

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Prime Minister Justin P.J. Trudeau of Canada and an Exchange With Reporters

November 18, 2021

President Biden. You guys all have health insurance, right? In case you get injured.

Q. Yes, sir.

Prime Minister Trudeau. Half of them are Canadian, so they definitely have health coverage.

President Biden. All right. Well, it's great to welcome back the Prime Minister, who—we've been good friends for a while, and—but it's great to have him here in the White House. We've had a lot of meetings around the country and around the world. We've been with each other—what?—a half a dozen times almost so far?

Prime Minister Trudeau. It's been a busy year.

President Biden. And the—you know, we—I know we're both keeping our minds close to the families affected by the storms, flooding in British Columbia area and the Pacific Northwest.

But one of the things we've spent time on is—on our global agenda is climate change. We've spent a lot of time dealing with that. And we are on the same page as to the need for us to move on it and get the rest of the world to move.

And since our first bilateral meeting back in February, we've met in venues around the world, getting COVID-19 under control, trying to deal with the next pandemic, be prepared for it, as well as meeting infrastructure needs across the developing world.

We see an opportunity not only to enhance the prospects of a better life for people around the world, but we can do it by the Build Back Better World, Build Back Better effort—that we can provide for the health needs as well.

We're contributing a significant amount of vaccines, no strings attached. And we're also—think we can—we should be building back in a more significant, more environmentally friendly way.

We're meeting infrastructure needs, as I said. We're driving inclusive economic recovery—together, as two nations—and meeting the climate crisis and standing up for democratic values.

And so we've spent a lot of time at the G-7, the G-20, and the COP26. And I think we both think we're at our best when opportunity, equity, and justice all coincide. And they're the core values of Canadians and the United States.

So this is one of the easiest relationships that you can have as an American President and one of the best.

And welcome.

Prime Minister Trudeau. Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, Joe. It's been a busy year. And it is a pleasure to be back here in Washington with you.

But as you say, we have had the virtual bilat. We've had many, many encounters at all sorts of different international fora where we've been strongly aligned on environment; on fighting COVID and getting through this pandemic, preparing for future challenges; but also on building back better and recovering our economies in ways that work for the middle class, for people working hard to join it in a way that is inclusive and fair.

And we've got a lot of work to continue to do. The easy work is done here at home; the hard work around the world—making sure we're bringing people along. And that's something that we're always great partners on.

[At this point, Prime Minister Trudeau spoke in French; no translation was provided. He continued in English as follows.]

I'm really looking forward to this. So thank you, Joe.

Electric Vehicle Promotion Efforts

Q. Mr. President, can I ask you a question about your tax incentives for electric vehicles that would be assembled in the United States? The Canadian Government says that would be a violation of the new trade agreement we just signed. Are you going to consider a carveout for Canada, given the fact that our industry—auto industries are so integrated?

President Biden. We're going to talk about that to some extent.

Q. [Inaudible]—car business—

The President's Legislative Agenda

Q. Is it possible, Mr. President, to make changes for Canada?

President Biden. I said we were going to talk about that. We haven't even—it hasn't even passed yet through the House. We're about to see that move. And we don't know what will happen in the Senate, but there's a lot of complicating factors. We're going to talk at length about it, I'm sure.

2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing, China

Q. Sir, do you support a diplomatic boycott of the Beijing Olympics?

President Biden. It's something we're considering.

Q. Something we're considering.

Q. What about—

Electric Vehicle Promotion Efforts

Q. Do you think you can find common ground? On the EV tax credit?

President Biden. The answer is: I don't know. And I don't know what we're going to be dealing with, quite frankly, when it comes out of legislation. So we'll talk about it then.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:49 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the audio was incomplete.

Categories: Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters :: White House; Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Canada, Prime Minister Trudeau.

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