

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2019

Remarks Following a Tour of the Apple Inc. Manufacturing Facility at Flextronics International, Ltd., and an Exchange With Reporters in Austin, Texas

November 20, 2019

The President. Well, thank you very much. It's an honor to be here. We're seeing the beginning of a very powerful, important plant. And anybody that followed my campaign, I would always talk about Apple, that I want to see Apple building plants in the United States. And that's what's happening. And having—Tim Cook is somebody that I greatly respect—a great leader, a great businessman. And it's a very special day. For me, this is a very special day.

Our country is doing well, probably better than ever before, certainly from the standpoint of the economy. And we're in a State that I love: Texas.

And Tim has a couple of things to say, not only about this incredible product that is made right here—very, very unique product—but also about their expansion from this point forward. We've already done it up to here. But from this point forward. And the nice part: He doesn't have to worry about tariffs. Because when you build in the United States, you don't have to worry about tariffs. It sort of helps people make a decision to come in.

But he's a very special person, as far as this country is concerned, because of the great job potential and the great job that he's done. Apple is the first trillion-dollar company, and that was about a year ago. Now it's about a trillion-three, I think you said. But Apple is doing fantastically well.

So we're honored that you're doing what you're doing. We're honored to be here with you at this special occasion. And we'll be back. We'll be back. Thank you, Tim. Thank you very much.

Apple Inc. Chief Executive Officer Timothy D. Cook. Thank you. I'd like to thank everybody for coming and joining us. And I'd particularly like to thank President Trump, Secretary Mnuchin, and Ivanka, and the other members of the administration. I'm grateful for the—their support and pulling today off and getting us to this far. It would not be possible without them.

What you're seeing here—the product, the Mac Pro—is 15,000 times more powerful than the original Mac, and it can perform 56 trillion tasks per second. That's 56 trillion tasks per second. It's absolutely blow-away.

We could not be more proud of the product. It's an example of American design, American manufacturing, and American ingenuity. We want to thank everybody for coming.

And I turn it back to—oh, one other thing: This morning we also announced a \$1 billion investment, groundbreaking—Rebecca was there with me for this—for a 3-million-square-foot site in Austin, about 10 minutes or so away from here. So we view Austin as a very key place for the future of our company. It's the second largest site in the world for us, next to our home base in Cupertino.

So—and I'm hoping for, obviously, more investments to come. Thank you very much.

The President. So Tim was saying, just a little while ago, that he's starting this massive, new development also in Texas—Austin. But he's also said something to me about the American economy, because he's, you know, all over the world. I would say there's probably nobody that's more over the world than Apple.

And what would you say about our economy compared to everybody else?

Mr. Cook. I think we have the strongest economy in the world right now.

The President. The strongest in the world.

Congressmen, please come over. Two of our great Congressmen. And it's great to have you. I just see you in the audience here.

[*At this point, Representatives William H. Flores and John R. Carter greeted the President and Mr. Cook.*]

Rep. John R. Carter. Pleasure to meet you. I'm honored. Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. So if anyone has any questions, go ahead.

Q. Mr. President, have you discussed——

The President. Steve [Steve A. Holland, Reuters], go ahead.

Impeachment Testimony/News Media/National Economy

Q. What did you make of Ambassador Sondland's testimony this morning?

The President. Well, I think it was fantastic. I think they have to end it now. He said there was no quid pro quo. "The President did absolutely nothing wrong." If you look at it—I guess you've seen me—I took down exactly what he said. He called, and he said—he asked me where are we—what should he do. I said, "I want nothing." Then, I repeated it: "I want nothing. I want no quid pro quo. Tell the President"—as you know, of Ukraine—"to do the right thing."

And then, he finished off, and he said, "This is the final word from . . . the President of the United States." So what did the President want? "I want nothing." Okay? "I want nothing."

Q. Mr. President, have you considered firing the whistleblower?

The President. And let me tell you, it's a hoax. It's a disgrace. It's an embarrassment to our country. Nancy Pelosi has done a terrible job as Speaker. There's never been a Speaker that's done so little. And she's totally incompetent. And Shifty Schiff, he stands up, and he tells lies all day long. And even with that—so we have no due process, we can't have anything. And yet not only did we win today, it's over. And some of the fair press—of which there isn't too much—said this thing is over.

So the President of the United States told this guy, who is no—I mean, the question I asked—and it's the same question that a number of the Congressmen have asked: Why didn't he put this statement into his opening remarks? That's the most important statement there are.

For this country, for our country to be playing this—we're opening up massive Apple plants. We have the greatest economy in the world. We have the greatest economy that we've ever had in the history of our country. We have the best unemployment numbers that we've ever had.

But we have a fake press. We have a phony press. We don't have freedom of the press in this country. We have a phony press. They're dishonest, most of them. We have some fine people from—fine journalists and reporters and companies. But most of them are fake and phony. CNN, NBC, ABC, CBS, The Washington Post, New York Times—these are fake papers. They are fake press. And there is—they should be ashamed of themselves, and they hurt our country.

Q. Mr. President——

The President. And, to be honest with you, I think it's a great tribute to all of those people in swing States and all of those people in this country. We had an electoral college—as you know,

Congressman, we had a landslide, 306 to 223. We had a landslide. And they're trying to take it away, because they can't do it fairly.

But these are bad people. Nancy Pelosi is incompetent. She's gotten nothing done in Congress. And now, with their big star witness—this was going to be their star witness. Now, just so you know, I don't know him very well. He's a guy that got put there. He wasn't even on my side. He came over to me—I didn't even know that. He came over to me after I defeated other people. I defeated them all.

But you know what? What, really, we have to learn from this whole thing is the press. They ought to straighten out their act. Because we have the greatest country in the world but we have room to get even greater. But with a fake press, with the media the way it is, they should be ashamed of themselves.

Please.

Intelligence Community Whistleblower/The President's Telephone Conversations With President Volodymyr Zelenskiy of Ukraine

Q. Mr. President, have you considered taking any action against the whistleblower?

The President. The whistleblower is not a whistleblower. He's a fake. And everybody knows——

Q. Would you fire the whistleblower? Or——

The President. Excuse me. Everybody knows who the whistleblower is. And the whistleblower is a political operative. These gentlemen know it. He's a political operative.

And frankly, the IG should have never brought this. Because if he would have compared what the whistleblower said, if he would have compared it to what I said in the conversation—two conversations, really—but to what I said in the conversation with the President—who I think is a terrific person—of Ukraine, he would have said: "Well, wait a minute. The whistleblower said this." And that wasn't the conversation because we have the transcribed conversation.

And also, Shifty Schiff—he's a dishonest—he's a corrupt politician. When he imitated or tried to copy my conversation, he didn't copy it.

Rep. Carter. Yes.

The President. He made up a conversation. Went before Congress and made up a phony conversation, just like he does every time he talks. He's a phony. He's a very dishonest, very corrupt politician.

So, instead of—and look, the big upset, as you folks know, was when I released the transcript. Because I don't like doing that, because you have to keep this very, very classified and confidential when you're speaking to heads of state. But I released it because Schiff and the whistleblower made up a phony deal.

And I'll tell you what: You ought to be ashamed of yourself. The press should be ashamed, and they ought to end the witch hunt right now.

Q. What did you mean—what do you mean Zelensky should "do the right thing"?

Q. Would you take some kind of action against the whistleblower?

Impeachment/Ukraine-U.S. Relations/News Media

Q. When you say Zelensky should "do the right thing," what did you mean by that?

The President. I didn't say that.

Q. When you told Sondland that.

The President. He's already done the right thing, because——

Q. When you told Sondland that.

The President. ——the President—if you look—of Ukraine, and his spokesman, the Foreign Minister, they put out: "There was no pressure whatsoever." "None whatsoever." And you knew that. You knew that very well. But you're fake news, and you should be ashamed of yourselves, and you should change, because it's a very bad thing for our country.

Q. Mr. President, are you going to sign the Hong Kong bill?

Former Vice President Joseph R. Biden, Jr./R. Hunter Biden

Q. Do you still want Ukraine to investigate the Bidens, Mr. President?

The President. The Bidens is a whole different story. When you talk about corruption, when you have a guy that made no money, his father becomes Vice President, and all of a sudden, he's getting millions and millions of dollars from Ukraine, from China, from all of these countries—you just see two of them. This guy made nothing. He got thrown out of the Navy. He couldn't get a job. And then, his father becomes Vice President, and the press doesn't want to report it, because the press is dishonest.

So I think it's a disgrace. I think the whole thing with Biden is a disgrace.

Q. Are you saying——

Q. [*Inaudible*]—China talks, sir. China talks——

Q. Are you going to sign the Hong Kong bill?

The President. Steve, go ahead. Go ahead.

South Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement/Apple Inc./National Economy

Q. Should Apple be exempt from China tariffs?

The President. Well, we're looking at that. And you know, the problem we have is, you have Samsung—it's a great company, but it's a competitor of Apple, and it's not fair if—because we have a trade deal with Korea. We made a great trade deal with South Korea, but we have to treat Apple on a somewhat similar basis as we treat Samsung.

Now, with all of that being said, we're doing very nicely with China, but I like it the way it is now, because we're taking in billions and billions of dollars, and we're giving some of that money to farmers and others. But we are looking at Apple. When I wanted Apple to do, from day one—from before I got elected—I said, "Someday, we're going to see Apple building plants in our country, not in China." And that's what's happening.

It's all happening. It's all the American Dream. Our country has never done better. It's doing better than it's ever done.

Unemployment, the lowest levels. The numbers just came out today. African American, Hispanic American, Asian American, the lowest they've ever had in the history of our country. So we're very happy.

Thank you very much.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—other Apple products?

Q. Are China trade talks at an impasse?

Q. Mr. President, will you sign the Hong Kong bill, Mr. President?

The President. Say it?

China-U.S. Trade/U.S. Tariff Structure on Chinese Imports/National Economy

Q. Will there be a trade deal in place before the end of the year?

The President. So I can tell you this: China would much rather make a trade deal than I would.

Q. Then, why haven't they?

The President. Because I haven't wanted to do it yet.

Q. And why haven't you wanted to yet?

The President. Because I don't think they're stepping up to the level that I want.

Q. I spoke earlier today with Mr. Cook, and he said: "Another round of tariffs would be bad for business. It would be bad for the United States."

The President. I know, but you know——

Q. Will the tariffs take effect——

The President. Here——here's what I say——

Q. ——December 15?

The President. Here's what I say——here's what I say: What do you know?

I put in tariffs, everyone said, "Oh, gee, you're taking in billions—hundreds of billions of dollars we will be taking in." And everybody said, "Oh, that's going to be bad for the economy." Well, as you just heard from Tim Cook, we have the strongest economy, by far, in the world, and we're taking in billions and billions of dollars. So we'll see what happens.

We are dealing with China. I have a great relationship with President Xi. They're a great country, but we're a greater country than China.

If I didn't win, right now China would be a bigger economy than the United States. But because I won, we picked up—reported on your network—\$11 trillion in worth, in value. And China has lost probably \$25 trillion. We are much bigger than China right now, and we're going to keep it that way.

Thank you all. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:52 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to U.S. Ambassador to the European Union Gordon D. Sondland; Rep. Adam B. Schiff, in his capacity as chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence; Intelligence Community Inspector General Michael K. Atkinson; and Minister of Foreign Affairs Vadym Volodymyrovych Prystaiko of Ukraine. Mr. Cook referred to Adviser to the President Ivanka M. Trump; and Rebecca Clemons, director of administration, Williams County, TX. A reporter referred to S. 1838.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Apple Inc. manufacturing facility at Flextronics International, Ltd., in Austin, TX, tour; Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters :: Austin, TX.

Locations: Austin, TX.

Names: Atkinson, Michael K.; Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Biden, R. Hunter; Carter, John R.; Cook, Timothy D.; Flores, William H.; Pelosi, Nancy; Prystaiko, Vadym Volodymyrovych; Schiff, Adam B.; Sondland, Gordon D.; Xi Jinping; Zelenskiy, Volodymyr.

Subjects: Agriculture : Farm subsidies; Apple Inc.; Business and industry : Domestic investment, promotion efforts; Business and industry : Manufacturing industry :: Strengthening efforts; China : President; China : Trade with U.S.; China : U.S. tariff structure, strengthening efforts; Communications : News media :: Accuracy and fairness; Congress : House of Representatives :: Impeachment inquiry; Congress : House of Representatives :: Speaker; Economy, national : Improvement; Employment and unemployment : Unemployment rate; Europe : European Union :: U.S. Ambassador; Intelligence, Office of the Director of National; South Korea : Free trade agreement with U.S.; Texas : Apple Inc. manufacturing facility at Flextronics International, Ltd., in Austin; Texas : President's visits; Ukraine : Minister of Foreign Affairs; Ukraine : President; Ukraine : Relations with U.S.

DCPD Number: DCPD201900813.