

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025

**Remarks at a Photographic Opportunity With Automobile Racing Champions
From NASCAR, IndyCar, and IMSA and an Exchange With Reporters
April 9, 2025**

The President. Hello, everybody. How are you?

These are nice cars.

[*At this point, the President greeted participants.*]

Well, thank you very much, everybody. We have a very special day, for a lot of reasons, actually, if you really think about it. But this is a day, because Roger Penske is a great friend of mine. I've known him a long time. He received, a few years ago, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest award in the country outside of the congressional Medal of Honor. It's sort of the civilian version of the congressional Medal of Honor.

And I watched him win his 18th Indianapolis 500, and now I just said, "Did you win 19?" And he said, "Well, actually, we won 20." He won two more since then. So that was, like, 5 years ago, and he won 2 more since then. And just well deserving.

If you look Germany, Japan, the countries, they spend billions of dollars trying to win Indy. And I guess they do it sometimes, but not much. But he's done it 20 times, fellas. So he must know something about cars and racing. And trucks too, by the way. He knows a lot about trucks.

But he's been a very special guy, and he's brought some of our outstanding racing champions with tremendous courage and guts and grit.

Hello, fellas. I didn't see you guys over there. That's a good-looking couple of teams too. [*Laughter*] They have a lot of courage. And we'll see you in a second.

So we're joined by the 2023–2024 NASCAR champion, Ryan Blaney and Joey Logano. That's really fantastic, fellas. That's great.

How fast do you get that car going? Like, as an example, on average, how fast will you go up to?

2023 NASCAR Champion Ryan Blaney. About 190.

The President. About 190.

Mr. Blaney. Two hundred, yes.

The President. You can have it. [*Laughter*] I don't want to go above—190, that's fantastic.

And on a straightaway, you'll go how much?

Mr. Blaney. About 190, 200.

The President. One-ninety to 200?

Mr. Blaney. Yes.

The President. Well, it takes a special genetic. You know that, right? It's genes, not only—it's genes, really, because most people couldn't do that. Very few people could do it.

The 2023 and 2024 Indianapolis 500 winner, Josef Newgarden. Josef. [*Inaudible*]

And the 2025 champions of the 24 Hours of Daytona, Felipe Nasr, Nick Tandy, and Laurens Vanthoor. Thank you, fellas. Did you have—[*inaudible*]?

So this is just a celebration of racing, and it's a celebration of Roger and his great success and his life and these incredible champions, who really do what very few people could do. Mentally, psychologically, it's a big factor here, like it is in all sports, really, but you need a great physical ability. People that do this, they don't realize what great athletes they are. It's just not the car.

I had a friend, he was a—he's a very successful guy, but he was a driver. And started off, he wanted to be a race car driver. He wanted to be like you. He wanted to be like—just like Joey Logano. [Laughter] And he had it for business, but he didn't have it for the—he said, "I just couldn't compete with the good drivers." He couldn't do it, no matter what he did. And he got lucky he went into business and made a lot of money. He was very successful.

But he said, "I couldn't press the accelerator down all the way, and the best drivers could," so there was just a difference. It was really about—I never forgot that story.

But these are great champions, and it's a great sport, and what you've done in Indianapolis also, with the track and everything, has been incredible. I mean, it's really incredible. People tell me it's been amazing. I'll have to get there. I might have to get there, maybe, this year——

Penske Corporation Founder and Chairman Roger S. Penske. Very good.

The President. ——with you. But——

Mr. Penske. You have an open invitation. [Laughter]

The President. Well, thank you very much. Thank you.

And we had the—we did Daytona. We went around the track in the Beast—what's called the Beast, with the thick windows and the whole thing. And you're not supposed to hear anything, but I heard the fans. They were going crazy outside. [Laughter] So it was a great honor.

So I just wanted to welcome them to the White House, a special place—a very, very special place. And we love champions. And these are the greatest champions in the world. These are the greatest champions in racing. And it's an honor to have you all.

And thank you very much. All of you, thank you very much.

I wouldn't ride in that thing if you paid me. [Laughter]

How fast will that go?

2023 and 2024 Indy 500 Winner Josef Newgarden. Two-forty plus.

The President. Two-forty?

Mr. Newgarden. Yes.

The President. That's unbelievable.

Mr. Newgarden. It's a weapon.

The President. Two-time winner of the Indianapolis 500. Consecutively, right?

Mr. Newgarden. Yes, sir.

The President. So what the hell are you doing? What do you eat? [Laughter]

Mr. Newgarden. A lot of milk.

The President. Because I want some.

Mr. Newgarden. I drink a lot of milk. Hopefully—[inaudible]——

The President. I'm going to take some.

And that one is pure speed and endurance, right?

2018, 2021, 2024, and 2025 IMSA Champion Felipe Nasr. Correct, sir.

The President. Speed and endurance.

What—is that car a very different car than, let's say, this one? Very different?

Mr. Nasr. Very different.

The President. Very different?

Mr. Nasr. Yes.

The President. Made for——

Mr. Nasr. You've got to last so many hours——

The President. Right.

Mr. Nasr. ——and we all share the car, so three drivers.

The President. And a totally different engine?

Mr. Nasr. Different engine.

The President. Everything is different?

Mr. Nasr. Everything, sir.

The President. And you'll go—is it 24 hours?

Mr. Nasr. Yes.

The President. That's a long time.

Mr. Nasr. That's a long way.

The President. And that car just——

Mr. Nasr. [*Inaudible*]

The President. ——and there's no let up, there's no—it's just constant, right?

That's fantastic—congratulations.

Mr. Nasr. Thank you.

The President. That's endurance. Endurance is a big factor in life and success, I can tell you, so—you guys have it.

Well, thank you very much.

Would you like to ask Roger or any of these champions any questions while we're here?

Q. Mr. President, I have a question for you if you don't mind.

The President. Yes.

Tariffs/China-U.S. Trade

Q. You started the morning saying, "Be cool," and then just a few hours——

The President. Be cool.

Q. —later, there was a pause put in on the tariffs. Can you walk us through your thinking about why you decided to put a 90-day pause—

The President. Well, I thought that—

Q. —on the tariffs?

The President. —people were jumping a little bit out of line. They were getting yippy. You know? They were getting a little bit yippy, a little bit afraid, unlike these champions, because we have a big job to do. No other President would have done what I did. No other President—I know the Presidents. They wouldn't have done it.

And it had to be done. What was happening to us on trade, not only with—you know, if you look at it, not only with China, but China was by far the biggest abuser in history and others also. But somebody had to do it. They had to stop, because it was not sustainable.

Last year, China made \$1 trillion off trade with the United States. That's not right. And now I've reversed it. It's for a short period of time, but we made \$2 billion. We're making now \$2 billion a day.

And somebody had to do it. Roger actually said it. Charles Schwab was here a little while ago, one of the great financial people, and he said he's been waiting for somebody to do what I did over the last month.

And if you didn't do it, you wouldn't have a country. It wouldn't be sustainable. So, I'm honored to have done it.

And you know, look, nothing is over yet, but we have a tremendous amount of spirit from other countries, including China. China wants to make a deal. They just don't know how quite to go about it. You know? It's one of those things they don't know how—quite—they're proud people, and President Xi is a proud man. I know him very well, and they don't know quite how to go about it, but they'll figure it out. They're in the process of figuring it out, but they want to make a deal.

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

And we have other—

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

We have many other countries, as you know—many more than 75, and they all want to come, and they want to come here, or they'll go to Commerce, or they'll go to Treasury. We have our great Senators here and Congressmen. They'll call John. They'll do—somebody. They'll go through somebody. But they're all calling, "How do we do this?" They all want to make a deal.

Somebody had to do what we did. And I did a 90-day pause for the people that didn't retaliate, because I told them, "If you retaliate, we're going to double it." And that's what I did with China, because they did retaliate.

So we'll see how it all works out. I think it's going to work out amazing. I think that our country is going to be—at the end of a year or shorter, but I think we're going to have something that nobody would have dreamt possible.

A man like Roger Penske, I don't want to get him in trouble with China, so I won't, but he would know that you have to—someday, you have to cut the bow and you have to do what you have to do. Right, Roger? And that's what I did, and I'm very happy to have done it.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Q. Mr. President, was there anyone—

Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis of Greece/Tariffs/Immigration Enforcement Actions

Q. Mr. President, the Prime Minister of Greece just told Breitbart's Matt Boyle that he thinks absolutely the European Union and the United States could work out a trade deal that's "win-win" and, quote, "mutually beneficial" to both sides.

The President. Great.

Q. What do you think about the Prime Minister's comments? And do you think a deal could be struck with the European Union?

The President. First of all, I know him. He's a good man, and I appreciate his comments.

Yes, a deal can be made with every one of them. Deal—a deal is going to be made with China. A deal is going to be made with every one of them, and they'll be fair deals. I just want fair. They will be fair deals for everybody.

But they weren't fair to the United States. They were sucking us dry, and you can't do that. You know, we have \$36 trillion of debt for a reason. We don't have a debt for fun. They have it for a reason.

And people took advantage of our country, and they ripped us off for a very—for decades. I've been thinking about this for decades. I've been—if you ever saw me on television, I was young, like these guys. And that was the good old days, I'll tell you, Roger. *[Laughter]* But I was like these guys, young, and I was talking about it.

Nothing changed, and nothing was done about it.

Then I did it. In my first term, I did it and did it well. We took in hundreds of billions of dollars from China and others. And I started the process, but then we had to fix up from the COVID mess caused by China. We had to fix up from that, and we did a good job of doing it.

And when we handed back the reins after a rigged election—and when we handed back the reins, the stock market was higher than it was before COVID coming in. So, you know, we did a great job, but we didn't have time to do the big thing, which we're doing now.

And it's a—you know, it's like a patient is sick. You have to do surgery. The patient is very, very sick.

And Joe Biden handed us over a country that was in very serious trouble, economically and in every other way. They let China run away with things. They let other countries run away with things. And maybe worst of all, in a certain way, is what they did at the border.

We had people pouring into our country by the millions. Many of them were murderers and drug lords and thieves and people from prisons from all over the world. And they were people from mental institutions, insane asylums. They were taking their mentally insane, and they were dumping them into the—into our country.

And I'll tell you, Tom Homan and Kristi Noem are doing a fantastic job in removing them. And now, the courts—the Supreme Court just gave us numerous good rulings where we have to be able to get them out.

You had other judges trying to take over the system. And think of it: They take over; they want these people coming back. Tren de Aragua from Venezuela, the Venezuela jails, that cut off the fingers of a man in Colorado. They cut off his fingers because he called the police looking for help.

They said, "Did you call the police?" He said, "Yes, I did." "Put your hand down," and they cut off the fingers. This is what—they want to bring these people back. No.

And I want to thank the President of El Salvador for the job he's done, because that is the way it has to be done, and it's too bad.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Q. Mr. President——

Q. Just to follow up, Mr. President——

The President. Yes, please.

Q. So Chuck Schumer and Nancy Pelosi, they've been talking about tariffs for decades.

The President. That's right.

Tariffs/Manufacturing Investment

Q. How come when these Democrat elites want tariffs, everything is hunky-dory, but when President Trump wants tariffs, all hell breaks loose? Do you see this double standard?

The President. I love this guy, whoever the hell that is. *[Laughter]* That's really nice. I appreciate that question.

No, Chuck Schumer and Nancy Pelosi—everybody knew you had to do it, but they never had the guts to do it. It does take guts.

It even takes guts for our country to go through it. That's why I say, "Be cool." They were saying about—I said, "Just be cool." It's going to work out. It's going to work out. And it's working out, I can tell you. Working out maybe faster than I thought.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

But I said it's—you know, it's going to take a little conditioning. It's a transition to—it's really—I think it's a transition to greatness. It's going to be greatness. Our country is going to be—there'll be nothing like it. And people investing in our country, they're going to do better than they've ever done before.

We have more car manufacturers, Roger, coming into our country now—speaking of cars. We've never seen anything like it, and they're coming in because of the election, but they're coming in because of the tariffs, because they don't want to pay 25 or 50 or whatever it may be. They don't want to pay that. They can't pay that.

We had three cancelations in Mexico building a plant. They're all coming into the United States. Canada, they're coming in. From China, they're coming in. They're coming in from everywhere, and that's just cars.

We have chipmakers coming. We have the biggest chipmaker in the world, from Taiwan, coming in, spending \$3 billion to build plants and a big—mostly a big plant. This is a hell of a plant. When you spend the kind of money, they're going to go \$2- to \$300 billion, not million.

You know, you'd say, "Million would be the right number." It's \$2- to \$300 billion dollars. Think of that: \$300 billion.

If you look at Apple, Apple is going to spend \$500 billion building a plant. They wouldn't be doing that if I didn't do this. They'd just keep building them in China, and that's unsustainable.

It's not a pleasant thing to do, but I appreciate the question.

And you know, interestingly, Chuck Schumer and Nancy Pelosi—Crazy Nancy—they—they've wanted to do this for years, but they never had a President that had the guts to do it. Because it does take guts, believe me.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Bond Market/Senate Majority Leader John R. Thune/Speaker of the House of Representatives J. Michael Johnson

Q. Is it the bond markets that persuaded you to reverse course?

The President. No, I was watching the bond market. The bond market is very tricky. I was watching it, but if you look at it now, it's beautiful. The bond market right now is beautiful.

But yes, I saw last night, where people were getting a little queasy. I think everything had—well, the big move wasn't what I did today. The big move was what I did on "liberation day." We had "liberation day" in America. We're liberated from all of the horrible deals that were made, all the horrible trade deals that were made.

And I was helped by people just like this. Senators, Congressmen, and friends, right? And we had great help in the Senate. Was—Republican Senators have been amazing. They stood tall. And likewise, in the House. And John Thune has done an amazing job. Barrasso has done an amazing job. All, I mean, I can't think of a Senator—really, we had tremendous support.

We got a bill passed the other day with almost unanimous support in the Senate, and I think we're going to get that in the House too.

And I have to tell you that Mike Johnson is a great Speaker. He's done a fantastic job. We had a majority of one. Now we have a majority of seven. And you don't realize how big seven is until you have a majority of one then seven. [*Laughter*] Sounds like so much. But we're doing well.

But Mike Johnson and John Thune have done a really great job.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

JPMorgan Chase Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Jamie Dimon/Tariffs

Q. Mr. President, was there anyone who influenced your decision? Did you speak with anyone? You know, Jamie Dimon—did you speak with anyone just about—

The President. Well, I watched Jamie Dimon on Maria Bartiromo's show—

Q. Did that influence your decision?

The President. —this morning, and he was very good. He said that—actually made the statement to effect that something had to be done with the tariffs and trade. He said that. He said, "Look, you know, at some point"—but he said something has to be done with tariffs and trade. He understood it. He's very smart and very—a genius, financially. He's done a fantastic job at the bank. And he knows that. Everybody knows that.

Anybody that's even a little bit smart knows it. It wasn't sustainable, what was happening. Somebody had to pull the trigger. I was willing to pull the trigger. This should have been done long ago, just like Biden should have stopped the border long ago.

I mean, he allowed 21 million people-plus into our country, many of whom should never have been allowed out of prisons and jails. They came out of prisons and jails from all over the world, and now we're getting them out, bringing them back to their countries. But it's—should have never been done.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Q. And where does the—where does the TikTok decision stand?

The President. Yes, go ahead, please.

Tariffs

Q. Sir, would you consider exempting some U.S. companies, maybe some larger companies, who have been hit hard in the markets the last few days——

The President. Well, I'll take a look, as——

Q. ——during this 90-day——

The President. ——as time goes by. We're going to take a look at it. There are some that have been hard. There are some that, by the nature of the company, get hit a little bit harder. And we'll take a look at that, yes.

Timeline of Tariff Implementation

Q. How will you determine it over the next 90 days?

The President. Just instinctively, more than anything else. I mean, you almost can't take a pencil to paper. It's really more of an instinct, I think, than anything else.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Q. Where does the TikTok deal stand?

The President's Position on Tariffs

Q. What is your credibility like? Because you said that these tariffs would go in effect. On Monday, you said no pause. And today there is a pause.

The President. No, I think you have to have——

Q. So how can people believe your word today, sir?

The President. It's—yes, it's not a question of that. You have to have flexibility. I could say: "Here's a wall, and I'm going to go through that wall. I'm going to go through it no matter what, and keep going"—and you can't go through the wall. Sometimes you have to be able to go under the wall, around the wall, or over the wall. These guys know that better than anybody, right? You got to go around them sometimes; you're not going to go through them. [Laughter]

So I consider—you know, I think in financial markets, because they change. Look how much it changed today. We went from, you know, pretty moderate today, but over the last few days, it looked pretty glum to, I guess they say it was the biggest day in financial history. That's a pretty big change.

And I think the word would be "flexible." You have to be flexible. Like, he's asking the question about "some companies." Some companies, through no fault of their own, they happen to be in an industry that is more affected by these things than others. You have to be able to show a little flexibility, and I'm able to do that.

I'm going to say hello to these champions, because they are great champions. I've got to say hello to them.

Q. Mr. President——

Q. Mr. President, do you plan to talk to Xi Jinping to avoid more escalation?

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:59 p.m. on the South Portico at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to IMSA 2016 Champion Nick Tandy; 2024 FIA World Endurance Champion Laurens Vanthoor; Charles Schwab, founder and chairman, Charles Schwab Corp.; White House

Border Czar Thomas D. Homan; President Nayib Armando Bukele Ortez of El Salvador; Senate Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer; Rep. Nancy Pelosi; Senate Majority Whip John A. Barrasso III; and Fox News Channel program host Maria Bartiromo. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on April 10.

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