

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2019

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters Upon Returning From Williamsburg, Virginia

July 30, 2019

The President. So Jamestown was amazing. I very much appreciate that the Democrats were so respectful, because it is what it is. It's a very important moment: 400 years. So I appreciate very much the Democrats. We had great receptivity. I guess I saw you; you only covered the protester. One protester.

But Jamestown, I thought, was fantastic. And I was treated, really, I think—and I have to—I obviously thank the Republicans, but I also thank the Democrats. We had one person. And other than that, it was really fantastic.

President Jair Messias Bolsonaro of Brazil/Appointment of Eduardo Nentes Bolsonaro as Brazil's Ambassador to the U.S.

Q. Mr. President, what do you think about the Brazilian President appointing his son to be the Ambassador here in the U.S.?

The President. Well, I know his son. I find his son to be outstanding. He's a brilliant, wonderful young man. I'm very happy he appointed him. I think it's a great appointment. I know his son, and that's probably why they did it. He's outstanding. I'm very happy with that appointment.

Q. Do you think that this is nepotism?

The President. No, I don't think it's nepotism, because his son helped him very much in the campaign. His son is outstanding. He really is. So I think it's a great appointment. I didn't know that.

Q. Mr. President——

The President's Criticism of Baltimore, Maryland

Q. Mr. President, can you get more specific on who exactly has been reaching out to the White House?

The President. What?

Q. Can you be more specific on who has been reaching out to the White House to say you're doing great on Baltimore?

The President. A lot of people. Many, many people.

And you see it also in the press, and you see it on watching television, just coming back. People living in Baltimore are very happy that I'm bringing out the fact that it's like living in hell.

What do you want, John [John Roberts, Fox News]?

Q. Mr. President, is——

Q. Mr. President, you've said you've done more for African Americans——

Q. Hang on. He called on me. He called on me. Mr. President——

Q. Okay. It's my husband. I'll be nice. *[Laughter]*

State Delegate Ibraheem S. Samirah of Virginia

Q. The protester was difficult to miss. He was standing in front of you, in all fairness. But my question is, what's——

The President. No, no. The only problem, John: You gave the protester a hundred percent of the time. And it's—I don't care about coverage. The last thing I need is coverage.

Q. I gave you a lot of time.

The President. But listen—hey, John, a hundred percent. Not one word of the speech. And you know, we were there about the speech. The protester didn't look so good to me. I'm going to be very nice. But you gave him a hundred percent. But you know, what? That's okay. You often do that. That's okay.

Q. But, Mr. President, the question I wanted to ask was: But what's the political strategy here? Because this seems to be causing—these attacks seem to be causing a lot of division in the country.

The President. What are you talking about by "political strategy"? Are you talking with——

Q. The political strategy of——

The President. ——respect to Elijah Cummings?

Representative Elijah E. Cummings/The President's Criticism of Baltimore, Maryland

Q. No, I'm talking about your attacks against Elijah Cummings and the tone of the attacks.

The President. There's no strategy. I have no strategy. There's zero strategy. All it is, is I'm pointing out facts. The most unsafe city in the country—in our country—is Baltimore. It's received as much money—it receives top of the line—billions of dollars. Somebody said \$15 billion over a short period of time. All of this money goes there. And take a look at it. I don't have to describe it. Take a look at it.

So there's no strategy. It's very simple. And Elijah Cummings is in charge of it, and he ought to take his Oversight Committee, and he ought to park them in Baltimore and find out what happened to the \$15 billion and a lot of other money.

Q. All right, so——

Q. [*Inaudible*]

China-U.S. Trade/National Economy/Criminal Justice Reform

Q. If China doesn't fulfill its commitment to buy U.S. agricultural products, what will you do?

The President. We'll see what happens with China. I think we'll do very well with China. We're already doing very well with China. China has had the worst year they've had in 27 years, and we're having the best year we've ever had. The stock market just hit an alltime high. We're doing the best we've ever done. All three indexes—if you look at it—indices or indexes, depending on what you want to call. All three are hitting brandnew highs. We're doing the best we've ever done as a country, and I'm very happy about it.

Unemployment, the best numbers we've ever had. By the way, African American unemployment, the lowest in history.

Q. I want to ask you about that.

The President. Criminal justice reform: Obama couldn't do it. I got it done. He could not do it. He didn't even come close. That's great for the African American population, who is very thankful about it.

If you look at all of the Opportunity Zones, they're inner-city Opportunity Zones, almost all of them African American. The African American people don't listen to fake news. They know what's going on.

Representative Elijah E. Cummings/The President's Criticism of Baltimore, Maryland/House Oversight Committee Investigations

Q. Mr. President, you know that Elijah Cummings is not the mayor of Baltimore, so why are you so angry at him about the city? Is it because——

The President. Elijah Cummings—yes.

Q. ——he's subpoenaing your officials?

The President. I'm not angry. I'm not angry. I'm just telling you the facts.

Q. You sound angry.

The President. I'm not angry at anybody. I'm just saying, Elijah Cummings has been there for 26 years. He's really, by far, the highest ranking politician. He's seen these mayors get thrown out, thrown out, thrown out. They're all friends of his. The corruption and the graft in Baltimore is probably the greatest in our country or one of them. Wait.

Now, he's in charge of an Oversight Committee. All I'm saying is take your Oversight Committee and go to Baltimore. You'll learn a lot.

Q. But why—[inaudible]?

Q. Mr. President——

Poland-U.S. Relations/The President's Upcoming Travel Plans

Q. On Poland, Mr. President. On Poland, what are you going to be doing on your trip to Poland? Are you going anywhere else?

The President. Say it?

Q. What are you going to do on your trip to Poland? And are you going anywhere else?

The President. Well, we have a very good relationship with Poland. I have, really, a very good relationship with most countries that the news doesn't like talking about. But I have a very good relationship with Poland. And we've been invited by the leadership of Poland, and I look forward to it. I like the people.

I gave a speech in Poland, which I know you don't like to say, but it was considered to be a great speech. And the reason is that I really feel strongly. I think Poland's—I think they're great people.

Q. Do you not want Sue Gordon——

Q. Are you going somewhere else on that Poland trip?

The President. We're looking at it. We may go to Denmark. We're looking at it.

Resignation of Director of National Intelligence Daniel R. Coats/Nomination of Representative John L. Ratcliffe to be Director of National Intelligence

Q. [Inaudible]—an acting role at DNI?

The President. What?

Q. Sue Gordon, do you not want her to be in the Acting role at DNI?

The President. We haven't named the Acting yet, but we're very happy with the fact that Dan Coats—I like Dan; he's a friend of mine. I mean, I think he's a terrific person. I like him a lot. And there really wasn't conflict. I think it was confusion more than conflict. Dan made statements, and they were a little confused. But that was not conflict.

Dan is a friend of mine. He's a good man. But I think that John Ratcliffe is going to do an incredible job if he gets approved. He's got to get approved.

Q. [Inaudible]

The President. But I think he'll do a great job. I hope he gets approved. I think we need somebody like that. We need somebody strong that can really rein it in. Because as I think you've all learned, the intelligence agencies have run amok. They've run amok.

Q. On General Hyten, sir. On General Hyten——

The President's Support Among African Americans

Q. You said you've done more African Americans than any other President. A new poll, Quinnipiac poll, came out today saying that 80 percent of Blacks think you're racist. How do you respond to that?

The President. You know why? Because the fake news doesn't report it properly. People like you. The fake news does not report it properly. If the news reported it properly, you know, the right way——

Q. What's proper?

The President. Like, instead of a statement like you just made. If the news reported properly, of all of the things I've done for African Americans, of all of the things that—like criminal justice reform——

Q. And we talked about that.

The President. ——like Opportunity Zones. Like all——

Q. Sir, we talked about that. I'm asking about the whole.

The President. I think I do very well with the African Americans. And I think I'm doing very well right now. And frankly, if I didn't do very well, relatively speaking, as a Republican—I mean, we should be way, way over 50 percent. But if you look back over 40 years, it just doesn't work that way. If I didn't do well, relatively speaking, I wouldn't be President right now.

But if you look at what I've done for African Americans, it's more than almost all Presidents.

Q. On General Hyten, sir. On General Hyten, General Hyten——

President Jair Messias Bolsonaro of Brazil/Brazil-U.S. Trade/Appointment of Eduardo N Nantes Bolsonaro as Brazil's Ambassador to the U.S.

Q. [Inaudible]—trade talks with Brazil. What is the U.S. goal in trade talks with Brazil?

The President. Well, we have a good relationship with the President of Brazil, and I'm sure we'll be successful at trade talks. We'll have them. And I am just—you're just telling me his son was appointed Ambassador. I think that's a great appointment, because I know his son. I think he's really competent, just like his father. He reminds of his father, and I like his father. And I think it's a great appointment.

Sexual Assault Allegations Against Joint Chiefs of Staff Vice Chairman Nominee General John E. Hyten, USAF

Q. Should the accuser of General Hyten be allowed to testify publicly?

The President. Well, I'm going to leave that up to the Senate. I am a fan of General Hyten. We're going to have to see how it all turns out. But I know he's been accused, and he's saying it's a false accusation, but I will leave it up——

Q. Should she be allowed to have a say?

The President. I hear they did an extensive report, a report very big, very important. And I will leave that up to the Senators. They're very capable people. That includes Democrats and Republicans.

President Xi Jinping of China

Q. Have you talked to President Xi of China recently? What would you say to him, that, right now, China's economy is not going that great?

The President. You have to speak differently. You have a little—go ahead. Speak up.

Q. Yes. Have you talked to President Xi of China recently?

The President. Yes.

Q. What would you say to him? Right now China's economy is not doing great.

The President. I would say that his economy is not doing well—China—but I like him a lot. That's what I'd say to him.

Q. Did—[inaudible]—do anything improper, sir?

Representative Elijah E. Cummings/The President's Criticism of Baltimore, Maryland/Immigration Reform/Enforcement Efforts at the Mexico-U.S. Border

Q. Help us understand the focus on Elijah Cummings and Baltimore.

The President. Well, I just explained it. I think I explained it very simply. Elijah Cummings is—it was a horrible thing, the way he spoke to the head of Homeland Security the other day. These people are working hard. They're getting no support from the Democrats. The Democrats refuse to fix the loopholes. They refuse to fix asylum.

Those two things would make it 95-percent easier. Instead, I'm relying—and Mexico has been great, but Mexico has done far more than Democrats have. You know, our numbers are way down, which is a positive. Numbers in apprehensions are way down. Mexico now has 21,000, or approximately 21,000 soldiers on the two borders, and they've been really great, I have to say.

Now, I don't know that that's going to stay. But what we have to do is fix the loopholes, and the Democrats don't want. The reason is, the Democrats want open borders. The problem is, open borders mean tremendous crime. People coming in—you have no idea where they're coming from, who they are. But I'm President; I can't allow that.

Q. So you're not—[inaudible].

Q. Do you have any evidence——

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:52 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Acting Secretary of Homeland Security Kevin K. McAleenan. Reporters referred to Deputy Director of National Intelligence Susan M. Gordon; and Col. Kathryn Spletstoser, USA. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 31.

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