

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025

Remarks on the Bureau of Labor Statistics Report on the Employment Situation in February and an Exchange With Reporters

March 7, 2025

The President. Hello, everybody.

So, before we begin, we're going to talk about how good some of these numbers are. I'll be way ahead of schedule, especially as respect to manufacturing and manufacturing jobs. It's taking hold. And we've only been here a few weeks, but it's really—it's going to be something. I don't know if the rest of the world likes it, but people in the U.S. like it, that I can tell you.

If I might, could—Will, could you talk about the student loan situation?

White House Staff Secretary William O. Scharf. Yes, sir. So later this afternoon we're going to have prepared for your signature an Executive order dealing with the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program. This is a program that's designed to expedite the—basically, the conclusion of payments on student loans for people who have taken out Federally backed student loans.

The problem, though, is that a lot of these people work for—NGO organizations—for nonprofit organizations that engage in illegal or what we would consider to be improper activities, supporting, for example, illegal immigration or foreign terrorist organizations or otherwise lawbreaking activities.

So this Executive order will direct your Department of Education and Department of the Treasury to basically bring about modifications to the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program in order to ensure that people who are engaged in these sorts of activities can't benefit from a program that's really not intended to support those sorts of things.

The President. And what are the consequences if they are not good?

Staff Secretary Scharf. The consequences would be that they wouldn't get forgiveness of their student loans as they would be eligible for if they were working for the Government or a normal nonprofit that's not violating the law.

The President. All right. Any questions on that? Anybody have any questions?

So we'll talk about the manufacturing turnaround. And it's been very early, but it's pretty significant. The numbers were much better, as you know, than projected by the media. And a little surprising, actually, how strong, how fast, because we have many—many companies are moving into our country.

As you probably know—it's a statistic that everyone talks about but nobody seems to have done much about—since the beginning of NAFTA, there's been 90,000 plants and factories closed in this country. Think of that. Ninety thousand plants and factories have been closed in this country. Many of them have been car manufacturing plants.

And that's a terrible statistic, and we'll be turning that around. You're going to see it already. We already have numerous that are being built or starting to be built, and numerous that were being built in other countries and they stopped, and they're coming here now because of the tariffs. And that's a big deal. That's what you want to hear.

During the last year, the Biden administration saw a loss of more than 110,000 manufacturing jobs, or 9,000 manufacturing jobs every single month. It averaged about 9,000 a month—110,000 manufacturing jobs.

During the first full month in office, we've not only stopped that manufacturing—collapse, but we've begun to rapidly reverse it and get major gains. We created 10,000 manufacturing jobs in February alone. That hasn't happened in a long time. And these aren't Government jobs, which, actually, we cut. These are private-sector manufacturing jobs.

So we gained all of those jobs—10,000 jobs—and we've barely started yet. That's a very unusual number. People are surprised by it. I'm even a little surprised.

On auto jobs, we created almost 9,000 new jobs in the auto production field, and the reason for that is largely they think things are happening, so they're already geared up. In some cases, they had rooms in their plants, or they had empty plants that they were able to put into use quickly, because they see—because of the tariffs, they don't want to be dealing with other places, and they don't want to go back and forth and around and through the borders and across Mexico border and Canada border and all over. They want to have the jobs in one location. And they've had space, and if they had space, they were able to create the jobs almost immediately. In some cases, they'll be building plants to take care of those jobs.

So we created 9,000 new jobs already in the auto production, auto parts manufacturing. So we want the auto parts, ideally—and, I think, from a simplicity standpoint too—to be built and made in the United States.

It's in a single month. That all took place in a single month—9,000 new auto jobs; you haven't heard that in a long time—after autoworkers lost more than 27,000 auto jobs in the final year of Biden. These are also high-paying jobs. These are very prime jobs.

The ISM manufacturing survey and the S&P manufacturing survey have also confirmed that our administration is presiding over a brandnew domestic manufacturing boom after major collapse under Biden. It was a collapse. All he did is keep adding new Government jobs, which are not the jobs you want. We're trying to shrink Government and grow the private sector. That's what we've been doing.

Under the final 2 years of Biden, one in every four jobs created in America was a Government job. That's a tremendous percentage. But under the first full month of President Trump—which we haven't even gotten started yet—an incredible 93 percent of all job gains were in the private sector. So that just—that statistic just came out.

Big gains for native-born Americans. For the first time in 15 months, the job gains for native-born Americans—for American people, people born in America—exceeded job gains for migrant and foreign-born workers. This is the first time that's happened in more than 15 months. Employment for native-born workers went up by 284,000, while foreign-born workers went down by 87,000.

Now, you know, you've heard the same stat, where foreign workers were taking up all the jobs or almost all the jobs. In some cases, literally all of the jobs. And now it's 284,000 native-born jobs here—people born in our country, 284,000—while foreign-born workers went down by 87,000. First time that's happened in a long time.

So these are incredible numbers, and they're very early. I mean, you know, we're here for 5 weeks. But we have been talking about it since the big win in November—November 5.

So a lot of these people, they listen to us speak, and they say, "Well, I'm going to gear up." And they're gearing up. And so they've been gearing up. They've had a little time. It's not just 5 weeks. It's 5 weeks, plus a few months. And they are—you know, they put it into effect pretty quickly. They have confidence that I'm—what I'm saying is going to happen.

So, with that, I'd like to ask a highly respected gentleman, Kevin Hassett. He's been with us for a long time, and he's been right about a lot. We had the greatest economy in history in the first term, and Kevin was a big part of it.

So, Kevin, could you maybe give it a little description, please?

National Economic Council Director Kevin A. Hassett. Yes. Thank you very much, Mr. Trump. I think that the three things that you emphasized during the campaign is that you wanted to create domestic, high-paying manufacturing jobs; that you wanted to end wasteful Government spending and reduce the unproductive Government workers, and in fact, unleash them into the private economy——

The President. Right.

Director Hassett. ——where they could be more productive; and to create jobs for Americans.

A lot of people said that if you deported illegals that employment would go down because no one——no Americans would take those jobs. And if you look, 280,000 American-born folks were hired. Manufacturing jobs are going up. And this is just out of the expectation of your future policies, really, sir.

It's in April when your reciprocal trade act is expected to happen. The tax cuts haven't passed yet. And so people are clearly expecting the golden age.

And if you want to forecast the future numbers, everybody, just keep in mind that President Trump has already gotten us \$1.7 trillion in commitments of new factories, and those haven't even happened yet. Those aren't even in the numbers.

And so I expect that this is going to be a glimpse of the golden age to come, sir.

The President. Thank you very much.

One other thing. In Canada, you know, we find that they're charging us over 200 percent for dairy products. You know about that. And when I left, we had that well taken care of. But under Biden, they just kept raising it.

Very difficult to deal with the Canadian representatives. Two hundred and fifty percent for dairy products——tariff. So where do you hear that? You don't hear that.

They have a tremendously high tariff——give you the exact numbers in a little while, coming out——on lumber. So they sell us lumber. They have a tremendous tariff. They make it impossible for us to sell number——lumber or dairy products into Canada.

But our numbers are a tiny fraction of that, almost nonexistent. And what we're doing is freeing up our forests from the environmental nonsense that they put on them, where you can't cut down a tree. And we have to cut down trees in order to build the fire walls, and those trees are sold. But we're going to——we're freeing it up on an emergency basis, because Canada has been ripping us off for years on tariffs for lumber and for dairy products.

Two hundred and fifty percent. Nobody ever talks about that. Two hundred and fifty percent tariff, which is taking advantage of our farmers. So that's not going to happen anymore.

We're going to be——they'll be met with the exact same tariff unless they drop it, and that's what reciprocal means. And we may do it as early as today or we'll wait till Monday or Tuesday, but that's what we're going to do. We're going to charge the same thing. It's not fair, never has been fair, and they've treated our farmers badly.

Look, our country has been ripped off by everybody, and that—that stops now. I had it stopped in the—my first term, and we're going to really stop it now, because this is—this has been very unfair. Our company, from—our country, from an economic standpoint, a financial standpoint, and a trade standpoint, has been absolutely ripped off by almost every country in the world—Canada, Mexico, and then you just go right down the line.

India charges us massive tariffs—massive. You can't even sell anything into India. It's almost—it's almost restrictive. They—it is restrictive. You know, we do very little business inside. They've agreed—by the way, they want to cut their tariffs way down now, because somebody's finally exposing them for what they've done.

And same thing with China. Same thing with a lot of other countries. And the EU has been a terrible abuser of this country. I mean, the EU was formulated in order to take advantage of the United States, and they have taken it, but they're not taking advantage when I'm in charge.

So sometimes you'll hear some negative things. It's always from outside countries. America will be very strong.

And you know, if I'm a foreign country—they're going to do fine, but they can't do like they used to do because we're going to bring back our business into this country. We need it from a job standpoint. We need it from even just a psychological standpoint. Think of it. Ninety thousand factories are gone since the beginning of NAFTA. So we're not going to have that, and we're going to see them build it back.

Now, we have—we've already had five major automobile companies—first time you've heard this in a long time, since my first term, actually, where we were really rocking and rolling, and then Biden came in and he stopped everything like—such a stupid thing to do. Not even a believable thing. But we have many auto plants now coming in.

We have big chip plants. We have the best—the biggest chip company in the world, most powerful—probably one of the most powerful companies in the world. Wouldn't you say, Kevin?

And he's coming in, and they're building one of the largest—chip plants in the world. That'll be done in Arizona—mostly in Arizona. And that'll give us a big percentage. That one plant will give us a big percentage of the chip market, something we have very little of.

You know, we used to have Intel, and Intel was run by a man named Andy Grove. And Andy Grove was a tough, smart guy. I used to read about him when I was a young man, and he did an incredible job. He really dominated the chip business. And then he died, and I guess they had a series of people that didn't know what the hell they were doing. And we gradually lost the chip business, and now it's almost exclusively in Taiwan. They stole it from us. They took it from us.

And I don't blame them. I give them credit. I blame the people that were sitting in this seat, because they allowed it to happen. We could have protected that so easily, but—so we had the chip business, and now it's all in Taiwan, almost exclusive. A little bit in South Korea, but mostly in Taiwan. And it's very important. Everything you do, everything you touch, is now about chips. The brake of a car—cars have chips all over the place. I was reading an article the other day where they talk about the brakes of a car are loaded up with chips. Who would think that a brake has a chip in it? But it's all about chips.

So that was a big thing, and they'll be investing hundreds of billions of dollars in this country, and we'll be taking back a big, big portion of that industry. And we have others coming in too.

But a lot of car manufacturers are coming in, and they're coming in fast. And one of the reasons you see these numbers—and, again, Kevin said it, and I said it a little bit—but the fact

that they know I won the election. So, after I was President-elect, they assumed that I was going to do what I said, because I do what I say.

And so these numbers really reflect a lot of the—a lot of things that took place since November 5, right?

So, Kevin, thank you very much. Great job.

Any questions?

[At this point, several reporters began asking questions at once.]

Labor Market/Federal Workforce Reduction Efforts/Education

Q. Mr. President, how concerned are you that the large-scale Federal Government layoffs will weaken the labor market? How concerned are you about that?

The President. The large-scale fentanyl what?

Q. That Federal Government layoffs will impact the labor market, will weaken the labor market.

The President. Oh. No, I think the labor market is going to be fantastic, but it's going to have high-paying manufacturing jobs, as opposed to Government jobs.

We had too many people in Government. You can't just do that. We had many, many—too many. This is for 40 years. You know, this isn't just now. This built up and got worse and worse, and they just hire more and more people.

You look at Department of Education. It seems like so many buildings I—ride by, it says Department of Education. They're all over the place. And we don't even want it. We want the education to be given by the States. It will be much better. It will be—it'll move us to the top of the list from the bottom of the list and actually save us money.

But no, it's too important to even talk about them. It'll save us a lot of money. But we don't want that. We want education to be given.

So you go to Iowa and Indiana and Idaho and all these places—they're so well run. They're going to be producing education that will be the equivalent of—like, Denmark is one—and Norway, Sweden. Actually, China is one of the better in terms of education. And so, we can't blame size anymore. You know, China has 1.4 billion people, but they're very high on the list.

The one thing we're doing well on—we're number one on the list—is cost per pupil. We spend more money than any other country in the world by far. So I jokingly say the one thing we do well on is the cost. We spend more money, and yet we're toward the bottom of the list.

Yes.

Inflation/Tariffs

Q. Mr. President, I want to ask you: The joint address—millions of Americans watched your joint address earlier this week, where you warned that there could be a little disturbance that Americans could feel as a function of these taxes—these tariffs. How much disturbance are you willing to accept in the near term as a function of that? And to set expectations, how long should Americans expect things to cost a bit more?

The President. Well, so far, Peter [Peter Alexander, NBC News], there hasn't been very much, because these numbers are coming out. We're—here for just a little over 4 weeks, and these are fantastic numbers. I was watching some of the reports this morning. They were surprised.

There could be some disturbance, a little bit of disturbance. I solved a little bit of that, because I have respect for our auto companies, and I gave them a little bit of a 1-month reprieve, because it was unfair. Although, I'm sure they'll take advantage of it. I see they're driving a lot of cars into the U.S. to try and avoid the tariffs, and you know, they're taking advantage of it a little bit.

But they were—they called me, they asked me—they said, could they have a little bit of help? And I decided, you know, they're American companies, USMCA. And I—let them have that.

But this really kicks in—the reciprocals, you know, kicks in on—let's see—I guess, the 2nd. And I wanted it to be the 1st so badly. Just didn't want to be on April Fool's Day, so I made it the 2nd. That's going to cost a lot of money. That one day is going to cost a lot of money, but that's okay.

But I don't see it. I don't see anything. I see good reports. I think—we're going to have good numbers from the beginning.

Now, globalists won't love this because this brings jobs back to America. So, if they're coming back to America, maybe you'll lose some in other parts of the world. But the other parts of the world have done very well, and they'll continue to do very well. But I think the United States is going to be doing record business. We'll bring a lot of those 90,000 factories that have been lost over the last number of years. It's been—

It's hard to believe. Ninety—think of what ninety thousand is. Ninety thousand plants and factories are gone. We're going to bring back many of those plants and factories.

U.S. Automobile Industry/Canada-U.S. Trade

Q. One day, the tariffs are on. The next day, they're off. Right now, the markets, as you know well, prefer stability. Are you done, going forward, with the pauses and the carve-outs? Is that it for those?

The President. There'll always be changes and adjustments. And, you know, you can't just—I could have, for instance, told the American car companies, "No, I'm not going to give you anything." And then you wouldn't have had to say, "Well, they're getting a little extra." It's just a little bit of a 1-month reprieve.

They're very happy about what's happening. They won't have to go across borders. And you see the zigzag, and you have a fender made in Canada, you have something else made in Mexico. We don't want that. We want it made here.

But there'll always be some modifications. I mean, if you have a wall in front of you, sometimes you have to go around the wall instead of through it. But, I think, very little. I think, very little.

On occasion, if we can do something, we want to help companies. We want to help companies create jobs. So I could have left that, and you wouldn't have had a minor change. Instead, I was asked by the major—the real majors, the big majors, if they could do this. And I said, "Yes, I'll do it. I want you to produce a lot of jobs."

And numerous of the people—actually, all of the people I spoke to have already been—they're very much on their way to already—[inaudible]. That's why you have auto jobs increase.

And the man—I don't know him—Shawn Fain—I don't know him, but—and I did great, as you know, with the autoworkers, with the Teamsters. With unions, I did fantastically well. Best numbers ever by a Republican, but—and I have a lot of respect for those people. But Shawn Fain,

who I don't know, but wasn't a supporter—although, the autoworkers were big supporters—I watched him last night, and he said, "Donald Trump is absolutely right on tariffs." He said, "What he's doing on tariffs is an incredible thing, and it's about time somebody had the guts to do it, because we're going to save auto manufacturing."

And I said to people, when I was campaigning, "You're going to have so many auto jobs, you're not going to believe what's going to happen. We're going to load up Michigan." I won the State of Michigan, as you know, and part of the reason I won it was I got a lot of autoworkers that voted for me. Detroit, et cetera. But I think people are going to be very surprised.

Yes.

Semiconductor Manufacturing

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. You mentioned in your remarks chips manufacturing—how a significant percentage is now in Taiwan. You also mentioned it in your address to Congress, and you called on Congress to overturn the CHIPS Act, which had bipartisan support in the last Congress. Why would you like to see this particular law overturned, Mr. President?

The President. Because it's hundreds of billions of dollars, and it's just a waste of money. Now, some people have already taken the money and used it. Actually, it's very hard to qualify because they go by race, they go by gender, they go by all sorts of things. Nobody has ever seen anything like it. You won't be able to find those people.

So I don't even think anybody can qualify. They have so many different categories in order to qualify. You have to have so many of a certain race, a certain gender, a certain this, a certain—and it's—I don't think they can qualify, but if they take the money, they better qualify, because we'll be watching them. But it's a tremendous waste of money.

I didn't give the great—the greatest chip company in the world, one of the greatest companies, I didn't give them 10 cents. They came here because of tariffs, because they didn't want to pay the tariffs. And they also came here because they liked the results of the election, because they know that I'm very pro-business and pro-jobs. I mean, I'm pro-business not for business' sake. I'm pro-business because of jobs, because business is producing the jobs. Okay?

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia/Ukraine

Q. Mr. President, on Russia, if I may. President Putin is bombing Ukraine.

The President. Yes.

Q. Do you still believe him when he tells you that he wants peace?

The President. Yes, no, I believe him. I believe him. I think we're doing very well with Russia, but, right now, they're bombing the hell out of Ukraine. And Ukraine, I'm finding it more difficult, frankly, to deal with Ukraine. And——

Q. Than with Russia?

The President. And they don't have the cards. They don't have the cards.

As you know, we're meeting in Saudi Arabia on—sometime next week, early, and we're talking. We're—I find that, in terms of getting a final settlement, it may be easier dealing with Russia, which is surprising, because they have all the cards. I mean, they're—and they're bombing the hell out of them right now.

And I put a statement in—a very strong statement: "Can't do that. You can't do that."

Q. Mr. President——

The President. Trying to—we're trying to help them. And Ukraine has to get on the ball and get a job done.

Michael, could you come up here? I see Michael back there. Good. I'm glad. He's traveling all over the world. I just saw him come in the door.

National Security Adviser Michael G. Waltz. Yes. Thank you.

The President. Could you give a little definition of what's going on, please?

National Security Adviser Waltz. Sure.

Well, the President has been crystal clear, and he's been clear to all sides: The fighting has to stop. Both sides need to get to the table.

We had a good engagement at—both leaders have said only President Trump could do so, and only he has been able to do so. We had an initial engagement with the Russians. The Ukrainians had a great opportunity to bind our economies together through that mineral deal. Unfortunately, that didn't go so well, but we think we're going to get things back on track.

Secretary Rubio, myself, and the Ukrainian delegation will be meeting in Saudi Arabia next week to get these talks back on track, get a cease-fire in place, and drive peace home—

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

——under President Trump's leadership.

Q. Mr. President, you put out on that social——

The President. I think both parties want to settle.

Q. Mr. President——

The President. I think if I wasn't President, this war would have had no chance of settlement. Zero chance. But I think we're going to get it settled and stopped. We got to stop. They're losing, on average, 2,000 soldiers a week.

Q. Do you——

The President. That's a lot of soldiers. Do you agree, Peter?

Q. Mr. President——

President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia/Ukraine

Q. It's a lot of soldiers on both sides, I agree.

Do you, Mr. President, think that Vladimir Putin is taking advantage of the U.S. pause right now on intelligence and military aid to Ukraine?

The President. No, I actually think he's doing what anybody else would do. I think he's—I think he wants to get it stopped and settled. And I think he's hitting them harder than—than he's been hitting them, and I think probably anybody in that position would be doing that right now. He wants to get it ended. And I think Ukraine wants to get it ended, but I don't see—it's crazy. They're taking tremendous punishment. I don't quite get it, but I suspect, Michael, he probably wants to get it ended.

National Security Adviser Waltz. He does, Mr. President. The Russians are taking incredible losses on the front, as the President has said.

The President. They both are.

National Security Adviser Waltz. This is a meat grinder of people, of materiel, of national treasure, and no one else has any solutions, except to let this war continue forever.

But I'll add, the President has had multiple conversations and a visit from President Macron of France, Prime Minister Starmer of the United Kingdom. We have the NATO Secretary General coming next week. We have this meeting with the—with the Ukrainians. We've had it with the Russians. All of this in the President's first month in his leadership.

We will engage in the shuttle diplomacy, and we will continue to use his leadership and what leverage we have to get both sides to the peace table.

Q. Mr. President——

National Security Adviser Waltz. It's not going to be easy, but President Trump is absolutely——

The President. This war should have never happened.

National Security Adviser Waltz. ——going to get it done. Thank you.

The President. It would have never happened if I were President. But it did happen, so—a lot of other things shouldn't have happened too.

We shouldn't have 21 million people pouring into our country through open borders, many of whom are criminals, very bad criminals, including murderers, thousands of murderers. Many killed far more than one person, and they're roaming our streets. But Tom Homan and Kristi Noem are doing an incredible job, and we're getting them out of here. And we'll get them out. We'll get them all out.

But all these things shouldn't have happened. We shouldn't have inflation. We shouldn't have had this horrible inflation, where the prices have gone up. Look at eggs.

So we're doing a good job. We're doing a good job.

Q. Mr. President——

Russia/Ukraine/U.S. Security Assistance

Q. Mr. President, in regards to the pause on military assistance to Ukraine, you put out on your social media post today that Russia is "pounding Ukraine."

The President. That's right.

Q. Why not provide Ukraine with air defenses? And what happens, Mr. President, when Ukraine runs out of the Patriot——

The President. Well, because——

Q. ——missile batteries?

The President. Yes. Yes. Good question.

Because I have to know that they want to settle. I don't know that they want to settle. If they don't want to settle, we're out of there, because we want them to settle. And I'm doing it to stop death. More important than anything else. Secondarily, way down the line, is the money.

So we're in for \$350 billion, and Europe is in for \$100 billion. They should be in for the same or more than us. And you know, I watched, over the last week or so, what's going on in Europe. This thing could end up in World War III if we don't get it settled. This could really end up in a World War III. We've got to get it settled.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Hostages Held in Gaza, Palestinian Territories/Hamas Political-Paramilitary Organization

Q. Sir, on Iran. How confident are you that the Iranians will negotiate with you? And is Israel on board with this outreach?

The President. Yes. I saw the hostages the other day. They came in. People that were not young—some young, and some older, much older. And they gave—it was hard for them to do it, actually. They gave statements as to what happened. I was asking: "What happened? How was it?" I said, "Did you see anybody in there that was kind, like out of the hundreds of people that you were seeing in Hamas? Did some of them wink at you and say, 'Don't worry. You're going to be okay,' or give you a piece of bread, or"—"No."

I said, "Were there any people that were, like, kind?" I was shocked. The answer was nobody. There was nobody. Just the opposite. They'd be slapped and punched. One man broke his ribs. He couldn't breathe for a month.

National Security Adviser Waltz. That's awful.

The President. It was brutal. I was so surprised, because you'd think there'd be a couple of people that would be kind, that would say, "You're going to be okay." But they had none of that. It's pretty amazing.

Brian [Brian Glenn, Real America's Voice].

Q. Yes. Thanks, Mr. President. I've got——

The President. He's a kind person.

Q. Well, according to the internet, I'm not.

The President. Although not to——

Q. I don't know. [Laughter]

The President. ——not to Zelenskyy, he wasn't.

Q. Well, you know what, that's another conversation.

The President. But to Trump, he's been good.

Q. Yes.

The President. Go ahead, Brian.

Q. Nice tie, by the way.

The President. Thank you.

Q. Look, we coordinated.

The President. Thank you. I like yours too.

Ukraine/Russia/Hamas Attacks of October 7, 2023, on Israel/Iran

Q. Two questions. One, on peace. Why don't you think any other European countries are offering a peace deal? It seems like no one has come to the table for peace, except for you.

The President. Yes. It's a very good question. Sometimes questions aren't answerable.

They're in a very unusual position. They don't know how to end the war. I think I do know how to end the war. Despite the "Russia, Russia, Russia" hoax, I've always had a good relationship with Putin. And you know, he wants to end the war. He wants to end it, and I think

he's going to be more generous than he has to be. And that's pretty good. That means a lot of good things, because, frankly, you could have made a great deal if you—if this war never started, you could have made a great deal. I don't know that anything would have had to be given up.

This was not a war that was going to start, Brian. And it didn't start. For 4 years, it—you know, somebody said, "Well, how do we know that?" Well, for 4 years, it didn't start.

I used to speak to Vladimir about it. I used to speak to him about it at length. It was the apple of his eye, but there was no way he was going in. And he knew, you know, there were going to be consequences. But it did start.

I mean, think of—think of what happened. Inflation. You have the war with Ukraine and Russia. That wouldn't have happened. October 7 would have never happened—Israel. They had no money. Iran had no money. Iran was stone-cold broke, and now they have a lot of money.

But—and that's going to be the next thing you'll be talking about is Iran—what's going to happen with Iran. And there'll be some interesting days ahead. That's all I can tell you.

You know, we're down to final strokes with Iran. That's going to be an interesting time. And we'll see what happens. But we're down to the final moments. We're at final moments. You can't let them have a nuclear weapon.

I would—I think that I would have had a deal within 1 month after the rigged election of 2020. They were all set to make a deal. And then, when I lost, they saw this person, who is a stupid person, very stupid person, and they said, "Let's not make a deal." And they were right. He took the sanctions off. They became rich under Biden.

They went from having no money to having \$300 billion all in a short period. It's oil. Oil builds up fast. It's a nice—nice living if you have a nice oil well, and they do. They have a lot of nice oil wells, right?

So, anyways. So it's—that's going to be a big thing. It's an interesting time in the history of the world. But we have a situation with Iran that something's going to happen very soon. Very, very soon. You'll be talking about that pretty soon, I guess.

And hopefully, we can have a peace deal. You know, I'm not speaking out of strength or weakness. I'm just saying I'd rather see a peace deal than the other. But the other will solve the problem.

Q. Mr. President, your allies——

Q. Mr. President, on peace——

Q. Your allies say——

Q. On peace, Mr. President——

Pardons and Commutations

Q. Your allies are calling on you to pardon Derek Chauvin. Are you considering pardoning Derek Chauvin?

The President. No, I haven't even heard about it. No.

Q. Mr. President, on peace.

The President. I haven't heard that.

Ukraine/Russia/Critical Minerals Supply

Q. In the first term, you may recall, I broke the news that you were nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, and the reason for that was the work that you led on the Abraham Accords. I spoke yesterday with the member of the Parliament, the Norwegian Parliament, that nominated you, and he said, what the Nobel Committee is looking for from you, Mr. President, is security guarantees for Ukraine. Is that a possibility, Mr. President?

The President. So, before I even think about that, I want to settle the war, get it finished. Because if I'm not here, nobody is going to settle it. And President Macron has said that, and every President—everybody has said that—the Prime Ministers and Presidents. We're pushing very hard. That's all I'm thinking about now.

As far as the question about security later, that's the easy part. The hard part is getting it settled. We got to get them—we're losing 2,000 human beings every week. More than that, actually. Two thousand nice, young—although, they're getting older because they're drafting much older now. In the case of one country, much older, because a lot of the young people have been killed. It's very sad, and I'd like to see if I could stop that.

Q. Mr. President——

The President. And I'd like to also see if we could stop making these massive payments from the United States. I mean, Biden gave away money like it was—like it was water with no anything. Got nothing for it. Europe—Europe did it in the form of a loan. They get their money back. We don't.

So that's how we came up with the rare earth deal. But we started, you know, behind the eight ball.

He could have—he could have gone to Europe. He could have said: "Come on. You've got to put up money with us. You've got to put up money with us." But he never did that. They just kept handing money out because he was grossly incompetent.

All right. Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:54 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Shawn Fain, president, United Automobile Workers; White House Border Czar Thomas D. Homan; Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi L. Noem; and President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine. He also referred to Executive Order 14235. National Security Adviser Waltz referred to and Secretary General Mark Rutte of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. A reporter referred to former Minneapolis, MN, Police Ofc. Derek Chauvin, who was convicted on April 20, 2021, for the murder of George Floyd; and Christian Tybring-Gjedde, member of the Norwegian Parliament.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Bureau of Labor Statistics report on employment situation in February; Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, White House.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Fain, Shawn; Hassett, Kevin A.; Homan, Thomas D.; Macron, Emmanuel; Noem, Kristi L.; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Scharf, William O.; Waltz, Michael G.; Zelenskyy, Volodymyr.

Subjects: 2024 Presidential election; Automobile industry, strengthening efforts; Bureau of Labor Statistics; Canada, trade with U.S.; China, trade with U.S.; Education, global competitiveness; Federal workforce, reduction efforts; France, President; Gaza, hostages held by Hamas; Hamas political-paramilitary organization; Inflation; Iran, nuclear weapons development; Israel, attacks by Hamas of October 7, 2023; Job creation and growth; Manufacturing industry, domestic

investment; Mexico, trade with U.S.; National Economic Council; National Security Adviser; Public Service Loan Forgiveness program, improvement efforts; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Russia, President; Secretary of Homeland Security; Semiconductor manufacturing; Tariffs; Timber production, expansion efforts; Ukraine, international military aid; Ukraine, President; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Ukraine, U.S. assistance; White House Border Czar; White House Staff Secretary.

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