

*Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025*

**Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni of Italy and an Exchange With Reporters**

*April 17, 2025*

*President Trump.* Thank you very much everybody.

*Shooting at Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida*

And I've been briefed on the Florida State University, Tallahassee, active shooting. I guess it's an active shooter. Fully briefed as to where we are right now. It's a shame. It's a horrible thing. Horrible that things like this take place, and we'll have more to say about it later.

*Italy-U.S. Relations*

In the meantime, it's an honor to have the Prime Minister of Italy with us, Prime Minister Meloni, who's doing a fantastic job. I would say that she has taken Europe by storm. And highly respected.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* Thank you.

*President Trump.* Everybody loves her and respects her, and I can't say that about many people. And she's become a friend, and we really have a great relationship between Italy and ourselves.

And we talked about trade. We talked about many, many things during our luncheon. And she'll be saying a few words, but she's a very special person, and it's nice to have you with us.

Thank you very much.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* Thank you very much, Mr. President. Thank you for your warm welcome. Thank you for this occasion, which is aimed to strengthen our relation, our friendship that comes from very far.

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* You know today is April 17, and April 17 marks the anniversary of the agreement that allowed Cristoforo Colombo——

*President Trump.* Oh.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* ——to make his trip. And I say to remember our ancient——our——our ties, but also to remind that we both share another fight, which is the fight against woke and DEI ideology——

*President Trump.* That's right. That's right.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* ——that would like to erase our history.

And as I know that we share lots of things on tackling illegal migration, on fighting against synthetic drugs. You know, Italy has been one of the nations——

*President Trump.* That's right. That's right.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* ——that made a plan against fentanyl, for example.

But we have been talking about many bilateral topics and things that we can do together——

*President Trump.* Right.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* —about defense, about economic—about economy, about space, about energy.

Italy will have to increase its LNG imports and also nuclear that we are trying to develop. I think there can be ways to work together. And the Italian enterprises will invest—as they've been doing for many years, as you know—in the next years, I think, around 10 billions.

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* That shows how interconnected our economies are. And that's very important, Mr. President. It's not only about Italy, it's about the entire Europe. The exchange between us is a very big one. Investments, trade—it's a topic that we are discussing in this week.

*President Trump.* That's right.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* But, at the end of the day, look, somebody quotes me. I was saying it before. Such western nationalism—I don't know if it is the right word, but I know that when I speak about West mainly, I don't speak about a geographical space. I speak about the civilization. And I want to make that civilization stronger.

So I think even if we have some problems—okay?—between the two shores of the Atlantic, it is the time that we try to sit down and find solutions.

So I want to thank President Trump for having accepted an invitation to pay an official visit to Rome in the near future and consider a possibility in that occasion to meet also with Europe. The goal, for me, is to make the West great again. Okay?

*President Trump.* Okay.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* And I think we can do it together.

*President Trump.* We can.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* And we will keep on work on that.

I'm going to close. I want to say only I'm proud of sitting here as Prime Minister of an Italy that, today, has very good—has a very good situation, despite the difficulties. A stable country. A reliable country. One million more jobs in the last 2 years and half.

*President Trump.* Great.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* Inflation is going down.

So you will forgive me if I promote, a bit, my country—

*President Trump.* Yes, please. *[Laughter]*

*Prime Minister Meloni.* —but you're a businessman, and you understand me. *[Laughter]*

*President Trump.* Go ahead. *[Laughter]*

*Prime Minister Meloni.* So migration flow is going down 60 percent.

So we are trying to do our best, but I think we can do it even better together.

Also, on Ukraine. I will close. Together, we've been defending the freedom of Ukraine. Together, we can build a just and lasting peace. We support your efforts—*[inaudible]*.

*President Trump.* Good.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* Thank you.

*President Trump.* Thank you very much.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* You're welcome.

*President Trump.* And I think we're doing well in that effort, but we want to get it done, and we'll see if we can. We want to save—on average—think of it—every week, 2,500 people are being killed. Mostly soldiers—Russian, Ukrainian soldiers. And if we can save those lives, that would be a very good thing, and so we'll see what we can do.

And I think we're getting close, but we'll let you know very soon. And you've been very helpful. I appreciate it. Thank you.

Any questions, please?

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

#### *Russia/Ukraine*

*Q.* On Russia—on Russia, Mr. President. How much longer does Vladimir Putin have to respond to your cease-fire proposal before you put secondary tariffs or sanctions on Russia?

*President Trump.* We'll see what that will be. We're going to be hearing from them this week—very shortly, actually—and we'll see. But we want it to stop. We want the death and the killing to stop.

#### *Chairman of the Federal Reserve System Board of Governors Jerome H. Powell*

*Q.* Mr. President, on Jerome Powell—on Jerome Powell, you said that the termination of Jerome Powell "cannot come fast enough." He says he won't leave even—even if you ask him to. Do you believe you have—

*President Trump.* Oh, he'll leave. If I ask him to, he'll be out of there. But——

*Q.* Do you believe you have the——

*President Trump.* ——I don't—I don't think he's——

*Q.* ——power to remove him? And are you——

*President Trump.* I don't think he——

*Q.* ——trying to do that?

*President Trump.* I don't think he's doing the job. He's too late—always too late, a little slow, and I'm not happy with him. I let him know it.

And, oh, if I want him out, he'll be out of there real fast, believe me.

Yes. Go ahead.

*Q.* So, President Trump——

*Q.* Are you trying to remove him?

*Q.* President Trump, on that.

*President Trump.* Go ahead, please. Question?

*Q.* Are you trying to remove him, Mr. President?

*President Trump.* Yes, question?

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

#### *Immigration Enforcement Actions/2024 Presidential Election*

*Q.* Mr. President, yesterday Judge Boasberg, in a case against your administration, said, "The Constitution does not tolerate willful disobedience of judicial orders." Do you agree with that statement? And will——

*President Trump.* Well, you're going to have to speak to the lawyers. We have great lawyers.

I can tell you this, we're doing a fantastic job of getting criminals out of this country who Biden allowed into the country—hundreds of thousands of criminals, murderers, and drug dealers. And I was elected because of the fact—I would say maybe that was the number-one fact, for a lot of reasons—the economy, a lot of things. But one of the primary reasons I was elected is because I said, "I'm going to get the criminals that he allowed to come into our country so stupidly through open borders—I'm going to get them out."

And I got a lot of votes—record-setting numbers of votes, as you know. We won everything: the popular vote, all seven swing States. We won everything. And that's what the public wanted, and that's what I'm doing.

But you'll have to speak to the lawyers, because it's up to them.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

Say it.

#### *Ukraine/International Diplomatic Efforts*

*Q.* What do you think of the proposal from France and U.K. of a peace mission in the Ukraine with soldiers? And do you think that Italy should take part in too?

*President Trump.* Well, I think Italy will have to make that determination.

But peace missions are always good with me. I'm okay with peace missions.

Yes, please.

#### *Transatlantic Cooperation/Trade Negotiations*

*Q.* Mr. President—Mr. President, have you discussed—what areas of cooperation have you discussed with the Prime Minister vis-à-vis Italy and the United States and Europe and the United States?

And, on China, it——

*President Trump.* We discussed it very briefly. No, we're doing very well with negotiations, I think, with all countries.

*Q.* Do you have a timing?

*The President.* And Scott could tell you a little bit, but we are doing very well. We have a lot of countries that want to make a deal. Frankly, they want to make deals more than I do.

Go ahead, Scott. Would you say something, please?

*Secretary of the Treasury Scott K.H. Bessent.* Yes. We've got a process in place. We're working on the big 15 economies first.

We had a fantastic meeting with Japan yesterday. I believe there's been calls with the EU already. And then we have South Korea coming in next week, and I believe India is also talking—or that's moving very quickly.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*Q.* Mr. President, on Ukraine.

*President Trump.* Go ahead, please.

#### *Ukraine/Critical Minerals Supply*

*Q.* On Ukraine, sir. President Zelenskyy has said he has evidence that China is supplying weaponry or ammunition to Russia. Do you have any evidence along those lines? And also, he said we could see a minerals deal signed this week. Is that on the table?

*President Trump.* Well, we have a minerals deal, which I guess is going to be signed on Thursday, Scott? Next Thursday?

*Secretary Bessent.* Yes.

*President Trump.* Soon?

*Secretary Bessent.* Yes.

*President Trump.* And I assume they're going to live up to the deal, so we'll see. But we have a deal on that.

No, I have no comment on that. I have no idea. That's his statement, not mine.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

#### *Iran/Nuclear Weapons Development*

*Q.* Mr. President, there are reports that Israel—that you waved off an Israeli attack on Iranian nuclear facilities. Can you comment on that? Is that accurate?

*President Trump.* And they say the attack is what?

*Q.* That you waved off an Israeli plan to attack Iranian nuclear facilities recently.

*President Trump.* I wouldn't say "waved off." I'm not in a rush to do it, because I think that Iran has a chance to have a great country and to live happily without death. And I'd like to see that. That's my first option.

If there's a second option, I think it would be very bad for Iran.

And I think Iran is wanting to talk. I hope they're wanting to talk. It's going to be very good for them if they do. And I'd like to see Iran be—thrive in the future, do fantastically well.

I know the Iranian people. They're incredible people. Always have been very smart, very energetic, very successful people, and I don't want to do anything that's going to hurt anybody. I really don't.

But Iran can't have a nuclear weapon. It's, you know, pretty simple. It's really simple.

We're not looking to take their industry. We're not looking to take their land. We're not—all we're saying is we—you can't have a nuclear weapon. The deal that was made—the deal that was made with Obama, that deal would have expired already. It was a terrible deal. It was a—it was—would have expired, and that gave them a clear path to a nuclear weapon. I wouldn't have accepted. That's why I terminated the deal. Number one, it was way too short.

You know, when countries are involved, you don't make short-term deals. These are countries with long lives. And I terminated that. And it was a great termination, because it didn't allow us to do anything once it terminated. You know what the deal was. It was a terrible deal. It really—many—one of many terrible deals made by the U.S.

But no, I want—I'd like to see Iran thrive. And they can do that, I think, very easily, or they can do it the other way, and the other way is not going to be good for them. It will be really bad for them.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*NVIDIA Corporation Founder, President, and Chief Executive Officer Jensen Huang*

*Q.* What do you make of the—what do you make of the Nvidia CEO going to China? He met with trade officials there.

*President Trump.* Well, Jensen is an amazing guy. He's become a friend of mine. And I don't know, he's a person that's very proud of our country. He loves our country. I'm not worried about Jensen at all.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*Immigration Enforcement Actions/Border Security*

*Q.* If a court holds you in—if a court holds you in contempt, will you take steps to return Kilmar Abrego Garcia to the United States and put him in front of a judge?

*President Trump.* Well, I'm not involved in it. I'm going to respond to that by saying you'll have to speak to the lawyers, the DOJ. I've heard many things about him, and we'll have to find out what the truth is.

But I will say this. You know, we're—we were inundated by millions of people, many millions of people, during the Biden administration. They say 21 million. And a big percentage of those are criminals—serious criminals. I'm not saying just criminals because they came into the border illegally. I'm saying they're criminals at the highest level. Murderers. Many of those people murdered more than one person, and they're on the loose.

And I was elected to get rid of those criminals, to get them out of our country or to put them away, but to get them out of our country. And I don't see how judges can take that authority away from a President.

We've done an amazing job. Tom Homan, Kristi Noem, the—we have done an amazing job. Nobody can believe the job we've done—far greater than what I said. I mean, I got elected on that, but we've done much better.

We have, right now, 99-percent border. It's at 99 percent. Nobody thought that would even be—nobody's coming through our border, practically. Two weeks ago, we had nine people come through, all for medical reasons. We allowed them. We brought them through because one had a heart attack, one had something else, and all for medical reasons.

We have a great border. We had a great border 4 years ago, but we have a border now that's even tighter, and we did that in a matter of weeks. And no, we have to—we need to get murderers and drug dealers and people that were in jail for horrible—you know, they released jails, Georgia, from all over the world. They released them. Not just South America—all over the world. The Congo in Africa—many, many people come from the Congo. I don't know what that is, but they came from the Congo. And all over the world, they came in, opened their jails. Venezuela—practically all of their prisoners released into our country. And we took them because we had an incompetent administration called the Biden administration.

And to think what they've done to our country. And I was elected to straighten that out, and I'm doing that. But we have activist judges that don't want murderers to be sent out of our country. They don't want killers and drug dealers and drug lords and people from mental institutions. They want them to stay in our country, I guess. I don't know, maybe that's the liberal way—or, as they call it nowadays, the progressive way.

But I don't think it's the way that our country believes, and that's why I won in a landslide.

Okay.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

### *Trade Negotiations/Inflation/Interest Rates*

*Q.* Back on trade—back on trade, Mr. President. Back on trade, Mr. President. You did say that you were confident these deals will be done, but you also said that you're in no rush. Americans are seeing prices rise. They're seeing it on their bills. How long can they expect that pain to last?

*President Trump.* So they've already seen it get much better, because if you were truthful, which you're not—you know, I know you very well—you have gasoline that hit \$1.98 yesterday in a couple of States. You have—gasoline is way down. The price of oil has dropped substantially. The price of groceries are substantially down. The price of eggs.

You know, when I came in, I—they hit me with eggs. [Laughter] I just got there. I was here for one week, and they started screaming at me, "Eggs have gone through the roof." I said, "I just got here." I was there for 7 days, and I hear that eggs have gone through the roof before I got there. And they were screaming at me, the press—the fake news, like you—you're fake—and the fake news is screaming at me, like, about eggs. I said, "I've only been here—I just—this is my seventh day."

And they were right. They went up 87 percent and you couldn't get them. They said, "You won't have eggs for Easter," which is coming up. Happy Easter, everybody. "You won't have eggs for Easter." And we did an unbelievable job. And now eggs are all over the place, and the price went down 92 percent.

And our commissioner of Agriculture, Brooke, has done a fantastic job. Did really—done a fantastic job.

So prices haven't gone up. The only thing that's gone up, actually, is interest rates, because we have a Federal Reserve Chairman that is playing politics. Somebody that I've never been very fond of, actually, but he's playing politics.

Interest rates should be down now. They should be coming down. In Europe, as you know, they reduced them, I guess, seven times. It looks like they're going to reduce them again and again and again, but our guy wants to play cute.

But interest rates are pretty much even. Maybe they went up just a slight bit, but that's the only thing. But that's because of the Federal Reserve, because they're not very smart people.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Go ahead. Yes, sir. Please.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Go ahead, please.

### *U.S. National Economy*

*Q.* Do you regret nominating him, Jerome Powell?

*President Trump.* Look, in the first 4 years, we had the greatest economy in the history of our country. Stock market went up 88 points. I think he's terrible, but I can't complain, because we had the most successful administration economically in the history of our country.

I think we're going to do even better this time, because you will see that the numbers that we're taking in are astronomical. We're taking in tremendous amounts of money with the tariffs.

We were treated very unfairly on trade, and the countries are getting—having a hard time getting used to the fact that they can't do that to us anymore because we have a real President. We have a President that understands what it's all about.

We had Presidents that, in some cases, were smart, but they didn't understand business or they didn't like business or, you know, it wasn't, like, a priority. And then you had like the last administration. The only thing they were good at was cheating in elections. That's about all they could do. They couldn't do anything. They were useless. They were incompetent.

Worst administration in the history of our country. Worse than Jimmy Carter. Jimmy Carter died a happy man. You know why? Because he wasn't the worst President. Joe Biden was.

So I think you're going to see some fantastic numbers when this all happens. It's happening now. I mean, everybody wants to make a deal. And if they don't want to make a deal, we'll make the deal for them, because that's what's going to happen. We'll just say, "This is what it is." But we want to listen to everybody. And I think——

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

I think——

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

I think I can say——

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

I think I can say, for Scott and the other people that are working on it, that we're listening, and we're going to be very fair to people. But you know, we're the one that really sets the deal, and that's what we'll be doing. Okay?

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

Yes. Go ahead, please.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

Please.

*Q.* Question to the—our Prime Minister.

*President Trump.* Oh, you have a great Prime Minister.

*Q.* Yes.

*President Trump.* You're so lucky.

*Q.* In Italiano?

*President Trump.* Yes, that's right.

*Q.* Okay.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* I'm not sure they would agree. *[Laughter]*

*[A reporter spoke in Italian; no translation was provided. Prime Minister Meloni then responded in Italian; no translation was provided. Several reporters again spoke at once.]*

*President Trump.* I—that sounded absolutely—that was so beautiful. *[Laughter]* What the hell did you say? *[Laughter]*

What did she say? Please.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*Prime Minister Meloni.* It was about——

*President Trump.* No, I mean, it sounded great.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* It was about—it was about——

*President Trump.* It was beautifully presented. [*Laughter*]

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

But maybe I could hear what she said.

Please, go ahead.

*Interpreter.* It was about——

*President Trump.* Go ahead.

[*A reporter spoke in Italian; no translation was provided.*]

*Interpreter.* It was about asking——

[*A reporter spoke in Italian; no translation was provided.*]

*Vice President James D. "J.D." Vance.* Guys, have—have——

*President Trump.* Hold it. Hold it.

*Vice President Vance.* Have some respect, please.

[*A reporter spoke in Italian; no translation was provided.*]

*President Trump.* Thank you.

[*A reporter spoke in Italian; no translation was provided.*]

*President Trump.* No, no. Wait. Wait. I want to hear what she said.

Go ahead, please.

#### *Ukraine/Russia*

*Interpreter.* Yes, President, Prime Minister Meloni was asked whether—what she thinks about the fact that President Trump holds Zelenskyy responsible for the war—the war in Ukraine.

And Prime Minister Meloni answered, "Well, w—actually, we—we have"—no.

And also if the—you talked about the military spending—how—and the raising of the military spending——

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Interpreter.* ——and the fact—and the first thing President—Prime Minister Meloni said is that, "No, actually, we didn't talk about the raise in military spending. Of course, Italy will keep its commitment with 2 percent. And then, we will see, because we are absolutely aware of the fact that it is very important to—to——

*Prime Minister Meloni.* Well, I will do that.

*Interpreter.* ——defense is very——

*Prime Minister Meloni.* Wait.

*Interpreter.* ——is very important."

*Prime Minister Meloni.* Wait, wait, wait. I will do that.

They've been asking if we raise—if we decided another defense percentage about the NA—the—the defense expending—spendings.

*President Trump.* Right, NATO. NATO.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* And I said—yes, NATO.

And I said that Italy is reaching the 2 percent, as it was already decided. We didn't speak about specific other——

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* ——percentage, but we are aware of the fact that defense is important for the future, and we see what—also, the work that we are trying to do at the European level.

*President Trump.* And I don't hold——

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

I don't hold Zelenskyy responsible——

*Prime Minister Meloni.* No.

*President Trump.* ——but I'm not exactly thrilled with the fact that that war started.

That was a war that would have never started if I were President. You'd have millions of people living right now that are dead. You'd have cities that would be open and thriving, and they'd have their beautiful turrets. Those turrets are the most beautiful in the world, but they're not with us any longer. They're smashed to smithereens, laying on the ground in a million pieces, getting hit by rockets, bombs, and bullets. And so I'm not happy with him, and I'm not happy with anybody involved.

I think it's a war—I know it's a war—it didn't happen for four years. It was never close to happening. It was never even a thought.

And I spoke to President Putin about it a lot. It was the apple of his eye, but there's no way he would have ever gone in if I were President.

Now I'm trying to get him to stop, because, as you know, Russia is a lot bigger. It's a bigger military force. And if you're smart, you don't go involved and get involved in wars that—you can blame the man that was sitting in this seat, Biden. He didn't know what the hell was going on. But I can guarantee you that, and everybody agrees to it. If I were President, that war would have never taken place.

I'm not blaming him, but what I am saying is that I wouldn't say he's done the greatest job. Okay? I'm not a big fan. I really am—I'm not a big fan.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

Go ahead, please. Go ahead.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

Go ahead.

*[A reporter spoke in Italian; no translation was provided. The reporter continued in English as follows.]*

*Europe*

*Q.* Mr. President, are you sure about the definition—"parasite" of European? Would you say again that the European are parasite?

*Prime Minister Meloni.* He's never said.

*Q.* Would you say——

*President Trump.* What? The European——

*Q.* ——again that European are parasites? Yes.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* Have you ever said that Europeans are parasites?

*Q.* Yeah.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* Have you said it?

*President Trump.* No.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* I don't think——

*President Trump.* I didn't say that. I don't know what he——

*Prime Minister Meloni.* He didn't say it.

*President Trump.* I don't even know what you're talking about, actually.

Go ahead, please.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Go ahead.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

No, no. Wait. Wait. Next. Next. Next. Go.

*Q.* Thank you. Prime Minister Meloni just said, "We want to make Europe great again, and we want to do it together, together with the United States."

*President Trump.* Yes. Sure.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* The West, yes.

### *Europe/Migration*

*Q.* Did you—I guess that's—that's what you said. Mr. [Madam; White House correction] Prime Minister, how are you going to do that? And are you looking to do it to counter China, who is really trying to gather influence against the United States with the help of a disjointed Europe?

And I guess the question is to both of you.

*President Trump.* I hope that Europe is going to be great again. Europe has gone through a lot of problems, and a lot of it's having to do with immigration. And I'm not a big fan of Europe and what they've done with immigration at all, and I think they've got to get smart, because Europe is being very badly hurt by what they've done with immigration.

Now, I'll say this, that the Prime Minister has taken a very tough stand on immigration. And I commented to her before. I said, "I wish more people would be like you having to do with that subject," but they're not.

Europe is very important to me. Europe is very important to the world. I want Europe to do very well. I think they have to get a lot smarter on immigration.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* But we are——

*President Trump.* [Inaudible]

*Prime Minister Meloni.* We are beginning do it—doing it. You've seen—you've all seen how the policies of the European Union in the last, let's say, two and a half years have been changing. Okay, at the beginning, we were talking all—only about how we were redistributing illegal migrants coming to Italy. [Laughter]

Now we are talking mainly about how to stop illegal migration, work with the countries of origin and transit, and to return people. The community—the European Commission just did the new rules about repatriations and things like that.

So things are changing——

*President Trump.* Yes. I hope so.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* ——thanks also to the example that Italy brought in—in lowering—lowering the rates of illegal migration. So they—we are working now together. So I'm optimistic on that.

*President Trump.* Good. I hope so.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Go ahead, please. Go ahead.

#### *Satellite Communications*

*Q.* I would like to ask—I would like to ask President [Prime Minister; White House correction] Meloni if you have discussed the option of a Starlink deal with Italy on satellite communications. And to President Trump, if you want to see the Google company broken up?

*President Trump.* The Google what?

*Q.* The Google company.

*President Trump.* What about it?

*Q.* The Google business.

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Q.* If you want to see it broken up, separated into entities.

*President Trump.* Go ahead, please.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* Oh, well, we didn't discuss about——

*President Trump.* No.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* ——about Starlink. We discussed—we've been discussing about defense space, where we will work together, also, in the——

*President Trump.* Sure.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* ——Mars missions, huh? So, there are big, big things to do together. But we didn't discuss it.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

#### *U.S. Tariffs/China/Mexico/Canada*

*Q.* Was there anything in your conversation with the prime minister that changed your mind, potentially, about tariffs and what you plan to do going forward?

*President Trump.* No.

*Q.* Was there anything the Prime Minister said to you that changed your perspective on this?

*President Trump.* No. Tariffs are making us rich. We were losing a lot of money under Biden—trillions of dollars, trillions—on trade. And now that's—that whole tide has turned. We're making a lot of money. We're taking in a lot of money.

Don't forget, we're taking in 25 percent on cars, 25 percent on steel, 25 percent on aluminum, 10-percent baseline. We put penalties on China for sending us fentanyl. We put penalties on Mexico and Canada—25 percent—for allowing fentanyl and allowing the borders to be weak.

No, we're taking in billions and billions of dollars while I sit here and talk to you. And we didn't do—we didn't take in anything before, other than the tariffs that I put on previous to Biden, which were the tariffs I put on China, where we took in, up and to this point, probably \$700 billion. They were Trump tariffs. He tried to weaken them. He did everything he could.

You know, he got paid money by China, right? The family got paid money. He did. And so, I don't know, maybe that was the reason or maybe it wasn't.

But he tried to weaken them, but he couldn't, because it was so much money that his budgets—you know, they couldn't stand not doing it. But I took in the—up till this point, my tariffs on China, nobody ever took in 10 cents from China. No other President took in 10 cents. I took in more than \$700 billion from China.

So we're doing very well. I mean, our country is doing very well. They had a bad report today from one of the health care companies that had an impact on the stock market.

But this isn't about that. This is—really, we're building a base. We're building a country like no other. And, again, I had the strongest economy in the history of our country, by far—history of any country, probably, but the history of our country, in 4 years. And I think this has a chance to be much better.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

#### *Ukraine/Critical Minerals Supply*

*Q.* Can you just clarify on the minerals deals: Will that be signed here at the White House with Ukraine on Thursday? Will President Zelenskyy be coming here for that?

*President Trump.* I don't know exactly. I'm going to leave that to Scott. What do you think? Where would it be signed and when?

*Secretary Bessent.* Yes, we're still working on the details. We're shooting for around April 26.

*Q.* Is there any more details that you could tell us about what's in that deal and how it came together?

*Secretary Bessent.* It's substantially what we've agreed on previously when the President was here. We had a memorandum of understanding. We went straight to the big deal, and the—I think it's an 80-page agreement, and that's what will be signed.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

#### *Chairman of the Federal Reserve System Board of Governors Jerome H. Powell/Inflation/Oil Prices*

*Q.* Can you clarify on—can you clarify: On rate cuts, do you intend to seek Powell's firing if he doesn't change his stance on rate cuts? *[Laughter]*

*Q.* Or is that on the table, or is it off the table?

*President Trump.* Well, I think he should do the rate cuts, because I think, if Europe has done it, I mean, it puts us at a disadvantage to Europe. I mean, he plays right into their hands. So I think he should do the rate cuts. We don't have, really, inflation now.

You know, I just said the major things are going down. Oil is great. Oil is way ahead of schedule, and that's because of our policies. But oil is down into the \$60—\$65 range now per barrel. And I told you, in certain States, we have less than \$2 for gasoline. And food is down. Groceries, as we call it, is—are down. Other than interest rates, everything is down.

Interest rates are pretty flat. They're not—it's not that they're up, but we should be better than flat. We should—if he would lower the interest rate, I think it would have a good impact on that too.

*Q.* And if he doesn't?

*President Trump.* But the costs are down.

We have very little inflation. I would say we have essentially no inflation. Hard to have inflation when oil goes down. And oil goes down. When Biden came in, oil went through the roof. That's what caused a problem, that and his very dumb spending. But when the oil prices go down—and they have gone down a lot. We've gotten it down really good. We've opened it up, and we've gotten them down. And that means that people driving cars are going to be paying \$2 and \$2.50 instead of \$4.50.

And you know, even at the end, they tried—they tried, just for the purpose of the election, to get it down. But they had really lost that sucker. That was really—it was not good. But if they had won, oil right now would be at \$7 or \$8 because of their policy, and we're going to be at about \$2. Could be even a little bit less than that. And you're starting to see it.

So I don't know how you can have inflation when oil is—has come down quite a bit.

And I would say the Fed really owes it to the American people to get interest rates down. That's the only thing he's good for. And he would have an effect on that if he lowered them. And I think, at some point, he will. He's going to have a lot of political pressure. You know, they are political also, and I think there's a lot of political pressure for him to lower interest rates.

Okay?

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*Q.* Mr. President, do you think——

*President Trump.* Yes, go ahead.

*Q.* Sorry.

*President Trump.* Please.

#### *President Trump's Relationship With Prime Minister Meloni*

*Q.* Do you think that Italy can be your best ally in Europe?

And also, do you ever notice, when you walk, if you step on ants?

*President Trump.* Only if the Prime Minister remains the prime minister can it be our best.  
[Laughter] She is—she's doing——

*Prime Minister Meloni.* Thank you.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*President Trump.* No, she's doing a great job. And yes, certainly one of our great allies, not just in Europe. Anywhere. She's a fantastic person and doing a great job. And our relationship is great.

And we have a lot of Italians in this country.

*Prime Minister Meloni.* I know.

*President Trump.* I tell you. And they like Trump, and they voted for Trump. *[Laughter]*

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

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:43 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former President Barack Obama; White House Border Czar Thomas D. Homan; and President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia. A reporter referred to James E. "Jeb" Boasberg, chief judge, U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia; and Kilmar Abrego Garcia, who was arrested by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers in Baltimore, MD, on March 12, and remanded for detention at the high-security Terrorism Confinement Center (CECOT) in Tecoluca, El Salvador.

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

*Locations:* Washington, DC.

*Names:* Bessent, Scott K.H.; Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Homan, Thomas D.; Huang, Jensen; Meloni, Giorgia; Obama, Barack; Powell, Jerome H.; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Rollins, Brooke L.; Vance, James D. "J.D."; Zelenskyy, Volodymyr.

*Subjects:* 2024 Presidential election; Border security; China, trade with U.S.; Egg prices; Europe, migration patterns; Federal Reserve System; Florida, shooting in Tallahassee; Gasoline costs; Illegal immigration; Inflation; Interest rates; Iran, diplomatic engagement with U.S.; Iran, nuclear weapons development; Italy, Prime Minister; Italy, relations with U.S.; Italy, trade with U.S.; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; NVIDIA Corp.; Opioid epidemic, efforts to combat; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Russia, President; Secretary of Agriculture; Secretary of Homeland Security; Secretary of the Treasury; Tariffs; Ukraine, critical minerals supply; Ukraine, international military aid; Ukraine, President; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Ukraine, U.S. assistance; Undocumented immigrants, deportation of criminals; Vice President; White House Border Czar.

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