

The President's News Conference

September 7, 2020

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you. Happy Labor Day. That was, really, a very special time I had speaking to some of the labor union heads and other people. They're very happy with the way things are going. As you probably see, the numbers are terrific.

So we called some people, wished them a very happy Labor Day, and they told us how they're doing, and we really celebrate the American worker. We are in the midst of the fastest economic recovery in U.S. history. So we have a lot to be thankful for, including this really beautiful day. It's why I thought we'd do this outside as opposed to in your more normal place.

The United States experienced the smallest contraction of any major Western nation. You probably know that. You look around and see how we're doing compared to every other nation, and our rise is spectacular. And we're rebounding much more quickly from the pandemic.

The U.S. economy added 1.4 million jobs last month, and we've have added a record-setting 10.6 million jobs since May—10.6 million jobs since May. That's a record that is not even close. Second place is a long ways away.

In July, the Congressional Budget Office was projecting unemployment over 10.5 percent through the end of 2020. So they thought 2020, and maybe it would be a lot longer than that. Some projections, where you'd go through the entire year, and that includes a lot of months in the following year, 2021. And instead, the unemployment rate plunged, really, to the surprise of many, all the way down to 8.4 percent in August. And that's the second largest single month decline on record. And we have the first; we have both of them. So we have the two number-one declines, "decline" meaning positive, not negative.

We're currently witnessing the fastest labor market recovery from an economic crisis in history—world history. By contrast, Biden presided over the worst, the weakest, and slowest economic recovery since the Great Depression. It was the—it was a long, slow slog, and it was a very small—very small on growth and very small on every other factor that you need. It was the weakest recovery.

Under my leadership, next year will be the greatest economic year in the history of our country, I project. And some people are starting to agree. We have a "V" shape. It's probably a "super V." And you see what's going on with the stock market, where it's, in certain cases, already setting records. NASDAQ has set 17 records already, and this is as we're, hopefully, rounding the final turn in the pandemic.

First, we'll end the pandemic. Under Operation Warp Speed, we've pioneered groundbreaking therapies, reducing the fatality rate 85 percent since April. You don't hear that from the press very often. They don't like to talk about that. So the fatality rate, 85 percent—think of that—since April.

The United States has experienced among the lowest case fatality rates of any major country in the world. And we are an absolute leader in every way. Under my leadership, we'll produce a vaccine in record time. Biden and his very liberal running mate—the most liberal person in Congress, by the way, who's not a competent person, in my opinion; would destroy this country and would destroy this economy—should immediately apologize for the reckless antivaccine rhetoric that they are talking right now, talking about endangering lives. And it undermines science.

And what's happening is, all of a sudden, you'll have this incredible vaccine, and because of that fake rhetoric—it's a politic rhetoric; that's all it is. Just for politics. Because now they see we've done an incredible job, and in speed like nobody has ever seen before. This could have taken 2 or 3 years, and instead, it's going to be—[laughter]—it's going to be done in a very short of period of time. Could even have it during the month of October.

So, contrary to all of the lies, the vaccine that they're—they politicalize. They'll say anything. And it's so dangerous for our country, what they say. But the vaccine will be very safe and very effective, and it will be delivered very soon. You could have a very big surprise coming up. I'm sure you'll be very happy. But the people will be happy. The people of the world will be happy.

Next, we'll return to unprecedented prosperity through our pro-American policies. We'll pass new tax cuts to boost take-home pay. We're going to be cutting taxes very substantially. We get it back through growth. We had tremendous growth until we got hit with the China virus.

We'll continue our historic regulatory reduction campaign. We've—as you know, in 3½ years, we've cut more regulations than any other administration, no matter how long, no matter what period of time you're talking about. We'll enact fair trade deals, and we're working on seven major fair trade deals right now. And when I say "fair," fair to our country—because our country was ripped off by every nation. Friend, foe, didn't matter: Every nation was ripping us off at a level that—it's just unbelievable, to be honest.

We're going to be expanding Opportunity Zones, and we will keep that going. It's been a tremendous—a tremendous—program. I want to thank Senator Scott, South Carolina, for coming up with that whole concept, because he came up, and I liked it right away, and it was—it's really turned out to be a tremendous thing, especially for African Americans, Hispanic Americans.

We'll continue to unleash American energy. We're number one in the world. And we're totally energy independent right now. And in 2021, we'll create 10 million jobs, at least, in the first 10 months.

Joe Biden and the radical, socialist Democrats would immediately collapse the economy. If they got in, they would collapse it. You'll have a crash the likes of which you've never seen before. Your stocks, your 401(k)s—remember, it's the people that own these massive, listed companies. A lot of people: rich people and not so rich people and middle-income people. And those stocks will crash like you've never seen before. The Biden plan begins with a \$4 trillion tax hike. And that will end everything, including growth. There won't be growth. There will be total contraction.

Biden has also pledged to demolish the U.S. energy industry and implement the same policies causing blackouts in California. He wants to have things lit up with wind. He'll have to talk to China, Russia, India, and lots of other countries, because they're not doing that. And if they're not doing it, it puts us at a tremendous economic disadvantage, and it doesn't work.

You take a look at the blackouts in California; it's really rather amazing what's going on there. They've tried to go—and that's just with a small portion going that route. That doesn't work, and it can't fire up our big plants. If we're going to have this great industry that we've created—can't fire up our big plants.

Biden's plan for the China virus is to shut down the entire U.S. economy. He's going to totally rely on somebody to walk up, "Yes, sir, it's time to shut it down." He'd be laying off tens of millions of workers and causing countless deaths from suicide, substance abuse, depression, heart disease, and other very serious illnesses.

Because when you do a shutdown, there's a problem on the other side; it's not just from the virus. You have a big problem with suicides, with losing your jobs, with all sorts of things that—you just take a look. Depression is a massive problem. And what happens is, you—they turn to substance abuse, alcohol, drugs. So we can't do that. And then, we'd have to give up all of the gains that I've been talking about over the last 3 months. We've—what we have done is incredible. We're setting records. All over the world, no matter where you go, nobody has done what we've been able to do.

So we're setting records in jobs. We're setting records in numbers. And you're going to see some very big numbers. Third-quarter numbers are coming out right before a very special day, November 3. So you have the numbers coming out, and they're, I think, going to be fantastic. You know, I think they're going to be fantastic.

The best numbers of all, if somebody doesn't come along and raise taxes—double, triple, quadruple your taxes—will be the numbers from next year. But you're going to have a good third-quarter number coming out. And I think it's going to be hard for even the media to disparage that number.

Biden wants to surrender our country to the virus, he wants to surrender our families to the violent left-wing mob, and he wants to surrender our jobs to China: our jobs and our economic well-being. I've taken in billions and billions of dollars from China. No other President has done what I've done. I've given much of it to the farmers. I've given it to farmers and manufacturers, but I've given most of it to the U.S. Treasury. Nobody has done that. We haven't taken in 10 cents from China ever.

They targeted our farmers, and I targeted them. And I gave \$28 billion to our farmers. Our farmers wouldn't be existent right now. Right now they're very happy. In fact, they're setting records on purchases. China is purchasing more corn than they've ever done. Record purchase of corn and soybeans, beef, because they know I'm not happy with them. They know I'm not happy at all.

And frankly, I don't want to set the world necessarily to thinking too much about it right now, but there's been no country anywhere, at any time, that's ripped us off like China has. We lose billions and billions of dollars for years and years, decades. We've lost billions and billions and billions of dollars by dealing with China. We get nothing from China. They get nothing, other than loss, other than giving our money. And they take that money, and they build their military. And you see they're building up a powerful military. And it's very lucky that I've been building our up, because otherwise, we'd be dwarfed right now by China. We would be a terrible thing—a terrible thing.

We're way ahead on the nuclear front. We've upgraded our nuclear. Hope to God we never have to use it. But we would be in a position that we are not in right now. But China is spending the money we give them to build up their military. So when you mention the world "decouple," it's an interesting word. So we lose billions of dollars, and if we didn't do business with them, we wouldn't lose billions of dollars. It's called "decoupling." So you'll start thinking about it. You'll start thinking.

They take our money, and they spend it on building airplanes and building ships and building rockets and missiles. And Biden has been just a pawn for them. He's been so easy. They dream about Biden. There was a report today that they hope that Joe Biden becomes President. If Joe Biden becomes President, China will own the United States, and every other country will be smiling also. They'll be smiling.

When reports come out that certain countries don't really like me too much, that's not because of my personality, although it could be that also, frankly. It's because of the fact that I've been very tough on countries that have been ripping us off for so many years.

If you look at NATO, with the exception of eight countries—we're one of them—every country is way behind. They're delinquent, especially Germany, in paying their NATO bills. That means we end up paying it, and we're not doing it. I told them; we're not doing it. And they've increased their spending now \$130 billion, going up to \$400 billion a year. It's all because of me. Then, you hear the country doesn't like me. I mean, I can understand that, because President Obama and other Presidents, in all fairness, would go in there, and they'd make a speech, and they'd leave. I went in there, I looked, and I said: "This is unfair. We're paying for NATO." We're paying for NATO. Almost all of it.

So they rip us off on the military and then they rip us off, with the European Union, on trade. And Biden doesn't have a clue. You know he doesn't have a clue. Everybody knows he doesn't have a clue. In primetime, he wasn't good. And now it's not primetime.

He spent 47 years sending American jobs to China, to Mexico, and to other countries, while collecting millions of dollars in campaign and super PAC contributions from global corporations that got rich by making American workers poor.

His son, "Where is Hunter?"—Where is Hunter?—I call him "Where is Hunter?"—walked away with \$1½ billion to manage, even though he never did that before. He walked away with a fortune from Ukraine, from China, and from other countries. Between his son and his brother, you ought to read the statements. And the press doesn't pick that up. If I ever did that, it would be—it would be hell, even worse than it's been. Okay? Even worse than it's been.

What he's done is so incredible. "I won't give them the billion dollars," he says. "I won't give them, unless they get rid of that Prosecutor." And then, *voilà*, they got rid of the Prosecutor. And the press doesn't even want to talk about it. You talk about quid pro quo. With me, there was none. With him, he's right on tape, and you don't want to cover it. You should be ashamed of yourselves. The press should be ashamed of themselves.

But Biden shipped away our jobs, threw open our borders, and sent our youth to fight in these crazy endless wars. And it's one of the reasons the military—I'm not saying the military is in love with me; the soldiers are. The top people in the Pentagon probably aren't because they want to do nothing but fight wars so that all of those wonderful companies that make the bombs and make the planes and make everything else stay happy.

But we're getting out of the endless wars; you know how we're we doing. We defeated 100 percent of the ISIS caliphate—100 percent. When I was in—when I came in, it was a mess; it was all over. They have it, in a certain color, all ISIS. A year later, I said, "Where is it?" "It's all gone, sir. Because of you, it's all gone," because of my philosophy. But all gone. And I said, "That's good. Let's bring our soldiers back home. Some people don't like to come home. Some people like to continue to spend money." One cold-hearted globalist betrayal after another, and that's what it was.

Biden supported NAFTA. He supported China's entry into the World Trade Organization. Two disasters. The most disastrous trade deals in history, both of them. I can't tell you which was worse; they were both terrible.

And as you know, I ended it, and I ended NAFTA. And we're looking at the World Trade Organization. They've become much better—I will say that. We—World Health, I got out of, because we're spending \$500 million. China was spending \$38 million, and China controlled it. But World Trade, we're looking at it. They've been very nice to us lately—I will say that—

amazingly. We never used to win anything at the World Trade; would lose every case. Now, all of a sudden, we're winning a lot of cases. We just won \$7 billion as a case. And they're talking to us much differently than they used to, because if they don't shape up, we're going to ship out. That's all. We're not treated fairly.

China is treated as a developing nation. Developing nation. We're treated as a nation that's fully developed. We're not fully developed, as far as I'm concerned—when you look around at Portland and you see what these Democrats are doing to our cities. Take a look at what's happening in New York and Chicago, where you have Democrat-run cities and mayors that are running, and Governors that are running States so badly, and mayors running cities so badly. It's very sad to look at it. It's Democrat-run, every one of them that I see. I guess we could probably find one or two that aren't. But I don't—so far, I haven't been able to.

If you look at Biden, he supported TPP, Trans-Pacific Partnership, which would have been a disaster; it would have destroyed our automobile business. By the way, many plants are being built right now—auto plants—in Michigan, just like I said. They're being built in Ohio; they're being built in South Carolina, North Carolina. They're being built all over and expanded at a level that we've never seen before, because I said to Japan and Germany and others: "Sorry, you've got to come here and build plants. Otherwise, we're going to have to make it very tough on you with tariffs."

And we got out of the horrible Paris climate accord that he'll go back into, because, you know, it sounds wonderful. It's a disaster for this country. They've basically taken away your wealth, the Paris climate accord. And the other countries don't have to adhere to it. China doesn't kick in until 2030; they don't have to do anything until 2030. We had very high standards. We would have had to close, under some scenarios, 25 percent of our businesses in order to qualify under this ridiculous Paris climate accord. It sounds good. It was very bad and very expensive.

The New York Times has just published an entire story on Biden's China sell-outs, which is amazing for the New York Times. I appreciate that. In 2001, Biden said, "The United States welcomes the emergence of a prosperous, integrated China on the global stage because we expect this is going to be a China that plays by the rules." They didn't play by the rules. They didn't play by the rules.

The World Trade Organization, one of the reasons it's so bad is that China didn't play by the rules. We did. We did. But their rules were easier because they're considered a developing nation, so they had a much lower standard. But even that, they didn't play by the rules. That's when they became a rocket ship. They were flatlined for years and years and years. Then, they joined the World Trade Organization. And frankly, they cheated. Okay? They cheated. I'll say it. What difference does it make? I feel much differently. I feel I made a great trade deal with China. Great. And they're buying. You know why they're buying? Because they know I'm not happy. That's why they're buying. And I talk about it because today is Labor Day, and it's a good time to talk about when we're being ripped off by countries. But nobody is even close to China.

Biden cheered China's rise as a great power "because great powers adhere to international norms in the areas of nonproliferation, human rights, and trade." Well, they didn't. They took advantage of stupid people. Stupid people. And Biden is a stupid person. You know that. You're not going to write it. But you know that.

The cost of Biden's economic treachery was 60,000 shuttered American factories. And I heard this morning, the real number is probably 70,000—70,000 shuttered American factories. And he's talking about how wonderful it is with China. No, China has been very bad, on top of which we had the China plague sent to us and other viruses—nothing near this serious—but the swine, and we had other viruses sent in over the years that came from China. I wonder why.

If Biden wins, China wins, because China will own this country. If Biden wins, China will own this country, and hopefully, you're not going to be able to find that out. It's the most important election in our history, right now. Most important election in our history.

Under my administration, we will make America into the manufacturing superpower of the world, and we'll end our reliance on China once and for all. Whether it's decoupling or putting in massive tariffs like I've been doing already, we're going to end our reliance on China, because we can't rely on China. And I don't want them building a military like they're building right now, and they're using our money to build it.

We'll manufacture our critical medical supplies in the United States. We'll create "Made in America" tax credits and bring our jobs back from China to the United States. And we'll impose tariffs on companies that desert America to create jobs in China and other countries. If they can't do it here, then let them pay a big tax to build it someplace else and send it into our country. We'll prohibit federal contracts from companies that outsource to China. And we'll hold China accountable for allowing the virus to spread around the world.

Now you can understand why China would much rather see Sleepy Joe than Donald Trump. But as long as I'm President, we will never waver in our undying loyalty to the American worker and to our country as a whole.

So happy Labor Day, everybody.

Yes. Go ahead.

Former Senator John S. McCain III/The President's Alleged Comments Regarding Fallen U.S. Servicemembers/The President's Canceled November 2018 Visit to Aisne-Marne American Cemetery in France/News Media

Q. Thanks, Mr. President. The issue of what happened when you were in France continues to be a story.

The President. You're going to have to take that off, please. Just—you can take it off. Your health—how many feet are you away?

Q. I'll speak a lot louder.

The President. Well, if you don't take it off, you're very muffled. So if you would take it off, it would be a lot easier.

Q. Well, I'll just speak a lot louder. Is that better?

The President. It's better, yes. It's better.

Q. Mr. President, some people are having a hard time believing your denials of the Atlantic story because of what you said about John McCain in the past. Do you understand that? And have you asked John Kelly—

The President. No, I don't understand that.

Q. And have you asked John Kelly to refute that story?

The President. No, I don't understand it at all, no, because I've always been on the opposite side of John McCain. John McCain liked wars. I will be a better warrior than anybody, but when we fight a war, we're going to win them. And frankly, I was never a fan of John McCain. You know that; that's been very obvious. I was—but I had to approve his entire—his funeral. I wanted him to get—he deserved a first-class—you know, and it all was approved by me. We sent Air Force One to pick up the casket—a lot of things.

But no, I was never a fan of John McCain, because he wanted the endless wars, and I didn't. I thought that the way the vets were taken care of—our great vets—was not good, not appropriate. And of course, he took the fake, dirty dossier and gave it over to the FBI. So this is not somebody—am I supposed to say, "What a wonderful guy"?

So, you know what? I lived with him. He lived with me. But we had different philosophies. I think my philosophy is right. I think it's turned out to be right. But I wasn't a fan. But I respect people, and I respect a lot of people. That doesn't mean I necessarily have to agree with them, and I didn't agree with him on a lot of things.

The story is a hoax, written by a guy who has got a tremendously bad history. The magazine itself—which I don't read, but I hear it's just totally anti-Trump; he's a big Obama person, he's a big Clinton person. And he made up the story. It's a totally made-up story.

In fact, I was very happy to see Zach Fuentes came out and said now he's—that's—I think that's number 15—and these are people that were there. That's the 15th person. General Kellogg, everybody that was there knew what happened. And so I was happy to see that Zach came out and said it's not true. He just came out.

And it's a disgrace. Who would say a thing like that? Only an animal would say a thing like that. There is nobody that has more respect for not only our military, but for people that gave their lives in the military. There's nobody—and I think John Kelly knows that. I think he would know that. I think he knows that from me.

But Zach Fuentes, as you know, worked for John. And I think they both know that. But Zach came out, as you know, today or yesterday, last night, and said very strongly that he didn't hear anything like that. Even John Bolton came out and said that was untrue.

Now, what was true is that we had the worst weather. I think it was as bad a rain as I've just about ever seen. And it was a fog you—you literally couldn't see. I walked out, and I didn't have—I didn't need somebody to tell me. I walked out and I said, "There's no way we can take helicopters in this." I understand helicopters very well. And they said, "No, sir, that's been canceled."

They would have had to go—Secret Service, I have the whole list—they would have had through a very, very busy section, during the day, of Paris. They would have had to go through the city. The Paris police were asking us, "Please don't do it," because they're not ready. When you do that, you need a lot of time. They take days and days and days to prepare for that.

I wanted to do it very badly. I was willing to sit in the car for 2 hours, 3 hours, 4 hours. I didn't care. It didn't matter. And I had nothing else to do. I went there for that; I had nothing else to do. It was ended because of the terrible weather, and nobody was prepared to go through, in terms of Paris, the police, the military, and the Secret Service. And they came out very strongly and said, "Sir, we can't allow you to make this trip." If I wanted to: "Sir, we can't allow you, from a safety standpoint."

It was a phony story, just like the dirty dossier—the fake, dirty dossier; just like the Russia collusion; just like all of the other phony stories. And there'll be more phony stories.

But I do appreciate Zach coming out. But Zach now is the 15th person that's denied it. Zach now, I think, also talked about the weather aspect of it. And he's probably the 14th or 15th person that blamed it on weather. So that's enough of that.

Yes, please.

Q. Mr. President——

Protests and Civil Unrest in U.S. Cities/Deployment of Federal Law Enforcement Officers to U.S Cities

Q. Thank you, sir. Christina Bobb, One America News. Thank you for holding the briefing.

The President. Thank you.

Q. We're seeing judges, most recently in Detroit, limit police ability to use nonlethal force. My first question would be: Should the police be allowed to use nonlethal force to quell the violence in their cities?

The President. We're talking about where? Nonlethal force?

Q. Right. So, in the riots, most recently——

The President. The riots?

Q. Yes.

The President. Well, I think what's happened is the—the toughness. These are Democrat-run cities, all. And there's no retribution. There's no—they stand there, they throw things at the people that are supposed to be protecting something, and nothing happens. They throw rocks. They throw cans of soup. They throw lots of hard objects. And rarely does anything happen.

But I've told, when we have the Federal in there—as you know, I told the U.S. Marshals to go get the man who killed a—another man. And they know who it was, and you have to arrest him. You have to arrest him. After 2½ days, they didn't arrest him. The U.S. Marshals went in, and it ended up being a gunfight, and the man was killed. But this is a man that had a bad record, and this is a man that killed a man in the street. I mean, I witnessed it; most people witnessed it. And the U.S. Marshals went in; they weren't playing games. They can't play games. If somebody is breaking the law, there's got to be a form of retribution.

I watch—so often, when I watch some of the areas that we're talking about—now we have Rochester—that's, again, Democrat Governor, Democrat mayor. All Democrats, every one of them, and it always will be.

I was with the Governor in Texas; he looked at me and said, "I can't imagine how they allow this to happen." And you know, it's different. It's different. I could talk about other Governors saying the same thing.

Yes, please, go ahead.

Removal or Defacement of Monuments, Memorials, and Statues

Q. If I could follow up on that. We're also hearing reports of groups like Antifa and Black Lives Matter traveling around the country, leaving their home cities to go riot and protest in other cities where they're causing damage.

The President. Yes.

Q. Do we expect to see prosecution or charges——

The President. Yes.

Q. ——from the Department of Justice for those traveling for that purpose?

The President. So we have now over a thousand people—Federal—in jail. We're prosecuting many people. A big thing was when I signed the law putting people in jail, if you knock down monuments. That was 3 months ago. There hasn't been a Federal monument knocked down in 3

months, or even thought about. I don't think they've even thought about it. So that's had a very big impact—a very big impact.

But yes, we're going around, and the nice part is, you people take—see those people up there?—they take nice pictures of everybody, so we don't even have to bother. We can use the news photos. We had a photo right over there of Andrew Jackson, the monument. He was getting ready, and this guy was a big, brave guy, and he was up like this, and he was showing off to all his friends. And he got arrested, and so did a lot of other people get arrested. And I would say we have the ultimate proof. Now, in that case, we got there before they ripped down the statue of Andrew Jackson, which is so beautiful, which is right over there. But they never got it.

But right after that, I signed an order saying you go to prison for 10 years. And as soon as I signed that order, that was the end of the statues coming down. But they have other ideas. They've got plenty of ideas. They're not at want for ideas.

Please, go ahead.

National Economy/Economic Stimulus Legislation

Q. Mr. Spunt—David Spunt from Fox News. Mr. Trump—Mr. President, thank you for taking my question. Sir, you talked a lot about the economy and touted the economy. Three weeks ago, in Bedminster, I asked you specifically why you have not called Democratic leadership in the White House to meet with them. If they don't want to meet, it's on them.

A lot of people are criticizing you. I cover you on the weekends and stuff. You're——
The President. I don't think they are.

Q. —doing a lot of golfing. Why have you not met with them in person?
The President. Yes.

Q. I mean, we're in September. There is no deal. There is no hope of a deal.
The President. I know. I know.

Q. We're 2 months out from the election. What do you say to——
The President. Don't say there's "no hope." Why do you say there's "no hope"?

Q. But what can you say to the millions——
The President. What do you know?

Q. Well, what can you say—it doesn't seem——
The President. What do you know?

Q. It doesn't seem like there's hope, sir.

The President. And let me just tell you: I know my customers; that's what I do. I know Pelosi, I know Schumer very well. They don't want to make a deal, because they think it's good for politics if they don't make a deal. This has nothing to do with anything other than you have to know who you're dealing with. I do. These are people that I don't have a lot of respect. I don't think they have a lot of respect for the American people. And I know who I'm dealing with.

And I don't need to meet with them to be turned down. They don't want to make a deal, because they know that's good for the economy. And if they make a deal that's good for the economy, and therefore it's good for me for the election in November—November 3—and therefore, they're not going to make a deal.

Now, if we gave the store away, if we bailed out all of their Democrat-run cities where we give them a trillion dollars, which is the kind of money they want—they want a trillion dollars to bail out badly run, Democrat cities and States. Whether it's New York or Illinois or others, they want to bail them out. And we're saying, "Well, we're not going to pay that kind of a price in order to bail the cities out." We'll do something to help cities, but that's going to have to rest on its own.

And why didn't you do this at the beginning? Because they could have done it at the beginning. So I know who I'm dealing with.

And I'm on the phone with Mnuchin and with Meadows and with all of these people constantly, you know, while they're there. But I also know when it's time to meet with people. I've done very well with deals, okay? That's what I do. And I know when it's time to meet. But I don't have to meet them in order to be turned down and in order for them to walk out to the sticks—which is the microphones—and give you people a false report of what just took place in the Oval Office.

So they don't want to make a deal because they think that if the country does as badly as possible, even though a lot of people are being hurt, that's good for the Democrats. But, David, that's a bad thing.

Yes, please. Go ahead.

Q. But as President, shouldn't you take the high road, sir?

The President. I am taking the high road. I'm taking the high road by not seeing them. That's the high road.

Yes.

Q. And you——

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. David——

The President. And if I thought it made a difference or would make a difference, I'd do it in a minute.

Yes. Go ahead.

2016 Donald J. Trump Presidential Campaign/Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act/Vote-by-Mail Policies/2020 Presidential Election

Q. Yeah, David Jackson, USA Today. My question is about the Durham report, which you have talked about recently. You said, "Let's see what happens." Now, you've accused people of committing crimes against you during the Russia investigation——

The President. Yes. Sure. Sure.

Q. ——including President Obama and Joe Biden.

The President. They spied on my campaign. That's right.

Q. Because my question is——

The President. They spied on my campaign. And if they were Democrats, they would have been in jail 2 years ago. They would have been in jail—literally, if this side were the Democrat side, they would have been in jail 2 years ago for 50-year terms for treason and other things.

Q. But excuse me, my question is: Do you want the Justice Department to indict people over this?

The President. I'm not going to say that. I have to see the report. I haven't seen—I purposely—I don't know if that was a good thing, smart thing. I don't know. But nobody can complain about it. I have every right to have been very much involved, and maybe someday I'll get involved in it.

They spied on my campaign, and that includes Biden and Obama. They spied on my campaign trying to defeat me. They wrote up a fake dossier that has proven to be totally fake—written by Christopher Steele, paid for by Hillary Clinton and the Democrats—and they used that illegally in the FISA courts.

If we did what they did, you would have many people in jail all right—right now. And you have, other than the one agent that admitted his guilt that he forged documents—we don't have that yet, but the report hasn't been issued yet. Let's see what happens.

Q. It sure sounds like you want to prosecute people.

The President. But let me just—let me just tell you something: President Obama and Biden—Sleepy Joe, he knew everything that was happening. They were spying on my campaign, and they got caught. Now let's see what happens.

But if this were the opposite way, people would have been jailed. They would have been in jail already for a period of at least—it would have started 2 years ago, and it would have been 50 years for treason, because you can't do that. That's never—and nothing like that's ever happened before. Then, they created, at tremendous expense—the money they paid is tremendous; I'm sure you know the money that was paid, millions of dollars. They created a fake dossier—a fake dossier—proven to be, now, fake. Everyone—and they used it in the FISA courts. That's a crime.

Q. But it sure sounds like you want to prosecute——

The President. So far, I haven't seen anybody have a problem. But the report hasn't been issued yet. Let's see what happens with the Durham report.

But this started at Obama, and some people would say—and some people, "Well, but he was President," like, "Let's leave him alone." If it were me, they wouldn't be leaving me alone, I can tell you. It's a totally double standard, and it's a disgrace.

And if I were a Republican Senator and if I were a Republican Congressman—and we have some great ones, but we have a lot of them that don't fight the way that the other side fights. We have much better policy. We have much better things going for us, like borders and walls and immigration and no sanctuary cities. And a lot—they have a lot of bad stuff going, but they're dirty fighters.

And the dirtiest fight of all is the issuance of 80 million ballots, unrequested. They're not requested; they're just sending 80 million ballots all over the country. Eighty million ballots, nonrequested. I call them "unsolicited ballots." That's going to be the dirtiest fight of all. People are going to get ballots; they're going to say, "What am I doing?" And then, they're going to harvest. They're going to do all the things.

And if you look at the last period of 6 months—take a look at the races where they've sent ballots out. Take a look at Carolyn Maloney, whose race should be redone because she won that race totally unfairly to her opponent. Her opponent did very well against her. That race should be rerun, but they declared her the winner, because they heard I found out about it. But take a look at what's happened in New Jersey and in Virginia, in different places. It's a disgrace. That will be a beauty.

Yes, please.

U.S. Postal Service Postmaster General and Chief Executive Officer Louis DeJoy

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. If proven true, are you okay with Postmaster General DeJoy and the fact that he asked former employees at his private company to make donations to the GOP and then reimburse them? Are you okay with that?

The President. Yes, I don't know too much about it. I read something this morning, but I don't—other than that, I'd have to see it. He's a very respected man. He was approved very much by both parties, I guess. It was sort of an approval that took place by both parties. I don't know exactly what the story is. I'll certainly know within a short period of time. I just read it for the first time—I read it this morning, just like you did.

Q. Would you support an investigation, sir?

The President. Sure. Sure.

Q. And in——

The President. I think let the investigations go. But he's a very respected man. Again, it was a bipartisan commission. Postmaster General is appointed by a bipartisan commission. And we'll see how that goes. But no, I think he's a very honest guy, but we'll see.

Yes.

Q. If he's proven to be a campaign——

Q. Thank you, Mr. President——

The President. Go ahead, please.

Q. Mr. President, just a follow-up, please, if you don't mind. If it's proven to be a campaign finance scheme, do you think he should lose his job?

The President. Yes. If something can be proven that he did something, always. You know?

Q. Thank you.

The President. Always. They've been looking at me for 4 years; they found nothing. Four years. Think of it: For 4 years—from the day I came down the escalator, I've been under investigation by sleaze, and they found nothing. They found nothing. A friend of mine said, "You have to be the most innocent, honorable man ever to hold the office of President."

Think of it: They spent—just Mueller alone, he spent—I guess the real number turned out to be \$48 million, but whatever it was—many, many millions of dollars. They had 18 angry Democrats looking. They had FBI agents all over the place. They had every—and they have no collusion. Friends of mine have said—sophisticated friends have said, "You've got to be the most innocent guy ever to hold this office." And there's a lot of truth to that.

Yes, please.

Nord Stream 2 Natural Gas Pipeline/North Atlantic Treaty Organization/Defense Burden-Sharing

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. After Navalny poisoning, Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany is under pressure to cancel Nord Stream 2 pipeline from Russia to Germany. Would you support such a move?

The President. Sure.

Q. Do you think that the project should be canceled?

The President. Sure. Well, I've been support—I've been supportive of that. I was the first one that brought it up. You never heard of Nord Stream 2 until Trump came along.

When I came along, I said: "Wait a minute. We're protecting Germany from Russia, right?" NATO. "We're protecting Germany from Russia. Germany is paying Russia billions and billions of dollars to get their energy." And the real number is, probably 60 to 70 percent, ultimately, of their energy is going to come from Russia. And I said this for years, that nobody talks about it. One of the many things, between sanctions and all of the—what we've done for Ukraine, relative to what the past—they used to send pillows, and we sent tank busters. But I brought that up a long time ago. Russia is unhappy that I brought it up. But you never heard of Nord Stream 2; nobody did, until I got elected.

And I said: "Why is Germany making a deal to give billions of dollars to Russia, and then we're protecting Germany from Russia? How does that work?" And then, on top of it, Germany is delinquent, because they're only paying a little more than 1 percent and they're supposed to be paying 2 percent, and even the 2 percent is low. But just remember: Trump—me—I got the countries of NATO to spend one point—\$130 billion, going to \$400 billion a year. Think of it: \$400 billion a year more for NATO.

And the purpose of NATO primarily is Europe protection against Russia. Now, they can use it for other, I guess—and they have a little bit in the Middle East, et cetera, et cetera.

But I'm the one that did that. So—but nobody talks about that. Nobody talks about Nord Stream 2.

The answer is: Absolutely, if they feel that something happens. But I don't know that Germany is in a position right now, because Germany is in a very weakened position, energy wise. They're closing all their plants. They're closing their nuclear. They're closing their coal. They're closing a lot of plants. And they are—they have put themselves in a very bad position, frankly. Very, very bad position.

Yes, please.

News Media/Former Chief of Staff John F. Kelly

Q. Mr. President, can I follow up Jeff Mason's [Jeff Mason, Reuters] question? Have you asked John Kelly to publicly refute the Atlantic? And then, can I ask something else?

The President. No, I have nothing against John. I have nothing against anybody. No.

I was very heartened to see that a friend of his—because I know Zach is a friend of his and worked for him—I was very heartened to see that Zach Fuentes came out with the statement that he did—I guess, late last night—that it was not true.

Office of Management and Budget Guidance on Federal Employee Training Restrictions

Q. Can I ask another question, sir, on a different topic, Mr. President? Mr. President, what exactly is un-American about Federal Government training programs that are aimed at improving inclusivity or pointing out biases?

The President. Well, we're going to do a report. Yes, I fired those people; they're all gone. And it was a disgrace, frankly. And we're going to give you a big report that's going to make you very happy.

All right, yes, please.

Coronavirus Vaccine and Treatment Development

Q. Thank you. Darlene Superville, AP. You said a moment ago, "They'll say anything." You were talking about Joe Biden and Kamala Harris and their comments about the vaccine. You have asserted——

The President. No, they say worse; they say negative. They say negative. They're going to make the vaccine into a negative so that when we have it—and I spoke to the head of Pfizer, I spoke to the head of Johnson and Johnson, I spoke to the heads of the greatest medical companies in the world. We're doing great. We're going to have it soon.

Q. Right——

The President. Wait a minute. So now what they're saying is: "Oh, wow, this is bad news. President Trump is getting this vaccine in record time." By the way, if this were the Obama administration, you wouldn't have that vaccine for 3 years, and you probably wouldn't have it all.

So we're going to have a vaccine very soon, maybe even before a very special date. You know what date I'm talking about.

Q. Yes.

The President. But let me just tell you—wait. And what they're doing, because they think it is going fast. And if you talk to a lot of your sources—if you have sources—if you talk to your sources in the FDA, you'll see it's going very, very well. The numbers are looking unbelievably strong, unbelievably good.

So now they're saying: "Wow, Trump has pulled this off. Okay, let's disparage the vaccine." That's so bad for this country. That's so bad for the world to even say that. And that's what they're saying.

But I watched Kamala's poll numbers drop from 15 to almost zero and then drop out even before she ran in Iowa because people didn't like her, and I understand why. She will never be President—although I have to be careful, because Obama used to say that about me. So I have to be a little bit careful.

Q. Right, but——

The President. But you have to look at her a little bit more closely, because obviously Joe is not doing too well. So you're going to have to look at her a little bit too closely.

But she's talking about disparaging a vaccine so that people don't think the achievement was a great achievement. I don't want the achievement for myself, I want something that's going to make people better, that people aren't going to get sick with. That includes therapeutics, where we're doing equally as well. Therapeutics.

Q. May I finish? May I finish the question?

The President. Go ahead.

Q. Your point is that: What they're saying is that they're saying it for a political purposes.

The President. Yes.

Q. You have asserted repeatedly that a vaccine will be on the market by—before the election, by the end of October.

The President. No, I didn't say—I didn't say "they will." I said, "By the end of the year."

Q. Aren't you doing the same thing that you——

The President. No, but you're not quoting me accurately.

Q. —say they're guilty of?

The President. I said that vaccines will be on the market before the end of year, but they may even be on the market—they may even be developed and fully developed, tested, and everything else.

You know, we have 30,000 people, in just one vaccine right now, under test in very, very highly infected areas. So we're going to be able to get a good result, one way or the other, very soon.

So I didn't say what you said. What I said is "by the end of the year." But I think it could even be sooner than that. It could be during the month of October, actually. Could be before November.

Q. But aren't you also saying that for political reasons?

The President. No, I'm saying that because we want to save a lot of lives. The fast—with me, it's the faster, the better. With somebody else, maybe they would say it politically, but I'm saying it in terms of this is what we need. We have to have—if get the vaccine early, that's a great thing, whether it's politics or not.

Now, do benefits inure if you're able to get something years ahead of schedule? I guess, maybe they do. But the most important thing to me is saving lives; it's the most important thing.

Yes, go ahead. In the back.

1619 Project/Washington Monument

Q. Hi. Just based on some of your recent tweets, sir, do you——

The President. You sound so clear—[laughter]—as opposed to everybody else, where they refuse.

Q. Your tweets about the 1619 Project——

The President. Yes.

Q. —why do you object to that being taught in schools? And do you object to slavery itself being taught in schools?

The President. Yes, so—no, I want everybody to know everything they can about our history. I'm not a believer in cancel culture, the good or the bad. If you don't study the bad, it could happen again. So I do want that subject studied very, very carefully and very accurately.

But we grew up with a certain history, and now they're trying to change our history—revisionist history. That's why they want to take down our monuments. That's why they want to take down our statues.

I saw something the other day, which was absolutely horrendous: Washington Monument, they want to rename it—the DC committee, but the DC committee is all Democrats. Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson—I mean, we're talking about—this is the big stuff now. This is the big stuff. And they want to rename it. They want to redesignate it. They want to take some down. No, we don't do that. Never going to happen with me, I guarantee you that.

Well, I want to thank you all, and I just want to wish you a very happy Labor Day. And we're having tremendous success, whether it's on the vaccines, whether it's on the pandemic—the plague that came in from China, that China should have never let happen, because I will never feel the same about China.

Q. Can I ask a question on the vaccine?

The President. And I just want to again wish you a happy Labor Day.

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:26 p.m. on the North Portico at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Vice Presidential Nominee Senator Kamala D. Harris; R. Hunter Biden, son, and Jim Biden, brother, of Democratic Presidential Nominee Joseph R. Biden, Jr.; former Prosecutor General Viktor Shokin of Ukraine; Jeffrey Goldberg, editor in chief, the Atlantic magazine; former White House Deputy Chief of Staff Zachary D. Fuentes; National Security Adviser to the Vice President J. Keith Kellogg, Jr.; former National Security Adviser John R. Bolton; Michael F. Reinoehl, accused gunman in the killing of Aaron J. Danielson during a demonstration in Portland, OR, on August 29, who was killed during an attempted arrest by Federal authorities and law enforcement in Lacey, WA, on September 3; Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo of New York, Mayor Lovely A. Warren of Rochester, NY; Gov. Gregory W. Abbott of Texas; Jason Charter, who was charged with destruction of Federal property in Lafayette Square in Washington, DC, on June 22; Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi; Senate Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer; Christopher D. Steele, cofounder and investigator, Orbis Business Intelligence Ltd., a firm contracted by Fusion GPS to investigate 2016 Republican Presidential candidate Donald J. Trump; 2016 Democratic Presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton; Kevin Clinesmith, former Assistant General Counsel in the National Security and Cyber Law Branch, Federal Bureau of Investigation; U.S. Attorney for the District of Connecticut John H. Durham; Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney; New York Democratic congressional candidate Suraj Patel; Department of Justice Special Counsel Robert S. Mueller III; Albert Bourla, chairman and chief executive officer, Pfizer Inc.; and Alex Gorsky, chairman of the board of directors and chief executive officer, Johnson and Johnson. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist organization. A reporter referred to Russia of the Future political party leader Alexei Navalny.

Categories: Interviews With the News Media : News conferences :: September 7.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Abbott, Gregory W.; Biden, James B.; Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Biden, R. Hunter; Bolton, John R.; Bourla, Albert; Charter, Jason; Clinesmith, Kevin; Clinton, Hillary Rodham; Cuomo, Andrew M.; Danielson, Aaron J.; DeJoy, Louis; Durham, John H.; Fuentes, Zachary D.; Goldberg, Jeffrey; Gorsky, Alex; Harris, Kamala D.; Kellogg, J. Keith, Jr.; Kelly, John F.; Maloney, Carolyn B.; Meadows, Mark R.; Mnuchin, Steven T.; Mueller, Robert S., III; Obama, Barack; Patel, Suraj; Pelosi, Nancy; Reinoehl, Michael F.; Schumer, Charles E.; Scott, Timothy E.; Shokin, Viktor; Steele, Christopher D.; Warren, Lovely A.

Subjects: Agriculture : Farm subsidies; Armed Forces, U.S. : Servicemembers :: Service and dedication; Arms and munitions : Nuclear weapons and material :: U.S. nuclear arsenal modernization; Business and industry : Domestic investment, promotion efforts; Business and industry : Manufacturing industry :: Strengthening efforts; China : Trade with U.S.; China : U.S. tariff structure, strengthening efforts; Commerce, international : Free and fair trade; Communications : News media :: Accuracy and fairness; Communications : News media :: Presidential interviews; Congress : House of Representatives :: Speaker; Congress : Senate :: Minority leader; Diseases : Coronavirus, domestic prevention efforts; Economy, national : Improvement; Economy, national : Strengthening efforts; Elections : 2020 Presidential and congressional elections; Elections : Absentee ballot policies; Employment and unemployment : Job creation and growth; Employment and unemployment : Unemployment rate; Energy : Domestic production, promotion efforts; Environment : Paris Agreement; Europe : European Union :: Trade with U.S.; Germany : Defense relationship with U.S.; Germany : Energy

cooperation with Russia; Government organization and employees : Employee training and development, improvement efforts; Government organization and employees : Federal regulations, review; Health and Human Services, Department of : Food and Drug Administration; Health and medical care : Experimental drugs and therapies; Health and medical care : Research and development; Holidays and special observances : Labor Day; Illinois : Gun violence in Chicago; Johnson & Johnson Services, Inc.; Justice, Department of : Bureau of Investigation, Federal; Law enforcement and crime : Monuments, memorials, and statues, vandalism and defacement; Law enforcement and crime : Nationwide civil unrest and violence; Monuments, memorials, and statutes, status of public display; New York : Governor; New York : Gun violence in New York City; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Oregon : Civil unrest and violence in Portland; Oregon : Political unrest and violence in Portland; Pfizer Inc.; Postal Service, U.S.; Russia : 2016 U.S. elections, interference; Russia : Energy cooperation with Germany; Terrorism : Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist organization; Texas : Governor; Treasury, Department of the : Secretary; White House Office : Assistants to the President :: Chief of Staff; White House Office : Assistants to the President :: National Security Adviser to the Vice President; World Health Organization; World Trade Organization.

DCPD Number: DCPD202000656.