

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THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think it's okay. I've already told that to President Erdoğan. Far more than sanctions — I'll do far more than sanctions. Lindsey and I feel differently. I think Lindsey would like to stay there for the next 200 years and maybe add a couple of hundred thousand people every place. But I disagree with Lindsey on that.

But I will tell you that I do agree on sanctions, but I actually think much tougher than sanctions if he doesn't do it in as humane a way as possible. But I've gotten him to stop for — virtually, from the first day that I was in office. But they wanted to fight, and that's the way it is. And they've done it for so long.

Yes, go ahead, please.

Q Sir, what does "as humane a way as possible" actually mean? Does it mean civilians? Or —

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we're going to have to see. We're going to have to define that as we go along. They want to — if you listen to Erdoğan, he wants to have people go back to where they came from, go back to Syria. Right now, he's holding — in all fairness to him, he's holding millions of people that would be all over the place if he wasn't holding them. So he wants to repatriate, he wants to have them go back into the area that he's looking at.

But we'll see. We'll see how he does it. He can do it in a soft manner. He can do it in a very tough manner. And if he does it unfairly, he's going to pay a very big economic price.

Q Mr. President, you said — with the letter that you sent up to Nancy Pelosi yesterday —

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah.

Q — you appeared to declare war on the impeachment inquiry. Can you tell us, in your own words, why you think it is incumbent upon the House to hold a full vote to authorize an inquiry? And if they were to hold the vote and it were to be positive, would you then cooperate with the inquiry?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, let me just say that the Republican Party — and President — but the Republican Party has been treated extremely badly by the Democrats — very unfairly — because they have a tiny margin in the House. They have eviscerated the rules. They don't give us any —

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any fair play. It's the most unfair situation people have seen. No lawyers — you can't have lawyers. You can't speak. You can't do anything. You virtually can't do anything.

And then, on top of it, they have a guy named Schiff. And Nancy Pelosi knows all this because she's just as guilty as he is. But you have a man named Schiff, where I had a perfect phone call with the President of Ukraine — like, I mean perfect. People read it, but they don't read that. They heard Schiff's version of it. He defrauded the American public. He gave the most horrible rendition, adding his own words.

I mean, Mark Meadows is here. I think I can say honestly, Mark, you didn't believe it when you heard it.

REPRESENTATIVE MEADOWS: Right.

THE PRESIDENT: And Mark has never heard anything like it. And many of the people that we work with, including Democrats, have never heard anything like it. He made up a phone call. He made it up. Because what happened is they spoke about a day too early. They heard a whistleblower who came out with a false story — you know, people say, "Oh, it was always fairly close." It wasn't close at all. What the whistleblower said bore no relationship to what the call was. We have a transcribed call, done by professionals. And the call was a perfect call, but Schiff made it up.

Then it turns out that the whistleblower was in cahoots with Schiff. Then it turns out that the whistleblower is a Democrat — strong Democrat — and is working with one of my opponents as a Democrat that I might end up running against. The whole thing is a scam. It's a fix.

And we wrote a letter yesterday, and it probably ends up being a big Supreme Court case; maybe it goes a long time. I don't know. But the Republican Party has been treated unbelievably badly and unfairly by the Democrats, John.

Q But then again, sir, if they held a vote in the full House, and the vote were to authorize, would you —

THE PRESIDENT: Well, yeah, that sounds okay.

Q — would you cooperate?

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THE PRESIDENT: Well, we would if they give us our rights. It depends. If they vote and say you can't have lawyers, you can't ask questions, you can't have anybody present — all of these crazy things. And even some of the reporters said to me, "It really is an unfair situation."

They ask all the questions and then — for instance, the ambassador who testified was a fine gentleman. He gave great testimony for us. But we don't get to do any of that or show any of that, so they brought out only the couple of negative things, all which were knocked out by his other statements. It was a great witness for us, but if you would've listened to them, you would've said it was a better witness for them. It wasn't. It wasn't even close. He was a fine gentleman. And we saw that, and we said that's very unfair.

Yes.

Q Mr. President, there were reports this afternoon that the Chinese are lowering their expectations for a trade deal. Are you also lowering your expectations for a trade deal?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't think so. I think they feel that I'm driving a tough bargain. But I have to. You know it better than anybody. You do a good job over there. I watch a lot.

We are so far down, in terms of where we started, from Presidents that didn't do their job for many years. Since the World Trade Organization founding — China went in in 2001 or so — China went in and just ripped off the world.

So, and I told that to President Xi. I said, "You know, this can't be like a 50/50 deal." Because a 50/50 deal, you're like up there and we're down here. So a 50/50 deal, it doesn't work, right? You got to have a little balance. This has to be a better deal from our standpoint. And I think they fully understand it.

One of the really good meetings I had today was with our people on opioids and drugs and fentanyl — and fentanyl, in particular, with respect to your question. And they said that Chinese leadership has a lot of respect for our President, and they are really being much more careful. It's a much different situation.

We have some great drug numbers. Now, what is great drug — if you're down 15, 16, 20, 25 percent, it's still horrible what's going on in this country and in the world. In the whole world, it's

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horrible.

But no, I think they have a lot of respect for us. It's the first time they've ever respected us. I think China has a lot of respect for me and for our country and for what we're doing, and I think they can't believe what they've gotten away with for so many years.

Q Are the Chinese wrong to be putting pressure on the NBA, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the NBA is a different thing. I mean, I watch this guy, Steve Kerr, and he was like a little boy. He was so scared to be even answering the question. He couldn't answer the question. He was shaking. "Oh, I don't know. I don't know." He didn't know how to answer the question. And yet, he'll talk about the United States very badly.

I watched Popovich. Sort of the same thing, but he didn't look quite as scared, actually. But they talk badly about the United States. But when it talks about China, they don't want to say anything bad. I thought it was pretty sad, actually.

Q So are you okay with the Chinese government pressuring the NBA, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: It'll be — it'll be very — it'll be very interesting. Excuse me.

Q Are you okay then with the Chinese government pressuring the NBA over Hong Kong?

THE PRESIDENT: They have to work out their own situation. The NBA is — they know what they're doing. But I watch the way that like Kerr and Popovich and some of the others were pandering to China, and yet to our country, they don't — it's like they don't respect it. It's like they don't respect it.

I said, "What a difference. Isn't it sad?" It's very sad. To me, it's very sad.

John.

Q Mr. President, Joe Biden came out for the first time today and said you should be impeached. Your response?

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THE PRESIDENT: Well, he's falling like a rock. We have him on tape with corruption. I mean, he's getting the prosecutor for, I guess, John, it was \$2 billion — saying, "We're not giving you the \$2 billion" — or whatever the amount was — "unless you get rid of this prosecutor." And then he goes, "Lo and behold, the prosecutor was gone."

Q It was \$1.2 billion.

THE PRESIDENT: And that was the prosecutor — excuse me, John?

Q \$1.2 billion.

THE PRESIDENT: \$1.2 billion. Not a lot of money. And then his son takes out \$1.5 billion from China.

And, by the way, the \$50,000 a month that he was getting from Ukraine, it looks like it's \$168,000, split among him and somebody else — his friend. And also there's a payment of about \$3 million to his son. His son just got thrown out of the Navy.

So Biden is dropping like a rock. I don't think he's going to make it. I didn't think he wasn't going to make it for a long time. I don't think he's going to make it. And I guess this is one way he can do it. You know, he didn't say that until right now. And he sees what's happening to him. I guess he's no longer the frontrunner.

But, look, I feel badly for him because I know he's going through a lot. He's been hit. And he's been caught red-handed. I mean, here's a man who is on tape saying exactly what he's going to do in terms of corruption, and he gets away with it. If that ever happened to a Republican, they'd be getting the electric chair right now. They'd be right now being walked into the electric chair. It's a whole different standard.

What Joe Biden said on tape — this isn't like, "Gee-whiz, we think." What he said on tape — and the fake media doesn't want to play the tape. They hardly play it. So I feel, you know, that it's too bad what's happened to him. He is sinking and his campaign is sinking.

But he walked away with hundreds of — I mean, you look at the kind of numbers his son — who is, at best, incompetent — got thrown out of the Navy. I don't even want to say why; A subject that we

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just discussed. I don't want to say why. But he gets thrown — and then all of a sudden, he's making a deal with Ukraine, where they're getting \$168,000 a month between the two of them — \$168,000 — and he gets \$3 million payments and all of this money coming out? And the kid has no expertise in energy, and it's an energy company. He has no expertise. You and I both know much more than he does, John.

And then you walk into China, and a couple of days later — 10 days later, to be exact — he gets \$1.5 billion out of China, and he's got no expertise. And I have friends that are the smartest people on Wall Street. I said, "Is that possible?" They say, "No, it's not possible." It's a pretty sad situation.

Please.

Q Mr. President, I just want to clarify something you said earlier. If Pelosi holds a vote on the floor on impeachment and commits to the rules of previous impeachment proceedings, you'll participate in that investigation?

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah, if the rules are fair.

Q Okay.

THE PRESIDENT: I — because I don't know how — I don't know exactly your definition.

If Republicans get a fair shake — because the Republicans have been — look, we were very nice to them. When Paul Ryan was the Speaker, he really wouldn't give subpoenas. And I'm not saying good, bad, or indifferent. Here's a man that knows it very well. They'd go in with all of the corruption that you've been reading about, and all of the things that they did wrong with Comey, and all of these people and all of the things they did wrong.

When we wanted a subpoena — meaning, they wanted a subpoena — it was very hard to get it and I'm not sure he ever even issued a subpoena. And Nancy Pelosi issues subpoenas: "Come on in and get them." Gives them to Nadler. Gives them to Crooked Schiff.

I mean, this Schiff is one crooked guy. The guy made up my phone call. Think of it. In the United States Congress, he made up my phone call. And I've had people that said, "I didn't like the way you talked to the Ukrainian President." I said, "Did you read my speech?" "No, I heard Schiff."

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Shifty Schiff. "I heard Schiff." I said — that's how I said — I said, "Well, let me see what he said." A lot of people saw that.

This — and frankly, I think if it wasn't for me, I don't know if anybody would have even noticed and called him out. He took my really — believe it or not — congenial and gentle words, and he made me sound like a tyrant. It's a terrible thing. He defrauded the American public.

I mean, honestly, I don't know what can happen, but there are those that say he should be prosecuted for what he did. He should certainly be impeached, but he should be prosecuted for what he did. And I think he's a very bad leader of this movement.

Yes, please.

Q And just, on the phone call, there's a new report out today that the whistleblower says a White House official came to him and said you committed a crime on that call. Did any White House official express any concern to you —

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q — or speak to you about that phone call afterward?

THE PRESIDENT: It's all a big con, don't you understand? Look, the phone call, you have it; it's the transcript. That's why they keep saying, "Oh, the whistleblower said this and that." What happened is, if they would have seen the transcript early, they wouldn't have had a whistleblower, because he wouldn't have said — there was nothing he could say. All you have to do is read the transcript. Very calm.

And what's even more important than the transcript, in a certain way? Although, I think the transcript is the most important, because it was really plain vanilla. No emotion. No nothing.

These are crooked people that are doing — these are Democrats, headed by a — a Democrat lawyer, a big Democrat lawyer. This is a con job. This is a con being perpetrated on the United States public and even the world. And the world is watching, and they — they get it better than a lot of other people. It's very interesting.

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But a poll just came out today: A very small people want to see something — even though I only get negative press from you people — not you, necessarily. But — but, that's the way it is.

So, I say this: Look, all you have to do is read the transcript. But you know what's almost as good as the transcript, I think? Is the Ukrainian President saying — he didn't even know that they were talking about — “no pressure.” The foreign minister of Ukraine saying, “No, it was a very normal call. There was no pressure at all.”

What is bad is when you see all of the elements, when you see that Schiff saw the whistleblower. When you see what the whistleblower said about the phone call, and it was totally different. He made it up. And I don't know why a person that defrauds the American public should be protected, okay?

Q Sir, then why did your administration try to bury that transcript in the extra level of —

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that I don't know. Again, I'm not a lawyer. I can say this: I assume it was for leaks. I have no idea. I'm just answering. Because this city is like the leaking capital of the world. If you want to get something out to the press, all you have to do is hand it to somebody in Washington.

So, I assume it was for leaks. I mean, I've read that, and it doesn't seem like a big deal. What is a big deal —

Q (Inaudible.)

THE PRESIDENT: I think they're probably trying to protect it from leaks.

But here's the other thing: We gave that transcript over almost immediately. It wasn't like we waited until now. Until now would be immediately, because it's only been doing it for three weeks. We gave that transcript up almost immediately.

And you know, when I heard Schiff's phony version, and when I heard what was being horribly said by this so-called whistleblower — and I'd like to find who is the person in between the whistleblower and hearing about this — the conversation? The conversation was, I think, a perfect conversation. But who's the person giving this information?

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If that person exists — I'm not sure that person exists — but I think it's important — and I say this to Congress — I think it's important to find out who that person is, because we could have a spy. And I don't want to have spies when I'm negotiating with China and Syria and all of the countries — if you look at Turkey, with Erdoğan. I have calls with all these people. And Kim Jong Un.

I don't want to have spies in the White House. I want to be free to make calls. I don't think it's fair that somebody interprets a call. He didn't interpret it wrong; I don't mind a misinterpretation. This was a fraud, because that call was perfect. And if you read the whistleblower's report, that was no — it bore no resemblance to what the call was.

Steve?

Q Could we go back to your conversation with Boris Johnson?

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah.

Q There was a case involving a car crash involving a —

THE PRESIDENT: I hate the case. I —

Q — American diplomat's wife. Did you bring — did you talk about that?

THE PRESIDENT: That's true. I — we talked about it.

Q What did you decide?

THE PRESIDENT: So, what we're going to do — it's a very, very complex issue, as you know, because we're talking about diplomatic immunity, which, in itself, is quite a subject, right? You people could lecture me on it, I suspect. But it's quite a subject.

A terrible accident occurred. The person driving the car — they know who it was, and they have it on camera. A young man was killed on his motorcycle. He was killed — sounds like instantly killed.

The woman, through diplomatic immunity, left the UK, and came back to America. And what I'm going to try and do and see — because I understand where the people from the UK are. And,

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frankly, a lot of Americans feel the same way. We have — I was telling Boris, we have a lot of Americans that, you know, they side on the fact that, you know, you have two wonderful parents that lost their son, and the woman was driving on the wrong side of the road.

And that can happen. You know, those are the opposite roads. That happens. I won't say it ever happened to me, but it did. When you get used to driving on our system and then you're all of a sudden in the other system, where you're driving — it happens. Have to be careful — very careful.

So a young man was killed, the person that was driving the automobile has diplomatic immunity. We're going to speak to her very shortly and see if we can do something where they meet — it was an accident. It was an acc- —

Q Like send her back?

THE PRESIDENT: It was a terrible accident.

Q Send her back, you mean, for trial? Or —

THE PRESIDENT: We're going to speak to her and we're going to see the person driving the car — the wife of the diplomat. We're going to speak to her and see what we can come up with so that there can be some healing. There's tremendous anger over it. It's a terrible incident. There's tremendous anger, and I understand the anger from the other side very much.

Q Mr. President, when you met with Robert Mueller in May of 2017 at the Oval Office, were you in fact interviewing him for the position of FBI? And were you aware, at the time that he was in the Oval Office, that he had had prior conversations with Rod Rosenstein about potentially becoming Special Counsel?

THE PRESIDENT: Okay, to you second question: Absolutely not. I had no idea that he was doing that. To the first question, he absolutely wanted to become the FBI Director, and I said, "No." I said, "Listen, you've been there for..." — I believe it was 12 years. And I said, "No." And it has since been proven that I was right. Plus, we have witnesses to it. I interviewed numerous people that day. And he was one of the numerous people. Making a decision ultimately — but he was one of the people. I said no — nicely, respectfully.

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Q Did you speak to him about a potential conflict of interest because of the dispute he had with you over the golf membership?

THE PRESIDENT: I knew about it. We didn't speak about that, because I wasn't going to accept him. That may have been one of the reasons I said no. Who knows? But I did have conflicts of interest with Robert Mueller. We had a business dispute. I thought we had, as you know, three basic conflicts of interest, and none of them were very good. But we had a — we had a business dispute.

But I thought he was there for 12 years. That was long enough, especially when you saw what happened with the FBI.

And you have to understand, nobody respects the FBI more than do. And I think, if you took a vote in the EBI, they'd vote me President right now — a vast, vast majority. And they're great people. I know a lot of them. But your leadership was terrible, whether it was Comey or Mueller or anybody.

I mean, this leadership turned out to be a disaster for this country, when you look at Strzok and Page, when you look at the "insurance policy." "You know, she's going to win. But just in case she doesn't, we have an insurance policy." Well, that only means one thing; there's no other interpretation.

So when you look at that — no, Robert Mueller wanted a job to be the Director, and I turned him — very nicely, respectfully — down. The other element of your question: I never — I never heard that until just recently when it's being reported a little bit.

Q So these trade — the trade talks —

THE PRESIDENT: Please. Go ahead, Steve.

Q — coming up with China: Are you optimistic that some sort of deal will be reached with these —

THE PRESIDENT: Well, China wants to make a deal. In my opinion, China wants to make a deal more than I do, okay? But — but — look, I'm very happy right now. We're taking in billions of dollars of tariffs. And despite what the news was saying, there's no inflation. There's not a very big

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price increase, if any, because they've eaten the tariffs. They've devalued their currency and they're pouring a lot of money into their system.

Now, they've lost three and a half million jobs and their chain is breaking up; their supply chain is breaking up like a broken egg. They want to make a deal.

The question is: Do I want to make a deal? And the answer would be, if we make the right deal, I'd love to do it. I think it would be a great thing for China, also.

Q But they seem to be reluctant to make concessions on IP and (inaudible) —

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we'll see. I mean, you don't know that. Look, there is so many false reports. Everybody is trying to guess. But there's really only two people that matter on this one, and that's President Xi and myself. We get along very well.

I can't imagine he likes me the way he did when I first became President, because, you know, it's been — it's been a rough time for China. China has gone down many trillions of dollars and we've gone up many trillions of dollars. I mean, we've — since I've been elected, many, many, many trillions of dollars have been — increased the value of — if you call it "value"; you could call it "worth" or "value" — of our country. We've you've increased — not just stock market, I'm talking our country. Our economy is bigger. It's stronger.

And I believe if my opponent got in, you would have had a tremendous slide. And don't forget, I only look at our numbers from the day after the election, because there was euphoria when I got elected and we picked up a tremendous amount from, let's say, the 9th of November to January 20th, when we had the inauguration. And it's been that way ever sense. It's been a fantastic thing.

But China wants to make a deal very badly. And if we can make a deal, we're going to make a deal. There's a really good chance. There's a really good chance, Steve.

Q Have you spoken — have you spoken at all, Mr. President, to the Attorney General about the coming Horowitz Inspector General's report and/or the Durham report — either investigation?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I really — I'm leaving that to the Attorney General — highly respected man, a very highly principled man. I did read the Comey report — 78 pages of total kill. And I think it says,

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frankly, a lot to the Attorney General that he decided not to prosecute on that report, because I think most people reading that report would have done that. That report was horrible for Comey. Horrible. But he's a highly principled man, and I'm leaving it up to him.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us what you said to President Erdoğan on Sunday when he said to you — did you promise him anything or did he promise you anything on Sunday?

THE PRESIDENT: No, we're talking about it. No. But he said, "I want to go in. I want to go in." But he's been telling me that for two and a half years.

Q And did you agree to that?

THE PRESIDENT: He's been telling that, virtually — he's been saying this for many years, before me. And, you know, he's ready to do it. They've been, again, fighting for so long. They've been fighting for so many — these are — this is like Israel and the Palestinians, okay? There's only one difference: maybe the hatred is even greater. Is that possible? Maybe not. But it's — this is a very, very serious hatred that's come over many years.

Yes, sir.

Q But, Mr. President, the Kurds helped the U.S. defeat ISIS. And, by allowing this offensive, is it going to be more difficult in future times of need to develop alliances?

THE PRESIDENT: No, it won't be. It won't be at all. Alliances are very easy.

But, you know, our alliances have taken advantage of us. If you look at how much money we spent on NATO and how much money countries from Europe — who are really a much bigger beneficiary that we are, okay? You know, they're there and we're here. We're many miles away. Our alliances, in many cases, have taken tremendous advantage of us.

If you look at NATO, I got them to pay \$100 billion more. The Secretary-General, Stoltenberg, came out with a report recently that, because of President Trump, the other countries — 28 countries — so 27, not including us — they paid over \$100 billion more because of me. But still, as good as that is — sounds good — it's nothing compared to the kind of numbers you're talking about.

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So I'm very happy with that, but the United States is paying over 4 percent and Germany is paying 1 percent — maybe a tiny bit more, but I actually think, the way you calculate it — because you can look at it many ways — is probably less than 1 percent. France is paying less than what they're supposed to.

Out of the 28 countries, 20 of them are delinquent. You know what the "delinquent" means? That's an old real estate term. "He's delinquent with his rent." They're delinquent with their payment. They owe us a tremendous amount of money and they never pay us back.

Because if Germany doesn't pay — they don't add that up, they just say, "Oh, that's okay." Then they don't pay. And yet, they're — if you go back that way, like the old fashioned way — like you don't pay and you owe it. But they don't pay and they just go on to the next year. They owe us hundreds and hundreds of billions of dollars. So, no. I don't look at it that way.

Now, the Kurds are fighting for their land, just so you understand. They're fighting for their land. And, as somebody wrote in a very, very powerful article today, they didn't help us in the Second World War. They didn't help us with Normandy, as an example. They mentioned names of different battles. They were there, but they're there to help us with their land. And that's a different thing.

In addition to that, we have spent tremendous amounts of money on helping the Kurds — in terms of ammunition, in terms of weapons, in terms of money, in terms of pay. With all of that being said, we like the Kurds.

Now you have different factions in there. Again, you have PKK — that's a different faction. And they worked with us. It's a rough group, but they worked with us. But we've spent a tremendous — and they're fighting for their lands. So when you say, "They're fighting with us" — yes, but they're fighting for their land.

Now, if we go on the theory that some of the folks in Washington go by — who all do very well with the military-industrial complex. I mean, you know, the military-industrial complex. Take a look at Dwight Eisenhower; he had it figured right many years ago. It's got tremendous power. They like fighting. They make a lot of money when they fight.

But it was time to bring our soldiers back home. So I see — and I will tell you: The hardest thing I have to do, by far, much harder than the witch hunt, is signing letters to parents of soldiers that have been killed. And it's not only that — in areas where there's not a lot of upside, if there's any upside at all, and in many cases, it's only downside.

And especially when that soldier was killed in a Blue-on-Green attack. You know what that is, right? That's where a soldier being trained or whatever turns his gun on an American soldier.

"Here, son. Take your gun. You know how to use it."

And he takes the gun and he turns it. And he shoots one — we have many of them in Afghanistan — in particular, in Afghanistan.

The hardest thing I have to do is signing those letters. That's the hardest thing I have to do. And each letter is different. We make each letter different. And last week, I signed of them for Afghanistan; one in Iraq; one in Syria, from two weeks ago. And sometimes I call the parents. Sometimes I see the parents. I go to Dover, when I can, but it's — it's so devastating for the parents that — you know. It's so devastating when they bring that boy or young woman out of the back of those big, powerful planes in a coffin, and the parents are there.

You know, we have people that do that. That's what they do. They — they work that. They accommodate everybody. That's what they do. They do an incredible job. And they said — I said, "The parents seemed to be okay." "I'll get there early." "The parents seemed to be okay." "Well, actually, sir, they aren't." "No, no. The way they're talking. They're really okay, aren't they?" "Sir, you never know until the back of that massive cargo plane opens up." And they walk down holding a coffin with four or five great soldiers on each side of it, representing our various forces. That you never know.

And then I see it. And I see people that were smiling, "Oh, Mr. President, thank you for being here. Thank you for being here." And I think they're doing great. And then, twenty minutes later, we'll be outside when that big plane pulls up and that door comes down, and they are walking the coffin with their boy inside this coffin with an American flag over the top. And they're walking that coffin down this ramp. And I've seen people that I thought were really incredible the way they were ta — I didn't even understand how they could take it so well — scream, like I've never seen anything before. Sometimes they'll run to the coffin. They'll break through military barriers. They'll run to the coffin and jump on top of the coffin. Crying mothers and wives. Crying desperately.

And this is on these endless wars that just never stop. And there's a time and there's a place, but it's time to stop.

And just to finish, last Friday, I went to Walter Reed. And I gave out five Purple Hearts to incredible young men — in this case, all men. And they took a beating. Beautiful people. They took a beating. One couldn't be there because the beating was so great that he was at a totally different part of the world. He lost a leg. He lost an arm. Ryan. He had tremendous damage, beyond even what these young folks went through.

But I'll tell you what: For me, it's very hard when I see that. It's very hard. It's easy to talk tough. You know, tough guys. All of these tough guys. "Let's keep fighting. Let's keep fighting." If they had to go to Walter Reed — where they do unbelievable work. I have to tell you, these doctors are unbelievable. You know, it's easy to say, "Oh, they're not the..." They're the best in the world. I've never seen anything like it.

One young man, last week, had his nose rebuilt. And they said it was in a thousand pieces. And, I said, "So where were you hurt?" He said, "My face, sir, was almost obliterated." I said, "You have a better face than I do." (Laughter.) And he said, "Sir, I had a doctor who was unbelievable, and they put it together." They said — he said "a thousand fragments." Now, I don't if that's even possible. But a thousand fragments. And they put it together.

And his father, who was crying, came up to me and said, "You're not going to believe this, but my son didn't have a great-looking nose and now his nose is better." (Laughter.) Okay? It's an amazing thing.

But when you see these — and the Purple Hearts — you see this kind of thing — and I see a lot of it at Walter Reed. And, again, the job those doctors and the people do at Walter Reed, it's something to be commended.

Thank you all very much. Thank you. (Applause.)

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REMARKS

Remarks by President Trump at the Swearing-In Ceremony of Secretary of Labor Eugene Scalia

Issued on: September 30, 2019



Oval Office

2:18 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Well, this is a very big day. We just had the swearing-in. We just had the most beautiful ceremony. I don't know if anybody was there, of you, but — our new head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. And now we have Department of Labor. So, that's big stuff. This is a big day.

And it's my pleasure to welcome everyone to the swearing-in of our new Secretary of Labor, Eugene Scalia. Gene is joined by many members of his family, which is a large family, including his mother, Maureen, who's been my friend for a long time, even before I knew you. Right? His mother is an incredible woman. And his wife, Patricia. Incredible job. Thank you, honey. And six of their beautiful children.

And I have a list of the folks. It's like — what a family. So you have Maureen, who a lot of the people in this room know, from the standpoint even of the media. You have Patricia, who is a very powerful person in the family — namely, the wife. (Laughter.) The wife is always powerful — or, in some cases, right? But in this case —

MR. SCALIA: This one is.

THE PRESIDENT: Super powerful, right?

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Antonin Scalia's son. Antonin. We have Megan Scalia, daughter; Bridget Scalia, daughter; Luke Scalia, son; Erin Scalia, daughter; Isabella Scalia, daughter. That's pretty impressive. John Scalia, brother. Catherine Courtney, sister. Mary Clare Murray, sister. Reverend Paul Scalia, who many of the folks know, in the room. The most powerful man, by far, in the room. Reverend Paul Scalia, brother. Christopher Scalia, brother. Margaret Scalia Bryce, sister. Christie S. Larsen — oh, wow — father-in-law. Susan Larsen, mother-in-law. That's powerful. That's powerful stuff. That's a great — that's a great family.

And, as you know, this was just happened — confirmed as the 20th Secretary of Labor, on September 26th, by a very substantial vote in current politics. Some people would say, "Gee, that was close." 53 to 44. I call that a landslide. (Laughter.) In this administration, I call it a landslide.

Eugene Scalia is one of the most qualified people ever confirmed as Secretary of Labor. He will use his skills as he has over the years, and he's built an extremely distinguished career to fight and win for the American workforce. He's a tremendous lawyer, a tremendous talent. One of the best anywhere in our country.

He earned a bachelor's degree from University of Virginia, and went on to the University of Chicago Law School, where he was editor-in-chief of the Law Review.

From 2002 to 2003, Gene served as the top legal officer at the Department of Labor. So he's very familiar with the environs. He earned a reputation as a brilliant and unbiased defender of rights and protections of the American people.

After his time in government service, Gene moved to the private sector, where he really became a tremendous force and very successful. He fought in some of the highest courts of our land, and worked to overturn bureaucratic overreach and unfair, job-killing regulations. That sounds very familiar. That's going to be good in this administration.

As he returns to the Department of Labor, Gene will use his wealth of experience to continue our bold regulatory reduction campaign. Most importantly, he will always put American workers first. I know that very well. That's what he's done his whole life.

And your father is looking down right now. Your husband is looking down right now and proud as can be. You know that. You understand that. He's looking down and he is beaming. And I knew

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him well enough to know that he was a beamer when he was proud, right?

MRS. MAUREEN SCALIA: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: So, Gene, I'm confident that your sharp legal mind, firmness of character, devotion to justice, love for this country, and commitment to its people will make you an outstanding Secretary of Labor. I want you to be the best. Can we say "the best of all time"? I'll ask you, maybe later, who was the best, so far. But you're going to top.

Congratulations to you and to your wonderful family.

And I'd like to now have Gene just say a few words and then we'll ask Vice President Pence to administer the oath of office. And thank you all for being here. This is a very important day. Thank you very much. (Applause.) Thank you.

MR. SCALIA: Mr. President, thank you for those remarks. Thank you for this great honor to serve as Secretary of Labor. And thank you for what's also a great opportunity, as well, to hold that position in this administration with a President who's willing to try things that are different, not necessarily conventional, and as you remarked a moment ago, prepared to fight for things that he considers are important for the American people.

You offered this job to me back in July, in this office. And in that meeting, you expressed to me your commitment to American workers and to our economy. And I will bear those words in mind every day that I serve as Secretary of Labor.

I also want to thank the President for the kindness that he has, in fact, shown my mother since even before his inauguration. It's a story few people know. I'm fixing that right now, I think. But he reached out to my mother for — just out of kindness, with no political advantage, to see how she was doing, to then make sure that she had a good inauguration seat and the like. And he looked after an elderly woman who was going through a difficult time and gave her some help and support when it meant an awful lot. And we're very grateful.

I do want to thank my mother, as well; my father who we do like to think is looking down and watching with some pride. And, of course, I want to thank my wife Trish for all of the support that

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she has given me, both in recent weeks, but throughout our marriage. And my brothers and sisters, too.

Mr. President, I'm sorry that the group is — might strike you as small. (Laughter.) There were three who couldn't make it, but they're here in spirit, too.

So, again, I want to thank the President and the Vice President for what is a great honor, but, more importantly to me, it's an opportunity to further the mission of the Department of Labor; to implement this President's agenda; and, to paraphrase the Constitution, to take care that our laws are faithfully executed.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Congratulations. Fantastic. (Applause.)

Mike? Thanks.

(The oath is administered.)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congratulations, Mr. Secretary.

SECRETARY SCALIA: Thank you. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, thank you all very much. Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you very much, everybody.

Q Do you know who the whistleblower is, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we're trying to find out about a whistleblower — when you have a whistleblower that reports things that were incorrect. As you know, and you probably now have figured it out, the statement I made to the President of Ukraine — a good man, a nice man, new — was perfect. It was perfect. But the whistleblower reported a totally different statement. Like, the statement, it's — it was not even made. I guess "statement," you could say, was the call. I made a call. The call was perfect.

When the whistleblower reported it, he made it sound terrible. And then, you had Adam Schiff who, even worse, made up my words, which I think is just a horrible. I've never even seen a thing

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like that.

Adam Schiff — representative, congressman — made up what I said. He actually took words and made it up. The reason is, when he saw my call to the President of Ukraine, it was so good that he couldn't quote from it because it — there was nothing done wrong. It was perfect. So Adam Schiff decided, "I can't let this happen, so let me make up..." — did you ever hear of this one, Gene? You ever hear a thing like this? So Adam Schiff made up a phony call. And he read it to Congress and he read it to the people of the United States. And it's a disgrace. This whole thing is a disgrace.

There's been tremendous corruption. And we're seeking it. It's called "drain the swamp." There's been corruption on the other side. There's been corruption like you've never seen.

Now, the new President of Ukraine ran on the basis of no corruption. That's how he got elected. And I believe that he really means it. But there was a lot of corruption having to do with the 2016 election against us. And we want to get to the bottom of it, and it's very important that we do.

Thank you very much.

END

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Issued on: July 23, 2019



Marriott Marquis Washington
Washington, D.C.

11:34 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you.

AUDIENCE: USA! USA! USA!

THE PRESIDENT: So, let's have a good time, right? (Applause.) Let's have a good time.

I'm excited to be here today with thousands of proud, young American patriots. You're great people. You're great people. (Applause.) You're the future. You're the future.

On behalf of my entire administration, thank you to everyone at Turning Point USA's Teen Student Action Summit. What a group. (Applause.) What a group. They don't realize there's more of you than there is of them. They just haven't figured that out yet. (Applause.) They'll understand. They'll figure it out someday. They're still trying to figure out what the hell happened. What happened? (Applause.) How did this happen?

You've come to our nation's capital from cities and towns across America. You've given up a big part of your summer, which many young people are not willing to do, and we understand that too.

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But what you're doing is fun and it's important. So important.

You've paid and paved your own way to get here. And, in some cases, it wasn't easy. And you've done it for all of us. You've done it for one simple reason: You are loyal to our nation, you are devoted to your fellow citizens, and you will always put America first. (Applause.)

I want to thank my great friend — and he's a young friend; he's a pretty young guy — Charlie Kirk. (Applause.) I said, "How old are you, Charlie?" He's a young one. He gave me a number; I won't say. But he's younger than he even looks. But I want to thank Charlie. He's an incredible guy. His spirit, his love of this country. He's done an amazing job. He's done something that is just incredible for somebody, really, of his age. You need tremendous talent to do what he's done, building one of the most powerful youth organizations ever created, Turning Point USA. And I want to thank you, really, Charlie. Incredible job. (Applause.)

The young leaders here today are part of a movement unlike anything in the history of our nation. There's never been anything like this. And the fake news doesn't even talk about it because —

AUDIENCE: Booo —

THE PRESIDENT: No, but when I say it, they don't correct me. They don't say, "Oh, he gets a Pinocchio." They can't because it's true. It's true. You know, they can find fault with anything, but they never — they never talk about that because we won. You know, there have been some pretty good movements. And they won New Hampshire, or they won a state someplace. (Laughter.) But they didn't win the whole ballgame.

And you saw what we won, and you could see it; we could feel it. We knew it was going to happen because it's a movement about reclaiming your future, rebuilding your country, and restoring your destiny, and renewing the values that are the true source of American greatness. We lost those values, and we're getting them back rapidly. We're getting them back rapidly.

Just backstage, a gentleman — very rich gentleman, in this case — came up, sitting in one these rows, I assume. Yeah. There he is. He said, "Sir, thank you for saving our country." (Applause.) I said, "Thank you very much." And, you know, I said, "Thank you very much." And I looked at Charlie and I said, "Charlie do you have any idea how many people say that?"

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I gave the commencement address at the Air Force Academy recently, and at Annapolis the year before. (Applause.) And they said, "Sir, would you like to shake the hands of all the cadets?" I said, "How many are there?" "One thousand one hundred." I said, "Yeah, that sounds okay." (Applause.) I say, "Do other Presidents do it?" "Yes, they do." "Do all of them?" "Yeah, they do."

What they didn't say is they start and then they peter out and they go back. Because it's — it's tough. It was really hot. That sun was beaming down. And I'm just one hand. And some of these guys are great athletes. And some of the women — they had some women in the class that were — their hands were very strong, okay? (Laughter.) And they're all shaking. And, you know, they're a little nervous, maybe; they're meeting the President. They're shaking strongly and — "Sir." But, you know, with shaking 1,100 hands and saluting. We're saluting, shaking, turning, spinning. They're coming at all different directions. (Laughter.) I felt like a great fighter pilot. (Laughter.)

But I stood up there for the whole thing. I said, "There's no way that other Presidents have done that." He said, "No, no, they do it but they leave after about 50 or 60 people." I said, "Why didn't you tell me that?" But I'm glad I did it. (Laughter.) But I did the same thing — I did the same thing at Annapolis the year before. Great place. Just great. (Applause.) And I shook the hands of, I think, 1,011 at Annapolis. And it's really something great.

But so many of these young, incredible people — they're like you — so many of these young, incredible people, they come, "Sir, thank you for saving America." "Sir, thank you for saving America." "Sir, thank you for saving our country." So many of them — it's not rehearsed; it's just — that's what they feel.

And you know what? Somebody had to do what I did. It's not pleasant. We have a deep state. We have bad people. We have sick people.

I watched, just this morning, this Tlaib — Tlaib.

AUDIENCE: Boo —

THE PRESIDENT: From Michigan, right? It's a great state. We won Michigan. There is no way she stands for the values of the people of Michigan.

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But I watched her this morning; she vicious. She's like a crazed lunatic. She's screaming. This is before she got into Congress. Who elected her? She's screaming like a total lunatic at one of our rallies. It's like I'm giving a little rally, and she starts screaming. And this was — this is not a sane person, folks, when you look at that. (Laughter.) And this is what we're up against. You have some of that.

Now, the Democrats, I guess, are forced to embrace her. And I called it "AOC Plus 3." Okay? AOC — "AOC Plus 3." (Applause.) Not that AOC is a bargain, because she's not. I mean, she's no bargain. Look, I mean, I — we'll go into it at some point. I'll tell you all about AOC. I got more on AOC. (Applause.) AOC. AOC.

But it's — you know, what's going on with that Party having to embrace them. And your other friend from an incredible state, right? A state that I'm going to win: Minnesota. You know that one, right? (Applause.) And you know why I'm going to win the state? Because of her. I almost won it last time. We came within just about a point. That's a very — because Minnesota is a very hard one for a Republican to win. And when we almost won it — one more night — I wanted to go there one more time. I said, "I'm telling you, "We're going to win Minnesota."

You know who thought I was going to win Minnesota? You know who thought I was going to win Michigan and Wisconsin and North Carolina? Bill Clinton. He was telling everybody, "You better be careful." He told people — from what I hear, he said, "The one you don't want to run against is Trump." And they would say, "Why? Oh, no, that's good. We want to run against..." "No, no, you don't." You know, I actually knew him pretty well. We got along very well until I decided to run for office. (Laughter.) We actually got along.

But they didn't want to listen to him. But he was the only one with the instinct the rest didn't have. So he came back and he said, "You know he's doing very well in Michigan. You could have a problem." They said, "No, don't worry about Michigan. We haven't lost Michigan in decades." And he came back, he said, "You know..." — he was in Wisconsin or something — but he said he hears that I'm doing well in Wisconsin. They say, "Forget it. A Republican can't win Wisconsin." And then we won Wisconsin. Then he came back — (applause) — he came back.

And I say this with a certain old-time affection because I had a very good relationship with him before doing this. You know, now it's a little harder for him to have a good relationship. But he

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said, "You don't want to run against Trump. Don't run against Trump." And they were saying, "No, no, that's okay. We like that."

Remember, President Obama, "He will not win. He will not win."

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Liar!

THE PRESIDENT: Okay, this is — he goes, "Liar." (Laughter.) That's — yeah. (Applause.) Hey, did Obama get a Pinocchio? That's right, Obama said, "He will not win. He will not be your President."

The anger was unbelievable. You know, what? He's right. He was a liar. Did you give Obama a Pinocchio, Washington Post? He said, "He will not win." (Applause.)

AUDIENCE: Booo —

THE PRESIDENT: These papers — these papers are so bad.

So yesterday we had a story in one of the papers that I thought was good but they're really not, you know, when you analyze it. There's almost not too many of them that are. The wall. We're building a lot of wall. But we — (applause) — well, let me just finish. But there are areas where they have walls that are falling down, walls that are in such bad shape. We're trying to renovate as much as we can.

And we have a provision: We can renovate but we can't build new. So we're taking all these areas. And generally speaking, when you have an old wall that's falling down, it's in a better location for a wall. That's why they had it there in the first place as opposed to an area that's empty. You know, typically that will be true.

So these walls are old, they're crumbling, they're of no use. They're falling down. So we rip it up, build brand new foundations, pour brand new, beautiful footings, and take a wall that's two or three feet high, mostly laying on the ground, some of it only for cars — you know, to stop cars from cars from coming across. Just a metal spike.

So we'd rip it out; it would take about a minute. And we'd put in deep foundations seven feet deep, and we put in 30-foot bollards, and they're loaded up with concrete. Because inside, you know, I like doing — one of the reasons they said, "But you said you're going to build a concrete wall." So

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actually, inside the steel we have — so we have both. We have steel and we have concrete.
(Applause.)

And I was saving that for later because the only thing they could do is, “He’s building a steel wall. It’s not concrete.” “Oh, sorry about that, folks.” (Laughter.) You know. And you do have to have vision. It’s very important. You know, it’s — you can’t just have a blank wall. You have to have vision. It’s much better for the security to have the vision.

Anyway, so we’re building the wall. So they come out with saying, “Donald Trump has built almost no wall.” What a lie that is. And we’re building — (applause) — we’re building 50 miles here, 50 miles there. Fifty — all in the right locations, because there used to be walls but then we had to take them down.

In some cases, if they’re good enough, we’ll renovate it because we can do it for a lot less money. But generally, some of these walls are worthless. I mean, literally, you just drive right over them. They’re laying down on their side.

They gave me no credit. But if you read the story, they’ll say, “While he has renovated a lot of wall...” Well, that’s not even a renovation, let’s face it. That’s a brand new wall. It’s all brand new wall. It just shows you how dishonest this fake news is. And this is what we have to deal with. This is really what we have to deal with. But get used to it. Many of you are going to be in politics. Just get used to it, okay? Get used to it.

Together — is this true? — we believe in the American Constitution and we believe judges should interpret our Constitution as written. You’ll be seeing this. (Applause.) We believe in religious liberty, the right to free speech, and the right to keep and bear arms. (Applause.) Second Amendment. What a group.

AUDIENCE: USA! USA! USA!

THE PRESIDENT: Look, look. Look, they are in the process of trying to take your arms away. You have the Second Amendment. They will —

AUDIENCE: Boo —

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THE PRESIDENT: They will do damage to the Second Amendment the likes of which nobody even thought of. That's where they're coming from. Just remember I said it. Hopefully they never get the chance. And that's why the election coming up — I always said this is the most important election — 2016 — most important election that we've ever had. And it was certainly the coolest. That's for sure. (Applause.) But it was, I believe, the most important election because our country was going wrong. It was going wrong.

And when you see all the incredible numbers coming up and all the success that we're having, and all the fact that we're respected all over the world. We have a really good man who's going to be the Prime Minister of the UK now, Boris Johnson. (Applause.) Good man. He's tough and he's smart. They're saying "Britain Trump." They call him "Britain Trump." And people are saying, "That's a good thing." They like me over there. That's what they wanted. That's what they need. (Applause.) That's what they need. He'll get it done. Boris is good. He's going to do a good job.

I think Nigel is someplace in this audience. Where is Nigel? Where is he? Nigel Farage. He's here someplace. I saw him. I said, "What is he doing here? He's a little older than most of you." Where is he? Nigel. Nigel. I'll tell you what: He got 32 percent of the vote from nowhere, over in UK. Nigel — thank you, Nigel. (Applause.)

I said, "What's Nigel doing here?" He's a little older than you folks, but he did a great job. And I know he's going to work well with Boris. They're going to do some tremendous things.

But we believe in the American Dream and not a socialist nightmare that these people are trying to put on our shoulders. (Applause.)

And we know that strong nations must have strong borders. And we're building a strong border against so much. You have no idea. Every time I announce, as an example, a section of wall, I get lawsuits. They sue me. You know who sues me? Congressmen. Congressmen. I get sued by Nancy Pelosi. We won that suit. Can you believe it? I won that. I won that. (Applause.)

We won a couple of them. But we have suits on the border. We had one judge — they always sue in the Ninth Circuit. You know what that means, right? They sue in the Ninth Circuit, which is sort of like an automatic victory. Although we did win one last week in the Ninth Circuit. Nobody can even believe it. Can you — you know what's happening, right? Do you know what's happening?

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So, as of today — this is so important. There are those that say it's the most important. I would say war and peace and security — that's the most important. But they say the most important thing a President can do is the selection of Supreme Court justices, right? (Applause.) Gorsuch and Kavanaugh. We have two. Already, we have two. Some have gone a long time, and they haven't had many. And they haven't had any, in some cases. So we have two already. And they're great, and they're good.

But, you know, what people don't talk about: I've just signed the 124th federal district judge — federal judges — under me. (Applause.) And within a couple of months, I'll be up to 147. Think of that: 147. Because, normally, when you become President, you go in and you say, "Do I have any judges to appoint?" "No." You know, they're all — because it's such an important thing.

Because these district judges — they're the ones who do the trials. I mean, this is big stuff. And then you have Court of Appeals judges. Then you have the Supreme Court judges.

So we have two in the Supreme Court. We have many appeals court judges — many — that we'll have appointed. The courts are a whole different thing.

But I was up to — I will be up to 147, not including the 2 Supreme Court justices. Now, percentage-wise, I blow everybody away except one person. One person I'll never beat. You know who the one person is?

AUDIENCE: George Washington!

THE PRESIDENT: Who?

AUDIENCE: George Washington!

THE PRESIDENT: George Washington. He's got 100 percent. George Washington. (Applause.)

But we're going to have a tremendous percentage. And after six more years, it'll go to a level that nobody will even be close. (Applause.)

But George Washington is hard to beat because he put in 100 percent. He was there first, so he had (inaudible). (Laughter.) But I have many more than George Washington. Remember that. George

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Washington didn't put in too many, but he had certainly the highest percentage. He'll never — that will be a record that will never be broken.

We believe that every young American should love our country, honor our history, and always respect what? Our great American flag. (Applause.)

How about the Betsy Ross? You know, isn't that terrible, where they're trying to take your heritage away from you like that? Isn't that terrible?

AUDIENCE: Booo —

THE PRESIDENT: Isn't that terrible? And then you see the picture of President Obama with the same exact flag up. He should have taken it down. Why didn't he take it down? It's, really, very unfair what they do. They try and demean and belittle, and they're very good at it. They're better at that than they are at politics. They're better than that than they are at policy.

Look at their policy. They want open borders, which means crime, which means drug —

AUDIENCE: Booo —

THE PRESIDENT: — drugs and human trafficking, which is a phenomena that you would think is thousands of years old, and that would have been their prime. No, their prime is now because of the Internet. Women — mostly women — are being trafficked. And they go not only in this country, all over the world. It's never been like this before. Human trafficking — they snatch women and they traffic women and they sell women.

And we can't get the Democrats to even give us a modicum of the money we need at the border, especially for the wall. I'm taking money from here and there and there and there. Let's take it from here. We have all these different sources coming from all over the place because they won't approve it.

And five years ago, they all wanted it. Six years ago, seven years ago, they all voted for it. They never got it built, but they all voted for it. And today, they make it so tough. You have to see. I'm doing everything I can. And we're doing well with it. But there should just be one nice, fat sum

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where I can get the best four or five contractors — not worry about “I gave it out, but I have a lawsuit. And if the lawsuit happens, I have to undo it.”

How do you give a contract out where you have a contractor and he’s going to build 67 miles of wall — we have one case — but we’re being sued, our funding source, because we’re taking it from a certain area? And so we’re being sued. So we have to wait for the suit. I mean, how would you like to be building like this? It’s not good. It’s not good.

But we’re getting it done anyway. But they should say, “It’s not working without the wall.” You got to have — when they bum-rush you — they did that last week; they rushed in, a tremendous, large number of people. By the way, you know why they’re coming up, right? Because we have created the strongest economy in the history of our country. So they’re coming up because they want a piece of the economy. (Applause.) They’re not coming up for safety and this and that.

Do you ever see these people? They fly their flag. They come up from Guatemala — who, by the way, went back on their word to us. They were all set to sign a safe third agreement, and then today, or yesterday, they announced they can’t do it because they got a supreme court ruling — their supreme court. Right? They got a — in other words, they didn’t want to sign it.

So they’re supposed to sign what’s called a safe third. That’s a good thing for us, okay? That’s all I have to tell you. And they went back. So we’re going to do either tariffs or we’re going to do a form of tax, or we’re going to use our ban. You know, we — people don’t realize we won the ban.

You know, I saw one of the journalists — we’ll call him — who happens to be back there, I believe. One of — look at those cameras. Isn’t that terrible, or good or whatever?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Fake news!

AUDIENCE: Boo —

THE PRESIDENT: Look at all those cameras. Wouldn’t it be great if they told the truth? (Applause.) They have such a low credibility. They started off very high, and then I ran and their credibility is so low you wouldn’t believe it. But that’s okay. But wouldn’t it be nice if they — think of it — think of it: What would be — what would be if we had an honest — I don’t want a media that’s for me or — I just want an honest media.

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So we have our best poll numbers today that we've ever had. Can you imagine how good our poll numbers — with all the things that we've done — how good our numbers would be if we had just a fair media?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: One hundred percent!

THE PRESIDENT: Because they can take any — (laughs) — he goes, "A hundred percent." (Applause.) Who said that? Stand up. Huh? Yeah. He goes, "One hundred percent." And, you know, what? I like your long hair. It's very nice, actually. (Applause.) Good. Thank you. Thank you. That's funny.

So, above all else, we know this: That, in America, we don't worship government, we worship God. (Applause.) Right? (Applause.)

AUDIENCE: One squad under God! One squad under God! One squad under God!

THE PRESIDENT: No, I'm not disavowing that. They'd like me — "Would you disavow that?" No, thank you. (Laughter and applause.) The squad. No, it's very good. Very true.

These are the values that unite everyone in this room. These are the values that inspire hundreds of thousands of Turning Point USA members at more than 1,400 college and high school campuses in all 50 states. It's incredible what's been done with Turning Point and the job Charlie and everybody — I've met all of the people backstage just a little while ago. These are people that love our country. It's amazing what they've done — the job they've done. And in a pretty short period of time.

And I was telling Charlie, too — and I said it before — remember, you are not in the minority. Most people are with you. There is a young woman today — I saw her on a beauty pageant — and she has conservative values.

And the pageant, which used she used to compete against my pageant. Mine did much better, but that's okay. (Applause.) I had the Miss Universe. This is a different company. But I sold it. I figured, when you run for office — I sold it to IMG. Great company. You know, when you won — worked out a very nice deal, too.

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But when you run for office, owning a beauty pageant is not the greatest idea. Do we agree? (Laughter.) Owning the Miss Universe and Miss USA and Miss Teen USA, by the way, was not exactly good with, maybe, running for President. So we sold it to IMG.

But what they did to this young lady was terrible. And because — and she was on “Fox & Friends” this morning, wearing a “Make America Great Again” hat, which was pretty cool. (Applause.) Which was pretty cool.

Each of you is coming of age at a time of unlimited possibility. It's true. Better than I think, ever before. We have the hottest economy on the planet Earth. (Applause.)

And I was elected — we've created more than 6 million new jobs. More than 7 million Americans have been lifted off of food stamps. Think of that. (Applause.) Unemployment for young Americans, age 16 to 19, has reached the lowest rate in over half a century. (Applause.) The unemployment rates for African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Asian Americans have all reached their lowest levels ever recorded. (Applause.) Wages are rising and they're growing fastest for blue-collar workers. Isn't that great, though? (Applause.) People don't talk about that. Young people have seen their wages rise by more than 10 percent. That's a lot. Quickly, too.

Our economic revival is incredible. And it's incredible news for everyone graduating from college or joining the workforce. This is the best time in the history of our country for young people like yourself to join the workforce because America is thriving, America is booming, and America is winning again and winning like never before. It's never been winning like this. (Applause.)

And we did it through a lot of hard work. It's not luck. I will tell you, if our opponent — if my opponent won, instead of having record stock markets and record employment numbers, you would have been in, in my opinion, a major recession, if not a depression. You would have gone down like a rock. Look what happened right after the election. The stock market was like a rocket ship because of enthusiasm. People wanted to have us win. It's not me; it's us. It's all of us. It's a movement. It's us. And the market went up. (Applause.)

We cut a record number of job-killing regulations. We passed historic tax cuts so that our industries can compete and win against anyone in the world.

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We are revising decades of ruinous trade deals that ravaged our communities and pillaged our factories. We were sending companies out of country — great companies. They were leaving us — going to Mexico, going to China, going to so many other places. The deals we made were the dumbest deals in the history of this world. It was unbelievable. Sixty thousand factories and plants and businesses closed up. Think of it: Sixty thousand. You would say, “How is that possible?” You’d get a map, you take 60,000 — you would say it’s impossible.

Sixty-thousand factories, plants, companies destroyed. Not destroyed — they went a different way. They were given no incentives to stay here. Some of the dumbest legislation ever passed — NAFTA.

The World — the World Trade Organization has been a horrible thing for us. That’s what built China. That, and the fact that our former Presidents did nothing about the fact that China was making hundreds of billions of dollars a year. And I guess they didn’t see it. I mean, 25 years, they didn’t see it. But we see it. And right now, they’re paying us billions and billions of dollars, folks. (Applause.) Billions. And they want to — they want to make a deal badly. And we’ll see whether or not we make a deal. We’ll see. We’ll see.

But our farmers are being helped. I said to our Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue — you know, because the — China, very smart. I don’t blame them. Look, I’m not blaming them. I blame our past leaders for allowing it to happen. I’m not blaming China. We should have done that to them. I blame our past leaders. I said that to President Xi of China. I said it. But I said to Sonny Perdue, “So, Sonny, they’re targeting us.” They said. They actually took ads in the Des Moines Register, anti-Trump —

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Iowa loves you!

THE PRESIDENT: I love Iowa, too. She says, “Iowa loves you.” I love Iowa. Well, ethanol is doing pretty well in Iowa too, right?

But — but, they took ads in the Iowa papers and it was anti-Trump ads, right? And then they stopped buying a lot of the product — almost everything. They stopped buying from our farmers because they knew that was my strength. The whole middle of the country is red. You saw that in that clip. That clip was fantastic. (Applause.) By the way, Charlie, that clip was so good, I would have rather seen it a second time and I could have come on a little bit later. I like it. But, that clip was great.

But you see what — the whole center is all bright red, meaning Republican. All red. And there's — those little edges are blue. And so they targeted the red. Nobody said China is stupid. And they said, "We're not going to buy product." And, essentially, they really closed it up.

So we're taking in billions of dollars in tariffs from China. They never gave us 10 cents. And I said to my Secretary of Agriculture — Sonny Perdue, who is great — I said, "Sonny, what's the biggest year that we've ever had with China? How much money did they spend in the United States?" "Sir, I'll get back to you." He gets back to me the next day: "Sir, \$16 billion." I say, "All right. We'll take \$16 billion out of our tariffs" — which are many times that amount that they're paying us in tariffs. They never paid us 10 cents.

"We'll take \$16 billion out" — that's the highest they've ever paid — "and we'll use that toward the farmers and distribute it. This way, nobody gets hurt." (Applause.) And no other President is doing that for the farmers, or no other President is going to save the miners and save energy. You know, we're the number-one producer of energy now in the world? (Applause.) And when I came, it was heading in the wrong direction. It was heading in a very bad direction. Right now, we're bigger than Russia and bigger than Saudi Arabia and bigger than anybody. (Applause.)

And we know that our first duty and our one true allegiance is to the American nation and to the American citizen — the USA. Loyalty to our people is our guiding light, it's our North Star, and our unwavering conviction.

We have secured record funding to build up awesome might for the United States Military because we know the best way to prevent conflict is to be prepared for it. So, you know, when you're strong, strong, strong, it's okay. They're going to leave you alone. They'll say, "Let's pass."

We had a depleted military. We built up our military. We had jets that were so old, they didn't fly. We had a large percentage of jets — fighter jets — that were out. We had an old Navy. We're building brand new submarines, brand new ships. We're building tremendous F-35s, F-18s. (Applause.) We're building a military the likes of which even we have never had because we have to. New missiles. We make the greatest equipment in the world.

We're — I hate to mention this word, but we're renewing and renovating our nuclear arsenal like never before. And hopefully — hope — (applause) — and we hope to God — we hope to God that we never have to use it. That's what I say. "We hope to God we never have to use it." (Applause.)

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But we have to have it ready. We have to have it as a — horrible — to me, the most horrible alternative that can happen is that. But we have nuclear the likes of which has — nobody has ever had like we have. And all pray that we never have to use it.

Our agenda is pro-worker and pro-family. We're making childcare more affordable, expanding access to vocational education — so important. (Applause.) And our pledge to America's workers had secured commitments to provide more than 9 million apprenticeships and job opportunities for industries all over the — the country. We're helping people get jobs. We're helping Walmart and so many companies. They went out — all out. They went all out.

And they're working — and they're working with a person you may have heard of, perhaps not: Ivanka Trump. She loves this. (Applause.) She loves it. She loves it.

I'll tell you, she didn't need it. She loves it. More than anything, that's what she loves. Because she says, "We're providing so many jobs and they're training people." And you know, the government can't really train them. When you go into these big companies — the Caterpillars and all of these — you got to, sort of, be trained by the people that do it — the complexity, the aerospace. Lockheed Martin has been great. Boeing has been great. (Applause.) There are so many.

And they can train much better than the government. The government really wouldn't know where to begin. So they're training. We're going to have close to 10 million very shortly. And Ivanka really has done an incredible job on that, so. (Applause.)

I might as well give her credit because the media will never give her credit. So, she's my daughter; I'll give her credit. But it's true. And you know what? If she didn't do a good job, I don't know that I'd say that, but I wouldn't be talking about her. That I can tell you. I wouldn't. I just — I'd probably just fluff over it. She's done an incredible job.

There's truly never been a better time to be young and American. There's never been a better time. (Applause.) Because our future is the brightest that it's ever been.

A new poll only — you got to hear this. How about this whole witch hunt that's going on? Should I talk about it for a second?

AUDIENCE: Yeah!

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THE PRESIDENT: The Russian witch hunt, okay?

AUDIENCE: Boo —

THE PRESIDENT: First of all, it's very bad for our country. Makes it very hard to deal with Russia. And we should be able — they're a nuclear power. They have a big country. And we should be able to deal with them without having this artificial stuff. But think of it: Only 11 percent, in a new poll, favor the starting of this ridiculous impeachment hearings that are going on. You hear about it.

So I said this morning — I said — I wrote it out. I said, "Let's see..." — because I'm watching. It goes on for years and years. No collusion, no obstruction. "Oh, that's not good enough. Let's go more." Forty million dollars, interview 500 people — they got nothing.

I could find something — I could take anybody in this audience. Give me \$40 million. Give me unlimited FBI, unlimited interviews, unlimited — they interviewed 500 people. Listen to this: Two thousand five hundred subpoenas. They did everything. Their collusion; no collusion. They have no collusion. (Applause.)

Then I have an Article 2, where I have the right to do whatever I want as President. But I don't even talk about that because they did a report and there was no obstruction. After looking at it, our great Attorney General read it. He's a total professional. He said, "There's nothing here. There's no obstruction." So they referenced, "No obstruction." So you have no collusion, no obstruction, and yet it goes on.

And they think this is helping them. I personally think it's hurting them. A lot of people think it's very bad for them. But it just goes on. But I wrote something out this morning on a thing called Twitter. (Applause.) Whether we like it or not, it is a good way — it is a good way of getting the word out. Because I saw Mueller is testifying tomorrow, again. How many times? Two — two and a half years. And, actually, it started practically from the time I came down on the escalator.

They said, "You know, he's got good numbers. We better start looking at him right away. Maybe he's dealing with a foreign country." I'm saying, "What are you talking about?" Listen to this. So I wrote this out this morning. I said, on Twitter, "Well, let's see: We have the best economy in history." And it used to be, "It's the economy, stupid." Right? It's the economy — nothing else. "It's the economy, stupid."

So we have the best economy in history, the best employment numbers in history. The most people working — almost 160 million — in the history of our country. The most people working. That's a big number. So we have the best economy, best unemployment numbers, most people working.

On Thursday, we had the highest stock market in the history of our country. (Applause.) And a lot of you with 401(k)s — and that's not a rich-people thing. The people that own that stock are people with 401(k)s and everything else. We have the best stock market in the history of our country. We just got the biggest tax and regulation cuts in the history of our country.

We got rid of the individual mandate from Obamacare, which was the worst part of Obamacare. (Applause.) We got perhaps the biggest site — energy site — in the world approved in Alaska, called ANWR. Nobody could do it. From Ronald Reagan to present, they said, "We can't do it." We got ANWR approved.

We have the best and newest military that we've ever had, almost totally rebuilt from the depleted military that I inherited two and a half years ago. Our military was totally depleted from these ridiculous, endless wars.

So we have the best, newest military in history, and the VA — you don't hear any problems anymore, do you? Remember? You'd hear so many problems. (Applause.)

We have the best VA in history, and I got Choice so that — that's one of the big things that's working — so that if a person has to wait for three weeks, four weeks, five weeks — can you imagine you go to a doctor and they say, "Come back in six weeks?" People were coming back — they were sick, and they were coming back and they were terminal. They could've been saved. They were waiting so long.

So I got Choice. You go out. If you have to wait, you go out and you see a doctor. We pay the bill. Okay? We actually — the least important thing is we save money. That's the least important thing, in that case, but we do save money. But we also have a very happy VA. They love it.

Those are just a few of those things. So we have all of this: the best economy, best market, best military, best VA, best everything, and much, much more. And then I see, in this statement this morning, "Gee, let's impeach the President." (Laughter.) I mean, you figured these people have

gone totally crazy. They've gone totally crazy. (Applause.) It is sort of nuts. It's true. I guess that was a Clinton statement, right? "It's the economy, stupid." Was that Clinton?

But it's about — you know — but it's not everything about the economy. It's not everything. A lot of other things. But, you know, we have — we're like at the top of every single thing that we do, when you think our military and you look at — and let me tell you something I didn't put: We are respected as a country again. They respect us. (Applause.) Because other countries have been ripping us off so badly, and some of the worst offenders are our so-called allies. They rip us off on trade.

European Union is worse to us on trade than China, okay? Nobody would think that. You know, a lot of us come from European Union. We come from Europe — our grandparents, our great-grandparents. So you think, "Oh, isn't that nice?" Except, they kill us — the European Union. It was formed in order to beat us economically, and yet we protect them with NATO. So they rip us off on trade, and we protect them with military.

But here's the problem with the protection: They're not paying their bills. So the United States — I got \$100 billion more in the last two years — \$100 billion. I got them to pay. I said, "You got to pay." (Applause.) Nobody else has ever done that.

It's like this. It was like this with every other President. President Obama would go meet them, he'd talk nice — you know. I don't know, to me, not so nice. Some people would say, "Oh, isn't it (inaudible) a wonderful speech?" I said, "No, I fell asleep during that speech." (Laughter and applause.) "I fell asleep. I don't get it. I don't get it." And he never got crowds like we get, that I can tell you. Huh? (Applause.) So we got to be doing something right.

But think of this. So they weren't paying their bills. So we're paying for close to 100 percent of NATO. So here's the story: They rip us off on trade. They have trade barriers that make it impossible for certain groups, like farmers and others, to go in. They rip us on trade, and then we protect them and they rip us on that too. And they don't pay their bills. Other than that, it's a wonderful deal.

So we're getting it straightened out, folks. We're getting it straightened out. Somebody said, "President Obama is much more popular in Germany than Donald Trump." Well, he should be. He should be. (Laughter and applause.) Because Germany is the biggest offender. They don't pay.

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They're paying 1 percent; we're paying 4.3 percent of a much bigger GDP. Germany doesn't want to pay. They're supposed to pay 2 percent. They're paying 1 percent. And I say, "You got to pay, Angela. You got to pay, Angela. Please pay, Angela."

And then they say, "Who do you like better: Obama or President Trump?" "Oh, I like President Obama. He was a nice..." Look, if I start getting good poll numbers over there, I'm not doing my job, okay? That's the way it is. (Applause.) It's true. I'm not doing my job. But they still like me. And I have a good relationship and a great relationship with some.

But somehow, even in this era of unprecedented prosperity and peace, the timeless traditions and values that make the American Dream possible are under attack like no one has ever seen before. These people have lost all control. And even the Democrats — they're Left, but now they're getting dragged into a radical Left position. I can't imagine who's doing that. But they're being dragged — they're being dragged radical Left with these people that I believe — honestly, I believe they hate our country. Okay? I believe they hate our country. (Applause.)

And it's true. When I watch this maniac Tlaib screaming and shouting — and this was before she was a congressperson. Can you believe it? But screaming and shouting — out of control. And then you see, they have now another clip where she's even worse. This is representing us? This is not what we want representing us, I don't think. And I think it's why we're going to have a tremendous victory in 2020. These people are crazy. (Applause.)

AUDIENCE: USA! USA! USA!

THE PRESIDENT: And, you know, when I have one of the others — I guess this is Cortez. You know, I said, "I'm not going..." "Sir, her name is Alexandria." (Laughter.) And the guy couldn't figure out her second name. It was so funny. I'm being interviewed by one of — "Her — her name is Alexandra. Um, wait a minute. Wait a minute, sir." (Laughter.) Okay. He never got it out. He never found his notes.

I said, "That's okay." I told him, "Just call her 'Cortez.'" Because I don't have time to call her by the whole name. It's too long. It's true. You know, you're doing an interview. (Laughter and applause.)

But she called our country and our people "garbage."

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AUDIENCE: Boo —

THE PRESIDENT: She said “garbage.” That’s worse than “deplorable.” Remember “deplorable”? Oh, yes, you do. Huh? Remember Hillary? “The deplorables.” She actually said a word that was worse. She said “deplorables.” And what was the second word? Go ahead.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Irredeemables!

THE PRESIDENT: Irredeemables. That’s right. She said, “irredeemable.” She said —

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Lock her up!

THE PRESIDENT: (Laughs.)

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Lock her up!

THE PRESIDENT: Ooh —

AUDIENCE: Booo —

THE PRESIDENT: She said “deplorables” and “irredeemables.” And when she said it, I said, “Boy, that ‘irredeemables’ is really a bad...” Well, that was not the one. You never know in politics, right? This is a tough business. You say a word and you’re gone. One wrong word. You can make 20 great speeches. Brilliant. They say, “He’s great. The greatest orator. The greatest orator of our times. He’s the great.” One word and you’re gone. Except for Trump — (applause) — because we represent you. Because we represent you.

AUDIENCE: Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Thank you.

No, but it’s true. It’s a tough business. One word and you’re gone. It’s an incredible kind of a profession to have. It’s a very — that’s why they’re scared. You know, they go around — they’re petrified. They’re petrified that they’re going to insult 15 people and lose an election.

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By calling out these four people, the “squad.”

AUDIENCE: Booo —

THE PRESIDENT: By calling them out — because we don't like when they talk about “evil Jews.” We don't like when they say horrible things about Israel. They say — they say — you know, people are opposed to Israel and they can express what their opposition. But when they say it with venom hatred and language that nobody would use — nobody would use — it's incredible. And then you don't have the Democrats fighting for Israel, and they end up passing things that have nothing to do with what the original problem was. You saw that.

So I don't know what they're going to do. I don't know. They have a big problem, because they have others than these four. I could name another 20 right now without looking at a note. I could name another 20 that I think are, in many way ways, worse. They're worse. They're not in this group. But they're worse than this group, and they're Democrats. And at some point, we will be naming them if you don't mind, because we want to get the word out. We have to get the word out. (Applause.)

As conservatives, we're grateful for the great heritage that we have, the heritage of being an American. So important to all of us. We know that America is the most just and virtuous republic ever conceived. I mean, we fight for other countries. I was with other countries two weeks ago, and we had the G20. And I'm talking to different people: “Who do you fight for?” “Just our country.” “Who do you fight for?” “Just our country.” “Who do you fight for?” And we fight for all these countries, and it costs us a fortune. And some of the countries are wealthy.

By the way, I've gone to all of them and said they have to now pay for their military. Okay? If you don't mind that, okay? (Applause.) They haven't done it.

I mean, we're fighting for countries that are so wealthy, some have nothing but cash. Nobody ever asks them, “Why aren't you paying us for this? Why aren't you reimbursing us for the cost?” But we now ask those questions.

On the Straits — so we get very little oil from the Straits anymore. In fact, yesterday was very interesting. They said, “It's very interesting there are no USA tankers here. They're all from China,

from Japan.” China gets 65 percent of their oil from the Straits, right? Japan gets 25 percent. Other countries get a lot.

And I said, “So let me ask you just a really stupid question.” We hardly use it. We’re getting 10 percent, only because we sort of feel an obligation to do it. We don’t need it. We have — we’ve become an exporter. Can you believe it? We’re an exporter now. We don’t need it. (Applause.) And yet we’re the ones that for many, many decades, we’re the ones that policed it. We never got reimbursed. We police it for all these other countries.

And I said, a while ago, I said, “Why are we policing for China? Very rich. For Japan? Very rich. For all these others?” And we’re policing also for countries, some of whom we’re very friendly with, like Saudi Arabia and others — UAE, others too. But why are we doing it without getting — why do we have our ships there and we’re putting our ships in the site?

And we did shoot down their drone the other day. You know, it’s funny, for religious people, they lie a lot. They lie a lot. (Applause.) You can see it laying right down on the bottom of that beautiful bed of water. (Laughter.) No, they said, “They never shot down a drone.” And then they say about, “We have captured 17 American spies.” I say, “No, no that’s...” First thing I did, I call up the CIA — true — “Sir, totally false.” “Okay.” By the way, totally false. But they make up stories. I just say, for religious people, they lie a lot. (Laughter and applause.)

We know the story of America is the story of good defeating evil. We protect so many people, and in some cases we shouldn’t have been doing it. It’s right overcoming wrong, and it’s freedom smashing tyranny. Americans are the patriots who threw off an empire, won an independence, settled the Wild West, ended slavery, secured civil rights, pushed the boundaries of science, vanquished the Nazis, brought communism to its knees, and put a man on the moon many, many years ago, right? (Applause.) And we will become the first nation to land astronauts on Mars, where they will proudly plant a very beautiful American flag. (Applause.)

Yet despite all we have achieved — despite the glory and grandeur of our nation — the radical Left has nothing but contempt for America’s heritage. And I’m talking about the radical Left among us. I’m not talking about the radical Left that are looking over failed countries, like Venezuela and others. I’m talking about the radical Left among us.

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They see our history as a source of shame; our traditions and our victories as relics to be replaced; our values as obstacles to be removed; our citizens as subjects to be controlled; and America as a menace to be constrained. That's what they see. That's what they see.

The agenda of the radical Left is one of division, discord, and demolition. You know, when I see her running and ranting and screaming like a total lunatic — this is what we're dealing with, okay? You can never have a country with values like that. Just look at it. There's no reasoning. The language she uses. I mean, she was throwing a certain F-bomb, right? Do we know the F? (Laughter.) She was throwing that out about the presidency and about the President. And it's just such a sad thing to see, how low have we gone.

The far-left has one fundamental objective and that's the objective of power — the power to control you, the power to control your family, and the power to destroy the foundations of our great republic. But we will not let them. It will never happen. It will never happen. (Applause.) It will never happen.

And they're right now destroying themselves and they're going after everything. They're doing things that nobody can believe. The people that I'm looking — they said, "Who's your toughest opponent?" I said, "So far, I dream about — I dream about these people that I'm looking at." There is no Winston Churchill in the midst. There is nobody that we look at. But you have to be very careful. Socialism is not as easy to beat as you think.

When you're wealthy and you're doing record stocks and you have 401(k)s, and you have all of the things that you have, and everybody is doing well, and somebody comes along and says, "We're going to give you free everything. Everything is going to be free. Oh, by the way, we're going to raise your taxes to 75 percent." But they don't mean that because it can't nearly pay 95 percent, and that won't pay for it either. Won't even come close.

"We're going to do the Green New Deal," which is the craziest thing I've ever heard, okay? It's crazy. But don't kid yourself. Not as easy — when I'm up there on the debate, all alone with some maniac that they chose — (laughter) — and that maniac is saying, "We're going to do this for you. We're going to do that for you. We're going to give you everything. We're going to give you — everybody gets a free Rolls-Royce" — (laughter) — "every family. And we're going to take better care of illegal immigrants than we take care of our citizens." They tell you that.

AUDIENCE: Booo —

THE PRESIDENT: And when they're saying all of this stuff, and then those illegals get out and vote — because they vote anyway. Don't kid yourself, those numbers in California and numerous other states, they're rigged. You got people voting that shouldn't be voting. (Applause.) They vote many times, not just twice, not just three times. They vote — it's like a circle. They come back; they put a new hat on. They come back; they put a new shirt. And in many cases, they don't even do that. You know what's going on. It's a rigged deal.

For example, the radical Left is waging an unprecedented assault on the rule of law in America. They are. They want to eliminate our borders and totally abolish ICE. And now they want to abolish a thing called "Homeland Security."

AUDIENCE: Booo —

THE PRESIDENT: That means going on airplanes without any security. That means doing all of the things that you do, and you appreciate it, but you don't even see what's going on. But they now want to abolish Homeland. They started off with ICE. And let me tell you, these ICE people are great patriots. That's a tough job. (Applause.) They go into these MS-13 gangs and, you know, even your local law enforcement — and we love our law enforcement. We love our law enforcement. (Applause.)

But these gangs are mean, they're tough, they deal in a medieval style. They cut people up medieval-style because it's more painful. These are sick people. We don't want them. We're taking them out by the thousands, out of our country. By the thousands. (Applause.)

So with raging anger, ignorance and malice, the far-left has slandered, libeled, and smeared our law enforcement heroes. They just go after our law enforcement; it's so sad to see. They're so respected and yet they don't know it because all they do is they see the negativity put on by the media.

But the American people forcefully reject these hate-filled attacks. And that's what they do. They're hate-filled, and they are indeed attacks on our very brave public servants. Americans will always stand with the courageous men and women of ICE and Border Patrol and law enforcement. Always. (Applause.)

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The hard-left is also waging war against freedom of speech. The greatest threat to this radical Left agenda is the truth. And the problem is, we're not getting the truth from the media, for the most part. Some, yes. But for the most part, we don't get the truth.

I can tell you stories where I'll do something — and let's say it's good; they'll make it look bad. Let's say it's great, things that you can't look bad; you can't — they'll make it look okay.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Liars!

THE PRESIDENT: And if it's bad — that is correct. That is correct. (Applause.)

What they're doing — what they're doing is unthinkable. And they've hurt themselves so badly. They'll say, "Seven sources have said that this took place in the White House," or something. There are no seven sources. They make them up. You know what? They make them up. There are no — they have gone — they used to call up and say, "We'd like to just verify this statement or verify a quote for..." They don't even call up anymore. We don't hear from the New York Times, which is totally crooked. We don't hear from the New York Times. The Washington Post, which is the Amazon — I always say, "It's the Amazon lobbyist." We don't hear from these people.

They don't call up and say, "We'd like to check a quote." I don't see anymore where they say, "Jim Smith of the White House made the following statement." It's always "a source who decided to remain anonymous from the White House." Sometimes they'll say, "Seven people from the White House." They don't exist. It's a lie. They do it; they don't check. They don't do anything. They're really, really dishonest people. And I'll tell you, when I say, "The enemy of the people." When I say, "The fake news." When I say these things, I'm not kidding: It's really dishonest. They have become — you know, they like the word "unhinged." They have become — the media has become unhinged.

They used to call. When I was a — I used to get the greatest publicity. When I was doing buildings, I was happy. No problems. I was doing buildings. I didn't have to worry about North Korea, Iran. (Laughter.) I didn't have to worry about China and trade. You think it's easy beating China on trade? Guess what? We're beating them on trade. We're beating them on a lot of — we're beating everybody. (Applause.) But it's not easy.

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But I used to get the best publicity. Now, I haven't had a good story in two and a half years. I'm dying for my first good story. They're going to give me one someday. I think when I get one, it will be time. I'll say, "I've just achieved something." I got — I'll say, "First Lady..." — they love our First Lady. They said, "First Lady..." — (applause) — they love our First Lady. "Hey, First Lady, I just got a good story. It's time to hang it up." (Laughter.) It's time.

Someday we're going to get them. We're going to get them, because nobody has done what we've done in two and a half years. Nobody even close. We've done in the first two and a half years more than any President in the history of our country. (Applause.)

So anyone who speaks the truth is shouted down, censored, de-platformed, fired, expelled, harassed, intimidated, abused, and even, in many cases, assaulted. But they don't go after certain of our people. Bikers for Trump — you ever see these guys? The Bikers for Trump. (Applause.) They leave them alone. Our construction workers, they leave them alone. Our law enforcement, they leave them alone. Anybody that looks real tough and real nasty, they leave them alone.

They only go after somebody that stands there and is not a fighter. Nothing wrong with that. And they beat the hell out of them and they pummel him, like what happened two weeks ago. They pummel him. That's the only one they go after. They'll go after that. They say, "Is he a fighter?" "No." "Let's hit him over the head with sticks and bats." What they do, it's a horrible thing. But hey, they don't do it to many of our people. But they look for the people that aren't the fighters.

These dangerous behaviors are the hallmarks of socialism. But socialism cannot survive when people are free to think for themselves. That's why America will never be a socialist country. It's never going to happen. (Applause.) So, thank you. Thank you.

Because as patriots, we cherish our First Amendment. We believe that every American has the God-given right to speak his or her mind. And no one can ever take away that right. (Applause.)

For centuries, Americans freely exchanged their ideas in the public square. Now, the public square exists online, and massive, multi-national tech companies have gained enormous power to censor opinions, shape public perception, and really, to decide what information citizens are going to be given. And I see it all the time. I see it on social media — for me. And I have people coming up all the time, "We want to follow you, sir. They make it so hard to follow you." And I have millions and millions of people. But it should be much more.

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I know exactly what's happening. I knew it when it started. But the only thing I do say is this: It's happened from the beginning — you know, Facebook, Twitter, Google, all of them, right? And they come to me when they want help. They want help because the Democrats want to shut them down. Can you believe it? How stupid is that for them? But maybe they don't have the power that we think because they were totally against me in the election. And I'm standing now, before you, as the President of the United States. (Applause.) So maybe they don't have the power. Maybe they don't. I don't know.

Everyone tells me, when you read — they talk about this tremendous power. And I'm saying, "That's right. They're making it impossible." And then somebody will look at me, "But sir, you won." But, they're gaining more and more and more. And we're looking at a lot of things because they have not treated us, as Republicans and conservatives — even when you get into religion, they have not treated us fairly. They haven't treated us fairly.

A free society cannot allow social media giants to silence the voices of the people. That is why I've asked my administration to explore every possible regulatory and legislative solution because you have to have free speech. You have to have free speech.

I've also instructed federal agencies to hold our public colleges and universities accountable. When they do numbers — you go up to speak, and what they do to our people is just — and, by the way, I'm President of all the people — everybody. Everybody. I love everybody. I have people maybe I shouldn't love. I love this nation. This nation is made up not only of us, it's made up of everybody.

But what they do is so unfair. Any college that refuses now to respect your First Amendment rights will be asking for billions and billions of dollars, and they won't be getting it. They won't be getting it. Signed. (Applause.) All signed up.

Anyone can become a target of the Left's brutal campaign to punish dissent. Hey, I'm the number-one target in the world. And here we are. But I'm the number-one target. Who's more of a target than me? No matter what you do, I'm the great target for these people. These people are crazy.

Earlier this year, in Park City, Utah, a leftist released pepper spray into a high school auditorium to shut down a Turning Point USA meeting.

AUDIENCE: Booo —

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THE PRESIDENT: Twenty students and teachers had to immediately seek major medical attention. Think of that. One of the students from that school joins us today — Ryan Zink. Ryan? Where are you, Ryan? (Applause.) Get over here, Ryan. Come on up here. Come on. Come up here, Ryan. (Applause.) Say a few words.

MR. ZINK: Hi, everybody. (Applause.)

AUDIENCE: Ryan! Ryan! Ryan!

MR. ZINK: I do believe the free speech in our schools is currently at stake. Us conservative students — there are many cases: myself, some other people that I've met here, and across the country — are being silenced, are being shut down by — whether it be their schools, teachers, friends. We're not being listened to properly. And our voices need to be proudly expressed. And we cannot be silenced. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: You know, he had no idea that was going to happen. But he started to like it. I said, "You know, this could be a long time." (Laughter.) He'll be in office someday or doing something fantastic. Thank you, Ryan. Great job. (Applause.)

In May, faculty at West Haven High School in Connecticut tried to ban the local chapter of Turning Point USA because students hung up a sign that read "America is the best country in world." Can you believe that? It is the best country in the world.

One Board of Education member viciously smeared the students as "racist, sexist, bullies who are brainwashed by their Republican parents." But the attacks have only strengthened the group's resolve, and membership has skyrocketed since then. (Applause.)

We are winning. We are winning.

With us today is that Turning Point USA chapter president, Dan Gallipoli. And Dan, I want to just thank you for that fight. Where is Dan? Dan. Do you want to come up, Dan? Come on up, Dan. He wants to come up. (Applause.) Come on up. Come on up. Come on up here, Dan. (Applause.)

MR. GALLIPOLI: Hi, everyone. It's great — (applause) — it's so great to be here. It's such an honor. Thank you all so much. Thank you, Turning Point USA, for all of your support and your — for helping us with the fight for free speech on campus, no matter what. No matter what they say!

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(Applause.) No matter the teacher, no matter the student, no matter the faculty, we will stand up for what we believe in! (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Whoa! That's fantastic, Dan. Now I see why he's president of his chapter. Who wants to fight him? Thank you, Dan. Great job.

Last year, Hunter Richard — where's Hunter? Hunter. You want to come up, Hunter? Do you want to? Come on up, Hunter. (Applause.)

Hunter is a high school sophomore in San Antonio, Texas. Great place. He just wanted to get a hamburger with a couple of his friends. And Hunter happened to be wearing a beautiful, red cap that said, "Make America Great Again." (Applause.) And a 30-year-old man flew into a rage, stole Hunter's hat — oh, I knew that. That was a pretty famous deal. That was all over the place, right? Threw a drink at him and called him a racial slur.

Thankfully, it was all captured on video and the assailant was arrested and wished he didn't do it. (Applause.) And we all watched that event many times — that scene many times.

And Hunter, thank you for your courage. That was fantastic the way you handled it. Thank you. (Applause.) Please.

MR. RICHARD: Every day I go to school, I always wear a red MAGA hoodie. If you follow my Instagram, you'll definitely see it all the time. I proudly wear my Make America Great Again hat every time I go out of my house. Although, I will say this, Mr. President, I do have one problem with you, and that's that I only get to have you as my President for six more years. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Wow. Thank you. (Applause.) Great future. Thank you. Boy, I'll tell you.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: President for life!

THE PRESIDENT: (Laughs.) Thank you very much. That's what they're afraid of, you know. Did you see the other side? Did you see they have some comedian — third-rate comedian? He's going — and he really means it: "You know he's going to win, don't you?" They go, "Well, maybe." "You know he's going to win. And you know that, in six years, you know it's going to happen. He's not

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leaving, you know that. He's never going to leave, you know it. He's not leaving." These people are insane. (Laughter.) And he believes it.

Thank you, Hunter. That was great. Great job. (Applause.)

You know that our movement stands for patriotism, confidence, excellence, liberty, justice, support for our military, love for America, and loyalty to our nation and all of its people. We're together. We all stand together for American greatness.

And even at such a young age, the members of your generation are proving that our hearts and souls are all wound together. We are unbridled in our love for our country. We are truly American patriots. Remember that.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Keep America great!

THE PRESIDENT: Keep America great. (Applause.) That's right. (Applause.)

AUDIENCE: USA! USA! USA!

THE PRESIDENT: The forces of political correctness want to silence conservative students to make you feel alone, marginalized, and isolated. And you are not. But just look around you at this incredible, record-setting crowd. Many, many people outside, too. I hate to tell you. I hate to tell them. They didn't do as well, but they have a screen. It's not as good. Not quite the same, right? But we do the best we can.

But you're not alone. The silent majority is silent no more. Your moment in the sun is just beginning. (Applause.)

The story of America has always been written by everyday citizens who loved their country so much they could not help but speak out. That's what happens. That's why these three young, incredible people came up here. "Would you like to speak, Hunter?" "Yes, sir!" (Laughter.) You know, most people go, "Oh, well, I don't know, sir. Oh, maybe not." But these people — it's like all three of them.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'll do it!

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THE PRESIDENT: "Ryan — you want to speak again, Ryan?" "Yes, sir. I do." Right? No, this is — we — these are great people. These are people with courage.

Many of them were young — barely older than all of you. George Washington was just 21 years old when he received his first military command. Decades later, he chose a 20-year-old Alexander Hamilton to be his top aide. (Applause.) Betsy Ross was 24 when she began sewing the first American Flag. (Applause.) If you think about it, she's probably more important now than she was two or three weeks ago when this stupid thing by Nike was done.

AUDIENCE: Boo —

THE PRESIDENT: And they're a tenant of mine. They pay me a lot of rent. I probably won't see those checks anymore, but I don't care, because I'm President. I don't care about that. (Applause.)

Amelia Earhart was only 23 when she took her first flying lesson on her way to becoming an aviation pioneer. Martin Luther King was 26 when he marched for justice through the streets of Montgomery, Alabama. (Applause.)

General Dwight Eisenhower and General Douglas MacArthur were both in their early twenties when they graduated from West Point, never imagining they would someday save the world from tyranny. (Applause.)

From the very beginning, America has been lifted even higher by the daring dreams of young Americans like each and every one of you. (Applause.)

Now it is your turn to inspire our country, your chance to choose greatness for America, because your time has come. Your time is now. (Applause.)

The choices you make over the next few years will shape much more than your own future — they will forever shape America's destiny. Your choices, your leaders — you're great leaders, you will be. Some of you in this room will be the great leaders of our country. A couple of you may be standing, essentially, here someday, in a position where you can do so much.

In mere months, some of you may take your first steps down a path that someday lead to discovering new breakthroughs in science, saving lives in medicine, leading a revolution in

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technology, upholding our values in public service, protecting our communities in law enforcement, defending our freedom in the military, or leading humanity into the stars.

As long as you are confident in our values, as long as you are loyal to our citizens, as long as you keep faith in God above, there is no limit to what you will achieve. (Applause.)

AUDIENCE: One squad under God! One squad under God! One squad under God!

THE PRESIDENT: You are the ones who are lifting our nation, in the very near future — and I have no doubt you will do it — to soaring new heights. I have no doubt. I see the people in this room. There's greatness in this room. There's greatness in this room. Remember I said it. Someday, you're going to think back to this day, and you're going to say, "You know, I remember President Trump saying there's greatness in this room." And you're going to be not only speaking about yourself, you're going to be speaking about others in the room who you know who are going to rise to great heights with you.

You are the ones who are bringing about the incredible rebirth of the American spirit. You are the ones who will make this moment a turning point — a true, historical moment.

This generation — your generation — will make the light and the glory of America shine brighter and longer and prouder than ever before.

I want to congratulate you. You've had a long journey, but your journey has just begun. I want to thank you for being here. May God bless you. And may God bless America. Thank you. (Applause.)

END

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REMARKS

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Remarks by President Trump Before Marine One Departure

Issued on: November 3, 2019

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 ALL NEWS

South Lawn

12:26 PM. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Would you like to talk to me? I'm shocked. I'm shocked. Yes, go ahead.

Q What would you like to know about the whistleblower?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the whistleblower gave a very inaccurate report. And, as you know, certain of the media released information about a man that they said was the whistleblower; I don't know if that's true or not. But what they said is he's an Obama person. It was involved with Brennan; Susan Rice, which means Obama. But he was like a big — a big anti-Trump person. Hated Trump. And they — they said terrible things.

Now, I don't know if it's true or not, but that was reported by some of the media, so you'll have to find out. I don't know why the media is not on it, because the whistleblower gave a very inaccurate report about my phone call. My phone call was perfect. It was totally appropriate. But he gave a report — he or she — but according to the newspapers, it's a "he."

They think they know — they know who it is. You know who it is. You just don't want to report it. CNN knows who it is, but you don't want to report it. The whi- — and, you know,

you'd be doing the public a service if you did.

The whistleblower gave a false report. And because of that false report, people thought bad things were done. And then you had Schiff go out and speak before Congress and before the American people, and give a false story. He made up a story. And then I released after — after all this was done, I released, and everybody said, "He didn't do anything wrong."

But the whistleblower should be revealed because the whistleblower gave false stories. Some people would call it a fraud; I won't go that far. But when I read it closely, I probably would. But the whistleblower should be revealed.

Then I want to ask another question of you: Where is the second whistleblower? And why did Schiff make a lie when he said about what I said on the phone call? And why didn't the Lieutenant Colonel say that he wrote a letter to the White House with certain little comments about the phone call?

And all of those many people that listened to the phone call, why didn't they have a problem with it? Because they didn't have — many people listen to calls between — I know that. For instance, the Secretary of State Pompeo was on the call. Nobody had — with all of those people, very few people, that I know, came forward. And they only came forward when you asked. And some of them are Never Trumper.

So — but why didn't all of those people listening to this absolutely, totally appropriate phone call — why didn't they come forward? So, you know, it's a whole scam.

Q Sir, what evidence do you have?

THE PRESIDENT: It's an impeachment scam. And you know what it is? It's between the Democrats and the fake news media.

Q Sir, what evidence do you have that Colonel Vindman is a Never Trumper?

THE PRESIDENT: We'll be showing that to you real soon. Okay?

Q Can you describe it, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah, go ahead. Go ahead.

Q In terms of the African American community, are you concerned that the possibility of impeachment might hurt your standing in the African American community?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I think I have a great standing in the African American community because, if you look at what we've done, as you know, we have the best unemployment numbers in the history of our country for African Americans. We have the best poverty numbers. We have the best employment numbers. And I'm doing great.

African American community gets it. And I did criminal justice reform. Nobody else. I did it. Without me, you don't have criminal justice reform. And that was for African Americans more than anybody else. So I think my standing in the African community — African American community is maybe the best.

We're going to see. We're going to see in one year. But I think that I'm going to get a tremendous percentage of votes from the African American —

I did one other thing. I did Opportunity Zones. And these are neighborhoods that a lot of people wouldn't be investing. Now, because of what I did with Tim Scott and some others — but Tim Scott was fantastic, of South Carolina. We did Opportunity Zones. It's an incredible thing.

So I think we're going to do great with African Americans. We have tremendous African American support.

Q Are you thinking about tweeting out the name of the whistleblower?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I'll tell you what. There have been stories written about a certain

individual — a male — and they say he's the whistleblower. If he's the whistleblower, he has no credibility because he's a Brennan guy, he's a Susan Rice guy, he's an Obama guy, and he hates Trump, and he's a radical. Now, maybe it's not him. But if it's him, you guys ought to release the information.

Q Was there a quid pro quo?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not at all. Not at all.

Q Mr. President, it's one year until the election. Are you confident of being reelected again?

THE PRESIDENT: Say it.

Q Are you confident being reelected again in one year?

THE PRESIDENT: Very confident. Our poll numbers are great. We're doing very well in the polls. And, by the way, not that it's very important because you got elected and you got elected, but the impeachment polls have been very, very strong — and especially in the swing states, I think you see that. The swing states — they don't want to hear about it. And we have polls — people don't want to hear about impeachment.

The only one that wants impeachment — to talk about it — is the fake media and the Democrats, who — basically, they work for the media. The way I look at it, the Democrats work for the media.

Q Any progress on the meeting place with China? Have you spoken to China?

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah, there's progress. And there's — first, I want to get the deal. I mean, the meeting place, to me, is going to be pretty easy. But first, we'll see if we get the deal. And if we get the deal, the meeting place will come very easily. It'll be someplace in the U.S.

Q Mr. President, according to several recent polls, more Americans want you to be impeached and removed from office than the number of Americans who don't.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you're reading the wrong polls. You're reading the wrong polls.

Q Fox News, Wall Street Journal, NBC, ABC, Washington Post — all of those polls.

THE PRESIDENT: You're read- — let me just tell you, I have the real polls. I have the real polls. The CNN polls are fake. The Fox polls have always been lousy. I tell them they ought to get themselves a new pollster.

But the real polls — if you look at polls that —

Q (Inaudible) 50 percent of Americans want you impeached.

THE PRESIDENT: You look at the polls that came out this morning. People don't want anything to do with impeachment. It's a phony scam. It's a hoax. And the whistleblower should be revealed because the whistleblower gave false information.

Q (Inaudible.)

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Do you still have confidence in Mick Mulvaney?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, he's working. As long as he's with me, I have confidence.

Q In the UK, do you side with Boris Johnson or Nigel Farage, if you had to choose?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I like them both. I'm with — look, I think Boris is the right man for the time. He's really — for the times. He's a great gentleman. He's a wonderful guy. He's tough. He's smart. And I think he's going to do something. I just hope he does it so the U.S. — which is by far the biggest economy in the world — it's not even close.

Since I took office, we've picked up trillions of dollars. Trillions. And, frankly, China has lost trillions of dollars, as you very well know. We're far and away the number-one economy in the world. And if you do it a certain way, we're prohibited from trading with the UK. That would be very bad for the UK because we can do much more business than the European Union.

So I think Boris will get it right. They're both friends of mine. What I'd like to see is for Nigel and Boris to come together. I think that's a possibility here.

Q How strong is your support for Ukraine in their conflict with Russia?

THE PRESIDENT: Very good.

Q Have you ever — have you ever told Putin to get out of Ukraine?

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah, very — my support is very good. My relationship with Ukraine is very good. My relationship with Russia is very good. My relationship with China is very good. People don't understand: I get along, but nobody is going to mess with me.

Q (Inaudible) on the John Durham investigation?

THE PRESIDENT: The John Durham investigation is moving along. That's up to Attorney General Barr — highly respected. John Durham is one of the most respected prosecutors in the last 50 years in this country. And I let them do their thing. It's Bill Barr and John Durham. And what they come up with will, I think, be very meaningful. We'll see what happens. I do not get involved with it. That's up to them.

And, by the way, I'd be allowed to get involved with it if I wanted to, but I chose not to. It's up to Bill Barr. But the John Durham investigation is a very important — I feel — one of the most important investigations in the history of our country. Okay?

Q (Inaudible.)

THE PRESIDENT: Say it?

Q Do you have a date or a venue for your meeting?

THE PRESIDENT: No, we don't, but it could happen. Something like that could happen. I know they'd like to meet. And something like that could happen.

Q (Inaudible) House Republicans call for a public testimony?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that the House Republicans and the Senate Republicans have been incredible. I don't think there's ever been unity like we have right now. We had 195 or so votes. We didn't have one negative vote. The only one that had negative votes on the whole impeachment scam were the Democrats.

I think Nancy Pelosi has lost her mind. And I think, frankly, that she should go back home to San Francisco. If you look at what's happening to her district — her district is going to hell, with homeless, with — that they're not taking care of; with needles all over the street; with tents; with people; with sanitation; with horrible things being washed into the ocean, into the Pacific Ocean. I think Nancy Pelosi — her district has probably gone down more than any district, proportionately, in the United States.

Q (Inaudible) could help Republicans' call to testify?

THE PRESIDENT: And what she's done — and what she's done for that district — and then, on top of it, you've got fires eating away at California every year because management is so bad. The governor doesn't know — he's like a child. He doesn't know what he's doing. And I've been telling this for two years: They've got to take care of it.

Every year, it's always California. Never — it's rarely somebody else or someplace else. But Nancy Pelosi ought to go back to her district and take care of it, because her district has become a mess — number one in the country for going down. All she thinks about is impeachment. But she doesn't want to impeach. You know who wants to impeach? The people that run the party: the radical left.

Q Do you want John Bolton to testify, sir? And if so, do you —

THE PRESIDENT: That's up to him and up to the lawyers. It's really —

Q Will you —

THE PRESIDENT: It's really up to the lawyers. I like John Bolton, I always got along with him, but that's going to be up to the lawyers.

Q Mr. President, you said "no quid pro quo." The thing is, is that, in the transcript, it says —

THE PRESIDENT: Read the transcript.

Q — "I have a favor to ask you though."

THE PRESIDENT: Read the transcript.

Q But it says, "I have no — I have a favor to ask you though."

THE PRESIDENT: Read the transcript.

Q What about a government shutdown? There's a genuine concern; the Democrats believe, that you will hold up money for the government because you're so upset about impeachment. Is that something that could be a possibility?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no, no.

Q What do you say to the American people?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think they believe that at all, but we'll see what happens. The Democrats only — they're — I call them the "Do-Nothing Democrats." They're doing nothing. They're not getting USMCA done. Everybody wants it. Even the Democrats want

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it. They're not getting anything done. Even guns — they don't talk about guns. They don't talk —

All they can do is talk about one phone call made to the President of Ukraine that was perfect. It was perfect. It was a perfect phone call. And they're hanging their hat on this one phone call. And you know what? The Republican Party has never been so unified.

Q Sir, will you mount a defense? Will you mount a defense, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: That includes senators, that includes House — they've never been so unified.

Q Can you commit to no government shutdown? I mean, can you — for people that are concerned, what would you say?

THE PRESIDENT: It depends on — it depends on what the negotiation — I wouldn't commit to anything. It depends on what the negotiation is.

END

12:39 PM. EDT



The White House

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Remarks by President Trump Before Marine One Departure | The White House



REMARKS

Remarks by President Trump Before Marine One Departure

LAW & JUSTICE

Issued on: November 4, 2019



South Lawn

4:12 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Such a friendly group. Such a nice group. So, the Washington Nationals just left. We had a fantastic time with them. That was a great championship. They're great champions. And we had a wonderful event at the White House. Terrific people.

We're now heading to the Adolph Rupp Arena, and it's packed. There are thousands of people trying to get in. It's going to be a great evening for Governor Bevin. It's a tight race. We're going to see how that works out. I think he's done a great job as governor. So I think it'll work out good because of that. But we'll have a little influence. We'll see how it is. But we have many thousands of people more than they have seats. So it's really great.

And today, the stock market hit a new all-time high — all three. We had NASDAQ. We had S&P. We had Dow. We hit an all-time high. And that's many, many days that we've hit all-time highs in the administration. So it's, really, very good.

Q Mr. President, was Marie Yovanovitch the target of a smear campaign by your allies? She testified she was.

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THE PRESIDENT: I don't hear — talk up, please.

Q Was Marie Yovanovitch the target of a smear campaign by your allies? She testified she was.

THE PRESIDENT: I really don't know her. But if you look at the transcripts, the President of Ukraine was not a fan of hers either. I mean, he did not exactly say glowing things. I'm sure she's a very fine woman. I just don't know much about her.

Q She told lawmakers she had concerns about Rudy Giuliani's role.

THE PRESIDENT: But you have to take a look at the transcript, because the President of Ukraine was not favorably inclined.

Q (Inaudible) want the whistleblower to do everything not in writing. They wanted to come in to talk to Congress. But you did your own depositions with Mueller, in writing, with the lawyers.

THE PRESIDENT: I think that the whistleblower gave a lot of false information. And you have to see who the whistleblower is. Once I released the transcript, which was almost immediately, the whistleblower's report was very wrong, because as you know, the whistleblower covered mostly my transcript — my call — my call with the President of Ukraine. So once I released that call — I released a very detailed version of that call — all of a sudden, the whistleblower's report was incorrect. And the whistleblower seems to have disappeared.

And I also wonder what happened to the second whistleblower and what happened to the informant. They all disappeared once I released the report. The fact is, nobody thought I was going to release the report. And then, in addition to the report, the Ukrainian President made a very strong statement that there was no pressure, there was no anything. And the Foreign Minister from Ukraine made an equally strong statement that there was no pressure.

So, look, nobody thought I was going to issue the report. And I hate to do it because I don't like to issue conversations with foreign leaders. Not fair to them. But we sought their approval. We got their approval. We issued it. And that was it. So, I was happy about it.

Q What should be done about Iran's advanced centrifuges? What should be done about Iran's advanced centrifuges?

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THE PRESIDENT: Well, we're looking into that. We'll see.

Q Mr. President —

THE PRESIDENT: Go ahead.

Q On arms control, Mr. President — the New START Treaty between the U.S. and Russia is about to expire in February 2021.

THE PRESIDENT: We are looking at arms control right now. We're dealing with China. We're dealing with Russia. I think they would both like to do it, especially as we're talking about nuclear weapons. But we are looking at a major arms control kind of an agreement right now with Russia, China, and maybe somebody else.

Thank you. I'm going to Kentucky.

Q On Iran: They keep this malign activity despite crippling sanctions. At what point are sanctions not enough? And where are we headed from here?

THE PRESIDENT: Watch.

END

4:16 P.M. EST

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REMARKS

Remarks by President Trump Before Marine One Departure

Issued on: October 10, 2019



South Lawn

4:32 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: So, we just completed a negotiation with China. We're doing very well. We're having another one tomorrow. I'm meeting with the Vice Premier over at the White House. And I think it's going really well, I will say. I think it's going really well.

So, we had a very, very good negotiation with China. They'll be speaking a little bit later, but they're basically wrapping it up, and we're going to see them tomorrow, right here. And it's going very well.

Q Mr. President, what about the story about former President — Vice President Joe Biden and Ukraine, that he received \$900,000 to himself, from Burisma Holdings? Do you think that's true?

THE PRESIDENT: What happened? Who took \$900,000?

Q There's a story out there that your personal lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, said on "Sean Hannity" last night that there is a possibility that Joe Biden took \$900,000 out of —

THE PRESIDENT: I hope it's not true that — Joe Biden took \$900,000? I haven't heard that. I hope it's not true. For the sake of the country, I hope that's not true. But I don't know anything about it.

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Q Do you know the whistleblower's name?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Do you know the whistleblower's name?

THE PRESIDENT: Who?

Q Do you know the whistleblower's name?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. But I know the whistleblower has been very inaccurate because when we released the transcript of the conversation that I had with the President of Ukraine, who — frankly, today, was very good; somewhere in Ukraine, I guess, gave a news conference on unrelated things — was asked a question, and he said, "President Trump behaved in a perfectly fine manner. There was nothing wrong in any way, shape, or form." Something to that effect. So, I appreciate that.

But the President of Ukraine, that should be case over, because the President of Ukraine said that the call was absolutely fine. I think he said that it resembled very much — and he remembered it — it was just like the transcript.

Now, the transcript is a perfect transcript. There shouldn't be any further questions. But the President of Ukraine just made that statement, so that's good.

Q Mr. President, what conversations have you had with Lev Parnas and Igor Fruman?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know those gentlemen.

Q You were in pictures with them.

THE PRESIDENT: Now, it's possible I have a picture with them, because I have a picture with everybody. I have a picture with everybody here. But somebody said there may be a picture or something where — at a fundraiser or somewhere. And so — but I have pictures with everybody.

Q Have you talked with them?

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THE PRESIDENT: I don't know if there's anybody I don't have pictures with.

I don't know them. I don't know about them, I don't know what they do. But, I don't know, maybe they were clients of Rudy. You'd have to ask Rudy. I just don't know.

Q Have you spoken with Rudy Giuliani today, sir? Have you spoken to him?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, should the Senate allow a full trial if the House does impeach? The Republican (inaudible) Mitch McConnell said he would.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't know how you can impeach on a conversation with the President of a country — in this case, Ukraine — which was a perfect conversation, where the President of Ukraine just said there was no pressure put on him whatsoever, that we had an absolutely perfect conversation. Then, on top of that, and maybe less importantly, frankly, but on top of that, we have a transcript of the conversation, fortunately, that's perfect.

And I do think this: I think it's very unfair to heads of countries when they think every time they make a conversation or have a conversation with the President of the United States, it's going to be on, you know, all over the world. I think that's very unfair.

But, in the case — in the case of what we're talking about, we released a perfect conversation. The President of Ukraine just confirmed that. And that should be case over.

I will say this: Adam Schiff took that conversation before he saw it and fabricated a conversation. To me, that's criminal. What he did is criminal.

Q Mr. President, do you intend to block Ambassador Yovanovitch from testifying tomorrow?

THE PRESIDENT: I just don't think you're running country — I just don't think that you can have all of these people testifying about every conversation you've had. In this case, we have a transcript. And I've given it almost immediately. It's called "transparency." Nobody has been more transparent than me. So, you have a transcript. And in this case, you also have the President of Ukraine confirming that, absolutely, it was a perfect conversation.

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But the Democrats have committed crimes because they made up the conversation. The whistleblower was wrong. You know, I don't think people should be allowed. You have to run a country. I don't think you should be allowed to do that.

Q Mr. President, have you spoken to the U.S. diplomat's —

THE PRESIDENT: Say it?

Q Have you spoken to the U.S. diplomat's wife, Anne Sacoolas?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't hear.

Q Have you spoken to the U.S. diplomat's wife, Anne Sacoolas?

Q Have you spoken with the U.S. diplomat's wife, Anne Sacoolas?

THE PRESIDENT: Are you talking about in the UK?

Q Yeah.

THE PRESIDENT: They're in the process of being spoken to. We're working on that. I did have a conversation yesterday with Boris Johnson, a good one. And we're talking about diplomatic immunity. It's a very interesting situation. We are trying to work something out.

Q Will you reconsider the decision?

THE PRESIDENT: So we're going to work — we're going to try and work something out. I think we'll be able to.

Q Mr. President — Mr. President, sir, Secretary Perry was just subpoenaed by the House Intel Committee for documents related to the — to Ukraine, sir. Any response to that?

THE PRESIDENT: How many people can they talk to? We had a simple conversation. Everybody knows what the conversation was because I gave it immediately when I heard about it.

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The whistleblower, who seems to be a Democrat that's involved with a lot of people, gave a false interpretation of the conversation because we have the conversation.

The President of Ukraine just said, just now, that the conversation was absolutely perfect. No problem. It was a very good conversation. So I don't know why they'd be calling Rick Perry. I don't know why they'd be calling all these people. It's a very bad situation for our country.

Q How do you know the whistleblower is a Democrat, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: It was reported.

Q Are you concerned that Rudy Giuliani could be indicted in all of this?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I hope not. Again, I don't know how he knows these people —

Q They're his clients.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q They're his clients.

THE PRESIDENT: Okay, well, then, they're clients. I mean, you know, he's got a lot of clients. So, I just don't know. I haven't spoken to Rudy about it. I don't know.

I will say this: From what I heard — I just heard about this — they said, "We have nothing to do with it. We're totally — we have nothing to do with it."

Q Were you joking when you asked China to investigate the Bidens?

THE PRESIDENT: Was I what?

Q Were you joking when you asked China to investigate?

THE PRESIDENT: China has to do whatever they want. If they want to look into something, they can look into it. If they don't want to look into it, they don't have to. Frankly, as far as I'm concerned, if

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China wants to look into something, I think that's great. And if they don't want to, I think that's great too. That's up to China.

Yeah.

Q Mr. President, thank you. Is it safe to say that Trey Gowdy is now your Chief Counsel and Rudy Giuliani is moving to the back?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, Trey Gowdy is a terrific guy. I think there's a problem with he can't start for another couple of months because of lobbying rules and regulations. So, you'll have to ask about that.

I just heard Trey Gowdy can't start until sometime after January because of the lobbying rules and regulations. So, I don't know. So, we'll have to see.

Q So Giuliani stays on?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't spoken to him. I haven't spoken.

Go ahead.

Q Which of the three choices on Syria that you just articulated in a tweet do you think you will follow?

THE PRESIDENT: Perhaps the last one, I hope. I hope the last one. Of the three, I hope it's going to be the last one.

Look, we have no soldiers in Syria. We've won. We've beat ISIS. And we've beat them badly and decisively. We have no soldiers.

The last thing I want to do is bring thousands and thousands of soldiers in and defeat everybody again. We've already done that.

So what we have is really two choices: You have the choice of bringing in the military and defeating everybody again, or you have the choice of financially doing some very strong things to Turkey so

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that they take it a little bit easy on, really, competition that is — I don't think it's being fairly treated in many ways, okay? We have a very good relationship with the Kurds. Or we can mediate. I hope we can mediate, John. I hope we can mediate.

Q Has Turkey gone beyond the limits, in your opinion, so far?

THE PRESIDENT: Say it?

Q Has Turkey gone beyond the limits you set up so far?

THE PRESIDENT: Turkey knows where I stand. And the last thing — okay, very simple: We had a big victory. We left the area. I don't think the American people want to see us go back in with our military, go back into that area again.

We won. We left the area. I don't think we want to go back in. Let's see what happens. We are going to possibly do something very, very tough with respect to sanctions and other financial things.

Q Mr. President, on Minnesota — you're headed to Minnesota. Do you think you can win in Minnesota? It's a long-time blue state.

THE PRESIDENT: I think we can win. It's been a long time since a Republican won. We have a 20,000-seat auditorium. You know, we have the — it's essentially Madison Square Garden. And it's sold out. Over 80,000 people requested tickets. It'll be totally sold out. I don't know who's going, but it'll be totally sold out. If you're not going to be there, I'm going to miss you. But they have a line now that's many blocks long. It's amazing. We have a line, right now in Minnesota, that's many blocks long. I think I can win in Minnesota.

Q Do you think Ilhan Omar is helping you win in Minnesota?

THE PRESIDENT: I think Omar is helping us win in Minnesota and other places. I'll see you all — I'll see you in Minnesota. I'll see you in Minnesota.

END

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REMARKS

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Remarks by President Trump Before Marine One Departure

— ECONOMY & JOBS Issued on: October 25, 2019

□□□

 ALL NEWS

South Lawn

11:53 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Hi, everybody. Hi. How are you? So, the stock market is doing very well. The economy is booming. We have a new record in sight. It could happen even today. But we have a new stock market record. I think it'll be about 118 times that we've broken the record. Jobs look phenomenal.

We're doing very well in Syria, with Turkey and everybody else that we're dealing with. We have secured the oil. We have a lot of oil. We've secured the oil. We have a couple of people that came knocking. We said, "Don't knock." And I think I would say that things are going very well.

I know people are still in a basement, in a secure room in the basement, trying to make us look as bad as possible. But that's not working too well. A lot of things are happening very good.

And I appreciate Republicans are just outraged, and the American public is outraged, that the Do-Nothing Democrats, they're doing nothing. They are doing nothing. There's such an opportunity to get things done. We need USMCA passed. It's a great deal for our country, for our farmers, manufacturers, unions. It's a great deal for our country. So we

Q Mr. President, some Democrats say comparing the impeachment inquiry to a lynching was painful and offensive. You're going to an HBCU today. Will you apologize?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it's a word that many Democrats have used. It's a word that many people have used over the years. But that's a word that has been used many times.

And let me tell you something: The level of unfairness for a perfect conversation with the President of Ukraine — this was a perfect conversation. And, frankly, had they known what the conversation was, they wouldn't have even wasted everybody's time. But this was a perfect conversation with the President of Ukraine.

The President of Ukraine and his Foreign Minister, separately, came out and said there was absolutely nothing wrong with the conversation. The President of Ukraine and the Foreign Minister came out and said there was no anything. There was no — he used the word "no blackmail." They said there was no pressure; there was nothing done wrong.

This is a hoax — just like there was no collusion. After two years, they found out and wasted \$45 million. This is a disgrace that this could happen in our country.

But remember —

Q Will you apologize for using the word "lynching"?

THE PRESIDENT: Wait. Wait.

The President of Ukraine, right now — the President of Ukraine said "no pressure." The President of Ukraine and his Foreign Minister said, again, "no pressure, no blackmail." They don't even know what you people are talking about. It's a ph- — it's a hoax. It's a hoax. It's just a continuation of the Russian witch hunt, which turned out to be phony. The Mueller deal was phony. And now they have this.

And all it is, is very simple: It's one conversation that I had with the President of Ukraine that

was perfect. That Adam Schiff defrauded everybody and he made up the conversation in the halls of Congress.

Q Are you at all concerned about the growing criminal investigation into Rudy Giuliani?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so, because I think Rudy is a great gentleman. He's been a great crime fighter. He looks for corruption wherever he goes. Everybody understands Ukraine has big problems in that regard. Rudy Giuliani is a fine man. He was the greatest mayor in the history of New York, and he's been one of the greatest crime fighters and corruption fighters. Rudy Giuliani is a good man.

Q Would you like to see your Justice Department still investigate Biden? Should the Justice Department still be investigating Biden?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think what Biden did, and his son — and now, I guess, they're finding also Romania; that just came out today. Or some other country. And I'm sure there are more than that.

When a man walks away — who has no talent, no skill, no experience — with \$1.5 billion out of China; when he walks away with \$168,000 a month for him and his friend, from Ukraine, when Ukraine supposedly gave him \$3 million — whatever the numbers are — and he's got no experience in oil and no experience anywhere, and now other nations are coming out. I heard one today; I won't embarrass the nation.

All he's doing — and in my opinion, that's a payoff, because you don't pay that kind of money for any other reason. And then you look at what the father did with oil, and "let's get oil." And then, all of a sudden, "let's not get oil." And now he's a great environmentalist, because the Ukraine benefits by that, and other places benefit by that.

No, I consider what they did to be an outrage to our country. I consider that to be an outrage to our country.

Q Mr. President, what do you think about Lindsey Graham's resolution? Some of your

supporters think he's not doing enough. And also, what do you think about the nine GOP senators who didn't sign on to that resolution against impeachment?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, some of them weren't even spoken to yet. They got 40 very quickly. I think they're at 47. And some of them haven't even — don't even know about it yet. It only took place yesterday afternoon.

So they had a great response. No, you have — we have great — great support. We had 185 out of 185 the other night — the Republican congressmen. I think we had 185 present and we had 185 positive votes. And with the senators we're doing great too.

Q Where are we on the China and U.S. deal — trade deal?

THE PRESIDENT: We're doing very well with China. We're moving along nicely. We're dealing with them right now. And a lot of good things are happening with China. They want to make a deal very badly.

Q What is in your new plan for Afghanistan?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q What is in your new plan for Afghanistan? Are you able to —

THE PRESIDENT: We're moving with Afghanistan. We're doing well in Afghanistan. We're slowly bringing things down to a certain level. But we're doing very well with Afghanistan. Things are moving along.

Q Your top diplomat in Ukraine said that you held up military funds because you wanted Ukraine to investigate the 2016 election and Burisma, the company on which Hunter Biden sat. Are you saying that he's making that up?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the problem is — here's the problem —

Q Do you think — are you calling him a liar?

THE PRESIDENT: Here's the problem: He's a Never Trumper, and his lawyer is a Never Trumper. And the other problem is you —

Q Mike Pompeo hired him.

Q Why did Mike Pompeo hire him?

THE PRESIDENT: Hey, everybody makes mistakes. I — Mike Pompeo, everybody makes mistakes.

Q Do you want him out now as the top diplomat?

THE PRESIDENT: He's a Never Trumper. His lawyer is the head of the Never Trumpers. They're a dying breed, but they're still there.

Q Based on what?

THE PRESIDENT: And here's the other problem —

Q Based on what, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: — you're with CNN and you're fake news.

Q Mr. President, on guns: This month is nearly a year since the shooting in Pennsylvania.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the Democrats don't have any time to work on anything. They have to do US — USMCA. They have to do guns. They have to do — they have many things. We want to reduce drug prices even more. You know, we can go so far, but we could get drug prices substantially reduced. The Democrats — the Do-Nothing Democrats, have no time to do it.

Q Do you — will you support the Republican plan that came out this week? It expands access to healthcare.

THE PRESIDENT: Which one?

Q The Republican plan that came out this week. Do you support that?

THE PRESIDENT: We have a great Republican plan. And if we take over the House, which we should — especially because of what they're doing with impeachment — I think we'll take over the House by big numbers. You'll have healthcare the likes of which you've never seen. Much less expensive. Deductibles will be much lower. You'll have great healthcare. We have to take over the —

Q But will we see gun legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: Because the Democrats don't have any time to do anything.

Q Sir, Vice President Pence said, yesterday, that America stands with the protestors in Hong Kong who are protesting against the Beijing government. Do you agree with that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I know he made the speech yesterday. I went over the speech. The speech was fine. It was fine.

Q Does America —

THE PRESIDENT: No, his speech was fine.

Q — stand with the protestors?

THE PRESIDENT: But I'm also working very closely with China on a deal. But his speech was fine.

Q Mr. President, are you trying to intimidate the whistleblower?

Q On the deal — on the deal with China, Lighthizer says you are — Lighthizer says you are close to finalizing some sections on the deal with China.

THE PRESIDENT: That's true.

Q What sections? Is it intellectual property?

THE PRESIDENT: We're doing very well with China. We're very good with the farmers. The farmers are going to do better, maybe, than anybody. But everybody is doing well.

China wants to make a deal. They'd like to see some reductions in tariffs. They'd like to see some tariffs that are scheduled to go on very soon — they'd like to see them not go on. But China — they really — look, you know it: They really want to make a deal. They're going to be buying much more farm product than anybody ever thought possible.

Q Are you confident that you have the votes in the Senate, if an impeachment goes there?

THE PRESIDENT: Only for one reason: I did nothing wrong. The only reason. I had a perfect conversation with the President of Ukraine. Perfect. Had they seen that conversation before they made up the story — they made up the story about that conversation — had they seen it, we wouldn't even be talking about it right now. The conversation has been perfect. And for that reason, I have tremendous support.

Q Thank you, Mr. President. With the opening of the investigations that your Attorney General, William Barr —

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah.

Q — is (inaudible), is this because people who are investigating you are, in fact, engaging in criminal conduct?

THE PRESIDENT: So they've started, and it's been going on a long time. And I sort of semi-read the papers. And I read them probably in greater detail than you, actually. And I try and sift out the fake news from the real news.

But, as you know, there's been a long-term look at — look-see — and it looks like it's becoming very serious, from what I'm hearing. Investigate the investigator — whether it's Strzok and Page, whether it's Clapper, and whether it's Comey, and all of these people — because terrible things went on for our country.

And we have a great Attorney General — a highly prestigious man, a very honorable man. And they've been looking at it for a long time.

I can't tell you what's happening. I will tell you this: I think you're going to see a lot of really bad things. And a lot of people think that — and they know they have problems because they were very dishonest. And, again, I leave it all up the Attorney General and I leave it all up to the people that are working with the Attorney General who I don't know.

But I will say this: I think you'll see things that nobody would've believed. This was the worst hoax in the history of our country. And a lot of people say that the phony deal on impeachment, where I have a perfect conversation — perfect — with the President of Ukraine — and they're using that to impeach one of the most successful Presidents.

We're going to hit another stock market high. We have the best jobs report. We have the best unemployment numbers. We have the best employment. More people working today in the United States than ever before. I've rebuilt the military. We're strong. We just did a great thing in Syria where we're getting our troops out. We took over oil. A lot of great things are happening in this country.

I will say this: If anything ever happened with this phony witch hunt that the Democrats are doing — the Do-Nothing Democrats — I really believe that you'd have a recession-depression the likes of which this country hasn't seen.

Now, a strong statement was made by a very highly respected man this morning on Wall Street — a man who is very respected — about that, that if anything happened to Trump — President Trump — you would see repercussions in the market like you haven't seen before.

But here's the thing: I don't have teams. Everyone is talking about teams. I'm the team. I did nothing wrong. This has been going on for — before I got elected. This was going on from the insurance policy — Strzok and his lover, Page. This was the insurance policy. It was Strzok and Page. We did nothing wrong. But Strzok said, "Oh, she's going to win. She's going to win. But if she doesn't, we have an insurance policy."

So — so, let me just tell you something. So, this has been going on since before I got elected. And people are angry about it. And do you know who's angry about it? The Republican Party is angry about it because this isn't a takedown of the President, this is a takedown of the Republican Party. And, frankly, the Democrats should be ashamed of themselves.

Q (Inaudible) cost of South Korean defense sharing (inaudible)?

Q Mr. President, you tweeted about Never Trumpers the other day. You have a few in your administration. Are you making personnel changes?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, if you let me know who they are — who are they? Tell me. Tell me. Tell me.

Q I hear you have a list.

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. Tell me who the Never Trumpers are because I'm not a fan of the Never Trumpers.

We do have Never Trumpers. I'm not a fan. I think they're bad people. Some have recovered. Okay? They went through, I guess, a recovery program. It's called, "They learned how to win through me." But others haven't. I'm not a fan of Never Trumpers, and

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I never will be.

But a Never Trumper sometimes is more vicious than a failed Obama candidate or a failed Clinton candidate who I beat both in the same election with very little experience.

Don't forget, I beat the Obama people. I beat the Bush people. And I beat the Clinton people. And I had no experience. That's not a bad job. But there's a lot of angry people out there. And that's the way it goes. Thank you.

END

12:07 PM. EDT



The White House

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Remarks by President Trump Before Marine One Departure | The White House



REMARKS

Remarks by President Trump Before Marine One Departure

Issued on: **October 3, 2019**

★ ★ ★

South Lawn

10:17 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Hello, everybody. We're going to The Villages in Ocala, Florida. We have a big crowd. We're going to be talking about healthcare. We're doing a lot of work on healthcare. We're very successful at it. And so we're going to be speaking to the great people of Florida. And I think they're very happy with the job we're doing.

Yeah.

Q Mr. President, first question, what did you —

Q What exactly, specifically, is inaccurate in the whistleblower's complaint?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q What exactly is inaccurate in the whistleblower's complaint?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, if you look at the whistleblower's complaint, it's totally inaccurate because the conversation that I had was absolutely perfect. And most people that have read it say the same thing. The whistleblower never saw the — saw the conversation. He got his information, I guess,

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second- or third-hand. He wrote something that was total fiction. And now, when people see that, they're not happy.

Q Do you want to restrict investment flows into China and have Chinese stocks delisted?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we're looking at a lot of different things. China is coming in next week. We're going to have a meeting with them. We'll see. But we're doing very well.

Some of the numbers, I think, are being affected by all of the nonsense, all of the politics going on in this country by the Democrats. I call them the "Do-nothings." They do nothing for this country. They don't care about this country. But the numbers, really, are looking very good, going into the future.

So, we'll see. I have a lot of options on China. But if they don't do what we want, we have tremendous — tremendous power.

Q Mr. President, what exactly did you hope Zelensky would do about the Bidens after your phone call? Exactly.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I would think that, if they were honest about it, they'd start a major investigation into the Bidens. It's a very simple answer.

They should investigate the Bidens, because how does a company that's newly formed — and all these companies, if you look at —

And, by the way, likewise, China should start an investigation into the Bidens, because what happened in China is just about as bad as what happened with — with Ukraine.

So, I would say that President Zelensky — if it were me, I would recommend that they start an investigation into the Bidens. Because nobody has any doubt that they weren't crooked. That was a crooked deal — 100 percent. He had no knowledge of energy; didn't know the first thing about it. All of a sudden, he is getting \$50,000 a month, plus a lot of other things. Nobody has any doubt.

And they got rid of a prosecutor who was a very tough prosecutor. They got rid of him. Now they're trying to make it the opposite way. But they got rid —

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So, if I were the President, I would certainly recommend that of Ukraine.

Q Have you asked President Xi to investigate at all?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't, but it's certainly something we can start thinking about. Because I'm sure that President Xi does not like being under that kind of scrutiny, where billions of dollars is taken out his country by a guy that just got kicked out of the Navy. He got kicked out of the Navy; all of a sudden, he's getting billions of dollars. You know what they call that? They call that a "payoff."

Q In your view, Mr. President — in your view, should the White House comply with any congressional subpoenas associated with the whistleblower complaint?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I leave that to the lawyers. I can say, though, that Schiff has now been proven to be a liar. We've known it for three years, because they've been trying to impeach for three years. He's a li- — he's a stone-cold liar. So I leave that to the lawyers. That's up to them to decide. But the whole investigation is crumbling.

Yeah.

Q Can you still work with Congress to get other work done? Can you still work with Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: I can. Yeah, I can.

Q How can you do that? How?

Q (Inaudible.)

THE PRESIDENT: You got — I —

Q Mr. President, Pakistan is urging (inaudible) talks with the Taliban. Are you going to do that?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we have a real problem. We've been hitting the Taliban very, very hard. And, as far as I'm concerned, they still haven't recovered from killing 12 people — one of —

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happened to be a great American soldier from Puerto Rico. They still have not recovered, and they probably never will.

Q Mr. President — President Trump, what is McConnell — what is McConnell telling you about impeachment? Has he assured you that Senate Republicans won't vote for it?

THE PRESIDENT: No, but I read Mitch McConnell's statement yesterday, and he read my phone call. And, as you know, he put out a statement that said that was the most innocent phone call he's read. And I spoke to him about it, too.

He read my phone call with the President of Ukraine. Mitch McConnell — he said, "That was the most innocent phone call that I've read." I mean, give me a break. Anybody that reads it says the same thing. And the only people that don't understand it is when they look at the false, fabricated, fraudulent statement made by Shifty Schiff.

Q Mr. President, Vice President Biden — Vice President Biden said that he's not going anywhere. He has said that you're not going to destroy his family. What do — what's your response?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think Biden is going down. And I think his whole situation — because now you may very well find that there are many other countries that they scammed, just like they scammed China and Ukraine. And basically, who are they really scamming? The USA. And it's not good.

Q He said he was carrying out the official policy —

THE PRESIDENT: And that's probably why China, for so many years, has had a sweetheart deal where China rips off the USA — because they deal like people with Biden, where they give their son a billion and a half dollars. And that's probably why China has such a sweetheart deal that, for so many years, they've been ripping off our country.

Q Do you support SB-206 — the college athletes getting paid? Or do you side with the NCAA and the schools? And do you think this should be a federal law?

THE PRESIDENT: We're looking at it. We're looking at very closely. It's under study.

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Q Has North Korea gone too far this time with the ballistic missile? Is that too far?

THE PRESIDENT: We'll see. They want to talk, and we'll be talking to them soon. We'll see.

So I'm going to — yes?

Q Mr. President, why did recall the U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine? Was she a problem? Why did you recall her?

THE PRESIDENT: I heard very bad things about her. And I don't know if I recalled her or somebody recalled her, but I heard very, very bad things about her for a long period of time. Not good.

Thank you. I'll see you in Florida. I'll see you all in Florida.

END

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REMARKS

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Issued on: October 4, 2019



South Lawn

10:43 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: So, the unemployment numbers just came out, and they're the best numbers we've had in over 50 years. The unemployment number is down to 3.5 percent. So that goes way, way back. We haven't had numbers like this in a long time. Wages are up by almost 3 percent. That's a fantastic increase for everybody out there working. We're very happy about those numbers. The stock market is substantially up, as it was yesterday. And our country does well. Europe is not doing well. Asia is doing poorly, to put it mildly. And we continue to do very well; we're the miracle.

But the unemployment numbers just came out: 3.5 percent unemployment. And that is a tremendous number; the lowest in over 50 years. So, very happy.

And, I think, really, very important — again, I'll say: Wages are up. When I was running, wages were nowhere. They were going down. And people were having two and three jobs, and they were making less money than they made 20 years before. Now wages are up. So we're very happy about that.

One other thing, having to do with Poland. So, Poland is a country; great people. We have a lot of Polish Americans living in the United States. I've just signed — I will soon be signing — and sign

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certain preliminary applications. We will be giving a full visa waiver to Poland. That means that people from Poland can easily travel there, and people from here can easily go back and forth. They can each — people from the U.S., people from Poland, can very easily go back and forth between the United States and Poland.

So, they've been trying to get this for many, many decades. And I got it for the Polish people, in honor of the Polish people in the United States and in Poland. So, we're very happy with that.

Yeah.

Q Did you see Adam Schiff got four Pinocchios by the Post, this morning, for lying?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I heard Adam Schiff got four Pinocchios. That's good. He should have gotten them two and a half years ago.

That's a very nice question. Let me shake your hand. Come here. That's a very nice question. That's almost a surprise. I figured that was a trick question, right?

Q Also, what does your letter to Pelosi say? And when will you send it?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we'll be issuing a letter. As everybody knows, we've been treated very unfairly, very different from anybody else. If you go over not only history — I mean, if you go over any aspect of life, you'll see how unfairly we've been treated. We've done a fantastic job.

Everything, to me, is about corruption. We want to find out what happened with 2016. And, as you know, there's a lot of work going on, on that. I don't care about Biden's campaign, but I do care about corruption. His campaign — that's up to him. Politics — that's up to them. I don't care about politics. Politics, as I think I've made clear — and yesterday, somebody asked me a question, and I gave an answer — but always in the form of corruption.

What I want to do — and I think I have an obligation to do it, probably a duty to do it: corruption — we are looking for corruption. When you look at what Biden and his son did, and when you look at other people — what they've done. And I believe there was tremendous corruption with Biden, but I think there was beyond — I mean, beyond corruption — having to do with the 2016 campaign, and

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what these lowlifes did to so many people, to hurt so many people in the Trump campaign — which was successful, despite all of the fighting us. I mean, despite all of the unfairness.

So, we are looking at corruption. We're not looking at politics. We're looking at corruption.

Q Sir, what did you say to the Chinese about the Bidens, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Somebody said that a long time ago. Was that in 2017? I don't know. You'd have to tell me when. All I can tell you is this: When I speak to foreign leaders, I speak in an appropriate way. If you notice, they don't mention the call that I had with the President of Ukraine. They don't mention that because it was so good.

The only time they mentioned it was when Adam Schiff made it up. You talk about Pinocchios — that should get 10 Pinocchios. He made up — he made up a story. It was a phony story. Adam Schiff. So, they don't talk about that anymore.

You know, when this came out, it was "quid pro quo." Well, there was none. Also, yesterday, the Ambassador — who I heard was tremendous and a tremendous person — he was 100 percent for what we're saying. A hundred percent. And, if you look, he also said there was no quid pro quo. That's the whole ballgame.

But now the Democrats don't bring that up anymore because they lost. Look, they never thought I was going to release the phone call between the Ukrainian President and myself. When I released that call, they were — they were jumping around like you wouldn't believe. They didn't know how to respond. And then they found out — and then they found out that the call itself was so bad for them. It was a perfect call. There was nothing — we hand that call out. We've handed the call out to people, and they'd say, "Wow, this is incredible." We're very proud of that call. When I speak to a foreign leader, I speak in an appropriate manner.

Now, we're also doing trade deals with China and we're doing deals with a lot of people for the country, so I'm not looking to insult people. I can tell you that. But we can probably find that out.

Q Would you be more willing to do a trade deal with the Chinese if they investigate Biden?

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THE PRESIDENT: No, it has nothing to do with it. No. No. I want to do a trade deal with China, but only if it's good for our country. And it could happen. Because you know they're very much — they're very much coming over next week, as I understand it. So I'd like to do a great deal with China, but only if it's a great trade deal for this country. One thing has nothing to do with the other.

Q Do you want the House to proceed with an impeachment inquiry at this point? An official impeachment inquiry.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I wouldn't mind because we have no rights. They way they're doing it, they've taken away our rights. So, if they proceed — and, you know, they'll just get their people. They're all in line. Because even though many of them don't want to vote, they have no choice. They have to follow their leadership. And then we'll get it to the Senate, and we're going to win.

The Republicans have been very unified. This is the greatest witch hunt in the history of our country. So we beat the one that started immediately. We went through two years of Mueller, and that came out like a 10. It came out perfect. And a few days go by and they start this nonsense. And this is just as ridiculous.

So the Democrats, unfortunately, they have the votes. They can vote very easily, even though most of them, many of them, don't believe they should do it. And I do believe — I do believe that because of what they're doing with Pelosi and their real leaders, AOC plus 3 — that's their real leaders — I really believe that they're going to pay a tremendous price at the polls.

And we saw the first glimpse of it two weeks ago, in a great state, North Carolina. We saw a great, great glimpse of what's going to happen. Because, in North Carolina, we had two races. One gentleman, Dan Bishop, was down by 17 points with three weeks to go, and he won easily. And the other man, as you know, Greg Murphy, was up by a very little bit and he won by a massive amount — I don't know, someplace in the twenties. Twenty percent or something. Maybe higher.

So I think you got your first glimpse of what's going to happen. And the big key is that I have to campaign there. But if you look at what happened in North Carolina — two races — we won both of them, and we won them easily. And one was almost tied and the other one was a big, big lead, and that one turned and the tie became a landslide.

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Q Mr. President, did Mitch McConnell make you any promises about a vote on impeachment in the Senate?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't know about Mitch. I have a lot of respect for Mitch McConnell. I know that; I saw his statements. And he thinks that this is ridiculous. He thinks it's unfair. I saw his statement yesterday that he put out where he read my phone conversation and he thought it was a wonderful conversation. And it was.

But, see, the Democrats don't talk about that anymore. They try and go to other things. These people are looking for anything they can get because they know they're going to lose the election. And we're in election season now. For them to be doing this now, it's never been done.

Q The U.S. is speaking to North Korea in Sweden. What do you expect?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q The U.S. is speaking to North Korea in Sweden right now. What do you expect?

THE PRESIDENT: So we're dealing with North Korea. They want to meet, and we'll be meeting with them. It's probably being set up as we speak, but we'll let you know. But North Korea would like to do something. Iran would like to do something. We have a lot of countries in a very good position right now, despite the witch hunt, which hurts our country and it hurts America. But Iran wants to do something. North Korea wants to do something. And China would like to do something.

Q Is the Justice Department investigating Joe Biden?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know that. That, you'd have to ask. Is the Justice Department investigating Joe Biden?

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that, you'd have you to ask Attorney General Barr. But I can tell you, just as an observer, what I saw Biden do with his son — he is pillaging these countries, and he's hurting us. How would you like to have, as an example, Joe Biden negotiating the China deal if he took it over from me after the election? He would give them —

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Q Mr. President —

THE PRESIDENT: Wait. He would give them everything. He would give them everything. How would you like to have that? Joe Biden would just roll out the red carpet. He would give them everything.

So, again, this doesn't pertain to anything but corruption. And that has to do with me. I don't care about politics. I don't care about anything. But I do care about corruption. And to have somebody take out a billion and a half dollars out of China, who's totally unfit. He's unfit. To have him get a billion and a half dollars, to have him — and now I'm hearing the number of \$50,000 a month. Now I'm hearing the number of \$50,000 a month is very low. It's a much higher number that Biden's son was getting per month. The fact is it's much higher. And for him to — and for him, as a total — for him, as a totally unqualified person, to be getting hundreds of thousands a month is very, very (inaudible).

So, again, is the Justice Department investigating that? I just don't know.

Q Mr. President, do you think the Democrats have the votes? Do you think the Democrats have the votes to impeach you? Do you think you will be impeached?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think they follow the leader. One thing with the Democrats — I give them credit for it — a lot of them don't want it; you know that, you interview them. A lot of them are in there — they call them "Trump districts" — where I won and then they won after when I wasn't running. But I'm going to win them big.

If you look at what's happened with my polls, they're through the roof. You know why? Because of this phony witch hunt. If you look at what happened with the fundraising, we've set a record — the Republicans — because people are sick and tired of it.

I got a call the other night from pastors — the biggest pastors, evangelical Christians. They said, "We have never seen our religious or any religious so electrified." They are — they say they've never seen anything like it. Churches are joining. Hundreds of thousands of people. And, you know, that's to a large extent because of you and your partner, the Democrats.

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Q But do you think it will pass the House, sir? Do you think it will pass the House and die in the Senate?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think this. I think this: We have great — we have a great relationship in the Senate. I have a 95 percent approval rating in the Republican Party. I believe the Senate — and I haven't spoken to that many senators — but I believe the senators look at this as a hoax. It's a witch hunt. It's a disgrace. Should have never happened. Just like Russia collusion delusion should have never happened. That was a witch hunt. And just like that, should have never happened.

So I think in the Senate, I think they feel that the Republican Party has been treated very, very badly. Now, in the House, they have the majority. They all vote with AOC and plus three. Nancy Pelosi is petrified of them. I mean, she's afraid she's going to lose her position. Nancy Pelosi will lose her speakership right after the election when the Republicans take over the House.

Q Sir, can we talk about the text messages that included holding off a visit to the White House?

THE PRESIDENT: The one text message that I saw was just about the last text message. Because I don't know — I don't even know most of these ambassadors. I didn't even know their names. But the text message —

Q But what it included, sir, was a visit to the White House.

THE PRESIDENT: — the text message that I saw from Ambassador Sondland — who's highly respected — was: There's "no quid pro quo." He said that. He said, by the way — it almost sounded like in general — he said, by the way, there's "no quid pro quo." And there isn't.

Now, for Biden there would be. But listen to this: There is no pro quo. And that was the text message that I saw. And that nullified everything.

Q Have you asked foreign leaders for any corruption investigations that don't involve your political opponents? That is, are there other cases where you've asked for corruption investigations?

THE PRESIDENT: You know, we would have to look. But I tell you, what I asked for and what I always will ask for is anything having to do with corruption with respect to our country. If a foreign

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country can help us with respect to corruption and corruption probes, and that — I don't care if it's Biden or anybody else. But if they can help us — if Biden is corrupt, if his son is corrupt. When his son takes out billions of dollars — billions — and he has no experience; he just got fired from the Navy — when they do that, that's no good.

So the only — just to finish your question — anything having to do with corruption, I actually feel I have an obligation to do that.

Q Including with Mr. Putin, sir?

Q Is someone advising you that it is okay to solicit the help of other governments to investigate a potential political opponent?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't say anything is okay. I'll tell you what's okay.

Q Is someone advising you that?

THE PRESIDENT: Here's what's okay: If we feel there's corruption, like I feel there was in the 2016 campaign — there was tremendous corruption against me — if we feel there's corruption, we have a right to go to a foreign country.

And just so you know — just so you know, I was investigated. I was investigated. Okay? Me. Me. In my campaign — I ran, I won. I was invest- — you won't say that, will you? I was investigated. I was investigated. And they think it could have been by UK. They think it could have been by Australia. They think it could have been by Italy. So when you get down to it, I was investigated by the Obama administration. By the Obama administration I was investigated. So when these people talk —

But as far as I'm concerned, what I want to look at and what we want to investigate: anything having to do with corruption.

Q In your view, Mr. President, do you view China as an ally, a partner, or an adversary?

THE PRESIDENT: I view China as somebody we're trying to make a deal with; we have a very good chance of making a deal with. We've had good moments with China. We've had bad moments with

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China. Right now, we're in a very important stage in terms of possibly making a deal. If we make it, it will be the biggest trade deal ever made — if we make it.

But I view China as somebody that we deal with on the world stage. I would like to get along with China if we can. And if we can, that's great. If we can't, that's okay, too.

But what we're doing is we're negotiating a very tough deal. If the deal is not going to be 100 percent for us, then we're not going to make it.

And I will — and I will say this. I will say this. I will say this: China very much wants to make this deal. China is getting killed. The tariffs are killing China. What's happened is they have now 3 million loss of jobs, their chains are broken up. If you look at their supply chain, which is a disaster — companies are going to other countries, including us. China, right now, is a total disaster.

Q Mr. President, does a trade with China have anything to do with an investigation into Joe Biden? And will you ask Xi to investigate?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no, no. Let me tell you: I'm only interested in corruption. I don't care about politics. I don't care about Biden's politics. I never thought Biden was going to win, to be honest. I picked somebody else a long time ago. And we'll see what happens.

But I never thought Biden was going to win. But I don't care. I mean, frankly, if he won, I'd be very happy. I think he'd be an easy opponent. But I never thought Biden was going to win. I don't care about politics, but I do care about corruption. And this whole thing is about corruption. This whole thing — this whole thing is about corruption.

This is about corruption, and this is not about politics. This is about corruption. And if you look and you read our Constitution and many other things, we — I have an obligation to look at corruption. I have an actual obligation and a duty.

Q Are you going to comply with the House subpoenas?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Are you going to cooperate with the House in this investigation?

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THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. That's up to the lawyers. I know the lawyers think they've never seen anything so unfair. They've never seen anything so unjust. I've been President now for almost three years, and I've been going through this for almost three years. It's almost become, like, a part of my day.

But in the meantime, we have the best economy we've ever had. We have the best job numbers we've had in 51 years. The best unemployment numbers that we've had in a half a century. The best numbers that we've ever had — African American, Hispanic American, Asian American, women — everything. We have the best numbers that we've had in many, many, many decades.

And you know what? People understand that. People are working. They're making money. The — if you look at one very important number that was just announced: wages up 3 percent. That's unheard of. That's unheard of. So, it's a great thing.

Q What about other Democrats? What about other Democrats?

THE PRESIDENT: I didn't hear you. Go.

Q Mr. President, when did you first get the idea to investigate the Bidens' activity in Ukraine? Who advised you to look into that?

THE PRESIDENT: We're investigating corruption. We're not investigating campaigns. I don't care about his campaign. As I said, I didn't think — I didn't think and I don't think Biden is going to win. All right? I don't think.

And maybe to answer your question, when you say, "Who is going to win?" — I'd rather not make a prediction, but I do have a feeling about it.

I didn't think — because I've watched Biden over the years, and Biden is not the brightest person. I never thought he was going to win. I never felt he was going to win. If you look at his other two campaigns, he was a one-percenter. He got very few votes. He got taken off of the garbage heap by Obama. Obama took him off the garbage heap. So it's one of those things.

But I never thought that Biden — I didn't think Biden was going to win. I guess that everybody has a shot. But I don't think he would be, frankly, my toughest opponent.

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And just to finish off — just to finish off, I don't think that he will win. I didn't think he was going to win, and I don't think he's going to win.

Q Joe Biden's poll numbers are dropping pretty badly. Elizabeth Warren's are rising. Bernie is sick. What do you think about facing Elizabeth Warren?

THE PRESIDENT: That's fine. I mean, it's fine. She's a socialist and maybe worse than that. But we'll see.

I heard — I haven't seen his poll numbers. I haven't seen Biden's poll numbers. Look, Joe Biden was never going to make it. All right? He was never going to make it. He tried it twice. He's at 1 percent. There's a reason.

When I announced, I went to number one, day one, and I stayed there the entire primary season. I never was off center-stage. I was never given credit for that, but that's okay. Except by Steve. The only one that gave me credit was Steve.

Q Did you try to talk to Rouhani at the UN?

THE PRESIDENT: Who?

Q Did you try to talk to Iran's President?

THE PRESIDENT: No, they were trying to set up a meeting but he wanted sanctions lifted. And I said, "You must be kidding." We had no interest. Rouhani wanted a meeting at the UN. We did talk. I didn't speak to him personally, but our sides talked. He wanted sanctions lifted or partially lifted, and I said no.

Q (Inaudible) socialism in Venezuela for political campaign.

THE PRESIDENT: We're watching Venezuela very, very closely. The people are suffering, and we are watching it very closely. We're also giving big aid to Venezuela.

Now, one thing. I'm now going to Walter Reed Hospital. We're going to be giving out five Purple Hearts to unbelievably brave young people.

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And I'm going to meet you — some of you are going over. I don't know. I think some of you are going over. So we could talk further over there. Although, when we're there, I would like you to respect the process. We're giving out Purple Hearts to very brave people, wounded warriors, people that have been — I mean, they're just incredible people. And I'm going to be back here in probably two hours.

Thank you. Good job.

END

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REMARKS

Remarks by President Trump Before Marine One Departure

— ECONOMY & JOBS

Issued on: September 22, 2019

★ ★ ★

South Lawn

8:35 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. We have a busy day planned. We're leaving now for Ellington Air Force Base in Texas. We're going to spend some time on the floods. We're going to be briefed on the flood. We're going to make a big investment so we can try and help Texas with this terrible flooding that they've been having. So we'll be talking to a lot of people and meeting a lot of people. That's going to be at Ellington Air Force Base.

Then we're going to Houston. Some of you are coming with me, I guess. And we'll be going to Houston, and we'll be at a very nice, big stadium packed full of people with Prime Minister Modi of India. He asked if I'd go with him, and I've accepted. And we're going to have a good time with Prime Minister Modi. We have — I hear it's a tremendous crowd. So that will be in Houston.

And then after that, I'm going to Ohio. Pratt Industries is opening a \$1 billion plant. And I told Mr. Pratt, who is a great — Anthony — I told him if he does something really spectacular, I'll go and cut the ribbon. And he did; he invested a billion dollars in Ohio. So that's Pratt Industries. They're great people. It's a great company, headed by a very great businessman from Australia. So they're bringing a billion dollars into Ohio, and I said I'd go and cut the ribbon, and here it is. We're ready to cut a ribbon. It's a great plant. So we look forward to that.

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Then we're coming home and then we have a lot of work at the United Nations during the next week.

Q Mr. President, is a meeting at the U.N. with Iran completely off the table?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing is ever off the table completely, but I have no intention of meeting with Iran. And that doesn't mean it doesn't happen. I'm a very flexible person. But we have no intention — it's not set up. We're meeting with a lot of leaders. We have about 15 meetings set up, but Iran is not one of them.

Q (Inaudible.)

THE PRESIDENT: We had a great conversation. The conversation I had was largely congratulatory. It was largely corruption — all of the corruption taking place. It was largely the fact that we don't want our people, like Vice President Biden and his son, creating to the corruption already in the Ukraine.

And Ukraine — Ukraine has got a lot of problems. He — the new President is saying that he's going to be able to rid the country of corruption. And I said that would be a great thing.

We had a great conversation. We had a conversation on many things. In fact, I believe Ukraine put out a statement yesterday saying that we covered many different topics. It was a warm and friendly conversation. We backed — I backed Ukraine from the beginning.

But I'm very upset that other countries aren't doing the same. Germany should be spending much more. France, all of the European Union should be spending money. Why are we spending money and they're not? Or least they're spending very little by comparison.

So I'm not happy about that.

Q Will you let Rudy Giuliani talk to Congress about what he asked Ukraine to do?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I would have no problem with it. Rudy is a very straight shooter. And Rudy wants to see the same thing as a lot of other people with respect to your Ukraine. Ukraine has had a tremendous corruption problem. Somehow they were involved in a lot of different things that took place in our country, and hopefully it can be straightened out.

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And I will say, the new President — we had a very good talk. The new President got elected based on the fact that he would end corruption. That was probably his number-one thing.

Q Mr. President, do you think somebody was spying on you on that call with Ukraine?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, this whistleblower — or whoever it was — because it sounds like it's not a whistleblower. You can't have that happen to a President of the United States.

The conversation, by the way, was absolutely perfect. It was a beautiful, warm, nice conversation, and it was put out last night, also, by Ukraine.

But you can't have people doing this. And you can't have people doing false alarms like this.

And, you know, when the President speaks to the head of another country, he has to be able to speak to those people. And those people don't want to know that they're being recorded or that you have a stenographer working. You don't want to have to hear that. You can't do that to a President and you can't do that to other countries.

But with all of that being said, we had a very great conversation — very straight, very honest conversation. I hope they can put it out.

Q Is there a recording, sir, of that call?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't say anything, but whenever I speak to a foreign leader, I assume there are many people on the line. I don't assume I'm talking to the leader. Any time I'm on the phone with a foreign leader, many, many people are on the line. Sometimes they're tapping calls. Sometimes they're doing a stenographer.

But I also assume many people are on the line from the other side. So if I'm speaking to a country, they also have people on the line. So who would say a thing like what you're saying?

Now, I will say this: I said absolutely nothing wrong. It was perfect.

Q Mr. President, you acknowledged that (inaudible) —

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THE PRESIDENT: Listen to me. Listen.

Q — talked about the Bidens in your earlier answer.

THE PRESIDENT: Listen to me.

Q You acknowledged that you —

THE PRESIDENT: Listen to me.

Q — talked about the Bidens. Is that correct, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Listen to me. I assume many people are on the line. I know that before I make the call. And that's what you have — intelligence agencies, everybody listening. That call was a great call. It was a perfect call. A perfect call.

What wasn't perfect is the horrible thing that Joe Biden said. And now he made it a lie when he said he never spoke to his son. I mean, give me a break, he's already said he spoke to his son. And now he said, yesterday, very firmly. Who wouldn't speak to your son? Of course, you spoke to your son. So, he made the mistake of saying he never spoke to his son. He spoke to his son.

But more importantly, what he said about the billions of dollars that he wouldn't give them unless they fired the prosecutor. And then he bragged about how they fired the prosecutor and they got the money.

Q (Inaudible.) Was that a snub (inaudible)?

THE PRESIDENT: No, it's not a snub at all. I'm very busy. I'm going on the floods today. The floods are very important to me. And climate change — everything is very important.

But today I'm going to Texas on the floods. Then I'm going to Houston on the big rally. It's a rally for Prime Minister Modi, and he asked me to do it — of India — and I look forward to doing it.

Q (Inaudible) Joe and Hunter Biden (inaudible) because of their involvement in Ukraine?

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THE PRESIDENT: Well, not only in Ukraine; take a look at China. They took a tremendous amount of money out of China. Now, if they ever took over a China negotiation, he would sell us out. Look at all the money he made in China.

The son, he knew nothing. The son is a stiff. He knew nothing, and he's making hundreds of thousands and millions of dollars. And he did the same thing in Ukraine. He knows nothing.

This is a very dishonest thing that Joe Biden did. And then he said he never spoke to this son. Does anybody believe that one? But then he also said, long before, that that he did speak to his son. So he lied, again.

But what he said is that he wouldn't give I think it was billions of dollars to Ukraine unless they fired the prosecutor who was looking at his son and his son's company — the company that his son worked with. And that's a very dishonest thing. And I'm not looking to hurt Biden.

I'm not even looing to hold him to it, to be honest. But he said a very bad thing. He said a very foolish thing.

Now, me, on the other hand, my conversation with the President — the new President of Ukraine was perfect. They put out a statement last night. They said the same thing. It was a warm, friendly conversation. There was no quid pro quo. There was nothing. It was a perfect conversation.

Q (Inaudible.)

THE PRESIDENT: Go ahead.

Q How do you explain the military aid, sir? How do you explain delaying military aid (inaudible)?

THE PRESIDENT: Because I want Germany and I want France and I want the European Union to put up money. And I didn't delay anything. We paid the military aid, to the best of my knowledge.

Q (Inaudible.)

THE PRESIDENT: Listen to me. I gave so much more to Ukraine than Obama did. Go back and check your record.

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Q (Inaudible.)

THE PRESIDENT: And you know what you should do? Also ask —

Q (Inaudible.)

Q Mr. President, can you tell us why anybody should be allowed to buy a gun without a background check?

THE PRESIDENT: We're looking at it right now. We're studying it very hard. It's an issue that, frankly, Congress is wasting all their time on nonsense. We're studying it very hard. If Congress would ever get back to work, we could work something. But Congress is doing all of this nonsense, this garbage that they're doing. And I'll tell you what — they don't have any time. The Democrats in Congress are doing nothing. I'll tell you what: They're going to lose the election. You know why? Because they're not doing anything.

Q (Inaudible.)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we're working very hard with some Democrats. The problem I have is that Jerry Nadler and all these people — they keep wasting time in Congress over nothing. They're studying nothing. The Mueller report was perfect. Corey Lewandowski was magnificent. Everybody is perfect. They're wasting time. They couldn't accept the Mueller report. They couldn't accept that defeat. They can't now accept the fact that we have the best economy we've ever had, and we may be hitting another all-time high in the stock market.

Q (Inaudible.)

THE PRESIDENT: We're looking at a lot of different things. The problem we find is the Democrats have very little time to talk because they're wasting their time. You take a look at what they're doing. It's a total waste of time, and they know it. They know it.

Q (Inaudible.)

THE PRESIDENT: Say it.

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Q (Inaudible.)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we're working with Joe Manchin, the senator, and we're working with Pat Toomey. And we have a lot of people working on this. And we'll be seeing, I'd say, over a period of time.

The problem that I have is the Democrats in the House especially, they're totally unavailable to talk because they have hearings all day over something that's already been won by us. They made up a story. It was a false story. It was a hoax. And, frankly, we have to get to the bottom of how it started. But they're wasting all of their time on a hoax.

Q You said Jay Powell was a "bonehead" with "no guts." But then you said his job is safe. Why?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, he's got a job. And I could do things if I wanted. But I don't want to do that. We're so strong, despite Jay Powell. But Jay Powell is not helping us. Other countries have lower interest rates. We're the primest of them all. But he has the rate —

Look, it's very simple. He lifted the rates far too quickly, and he lowered them far too slowly. And it's a shame. And it's a shame.

Q Are there other boneheads in your administration whose jobs are safe?

THE PRESIDENT: Not too many. Not too many boneheads. We have a great — I'll tell you what, we really now have a great administration. But what we have is a great Cabinet. Our Cabinet has done a great job.

Q (Inaudible.)

THE PRESIDENT: Go ahead.

Q Is the White House blocking the Director of National Intelligence from sending the whistleblower complaint to Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: No, he is a great gentleman — Joe. He's doing a fantastic job. And I know one thing: He's only going to do what's right. But he is doing a fantastic job. And he's only going to do

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what's right. But just so you understand, the conversation I had with the President of Ukraine was absolutely perfect. And people better find out who these people are that are trying to subvert our country, because here we go again. These are bad people.

But the conversation I had with the President of Ukraine was absolutely a 10. It was perfect.

Now, what you have to do is look at the corruption on the Democrat side. Take a look at how the whole witch hunt started. Now they want to try and start another witch hunt. But unfortunately this one is reverting now to Joe Biden, because he's done some very bad things.

And I'm not even looking to hurt him, to be honest. He needs all the help he can get. I'm not looking to hurt him. I'm not looking to hurt his family. But the corruption and what he said is a terrible thing.

Thank you.

END 8:49 A.M. EDT

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REMARKS

Remarks by President Trump in a Multilateral Meeting on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela | New York, NY

— FOREIGN POLICY

Issued on: September 25, 2019



InterContinental New York Barclay
New York, New York

10:16 A.M. EDT

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Thank you very much. Are you ready? Ready? Thank you very much. Thank you.

I'm honored to be here today among so many terrific leaders dedicated to the future of democracy, prosperity, and freedom for the people of Venezuela. We are behind you.

For this deeply important event, we are grateful to be joined by Secretary Mike Pompeo, Secretary Steve Mnuchin, Secretary Wilbur Ross, and Administrator Mark Green. Thank you all for being here. Thank you very much.

I want to extend my profound appreciation to every representative with us from across the Western Hemisphere. Each of you is part of a historic coalition of 55 countries that recognize the legitimate constitutional government of Venezuela. We are especially grateful to be joined by representatives of the people of Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, and Peru, for their

leadership and assistance in the face of an unprecedented political, economic, and humanitarian disaster, which has been going on for a long time. And we're helping a lot. We're helping a lot.

Let me also recognize two leaders from the government of Venezuela's legitimate interim government, Presidential Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, Julio Borges. Where's Julio? Julio? Please, stand up, Julio. Great. Thank you very much. Thank you. (Applause.) And Venezuela's Ambassador to the United States, Carlos Vecchio. Where's Carlos? Thank you, Carlos. Please. (Applause.) It's very nice. Thank you.

As everyone in this room knows, the situation in Venezuela is a tragedy of historic proportions. The Maduro regime does not care about the welfare of their own people. They care about their own power. It's what they want, is power and money. They want the money, too — not just power.

Socialism has destroyed what was once among the most prosperous countries anywhere in the world. You go back 20 years ago and you look: one of the wealthiest countries in the world, relatively speaking. And now, they don't have water, they don't have food, they don't have medicine, they don't have anything.

Today, Venezuelans are starving and they're dying from lack of medicine, doctors, help. According to U.N. Human Rights Commissioner, Maduro's Cuban-trained death squads have murdered up to 10,000 Venezuelans, and they think that number is extremely low. Citizens since — all since 2018. That's over a very short period of time. These atrocities are an outrage to all and everything that we hold dear.

As President of the United States, I am committed to the future of stability, prosperity, and liberty for Venezuela. We will stand with the Venezuelan people every single day until they are finally freed from this horrible and brutal oppression. They will be freed. It will happen.

Our first objective is to ensure a peaceful and constitutional transition, paving the way for free and fair elections. That's why we, at the United States, and in the United States, are doing everything we can to isolate Maduro and his cronies.

Over the past year, the U.S. Treasury Department has imposed very tough sanctions to prevent Maduro and his enablers from accessing the U.S. financial system. Last month, I issued an executive order to completely freeze the assets of the Maduro regime in the United States. Our

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sanctions have been tightly focused on closing down every avenue by which Maduro sustains his criminal and totalitarian rule. And he has been vicious, he's been corrupt. He's been as bad as you get.

At the same time, we have undertaken significant efforts to ensure that the Venezuelan people have access to food, medicine, and other humanitarian supplies, despite the regime's efforts to stop aid from coming into Venezuela. They are making it very, very hard to get aid into Venezuela. We are getting aid into Venezuela, but it's a very difficult thing. You would think, frankly, that would be to their benefit to let aid get in instead of letting people die from lack of medicine or food. But they don't make it easy, but we get it in anyway.

We call on Maduro to immediately allow his lifesaving humanitarian aid. This has to be allowed to come into Venezuela for the long-suffering Venezuelan people. Unfortunately, a few countries outside of this hemisphere continue to enable this depraved regime with military and technological support. The most significant factor propping up the Venezuelan regime is the communist dictatorship in Cuba. Maduro allows Cuba to plunder Venezuelans' oil, raid its wealth, and rob its people. Venezuela's oil is at a low point. Not much is being taken out. Not many people are in there because of the dangers involved. But nevertheless, there's some money coming out, and it goes into Cuba.

He's allowed thousands of Cuban agents to infiltrate Venezuela's security forces and other institutions. In other words, Maduro has sold out his nation to a foreign dictatorship, and it has been that way a long time.

The civilized world must pressure the Cuban regime to leave Venezuela immediately. The United States is ready to support a democratic transition government, and we know that our partners around the world — of which we have many — are ready as well. Venezuela's rebuilding can begin the moment a peaceful transition occurs.

This is a critical moment for the world. We must not allow the destructive forces of socialism and communism to repeat the horrors of the last century. Can't allow it to happen. There have been horrors like nobody would believe. We can't allow this to happen today in Venezuela. We resolve that the future of the Western Hemisphere will not be written by socialists and tyrants, but by liberty-loving patriots. Our great destiny is to become the first fully free hemisphere in human history. We have a very, very good chance of doing that.

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We work and we pray for the hour when every person across the region, and every suffering soul in Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela, will finally know the blessings of democracy and the full glory of freedom.

Once again, thank you all to so many of my friends in this room and to the nations that have helped us with respect to Venezuela and many other things.

I want to personally thank the President of Mexico for the incredible work and spirit and everything that they've done on our southern border. Our southern border has become secure, with 27,000 Mexican soldiers on the Mexican side, telling people, "Sorry, you can't come in." So I want to thank the President of Mexico. Thank you very much.

And for Venezuela: It will all work. It will all come back. And good things will happen.

Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you. (Applause.)
Thank you very much.

Q Mr. President, on the transcript, sir? On the transcript, sir?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Okay. You know what? Because you're so anxious, we're going to let you stay as certain presidents speak. Because I know that's what you want to hear.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Thank you, Mr. President. Let me do the introductions. First of all, Mr. President, let me say how proud I am to be part of everything that you have led in this effort to try and bring the Venezuelan crisis to a peaceful and democratic resolution. Your leadership has been outstanding.

The work of the Lima Group, too, has been important. I believe it's a sign of a new era in Latin America. And like your nations, the United States is tired of the heartbreaking stories of Venezuelans forced to dig through trash cans for food, of the hospital patients dying unnecessarily, of the millions of innocent children who go to bed hungry every night because 94 percent of Venezuelan households can't get their basic necessities.

The United States wants to announce today an additional tranche of \$118 million to aid the Venezuelan crisis response. The assistance will include \$36 million for relief efforts inside of

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Venezuela. They'll provide urgently needed medicines that improve access to quality healthcare of for the Venezuelan people. The remaining monies will protect and assist many of your countries, as you generously host a combined 4.4 million Venezuelans who have fled their country — over 10 percent of the Venezuelan population. We'll help provide food, shelter, clean water, and legal support for them.

This brings to over \$570 million the amount of aid that we have provided — the United States has provided — to ease the crisis, both inside Venezuela and throughout the hemisphere.

As long as the Maduro regime stands, it will stand between the Venezuelan people and their return to freedom and prosperity. The United States, under President Trump, remains a steadfast supporter of the Venezuelan people and of the Lima Group in its ongoing struggle for the prosperous, free, and democratic Venezuela.

It's now my pleasure to introduce a member of the true government of Venezuela: Julio Borges. Mr. Borges is a longtime supporter of a return to democracy in Venezuela, and for this, he has been forced into exile by the Maduro regime. He now lives in Colombia.

Earlier this year, Interim President Juan Guaidó appointed him as Venezuela's representative to the Lima Group, and later as presidential advisor on external relationships.

Julio, you've been instrumental in rallying the international community to place pressure on the Maduro regime, and we're honored to have you with us today. The floor is yours, sir.

MR. BORGES: Well, thank you. Thank you for being here today. I would like to make a five-minute introduction about what's going on in Venezuela.

I could be speaking in Spanish, but I have chosen to speak in English because, Mr. President, on behalf of the Venezuelan people, their democratic-elected National Assembly, and their President Juan Guaidó, I want to personally thank for the leadership that you have shown in our case.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Thank you.

MR. BORGES: Your leadership has made a big difference. And I thank each and every one of you for what your governments have done to end the suffering in Venezuela and reclaim our democracy.

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You have helped us in our time of great need, which is something no Venezuelan will ever forget.

Venezuela is not alone. Nicolás Maduro and his criminal regime is responsible for the historic crisis impacting our country. To put it in perspective, from an economic standpoint of view: Venezuela's economic crisis is almost three times bigger than the Great Depression. And from the humanitarian point of view, it's become the second-largest refugee exodus in the world.

President Guaidó has been working closely with you to reverse the situation. We, as a Venezuelan, has been fighting for almost 20 years. We have gone down many paths, seeking a peaceful solution, but the dictatorship has stalled all possibilities time and time again.

Today, Venezuela is not passively asking for solidarity. The suffering of our people gives testimony of our times of need. This sacrifice have achieved important accomplishments.

Let's be clear: The diplomatic pressure from democratic voices has been effective. The dictatorship is fractured and weak, and only backed by the Cuban regime that has tortured, persecuted our people and our brave armed force.

Michelle Bachelet's recent report exposed the repression, torture, and executions that the regime carries out against civilians and members of our armed force in Venezuela. Mr. President and all leaders of Americas, over the last year, regime force have murdered a citizen every two hours.

Havana is the mastermind behind this tragedy to sustain Maduro. This is why crucial to break the regime of Díaz-Canel, Raúl Castro, and Maduro with more democratic pressure.

Our humble petition to the Americas is simple: First, that every country in the region should impose sanctions on Cuba. It is time for Castro and Díaz-Canel to understand the consequences of supporting a criminal regime.

Second, every country in the region should move forward, as agreed to in TIAR, to prosecute any regime member involved in drug trafficking, human rights violations, and corruption.

Third, maintain the support for Venezuelan National Assembly and our President, Juan Guaidó.

And last but not least, compel Europe to more actively join efforts to put more pressures on Maduro regime.

The alliance between the Cuban and Venezuelan regimes holds over 50 million hostage. Millions of Cubans and Venezuelans have had to abandon their homelands to escape oppression. And this should not be tolerated.

I have had the honor of traveling to the border of Cúcuta with President Duque, with President Piñera, with President Abdo, and as well with Secretary Pompeo. And most recently, with Ivanka Trump. I have seen them moved to tears because the stories of suffering cannot be put into words. Mark has been many times over there as well.

As rightly so, because we are not talking about cold numbers or (inaudible) statistics. Socialist dictatorships, such as Maduro, dehumanize. With great pain, we have seen the regime has done the most vulnerable people in my country. Child prostitution, President, has been normalized. Women are being sold into slavery and taken to other countries for profit, while children and (inaudible) have been recruited by terrorist organizations linked to drug trafficking. And our people are crawling through the streets of Venezuela looking for food.

The Maduro regime is a corrupt, criminal enterprise that has turned what once was one of the most prosperous country in the region into a living and dying hell. The world needs to understand that Venezuela is not a dictatorship, not even a failed state. It's something worse. The Maduro regime is a sanctuary for the promotion of terrorism, drug trafficking, and organized crime.

Faced with this reality, there are those who are shocked when we say that no option can be ruled out to rid Venezuela and the region for this corrupt regime. They say that keeping every option is very dangerous. However, Mr. President, evidence shows that the worst thing that could happen in Venezuela is that nothing happens.

What is truly dangerous, what is unacceptable, is having a regime destabilize the whole region while 35 million people are starving to death. Ignoring the crisis in Venezuela leaves an open wound that will infect the region and will destroy democracy throughout the continent. As I said, in the case of Venezuela, the worst thing that could happen is that nothing happens.

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Presidents and leaders of the Americas, on behalf of millions of Venezuela, I thank you because we are close to victory.

President Trump, you have led the free world in the fight for freedom in Venezuela and Cuba. History and the Venezuelan people will remember and recognize you. Recent opinion research in Venezuela shows the total support for our policy, for your plans to Venezuela, and you have become the most important leader within Venezuela, which is very important for us.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Maybe I'll move there. (Laughter.)

MR. BORGES: All right. (Laughter.) Next time.

I'm convinced that working together, working together the whole Americas, 30 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, another wall will fall in the Americas and give the way to a chapter of peace, progress, and development for our hemisphere.

Venezuela will rise with the strength of its people. We will reveal our country with the spirit of those who refuse to surrender.

President and leaders of the Americas, 32 millions of Venezuelans and 12 millions of Cubans are at the gates of freedom. Let's not make them wait any longer. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Thank you. Thank you.

Would the presidents like to speak in front of the media or without the media? We have three presidents who are going to speak. Would you prefer the media or not, presidents?

SECRETARY POMPEO: President Duque, would you like to begin?

PRESIDENT DUQUE: Thank you so much, Mr. Secretary. Thank you so much, President Trump, for gathering this very important meeting. I'm going to be brief, but I'm going to try to be very (inaudible) in my statements.

What we have been seeing in Venezuela is a tragedy of major proportional dimensions. What we have seen is the worst humanitarian crisis in Latin America's recent history. What we have seen is

the brutality of a dictatorship that is only comparable to what some countries saw when Slobodan Milošević brutalized thousands of people.

That's why we consider him a criminal. That's why we have denounced him before the International Criminal Court with the support of many heads of state around the hemisphere, and also in Europe. We consider his behavior to be not only regrettable, but it has to be punished, and that's why we all must continue to embrace the diplomatic blockade and to explore as many sanctions are needed against that criminal.

The second thing I want to highlight is that the migration crisis — it's really producing a major social impact. In Colombia, we have supported the migrants. We have 1.4 million Venezuelan brothers and sisters, and we will continue to provide support because we know they're coming to our country with (inaudible), lacking of medicine, and many of them without any access to food.

But we have to make the call to the whole world that this situation is unsustainable. And that's why the coalition that is sitting among this table, but also the coalition that has build of more than 54 states that have recognized President Guaidó and they have recognized the National Assembly, must also continue to bring more countries to the table, because this coalition has to be stronger day by day.

I also want to highlight that the behavior of the dictatorship is also affecting the national security of many states, obviously including Colombia. Nicolás Maduro has become a sponsor, and he's providing safe haven to terrorist groups from Colombia to plot against the Colombian people. And that attitude is only comparable to what the world saw when the Taliban regime allowed al Qaeda to plot against the whole world, in their soil.

We continue believing that that behavior is in direct violation of Resolution 1373 that was issued by the United Nations Security Council right after September 11. And we're going to make that denouncement public today when I deliver my speech before the U.N. General Assembly. I will present a report that is going to be given to the U.N. Security Council, the U.N. Secretary-General. And I believe that that report should be open for a debate.

We also believe that that behavior requires not only the whole world to be seen and to be addressed, but we also want to highlight what happened this week in a historical way. The Inter-

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American Treaty for Reciprocal Assistance had a historical voting, and they recognized that the Maduro regime is pretty much involved in terrorism sponsorship, narco-trafficking activities.

And last but not least, I also want to mention that the following months are crucial. The following weeks, the following hours are crucial. Some people speculate whether Maduro is going to last more. But I continue the debate should be different. The debate is: What is it that we're going to do so that we can grant liberty to the Venezuelan people?

That's why we're gathered here at this table, and that's why we support the approach of strengthening everything we can do so that three conditions are met: the end of the dictatorship, a transitional government, the call for free elections, and maybe I'll include a plan for economic and social recovery in Venezuela.

Thank you so much, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Thank you. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

SECRETARY POMPEO: Thank you, President Duque. Now I would like to hear from President Piñera. Please.

PRESIDENT PIÑERA: Thank you very much. Well, we all know that we are dealing with a criminal, corrupt — (microphone is turned on.) I'm sorry.

Thank you very much. We all know that we are dealing with a criminal, corrupt, and drug-related regime. And the conclusion is very clear: This dictatorship has to stop.

Maduro is part of the problem and will never be part of the solution. The solution has been expressed by President Duque. We need to end this regime, have a transitional government, call to free and open and transparent elections, and then the big story of how to reconstruct Venezuela will start. And we will be supporting all of these stages.

But at the same time, we have to realize there are some allies that are helping Venezuela, and we are talking — we are talking about countries like Cuba, China, Russia, Iran, and Turkey. I think that the whole Latin American community, and maybe the whole world, should let them very clear that

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what they are doing is affecting — and it's really affecting the interests of all Latin American countries.

We know that we have already more than 4.5 million refugees — migrants. But probably the number will double if the situation stays as it is. In the case of Chile, we have received more than 450,000, which is about 2 percent of our population. Compared to the U.S., it would be equivalent to 6 million Venezuelans in the U.S.

And we are happy to do so because that's one way to help. But the solution and the final conclusion here should be we have to make it impossible for the regime to continue.

One thing is that we have to seize all their assets of their main members of this dictators; avoid and prevent any moment so that the situation will become more and more difficult for them; and, at the same time, we have to help and solidarize and continue with the democratic opposition in Venezuela.

But I know the situation is very, very difficult. But you know that the night never is so dark that just before dawn. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

SECRETARY POMPEO: Thank you, President Piñera. President Moreno, the floor is yours, sir.

PRESIDENT MORENO: (As interpreted.) Thank you. My dear colleagues, the ill that brings us here today has to do with the democracy of the world and the stability of a region. It is related specifically to this people — this people who was suffering and the presidents around the table from countries to which over 4 million migrants have gone; people who are living beings, who wander the streets, they wander our avenues, looking for refuge. They seek a way out. They seek a solution to the problems they face when it comes to hunger, safety, and health. They have been kicked out by this regime. They seek social justice.

However, this regime has been despotic for so many years, and it is due to this. But international action should never be interpreted as intervention. We cannot talk about intervention because all countries, including Venezuela, have signed all commitments, all agreements related to the democracy of this community.

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This is an ethical obligation as well. My colleagues who preceded me have stated this. We are talking about over 4 million people, who are humble people, who have fled, who flee this despotic regime, this criminal regime — the regime of Nicolás Maduro, which is the most corrupt, which harbors terrorists, and where all international criminals go in the end to seek refuge, including those who represented corrupt regimes in our countries.

This is why it is — this meeting is so important. This meeting is important because I would like to energetically make the call for democracy to be put into place in Venezuela, as it should be in a country that has lived in democracy for so long. They cannot be going through a genocidal regime. The only exit is democracy — democracy with a broad international observation, with no pressure, with no red spots, so that people are able to vote freely.

This cannot happen under any circumstances unless they're — unless all democratic institutions, all international organizations involved in democracy participate, are involved in making sure that the will of Venezuelans is no longer deceived.

Venezuela is most definitely a failed state. It is a failed state, and this is shown by the exit not of dissidents, not people opposed to policies. We're talking about humble people — people who are personally living through how terrible it has been to suffer through the regime of a despot.

Unfortunately, we have to hear that this is a Bolivarian republic. No, we are a Bolivarian republic. We are aligned with the ideals of Washington, of Jefferson, and we converge with the ideals of Bolívar. And Bolívar never would have imagined any like this. Bolívar must be turning in his grave.

Looking at everything that has happened to a democracy that at one time was among the most prosperous in Latin America — and I will say this again — that is why this meeting is such a great one, and it will be great as long we can talk about benefitting that democracy. Maduro must leave power and, immediately, there must be a call for elections. That is the only way out. That is the only way out for this people. As I said, there must be elections with broad international observation. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Thank you very much. Thank you, everybody. Thank you very much.

Q Mr. President, in the Ukraine transcript, sir, you talk about how good the U.S. has been to Ukraine. You ask President Zelensky for a favor. And you ask him to talk to the Attorney General of

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the United States and Rudy Giuliani about Joe Biden. Sir, how is that not pressuring President Zelensky? How does the transcript —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: There was no pressure whatsoever. And if you take a look at the Democrats, they went down to see the President of Ukraine, and they asked him for all sorts of things. And, “Don’t go with the Republicans,” and, “Stay with us.” And — like it’s a political war. They shouldn’t have done that. That should be an impeachable event, I guess, based on what you’re saying.

The Democrats just came out. They went down there — a group of people — some of whom I was dealing with on the gun issue. And they went down and put tremendous pressure on Ukraine. The President himself just came out with a statement saying there was absolutely no pressure put on him. And there wasn’t.

What I do want to see is, is I want to see other countries helping Ukraine also, not just us. As usual, the United States helps, and nobody else is there. So I want to see other countries help.

Just so you understand, it’s the single greatest witch hunt in American history — probably, in history, but in American history. It’s a disgraceful thing. The letter was a great letter. Meaning, the letter revealing the call. That was done at the insistence of myself and other people that read it. It was a friendly letter. There was no pressure. The way you had that built up — that call — it was going to be the call from hell. It turned out to be a nothing call, other than a lot of people said, “I never knew you could be so nice.”

So, part of the problem you have is you have the fake news. You have a lot of corrupt reporting. You have some very fine reporters and journalists, but you have a lot of corrupt reporters, a lot of corrupt journalists. I would rate you right in there, by the way.

And —

Q You said —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: Excuse me. Excuse me.

(Cross-talk.)

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PRESIDENT TRUMP: Excuse me. Excuse me.

So, we're having — if you noticed, the stock market went up. When they saw the nonsense, all of a sudden the stock market went down very substantially yesterday when they saw a charge. After they read the charge, the stock market went up very substantially.

We have created the greatest economy in the history of our country. The greatest economy in the world. Had my opponent won, China would right now be the number one economy, by far. And right now, China is way behind us and they'll never catch us if we have smart leadership. Way behind.

We've picked up trillions of dollars, and they've lost trillions of dollars. And they want to make a deal very badly. And it could happen. It could happen. It could happen. It could happen sooner than you think.

Our military is rebuilt. Our military has never been stronger. When I came in, it was depleted. Our vets are happy. So many great things are happening. And the Democrats feel they're going to lose. We had the highest poll number — Rasmussen — 53, but they say you could add 10 to it. A lot of people say you could add more than 10 to it because a lot of people just don't want to talk about it, but they want to vote for Trump.

So I just say this: We have the strongest country we've ever had. We have the best economy we've ever had. We have the best unemployment numbers we've ever had. We have the best employment numbers we've ever had. We have now almost 160 million people working. That's far more than we've ever had working in our country before.

Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you.

END

10:52 A.M. EDT

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1/1/2020

Remarks by President Trump Before Marine One Departure | The White House



REMARKS

Remarks by President Trump Before Marine One Departure

Issued on: April 24, 2019



South Lawn

11:00 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: So the stock market and our country, from an economic standpoint, is doing the best probably it's ever done. We're hitting new highs again. We've hit new highs, I guess close to, or over 100 times since I'm President — from the time of the election.

Unemployment numbers are the best they've ever been by far. We have almost 160 million people working today in the United States. That's more than we've ever had working in our country before.

We're doing well on trade. We're doing well with China. Things are going good.

I'm bringing the First Lady right now. She's worked very hard on the opioid crisis. We're down about 17 percent from last year, which is pretty amazing. We're down 17 percent with the opioid problem. It's a big problem. It's a big addiction and we're handling it. The doctors are working with us. The labs are working. The clinics are working. The pharmaceutical companies are working with us. And we've made a tremendous amount of progress.

John. Go ahead.

1/1/2020

Remarks by President Trump Before Marine One Departure | The White House

Q Mr. President, what do you plan to do about the subpoena for Don McGahn and other subpoenas that are expected from the Hill?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the subpoena is ridiculous. We have been — I have been the most transparent President and administration in the history of our country by far. We just went through the Mueller witch hunt, where you had, really, 18 angry Democrats that hate President Trump. They hate him with a passion. They were contributors, in many cases, to Hillary Clinton. Hate him with a passion. How they picked this panel, I don't know.

And they came up with no collusion and they actually also came up with no obstruction. But our Attorney General ruled, based on the information, there was no obstruction. So you have no collusion, no obstruction.

Now we're finished with it. And I thought, after two years, we'd be finished with it. No. Now the House goes and starts subpoenaing. They want to know every deal I've ever done. Now, Mueller, I assume, for \$35 million, checked my taxes, checked my financials — which are great, by the way. You know they're great. All you have to do is go look at the records; they're all over the place. But they checked my financials and they checked my taxes, I assume.

It was the most thorough investigation probably in the history of our country — I think I read — where they interviewed 500 people.

I say it's enough. Get back to infrastructure. Get back to cutting taxes. Get back to lowering drug prices. That's what — really, that's what we should be doing.

Q Mr. President, will you fight the McGahn subpoena? Will you claim executive privilege?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we're fighting all the subpoenas.

Look, these aren't like impartial people. The Democrats are trying to win 2020. They're not going to win with the people that I see. And they're not going to win against me. The only way they can maybe luck out — and I don't think that's going to happen. It might make it even the opposite. That's what a lot of people are saying. The only way they can luck out is by constantly going after me on nonsense.

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Remarks by President Trump Before Marine One Departure | The White House

But they should be really focused on legislation, not the things that have been — this has been litigated — just so you understand, this has been litigated for the last two years, almost since I got into office.

Now, if you want to litigate, go after the DNC, Crooked Hillary, the dirty cops — all of these things. That's what should be litigated because that was a rigged system. And I'm breaking down — I am breaking down the swamp. If you look at what's happening, they're getting caught. They're getting fired. Who knows what's going to happen from now on, but I hope it's — I hope it's very strong.

But if you look at "drain the swamp," I am draining the swamp.

Thank you very much. Thank you.

END

11:05 A.M. EDT

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12/20/2019

Remarks by President Trump Upon Air Force One Arrival | Prince George's County, MD | The White House



REMARKS

Remarks by President Trump Upon Air Force One Arrival | Prince George's County, MD

Issued on: September 26, 2019



Joint Base Andrews

Prince George's County, Maryland

1:00 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Hello, everybody. I just watched a little bit of this on television. It's a disgrace to our country. It's another witch hunt. Here we go again. It's Adam Schiff and his crew making up stories and sitting there like pious whatever you want to call them. It's just a — really, it's a disgrace.

It's a terrible thing for our country. They can't do any work. They're frozen — the Democrats. They're going to lose the election; they know it. That's why they're doing it. And it should never be allowed, what's happened to this President.

And despite that, I think I've done just about more than any President in his first two and a half years in office. If you look, I think you'll see very few could compete with the things we've done for our military, for the economy. We have the best economy anywhere in the world, by far. We've rebuilt our military. We've done so many things that are so incredible with tax cuts and regulations. And I have to put up with Adam Schiff on a per- — on an absolutely perfect phone call to the new President of Ukraine. That was a perfect call.

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Remarks by President Trump Upon Air Force One Arrival | Prince George's County MD | The White House

But Adam Schiff doesn't talk about Joe Biden and his son walking away with millions of dollars from Ukraine, and then millions of dollars from China. Walking away — in a quick meeting, walking away with millions of dollars. He doesn't talk about Joe Biden firing a prosecutor, and if that prosecutor is not fired, he's not going to give him money from the United States of America. They don't talk about that.

My call was perfect. The President, yesterday, of Ukraine said there was no pressure put on him whatsoever. None whatsoever. And he said it loud and clear for the press. What these guys are doing — Democrats — are doing to this country is a disgrace and it shouldn't be allowed. There should be a way of stopping it — maybe legally, through the courts. But they're going to tie up our country. We can't talk about gun regulation. We can't talk about anything because, frankly, they're so tied up. They're so screwed up, nothing gets done —except for when I do it.

I'm using Mexico to protect our border because the Democrats won't change loopholes and asylum. When you think of that — and I want to — I'll tell you, I want to thank Mexico. Twenty-seven thousand soldiers they have. But think of how bad that is — think of it — where we use Mexico because the Democrats won't fix our broken immigration system. We need their votes. If we don't get their votes, we can't do it.

And the Republicans are all onboard. They want to fix it, but the Democrats won't do it. They don't want to talk about infrastructure. They don't want to talk about lowering drug prices. They don't want to talk about anything because they're fixated on this. And Nancy Pelosi has been hijacked by the radical left, and everybody knows it.

Thank you.

END

1:03 P.M. EDT

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12/20/2019

Remarks by President Trump Upon Arriving at the U.N. General Assembly | New York, NY | The White House



REMARKS

Remarks by President Trump Upon Arriving at the U.N. General Assembly | New York, NY

— FOREIGN POLICY

Issued on: September 24, 2019

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United Nations Headquarters
New York, New York

PRESIDENT TRUMP: (In progress.) So we had a great meeting yesterday, as you know, with the Prime Minister. And I think that, as far as Pakistan is concerned, India — they're talking. I'm certainly willing to help. I think they would, in a certain way, like my help. But they have to both want it. They have very different views, and I'm concerned about it.

On Iran, I think we're doing very well. Let's see what happens with Iran. But we are — we're in a very strong position on Iran. And I think they'd like to do something, and I think it would be a smart thing for them if they did.

Q (Inaudible.) I have two questions. The first is your reaction to the Washington Post story about you supposedly asking and withholding or holding the funds and aid for Ukraine.

And the second one is: You're meeting tomorrow with Venezuela — with leaders of Latin America to talk about Venezuela. Nicolás Maduro said that if the United States changed the policies of Obama, they will meet with you and they would love to have talks. What do you think?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: So, here's the story, very simply: We're watching Venezuela very closely.

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Remarks by President Trump Upon Arriving at the U.N. General Assembly | New York, NY | The White House

As far as withholding funds, those funds were paid. They were fully paid. But my complaint has always been — and I'd withhold again, and I'll continue to withhold until such time as Europe and other nations contribute to Ukraine. Because they're not doing it. Just the United States. We're putting up the bulk of the money. And I'm asking why is that.

And I want Europe — and it's always been this, and everybody know it. Every single reporter knows it. Everybody in the administration knows that what I want, and I insist on it, is that Europe has to put up money for Ukraine also. Why is it only the United States putting up the money? And I — and, by the way, we paid that money.

But I always ask: Why aren't other countries — in Europe, especially — putting up money for Ukraine?

Go ahead. Go ahead.

Q Mr. President, Congress is moving towards impeachment, including Nancy Pelosi. It could be a result of the Ukraine call. How do you feel about that?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it's ridiculous. It's a witch hunt. I'm leading in the polls. They have no idea how they stop me. The only way they can try is through impeachment. This has never happened to a President before. There's never been a thing like this before. It's nonsense. And when you see the call, when you see the readout of the call — which I assume you'll see at some point — you'll understand.

That call was perfect. It couldn't have been nicer. And even the Ukrainian government put out a statement that that was a perfect call. There was no pressure put on them whatsoever. But there was pressure put on with respect to Joe Biden. What Joe Biden did for his son, that's something they should be looking at.

Go ahead. You.

Q Why did you block aid a week before the call with the Ukrainian President?

THE PRESIDENT: Because very important — very important: I want other countries to put up money. I think it's unfair that we put up the money. Then people called me, they said, "Oh, let it

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Remarks by President Trump Upon Arriving at the U.N. General Assembly | New York, NY | The White House

go.” And I let it go. But we paid the money. The money was paid. But very importantly: Germany, France, other countries should put up money. And that’s been my complaint from the beginning.

Q Are you confident your advisors aren’t dragging you into war in Iran? Thirteen percent of Americans only support war with Iran. It seems like a lot of your advisors, including (inaudible), want to drag you into a war.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we’re going to see what happens. But I think Iran is coming along well. Regardless of what happens, we’re in very good shape with respect to Iran. Okay?

Thank you, everybody.

END

Remarks by US Ambassador Geoffrey Pyatt at the Odesa Financial Forum on September 24, 2015

Good morning. Thank you, Andy, for your kind introduction. It is my pleasure to be here at the Odesa Financial Forum with such distinguished experts from across Ukraine. I welcome the leadership of the Association of Ukrainian Stock Traders and the Financial Markets Association of Ukraine for organizing this forum. Special thanks to the American Chamber of Commerce for its strong support.

Today's event is about highlighting the potential of the Odesa region and determining how you, business leaders and investors, can work to sustain progress. How you can demand that things get better, by insisting on accountability, transparency, and fair rules. Without these, business cannot survive and investors will not invest.

During my tenure as U.S. ambassador to Ukraine, I have been inspired by the Ukrainian people's demand for accountability. During the Revolution of Dignity, and every day since, Ukrainians have persevered, often at great personal cost, in order to determine their own future.

And Ukraine's leaders are listening. Despite an invader in the east – using weapons and words to weaken, dispirit, and distract – national, regional, and local officials are moving forward with difficult political and economic reforms to bring Ukraine closer to its chosen European future.

However, they – we – must not ignore an equally tenacious enemy dead set on undermining Ukraine's economic success. One that is equally dangerous to Ukraine's future. That enemy is corruption.

Corruption kills.

It kills productivity and smothers inspiration. Ideas are lost in its shadow. Innovation and entrepreneurship lag under the weight of bribery, back room dealing, and bullying.

These old ways are not worthy of today's Ukraine.

Those who gave their lives last year on the Maidan, or in recent weeks the ATO, did not sacrifice themselves for business as usual. The sons, brothers, sisters and mothers defending Ukraine in Donbas today are not there to preserve the status quo. They deserve and demand better.

All of us here today know that Ukraine can, and must, address the problem of corruption now. You, Ukraine's business leaders, investors, prospective investors and partners, all who want to do business here, can help. You can refuse to participate in corrupt business practices. You can insist that when corruption is found, arrests are made and followed by thorough, properly implemented investigations. And then, when warranted, the guilty should be convicted and punished according to the law.

Imagine the impact if – instead of lining corrupt officials' pockets – the resources being zapped by corruption were freed up and reinvested in Ukraine's economy. Imagine what those resources could do to fuel the development and broad-based prosperity the Ukrainian people want and deserve.

The United States is helping to build Ukraine's capacity to fight corruption, expose the guilty and see them punished appropriately. And we are helping to do it, here in Odesa. Let me give you a few examples.

First, the U.S. government is developing a program to provide training for every judge, prosecutor, and defense attorney in Odesa Oblast on the adversarial process in criminal proceedings as envisioned by the new Criminal Procedure Code.

We hope that this pilot project will demonstrate how Ukraine's criminal process can be made more effective. If it is successful, the project can be a model for the rest of Ukraine.

Second, we partnered with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Odesa to deploy the new Patrol Police in Odesa. The presence of these officers on the streets is a concrete demonstration of how Ukraine is changing, but more importantly, they are building trust with the public. That trust will give rise to

confidence – the confidence to work together to expose and fight the petty corruption that stifles small business and intimidates average citizens.

Third, we are funding a team of Ukrainian, regional, and international experts who are working with Governor Saakashvili to flesh out an anticorruption and deregulation agenda for Odesa oblast. Odesa's vision for reform is transformative. If successful, Odesa can be a model of transparent, accountable government and business.

It will be a symbol of success in the new Ukraine. Odesa, long known for corruption, will come clean. Investment and opportunity will follow.

I know that President Poroshenko and Prime Minister Yatsenyuk understand the importance of this issue and recognize the threat that business as usual represents for Ukraine's hopes of political and economic transformation.

However, there is one glaring problem that threatens all of the good work that regional leaders here in Odesa, in Kharkiv, in Lviv, and elsewhere are doing to improve the business climate and build a new model of government that serves the people.

That problem threatens everything that the Rada, the Cabinet, the National Reform Council, and others are doing to push political and economic reforms forward and make life better for Ukrainians, and it flies in the face of what the Revolution of Dignity is trying to achieve.

That obstacle is the failure of the institution of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine to successfully fight internal corruption. Rather than supporting Ukraine's reforms and working to root out corruption, corrupt actors within the Prosecutor General's office are making things worse by openly and aggressively undermining reform.

In defiance of Ukraine's leaders, these bad actors regularly hinder efforts to investigate and prosecute corrupt officials within the prosecutor general's office. They intimidate and obstruct the efforts of those working honestly on reform initiatives within that same office.

The United States stands behind those who challenge these bad actors.

We applaud the work of the newly-established Inspector General's office in the PGO led by David Sakvarelidze and Vitaliy Kasko. Their investigations into corruption within the PGO, have delivered important arrests and have sent the signal that those who abuse their official positions as prosecutors will be investigated and prosecuted.

I encourage all of you to speak up in support of these brave investigators and prosecutors. Give them the resources and support to successfully prosecute these and future cases.

We have learned that there have been times that the PGO not only did not support investigations into corruption, but rather undermined prosecutors working on legitimate corruption cases.

For example, in the case of former Ecology Minister Mykola Zlochevsky, the U.K. authorities had seized 23 million dollars in illicit assets that belonged to the Ukrainian people. Officials at the PGO's office were asked by the U.K to send documents supporting the seizure.

Instead they sent letters to Zlochevsky's attorneys attesting that there was no case against him. As a result the money was freed by the U.K. court and shortly thereafter the money was moved to Cyprus.

The misconduct by the PGO officials who wrote those letters should be investigated, and those responsible for subverting the case by authorizing those letters should – at a minimum – be summarily terminated.

Even as we support the work of the new Anti-Corruption Commission, and the recruitment of new prosecutors, we have urged Prosecutor General Shokin to empower Deputy Prosecutors Sakvarelidze and Kasko to implement reforms and bring to justice those who have violated the law, regardless of rank or status. We are prepared to partner with reformers within the PGO in the fight for anticorruption.

That's why, on August 10, the United States signed a Joint Action Plan with Deputy Prosecutor General Sakvarelidze to provide 2 million dollars in U.S. assistance to support reform, anticorruption, and capacity building at the PGO.

It is critical that these reforms be undertaken in an open and transparent manner – consistent with the Procuracy Reform Law, international standards, and in coordination with national and international stakeholders – so that the Ukrainian people can have full faith and confidence in their laws and in those who have sworn to enforce them.

There are other cases as well, like those involving Former Deputy Chief Prosecutor Volodymyr Shapakin and Former Prosecutor Korniyets that clearly demonstrate that it is critical to cease intimidation and investigations of investigators, prosecutors and witnesses.

We want to work with Prosecutor General Shokin so the PGO is leading the fight against corruption.

We want the Ukrainian people to have confidence in the Prosecutor General's Office, and see that the PGO, like the new patrol police, has been reinvented as an institution to serve the citizens of Ukraine.

Ukraine has every reason to succeed. This country has resources in abundance. Its highly educated workforce can supply Europe and its neighbors with human capital and competitive products. Its famous black earth already feeds the world. Ukraine exported a record-breaking 33.5 million tons of grain last year, and the agricultural sector has tremendous potential to grow even more.

The Deep and Comprehensive Trade Area Agreement with the European Union will help leverage these natural resources and help build even more economic success. Ukraine's government, spurred on by an active, engaged, and committed civil society, is continuing difficult reforms in the face of armed aggression and economic hardship.

But as I said before, it is up to citizens, business and investors to hold those standing in the way of reform and progress accountable.

Work with the reformers, with new, trustworthy authorities like the patrol police and honest civil servants to make change happen. Think creatively about how to overcome the roadblocks being put up by those, like the bad actors in the Prosecutor General's office I mentioned before, who want to keep the status quo. Do not take no for an answer, but rather work to strengthen your democracy and push for Ukraine's European future.

The United States is with you in this difficult process. Through training programs and other assistance, we are working with Ukraine to make judges independent so they can uphold the law free from political pressure. We continue to support your efforts to build a modern police force and public prosecution service focused on serving the citizens, and providing an equal playing field for all.

And U.S. businesses – with the support of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce – will continue to look for opportunities to invest in Ukraine, a Ukraine committed to reform, transparency, accountability, and clear rules properly enforced.

I ask you all to be committed to putting a stop to corruption, wherever it is found.

Ukrainians demanded an end to business as usual on the Maidan. Business leaders here today can help by demanding a better, fairer, corruption-free environment to invest and create opportunities for the future.

In closing, and speaking of creating opportunities for the future, I take great pleasure in announcing that U.S. Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker will return to Ukraine in October. During her visit, Secretary Pritzker will take a serious look at what Ukraine has accomplished since her last visit. I am confident that she will see a government and business community serious about reforms, and ready to establish more connections and partnerships with U.S. businesses and investors.

As the United States Ambassador to Ukraine, I tell you, we stand with you.

Slava Ukraini.