

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2019

Remarks at a Cabinet Meeting and an Exchange With Reporters
July 16, 2019

The President. Thank you very much. Our Cabinet meeting. And we'll start with a prayer, please. Rick Perry.

Secretary of Energy J. Richard Perry. Yes, sir. Mr. President, thank you. Just as a—to, kind of, put this all in perspective: On the Fourth of July, I had a prayer that came true, which is a good thing: to pray and for the good Lord to agree that your prayer is a good one. So Griffin James Perry came into the world on the Fourth of July, at about 8:10 in the morning. So I have a grandson.

The President. Good.

Secretary Perry. And we had prayed about that for many years. And I think the reminder for all of us is that prayer is an incredibly and powerful thing. It's a great tonic. And as we interact with each other, to keep all of us—our friends, our families, this country—in our prayers.

Every Wednesday morning, there's a Cabinet member Bible study, that has been one of the great privileges for me, in this administration, to pray with the Cabinet members. So this is an extension of that. So if you would bow your heads and join with me in asking the Lord to continue to bless this country:

Father, thank you for this table of men and women, of individuals who selflessly serve this country. And, Lord, we ask you to continue to give them courage, to give them wisdom, to be with this President as he deals with the challenges of the day; to continue to comfort him in the knowledge that you are in charge and in control.

We thank you for your blessings both in the personal way and the larger issues of this world that we live in, that we've been given the privilege to serve. We ask you to continue to keep our young men and women who defend our freedom safe and to bring them home soon. And, Father, we ask you again to keep this President safe and to give him wisdom.

In your most holy name, we pray. Amen.

The President. That was very good. Thank you very much, Rick. Well done. Well done.

Thank you all for being here, our Cabinet meeting. We have them quite often, and they really produce results. We're producing results I don't think any administration ever, in 2½ years—the first 2½ years certainly—has produced the results that we've produced. We have the strongest stock market in the history of our country. By the way, just in walking in, we just set a new record. Just went up today. We had—a new record was set. The Dow Jones went over 27,000 for the first time ever. It went over 26,000 for the first time ever and 25,000 for the first time ever. So we've set it. I think we're over a hundred since election. We're over a hundred times that we've set a new stock market record. And, to me, that's not just a record; that means jobs. It's all about jobs. It's jobs for this country.

We're bringing in many, many countries. They're coming in. They're coming in at a level that we haven't seen for decades. Car companies are coming in, Japanese car companies, in particular. Although, Germany called to say that they're going to be announcing some very big movement with respect to a certain company that I've demanded has to come, because they sell us a lot of cars, but they make them in other places. We want them making them in the United States.

But Japan has 12 different companies building plants in Michigan, in Ohio, in North Carolina, in Pennsylvania. One is going to be announced in Florida. We are doing things that nobody thought were possible. I wouldn't have even said them, frankly, during the campaign because nobody would've been able to believe them. Nobody would've believed them.

Our unemployment numbers are historic, in the sense that we've never had better numbers. African American have the best numbers in the history of our country. Hispanic American, best unemployment numbers in the history of our country. Women, 75 years. Asian Americans, best in the history of our country. We have the best overall unemployment, the best in 51 years. And, very soon, that will be historic—meaning the history of our country—if we keep going the way we're going, and it should be fairly soon.

So things are happening that we wouldn't have believed happening—or could happen.

The border: We're working very hard, with everybody—the Attorney General. We're doing everything we can do without getting Congress to act, because the Democrats refuse to act. They refuse to do what they have to do and what they should do, and that's loopholes. We have loopholes that are so bad, you could drive a truck through them. They could be solved in 15 minutes; we'd have those loopholes taken care. Literally—everyone knows what they are; they're very simple. You know what they are. You know what they are better than the people in Congress.

But the Democrats, we need their votes. Not that we need them; we need their votes—because we have a very, very small margins both ways. The Senate is 53–47. The House is very tight. It's a very tight House too. Very small number. We need Democrat votes to get up to what we need. That's why we didn't do it last time—first 2 years—because we only had—we needed 9 to 10 Democrat votes, and we were never able to get them for certain things. But we were—but wherever we could use the majority, we ended doing a fantastic job, including two Supreme Court judges. We got two Supreme Court Justices put on and many other things.

But we need Democrat votes to get the border fully secured, fully taken care of. We're getting close. Mexico has been fantastic. We had a meeting with Mexico. For 45 years, people have been trying to get Mexico to do what they're doing now, and they weren't able to get it. And we got it in 1 day, everything. Mexico now has approximately 21,000 soldiers on their land. They have very powerful immigration laws. They can do what they have to do.

We have the worst laws in the entire world. There's no law like this, where we catch them and release them. We catch them, and we say, "Come back to court in 5 years." And nobody comes back. Two percent, to be accurate. I want to be accurate because I don't want the press to say I was inaccurate. Two percent come back. And those people, we wonder why: why they're coming back. They're the only ones. So we can straighten that out.

We are getting rid of thousands of people who are criminals. We're taking them out of the country—MS–13—by the thousands. And they're going out quickly. We do it very professionally. We have papers on everybody we take out. All documented, all very legal. They come in illegally, and they go out legally. So we've done a job.

On Sunday, there was a lot of activity, but you didn't even see it because it went very smoothly. The ICE folks and the people from Border Patrol, the job they do, is—they're heroes in so many ways. We have Border Patrol, though, being nurses and doctors and janitors.

And I very much want to thank Vice President Pence for taking a whole delegation of people down to see the things that one of our very radical-left Democrats called "concentration camps." They're not concentration camps. They're really well run. They're very crowded, in many cases. Actually, in the case of the children, they weren't crowded at all. People came back, and they—

even some of the news—which is shocking, frankly—said they were very well run, very clean, very nice for the children.

We had an adult center of males. Many of these people were criminals. We're not letting them out. We can't let them out. And it was crowded, very crowded. And the best way they can solve that is don't come up. If you don't come up, you're not going to be crowded. We want to take people in legally, and we want to take them in, frankly, through merit. We want our companies to be helped. All these companies that are pouring into the United States because we're the hottest country in the world right now. Every time I meet a leader—a President, a Prime Minister, a King, a Queen—they all say: "Thank you, and nice to meet you. It's wonderful. By the way, congratulations on your economy. What you've done is incredible."

You read yesterday where China is down very substantially. They're having the worst year they've had in 27 years. I don't want to have them have bad years. But we made a deal, and they broke the deal on me. The deal was done. It was practically done. It was just, like, a very short period of time, we would've had it finished. And they broke the deal. They decided they didn't want to do the things that they had agreed to. So I said, "That's all right."

We put tariffs on. Twenty-five percent on \$250 billion. It's obviously having a very negative—I don't want it to have a negative impact. Not having any impact on us other than positive, because China devalues their currency, and they're pumping money into their system. Our people aren't paying for that. There's been no inflation. There's been no nothing. Frankly, if we ever got interest rates down where they should be, and if they weren't raised so fast, you would see another, probably, 10,000 points on the Dow. We're setting records.

I don't want to act like—it's like somebody gets a 99 on a test, and they're complaining. I don't like that. But I'm going to complain—[laughter]—because frankly, we would've done even better had we had a Federal Reserve that didn't raise interest rates so quickly. And had we had a Federal Reserve—and there are many people on the Federal Reserve. You know, you have votes. It's called votes.

But if we had a Federal Reserve that didn't do quantitative tightening—they did quantitative tightening—\$50 billion a month. That's a lot of money. Now they're doing \$25 billion a month. Whereas, in Europe, they are pumping money into their system, and they're lowering rates. In China, they are pumping money into their system, and they're lowering rates very substantially. In Europe, the rates almost zero. And in China, the rates are whatever President Xi wants. He's his own Fed. He's the Federal Reserve. He's—one man. He's the Federal Reserve. He's the President. He's everything else.

But unfortunately, what they did was not appropriate. They are supposed to be buying farm products. Let's see whether or not they do—our ag—our great farmers. But out of the tariffs, I took \$16 billion to make up for the shortfall. I went to Secretary Sonny Perdue. He's a fantastic gentleman. By the way, is he here?

Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Stephen Censky. He's in California today.

The President. What happened? He's working on—he's working with the farmers. They have a big meeting in California. Good. I'm glad he's there. He can do more help there. [Laughter] He's done a fantastic job.

I said, "What was the amount at its highest that China pumped into the farmers in the form of purchase?" "Sixteen billion dollars." I said: "That's all right, we're taking in many, many times that in tariffs. We're going to help the farmers out." And I did that with \$16 billion. It cost us nothing. Same thing as if they bought. And yet the farmers don't even want that. They really just

want to make the product and sell it. But it was just a small percentage of the tariffs that we're taking in.

And we have a long way to go as far as tariffs, where China is concerned, if we want. We have another \$325 billion that we can put a tariff on if we want. So we're talking to China about a deal. But I wish they didn't break the deal that we had.

We had a deal where China opened up. We had a deal where there'd be—intellectual property theft would be taken care of, because it's estimated that they steal \$300 billion worth of intellectual property a deal. Who knows? Who knows? That's what they tell me. Three hundred billion. That's a big number. How they get to that number, I'll accept it—they're experts. That's what they do. But that's a big number.

You add that to the fact that, during the Obama administration, \$500 billion a year was being lost to China. Five hundred billion. They did nothing. And, in all fairness, whether you go back to Bush, you go back to Clinton—you can go back a long way—the WTO. Once the World Trade Organization was formed, China became like a rocket ship.

But now we're doing something about it. Now we're doing something about it. And we're doing a lot about it. We picked up close to \$20 trillion in wealth during my administration, from election. And I have to say "from election." Because when I got elected, the stock market—the day after, the stock market went wild. If I would not have gotten elected, you would have had a crash. So I can't give Obama credit—President Obama—credit for the tremendous gain from the day I won until January 20, was when I took office. Because that was all attributed to the enthusiasm that we've caused and that we've had as a country. From the election till now, it's been extraordinary. We've picked up \$20 trillion. China has lost \$20 trillion.

If my opponent had won, China would right now be number one in the world. Right now we're number one in the world, by far. We're going to keep it that way. And if you have smart people sitting in this chair, in this position, you're not going to lose.

So we've got an extraordinary country. We're doing numbers that have never been done before. I think a number that makes me the happiest is that, proportionately, the biggest gainer in this entire stock market—when you hear about how much has gone up—blue-collar workers, the biggest proportionate gainer. They've had a tremendous gain. The workers have had a tremendous gain. People without a diploma—high school diploma—have had a tremendous gain. Our country is doing really, really well.

Just to finish: 401(k)s. People have 401(k)s. Many of you have 401(k)s. Your 401(k)s are up 50 percent, 60 percent—somebody told me 78 percent. People that were losing money all their lives are now doubling their income and doubling their—the money that they had in the bank is being doubled up. Their 401(k)s are going through the roof.

And they're getting a lot of credit from their wives or husband, whichever one. Because the one that's doing it is saying, "You're a financial genius." [Laughter] "Darling, I love you very much. First time in your life, I think you're a financial genius." [Laughter] And it would have been just the opposite had the opponent—this country was set for a big fall had we not come in and cut regulations immediately and let our country breathe. Whether it's the pipelines that we approved on almost day one or LNG plants.

I just left Louisiana; we cut a ribbon for a \$10 billion LNG plant that's so incredible. People wouldn't believe it. It was many, many years trying to get permits; they couldn't get the permits. But we got the permits, and we got them very rapidly. And that was a great thing. Great thing. You know the plant I'm talking about, Rick. And we have about six of them now under consideration. We hadn't built one in 40 years. Forty years. We didn't build plants like that.

So our country is doing things that nobody thought would even be possible. We're doing incredibly well.

I'd like to start off—and if you'd like to stay for this, you can. Ben Carson is going to say a few words about HUD. And then I think Jared is going to talk a little bit about immigration and some of our plans for immigration. And then, we're going to go around the table.

And if the press wants to stay, you can. If you'd like to leave—it's like I said the other day: I don't mind. If you want to leave, that's your option. *[Laughter]* You can leave anytime you want, okay?

Please, Ben.

Secretary of Housing Benjamin S. Carson, Sr. Well, thank you, Mr. President. And just before I talk a little bit about what's going on at HUD, I just want to thank you for your incredible courage——

The President. Thank you.

Secretary Carson. ——and stamina and resilience with unwithering criticism, unfair criticism, all the time. And I would just, sort of, sum it up by saying: Would you rather have a nonpolitician whose speech is unfiltered, who gets a lot of stuff done? Or somebody with a silver tongue who gets nothing done?

The President. But I thought I had a silver tongue. *[Laughter]* I heard that so often. I always thought I had a silver tongue. *[Laughter]* But I agree with you.

Secretary Carson. But you know, as I told you before, I think God is using you.

The President. Thank you very much.

Secretary Carson. I really appreciate that.

The President. And you have said that, and I appreciate it. Thank you, Ben.

Secretary Carson. Now, once again, you know, promises made are promises kept. You said in the Inaugural Address that the forgotten men and women of this country would be forgotten no longer. And last December, you took the extraordinary act of establishing a White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council. And I'm privileged to chair that. We have, with us, Scott Turner, who is serving as our Executive Director, also.

[At this point, Secretary Carson continued his remarks, concluding as follows.]

But today, like so many other milestones this administration has surpassed, you know, we're already approaching extraordinary figures. For example, last month, the National Council of State Housing Agencies announced that its Opportunity Zone Fund Directory has expanded to nearly \$29 billion in anticipated investment.

The President. And, Ben, I might add that Opportunity Zones, for the media, is one of the hottest things anyone has ever done with respect to inner cities and with respect to minorities. It is working out far beyond anybody's expectation.

Secretary Carson. Absolutely.

The President. I don't think it's been written about very much, but I'm not that surprised at that. But the Opportunity Zones are an incredible thing. And if you want to do something, you should write about them. Because what's happened, the employment, the investment—people are investing that would have never invested in these locations in a million years, and they're investing a lot of money. It has absolutely been—you can talk about the number of sites, the

number of cities. What's happened with Opportunity Zones is somewhat of a miracle. Nobody in their wildest imagination thought this could happen.

Secretary Carson. That's right. And to add onto that, you know, we've gotten a lot of positive reports, you know, from government officials across the country about the investors in Opportunity Zones and how it's stoking unprecedented interest in these underserved communities.

And in fact, last week I was in Salt Lake City, and a big multifamily dwelling is going up with a concentration of people with autism and a center for helping autistic people to get back into the workforce. They were able to do that because of the completion of the gap funding through an Opportunity Zone fund.

[Secretary Carson continued his remarks, concluding as follows.]

You know, I'm very excited. I may not look excited; this is about as excited as I ever look. *[Laughter]* But I am very excited about being able to participate in something that's going to have such a positive effect on so many people in our country. And I want to thank you for pushing this.

And I'd like to hear just a bit from our Council's Executive Director, Scott Turner.

The President. Good.

White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council Executive Director Scott Turner. I am right here, sir. Good morning. Or good afternoon. Thank you, Dr. Carson, and thank you, Mr. President, for allowing me to serve in this role. And, Cabinet members, it's good to see you all again.

I looked up that term, "revitalize." And to revitalize means to imbue with new life. It means to reinvigorate and to reenergize. And that's exactly what we've seen over these last 12 weeks. And we were here 12 weeks ago tomorrow, and when the President appointed me to be the shepherd of this Council.

[Mr. Turner continued his remarks, concluding as follows.]

And it's my prayer that when history tells this story—what did we do with the opportunity that the Lord gave us in Opportunities Zones to bring a blessing to those that come after us? And I believe that will be the story when history tells it.

So thank you, Mr. President. God bless you guys.

The President. So as most of the people in the room know, Scott was a great football player, not a good player, a great player. *[Laughter]* Well known for being a great player. Scott, you may be better at this. *[Laughter]* I don't know if that's an insult or not. You may be better at this, okay?

Mr. Turner. Thank you, sir.

The President. Thank you.

Mr. Turner. Yes, sir.

The President. Really a great job. Thank you very much.

I'm going to ask—Ben, would you like to finish up? It's a tough act to follow, Ben, right? *[Laughter]*

Secretary Carson. No, I just want to reemphasize how important it is that everybody continue to make sure that their sub-Secretary work with us. We're getting an incredible amount done.

And one of the things that really encourages me about this is, you know, I go to places, and the Governor is a Republican, the mayor is Democrat, the Congressman is a Dem, and they're all working together. We can tamp down all this hatred that exists in our country—

The President. Right.

Secretary Carson. —because our country is extraordinarily strong. Nobody can bring us down from the outside. We can only do it from the inside. And Jesus said it: "A house divided against itself cannot stand." These are the kind of efforts that I hope will be able to bring people together. So thank you for this.

The President. Fantastic job. Beautiful words. We appreciate it. Thank you, Ben. Really good job.

I'd like to ask Jared Kushner to talk about the immigration policy—the plans—what we have short term and long term. Thank you very much.

White House Senior Adviser Jared C. Kushner. Thank you, Mr. President. And this actually fits very well with what we've spoken about. You were talking before about all the great trade deals and all the jobs that are coming to America. And then, Dr. Carson and Director Turner—what they've been talking about with the Opportunity Zone Revitalization Council, really raising wages and lifting people up.

[*Senior Adviser Kushner continued his remarks, concluding as follows.*]

So thank you for your leadership. And you have information in your binders, and we have a 22-page summary that we'll be submitting to all your offices. And again, immigration doesn't just touch Homeland Security or Justice or State, it really touches all of your agencies. And so if we can get this right, it will really be something that will be great for our country both in the short term, medium term, and the long term.

So thank you very much.

The President. Fantastic job. Thank you, Jared. This is a commonsense plan. It's a plan where we've studied almost every country. Some good. Some bad. Some tremendously successful. Some not successful at all. And this is the best of everything. And it gives incentive to people.

It also—we have a problem. I'm called constantly by people; they want to have really smart people working in their companies. We have companies where you need very smart people, and we don't have a provision for smart people. You can graduate from a college, you can be number one in your class in the best college in the country and be thrown out of the country the following day. And we want to be able to keep people in that have this kind of genius.

Silicon Valley is constantly complaining. They're building places in Canada. They're building places elsewhere because our immigration plans don't allow this. Well, we have to have this. Whether we like it or not, we have to have this. And we'll be able to get it.

But I've met with many people that have very good intentions, but have to have smart people, and they have to have smart people stay in our country and be able to stay here for a period of time, not just for a short period of time, where they can't even buy a house. They don't know if their family should move. So we're doing a lot of things to help people.

I think as you saw it—and as Jared really put it very well—our country has a tremendous immigration gap. These are plan after plan after plan, and each plan is very simple, overly simple. When you put them together, they're indistinguishable. You can't—it becomes a maze of complexity that nobody even knows the answer to. You have people studying, where—you're going to have a really beautiful system of immigration. People are going to be able to come into

our country, be proud of our country, and help our country. We want them to help us. You know, it's a two-way street; they have to help us also. And it's met with great popularity.

Now, if it doesn't get passed, because we do have the Democrats—because they're against almost everything. We'd love to do it in a bipartisan way. We'll make changes. We'll do what we have to do.

But if it doesn't get passed, it's a campaign issue, because we'll pass it if and when we win the Congress. We'll win the House and we should be able to keep the Senate, win the Senate, maybe pick up some seats. And hopefully, we're going to keep the Presidency. That, I feel very comfortable—I feel very confident about. But I feel also very confident we have a very good chance at winning back the House. And it may very well be an election issue, because this plan is a plan like no other. This is the best of everything all over the world. And it's a very fair plan. We have to say that and stress it. Very, very fair plan. Very compassionate plan.

So it could very well be something that gets done where everybody puts politics aside and they get it voted on. Or if it isn't—you know, the election is 15 months away. Very close. Who would have thought that? But it's very close.

And we will put this as a major election issue. This is what people want. They want this kind of a plan. They want the compassion, but they also want a merit-based plan where people come in and can help our country. So I appreciate your seeing that.

I think what I'd like to do, if I could—ask our Secretary of State, who is doing a terrific job—Mike Pompeo—to give you a little update on Iran.

I could possibly say a couple of things about North Korea. When I took over—when I became President—North Korea was ready to go to war. We were, I think, headed to a war. It would have been very quickly too. It would have been a very bad war, a very rough war. But I believe we were headed in that one direction. There was no communication. There was no talk. There were nuclear weapons being—and nuclear everything being tested. Constantly, we'd be hearing about earthquakes. It wasn't earthquakes; it was nuclear testing. And we were heading in a bad direction.

And you saw what happened a few weeks ago when we were in South Korea, and I said, the day before—there was no planning, no nothing—the day before, I said: "Hey, we're here. Let's say hello to Kim Jong Un." And nobody actually knew how to get in touch. Tough people to get in touch with. But I have a very good relationship with him. And I put it out on Twitter: "Hey, I'm in South Korea. You want to meet?" And we had a great meeting. It was pretty wild. Very good communication. We'll see what happens.

But, in the meantime, as I say, we got our hostages back. We got the remains back, and they continue to come. We have the sanctions on in full. We're working with China. We're working with Russia on the border. And at some point—I'm in absolutely no hurry—but at some point, I think we can probably do something that would be very good for them and very good everybody and for the world.

So we've met tremendous progress. People don't like saying that. The progress is great communication. Before, we had no communication. There was zero—zero communication. Nobody spoke to anybody. They wouldn't know who. I do believe they tried. I do believe it never happened. I think we tried very hard to speak to them, but they weren't interested in speaking. But now they're interested in speaking, and the relationship is very good. I think we've made tremendous progress on North Korea.

And again, time is not of the essence, but I think good things will ultimately happen.

I'd like to ask Mike to say a few words about Iran and what that situation is. Please.

Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo. Thank you, Mr. President. If I may just to—I'll try and do it briefly, but I might just take a minute. In the same way that—when this administration came in, broadly in the Middle East, you had ISIS with an enormous caliphate, Iran as the world's largest state sponsor of terror, with lots of wealth and the capacity to grow their terror campaign.

What we've done in these 2½ years is, we've built out a coalition of Gulf States, the Israelis. Each of them has been focused on taking these activities on. And we've taken down the caliphate nearly in its entirety.

And second, with respect to Iran, we've done three things. We've supported the Iranian people. The Iranian leadership is not doing what the Iranian people want it to do. We've made clear that we support the Iranian people.

Second, we've continued to work with this coalition that all understands that the largest threat to Middle East security is, in fact, the Islamic Republic of Iran.

And third, we've imposed a series of sanctions on the Iranian regime. I remember, Mr. President, when we began, the—a lot of folks said that it wouldn't work; if it was just America alone, it wouldn't have any impact. We—as of June, we'd taken down 90 percent, maybe 95 percent, of all the crude oil that was being exported from Iran around the world is no longer shipping. You can see it. The Iranian regime is struggling to figure out what they're going to do with their economy, because we have been terribly effective.

And the result is that—is that, frankly, I think it was yesterday or maybe the day before—for the first time, the Iranians have said that they're prepared to negotiate about their missile program. And so we will have this opportunity, I hope. If we continue to execute our strategy appropriately, we'll have this opportunity to negotiate a deal that will actually prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon in the same way that the previous agreement had no chance of actually doing.

The President. Well, thank you very much. You know, a lot of progress has been made. And if they'd like to talk, then we'll see what happens. But a lot of progress has been made.

Remember one thing: An agreement was made with Secretary Kerry, at the time, and with President Obama. That agreement was a disaster. We spent \$150 billion; \$1.8 billion was given in cash—cash—like cash from your pocket. \$1.8 billion given in cash. And we had an agreement that, number one, didn't give us good inspection rights. We were—the places we most would want to inspect we weren't allowed to inspect. We were allowed to inspect places that didn't mean anything. Number one.

And I think, very importantly, and maybe most importantly, the agreement was short term. You know, for a country, 10 years and 15 years is short term. If you sign a lease, you can sign a 10-year lease. But for a country, that's a speck of time. And there's only a few years left now. Very short number of years left. And you're not going to go up and make a deal. This was a path for Iran to have a nuclear weapon. They can't have a nuclear weapon.

We want to help them. We'll be good to them. We'll work with them. We'll help them in any way we can, but they can't have a nuclear weapon. We're not looking, by the way, for regime change, because some people say we're looking for regime change. We're not looking for regime change.

I've watched President Obama and many other Presidents try that. It doesn't work out too well. We're not looking for that at all. They can't have a nuclear weapon. They can't be testing ballistic missiles, which, right now, under that agreement, if they had the agreement—which we are out of—they'd be able to do. They can't do that.

And we want them to get out of Yemen. I asked Secretary Kerry, through people, "Why didn't you get them out of Yemen when you gave them \$150 billion?" He said it was too complicated. Oh, great. So we want them to get out of Yemen. Syria is a different kind of a situation, but it's all working out.

We did a great job. As Mike said, we did a great job with the caliphate. We have a hundred percent of the caliphate, and we're rapidly pulling out of Syria. We'll be out of there pretty soon. And let them handle their own problems. Syria can handle their own problems, along with Iran, along with Russia, along with Iraq, along with Turkey. We're 7,000 miles away.

But we did a hell of a job with the caliphate. Nobody thought that was possible. When I came in, my own generals told me it would take 2 years. And I said, "Really?" But then, I met another general. He said, "Sir, we can do it in a month." [Laughter] I said: "I like you. I like you. I like you much better than some other people." And he did an unbelievable job. They were incredible, the job they did. And we got a hundred percent of the caliphate.

We now have 2,000 prisoners, ISIS prisoners. And we're telling Europe, "Look, they were going to Europe." They weren't coming here; they were going to Europe. "You've got to take them." Europe doesn't want to take them, because you know, why should they? They—American patsies. We were patsies for so many years, but they don't want to take them. You've got to take them. They were going to you. We helped you out. We did a big thing. We can't be responsible for these people for 50 years or whatever it may be, or more.

And so we're negotiating with Europe, and we're negotiating with Iraq and lots of other people. Somebody has got to do—we have a lot of war; bad people, in many cases. Bad people, possibly in all cases. But we have about 2,000 of them, and we're negotiating right now with Europe. We say, "We don't want them." "Oh, you don't want them? You would've had them if we didn't come along. You would've had them in a way that you don't want to have them." And everyone knows what I mean.

So we weren't treated very fairly by the world for the last 20, 25 years, whether it's trade or the military. We protect so many countries. Some countries are unbelievably rich. They don't pay us. They never paid us. Now they're starting to pay, and they're paying. And importantly, they're paying a lot, and they're appreciative of us. I actually think they like us better now than they did before because they have respect for us again.

So I want to thank Jared. And I want to thank Ben. And I want to thank Scott, Mike, everybody. You've been doing a fantastic job.

I think I'm going to finish just by asking Alex to say a few word about—words about what we're doing with prescription drug prices, because it's really exciting. I'd also like you to discuss—because most people have no idea that we're so close—what's happening with respect to the eradication of AIDS, which nobody would've thought of 2 years ago. And now we're really at a point where we can eradicate AIDS from the United States within 10 years. So if you could discuss those two subjects, I would appreciate it.

Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex M. Azar II. Yes. Thank you, Mr. President. Absolutely. So new data in for June that shows that, again, prescription drug prices are going down. The Department of Labor's inflation measure for prescription drug prices, it continues to go down this time for the first time in 50 years. The biggest decrease in over 50 years.

[*Secretary Azar continued his remarks, concluding as follows.*]

I've got to tell you, Mr. President, the reaction has been just bipartisan, across the board, nationwide, and it's been unbelievable. You see in the media, people say: "You know, I'm not a big fan of President Trump, but I've got to tell you what, you know what he did? He just delivered

for America's people who have cancer and who have kidney disease." He just delivered for everybody who has kidney disease or a loved one with kidney disease. This is the first transformation in 50 years. Just like on HIV, tackling a problem that other Presidents have not been willing to tackle.

So thank you.

The President. Well, that was an amazing meeting we had last week on kidney disease, which I didn't know too much about. I knew it was a very big problem. Nobody knew the cost. When you say 1 in 5, that's incredible. But I learned, and I met so many people that had the problem. And we spent a long time with you, last week, at that conference, and then we made a speech.

Secretary Azar. Yes.

The President. And one of the things I learned is that people with kidney disease, oftentimes, they die of hard work. They literally die like—we all work hard. We work hard. I don't know, we seem to be able to handle it. But their work is much harder. And it is so hard to go through this dialysis program that they die of exhaustion. It is an unbelievably horrible situation. And we're working on transplants. And we're actually working on something—and there's some pretty positive news: artificial kidney, which would be the ultimate answer. We think there's going to be some good news on that—

Secretary Azar. Absolutely.

The President. —long before people thought.

I would like you to mention, because a certain, very large pharmaceutical company—and you hear very bad things about pharmaceutical companies, and I agree with that.

Secretary Azar. Deservedly so. [*Laughter*]

The President. And deservedly so. But I would like you to mention the name of the company because they're giving hundreds of millions of dollars for the HIV/AIDS, and you might mention the name.

Secretary Azar. So we secured this deal with Gilead. So Gilead is the company that invented—that has drug PrEP. PrEP is the medicine that if a patient takes it regularly, as prescribed, they reduce by 97 percent the chances that they can contract HIV/AIDS. We have patent issues between us and Gilead. Without sacrificing any of the rights that we have, we were able to secure a donation by Gilead of 200,000 courses of treatment per year of PrEP, for use in our ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic program—of PrEP or any successor product developed—up until 2030. It's really a historic agreement.

The President. The dollar value of that?

Secretary Azar. Billions and billions and billions of dollars.

The President. It's billions of dollars they're contributing.

Secretary Azar. Billions. Huge.

The President. It's something, right? That's really something. I want to thank you very much.

I also want to thank a man who has been really an outstanding Secretary of Labor, Alex Acosta. This is your last meeting in the Cabinet Room.

Secretary of Labor R. Alexander Acosta. It is.

The President. And I just want to say, "Job well done." You really were; you were absolutely terrific. Never once a problem. Always in advance of everything else, whether it was on 401(k)s or all of the other things we worked on. You really did an outstanding job as Secretary of Labor. We—everyone in this room, I think, we can say we're going to miss you. But we'll see you. But congratulations. And a job well done.

Secretary Acosta. So, first, let me say thank you. The opportunity to work with you, to work with everyone in this room, has been truly special. As we look back, I think one of the unwritten stories—we talk a lot about the economy. But we are a safer nation in the workplace. I mentioned it before, but last year, we had fewer workplace fatalities. We had 45,000 fewer workplace injuries. We had the safest year ever in mining. We returned more than \$300 million in back wages to American workers—the highest amount of back wages ever returned by the Department of Labor.

And I mention this because I think this is a story that isn't written, that needs to be written, that that's part of your legacy, that's part of our legacy. And you see similar work, whether it's been with Opportunity Zones, whether it's at the Small Business Administration, and how, after hurricanes and other natural disasters, the bureaucracy has been cut and reduced. All of us could point to these unwritten stories. And they're transformative, and they're impactful, and they need to be told. And so thank you for the opportunity, and thank you for the honor.

The President. And thank you. Great job.

Thank you very much, everybody. I appreciate it. Thank you.

The President's Criticism of Representatives Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ayanna S. Pressley, Ilhan A. Omar, and Rashida H. Tlaib

Q. Mr. President, when you say that the Democratic Congresswomen should leave if they're not happy, where should they go?

The President. It's up to them. They can go wherever they want, or they can stay. But they should love our country. They shouldn't hate our country. You look at what they've said. I have clips right here. The most vile, horrible statements about our country, about Israel, about others. It's up to them. They can do what they want. They can leave. They can stay. But they should love our country, and they should work for the good of our country.

All right, thank you very much, everybody.

Q. Mr. President—

Q. Mr. President, do you believe that Omar—

Q. Is anyone at the table uncomfortable with the President's tweets?

Turkey-U.S. Relations/Return of U.S. Citizens Detained Overseas

Q. Mr. President, what about Turkey and sanctions? Turkey and sanctions?

Q. Is anyone concerned about the President's tweets?

The President. We're talking to Turkey. We're speaking to Turkey.

Q. What are you saying to them, sir?

The President. I've had a very good relationship. And frankly, it's a very complex situation. The Obama administration would not sell them the Patriot missiles. They need the Patriot missiles for defense. They would not sell them, under any circumstance.

And Turkey tried very hard to buy them, and they wouldn't sell them, and this went on for a long period of time. And it was as soon as they found out that they were going to have to buy the missiles—a comparable missile—not as good a missile, but a comparable, almost, missile from Russia, all of a sudden everybody started rushing and saying to Turkey, "Okay, we'll sell you the Patriot missile." It was only when they found out they couldn't get it, then, they say, "Let's go, we'll sell you the Patriot missile."

But by that time, Turkey had already signed and paid a lot of money to Russia for the missile system that they were not allowed to buy here, foolishly, because Turkey is a NATO member.

Turkey has also ordered over a hundred F-35 planes—substantially over a hundred—and they have plans to order more. But because they have a system of missiles that's made in Russia, they're now prohibited from buying over a hundred planes. I would say that Lockheed isn't exactly happy. That's a lot of jobs.

And frankly, I've always had a very good relationship. We have Pastor Brunson—came back, at my request, when I called up. Pastor Brunson was going to be in jail for 25 years. And I called President Erdogan, and I said: "Listen, he's an innocent man. He's a pastor. He's a religious man. He's not a spy. He's not the things they said." And we had a couple of conversations, and I was able to get him back, along with many other people I was able to get back. The press doesn't want to write about it.

Our Ambassador for hostage negotiations said, "Trump is the greatest of all time." I only tell you that because you'll never say it. *[Laughter]* But I guess we have 21 back. I got 21 back. I don't pay, either, unlike the \$1.8 billion that was paid by the Obama administration to get hostages back. I don't pay because, once you pay——

Q. What about the——

Q. *[Inaudible]*

The President. It doesn't work out.

So what happens is, we have a situation where Turkey is very good with us. Very good. And we are now telling Turkey that, because you have really been forced to buy another missile system, we're not going to sell you the F-35 fighter jets. It's a very tough situation that they're in. And it's a very tough situation that we've been placed in, the United States.

With all of that being said, we're working through it. We'll see what happens. But it's not really fair. They wanted to buy—I don't stick up for countries. I don't stick up for Turkey. I don't stick up—other than, I've had a good relationship with President Erdogan.

He wanted to buy our Patriot missile. We wouldn't sell it. And then, when he made a—and he really wanted to buy it. And then, when he made a deal with another country—Russia—to buy their system that he didn't even want, then, all of the sudden, we say: "Oh, okay. We'll now sell you the Patriot." And because of the fact he bought a Russian missile, we're not allowed to sell him billions of dollars' worth of aircraft. It's not a fair situation.

Do you have something to add to that, Mike?

Secretary Pompeo. No, sir. I think you explained it well.

The President. I think so. Good. You said the right thing. *[Laughter]*

China/Google LLC

Q. Google and China? Google and China? You tweeted about it.

The President. Well, what we're doing with China, first of all—you know, Peter Thiel is a friend of mine. He's a tremendous contributor. He's a big—he's a big—he spoke at our convention—at the Republican National Convention. Peter is a brilliant young man, one of the most successful people in Silicon Valley. I guess he was an original investor in some of these biggest companies, including Facebook, I understand.

Yes, he made a very strong charge. He's one of the top—maybe the top expert on all of those things. And he made a very big statement about Google. And I would like to recommend to the various agencies, including perhaps our Attorney General, who is with us, to maybe take a look. It's a big statement, when you say that, you know, Google is involved with China in not a very positive way for our country.

So I think we'll all look at that. I know that our other agencies will be looking at it. And we'll see if there's any truth to it. But that's a very big statement, made by somebody who's highly respected. So we'll certainly take a look at that.

Guatemala/Honduras/El Salvador/Border Security/Mexico's Immigration Enforcement Efforts

Q. And at least two Central American countries have said they're not going to play ball with your new asylum plans. What are you going to do?

The President. We'll see what happens. We were sending hundreds of millions of dollars to—are you talking about Guatemala and Honduras?

Q. Mm-hmm.

The President. We were sending hundreds of millions of dollars to Guatemala and Honduras. We're not going to send it anymore. We haven't been sending it for the last year because they weren't doing anything for us. They were forming caravans, and they were sending them up. And in those caravans, you had some very bad actors. You had some people that were not people that we want in our country.

So I realized that, when they—in the middle of their city or towns—when you form a caravan, if a government is at all a government, they don't have to allow that caravan to come up. So if they're not going to play ball, that's okay with me. We're not going to play ball with them. We don't give them any more money. They've been ripping us off for years. I'm not a fan.

So until they shape up—now, all of the sudden, they came down, supposedly, with a Supreme Court ruling that they're not allowed to do a safe third agreement with us. Well, I sort of wonder, did it come down because they wanted that ruling to come down?

But we were giving them hundreds of millions of dollars, like fools, for years, and all they did is send us up a lot of people caused a lot of problems, and a lot of the people in those caravans were criminals, hardened criminals, dangerous people.

And why not? Why would Honduras or Guatemala or El Salvador, why would they keep their criminals when you can put them into the caravan, lose them in a caravan, and send them up to the United States. We take everybody, because the Democrats don't allow immigration laws that mean anything. It's horrible. It's horrible.

How they aren't—how they aren't taking care of just that one situation, which could be taken care of very easily—how they won't even give us a vote on that. We've had many interviews of the people in those caravans. Some of them are very bad players.

You had interviews—one of the folks that was, perhaps, in this room—I think might be in this room—said, "What was your crime?" And the man said, "Murder." And the reporter looks

at—"Murder?" That's a very famous clip. She said, "Well, what was your crime?" You know, they were interviewing to show how wonderful the people are in the caravan. "And you, sir, what was your crime?" "Murder." The young woman goes, "Whoa." I was surprised they didn't cut it. It must have been live; otherwise, you would have cut it. [*Laughter*] It must have been a live shot. But a pretty famous shot. But you have a lot of that.

And so, as far as those countries, we were supposed to have a safe third. We didn't. Now, Mexico—because of tariffs, but that doesn't matter because they've really been doing a job. They've only had 1 week in June, and June was down 28 percent. One week. Two thousand soldiers they started with. Now they have 6,000 soldiers on their southern border.

You know, they used to have like three soldiers; they had nobody. They wouldn't do it. For 45 years, 50 years, people have tried. In the State Department, one of Mike's people said, the woman that we respect, who's been in charge of Mexico for 20 years—she laughed when we said we were going to ask for these things. She said, "They've been trying to get"—she was there for 20 years. But they've been trying to get it for 45 or 50 years, the things that I asked for.

And they all laughed. I got it done in 1 day. Because I said, "If you don't do it, we're going to put tariffs on." And every car that comes through, that used to be made in the United States, now Mexico has 30 percent of our car business. But that's not going to happen anymore. No more—no more companies are going to leave because we have reasons that they can't leave anymore. There's just no reason for them to leave anymore. In fact, just the opposite: They're all coming back.

But now we have 21,000 soldiers—6,000 on the Guatemala border, and—which is, you know—obviously, that makes the safe third, John [John Roberts, Fox News], much less important. You understand. It's very hard to get from Guatemala to the United States. And we'll have about 16,000 or so—maybe more—on our southern border.

And we're using the Mexican immigration laws, because that's Mexico. And those laws say you can actually tell a person: "I'm sorry. You can't come in. Get out." Or they can take them back to a point of origin.

So we're doing very well, but we have no help whatsoever from the Democrats—just the opposite. They want open borders. They obviously don't mind crime and drugs and human trafficking, which is a tremendous problem. And it's human trafficking, mostly in women. And you know, Democrats, with their big, wonderful hearts—human trafficking with women—where three, four, five women are put in the back of a van or the back of a car, and they go through areas where there will soon be wall, but there's no wall right now. Because you can't, obviously, come through ports of entry.

But we're really doing well on the border, considering we have absolutely no help from the Democrats. And not only no help, just the opposite.

Now, we won a big lawsuit against Nancy Pelosi and Congress, having to do with the wall. You saw that 2 weeks ago. But we also have one that we're appealing to the Supreme Court. I think it was just put into the Supreme Court. And I hope we're going to be successful on that.

But we're building a lot of wall right now. But it's being met with force. There's no question about it. The Democrats are fighting us on a wall, so people can come through.

But now what's happening with Mexico—21,000 soldiers—we're hearing that even the cartels are saying: "Wow. This is hard to get through." Because the cartels were bringing tremendous numbers of people into our country, through diversion and other tactics, and money.

So we're doing well on the border, considering we have no help. I think we're doing well, even if we did have help. And I want to thank Mexico, because they really have gone above and

beyond, I think beyond, Mike, what we thought. We didn't ever expect 21,000 soldiers. We expected a smaller number than that.

And, at the same time, they're helping themselves a lot, because they were having a lot of crime. And the border was really—the borders were run by the cartels. And Mexico is taking back its country. And I give the President a tremendous amount of credit for that because that's been going on for a long time.

Thank you all very much. Thank you.

Q. [Inaudible]—sanctions?

China-U.S. Trade

Q. Update on China trade? China trade?

The President. We're doing well with China, but you will see whether or not we have a—we're talking to China about a deal. We'll see what happens. But we're doing very well economically because they're paying us billions and billions and billions of dollars.

The President's Criticism of Representatives Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ayanna S. Pressley, Ilhan A. Omar, and Rashida H. Tlaib

Q. Mr. Trump, would you be willing to not use the phrase, "Go back to your country" to citizens and women of color who are either citizens or have been born in this country? Would you be willing to not use that specific phrase?

The President. I think it's terrible when people speak so badly about our country, when people speak so horribly. I have a list of things here. I'm not going to bore you with it, because you would be bored. You wouldn't write it anyway. But I have a list of things here said by the Congresswomen that is so bad, so horrible, that I almost don't want to read it. It's so bad. I think what you do is, you have the same list that I do. You should repeat some of that.

When the Democrats didn't want to mention the name of the Congresswoman, not so long ago—and what they did and the way they're treating Israel is a disgrace. But not only Israel; it's what they say about our country. It's my opinion they hate our country. And that's not good. It's not acceptable.

Thank you very much, everybody.

Q. Mr. President—[inaudible]—core values to be able to criticize this country, isn't that a core American value?

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:46 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Supreme Court Justices Neil M. Gorsuch and Brett M. Kavanaugh; 2016 Democratic Presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton; Chairman of the State Affairs Commission Kim Jong Un of North Korea; Kim Hak-song, Tony Kim, and Kim Dong-chul, U.S. citizens formerly detained by North Korean officials who returned to the U.S. on May 10, 2018; former Secretary of State John F. Kerry; Andrew C. Brunson, pastor, Dirilis (Resurrection) Church in Izmir, Turkey, who was detained by Turkish authorities on October 7, 2016, and returned to the U.S. custody on October 12, 2018; Robert C. O'Brien, Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs, Department of State; venture capitalist Peter Thiel; and President Andres Manuel López Obrador of Mexico. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist organization.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Cabinet meeting; Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters :: White House.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Acosta, R. Alexander; Azar, Alex M., II; Barr, William P.; Brunson, Andrew C.; Bush, George W.; Carson, Benjamin S., Sr.; Censky, Stephen; Clinton, Hillary Rodham; Clinton, William J.; Erdogan, Recep Tayyip; Gorsuch, Neil M.; Kavanaugh, Brett M.; Kerry, John F.; Kim Dong-chul; Kim Hak-song; Kim Jong Un; Kim, Tony; Kushner, Jared C.; López Obrador, Andres Manuel; Obama, Barack; O'Brien, Robert C.; Ocasio-Cortez, Alexandria; Omar, Ilhan A.; Pelosi, Nancy; Pence, Michael R.; Perdue, George E. "Sonny"; Perry, J. Richard; Pompeo, Michael R.; Pressley, Ayanna S.; Thiel, Peter; Tlaib, Rashida H.; Turner, Scott; Xi Jinping.

Subjects: Agriculture : Farm subsidies; Agriculture, Department of : Deputy Secretary; Agriculture, Department of : Secretary; Armed Forces, U.S. : Servicemembers :: POW/MIA remains, recovery efforts; Business and industry : Automobile industry :: Improvement; Business and industry : Domestic investment, promotion efforts; Business and industry : Manufacturing industry :: Improvement; Cabinet meetings; China : Monetary policy; China : President; China : Trade with U.S.; China : U.S. tariff structure, strengthening efforts; Commerce, international : Intellectual property law, strengthening efforts; Communications : News media :: Accuracy and fairness; Congress : Bipartisanship; Congress : House of Representatives :: Speaker; Defense and national security : Border security; Diseases : Kidney disease, prevention and treatment efforts; Drug abuse and trafficking : Foreign narcotics traffickers; Economy, national : Household income and wages; Economy, national : Improvement; Economy, national : Strengthening efforts; Elections : 2020 Presidential and congressional elections; Employment and unemployment : Job creation and growth; Employment and unemployment : Unemployment rate; Energy : Domestic production, promotion efforts; Energy, Department of : Secretary; Foreign policy, U.S. : Foreign aid policies and funding; Google LLC; Health and Human Services, Department of : Secretary; Health and medical care : Research and development; HIV/AIDS : Domestic prevention and treatment efforts; Homeland Security, Department of : Customs and Border Protection, U.S.; Homeland Security, Department of : Immigration and Customs Enforcement, U.S.; Housing and Urban Development, Department of : Secretary; Immigration and naturalization : Illegal immigration; Immigration and naturalization : Reform; Immigration and naturalization : Refugees; Immigration and naturalization : Visa policy, U.S.; Iran : International diplomatic efforts; Iran : Nuclear program, Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action; Iran : Nuclear weapons development; Iran : Regional involvement; Iraq : Relations with U.S.; Judiciary : Judicial review; Judiciary : Supreme Court :: Associate Justice; Justice, Department of : Attorney General; Labor, Department of : Secretary; Law enforcement and crime : Illegal immigration, deportation of criminals; Law enforcement and crime : Transnational criminal organizations; Mexico : Border with U.S., infrastructure and security; Mexico : Immigration enforcement, cooperation with U.S.; Mexico : President ; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; North Korea : Chairman, State Affairs Commission; North Korea : International diplomatic efforts; North Korea : Nuclear weapons development; Reserve System, Federal; State, Department of : Hostage Affairs, Special Presidential Envoy for; State, Department of : Secretary; Syria : Civil war and sectarian conflict; Syria : U.S. military forces, withdrawal; Terrorism : Counterterrorism efforts; Terrorism : Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist organization; Turkey : President; Turkey : Relations with U.S.; Turkey : Trade with U.S.; White House Office : Assistants to the President :: Senior Adviser; White House Office : Vice President; White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council.

DCPD Number: DCPD201900474.