

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2019

Remarks at a Young Black Leadership Summit

October 4, 2019

The President. Boy, oh boy. This is a group. So I've been doing this for a long time. That is the loudest I've ever heard anything in this room. You just broke the record. Unbelievable.

Well, I want to thank you all. And I have a lot of friends, but—[*applause*]. And this is a place, 1799 it was built—1799. Started off with number six—John Adams, President. And so it's a long time. It's the White House, and we love it, and it's an honor to have you.

But you really did, you broke the sound barrier. I've never heard that. I've never heard it quite like that, and I appreciate it. We love you. We love you.

Audience members. We love you!

The President. Thank you. Thank you. And I'm honored to welcome everybody and these incredibly talented and unbelievable, patriotic, young American leaders. You're going to be the leaders. Somebody—I would be almost willing to bet, maybe even willing to bet—somebody in that audience, right here, right in front of me, is going to be standing here someday. I think so. You've got a good shot. You're going to have a good shot. You've done incredible work to get to this position, and I have tremendous respect for it.

We're glad to be joined by our terrific Vice President, Mike Pence. And many of our Cabinet members are here. They wanted to be here. I told a couple of them: "Don't have to. Don't worry about it. What the heck. These are my friends." They said, "No, we want to be here." So we have a lot of our Cabinet members here.

And to every young person: You represent America's future. You are the best and the brightest, the bravest and boldest, and someday you are going to be setting records like nobody before. I'm telling you, I know it. I know where's it's at. I know where energy is, and you have the energy like very few people have the energy. So I just want to tell you: Get out there. Prove me right, please. Okay? [*Laughter*] Prove me right. I have no doubt you will.

Audience member. We love you!

The President. Each of you has come to Washington for the Black Leadership Summit because you have what it takes to achieve real change on your campuses and in your communities, and that's what you've been doing, and that's actually why you're here.

You speak out for the values and principles that have made America the most exceptional nation anywhere on Earth. And I will say this today: It's greater than it ever was before: our military, our economy. We have the greatest economy in the world. We have the greatest economy we've ever had. Tremendous numbers just came out today. You heard that.

But you stand up for the oppressive forces—and you do. You stand right up to those forces in our country that demand conformity and control. You refuse to be censored, you refuse to be silenced, and you will never back down. And don't. Don't ever back down.

You're the champions for free thought and free speech. And I especially want to thank a friend of mine who is—I mean, first of all, you think he's like 50, but he's about 25 or something like that. [*Laughter*] He's a young guy. I can't even imagine being so successful at such a young age. What he's done in so many ways—and really, more importantly, letting young people know that they have a voice—Charlie Kirk, from Turning Point U.S.A.

Charlie, you've done a fantastic job. Fastest growing organization of thought—of thought—in the country. He is something. Thank you very much, Charlie. I appreciate your being here.

And we're also joined by a friend of mine—just got married—[*applause*]*—just got married. And Candace Owens—I watched her, and I saw her coming. I said—you know, I'm pretty good at star power. I look, and I say, "That's a star." [Laughter] Every once in a while, I'll see somebody. You know, it happens about once every 5 years. That's all it is. But I'll be watching. I saw Candace probably 3, 4 years ago. How long would it be, Charlie? Four? Maybe 4. I saw this woman on television. I said: "Man, I don't want to mess with her. She's tough. She's tough."*

Now, I'm not allowed to say it—you know that. I'm not allowed to say it anymore, but she's also beautiful. So I'll say that too. Okay? [*Laughter*] It's true. Under the #MeToo generation, we're not allowed to say it. [*Laughter*] So all of you young, brilliant guys: Never ever call a woman beautiful, please. [*Laughter*] You're not allowed to do it. And I've kept doing it, and I've never been told by that woman never to do it. Just say, "Thank you, sir." [*Laughter*]

Candace, would you come up here, and say a few words? Do you mind? Come. Thank you, Candace. Thank you.

Author, commentator, and talk show host Candace Owens. You know what? I was thinking: Every single President that comes into office, after 2 years, they look so much older. He seems to be the only President that's getting younger. Is he—I mean, like, he has somehow found a fountain of youth. I think he gets up out of bed—it's the fight. He loves the fight. He really does.

The President. We have no choice.

Ms. Owens. We are so blessed. And listen, let me say this: The media—the audacity of them to think that they're going to impeach our President.

Audience members. Boo!

Ms. Owens. No. It's not happening. It's absolutely not happening. Not under our watch. We need to make sure we fight for this man: the one man who is standing up for Black America, we are going to fight for, guys. We have to keep it going.

The President. Thank you, Candace. Thank you. That's so nice. Outstanding person. She's another one. You're going to have to compete with her, too, for this position, I suspect. [*Laughter*] Thank you very much.

You know, it's sort of interesting. It's like: Do we have a choice? We have to fight, right? We have to fight. We have to fight for everything, whether we like it or not.

Another man who has been so incredible—Ja'Ron Smith. Where is Ja'Ron? Is he around here? Ja'Ron Smith. Man, have you done a job. You've done such a great job, Ja'Ron. At least, come up and shake my hand, will you, please? Come here, Ja'Ron.

You know, he works with us, and he's actually not—I always say he's so elegant and so quiet and so nice. [*Laughter*] They say, "You don't know the real Ja'Ron." So I want to see that. [*Laughter*] But what he does and the job he's done on outreach and so many other aspects of our lives is incredible. I want to thank you, Ja'Ron. Thank you very much. I want to thank you for that. I appreciate it. Thank you.

And Ja'Ron knows what I'm about to do because—a man who I met on Twitter, or, as we would say, "social media"; he is some piece of work, this guy—he was hitting Debra Messing like she never got hit before. [*Laughter*] This crazy Debra Messing started messing with us. And all of a sudden, I see this man on Twitter, and I see him all over. And he was hitting her, and I never saw anything like it. [*Laughter*] I felt so sorry for her.

And then, I look, and I say, "Who is this guy?" His name is Terrence Williams. I look—[*applause*]—and I look, and I said, "Well, you know, the way you look . . ." And the first thing I look is, how many followers does he have? And he had like 700,000 followers. I said, "Whoa."

You know, oftentimes I'll be impressed by somebody. I'll look, and they have three followers, they say. [*Laughter*] I say, "We have to wait for him or her." But this guy has a following like very few people. And I want to just thank you, because I'm a fan of yours also. You're a very successful guy. Say a few words. Please.

Commentator and comedian Terrence K. Williams. Thank you, President Trump. Thank you. Yes, let me—yes, this is a little too tall for me. First of all, I just want to say I love President Donald J. Trump. The media is attacking him. But when they attack him, they are attacking us. Because he is out here fighting for us. And they are harassing you, Mr. President, so they are harassing me.

And I want to say one more thing here. A while back, President Trump said, when he was talking to the Black community, "If you vote for me, what do you have to lose?" Because the do-nothing Democrats have done nothing for the Black community. Twenty-twenty is around the corner and we have a lot to lose now, because President Donald J. Trump has done so much for the Black community. Thank you, President Trump.

The President. Thank you.

He is something. And he's a talented, talented guy. And when he started talking, I wasn't—man, I watched it once. I watched it twice. And then, I called the First Lady over. I say, "What do you think of this guy?" [*Laughter*] Thank you very much, Terrence. We appreciate it a lot.

We come together at a time of extraordinary opportunity for our Nation. Thanks to our pro-American agenda, the economy is booming, wages are rising, and poverty is plummeting. We have the best economy we've ever had, and believe me, we're just getting started. We have such potential. Such potential.

Last month, the unemployment rate dropped to the lowest level in over 51 years: 3.5 percent. People didn't think they were going to see that a couple of years ago. If I would have said that, the fake news would've said, "This guy is exaggerating." [*Laughter*]

Wages are up by almost 3 percent in the last 3 years. When I was campaigning 3 years ago, and people were making less and less and less—they were making less 3 years ago. You go back 20 years from then, they used to make more money with one job than they made with two or three jobs. And now, for the first time in many, many years, wages are rising again.

The unemployment rate for African Americans is at the lowest it's ever been in the history of our country. And African American youth unemployment—young, African American talented people—recently reached the lowest rate ever recorded. So how do we lose that debate? We'll be up, and somebody will say, "I'm going to do this." I say, "Folks, how old is your country?" [*Laughter*] African American, the best numbers you've ever, ever had.

And I could go into plenty of other numbers. For the first time ever, as an example, the most new hires of prime working age are minorities and women. The African American poverty rate has reached its lowest level in the history of our country, so that's good.

And they're working hard, they're finding jobs, and they're getting good jobs. And if you don't like that job, you can get another one, because you have a lot of choice. It's like the military; we got them choice in the VA. They can go find another doctor. They can go out—you know, by the way, just because a lot of people are vets—the vets were treated horribly. You don't hear that anymore.

Audience member. No.

The President. You don't hear it.

Now, they'll go out and find some vet somewhere in this country that isn't happy. And that person will become a star overnight, right? [*Laughter*] But you don't hear it anymore.

But we did a thing called choice. And that's where people were waiting—our great veterans were waiting for 2 days, 5 days, 5 weeks, months to get a doctor. Now they don't have to wait at all. They go outside, they get a good doctor of their choice, and the doctor gives us a bill, we pay the bill.

And you know, the least important thing is, it actually costs us less. That's the least important. The most important thing is, we take care of our vets. Our vets were dying waiting to see a doctor. They'd go in—think of this. I mean, many of you, you go see a doctor. It's not that big a deal. They would go see a doctor, and they'd be waiting on line for weeks. And they'd be sick, but not bad. By the time they saw the doctor, they'd be terminally ill. And we don't do that anymore.

So it's a big thing. They've been trying to get this approved by—for over, I guess, Mike, over 45 years, and we got it done. We're good at getting things done. And how much sense does it make? So it's good.

So you have choice also. You have choice in your jobs. You don't like your job, you go out. We have a great economy. You go out, get another one. And it's incredible how well you're doing.

Our agenda is lifting up citizens of every background, race, religion, color, and creed. But while we are fighting every day to build up our Nation, the far left only wants to wreck, ruin, and destroy our Nation.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. And you know better than anybody: For the last 3 years, Democrat lawmakers, their deep-state cronies—[*laughter*]—the fake news media, they've been colluding in their effort to overturn the Presidential election—63 million people voted—and to nullify the votes of the American people. And many African American people voted for Trump even then. Now they like me more, because I said I was going to do it, and now I did it. So you'd better vote. I said I was going to do it. I said, "I'm going to do it."

Audience members. Four more years!

The President. Yes.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Thank you very much. But you remember, I'd make speeches, and I'd go through a list. I'd be talking about the African American community, and I'd go through a list of worst poverty levels ever, worst crime ever, worst schools ever, worst this—I'd go through 10 things. I'd read off from a list.

And at one big rally—I had 25,000 people—I said: "Go with me. What the hell do you have to lose?" Remember that, Candace? I said: "What do you have to lose? You're doing the worst in every category. You're getting just—it's terrible. What the hell do you have to lose?" [*Laughter*]

And I'll never forget, I got off stage, and my people came: "Sir, that wasn't very nice." I said, "No, it's true." What do they have to lose? And you went with me, and I did get a good vote, I have to say. You went with me, and now you have the best employment numbers you've ever had, the best numbers, the best poverty numbers. So it's good.

But the radical Democrats are willing to do anything to smear anyone and to lie about everything in their craven quest for power and money and other things, I guess. *[Laughter]* I don't want to tell you what those other things are, but they're not good. Although, maybe when the cameras shut off, we'll talk. *[Laughter]*

They're trying to steal your vote. They're trying to steal your voice and steal your country. They're trying to steal your country. And they don't have what it takes. "Shifty Schiff." How about Shifty Schiff?

Audience members. Boo!

The President. He got four Pinnochios today in the Washington Post. He lies like a son of a gun. He's been lying for 3 years. *[Laughter]*

But we will never let that happen, where they take away your country. We will uphold the sacred principle of government by and for the people. That's you. The corrupt forces in Washington—and they are corrupt—and that includes the media, because large parts of the media—not all of it. You have some great journalists, reporters. But large portions of the media are corrupt, perpetrating these hoaxes like never before.

The very same people who have made a living selling out American workers to foreign countries. They were closing the factories. You're losing your jobs. They leave our country, they make the product, they sell the product in. No tax, no nothing. So we ended up with empty factories and no jobs, by the thousands, by the tens of thousands, and jobs by the millions.

These are the same bought and paid-for politicians who let special interests write the laws, who push trade policies to enrich foreign nations, and who beg far-left judges to rewrite the Constitution of the United States to impose their own extreme ideology.

No one in America has been hurt more as a result of the Democrats' corrupt leadership and socialist policies than our Nation's African American communities. It's true. That's true. It's true. For a hundred years—for a hundred years—African Americans have gone with the Democrats. Has it worked?

Audience members. No!

The President. It hasn't worked. For—actually, I guess, Candace, it's even more—but a hundred years. And you look at what's going on in the cities run by these crazy-left Democrats, and what's going on is not good.

My administration is fighting with everyone and all our heart—*[laughter]*—to reverse the pain inflicted by Democrat leaders and to deliver hope and opportunity and prosperity for all Americans, but for African American communities all throughout our land.

Together, we will express the corruption, we will defeat the Socialists, we will defraud. And I tell you what: We will do what we have to do, but we will stop defrauding all of the people in our country, because they've defrauded the people in our country. We'll defend democracy. And yes, we will drain the swamp. But that's what we're doing.

African Americans built this Nation. You built this Nation. You know, you're just starting to get real credit for that, okay? I don't know if you know that. You're just starting to get—you built the Nation. We all built it, but you were such a massive part of it, bigger than you were given credit for. Does that make sense? Right? But with Candace around and Terrence, that's not going to happen for long. I—*[laughter]*.

But through generations of blood, sweat, and tears and—you deserve a government that defends your interests, protects your families, and cares for our own citizens first.

You know, at the border, where they want the open policies—they want open borders. They don't want walls. They actually do want walls, but because I want it—you know, I know how I can get the wall. If I announce tomorrow, "I don't want a wall," the Democrats would come out in favor of the wall. *[Laughter]* I should have thought of that 2 years ago. But the wall is being built. It would've been a lot easier. "We don't want the wall." "We want the wall." I say, "All right, go ahead and build." *[Laughter]*

Our philosophy is grounded in the sacred bonds of love and loyalty that unite all Americans. And we really have been united. It's been an incredible thing. A lot of great things have been happening. You don't necessarily see it at the top of government, where the hatred is tremendous, the hatred toward us. And a lot of it is because of the success. We're having such success. We're showing them what's going on—when you look at your unemployment numbers, how great they are. The best in history. You look at your employment numbers. You look at the poverty numbers.

You look at all of the things that have been so beneficial, it's driving them crazy, because they never produced numbers like that. And they're losing African American votes, and they can't do that. They just can't do that. They haven't done anything for you. They haven't done anything. A hundred years, they haven't done anything. At long last, you have a government that puts Americans first, puts you first, puts your families and your communities first.

We're adopting "buy American" trade policies to stand up for our workers. Our tax and regulatory reforms are stopping the outsourcing of jobs, where they outsource all your jobs to other countries, and keeping businesses in America where they belong. And keep your jobs where your jobs belong. We're fighting every day to secure our Nation's borders and to achieve an immigration system that prioritizes American families, wage earners, taxpayers, and people that can help you and can help our country.

To keep our cities safe, we're supporting the brave men and women of ICE and Border Patrol and law enforcement. And you'd be amazed at how many African American people come up, and they have people living near them that are brutal killers. They're killers. But you're tough; you fight back. But sometimes, you don't win those fights—*[laughter]*—because these guys are tough too. They shouldn't be in our country. And it's really amazing to see what some of our law enforcement does and how much they love you. And that's the fact. That's the fact. And we're lucky to have them.

To revitalize distressed neighborhoods, we created something that I'm very proud of. Tim Scott, South Carolina. You know Tim? Tim Scott has to get a lot of credit. He came to me with Jared, and he said, "So we'd like to do Opportunity Zones." I said, "What's that?" But once he told me, I said, "Maybe that would work."

And I think, Jared, it's one of the great—it's one of the great unknowns of the successes that we have. Thousands and thousands of zones in inner cities and poor neighborhoods. Tremendous investments going in. Tremendous jobs are happening. Revitalization is happening. It's been incredible for the African American community. I don't think there's ever been anything. It's early yet. It's a year and a half. But, Ja'Ron, I don't think we've ever had anything quite like it. And people don't like writing about it, because they don't want to give the Trump administration credit. But I'm used to that. I'm used to it. You've got to get used to it.

You know who knows though? The people know. The people know. But because no——

Audience member. [Inaudible]

The President. Thank you. *[Laughter]*

Because, really, no American community is going to be left behind. Any community.

To help former prisoners get a second chance at life, we passed groundbreaking—and this is with liberals and conservatives—some of the most conservative people in the Republican Party were so in favor of it. Senator Lee—Mike Lee, of Utah, great guy. Senator Grassley, great guy—Iowa. So many people.

Criminal justice reform. Everybody said it couldn't be done. And a group came to my office: "Sir, please. Please, would you help us?" These were liberal people. And I said, "I will." [Laughter] Van Jones was one. Nice guy. I wouldn't say treats me too good, but that's okay. [Laughter] Van Jones. And he said: "Sir, we need your help. We can't get five Senators. We can't get this, we can't get that. We need your help. We need your help. Please, sir, help me! Please, help me!" [Laughter]

I said, "I can get you those five Senators." And I called five or six or seven, to get the five. Sometimes, you have to call a little more than the five if you want to get the five, right? You'll learn. [Laughter] A couple said, "Could I take a pass on this, sir?" But I got five people. Right, Jared? And we got the vote, and people were shocked. And nobody else could've done it.

And they've been trying to change this for the African American community, for the Hispanic community, for other communities, but really, the African American and Hispanic communities, by far, benefited the most. And they've been trying to do this for decades. It started with the Clintons. It was not good. Right? Remember when she ran and she—

Audience members. Boo!

The President. No, remember when she ran, and she had that young African American woman who was tough? Maybe it was Candace. Could that have been you, Candace? [Laughter] But no, I don't think so.

But I remember how she was so angry at Hillary Clinton. But they passed that. And it was horrible for the Black community, for a lot of communities, but in particular Black and Hispanic and some others. And I said to a Senator: "It's a great thing. We've got to do it." People are in jail for 40, 50, 60 years for a crime that isn't even a crime today.

Audience member. Right!

The President. Right? Isn't that right?

Audience members. Yes.

The President. Our friend, Jared—we have number of them, but we helped a couple of our friends—a lot of our friends now. We pardoned certain people. Who you would say, Ja'Ron? Who would you say in particular? Go ahead. Give me a couple of names, because we had—you know, who I'm talking about? Alice. Right?

Participant. [Inaudible]

The President. We had a woman—Alice Johnson. We had a woman, Alice Johnson, who was this lovely woman, and she was in for about 22 years already. I mean, she's served 22 years, and I think she had another 25 or 26 to go for making a phone call. And look, she admits she did wrong. But today, it would be a slightly different—like, maybe not enough, to be honest with you. But it would be very different.

So she was in, and she was a wonderful woman, and Kanye West came, and Kim came, and they said, "President, could you do this?" I said, "Do what?" [Laughter] "Do what? What are you talking?" "A woman has been in jail for 22 years. She's got another 28 to serve, I think. Something like that." Think of that. And she's got another 28 to serve, and she's a great woman, and she's a wonderful woman.

And I get along with Kanye for a long time. You saw the way he—when he was with the White House; he puts the hat on. *[Laughter]* I think for 1 day I went up through the polls like through the roof. I'll tell you. *[Laughter]* He is—with the African American community, they like Kanye, and they like Kim Kardashian.

And we pardoned her, and we worked it so that she was going to be able to get out—a form of a pardon, where she could get out. And she came out. And I'll never forget the scene: She comes out of this big prison—mean, mean prison. Not too many of them are nice, right? *[Laughter]* But she comes out through the doors, and there are her children, but her children are now very grown. Big strong guys, beautiful women, beautiful—just a big family. And they just embraced. They just embraced. And it was on television all over. And the love, it was just incredible to see. And the tears—and they were just like one. It was incredible to watch.

And I said, "We have to do it with others." And you called Alice, I know that, Ja'Ron and Jared.

Audience member. [Inaudible]

The President. Come on. Give—give those names. They're great—

Audience member. So you got—*[inaudible]*.

The President. Right.

Audience member. You have Brenda—*[inaudible]*.

The President. Right, Brenda.

Audience member. You have Matthew as well.

The President. Right.

Audience member. You've got Keith—*[inaudible]*.

The President. Right.

Audience member. But also, prosecutors are now sending them letters to try to overturn what you've done.

The President. That's right. The prosecutors are doing things that they weren't doing before, right? That's right. Thank you very much. That's great. Boy, that was a—you have a good memory. That's very good. *[Laughter]* Huh, because you work with it, right? It's from the heart. When it's from the heart, you always remember. That's great.

And we have many others. And we're going—like we'll going to Alice, and we'll say, "Alice, who knows better"—because you can't let everybody out, because frankly, some are going to be there, and they deserve to be there.

But we say, "Alice, who else do you think in that prison—you grew up, you were there for so long—22 years—who else do you know that should be let out?" And she gave us some names. And not even that many names, but she gave us four, five names. And I guarantee you, those are great people. They've been in there also for many, many years. And they got to be friendly. And afterwards—she's smart. After all those years, she knows the good. And I have no doubt that it will work out. And we're getting them out now. We're in the process of getting them out to be with their families. So it's great. It's great. It's been a great thing.

But I did want to say—so Van Jones was on about 2 weeks ago, and he came to me, and I'm telling you, he was so nice. He was sitting right there when I was doing it. And I said: "Thank you, Van Jones. Thank you." This one, this one, that one, that one. And that was it. And he came up to me, thanked me. And that was it.

Then, about 3 weeks ago, I saw him on television. I don't watch his show too much, neither do too many. *[Laughter]* But I'm watching him, and he gets up, and he goes, "I want to thank a number of people, because we did something this year that was undoable. They said it couldn't be done. We passed criminal justice reform." Okay? Van Jones said it. "And I want to thank Reverend Al Sharpton." Well, he wasn't nowhere. He was nowhere to be found.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Just so we know, I've known him for a long time. He used to love me.

Audience member. Crook!

The President. We used to go to fights together with Don King. Don King is a friend of mine. Don King endorsed me. And Don King and Al Sharpton get along. We used to go to fights together, and he liked me until I ran and succeeded in politics. Then it wasn't to his benefit.

But look, Al is a con man. We all know that. Just a con man. He's a con man. And he scared NBC into giving him a show. You know, they don't want to have any trouble. But he's a—just a, sort of a third-rate con guy. *[Laughter]*

But here's Van Jones. *[Laughter]* Here's Van Jones. Van Jones: "I want to thank Al Sharpton. I want to thank all of these people." He's naming people I never heard of. The only one he didn't mention was me. And then, it got worse. You ready? Candace, listen to this. *[Laughter]* Terrence, are you listening? *[Laughter]*

So he named these people—a lot of people—standing at the end of a show. "I want to thank—because this was the greatest year we've ever had. We got criminal justice reform. I want to thank this one and that one and that one and that one." I never heard of any of them. And I kept waiting for my name. *[Laughter]*

I said: "Darling, come over here. I'm going to have a great, really, little name mention." *[Laughter]* "Yes, darling." The First Lady—how good is the First Lady? So she came over. And I kept waiting, and I kept waiting, and then he named a lot of people. That was the end. I said—I was a little embarrassed in front of my wife. I said: "He didn't name me. I'm the one that did it." *[Laughter]*

Audience member. That's right. That's right.

The President. I called up Jared. Right, Jared? I said, "What the hell is this?" But before that—*[laughter]*—he did have one other thing to say. This was 3 weeks ago. He said, "And I have one thing to say that we have to do. We must defeat this President."

Audience members. Boo!

The President. "We have to defeat President Trump. And we have to work 24 hours a day to defeat President Donald Trump." And I called Jared, and I said, "That's terrible." Right? Is that a true story? And then, he spoke to Jared, and he apologized, didn't he? He apologized. But I don't accept those apologies, you know?

Audience members. No!

The President. All right. Should we get back onto script, okay?

Audience members. No!

The President. "No." They say, "No." This is more interesting—they don't want to go back onto—this is much more interesting. We love you folks, okay? We love you.

Van Jones. Van Jones, he's another beauty. Thank you very much, Van, for the wonderful acknowledgment. I appreciate it. *[Laughter]*

To give every American child the best chance to reach the American Dream, we are fighting for school choice. Very important. Sadly, Democrat lawmakers care more about catering to lobbyists and powerful teachers unions than they do about improving our schools for our children. And Democrats care more about illegal immigrants than about their own African American constituents. It's true. They want to give health care to people that just walked into the country. And for you, they don't care. The whole thing is crazy. These people have gone absolutely nuts.

While we're fighting for the American way of life, the hard left and the radical left is working to trample the rule of law, erode individual liberty, and exert a far-reaching control over our lives. Left-wing censors have launched an all-out campaign against free speech. That is why they are trying to silence, deplatform, cancel, punish all of the proud conservative voters, all of the proud African American voices that know what's happening and know how to become big, big, successful people, help other people. They want to silence you.

But we know the patriots in this room will never be intimidated. I know that. I know that.

So here with us today is Kearyn Bolin, president of the Texas State University—that's a big deal—Turning Point U.S.A. Chapter, who has bravely defended the right to free speech. And, Kearyn, would you please come up and say a few words? Please. Thank you. I thought so. I love her hair. [*Laughter*] You look great. That's beautiful.

Texas State University student Kearyn Bolin. So last year at my college campus, they did try to ban Turning Point from our campus. So we fought strong, and we prevailed. The piece of legislation was completely unconstitutional, and we are still fighting strong on our campus. So we're still there.

I just want to thank Donald Trump for everything you have done for us. We are so incredibly honored to be here. And you've done so much for this country, and thank you so much.

I'd also like to thank Turning Point for giving me the platform and the confidence to fight for a right for freedom of speech. It hasn't been easy, and it will not be easy, but being a part of Turning Point and being able to see all of you accomplish so many of your goals and to help fight for the freedom of speech, it's honestly amazing, and it gives me so much hope.

Our generation is playing a vital role in keeping our First Amendment rights, and we are going to continue to keep up that fight.

So all of you on your campuses or in high school—I know a lot of you all are in high school—continue to fight for your right for freedom of speech, because you know where you stand, and everyone else can know where you stand too. So just keep up that fight.

The President. Thank you. Thank you, Kearyn.

[*At this point, the President kissed Ms. Bolin on the cheek.*]

Audience members. Aww!

The President. Thank you very much, Kearyn. [*Laughter*] I've got to get the other cheek.

[*The President kissed Ms. Bolin's other cheek.*]

The President. Now I feel better. You've done a fantastic job. I appreciate it too.

In order to protect the rights of our students, I signed an Executive order making clear that public colleges and universities shutting down free speech will risk losing all of the billions and billions of dollars that we give them.

So we'll shut down their Federal taxpayer dollars that go to them. And then, they shut down speech. And they just choose whoever it is. They'll let somebody speak; they'll tell other people you can't speak. And then, we're supposed to give them, individually, hundreds of millions of dollars. It doesn't work that way anymore.

I've also tasked my administration to explore every possible solution to stop social media giants from restricting your rights to speak your mind. And, Candace, you had a problem with that, I know. And other people have had a problem. Some people in this room have had a problem. Terrence, have you had a problem with it? Huh?

Audience members. [Inaudible]

The President. Terrence has had a problem. It's incredible. It's incredible. Yes, no, a lot of people have. But not the other side of the world. The other side doesn't have that problem. Very rarely do they have it. We must preserve the fundamental American rights that generations of Americans have sacrificed everything to secure.

With us this afternoon is Ben Okereke. That's a great name. I love that name. [Laughter] When Ben was 14 years old, he legally immigrated to the United States after suffering many hardships in Cameroon, which I hear is a beautiful, beautiful place. Cameroon.

[An audience member cheered.]

The President. Ooo. Wow. One person from Cameroon. [Laughter]

To give back to our country, he joined the United States Army and honorably served for 4 years as a very talented field artillery specialist. A lot of talent, they say. Ben, we salute your noble service. And please say a few words. Ben. Please. All yours.

Georgia State University student Ben Okereke. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, Mr. Vice President. And thank you, Charlie Kirk.

First of all, Mr. President, we would like to thank you for everything that you've done for the African American community so far. We thank you for criminal justice reform. We thank you for the lowest Black unemployment rate in this country, sir.

The President. Thank you, man.

Mr. Okereke. And finally, most importantly, sir, thank you for saving America and thank you for——

[Mr. Okereke began to choke up. The President put a hand on his shoulder.]

Audience members. Aww!

Audience member. It's all right!

Mr. Okereke. Thank you. Thank you. Finally, sir, thank you for taking on the fake news media, sir. [Laughter] Finally, we want you to build the wall, sir. [Laughter] Frankly, because we don't oppose immigration, but we oppose illegal immigration. So we want you to come to this country legally, if you're going to come to this country. Thank you.

The President. Thank you, Ben.

Mr. Okereke. Yes, sir.

The President. Good job. Thank you, Ben. And that's from the heart. That's from the heart. That's what it's all about.

The young leaders in this room remind us that true power in our Nation is not found in government or hallways or anywhere; it's found not in the media boardrooms. It really is where

the strength is. It's in our people. It's in your hearts. It's in your courage, your spirit, your faith, and your pride.

Together, we will defend the benefits and the beliefs that you want and you have and you're entitled to: the traditions and God-given freedoms that make our country the greatest in the world, and even, I think we can say, right now, the greatest in the history of the world. Just like your unemployment numbers, greatest in history. That's the greatest in history also.

You are my friends. I'm never going to forget you. You've been incredible. You've been incredible.

Audience members. We love you!

The President. Whether it's Ja'Ron, the job you do; or Charlie, I appreciate it; or Terrence; or Candace, you're all special people. Very, very special people.

And you're doing something very important. I don't even know if you know—maybe you don't know. And you know, sometimes, you're so into something, and you just don't really feel how important it all is. What you are doing is so important for your community and for this country.

We will renew the values that unite our people as one America. As one team, we will build up our Nation, we will lift up our forgotten communities, and we will defeat any threat. We will beat any challenge, we will overcome every obstacle, and we will achieve a glorious future of American greatness beyond our wildest dreams. And that's what you're doing.

To everyone here today: Keep up the great work. And I just want to say, from the bottom of my heart: God bless you, God bless your families, and God bless America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:07 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Charlie Kirk, founder and executive director, Turning Point U.S.A.; Special Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy Ja'Ron K. Smith; actor Debra Messing; Rep. Adam B. Schiff, in his capacity as chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence; Sen. Timothy E. Scott; White House Senior Adviser Jared C. Kushner; Van Jones, host, CNN's "The Van Jones Show"; former President William J. Clinton; 2016 Democratic Presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton; Charlotte, NC, resident Ashley Williams; musician Kanye O. West and his wife Kim Kardashian West; Memphis, TN, resident Alice Marie Johnson, whose lifetime prison sentence was commuted by the President on June 6, 2018; Al Sharpton, host, MSNBC's "PoliticsNation With Al Sharpton" program; and boxing promoter Don King.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Young Black Leadership Summit.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Bolin, Kearyn; Clinton, Hillary Rodham; Grassley, Charles E.; Johnson, Alice Marie; Jones, Van; King, Don; Kirk, Charlie; Kushner, Jared C.; Lee, Michael S.; Messing, Debra; Okereke, Ben; Owens, Candace; Pence, Michael R.; Schiff, Adam B.; Scott, Timothy E.; Sharpton, Alfred C., Jr.; Smith, Ja'Ron K.; Trump, Melania; West, Kanye O.; West, Kim Kardashian; Williams, Ashley; Williams, Terrence K.

Subjects: Business and industry : Domestic investment, promotion efforts; Civil rights : Freedom of speech; Civil rights : Racial equality; Communications : News media :: Accuracy and fairness; Defense and national security : Border security; Economy, national : Household income and wages; Economy, national : Improvement; Economy, national : Poverty; Economy, national : Strengthening efforts; Education : Postsecondary education :: Federal assistance; Education : School choice and voucher programs; Elections : Voter participation; Employment and

unemployment : Job creation and growth; Employment and unemployment : Unemployment rate; Homeland Security, Department of : Customs and Border Protection, U.S.; Homeland Security, Department of : Immigration and Customs Enforcement, U.S.; Immigration and naturalization : Illegal immigration; Law enforcement and crime : Criminal justice system, reform efforts; Law enforcement and crime : Law enforcement officers, service and dedication; Law enforcement and crime : Pardons and commutations; Mexico : Border with U.S., infrastructure and security; Taxation : Tax Code, reform; Veterans : Health and medical care; White House Office : Assistants to the President :: Senior Adviser; White House Office : Domestic Policy Council; White House Office : Vice President; Young Black Leadership Summit.

DCPD Number: DCPD201900697.