

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025

Remarks During a Cabinet Meeting and an Exchange With Reporters

April 10, 2025

The President. Thank you very much. We had a very good meeting. We were talking about a lot of different things.

Consumer prices have actually dropped. There's very little inflation—everybody predicted a lot of inflation—very little inflation. Energy costs are down. Interest rates are probably down. They scatter, but they're probably down. Prescription drug prices are even to down.

We're doing very well. It's been amazing. We had a big day yesterday. There will always be transition difficulty, but we had a—in history—it was the biggest day in history, the markets.

So we're very, very happy with the way the country is running.

We're trying to get the world to treat us fairly. This is something that should have been done 25 years ago, and it wasn't. Should have been done 40 years ago, and it wasn't. But no President was willing to take it on, but you had to. It's not sustainable. It wasn't sustainable.

And, as you know, without a lot of money being added, because there's a lot of money that we could add, the country is making approximately \$2 billion a day. And when you think of it, that's—we've never done that before, never come close to it. And the number is probably 3½ billion dollars a day. And that makes us a very strong country.

But we have Scott here and Howard and some of the people that are working on deals, and the biggest problem they have is, they don't have enough time in the day. Everybody wants to come and make a deal. And we're working with a lot of different countries, and it's all going to work out very well. I think it's going to work out, really, very well.

But we're in good shape. There is no inflation. There's very little inflation. And I went 4 years without inflation. And I tariffed. I took in hundreds of billions of dollars from China and others—taxes on China—but we took in hundreds of billions of dollars a year from China, and we had no inflation, essentially.

So we think we're in very good shape. We think we're doing very well. Again, there'll be a transition cost and transition problems, but in the end, it's going to be a beautiful thing.

We're doing, again, what we should have done many years ago. We let it get out of control, and we allowed some countries to get very big and very rich at our expense, and we're not going to—can't let that happen. Can't—it's not a sustainable formula.

So I want to just thank everybody at the table, and maybe I'll go around and ask some of you a little short couple of answers. Pete just got back from Panama, and he's been all over the place. And you want to give us a little report on that, and whatever else you might have to say?

Everyone at this table is doing an incredible job, by the way, I have to say. Incredible. And the relationships are—it's like they're friends. There's really—

Secretary of Agriculture Brooke L. Rollins. Family.

The President. The relationships are very strong—really good, really strong. And these meetings are very good.

And I think, you know, having—I don't believe there's any other President that allowed the press to come into a meeting such as this. It's—these are very sacred meetings. These are very

private meetings. But we have nothing to hide. And I think it's good. I think it's a good—we want to be—a word you like to use, Jeff [Jeff Mason, Reuters], is "transparent." So we want to be transparent.

And we'll do that by starting with Pete. Go ahead, Pete.

Secretary of Defense Peter B. Hegseth. Yes. Mr. President, we just got back from Panama last night. We were at the Panama Canal with our SouthCom commander, ships, F-18s, troops, and signed a couple of historic deals—one which is with the Panama Canal Authority, a framework for U.S. vessels, first and free, through the Panama Canal.

The President. Right.

Secretary Hegseth. And then also a memorandum of understanding with their security minister for the presence of U.S. troops—Fort Sherman is an old U.S. base there—as well as a naval station and air station jointly with Panama to secure the Panama Canal from Chinese influence. That's something you said: We're taking back the canal. China has had too much influence. Obama and others let them creep in. We, along with Panama, are pushing them out, sir.

And so we had a very successful trip there. President Mulino sends his regards, very complimentary of the U.S., as—he's a great ally, and I think he—they want the Communist Chinese out. And with our troops—they're partnering with their forces—we've got a chance to push them all the way out, sir.

The President. We've moved a lot of troops to Panama and filled up some areas that we used to have, and we didn't have any longer, but we have them now, and I think it's in very good control, right?

Secretary Hegseth. Yes, sir.

The President. Okay, thank you, Pete. Very good.

Howard.

Secretary of Commerce Howard W. Lutnick. So—so, we've—have so many countries to talk to. It is—it's incredible. I think Scott and I—I'm not sure we could ever have enough time in the day to talk to all these countries, because they want to talk, and they want to talk now. And they have come with offers that they never, ever, ever would have come with but for the moves that the President has made, demanding that people treat the United States with respect. We're getting the respect we deserve now, and I think you're going to see historic deals, one after the other.

And then I'm very excited that, within a week and a half, we're going to start with the gold card, and the Trump card is coming out, and we're very excited about that, and that's coming soon. So very excited.

The President. Good. Thank you very much. Good job.

Linda.

Secretary of Education Linda E. McMahon. Well, on a couple of fronts, we have been addressing the issue of anti-Semitism on campuses. There's been some grant funding and contract funding that we've reviewed, and some canceled, and some we've put on hold—waiting for that—while we do an investigation.

On the other side of what my responsibilities are in having education go back to the States, we're meeting and talking with Governors. I was with, this week, all 50 commissioners of education around the country, and—because we also want to provide them with tools of best practices as education does move back to the States. Making great progress, great response from the States, and very positive.

The President. And what about colleges? You're holding back \$400 million from Columbia——

Secretary McMahon. From Columbia.

The President. ——\$8 billion from Harvard. Can you imagine the money we pay Harvard? They have a \$60 billion fund, and we're giving them \$8 billion, and we're trying to figure that out.

And then they hire de Blasio, the worst mayor in the history of New York, and they hire the woman from Chicago who was a disaster, total disaster, and they pay them massive salaries, and they're supposed to be teaching you government. That's not Harvard. That's not Harvard the way it used to be.

So do you have anything to say about that, the dollars you're holding back from quite a few——

Secretary McMahon. Yes, we——

The President. ——universities that were not behaving?

Secretary McMahon. Yes. And you know—and other—you know, there's Princeton, Cornell, others that are coming in, and actually getting calls now from the presidents of the universities who really do want to come in and sit down and have discussions.

And so we're investigating them, but we're—in the meantime, we're holding—we're holding back the grant and the fund money.

The President. Okay. Great job. Thank you.

Office of Management and Budget Director Russell T. Vought. Very thankful for the House voting for the President's budget resolution along with the Senate bill. Made a ton of progress this week in working with Members to ensure that a desire for flexibility in the Senate was not misconstrued as a desire not to slow and do spending reforms, and so we're very thankful for that.

And now we can get after writing that bill, getting the President as big a package of his agenda to his desk. So, very good week.

The President. Good. That's right. We just got the House vote. And now we're well on our way to getting, as we call it, the big—the great big, beautiful bill. It's a beauty. There's never been a bill like this one. We're trying to get it all into one beautiful bill. It's tax cuts, regulation cuts, and many other things—the border, a lot of money for the border, where you're doing a fantastic job.

So—but we just got a report that we—as you know, you knew before us—were you surprised we got the vote? Got the vote. And we're happy to get the vote. So I think we're going to be in very good shape.

Okay, please.

National Security Adviser Michael G. Waltz. Mr. President, last year, the Chinese received 1,700 orders for new ships. American shipyards received five. Under your leadership, like so many other industries, we are going to revitalize and make shipbuilding and maritime great again. These blue-collar jobs—these are the cranes, the ports—opportunity zones, and drive that investment back in.

And we have, under that Executive order, and also one to streamline foreign military sales for people that want to buy our equipment, and, of course, acquisition reform, all just this week under your leadership, Mr. President.

The President. So we're going to be rebuilding our shipbuilding business. We may order—we'd have to go to Congress for this, but we may buy some ships from other countries that we're close to and that do great jobs with ships, but we're going to start the process of rebuilding. We don't really essentially build ships anymore, which is ridiculous. It's going to be a very big business for us in the not-too-distant future.

But in the meantime, we have countries that do very well at building ships, and we'll be dealing with those countries, and we may be ordering top-of-the-line ships from those countries.

Now, within a fairly short period of time, we'll be building our own ships. So we'll probably have to go to Congress for that, but we'll have no—we're not going to have a problem.

Susie, thank you very much for the job you've done. Go ahead, please.

White House Chief of Staff Susan Wiles. I just wanted to make sure you know that this Cabinet, I think, pretty uniquely collaborates and cooperates and works together to accomplish all that you've—you've asked them to do, and I think they deserve a lot of credit for that.

The President. It's true. You're doing a great job.

Chief of Staff Wiles. Thank you, sir.

The President. The chief—Chief of Staff. [*Laughter*] You're doing a great job.

Lee, go ahead.

Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lee M. Zeldin. Mr. President, the Biden EPA was strangulating the economy. The Trump EPA understands it's not a binary choice. We can protect the environment and grow the economy.

Working with DOGE and Elon Musk, we've now canceled 22 billion dollars' worth of grants, and we have launched what is the largest deregulatory action in the history of the country. Just in one agency—that's how much of a mess the Biden EPA left us. It is going to end up reducing the cost of living. It's going to create jobs. It's going to make it easier to purchase a car. It will be easier to heat your home.

We're proud of this effort. The effort that we have is fulfilling the mandate that you earned from the American public: clean air, land, and water for all Americans; unleashing energy dominance; permitting reform; advancing cooperative federalism; making America the AI capital of the world; and bringing back American auto jobs.

When you called me that day asking for me to take this position, I was honored, and you were very specific and—and clear in what you wanted us to accomplish. We understand our mission, and, at the Trump EPA, we're going to make you proud.

The President. Great job. You're doing a great job, and you have a lot of applications for approvals for power plants, which are going to really power the regular plants, and they're going to be right next to each other, because we can't rely on our grid. It's old, and it's tired. And it's, you know, very subject to being attacked, whether by rain or by bombs or by anything else.

And we're letting people build their own power plants. And these are—a lot of them being built with the AI and beyond the AI, chips. And they—we're letting them build their own power and never been done before. And we're going to get it done quickly and approved quickly. As part of a plant, they'll have a—they'll sort of be their own power company.

And it's very exciting. They couldn't believe it when I told them that. I said: "We're going to get you the approvals very fast. As part of your regular plant, you're going to build electric-producing plants." And it's very exciting. And they're able to do it very quickly and very well, and you made it possible.

Thank you. You have a lot of applications for some of the biggest plants that have ever been built in the world. These are serious. These are serious plants, aren't they, huh?

Administrator Zeldin. Approved. Approved. Approved. [*Laughter*] Get your applications in. We are open for business.

The President. Sure, get them in. They'll get them in.

Administrator Zeldin. Working with Secretary Burgum, Secretary Wright, we're going to make you proud.

The President. Good. Great.

Sean.

Secretary of Transportation Sean P. Duffy. First off, Mr. President, it's Brooke's birthday today. [*Laughter*] So——

The President. Happy birthday.

Secretary Rollins. Oh, gosh.

Secretary Duffy. She's keeps getting younger. So happy birthday to Brooke.

Secretary Rollins. Thank you. Thank you.

Secretary Duffy. I want to thank you as well for the shipbuilding EO. Again, to build ships, we also need mariners to sail those ships. I was just up at Kings Point for the Merchant Marine Academy a couple days ago, and we have some of the greatest young men and women who are learning how to be mechanical engineers, to rebuild and fix the engines on those ships, but also how to sail ships.

The President. Right.

Secretary Duffy. I would tell you that over the past decades, this academy has become—it needs some love. It's been a little bit dilapidated. We have to invest in sailors. And I appreciate you taking the initiative. To be a global power, we have to build ships and have sailors to sail those ships. These are the very people that help Pete, should we come into points of crisis, to support the military. So thank you for that.

The President. Good.

Secretary Duffy. Number two, the last administration announced 3,200 projects: big, beautiful roads and bridges. Most of them are good. But they announced them, and they didn't sign a grant agreement—3,200. So the money doesn't go out the door to build the infrastructure in the country.

And it's fun to do announcement—an announcement. It's actually the harder work to—to put together these grant agreements. So we're doing the work right now at DOT to get these grant agreements done and build the projects. Most of them are good.

And they also put in all of this green and social justice requirements on roads and bridges. We're pulling——

The President. Take it out.

Secretary Duffy. We're pulling all that out and putting the money toward the infrastructure, not the—the social movement from the last administration.

The President. Toward good steel—right?—as opposed to green papier-mâché. [*Laughter*]

Okay, thanks. Great job.

Secretary Rollins. Yes, thank you.

Sir, first, we are, I would say, more than friends. We've all become family. And I think that what you have assembled in your vision is a turning point and an inflection point in American history. And so, just being a part of that is the greatest honor. So thank you for that.

And, again, just the—the relationships here and the honor and respect we have for each other is a reflection of you and your leadership. So I just wanted to say that first.

The second thing I want to say is that, on behalf of the farmers and ranchers, food security is national security. We have to be able to feed ourselves. And your idea of using tariffs, along with deregulation and tax cuts—but your idea of using tariffs to ensure that we are putting forward and putting America first, no one understands that better than our farmers and our ranchers.

But having said that, emerging from four years of Biden with a 30 percent increase in inputs for our farmers and ranchers, with an almost \$50 billion trade deficit. When we left the first time, it was zero, meaning that they are hurting.

So the period of uncertainty we're in, they know that your vision will move us into an age of prosperity for all Americans, but for my people, for the farmers and the ranchers—and ranchers, unlike any they have seen before. And I think they are really, really excited and so grateful for your leadership.

But also, you have never failed to say that you have the backs of our farmers and our ranchers. It was the first phone call that I had after I was—after I was voted with the Senate, and that message just resonates with an almost 85 percent support of you in the last election.

The President. Good.

Secretary Rollins. They're with you.

Interestingly, the biggest budget driver at the United States Department of Agriculture is not farming and ranching or agriculture, it's food stamps. And so, as we emerge and embark, Secretary Kennedy and I, on your vision of making America healthy again, a massive part of that is realigning and reworking our food stamp program so that it better serves those who need it.

The President. Good. So you'll do that?

Secretary Rollins. And yes, to the point of getting the transgender, DEI, Green New Deal out of the USDA—

The President. Good. Get it out.

Secretary Rollins. —and realigning is really important. So thank you.

The President. It's out of the military, right?

Secretary Hegseth. Yes, sir.

The President. Is it 100 percent out, would you say?

Secretary Hegseth. Ninety-nine point nine, sir. We're going get that last point one out.

The President. Get the rest of it out. [*Laughter*] All right. We've got a—

Secretary Rollins. But thank you, sir.

The President. We've got a much different military, I will tell you. Thanks very much. Good job.

And eggs are down—

Secretary Rollins. Eggs are down.

The President. —big, right?

Secretary Rollins. Yes.

The President. Big?

Secretary Rollins. Yes, sir. Wholesale prices.

The President. Good.

Secretary Rollins. Retail will come.

The President. Yeah.

Secretary Rollins. Easter is the Super Bowl for eggs. *[Laughter]*

The President. Right. That's right.

Secretary Rollins. So, you know, there may be a little fluctuation. But no, we feel really good about it.

The President. That's—that's right.

Secretary Rollins. Thank you.

The President. That's what I hear. Thank you.

Secretary Rollins. Thank you.

The President. Scott.

Secretary of the Treasury Scott K.H. Bessent. Good. I'd echo what Howard said on the trade queue, that we've got over 75 countries that want to come in. So it will be Treasury, Commerce, Jamieson at USTR, and we're putting a process in place.

And as you said, you're going to be part of the negotiations too, because, you know, I've had these countries call me up. "Secretary Bessent, we're happy you're going to be negotiating." And I say, "Well, President Trump is going to be involved too." *[Laughter]*

Secretary Rollins. With every detail.

Secretary Bessent. "And so—and bring your best deal."

On the budget—*[laughter]*—the—on the budget, it's moving quickly in the House and the Senate, thanks to your leadership. We're also going to have debt ceiling in there. So we're going to——

The President. Right.

Secretary Bessent. —get an increase in the debt ceiling, so—and that will be the—done and dusted for——

The President. Part of the bill that we just got a vote on today, so——

Secretary Bessent. Part of the bill. It will be done and dusted for two years. We won't have to worry about that.

And then they—I gave a speech yesterday to 1,400 small and community bankers, and they were so happy to hear from your administration. And I told them Wall Street has done great for the past 4 years, 10 years, 20 years. It can continue doing great. But it's Main Street's turn now, and it's those small bankers, through deregulation, through emphasis the—on Main Street—your Main Street agenda, bringing back jobs, that is going to power the—the smaller communities.

And then, finally, the bond auction went very well yesterday. We had a lot of foreigners show up as the support, showing that the U.S. is still the best place to invest. The inflation report, as you said, was quite good, and energy prices are down more than 20 percent since January 20.

Secretary Rollins. Amazing.

The President. That's great. That's really good. Good numbers.

Secretary Bessent. Great numbers.

The President. Thank you.

Pam.

Attorney General Pamela J. Bondi. President, we've got—had some great wins in the last few days. That—you know, you were overwhelmingly elected by the biggest majority. The U.S.—Americans want you to be President because of your agenda. And the courts are ruling that you have the authority to determine how the money of this country will be spent. That's what the American citizens wanted, and that's what they're getting.

An example of that Friday was the Department of Education, that you can determine how the money will be spent. No more DEI, and that impacts every agency across the board.

On the civil side, again, NLRB—we had a big win in the Supreme Court there. OPM, a big win there. But also—16,000 workers there.

But also, on the criminal side, the Alien Enemies Act—we are winning there. And you know, your directive to me was to keep America safe, and that's what we're doing, whether it's the alien enemies, all of these gangs—and they are enemies of our country. They are terrorists. They are organized crime. They have come here. They are extremely organized. They are spread throughout our country, and they are creating terror. And no more under your directive, and that has stopped.

Yesterday, in South Florida, we charged 11 defendants with half a billion dollars of pure cocaine coming into our country to kill our kids. They were caught. They will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. These gang members are going back to where they came, or they're going to an El Salvador prison, at your directive.

And, you know, you also gave us a directive to prosecute the people who are going after Tesla to the fullest extent of the law. Some of the greatest police work I've seen. We've made four arrests. There will be no negotiations, at your directive. They're all looking at 20 years in prison. And when the—within the next 24 hours, you're going to be seeing another huge arrest on a Tesla dealership, President, and that person will be looking at at least 20 years in prison with no negotiations.

The President. That's great. That's great. That will stop it cold. That's great.

White House Senior Adviser Elon R. Musk. Domestic terrorism.

The President. Thanks, Pam. You're doing a great job too. Thank you very much.

Lori, please.

Secretary of Labor Lori M. Chavez-Deremer. Mr. President, accountability matters. That's what we're recognizing.

With our partners at the Department of Labor for government efficiency, just a few weeks ago, we realized there's about \$4.4 billion in COVID funds that were not used that the State coffers were just holding on to. Out of that, we've returned \$1.4 billion back to the State treasury,

so essentially to the American people, and we'll go back and claw the rest of those billions of dollars back.

And, on the heels of that, last night—late last night, we're understanding, unemployment insurance fraud. That trust needs to be whole for the American people. When we need it, we need it for who deserves it. That's not what we're seeing in the numbers that we saw last night, again, exposed by our partners in—at DOGE at the Department of Labor.

Since 2020, over \$400 million of payments have gone out already. And when you hear these numbers—apparently, in the United States, we have over—almost 25,000 people who are over 115 years old, who are collecting \$59 million that we have sent out to people. Talk about fraudulent behavior.

Mr. President, 28,000 people between 1 and 5 years old have collected fraudulent payments at the tune of \$254 million has gone out. And lastly, 10,000 people who have not been born yet, 15 years into the future——

Senior Adviser Musk. That's my favorite. [Laughter]

Secretary Chavez-Deremer. ——\$69 million, and they haven't even been born yet. In one case, they will be born 129 years from now. The United States Government sent them \$41,000, and they're not born yet.

So, under the Department of Labor, those are the things that we're uncovering. I couldn't be more honored to tell the American people that we're bringing back their dollars and we're saving them and returning them to the United States Treasury.

Also, jobs numbers. Last Friday, 228,000 new jobs were reported. That is good for the American people. That is my primary job is to grow that workforce under your leadership.

So we've kicked off the "America at Work" tour, and we'll be visiting all 50 States, and I'll be working with my colleagues here to do just that.

So thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you, Lori.

Secretary Chavez-Deremer. We're going to grow this economy. We're going to keep our focus on the American worker.

The President. So you're finding tremendous fraud though. Those numbers are really bad when you——

Secretary Chavez-Deremer. Unheard of.

The President. Over 115 years old. And I think you had mentioned the oldest person in our country is 114——

Secretary Chavez-Deremer. -14, recorded.

The President. ——years old. That's pretty good.

Secretary Chavez-Deremer. A woman living in Pennsylvania, but apparently, there's 24,000 more of them—[laughter]—that are 115 or older that we're giving payments to.

The President. I hope you hear that.

Secretary Chavez-Deremer. Yes.

The President. So we have 24,000 older than the oldest person.

Senior Adviser Musk. Definitely dead, essentially. [Laughter]

The President. That's—

Senior Adviser Musk. It's, like, you know——

The President. That's terrible. And what are we doing about it?

Senior Adviser Musk. Unemployment from the grave.

The President. How do we get that money back?

Secretary Chavez-Deremer. Yes, so we're working with our IGs to do the further investigation. The House and Senate, we had a 5-year statute of limitations. We've got an extension on that, another 5 years. And so, the goal, in my opinion: We should never have a statute of limitations to return the American dollars back to the Treasury when there's fraud. But, at this point, we will continue to work hard and double down and return those dollars to the Treasury.

The President. Great. Thank you very much.

Secretary Chavez-Deremer. Thank you.

The President. Great job.

Kristi.

Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi L. Noem. Well, Mr. President, thank you for your leadership at the border. For the second month in a row, you have broken the record in the history of the Nation for the lowest number of encounters at the border, which is absolutely remarkable.

You have said that America's laws matter and that they'll be enforced, and we're hard at work now to get people to go back home that are here illegally.

So the Alien Registration Act has been in place long enough now that those individuals that are here illegally, if they haven't registered, then they can be charged criminally, and they can face fines up to \$1,000 a day and face deportation if they don't go home, and they'll never get the chance to come back to America.

So we're encouraging people to use the CBP Home app to register, and we're working on the resources and funding to buy them a plane ticket to send them home.

I went to El Salvador, Colombia, and Mexico, and those countries and others are thinking about setting up programs to support these individuals——

The President. Good.

Secretary Noem. ——when they get back to their country. So, when they get there, they'll have housing and food assistance and——

So making sure that these folks have the opportunity to go home so that they can get the chance to come back to America is important. And——

The President. So it's a very big self-deport operation——

Secretary Noem. It is, sir.

The President. ——that we're starting.

Secretary Noem. Very big. Thousands of people have already——

The President. Yes.

Secretary Noem. —self-deported. We're just going to—when you have 20, 21 million people that need to go home because they're here breaking our laws, then we need to facilitate that.

And I've been working with the governors a lot lately on several different issues.

One of them has been on FEMA for recommendations on how to do exactly what you've directed us to do.

And then, also, I sent a letter and communicated with them that they need to be setting up a SCIF. Some of our Governors don't have secure facilities to have national security issues.

I think one of the jobs Homeland Security has is—is to give communication down to states, to local cities and communities. And so, recommending they get a SCIF; they have secure comms with them at all times or nearby so that they can have national security conversations; and then to have somebody in their office designated that is their communications person.

A lot of them have emergency management officers, but they don't necessarily have somebody designated when it comes to a national security issue that we may need to communicate with them on. And I think American people need to know that Real ID will be required to travel on May 7, so those Governors have been notified to communicate that at home. We don't want anybody to get delayed and not be able to travel when they get to an airport.

And this will also help us bring integrity back to all of our IDs and how they're used, how they're used for issuing driver's licenses. And Governors know how I feel about making sure their driver's licensing system has integrity, because a lot of people use their driver's license to vote, and the backbone of our country and the foundation is election integrity.

The President. Good.

Secretary Noem. So we're giving all those directions to our Governors and communicating that so they can lead on it as well.

The President. And we're going to work with people so that if they go out in a nice way—

Secretary Noem. Mm-hmm. That's right.

The President. —and go back to their country, we're going to work with them, right from the beginning, on trying to get them back in legally.

Secretary Noem. That's right.

The President. Is that right?

Secretary Noem. They'll get the chance to come back.

The President. So it gives you a real incentive. Otherwise, they never come back.

Secretary Noem. That's right.

The President. They'll never be allowed once a certain period of time goes by, which is probably going to be 60 days.

We're also going to work with farmers that, if they have strong recommendations for their farms for certain people, we're going to let them stay in for a while and work with the farmers, and then come back and go through a process—a legal process.

Secretary Rollins. Thank you, sir.

The President. But we have to take care of our farmers and hotels and, you know, various—various places where they're used—where they need the people. And we're going to be working with you very carefully on that.

Secretary Rollins. Yes, sir.

The President. So a farmer will come in with a letter concerning certain people, saying they're great, they're working hard. We're going to slow it down a little bit for them, and then we're going to ultimately bring them back. They'll go out. They're going to come back as legal workers.

Secretary Rollins. Yes.

The President. Okay?

Secretary Rollins. Yes, sir. Thank you.

The President. Which I think will be a—I think it's very important to do.

Secretary Rollins. That's incredible.

The President. Okay. Thank you very much. Great job.

Jamieson, I watched you testify for the last couple of days.

Secretary Noem. Yes, he did great.

The President. You were on every night at 3 o'clock

in the morning testifying. [Laughter] And you did great. You were fantastic. Thank you very much.

U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson L. Greer. It's just what I like to do for fun, sir. [Laughter]

You've been keeping us very busy. Last week, you started a reordering of international trade—something that hasn't happened for 80 years, something that should have happened decades ago. And you know that. You've known that for a long time. That's why you have us all working on this.

You came into an emergency situation, where President Biden left us with a \$1.2 trillion trade deficit. It's the largest of any country in human history—the largest.

So you declared an emergency. You took action.

The President. You would say the largest in history, right?

Ambassador Greer. In history—of the planet.

The President. There's never—

Ambassador Greer. It's never been larger.

The President. There's never been anything like what he left us. He left us a mess. His whole administration was a mess.

So go ahead.

Ambassador Greer. So you declared an emergency. You imposed a trade action. So, now you have a tariff on the world. It promotes U.S. manufacturing. It protects U.S. workers. And you've also given room for negotiation during this time so we can open export markets for our farmers and other producers and American workers.

And this is why the unions vote for you. This is why the workers vote for you. This is why the families want you to be the President, because you're standing up for American workers and American communities.

We've had countries come in over the past couple of weeks that represent more than half of global domestic GDP—more than half.

The President. Right.

Ambassador Greer. That's who's coming in to talk to you and to your advisers about how to—how to have reciprocal trade, how to have fair trade. Wouldn't happen without you.

The President. Thank you very much. Great job.

Hello, Elon.

Senior Adviser Musk. Hello.

Well, thanks to your fantastic leadership, this amazing Cabinet, and the very talented DOGE team, I'm excited to announce that we anticipate savings in FY26 from reduction of waste and fraud by \$150 billion.

The President. That's a lot of money.

Senior Adviser Musk. And that means—and some of it is just absurd, like people getting unemployment insurance who haven't been born yet. I mean, I think anyone can appreciate whether—[*laughter*—I mean, come on, that's just crazy.

So, you know, some of these things—you know, people ask me, like, "Well, how are you going to find waste and fraud in the Federal—in the Government?" I'm like: "Well, actually, just go in any direction. That's how you find it." [*Laughter*] It's just—it's very common. [*Laughter*] It's, as the military would say, a target-rich environment. [*Laughter*]

So I think we're doing a lot of good and excellent collaboration with the Cabinet to achieve these savings, and it will actually result in better services for the American people, and then we're going to be spending their tax dollars in a way that is sensible and fair and good.

The President. And your people are fantastic. In fact, hopefully, they'll stay around for the long haul.

Senior Adviser Musk. Yes.

The President. We'd like to keep as many as we can. They're great.

Secretary Rollins. For sure.

The President. Smart, sharp. Right?

Secretary Rollins. Yes. One hundred percent.

The President. Finding things that nobody would have thought of. Very computer savvy.

Senior Adviser Musk. Yes. They're work—working with Howard to get the—that—the Trump gold card operational, hopefully, in the next week or so.

The President. That will be great.

Secretary Rollins. Incredible.

The President. That will be very exciting. It's——

Secretary Lutnick. Really exciting.

The President. That's a pathway to citizenship——

Senior Adviser Musk. Yes.

The President. ——into the United States. It's big.

Senior Adviser Musk. I think it will—it's a big deal.

The President. Yes, it's a big deal.

Thank you very much. Great job you're doing.

Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard. Thank you, sir.

The President. Tulsi.

Director Gabbard. Thanks to your leadership and setting the mandate of transparency and accountability across the U.S. Government, I'm bringing that transparency and accountability to the intelligence community, first and foremost, to make sure that you and your Cabinet have that real-time, relevant, apolitical, objective intelligence to best inform whether it's negotiations for peace, negotiations around tariffs, the great work that you are leading around the Cabinet today.

Secondly, working with Department of Homeland Security and the FBI to increase our information sharing to achieve your goal of countering the narcotic trafficking and the—our ability to go after cartels now designated as foreign terrorists.

I met with the National Sheriffs' Association this week. Being able to work to make sure that the information that they are getting on the ground, that local law enforcement is getting on the ground, is being fed back up through to our National Counterterrorism Center and that we have all of the federal agencies, State and local law enforcement all on the same page as we are working to make our country safe again.

The President. Good.

Director Gabbard. And lastly, sir, as you know, declassification and rooting out weaponization, politicization of the intelligence community is a huge priority. You know, more than anyone else, the very dangerous and negative consequences of that.

I've got a long list of things that we're investigating—we have the best of the best going after this—election integrity being one of them. We have evidence of how these electronic voting systems have been vulnerable to hackers for a very long time and vulnerable to exploitation to manipulate the results of the votes being cast, which further drives forward your mandate to bring about paper ballots across the country so that voters can have faith in the integrity of our elections.

And lastly, we've been scanning—I've had over a hundred people working around the clock to scan the paper around RFK—Senator Robert F. Kennedy's assassination, as well as Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination. These have been sitting in boxes in storage for decades. They have never been scanned or seen before. We'll have those ready to release here within the next few days.

The President. That's great. That's great.

Bobby, how do you feel about that? That's hitting—that's hitting close——

Secretary of Health and Human Services Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. I'm very gratified to you.

The President. That's hitting close to home, isn't it? Right?

Secretary Rollins. Yes, no kidding.

The President. When you think——

Secretary Rollins. Yes.

The President. I'm thinking about Bobby when——

Secretary Rollins. No.

The President. ——when that statement is made.

Secretary Kennedy. I'm very grateful to you, Mr. President.

The President. Good. And you'll let Bobby see some of this because, you know, it's very personal stuff. But it's time.

Director Gabbard. I've asked him. I've asked him, and his response is: "Put it out. The world needs to know the truth."

The President. And his uncle—that's been out, and anything that hasn't been out, we'll—they can go to your offices and see, right?

Director Gabbard. Everything that we have within our possession, it's either online or it's physically at the National Archives and Records Agency.

We also have hunters going out, Mr. President, and looking in the storage lockers at FBI and CIA and other agencies, specifically to find if there are—if there is anything else that has not been reported, we're actively going out and trying to search out the truth.

The President. Good. Good. Yes, we want to get it all out.

Director Gabbard. Yes.

The President. One hundred percent. Good.

Thank you very much. Good job, Tulsi.

Director Gabbard. Thank you, sir.

Administrator of the Small Business Administration Kelly L. Loeffler. Mr. President, on behalf of America's manufacturers, I want to thank you for standing up to the Chinese Communist Party and fighting for our Main Streets, for our workers, and for those that make things in America.

I'm out on a "Made in America" manufacturing tour, and as I go across the country, people are grateful to have a President who's not just fighting on the tariffs fronts, but to get inflation down, to create jobs. After Biden destroyed 110,000 manufacturing jobs in just his last year, you've already brought back thousands and thousands of manufacturing jobs.

So the American worker is grateful. Main Street is grateful for you.

And, at the agency level, we're making sure that manufacturers have access to the capital they need, but we can't do that if we're not fighting fraud. So we've modified our loan applications to have citizenship verifications, to make sure we have birthdates; commonsense principles around lending that the Biden administration had waived. They waived \$450 million of fees in 1 year. We're restoring that for the American taxpayer.

And the American taxpayer, as Tax Day approaches—April 15—they need to know that this Cabinet, this administration—and thank you, Elon Musk and DOGE, for fighting for the American taxpayer to make sure that their hard-earned dollars are well spent, that they have a return on investment for this country, and that we're fighting for them, just as you are, every single day.

So thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you. Thank you very much.

Secretary Kennedy. Mr. President, we're doing—we are working at HHS to advance your agenda to make America healthy again.

I'm working with Lee Zeldin to reassess the fluoride rules based upon the August release by the National Toxicity Program of new science that shows a direct inverse correlation between exposure to fluoride and IQ loss, particularly in children.

Lee and I were in Utah this week—Utah—to announce that Utah became the first State in the country to ban supplemental fluoride.

I'm working with Brooke on—and Governors now in 24 States who are advancing MAHA legislation to get soda pops off of the food stamp program, off the SNAP program.

We've launched Operation Stork Speed to get the bad chemicals out of baby formula.

We're working with Governors across the country to get good food into the school lunch programs and to get rid of food chemical dyes and other bad chemicals in our food. We've shown now that this directly affects academic performance, violence in the schools, and mental health as well as physical health.

We are working with Governors across the country to get cell-to-cell—or bell-to-bell legislation to restrict the use of cell phones in schools, which, again, dramatically impacts academic performance.

We—today we announced a dramatic reduction in animal testing at NIH and FDA. We're going to switch over to AI, which we've now found is much more precise in identifying the impacts of toxics in various products.

We're working with the Elon, who's done an incredible job, to eliminate the redundancies and to streamline operations at all the health agencies and to recalibrate our trajectory to your agenda of making America healthy again.

And finally, on the CDC has done an amazing job at getting the measles outbreak under control. We have about 680 cases now in 22 States, compared to the same outbreak in Europe, which is 127,000 cases and 37 deaths. Our numbers in this country have now plateaued, and I want to thank CDC for that.

And we're trying to refocus the press. We've had three measles deaths in this country over 20 years, and we're trying to refocus the press to get them to pay attention to the chronic disease epidemic, as you've asked us to.

We have now—38 percent of American youth are prediabetic. This was unknown 30 years ago. Every child that becomes diabetic, there should be a headline about them. We have 100 million adults who are prediabetic or diabetic. And we have—as you—we have now—the autism rates have gone from—now, most recent numbers, we think, are going to be about 1 in 31. One in—so they're going up again—from 1 in 10,000, when I was a kid.

And we are going—at your direction, we are going to know by September—we've launched a massive testing and research effort that's going to involve hundreds of scientists from around the world. By September, we will know what has caused the autism epidemic, and we'll be able to eliminate those exposures.

The President. That would be so big.

Think of that. So it was 1 in 10,000 children had autism, and now it's 1 in 31. Not 31,000—31. That is a horrible—that's a horrible statistic, isn't it? And there's got to be something artificial out there that's doing this.

So you think you're going to have a pretty good idea, huh?

Secretary Kennedy. We will know by September.

The President. There—there will be no bigger news conference than that. So, that's—that's it. If you can come up with that answer, where you stop taking something, you stop eating something, or maybe it's a shot—but something is causing it. It can't be—it can't be from 10,000 to—can you imagine that, Marco? That's a big—that's a big number.

Thank you very much. You're doing great. Thank you, Bobby.

Please, Doug.

Secretary of the Interior Douglas J. Burgum. Well, Mr. President, one of your primary administration goals is to make sure that we unleash American energy. And, of course, the strategy behind that is, when we do that, it helps make it more affordable for all Americans. Energy isn't just industry. It is the foundation of every other industry, whether it's food, manufacturing, clothing, transportation.

And then, also, when we've got the ability to generate, and not just be energy independent but energy dominant, then we have the opportunity to sell energy to our friends and allies, versus them buy it from our adversaries. And our adversaries were funding terrorism and conflicts against our allies by their oil and gas sales that were going through a Swiss cheese set of sanctions.

So, with your creation of the National Energy Dominance Council—over half the people at this table serve on that. Everyone has been engaged, whether it's interactions with negotiations with other countries, with putting sanctions in place that actually work, with cutting deregulation, working on biofuels, building infrastructure for transportation. There's a whole range of things that are being tackled.

But when—in the price—the outcome of all that is—is that you're—the Biden administration was restricting supply; you're increasing supply. When you increase supply, then prices start to come down. And we have a huge opportunity to do this.

Just in Interior alone, there's 500 million acres of surface, 700 million acres of subsurface, and 2.5 billion acres of offshore. And the Biden administration was trying to restrict this so that you couldn't—you know, you couldn't get a timber lease; you couldn't cut a tree; you couldn't graze a cow; you couldn't develop oil and gas minerals; and you couldn't develop the critical minerals we need for our technology, for our defense industries, and to be able to help us win the AI arms race against China.

So we're opening up this. And with your Executive orders and your work, we've—on Tuesday, a historic day, you ended the war on beautiful clean coal, which has been going on since Obama took office.

China gets 60 percent of their electricity from coal. They're opening up a—they've opened up 94 gigawatts of coal in the last year as part of this AI arms race. Ninety-four gigawatts—that's enough for 94 Denvers to be able to—one gigawatt per a metro area like that. It's unheard of.

So what—we have an opportunity under your leadership to come back.

The Gulf of America had its first offshore lease sale, which is scheduled for later this year, but that was—the industry loved that, because we're now—the Gulf of America is now open for

business again. And there's the—as much as 7 billion barrels of oil accessible now. They've increased the upside of what they think that is.

On the coal front, the estimate is the financial value of the coal in America is \$8 trillion. That was an asset on the balance sheet that we've now—being put back on again.

And, of course, in Alaska, with your separate Executive orders to unleash Alaska energy, between ANWR, the North Slope, the Strategic Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, all of those, we've reversed Biden's decision. Those are all open for business again. And all of this is leading to the—to the investment coming to America.

The smart money is coming to the U.S. That's why we've got, you know, trillions of dollars of investment that are showing up at the door, because they know if they're going to do manufacturing here, there's going to be energy to power their plants.

And so, again, thank you for your leadership.

The President. Thank you, Doug.

Secretary Burgum. And thank you for everything you're doing.

The President. Very good. Thank you.

Marco.

Secretary of State Marco A. Rubio. Well, Mr. President, one of the most important things I believe you'll achieve in your presidency is reordering the world in a proper way.

For 31 years—more than 31 years now—multiple administrations have allowed the Chinese to deindustrialize this country, to take away jobs and factories and pillars of our national strength.

And what you're doing now, I think, is a great service to our country, but ultimately to the world. And I want to congratulate you and your team that's working on that, because it has extraordinary geopolitical implications, as you see from all of these other countries that are now coming here and wanting to join something that actually makes—it's crazy to allow these—I mean, basically, we lived in a world where country—company—Chinese companies can do whatever they want in America, but our companies cannot do anything over there unless they allow it, and even then, they steal our stuff and reverse engineer it.

So just reordering all of that has dramatic implications on the—on peace and security of the world. So we thank you.

An important meeting, thanks to you, is going to happen on Saturday. For the first time in a long time, there'll be direct talks between Ambassador Witkoff and a top-level leader in Iran. We hope that will lead to peace.

You've been very clear what Iran is never going to have is a nuclear weapon, and I think that's what led to this meeting. And we'll wait for him to come back from it, and we're hopeful about that.

I would also say that we are receiving—and I think the Department of Homeland Security can confirm this—historic cooperation from countries all over the world, number one, in taking back their citizens. Every country in the world has to take back people that are illegally in another country, and we have countries that refuse to do it or would kind of ignore our calls.

All of them are doing it. The ones that are not are paying a price.

And we've also found cooperation in other countries that are willing to take some of these people, some very dangerous criminals. I know the President of El Salvador will be here next week—has really been a good friend of the United States in that regard.

These are some of the worst people you'll ever encounter. And—and Pam knows this and Kristi knows this from the work they're doing.

You know, and—and one last point I want to make, Mr. President, again, it's under your leadership—it's actually under your Executive order: If you come to this country as a student, we expect you to go to class and study and get a degree. If you come here to, like, vandalize a library, take over a campus, and do all kinds of crazy things, you know, we're going to get rid of these people.

And we're going to continue to do it. So, when we identify lunatics like these, we take away their student visa.

No one is entitled to a student visa. The press covers student visas like they're some sort of birthright. No, a student visa is like me inviting you into my home. If you come into my home and put all kinds of crap on my couch, I'm going to kick you out of my house. *[Laughter]* And—and so, you know, that's what we're doing with our country, thanks to the President.

And last but not least, very important development this week. Both—both Pam and I are very excited. The finest higher education institution in the United States, University of Florida, is also now the national champions in basketball—*[laughter]*—

Secretary Rollins. Easy. Easy.

Secretary Rubio. —and we hope you will host them here soon, Mr. President. Go Gators!

The President. They're coming. They're coming.

Secretary Rollins. Good for the SEC.

The President. They're coming very soon.

Secretary Rollins. Good for the SEC. Congratulations.

The President. Well, thank you very much. You're really doing a great job. We appreciate it.

Any question?

Stock Market Volatility

Q. Mr. President, can you give us a reaction to today's stock market drop? And also give us a sense of the next steps with China.

The President. Well, I haven't seen it because I've been here for 2½ hours, so I'll be—*[laughter]*—I'll be seeing it.

Q. It's down.

The President. I think Scott went out.

Scott, do you want to have a statement on that?

Secretary Bessent. Sure. Look, the up 2, down 1 is not a bad ratio, or up 10, down 5. And I think, as we have talked about, as we go through the queue and settle with these countries who are going to bring us their best offers, you know, we will end up in a place of great certainty over the next 90 days on tariffs.

We had very good inflation numbers today. Oil is down. We had a successful bond market. So I don't think—see anything unusual today.

China-U.S. Trade

Q. And next steps for China, sir?

The President. Well, we'll see what happens with China. We would love to be able to work a deal. They've really taken advantage of our country for a long period of time. They've ripped us off beyond anybody. Nobody—how people stood for it, sitting in my position, is not even believable. And we're talking about many Presidents, not just a couple. But they did, and all we're doing is putting it back in shape. We're resetting the table.

And I'm sure that we'll be able to get along very well. I have great respect for President Xi. He's been—in a true sense, he's been a friend of mine for a long period of time. And I think that we'll end up working out something that's very good for both countries. I look forward to it.

China

Q. Mr. President, China retaliated today by reducing the number of American films that can be shown there. What's your reaction to them now targeting cultural exports from the United States?

The President. I think I've heard of worse things than that. [*Laughter*]

Q. Mr. President—

The President. Yes, please. Go ahead.

Ukraine/Russia/Hostages Held in Gaza, Palestinian Territories

Q. Mr. President, also on China, the Ukrainians say they have evidence that Chinese soldiers are being found fighting for the Russians in Ukraine. Can the U.S. verify this, and, if so, what does the U.S. plan on doing to China in—to counteract that?

The President. We'll look into it, but I think, beyond that, we're really looking to get that war stopped. They're losing 2,500—and even more than that—young people a week. They're Russian, and they're Ukrainian. They're not American, but they're—they're people. And we're seeing if we can get it stopped, and I think we're making progress.

I appreciate the ballerina who was released. It was a—at the request of a very good friend of all of ours, actually. Dana White called me, and he said it's the friend or the relationship of one of the fighters for UFC or one of the fighters. And Dana is an incredible guy, and we spoke to President Putin about it, and they made a deal. They released the young ballerina. And she is now out, and that was good. So we appreciate that.

We hope that we're going to be able to make a deal relatively soon with Russia and Ukraine to stop the fighting. It's so senseless. It's such a horrible thing. Would have never happened if I were president, but it did happen, and we were given that card. And I think we're going to get it—I think we're going to get it stopped. Got to get going. We've got to get it. We have to move it faster.

Likewise, with the hostages, we're making progress. We—you know, there's 59 hostages, but only 24 of them are living. And that's the way it's been presented to me by the mothers of some of the dead—mothers and fathers of some of the dead hostages. And they want the bodies of their—of their baby, as they say, "their baby"—their young boys. They want them back as much as if they were alive.

It's amazing, because when I met the hostages 2 weeks ago here—I couldn't believe what they had to go through, by the way. But when I met them, they said, "Yes, there's 59, but 24 are living." And they actually consider—I guess, if you're a parent, you do consider it this way—that the remainder who are dead—the 24 that are alive; the remainder that are dead—they want them back just as much as they would want them back if they were alive. It's really pretty amazing and pretty sad.

So we're getting close to getting them back. We have a—a lot came back. A lot of people are very grateful. And some came back in pretty bad shape. Some came back, they're okay. I think they're going to be scarred mentally for a long time, because if you sit down and talk to them, as I have, what they went through is incredible.

But we're making progress. We're dealing with Israel. We're dealing with Hamas, and it's a nasty group.

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

Q. Mr. President—

The President. Yes.

Tariffs/Trade Negotiations

Q. Yes. So how close are you to the first country coming to actually make a deal with the United States over tariffs? Is it days? Months? Weeks?

The President. Well, I think it's very close. But you know, we have to have a deal that we like. We—we don't want a deal that's going to be a bad deal, or I could—I could make every deal in one day if I wanted to. I could do this in—all in one day. I could just say, "Here's what we'll do."

And I was saying to the people before—to Scott—mostly to Scott and Howard and some of the other people that work with us on the negotiations—you know, we have a lot of law firms that have paid me a lot of money in the form of legal fees. We're going to probably use those firms to—if we can—I think we can—I'll make a contribution to the country—but they're great firms. They're the best firms, the biggest and really the most prestigious. And we may be using them to help you guys out, because you're going to need a lot of lawyers. [*Laughter*]

And I'm not sure Pam is going to be happy if I say, "Can you send over about 200 lawyers and work on trade?" She's working on criminal stuff, and I think that's going to be her focus more than anything else.

So we'll find out if we can do that. But we have a lot of lawyers that you've been reading about where they paid \$100 million a firm, on average. Now we have the final four or five are at \$125 million. So I have a lot of legal fees I could give to you people, but—[*laughter*—and we might as well use them. Hopefully, I won't need that many legal fees or that much. I may. Who knows? After it ends, after we leave, maybe I'll need it. But if I do, it's not going to be very pleasant.

Q. So is it months, then, sir?

The President. So I think we're going to try to use these—these very prestigious firms to help us out with the trade, because, you know, we have a lot of countries. But we want to make deals that are proper for the United States, not just—we can make deals easily. We want to make them proper.

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

Trade Negotiations

Q. Mr. President, if you aren't able to reach the deals that you want to see at the end of the 90 days, will you put those higher tariffs in place, or will you extend the pause?

The President. Well, that's what would happen. I mean, if we can't make the deal that we want to make or we have to make or that's, you know, good for both parties—it's got to be good for both parties—

Q. You wouldn't extend——

The President. ——and then we'd go back to where we were.

Q. Go back to the numbers that you announced——

The President. Yes.

Q. ——last week?

The President. I think so.

Q. You wouldn't extend the pause?

The President. Yes. We'll have to see what happens at that time.

Possible Exemptions From U.S. Tariffs

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. You said yesterday you were considering some exceptions for companies. Can you talk about what you're considering? And then, also, on the reciprocal tariffs, you said they'd be substantially lower. Is the same math formula going to be used, or is that tossed out?

The President. I'm not considering now for any country or company, but it's possible that I would. But I'm not. I'd have—we don't have that situation right now. People understand where we are, what we're going to do. But it could happen.

You know, it's called flexibility. You have to have a certain flexibility.

Revenue From U.S. Tariffs/Border Security

Q. Mr. President, what are you planning on using the money that you're gaining from revenue through the tariffs on?

The President. Paying down national debt, reducing taxes, creating good budgets, helping Kristi with the border and all of the other things. We built—I built hundreds of miles of wall, as people now understand—571 miles of border wall in the first administration. But we're going to beef it up, and we're going to add more.

And you know, the numbers are incredible. Really, the numbers are—what's—what's taking place. We had great numbers, but these numbers are topping my last administration. And Kristi and Tom Homan have done an amazing job, but you know, it's an expensive process.

This weekend, where they used to have hundreds of thousands of people standing there pouring through the border in Tijuana, Mexico, this weekend, they had nobody. You had a man sweeping this massive piece of concrete, which is, you know, the area where they stood. Massive.

And I've looked at that. During the Biden administration, you couldn't see a piece of that concrete, there were so many people on it. You couldn't—if you had a helicopter shot, you couldn't see concrete. Now, this weekend, you had nobody there but a man with a broom, sweeping it and cleaning it up. Pretty amazing. That's—it's really an amazing job.

But it will be used for that. It will be used for a lot of things. It will be used by the Department of Justice for doing a great job. Pam is doing a fantastic job. So it's going to be used for a lot of different things.

Baseline Tariff Rate

Q. Mr. President, on the 10 percent—on the 10-percent tariff, is that a basement—is that the—for——

The President. It's a baseline.

Q. Can countries negotiate that to bring that down?

The President. It depends on what they're adding. You know, some countries have—we have massive deficits with or they have big surpluses with us, and others it's not that way. So, it depends.

That's why it's really all—they're all different. Every country is different. Some have certain advantages that others don't have on certain things. We have some—China has a surplus of a trillion dollars. I mean, the numbers are crazy. And others have basically no surpluses. You know, we have some that are pretty even, but they hurt us in other ways, and we just want to get that taken care of.

S, it's—every one is a little bit different.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

China/European Union/Japan-U.S. Defensive Alliance

Q. Sir, are you in negotiations with—are you in negotiations with the EU as one bloc or individual nations for the trade—for the tariffs?

The President. We're looking at it as one bloc. They've been very tough, but they were very smart. They were ready to announce retaliation, and then they heard about what we did with respect to China—and others, but China. And they said, "You know, we're going to hold back a little bit." [Laughter] They decided to hold back. I thought they were very smart.

Look, the EU is very smart, but they really have taken advantage of the United States. They were formed for the purpose of taking advantage of the United States. And I don't blame them, and I don't blame China. I don't blame anybody. I blame the people that were sitting at that desk in that other beautiful Oval Office for allowing it to happen. Many Presidents I blame. They should have never allowed it to happen.

And I'm doing something that a lot of them wouldn't want to do. But I'm here, I do those things, and we're going to make this country great again.

We were taken advantage of by almost everybody. I sat back—in the last administration, I would actually read them. I don't have to read them now, I know them so well. I would read some of these documents that were signed—deals—and I said, "Who would do a deal like this? Who would do it?"

You've seen it, Elon.

Senior Adviser Musk. Yes.

The President. I'd look at deals where it's so one-sided. Even—we have a deal with Japan, and we get along great with Japan, and we had the Prime Minister here. He was fantastic.

As you know, Abe was great. Shinzo was great. He was a good friend of mine. Unfortunately, no longer with us. But we defend them, but they don't have to defend us. I said, "That doesn't sound too good." But we have a deal where—a defense deal—we pay hundreds of billions of dollars to defend them, but, if for any reason—in other words, we pay all the money. They don't pay anything. But if we're ever attacked, they don't have to do a thing to protect us. I said, "Oh, that sounds like a wonderful deal."

So I just—that's just one out of thousands. And I just wonder, who did this? And it's people that either hate our country or didn't care—an expression that you use. I think it's really they—a lot of them didn't care.

Participant. They didn't care.

The President. They just—it's just hard to believe how—how bad they are.

Now that's a little bit of a defensive deal, but I'm talking about trade deals. It's the same thing. They're so bad, you would say, "How come?"

And even when I'd renegotiate—like, I'd go to a country, they'd give me everything I asked for. I said, "Why didn't somebody ask for it, like, originally?" They'd give me everything.

I think when they were negotiating, they didn't care or they didn't ask or they were shy or they were very stupid or they hate our country.

Yes. Go ahead, Jeff.

U.S. Steel Corporation/Domestic Steel Industry/Manufacturing Investment

Q. You were speaking about Japan. Can you clarify what your vision is for U.S. Steel? You referenced it yesterday——

The President. Yes. Yes.

Q. ——but there were some questions about what you actually want to see happen with that.

The President. Sure. Look, U.S. Steel is going to do very well now because of tariffs, and I don't know why they even need a deal. But the only thing is, U.S. Steel—if you go back 80 or 90 years, that was a behemoth in this—that was our biggest, most—if we were around, we would have been very proud of it.

Today, we have different types of companies that are big: Google. It's not the same as U.S. Steel, and I love—I love Google, and I got to like the people that run it. They're very capable people. They didn't like me so much in the first administration, but they like me a lot now. I don't know what happened. But I like them. But you know, I think they would be the first to admit.

What I envision—you look at some of those steel factories from 90 years ago, when we were—it was a different kind of a country, but they were miles long. Today, you see just empty hulks. Those hulks are going to be filled up very soon because of what I'm doing with tariffs.

It was a different kind of a thing. But if I didn't do that in—in the first term—in my first term, if I didn't put tariffs on, we would have—because China and others were dumping steel, billions of dollars of steel. Our steel companies were all closing, every factory—we wouldn't have one steel plant open. And now we have a steel industry—that's doing very well, but soon it's going to be thriving, really thriving. And those factories are going to be filled up, but more importantly, they're going to build brand new ones.

Nucor and so many other companies call me—Nucor being a big steel company. They're building massive new steel plants, and it's great.

And, likewise, car companies. We have many, many car companies that—three of them—I'm not looking to hurt Mexico, and I like Mexico. And by the way, I think the new President is a terrific person and a fantastic woman. We've had many conversations. She's a very elegant—just a fantastic person. And she's been very nice—very, very nice.

But I'm not looking to hurt them. But we have three car plants that were under construction in Mexico. They stopped constructing, and now they're going to build in the United States because of tariffs.

See, we should have never let this happen, because whoever it was that was President at the time—we lost 90,000 plants and factories since NAFTA. Ninety thousand. It's not believable.

How about that, Lori? You know, you're in that sort of——

Secretary Chavez-Deremer. That's right.

The President. ——world of factories and plants.

Secretary Chavez-Deremer. We're going to build back manufacturing, construction jobs, and bring those workers back home.

The President. That's right. We're going to bring them all back.

But think of it. From that period of time, which isn't so long on ago, we lost—I said the other day, if you had a map on a big wall like this, and if you had pins, 90,000—I don't know if you'd have enough—I don't think you'd have enough room on the map to put the pins. Ninety thousand factories that we've lost since NAFTA, and it's not even—and about 6 million jobs. But really, I think probably a lot more than that, but they say 6 million jobs.

We're going to bring many of that back, many—I think we're going to bring more than—more than all of it back. We're going to bring—we're going to be better and stronger than ever before.

But if a President, when they were leaving, said, "Look, you can leave, but if you're going to build a factory someplace else, and you think you're going to come and sell your steel or your car or any product that you make, your pharmaceuticals"—which we're going to do; we're going to get them all back—"but if you think you're going to just"—all they had to do is say this, and they wouldn't have left.

You know, I said it the other day. I said it with respect to—I made a speech a year ago, and I told them, "If I win, we're going to charge a big, big tariff at the border." And people were thinking about building, in Mexico, a car plant, and I said: "We're going to have a big tariff, so if you want to build a car, you have to pay 25-percent more than the cost of that car. You're going to have to pay 25-percent tariff at the border." They would have never left.

They could have kept everybody. If a President said, "If you leave this country"—you leave Michigan, you leave Detroit, you leave any of the—anybody, any of our States, because, to me, they're all the same. I love them all. I love them all. And I probably won them all, but they say I won—[laughter]—they say I won most of them, but I probably—I think I won them all, but that's okay.

But all you had to say, if you were the President, is: "If you leave, and you think you're going to now fire all those workers, leave all that—you know, everything behind, and you're going to build in another country and sell it in here—no, you're not going to. You're going to pay 50 percent or 100 percent tariff." They would have never left.

And all you had to say, Marco, is—all you had to say, very simply, is—you don't have to write it down. All you have to do is say it verbally. "If you leave, you're going to pay 100-percent tariff. Therefore, don't leave." They would have never left.

But they left—90,000 plants. I mean, it's hard to believe that many. It's not—you can't envision it.

So, just getting back to your—you know, because I'm the great weaver of all time, right? [Laughter] To weave, you have to be a genius. [Laughter] To go on tangents, anybody could do that. But we'll get back to your original, U.S. Steel.

U.S. Steel is a big name in this country. You know, it's—Babe Ruth is a big name. We have a lot of big names, but not too many. U.S. Steel is one of the great names in the history of our country. And normally, I wouldn't mind so much. I wouldn't be thrilled with it, but to buy—for a

foreign country—and we love Japan, but for a foreign country to buy that cherished U.S. Steel brand, that's hard for me to do.

And maybe somebody else—somebody else may want it. The company Nippon that's involved with it is a big, powerful company who'd do a good job. But why can't they just build a plant themselves? I mean, why do they have to, you know, take U.S. Steel?

So, as you know, I rejected the deal. Now they've come back in a different form. They're coming back as an investor. And you know, I feel better about that, I guess.

But you know, I know them very well. I know the thinking. It's the investor—they'll invest, and somebody else maybe is sitting in this chair, and they will no longer have an investment; they'll have the whole thing. You know, that's the way it works here.

Very smart. They're very, very smart people. We're dealing with very smart people throughout the world. Great geniuses, actually. Look what they've done to our country.

And, again, I don't blame China. I don't blame anybody. If I could have done it, if I were in that position, I'd have great respect. I have great respect for the people. They ripped off the United States, and all we had to do: have a President that knew what the hell was going on and none of those countries would have left—those companies, none of them would have left.

So that's a little lesson in basic business. And it's really basic business. It's not complicated business. It's very basic business.

And we'd have every one of those car plants going just the way they were 30 years ago. None of them would have left, but now they're coming back.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Unemployment Insurance

Q. Mr. President, the Labor Department has confirmed that \$400 million went to fake people for unemployment benefits.

The President. Yes. Yes.

Q. I just wanted your initial reaction to that.

The President. I think it's terrible. I just heard it from Lori, and I appreciate it. And you heard it from Elon's people, right?

Secretary Chavez-Deremer. That's right. That's right.

The President. Elon has done a fantastic job. Look, he's sitting here. And I don't care, I don't need Elon for anything other than I happen to like him.

Senior Adviser Musk. The feeling is mutual, Mr. President. *[Laughter]*

The President. But I'm telling you, this guy did a fantastic job. I don't need his car. I actually bought one because——

Senior Adviser Musk. Yes. Thank you.

The President. ——and they said, "Oh, did you get a bargain?" No. I said, "Give me the top price." I paid a lot of money for that car. *[Laughter]*

Senior Adviser Musk. Much appreciated.

The President. But honestly, he makes a great car. You know what I do with it? I let the people in the office drive around in it. *[Laughter]* Margo and Natalie and—they're all—Chamberlain, they're all driving around the most beautiful car. They—it's gorgeous. But I did that

as a sign of—just a show of support. Numerous people have done that. Just a show of support. Because, you know, he's done a fantastic job, but he hasn't been treated properly.

Q. The unemployment benefits—

The President. Hasn't been treated properly.

Yes.

Trade Negotiations/Tariffs/Border Security

Q. Mr. President, can you talk to us about your communications with China? Has President Xi reached out at all since the tariffs escalated?

The President. Well, I don't want to say who's reached out. I just say that I think it's going to work out, hopefully, well.

Q. Including TikTok?

The President. They're very big. It's hard to get over, if you're me, the—what they've done to our country. They've destroyed our economic base to a large extent. The good news is, we're very vibrant, and we're going to get it back fast.

We already have. Look, we're making \$2 billion a day now, and during Biden, we were losing \$3 billion a day. Biden was a disaster. He was the worst President in the history of our country. And you know, to me, worse than that—because the money you can make if you have the right guy in this position—worse than that was what we have to—what they did on the border by allowing the jails of the world—not South America, all over the world—to be opened up so that we take everybody from Africa, Asia, South America, Europe—the bad ones. They opened up their jails, and they dumped them in the United States.

And now this beautiful young woman, who seems to be—boy, she loves what she does though. [*Laughter*] I think she loves what she does because she's a patriot. She hates to see it. And Tom and all the people.

But, for us to spend, you know, hundreds of billions of dollars to—this was just—I don't know. Either—again, they either hated the country. Why—who would do this? Who would want millions of people to pour through an open border—we have no idea who the hell they are—and just walk right through?

And half of them, whether you like it or not, you could look at them, and you could say, "They are not going to help us." These are some rough people. But they'd empty out their jails, and they'd empty out their mental institutions, insane asylums, and they let them into the United States of America.

And inflation we can fix, and all of the other things we can fix. We'll get it going. But this is something—it's such a horrible thing, and it's really hard. You know, we have to do deportations. Now we're doing self-deportation. We're coming up with all sorts of ideas. And they must have known it's not going to work out well.

And you know, we want people to come into our country, by the way. We need them badly for the jobs. But we want them to come in legally. They have to come in legally. They have to show that they can love our country.

Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you very much.

Q. Mr. President, Democrats were making allegations about market manipulation yesterday.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:47 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former Mayor Lori Lightfoot of Chicago, IL; Greenville, PA, resident Naomi Whitehead; U.S. citizen and retired ballerina Ksenia Karelina, who was released from detention in Russia on April 10; Dana F. White, chief executive officer, Ultimate Fighting Championship; White House Border Czar Thomas D. Homan; Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba of Japan; President Claudia Sheinbaum Pardo of Mexico; and White House Communications Adviser Margo Martin and Executive Office aides Natalie Harp and Chamberlain Harris. Secretary Hegseth referred to Adm. Alvin Holsey, USN, commander, U.S. Southern Command. Secretary Rubio referred to U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East Steven C. Witkoff; Minister of Foreign Affairs Abbas Araqchi of Iran; and President Nayib Armando Bukele Ortez of El Salvador. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on April 11.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Cabinet meeting; Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, White House.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Bessent, Scott K.H.; Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Bondi, Pamela J.; Burgum, Douglas J.; Chavez-DeRemer, Lori M.; de Blasio, Bill; Duffy, Sean P.; Gabbard, Tulsi; Greer, Jamieson L.; Harp, Natalie; Harris, Chamberlain; Hegseth, Peter B.; Homan, Thomas D.; Ishiba, Shigeru; Karelina, Ksenia; Kennedy, Robert F., Jr.; Lightfoot, Lori; Loeffler, Kelly L.; Lutnick, Howard W.; Martin, Margo; McMahon, Linda E.; Musk, Elon R.; Noem, Kristi L.; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Rollins, Brooke L.; Rubio, Marco A.; Sheinbaum Pardo, Claudia; Vought, Russell T.; Waltz, Michael G.; White, Dana F.; Whitehead, Naomi; Wiles, Susan; Zeldin, Lee M.

Subjects: 2024 Presidential election; Artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies; Assassinations of President John F. Kennedy, Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, and Martin Luther King, Jr., declassification of records; Attorney General; Autism spectrum disorders; Automobile industry, strengthening efforts; Border security; Cabinet meetings; China, trade with U.S.; Citizenship; Director of National Intelligence; Egg prices; Electricity capacity, expansion efforts; Energy grid infrastructure, improvement efforts; Environmental Protection Agency; Federal deficit and debt; Federal regulations, reduction efforts; Gaza, conflict with Israel; Gaza, hostages held by Hamas; Government accountability and transparency, strengthening efforts; Hamas political-paramilitary organization; Illegal immigration; Immigration reform; Inflation; Israel, military operations in Gaza; Japan, defense relationship with U.S.; Japan, investment and business ventures in U.S.; Japan, Prime Minister; Manufacturing industry, domestic investment; Mexico, border with U.S., infrastructure and security; Mexico, President; Mexico, trade with U.S.; National Security Adviser; Office of Management and Budget; Panama, security cooperation with U.S.; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Russia, President; Secretary of Agriculture; Secretary of Commerce; Secretary of Defense; Secretary of Education; Secretary of Health and Human Services; Secretary of Homeland Security; Secretary of Labor; Secretary of State; Secretary of the Interior; Secretary of the Treasury; Secretary of Transportation; Semiconductor manufacturing; Small Business Administration; Steel and aluminum, U.S. tariffs on foreign imports; Tariffs; Tax Code reform; U.S. DOGE Service; U.S. Steel Corp.; U.S. Trade Representative; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Undocumented immigrants, deportation of criminals; Unemployment insurance; Universities and colleges, Federal funding; White House Border Czar; White House Chief of Staff; White House Communications Adviser; White House Senior Adviser.

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