

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Secretary General Mark Rutte of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and an Exchange With Reporters

March 13, 2025

President Trump. Hello, everybody. It's great to be with a friend of mine, who was Prime Minister of the Netherlands, so I got to know him very well. We had a great relationship always.

Secretary General Rutte. Absolutely.

President Trump. Mark Rutte. Now he's Secretary General of NATO and doing a fantastic job. Everybody—every report I've gotten is what a great job he did. And I'm not at all surprised when I hear it. We had to support him, and we supported him as soon as I heard the name.

But——

Secretary General Rutte. Thank you.

President Trump. But he was a fantastic Prime Minister, and he's doing a fantastic job—an even tougher job. Which is tougher: being the Prime Minister of Netherlands or——

Secretary General Rutte. This job is quite tough. Yes. [*Laughter*]

President Trump. I would think this is a little tougher.

Secretary General Rutte. But Dutch politics is also brutal. So—[*laughter*].

President Trump. Yes. But this is pretty tough.

Secretary General Rutte. Yes.

President Trump. But you're doing—you're doing good.

Secretary General Rutte. Thank you.

President Trump. We're going to be discussing a lot of things. Obviously, we'll be discussing what's happening with respect to Ukraine and Russia.

At this moment, we have people talking in Russia. We have representatives over there—Steve Witkoff and others. And they're in very serious discussions. As you know, Ukraine has agreed, subject to this—what's happening today—to a complete cease-fire, and we hope Russia will do the same.

Thousands of people are being killed—young people, usually, mostly—young people. We were just talking about it. Thousands of young people are being killed a week, and we want to see that stop. And they're not Americans, and they're not from the Netherlands for the most part——

Secretary General Rutte. No.

President Trump. They're not from—they're from Russia and they're from Ukraine, but they're people. And I think everybody feels the same way. We want it to stop.

It's also a tremendous cost to the United States and to other countries. And it's something that would have never happened if I were President, and it makes me very angry to see that it did happen. But it happened, and we have to stop it.

And Mark has done some really good work over the last week. We've been working together, and he's done some really good work. So I'm very happy about that.

We'll also be talking about trade and various other things, and I think we'll have a very, very strong day. We're going to have lunch afterwards. That will go. And then we'll see you all later.

But, Mark, would you like to say something?

Secretary General Rutte. Yes. First of all, thank you so much, Mr. President, dear Donald, again for hosting me and—but also for taking time in Florida a couple of weeks after you——

President Trump. Right. That's right.

Secretary General Rutte. ——you were reelected.

President Trump. That's right.

Secretary General Rutte. And of course, our phone call a couple of weeks ago. And I must say, Trump 45—you basically—you originated the fact that in Europe we are now spending, when you take it to aggregate, \$700 billion more on defense——

President Trump. Yes.

Secretary General Rutte. ——than when you came in office in 2016—in 2017.

But that was Trump 45. But, when look at Trump 47——

President Trump. Going to be hard to top. *[Laughter]*

Secretary General Rutte. ——what happened the last couple of weeks is really staggering. The Europeans committing to a package of \$800 billion defense spending. The Germans now——

President Trump. Yes.

Secretary General Rutte. ——potentially up to half a trillion extra in defense spending. And then, of course, you have Keir Starmer here, the British Prime Minister, and others all committing to much higher defense spending.

They're not there. We need to do more. But I really want to work together with you in a runup to The Hague summit to make sure that we will have a NATO which is really reinvigorated under your leadership. And we are getting there.

We also discussed defense production, because we need to produce more weaponry. We are not doing enough—not in the U.S., not in Europe. And we are lagging behind when you compare to the Russians and the Chinese. And you have a huge defense industrial base, Europeans buying—four times more here than the other—the other way around, which is good, because you have a strong defense industry.

But we need to do more there to make sure that we ramp up production and kill the red tape. So I would love to work with you on that.

And finally, Ukraine, you broke the deadlock. As you said, all the killing, the young people dying, cities getting destroyed. The fact that you did that, that you started the dialogue with the Russians and the successful talks in Saudi Arabia now with the Ukrainians—I really want to commend you for this.

So, well, the Hague is my hometown. I'd love to host you there in the summer and work together to make sure that——

President Trump. We'll do that.

Secretary General Rutte. ——that will be a splash, a real success, projecting American power on the world stage.

President Trump. What Mark is saying is: When I first went to NATO, my first meeting, I noticed that very few people were paying. And if they were, they weren't paying their fair share. There were only seven countries that were paying what they were supposed to be paying, which was—

Secretary General Rutte. It's even worse; there were three.

President Trump. Yes.

Secretary General Rutte. That's even worse.

President Trump. It could be even worse.

Secretary General Rutte. Yes.

President Trump. But there were just very few countries that were paying. And even the paying, they—it was at 2 percent, which is too low. It should be higher. It should be quite a bit higher.

But you had Poland and—I remember Poland was actually paying a little bit more than they were supposed to, which was—very impressed with. And they've been actually terrific and some of the others. But most of them weren't paying or they were paying very little.

And I didn't think it was appropriate to bring it up there, but I said, "It's going to be brought up at my next meeting." And my next meeting—you know, the first meeting, you want to give them a little break. The second meeting, it began.

And I was able to raise——

Secretary General Rutte. You did. [Laughter]

President Trump. —hundreds of billions of dollars. I just said, "We're not going to be involved with you if you're not going to pay." And the money started pouring in. And NATO became much stronger because of my actions and working along with a lot of people, including Mark.

But they would not pay for other Presidents. And other—I don't think other Presidents even knew that they weren't paid. I asked—first question, "Has everybody paid up?" And literally, I mean, they showed—they told me seven. You could be right. It could be three. But—that makes it even worse—but they just weren't paying.

And I said: "No, I won't protect if you're not paying. If you're delinquent or if the money isn't paid, why would we do that?"

And as soon as I said that, got a little hit from the press, because they said, "Oh, gee, that's not very nice." But if you said the other, nobody would have paid. And the money started coming in by the billions.

And you know, hundreds of billions of dollars flowed into NATO, and NATO became strong.

Secretary General Rutte. Yes.

President Trump. And you remember that. And your predecessor, who I thought was a very good man actually.

Secretary General Rutte. Absolutely. Jens Stoltenberg. He sends his best greetings.

President Trump. Yes. He was terrific.

Secretary General Rutte. Yes.

President Trump. Stoltenberg, Secretary General.

Secretary General Rutte. Great man.

President Trump. And he made the statement that when Trump came in, the money started coming in like we never saw before. Hundreds of—it was actually probably close to \$600 billion came in. And NATO became strong from that standpoint.

And now we have to use it wisely. And we have to get this war over with. And you'll be back to a normal—much more normal life.

And maybe we're close. We're getting words that things are going okay in Russia, and it doesn't mean anything until we hear what the final outcome is.

But they have very serious discussions going on right now with President Putin and others. And hopefully, they all want to end this nightmare. It's a nightmare. It's a horrible thing, when you look. I get pictures every week. They give me the pictures of the battlefield, which I almost don't want to see. It's so horrible to see.

Secretary General Rutte. It's so terrible.

President Trump. Young people laying—arms and legs and heads laying all over the field. It's the most terrible thing that you'll ever see.

And it's got to stop. These are young people with mothers and fathers and sisters and brothers and friends, and it's got to stop.

So we, hopefully, are going to be in a good position sometime today to have a good idea. We'll have—we know where we are with Ukraine, and we are getting good signals outside of Russia as to where we are with Russia, and hopefully, they'll do the right thing.

It's a really—humanity—we're talking about humanity. We're not talking about the money. But then you add the money to it, and you know, hundreds of billions of dollars is being spent and, really, wasted so unnecessarily. It should have never happened.

So it's an honor to have you here. They picked a great gentleman. I'll tell you, that was—I was so happy to hear, because you had somebody—Stoltenberg was really good. And you have somebody that's going to do an incredible job. And I was so much in favor of you, you have no idea.

They had another person that I did not like. *[Laughter]* I was not happy. And I think I kept him from—you know what I'm talking about. I said, "This is the right man to do it." And he really did. He was a great Prime Minister of the Netherlands. He did a great job. And that's what he's doing right now.

So thank you, everybody, for being here. And very great honor to have you. And we even have some of our great energy people here today, right? We have our—the Governor, and we have Chris. You know Chris.

Secretary General Rutte. Yes. Absolutely.

President Trump. He's supposed to be the most talented man in the world of energy, according to the Governor. *[Laughter]* So I don't know if he's right.

And we have—General, you've been fantastic. Thank you very much.

And we have all—a lot of good people that won't be so much involved with this, but they wanted to see what was happening. It's become a little bit of a show—*[laughter]*—but we wanted—they wanted to see what was happening. And—and I think a lot of good things are happening.

So, with that, if anybody would have a question.

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

Q. Mr. President, on Russia.

President Trump. Please, go ahead.

Q. Vladimir——

Russia/Ukraine/North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Q. Sorry. Sorry, Mary [Mary Bruce, ABC News]. Steve Witkoff's trip to Moscow, you spoke about it. What sort of agreement do you hope he comes away from there with?

President Trump. Well, we'd like to see a cease-fire from Russia. And we have, you know, not been working in the dark. We've been discussing with Ukraine land and—pieces of land that would be kept and lost and all of the other elements of a final agreement.

There's a power plant involved—you know, a very big power plant involved. Who's going to get the power plant and who's going to get this and that. And so, you know, it's—it's not an easy process.

But phase one is the cease-fire. A lot of the individual subjects have been discussed though. You know, we've been discussing concepts of land, because you don't want to waste time with the ceasefire if—if it's not going to mean anything. So we're saying: "Look, this is what you can get. This is what you can't get."

They discussed NATO and being in NATO, and everybody knows what the answer to that is. They've known that answer for 40 years, in all fairness.

So a lot of the details of a final agreement have actually been discussed. Now we're going to see whether or not Russia is there, and if they're not, it will be a very disappointing moment for the world.

Yes.

President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia

Q. And Vladimir Putin just said he is open to a cease-fire, but he does still have some concerns. He suggested that you two should speak directly. Do you have plans to speak to him soon? If so, when?

President Trump. Well, I would. Yes, sure.

Q. And are you confident you can get this across the finish line?

President Trump. Sure. He did say that today. It was a very promising statement, because other people are saying different things, and you don't know if they have anything to really—if they have any meaning, or I don't know. I think some of them were making statements. I don't think they have anything to do with it.

No, he put out a very promising statement, but it wasn't complete. And yes, I'd love to meet with him or talk to him, but we have to get it over with fast. You know, every day people are being killed. It's not like—as we sit here, two people will be killed. Think of it. Two people are going to be killed during this little period of time.

Thousands of people a week are dying, so we really don't have very much time. We have to make this fast. It shouldn't be very complicated.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Yes.

Canada/Tariffs

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. A representative of Canada, the Finance Minister, are in town and will meet members of your administration during the day.

President Trump. Sure. Yes.

Q. Any chances that you will ban on the tariffs on aluminum and—the ones that are planned for April 2?

President Trump. No.

Q. You are not going to change your mind?

President Trump. No, I'm not. Look, we've been ripped off for years, and we're not going to be ripped off anymore. No, I'm not going to bend at all on aluminum or steel or cars. We're not going to bend. We've been ripped off as a country for many, many years. We've been subjected to costs that we shouldn't be subjected to.

In the case of Canada, we're spending \$200 billion a year to subsidize Canada. I love Canada. I love the people of Canada. I love—I have many friends in Canada. "The Great One"—Wayne Gretzky, the great. Hey, how good is Wayne Gretzky? He's the Great One.

But we have—I know many people from Canada that are good friends of mine. But, you know, the United States can't subsidize a country for \$200 billion a year. We don't need their cars. We don't need their energy. We don't need their lumber. We don't need anything that they—that they give.

We do it because we want to be helpful, but it comes a point when you just can't do that. You have to run your own country. And to be honest with you, Canada only works as a State. It doesn't—we don't need anything they have. As a State, it would be one of the great States anywhere.

This would be the most incredible country visually. If you look at a map, they drew an artificial line right through it—between Canada and the U.S. Just a straight artificial line. Somebody did it a long time ago—many, many decades ago—and makes no sense.

It's so perfect as a great and cherished State, keeping "O Canada," the national anthem. I love it. I think it's great. Keep it, but it will be for the State. One of our greatest States. Maybe our greatest State.

But why should we subsidize another country for \$200 billion? It costs us \$200 billion a year. And again, we don't need their lumber. We don't need their energy. We have more than they do. We don't need anything. We don't need their cars. I'd much rather make the cars here.

And there's not a thing that we need. Now, there will be a little disruption, but it won't be very long. But they need us. We really don't need them. I—and we have to do this. I'm sorry, we have to do this.

Yes.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Q. Mr. President——

President Trump. Yes.

Q. ——you have made it very clear that NATO needs to step up, although great progress——

President Trump. Yes.

Q. —has been made in your first mandate. How do you envision this new transatlantic—

President Trump. Are you talking about NATO stepping up?

Q. Yes.

President Trump. Well, NATO is stepping up——

Q. How do you envision——

President Trump. ——through this man. This man is a man that only knows how to step up. And we have the same goal in mind: We want the war ended. And he's doing his job. He—only knows how to do a good job. That's one thing. That's why I fought for him to get that job——

Secretary General Rutte. Thank you so much.

President Trump. ——because they had some other candidates that I'll tell you would not have done a very good job.

Secretary General Rutte. I need this part of the movie for my family. *[Laughter]*

President Trump. That's right. That's right. We'll get a—we'll get you a clip.

Secretary General Rutte. Yes. Exactly. *[Laughter]*

President Trump. We're going to get him a clip of that—of that little last essay. But the rest of the statements he doesn't care about.

Ukraine/U.S. Security Assistance

Q. Sir, how does this new transatlantic cooperation—how do you envision it? What is it going to look like?

President Trump. Well, we have—that's one thing. I mean, you know, we're the other side of the ocean, and they're right there. And yet, we're in for \$350 billion because of Biden, and they're in for \$100 billion. So it's a big difference, and it's unfair.

And I said, "You have to equalize." They should equalize. They should have—it should have never happened, where Biden just gave his money away.

Now, as you know, we're—we have an agreement with Ukraine on the rare earths and other things, and that will get us something back—a lot back. It will get us our money back. We're not doing it for that though. We're doing—I'm just doing this to get the war stopped. I'm doing it, really, to save lives.

But, at the same time, we were treated very unfairly, as we always are by every country. And we're in for very substantially more than the European nations are in for, and that shouldn't be. You know, they're much more affected by it than we are, because we do have an ocean in between.

But I don't know. I think good things are going to happen. I really do. I think good things are going to happen. I do say—we were talking before, and Mark was very nice. He said, "If you wouldn't get involved, there would be"—you'd just be going on, and we——

Secretary General Rutte. Yes.

President Trump. This thing would have gone on for a long time.

Secretary General Rutte. Breaking a deadlock. It was crucial.

President Trump. Yes, we broke a deadlock.

Secretary General Rutte. Yes.

President Trump. We did break a deadlock. I hope it's meaningful.

Secretary General Rutte. Yes.

President Trump. Yes, did you have one?

Q. Mr. President——

President Trump. Yes, please.

Immigration Enforcement Actions/Border Security

Q. Yes, sir. Thank you, Mr. President. Amanda Head with "Just the News." On the southern border, you've got DHS and ICE, who are reporting that there was a little bit of fudging of numbers during the Biden administration——

President Trump. Yes.

Q. ——on both the catch and the release side with respect to reporting the number of illegals coming into the country who were released.

President Trump. They cheated on the numbers. They were——the numbers were——I love that question.

Q. Right.

President Trump. Who are you with?

Q. "Just the News." Amanda Head.

President Trump. Very nice. That's good. That's good.

Q. Do you know how many of those are criminal illegal aliens?

President Trump. Many of them.

Q. And Biden is out of office——

President Trump. Yes.

Q. ——Alejandro Mayorkas. Who gets held accountable?

President Trump. No, Biden fudged the numbers. The numbers were totally fake, and he gave fake numbers. I knew they were fake. Everybody knew they were fake, but now it came out. And terrible what they did. That administration was a horror show for this country.

Q. Can you hold anyone accountable?

President Trump. Well, I don't know. They gave phony numbers, and phony numbers are a very bad thing to give. But I'm not sure about that. I don't know how it would play. We want to get it straightened out.

We have—we're after many, many bad people that were let into our country. And Kristi Noem and my friend Homan—he's—how good is Tom Homan doing, right? And they're after them. And they—I mean, you see: They're taking them out in record numbers. Gang members, gang leaders, drug dealers.

This is a problem the Netherlands does not have. The Netherlands never had this problem. If you'd like to take——

Secretary General Rutte. We have a few drug dealers, I'm afraid. [Laughter]

President Trump. I could deliver some people. I could deliver some nice people to the Netherlands if you'd like. [Laughter]

Secretary General Rutte. I'm not sure. [Laughter]

President Trump. No, what he did to this country, letting 21 million people flow through an open border—many of those people were hard criminals from prisons and jails, from mental institutions, and I always say "insane asylums," because they were seriously deranged. And they're here from—not South America, from all over the world. From South America, but from all over the world. And it's so sad.

You'd say: "Why would anybody do this? Why?"

Yes, go ahead.

2024 Presidential Election/Democratic Party

Q. And one more. There's some new internal Democrat polling that doesn't look great for Democrats, but it also has 54-percent unfavorability for Republicans in swing States and battlegrounds for the midterms. Do you consider those voters capturable for—Republicans?

President Trump. Yes, well, we did—you know, I won every swing State, as you know, by a lot, and I won the popular vote by a lot, and we won the counties. If you look at the counties and district plan, we had 2,725, and they had 501. That's a real—that's why the map is all red. So, we had a great thing.

Yes, I think—winning from the Democrats—I saw—if you looked the other night, I made a speech, and I introduced two young ladies who were killed. Two killed. Viciously, violently killed. Young. Unbelievable. Both outstanding people. They were killed by illegal aliens. And the Democrats wouldn't get up and applaud. The mothers were, I mean, inconsolable. They were crying, and everybody was crying. The Democrats sat there with stone faces. They didn't clap, they didn't stand, they didn't do anything.

We had a young man with very serious cancer, wanted to—his dream is to be with the police department someday, and he was introduced.

Secretary General Rutte. That was very touching.

President Trump. They didn't even clap.

Secretary General Rutte. Yes, I saw it.

President Trump. I mean, they were disgusting. Frankly, they were disgusting. There's something wrong with them. They're deranged. They're deranged. Like Jack Smith, they're deranged people.

And I never saw anything like it. I'm standing up, and I introduce the—the mother and the parents of these two young girls that were just recently, essentially, killed. Violently killed. And the Democrats are like this. It's so sad.

And I saw this morning where—one of them is pretty well known—one is arguing, fighting like crazy over men being able to play in women's sports. I said, "Yes, I thought that was tried." I thought that was about a 95—I think it's a 95-percent issue.

But, in a way, I want them to keep doing it, because I don't think they can win a race. I mean—and I tell the Republicans, I said, "Don't bring that subject up, because there's no election right now. But about a week before the election, bring it up, because you can't lose."

And everything is "transgender this, transgender that." You know, it's—they have bad politics.

But one thing: They stick together. You know? I wish—and the Republicans stick together, mostly, but we have a couple that are grandstanders. You know, you always have grandstanders in life.

But the Democrats, they don't seem—they have grandstanders, but when it comes to a vote, they do stick together, right?

Vice President James D. "J.D." Vance. They get in line. Yes, sir.

President Trump. So.

Federal Government Appropriations/Tax Code Reform

Q. It seems like they'll stick together on the shutdown. Will that hurt Democrats going into midterms?

President Trump. Well, if they do a shutdown—and, ultimately, that might lead to very, very high taxes, because we're talking about a shutdown. We're talking about getting to work immediately on the greatest tax bill ever passed. That was the one we did. It's a renewal, and it's an addition to it. And we're going to cut people's taxes.

And if the—if we don't open, the Democrats are stopping all of these good things that we're providing. We're providing the greatest package of benefits that this country has ever provided.

The biggest part of that's going to be tax cuts for the middle class and for businesses, small businesses, employers—people that hire people and jobs.

And if it's shut down, it's only going to be—if there's a shutdown, it's only because of the Democrats, and they would really be taking away a lot from our country and from the people of our country.

Tariffs/U.S. Automobiles Industry/Manufacturing Investments/China-U.S. Trade

Q. Mr. President, on tariffs, you made clear you're not backing down from this, but many American small-business owners say they are concerned that these tariffs are going to hurt them. What's your message to them?

President Trump. They're going to be so much richer than they are right now.

And we have many—yesterday, General Motors was in. They want to invest \$60 billion. The people from Facebook were in yesterday. They're going to invest \$60 billion by the end of the year. Other people are talking about numbers.

Apple, as you know, a few days ago, announced \$500 billion investment. They're going to build their plants in the United States, which, as you know, —almost all of their plants are in China. Now they're building in the United States. Nobody—I was—I—look, the reason is two things. Number one, the election—November 5. And the other thing is tariffs. I think, probably, in that order.

But Tim Cook came in and he announced \$500—think of it, \$500 billion, not million. Five hundred million is a lot, when you think about it, right? But——

Vice President Vance. Yes, sir.

President Trump. I would have been happy with \$500 million. But it's \$500 billion investment by Apple in the United States, and that's because of the election result and it's because

of the tariffs and the tax incentives too. You know, tariffs and tax incentives. And I've never seen anything like it.

We have plants going up now in Indiana. We have plants going up in Michigan. A lot of plants going to be planned from—I'm trying to steer them to Michigan, because Michigan got so badly beaten by, you know, what happened with Europe.

You know, if you look at Europe—take a look at the EU. We're not allowed to sell cars there. It's prohibitive because of their policies, and also their nonmonetary tariffs. That's—they put obstacles in your way that you can do nothing about.

But if you take a look at what happens—so we sell no cars to Europe—I mean, virtually no cars—and they sell millions of cars to us. They don't take our agriculture. We take their agriculture—it's like a one-way street with them.

The European Union is very, very nasty. They sue our companies. Apple was forced to pay \$16 billion on a case that—like—very much like my cases that I won. They shouldn't have been even cases. But we felt they had no case, and they ended up having an extremely favorable judge and decision.

But they're suing Google, they're suing Facebook, they're suing all of these companies, and they're taking billions of dollars out of American companies, many more than the ones I just mentioned. And I guess they're using it to run Europe or something. I don't know what they're using it for.

But they treat us very badly. China obviously treats this very badly. Almost everybody does. And I blame past Presidents, to be honest.

Because when I was President, I—we received, so far, about \$700 billion from China, over the years, on the tariffs that I put in. No other President got 10 cents from China. And that was only beginning. Except for COVID, it would have—I would have been able to finish the process. But we had to fight the COVID thing, and we did really well with it. But we had to fight.

And then we had actually—as you remember, Mark, we actually handed over the stock market. It was higher than just previous to COVID coming in, which was sort of a miracle, frankly. We did a good job.

But the tariffs are very important. And I think the psychology—there's great spirit. When Mark came in, he said: "Congratulations. There's a whole new spirit. There's a whole new light over this country, and really over the world"——

Secretary General Rutte. Yes.

President Trump. ——because you have somebody that—a whole group of people, really, because I talk about this whole group, that we know what we're doing. And a lot of great things are happening.

But I've never seen investment like this. Trillions of dollars is being invested in the United States now that would have never—our country could have failed. Another 4 years of this, what happened in the last 4 years, our country would have been a crime-ridden mess.

And I don't know if you noticed—a little thing, they call it, but it's not a little thing if you don't have—if you like eggs and you don't have a lot of money—eggs have gone down 25 percent in the last couple of weeks. We inherited that problem: eggs.

Groceries have gone down a little bit. Energy has gone down.

Do you want to speak to that for a second, Governor? Would you just say a couple of words, you and Chris, about energy, what's happened?

Secretary of the Interior Douglas J. Burgum. Well, happy to, but I think that—Chris and I just came from CERAWeek, which is the largest conference in the world. So global leaders, people from the EU, officials from all the energy-producing countries all there. And all the global nationals, all the U.S. The spirit of that group is through the roof, because now they realize that in the United States, that President Trump's policies are pro developing more energy, as opposed to we're trying to shut down energy.

And that pro-growth, pro-business, pro-energy approach is giving people the optimism. So then the markets are reacting to that, and energy prices on the futures market are going to go down because people know we're not going to be killing off the energy we need for prosperity in all of our countries, but also for peace, because people have used energy to fuel these wars that President Trump is working so hard to end. And we know that energy—high energy prices were driving the inflation that he talked about.

So it accomplishes two goals for us—which is prosperity for the world, peace for the world—when we have smart energy policies. And President Trump has brought common sense back to how we think about energy.

President Trump. And it's brought down now \$65 a barrel, I saw this morning. That's phenomenal news, and that's going to bring—that's what brought it up. The energy went—they took our beautiful energy policies, and they just messed them up. And then they went immediately back to them, because—but by that time, they lost it. They lost that bronco, as the expression goes.

Chris, do you have something to say?

Secretary of Energy Christopher A. Wright. I think Doug said it well, but you just can't overstate how important the return of common sense, the return of knowledge about energy and pro-American consumers, pro investment in our country. I think, globally, that was welcomed. It means capital flows. It means more sobriety and lower energy prices, more economic opportunity for Americans.

So, yes, it was elated atmosphere at a global energy conference.

President Trump. Well, we're working on one project, and it should be very easy. It's a pipeline going through a small section of New York. New York has held it up for years, actually. For years they've wanted to do it—for years and years. And it will reduce—

The most expensive energy, almost, in the world is in New England, because they have no way of getting it there because it's been held up by New York. And the whole of New England and Connecticut and New York—the energy prices are through the roof. And this one pipeline will save for—per family, \$2,500 just on heating and another \$2,500 on everything else. So, the energy—by just a simple pipeline going through an area that wants it—an area that's not a rich area; it's actually a very poor area—would create jobs and everything else.

And it's going to be way underground. Nobody's going to see it. Once they fill it up, nobody's going to see it. Nobody's going to know it's there.

And families in New York and Connecticut and New England are going to save \$5,000 a family. Think of that. Because, right now, they have the highest energy prices maybe in the world, they say. New England is a disaster.

So we're working on that. In fact, the Governor is coming in—Governor of New York, Kathy Hochul, who's a very nice woman. She's coming in tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock to meet me on that and other things—not only that, but other things.

So I hope we don't have to use the extraordinary powers of the Federal Government to get it done, but if we have to, we will. But I don't think we'll have to.

I can tell you, Connecticut wants it and all of New England wants it. And who wouldn't want it? And it's also jobs on top of everything else. So that's going to be very exciting. So we're meeting with the Governor tomorrow morning.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Yes.

Greenland/Arctic Security Cooperation

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Greenland. What is your vision for the potential annexation of Greenland and getting them, potentially, to——

President Trump. Yes.

Q. ——to statehood?

President Trump. Well, I think it will happen. And I'm just thinking—I—I didn't give it much thought before, but I'm sitting with a man that could be very instrumental. You know, Mark, we need that for international security—not just security, international. We have a lot of our favorite players, you know, cruising around the coast, and we have to be careful. And we'll be talking to you.

And it's a very appropriate—really, a very appropriate question.

Secretary General Rutte. It's an——

President Trump. Thank you very much.

Secretary General Rutte. ——an issue in the high north, so the Arctic. So what you did—so, when it comes to Greenland, yes or no, joining the U.S., I would leave that outside, for me, this discussion, because I don't want to drag NATO in that.

But when it comes to the high north in the Arctic, you are totally right. The Chinese and—are using these routes. We know that the Russians already arming. We know we have a lack of icebreakers. So the fact that the seven—outside of Russia, there are seven Arctic countries—working together on this, under U.S. leadership—it's very important to make sure that that region, that that a part of the world stays safe. And we know things are changing there, and we have to be there.

Q. Well, they just had an election there the other day. I mean, do you see a referendum, a plebiscite where the people of Greenland would be in a position to decide if they want to become part of the United States?

President Trump. Yes, it was a good election for us, as you know. It was not a referendum. It wouldn't be called that. It was an individual election. But the person that did the best is a very good person, as far as we're concerned. And so we'll be talking about it. And it's very important.

Mark mentioned the word "icebreaker." So we've ordered—we're in the process of ordering 48 icebreakers, and Canada wants to know if they could use them. I said, "Well, you know, you got to pay for them." Think of it. Canada. We pay for their military. You know, Canada pays very little for their military, because they think we're going to protect them, but—even with the icebreakers.

So we're going to order 48, and Canada wants to be part of the deal. I say: "You've got to get your own icebreakers. I mean, if you're a State, you can be part of the deal, but if you're a separate country, you've got to get your own icebreakers."

Russia, as you know, has about 40 of them, and we have 1 big icebreaker. But that whole area is becoming very important and for a lot of reasons. The routes are, you know, very direct to Asia, to Russia, and you have ships all over the place. And we have to have protection. So we're going to have to make a deal on that.

And Denmark is not able to do that. You know, Denmark is very far away and really has nothing to do.

I—what happens? A boat landed there 200 years ago or something, and they say they have rights to it. I don't know if that's true. I'm not—I don't think it is, actually.

But we've been dealing with Denmark. We've been dealing with Greenland. And we have to do it. We—really need it for national security. I think that's why NATO might be—have to get involved in a way, because we really need Greenland for national security. It's very important.

You know, we have a couple of bases on Greenland already, and we have quite a few soldiers that—maybe you'll see more and more soldiers go there. I don't know.

What do you think about that, Pete? So—don't answer that, Pete. *[Laughter]* Don't answer that question—

But we have—we have bases, and we have quite a few soldiers on Greenland already.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Q. Mr. President, some people question your commitment to NATO. Will everything—anything change?

Your commitment to NATO, will anything change? Same amount of money?

President Trump. Well, I think they made—

Q. Same number of troops?

President Trump. —a great step by putting Mark in charge. I think, to me, that's a great step, because he and I have seen eye to eye on everything for a long time. We've been doing this a long time now.

Secretary General Rutte. Nine years now.

President Trump. And so that's a great step.

You have to keep NATO strong. You have to keep it relevant.

But the biggest thing we have to worry about right now is what's going on right now. I think the rest is going to take care of itself.

I don't see this have—this was a fluke. This was something that if we had a competent President, it would not have happened. The man was grossly incompetent. All you have to do is look in—take a look at—he signs by autopen.

Who was signing all this stuff by autopen? Who would—who would think you signed important documents by autopen? You know, these are major documents you're signing. You're proud to sign them. You have your signature on something—in 300 years, they say, "Oh, look." Can you imagine? Everything was signed by autopen—almost everything. Nobody has ever heard of such a thing.

Q. Do you—

President Trump. So—

Q. Sorry.

President Trump. Should have never happened.

Department of Justice/Federal Bureau of Investigation

Q. You're speaking tomorrow at the Justice Department about law and order. Could you tell us a little bit about that?

President Trump. Yes, we're going to be with the Justice Department. We have a great Justice Department. Pam Bondi is so fantastic. And Todd Blanche and Emil—you got to know him a little bit; he was acting for a little while—and some other people are incredible in the Justice Department.

And I consider the FBI to be a part of it, in a sense, and Kash is going to be fantastic, and all the people he's—Dan Bongino, I love that. I mean, I love that. I think Dan is great.

I think we have unbelievable people. And all I'm going to do is set out my vision. It's going to be their vision, really, but it's my ideas. And basically, we want—we don't want to have crime in the streets. We don't want to have people pushed into subways and killed, and then the—the person that did the pushing ends up in a 15-year trial and gets off scot-free. We want to have justice, and we want to have safety in our cities, as well as our communities.

And we'll be talking about immigration. We'll be talking about a lot of things. Just the complete gamut. So I look forward to that. That will be tomorrow at the Justice Department.

Ukraine/Russia

Q. Mr. President, you are a man of peace. You've said it several times and made it very clear. A man of peace dealing with belligerent people.

President Trump. Yes.

Q. And I'm thinking, we saw you handled Zelenskyy in this very own room. What is your leverage on Putin? Are you thinking sanctions? What if he refuses to——

President Trump. Well, I do have leverage, but I don't want to talk about leverage now, because right now we're talking to him. And based on the statements he made today, they were pretty positive, I think, so I don't want to talk about that.

I hope Russia is going to make the deal too. And I think once that deal happens, you're never going to be in a process. I don't think they're going back to shooting again. I really believe if we had a—if we get a peace treaty, a cease-fire treaty, I think that leads to peace. That's going to really lead to a peace—I don't think anyone wants to go back.

They've been doing this for a long time, and it's vicious and violent. And I think if—President Putin agrees and does a cease-fire, I think we're going to be in very good shape to get it done. We want to get it over with. That's why it was very important what I instructed everybody, including Steve, what we're looking for: to discuss concepts of land, concepts of——

National Security Adviser Michael G. Waltz. Yes, sir.

President Trump. ——of power plants because it's complicated. You know, you have a whole—you're sort of creating the edge of a country.

The sad part is that country, if they didn't—if this didn't happen—and it wouldn't have happened—I don't know if they would have to give anything back. I guess Crimea?

You know, I said it last time, Crimea was given by Obama, Biden gave them the whole thing, and Bush gave them Georgia. And Trump didn't give them anything.

I gave them—you know what I gave them? I gave them—I gave them Javelins. And the Javelins were very effective, as you know. I gave them nothing——

Secretary General Rutte. 2Twenty nineteen.

President Trump. And then also, if you take a look, I was the one that stopped the pipeline going into Europe. It was totally stopped: Nord Stream 2. Nobody ever heard of Nord Stream 2 before I came along.

But I got along very well with President Putin. I got along with most of them. I get along great with President Xi. I got along great with Kim Jong Un. I got along great with all of them. And we had no wars. We had no problems. We wiped out ISIS in record time—General "Razin" Kane. And he wiped them out.

And he is going to be our new chief, right? He's going to be——

Secretary of Defense Peter B. Hegseth. Yes, sir.

President Trump. ——the head of Joint Chiefs of Staff, and he's a highly respected man. He's going to be great.

Pete is going to be fantastic. I have no doubt about it. We have a great team. A really great team.

Yes, please. Go ahead, please.

Russia

Q. Mr. President, some of our allies have said that they're worried that they could be the next to be attacked by Russia. You've spoken directly with the Russian President.

President Trump. Yes.

Q. Do you think those fears are justified?

President Trump. No, I don't. I think when this gets done, it's done. They're going to all want to go home and rest. I don't see it happening. Nope, I don't see that happening. And we'll make sure it doesn't happen. Not going to happen. But we'll make sure it doesn't happen.

Yes, go ahead, please.

Nuclear Disarmament Efforts

Q. Leaders from Russia and Iran are heading to Beijing tomorrow to discuss nuclear programs. What do you hope to get out of that?

President Trump. Well, maybe they're going to talk about nonnuclear programs. Maybe they're going to be talking about the deescalation of nuclear weapons, because, you know, I was talking about that with President Putin very strongly. And we could have done something. Had that election not been rigged, we would have had something. I think I would have made a deal with Putin on de-escalation, denuclearization, as they say. But we would have deescalated nuclear weapons, because the power of nuclear weapons is so great and so devastating.

And right now Russia and us have by far the most, but China will catch us within 5 years. China doesn't have—but they're in the process of building——

Secretary General Rutte. Yes.

President Trump. ——and they build. And within 4 or 5 years, they'll probably have the same.

Secretary General Rutte. And by the way, you—this is a Republican tradition. Ronald Reagan, when he negotiated with Gorbachev——

President Trump. Right.

Secretary General Rutte. ——in the 1980s——

President Trump. That's right.

Secretary General Rutte. ——about bringing down the number of nuclear weapons is what you have been doing your first term. And it is important.

President Trump. It would be a great achievement if we could bring down the number. We have so many weapons, and the power is so great.

And we—number one, you don't need them to that extent. And then we'd have to get others, because, as you know, in a smaller way—Kim Jong Un has a lot of nuclear weapons, by the way—a lot—and others do also. You have India. You have Pakistan. You have others that have them, and we'd get them involved.

But we started off with Russia and us. We have, by far—actually, by far, the most. And we were going to denuclearize, and that was going to happen.

And then we were going to China. And I spoke to China. I spoke to President Xi about it. And he really liked the idea. You know, he'd like not to spend trillions of dollars building weapons that, hopefully, he's never going to have to use. And—because they are very expensive also. So that would have been great.

Okay, one or two more.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Yes, go ahead.

Federal Government Appropriations/Tax Code Reform/California Water Access

Q. Thank you. We are looking at an impending Government shutdown Friday at midnight.

President Trump. Yes.

Q. Democrats, for 30 years straight, have said, if there's a shutdown, bad things happen. Do you anticipate direct negotiations yourself with conference leader of the Democrats, Chuck Schumer?

President Trump. Yes, if they need me, I'm there a hundred percent. It's—right now, it's two or three people. If they—if it shuts down, it's not the Republicans' fault. You know, we passed a bill where we had an incredible Republican vote. We only had one negative vote, a grandstander. You know, one grandstander. There's always a grandstander in the lot.

But it was amazing. People were amazed that the Republicans were able to vote in unison like that so strongly.

If there's a shutdown, even the Democrats admit it will be their fault. And I'm hearing a lot of Democrats are going to vote for it, and I hope they do. This is an extension.

But ultimately, we want to vote for one big, beautiful bill where we put the taxes in, we put everything in. We're going to have big tax cuts. We're going to have tremendous incentives for companies coming into our country and employing lots of people.

It'll be—I called it, in a rare moment, one big, beautiful bill. That's what I like. And it seems to be that's where they're heading. And we'll have to take care of something to do with Los Angeles.

A place called Los Angeles almost burned to the ground. By the way, I broke into Los Angeles. Can you believe it? I had to break in.

Secretary General Rutte. Yes?

President Trump. I invaded Los Angeles. And we opened up the water, and the water is now flowing down. They have so much water, they don't know what to do. They were sending it out to the Pacific for environmental reasons. Okay? Can you believe it? And in the meantime, they lost 25,000 houses. They lost—and nobody's ever seen anything like it.

But we have the water. I'd love to show you a picture. You've seen the picture. The water is flowing through the half pipes. You know, we have the big half pipes that go down. Used to—25 years ago, they used to have plenty of water, but they turned it off for—again, for environmental reasons. Well, I turned it on for environmental reasons and also fire reasons.

But—and I've been asking them to do that during my first term. I said, "Do it." I didn't think anything like—could happen like this, but they were—they didn't have enough water. Now the farmers are going to have water for their land, and the water is in there.

But I actually had to break in. We broke in to do it because we had people that were afraid to give water.

Secretary General Rutte. Yes.

President Trump. They were—in particular, they were trying to protect a certain little fish. And I say, "How do you protect a fish if you don't have water?" They didn't have any water, so they're protecting a fish, and that didn't work out too well, by the way.

So they have a lot of water going down throughout California, all coming out from the Pacific Northwest, even some from Canada. Thank you, Canada, very much. I appreciate it.

Next thing you know, they'll want to turn the water off. They'll want to charge us for the water. But it comes up from the Pacific Northwest, and it's a beautiful thing to see. I mean, it is brimming with water.

Now, if they would have had that done, you wouldn't have had the damage, because the fire would have been put out. The fire hydrants would have been loaded. The sprinklers in people's living rooms and bedrooms would have been loaded up with the—they had no water. The Government makes them put sprinklers in. They had no water in the sprinklers because they had no water.

So the water is flowing, and we're going to have to give a lot of money to Los Angeles to help them, and the Democrats are going to want to do that. So that's the one thing different.

And I—frankly, I think that makes it a lot easier. But one of the—the big thing is, we have the big, beautiful bill. We got to get that done. And that will put our—country in a position like it's never been in.

It's a reduction of taxes. It's tremendous incentives for companies to come from all over the world into our country. It's great environmentally, but it's not this environmental scam that we went through—that we all went through. It provides for everything.

It's a big, beautiful bill, and I hope we can get it approved. And that will be next.

But in the meantime, we have the continuing resolution, and the Republicans have approved it, and now the Democrats have to approve it. And I hope they will.

And I think a lot of them—I can tell you, they want to. I've spoken to some of them. They really want to. Their leadership may not want them to. And if it closes, it's purely on the Democrats.

All right, one more.

North Korea

Q. On Korea, sir. We've seen tension increasing in the Peninsula. You've talked about Kim Jong Un. Do you have any plans of getting—of reestablishing the relationship you had during the first meeting?

President Trump. Yes. Well, I would. I had a great relationship with Kim Jong Un, North Korea. If I wasn't elected, if Hillary got in, you would have had a nuclear war with North Korea. He expected it. He expected it. And they said, "Oh, thousands of people." No, millions of people would have been killed.

But I got in. We went to Singapore. We met. We went to Vietnam. We met. We got along really good. We had a very good relationship. And—and we still do. We still do. You don't have that threat that you had.

Q. You have talked with—have you talked to him?

President Trump. I mean, look, when I was running the first time, it looked like there was going to be a war with North Korea. You know that better than anyone.

Secretary General Rutte. Tensions were high. Yes. Yes.

President Trump. Yes. And it—and it started off——

Secretary General Rutte. And everybody was—was startled that you——

President Trump. Yes.

Secretary General Rutte. ——invited him for talks.

President Trump. Right.

Secretary General Rutte. But you did, and it——

President Trump. It started out very rough.

Secretary General Rutte. Yes. Yes.

President Trump. And he wouldn't meet with Obama. Wouldn't take his calls. I said, "How many times did you call?" They called a lot. He wouldn't take their call. He told me, "I wouldn't take his call."

But with me, it did start off rough, if you remember. Very rough, actually. Very nasty. And——

Secretary General Rutte. That was in Singapore, the first one?

President Trump. Yes, but then—no, before that. Then it stopped. The rhetoric was extremely tough. It was—it was a little bit——

Secretary General Rutte. You had it in your speech at the U.N. I remember. [*Laughter*]

President Trump. Yes, that's right. It was a little bit dangerous.

And then we met. They asked for a meeting, and then we met. And the meeting caused the Olympics, which was in South Korea, to become a tremendous success. Nobody was buying tickets for the Olympics because they didn't want to be nuked.

And I met, and not only did the Olympics become successful, but North Korea participated in the Olympics.

Secretary General Rutte. Yes. His sister visited.

President Trump. It was an amazing thing.

Secretary General Rutte. Yes.

President Trump. And that was something that was an achievement of the Trump administration—great achievement. And so I have a great relationship with Kim Jong Un. And we'll see what happens.

But certainly, he's a nuclear power.

Okay? Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:33 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East Steven C. Witkoff; former National Hockey League center Wayne Gretzky; White House Border Czar Thomas D. Homan; honorary U.S. Secret Service agent D.J. Daniel; former Department of Justice Special Counsel John L. Smith; Timothy D. Cook, chief executive officer, Apple Inc.; Prime Minister-designate Mark Carney of Canada; Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche; Principal Associate Deputy Attorney Emil Bove; Federal Bureau of Investigation Director Kashyap P. "Kash" Patel and Deputy Director Daniel J. Bongino; former President George W. Bush; President of the State Affairs Commission Kim Jon Un of North Korea; Lt. Gen. J. Daniel Caine, USAF (Ret.), the President's nominee to be Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and 2016 Democratic Presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist organization. Secretary General Rutte referred to Kim Yo Jong, sister of President Kim. Reporters referred to Minister of Finance Dominic LeBlanc of Canada; former Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro N. Mayorkas; President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine; and Senate Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer.

Categories: Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, White House; Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Secretary General Rutte.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Blanche, Todd; Bondi, Pamela J.; Bongino, Daniel J.; Bove, Emil; Burgum, Douglas J.; Bush, George W.; Caine, J. Daniel; Carney, Mark; Clinton, Hillary Rodham; Cook, Timothy D.; Daniel, D.J.; Gretzky, Wayne; Hegseth, Peter B.; Hochul, Kathleen C.; Homan, Thomas D.; Kim Jong Un; Noem, Kristi L.; Obama, Barack; Patel, Kashyap P. "Kash"; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Rutte, Mark ; Smith, John L.; Stoltenberg, Jens; Vance, James D. "J.D."; Witkoff, Steven C.; Wright, Christopher A.; Xi Jinping.

Subjects: 2024 Presidential election; Arctic security, improvement efforts; Attorney General; Border security; California, wildfires in Los Angeles area; Canada, Prime Minister-designate; Canada, trade with U.S.; China, President; China, trade with U.S.; COVID-19 pandemic; Deputy Attorney General; Egg prices; Energy infrastructure, improvement efforts; European defense spending levels; European Union, trade with U.S.; Federal Bureau of Investigation; Federal Government appropriations; Greenland, political status with respect to Denmark; Illegal

immigration; Immigration reform; Inflation; Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist organization; Joint Chiefs of Staff; Manufacturing industry, domestic investment; New York, Governor; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; North Korea, President of the State Affairs Commission; North Korea, relations with U.S.; Nuclear disarmament, international efforts; Oil and natural gas, domestic production; Olympic Games; Poland, defense spending level; Principal Associate Deputy Attorney General; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Russia, President; Secretary of Defense; Secretary of Energy; Secretary of Homeland Security; Secretary of the Interior; Sports, efforts to restrict transgender participation; Tariffs; Tax Code reform; U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East; Ukraine, international military aid; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Ukraine, U.S. assistance; Undocumented immigrants, deportation of criminals; Vice President; Water management policy, improvement efforts; White House Border Czar.

DCPD Number: DCPD202500351.