

*Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025*

**Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Chancellor Friedrich Merz of Germany and an Exchange With Reporters**

*June 5, 2025*

*Chancellor Merz.* So, to let you know, this is the birth certificate of Donald Trump's grandfather, born in 1869, close to Bad Dürkheim.

*President Trump.* Right.

*Chancellor Merz.* Yes.

*President Trump.* That's called serious——

*Chancellor Merz.* And his Christian name was Frederick.

*President Trump.* Right. That's serious Germany. Right?

*Chancellor Merz.* Serious German name.

*President Trump.* That's serious German. Bad Dürkheim is serious Germany too.

But I want to thank you very much for—first of all, I want to thank you for that. That's beautiful.

*Chancellor Merz.* My pleasure.

*President Trump.* Thank you very much.

*Chancellor Merz.* Thank you again.

*President Trump.* Fantastic. We'll put it up in a place of honor.

*Chancellor Merz.* Yes.

*President Trump.* I don't know, maybe we can—let's see. [*Laughter*] Could put it up there someplace.

It's an honor to have you.

*Chancellor Merz.* Thank you.

*President Trump.* As you know, the Chancellor just won a great election. Very, very strong election. Very respected man, I can tell you. We've been on the phone many times——

*Chancellor Merz.* Yes.

*President Trump.* ——talking about some of the problems of the world outside of Germany. And it's very sad what's going on. We both feel that way.

What's going on with Russia-Ukraine and other things we talk about, but Russia-Ukraine in particular. We'd like to see it end, and maybe it will end. But we got some news. There'll be some fighting. Something happened a couple of days ago, and now they do a return. And you know, here it goes. It's not good what—he's unhappy about it. I'm unhappy about it. But I think, eventually, we're going to be successful in stopping the bloodshed. It's pure bloodshed. Five, six thousand young soldiers a week are being killed. You know that? Those numbers are——

*Chancellor Merz.* Yes, we know the numbers. Terrible.

*President Trump.* They're staggering. They're staggering numbers.

But, Chancellor, I just want to congratulate you, and I want to welcome you to the Oval Office.

*Chancellor Merz.* Thank you.

*President Trump.* It's an Oval Office that's in very good shape. [*Laughter*] We like fixing things up and having them tippy top, like they have in Germany. They do that in Germany very much, and we do it here.

We're having a very good run. We had a—I also had a great election, great win. Won everything. Won the popular vote, the—all seven swing States——

*Chancellor Merz.* Yes.

*President Trump.* ——which is a big deal.

*Chancellor Merz.* Yes.

*President Trump.* It's pretty unusual to do that.

And we have a great mandate from the people, and part of our mandate is, we're going to have a great relationship with your country.

So I just want to thank you very much for being here, and if you'd like to say a few words.

*Chancellor Merz.* Absolutely.

So thank you, first of all, Mr. President, for your kind invitation to come to Washington, DC. I was in this building first time ever in 1982, I told you——

*President Trump.* Right.

*Chancellor Merz.* ——when former President Ronald Reagan was in office. So I'm very happy to be here again and to offer our close cooperation with the United States of America.

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Chancellor Merz.* We are having so much in common—our history. We owe the Americans a lot. We will never forget about that. And so, with your German provenance, I think this is a very good basis for close cooperation between America and Germany.

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Chancellor Merz.* So, again, thank you. Thank you for the hospitality and thank you for having your guesthouse for a night.

*President Trump.* Good. It was very nice, yes.

*Chancellor Merz.* This is a great place. Great place. Many thanks for that.

*President Trump.* That's great.

*Chancellor Merz.* I really enjoyed it. Thank you.

*President Trump.* That's good. It's a wonderful place. It's a landmark also. And Blair House is—it's a nice place to stay.

*Chancellor Merz.* Yes.

*President Trump.* Good. Thank you very much for saying that.

Would you have any questions, please?

*Egypt/U.S. Travel Restrictions on Designated Countries/Migration Issues in Germany*

*Q.* Mr. President——

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Q.* On your new travel ban. Why now? And if the Boulder attack was part of your reasoning, why not include Egypt on that list, where the suspect is from?

*President Trump.* Well, because Egypt has been a country that we deal with very closely. They have things under control. The countries that we have don't have things under control.

And why now? I can say that it can't come soon enough, frankly. We want to keep bad people out of our country. The Biden administration allowed some horrendous people. And we're getting them out one by one, and we're not stopping until we get them out.

We have thousands of murderers. I hate to—I even hate to say this in front of the Chancellor, because you have a little problem too with some of the people that were allowed into your country.

*Chancellor Merz.* It's getting smaller.

*President Trump.* It's not your fault. It's not your fault. It shouldn't have happened. I told her it shouldn't have happened, what she did. But you have your own difficulty with that. And we do, and we're—we're moving them out. And we're moving them out very strongly, but it can't come fast enough.

We want to get them out. We want to get them out now. We don't want to have other bad people coming into our countries. By using the word "bad," I'm being nice.

Okay. Question? Please.

*President Xi Jinping of China/China-U.S. Trade*

*Q.* Mr. President, you put out on Truth Social a post regarding your conversation with President Xi.

*President Trump.* Right.

*Q.* Can you talk about whether or not you feel that trade talks, trade relations are back on track after appearing to be a little bit off track last week?

*President Trump.* A little bit off track. It was only the complexity. You know, it's pretty complex stuff.

We had a very good conversation with President Xi a little while ago, just before——

*Chancellor Merz.* Yes.

*President Trump.* ——your arrival. In fact, we just hung up, and they said you're here. I said: "That's pretty good. Two great leaders of the world in a very short period of time."

We had a very good talk, and we've straightened out any complexity. And it's—it's very complex stuff, and we straightened it out.

The agreement was we're going to have Scott and Howard and Jamieson will be going and meeting with their top people and continue it forward. But no, I think we have everything—I think we're in very good shape with China and the trade deal.

We have a deal with China, as you know, but we were straightening out some of the points, having to do mostly with rare-earth magnets and some other things.

*Q.* So those reduced trade tariff rates, they remain in effect?

*President Trump.* Yes, we have the deal. I mean, we've had a deal. We announced the deal, and we'll be—I guess you could say—I wouldn't even say finalizing it up, Scott. I would say we have a deal, and we're going to just make sure that everybody understands what the deal is.

Okay?

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

We had a really good conversation. By the way, he invited me to China, and I invited him here. We've both accepted. So I'll be going there at—with the First Lady at a certain point, and he'll be coming here, hopefully, with the First Lady of China.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

Yes, please. Go ahead, please.

#### *U.S. Visa Policy for International Students/Harvard University*

*Q.* Did you talk about the Chinese students? Are you allowing them to come to——

*President Trump.* Oh, yeah. No, we——

*Q.* ——to the U.S.?

*President Trump.* No, Chinese students are coming. No problem. No problem.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

It's our honor to have them, frankly. Look, we want to have—we want to have foreign students, but we want them to be checked. You know, in the case of Harvard and Columbia and others, all we want to do is see their list. There's no problem with that.

This is anybody outside of our country—international students—because when we see some of the people that we've been watching, we say: "Where do these people come from? How is that possible?"

No, we want to have foreign students come. We're very honored by it. But we want to see their list. Harvard didn't want to give us the list. They're going to be giving us the list now. I think they're starting to behave, actually, if you want to know the truth. Okay.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

Yes, please.

#### *Russia*

*Q.* On Russia. Are you willing to put more pressure on Putin to end the war by imposing——

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Q.* ——any new sanctions on Russia and also on China?

*President Trump.* Well, remember, I'm the one that ended Nord Stream 2. Going to a place called Germany, come to think of it. *[Laughter]* I'm sorry I did that. I'm—but I ended Nord Stream 2. Nobody else did. And then when Biden came in, he immediately approved it. That's the largest—essentially the largest pipeline in the world, going to Germany and other countries.

And by the way, we have so much oil and gas. You will not be able to buy it all. I mean, you—literally, we have so much. And I hope we're going to make that a part of our trade deal, because we have more than anybody else. We have actually the most, by far, in the world.

Probably double what anyone else has. So we'll work on that. I'm sure that's something we'll discuss today.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

Wait a minute. Please.

#### *Germany-U.S. Relations*

*Q.* What do you expect from Germany, and what do you expect from the Chancellor?

*President Trump.* Well, first of all, I'm glad to meet because I've been dealing with the Chancellor, and he's very—a very good man to deal with. He's difficult, I would say. Can I say that?

*Chancellor Merz.* I——

*President Trump.* It's a positive.

*Chancellor Merz.* Go ahead.

*President Trump.* You wouldn't want me to say you're easy, right? *[Laughter]*

*Chancellor Merz.* No.

*President Trump.* Yes. He's a very great representative of Germany. I think all we want is just going to have a good relationship. The rest will just sort of follow very easily.

We'll have a good trade deal. I mean, I guess, that will be mostly determined by the European Union——

*Chancellor Merz.* Yes, yes. That's true.

*President Trump.* ——but you're a very big part of that.

*Chancellor Merz.* Yes.

*President Trump.* So you'll be involved.

But we'll end up, hopefully, with a trade deal or we'll do something. You know, we'll do the tariffs. I mean, I'm okay with the tariffs, or we make a deal with the trade. And I guess that's what we're discussing now.

*Chancellor Merz.* Yes.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*President Trump.* Back there. Please go ahead.

*Q.* Mr. President——

*President Trump.* No, no, not you. Right here.

#### *German Defense Spending*

*Q.* Is Germany——

*President Trump.* I've had—I've had enough of you.

*Q.* ——doing enough on defense, Mr. President? Is Germany doing enough on defense?

*President Trump.* What?

*Q.* Defense spending?

*Q.* "Is Germany doing enough on defense spending?"

*Q.* The Chancellor—the Chancellor wants to—

*Vice President James D. "J.D." Vance.* "Is Germany doing enough on defense?"

*Q.* The Chancellor wants to spend 3.5 GDP—

*President Trump.* Well, I don't know. I mean, I haven't discussed it very much. I know that you're spending more money on defense now and quite a bit more money. That's a—

*Chancellor Merz.* Yes. Definitely.

*President Trump.* That's a positive thing. I'm not sure that General MacArthur would have said it's positive. You know, he wouldn't like it, but I sort of think it's good.

You understand what I mean by that?

*Chancellor Merz.* Absolutely. I understand.

*President Trump.* He made a statement: Never let Germany rearm.

*Participant.* [Inaudible]

*President Trump.* And I said—I always think about that. When he says, "Sir, we're spending more money on defense," I say, "Ooh, is that a good thing or a bad thing?"

I think it's a good thing—but, you know, at least to a certain point. There'll be a point when I'll say, "Please don't arm anymore, if you don't mind." [Laughter] We'll be watching him. I'm kidding.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*Former President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.*

*Q.* Mr. President—on Biden, Mr. President.

*President Trump.* Yes, Biden? You said "Biden"? [Laughter]

*Q.* Your predecessor dismissed your autopen investigation. He said he made all the decisions during his Presidency. I'm curious your reaction to his dismissal.

*President Trump.* Well, look, the autopen, I think, is the big scandal—outside of the rigged election of 2020, I think the biggest scandal of the last many years is the autopen and who's using it. I happen to think I know—okay?—because I'm here. And I'm not a big autopen person, fortunately—I'm glad. I'm very glad. It's an easy way out.

But it's a very bad thing, very dangerous.

You know, I sign important documents. Usually, when they put documents in front of you, they're important. Even if you're signing Ambassadorships or an—I consider that important. I think it's inappropriate. You have somebody that's devoting 4 years of their life or more to being an Ambassador, I think you really deserve—that person deserves to get a real signature, not an autopen signature.

And I can tell autopen easily. I can look at it. Like two little pinholes from pulling the paper. Right?

*Chancellor Merz.* Yes.

*President Trump.* You always see the pinholes.

*Chancellor Merz.* Yes.

*President Trump.* It's real easy to tell about autopen. I think it's very disrespectful to people when they get an autopen signature.

Outside—autopen, to me, are used when thousands of letters come in from young people all over the country, and you want to get them back. And you know, people use autopens for that, to send a little signature at the bottom of a letter where you have thousands of them.

We get thousands of letters a week, and it's not possible to, you know, do. I'd like to do it myself, but you can't do it. To me, that's where autopens start and stop. But I don't think—I don't—I'm sure that he didn't know many of the things.

Look, he was never for open borders. He was never for transgender for everybody. He was never for men playing in women's sports. I mean, he changed—I mean, all of these things that—that changed so radically, I don't think he had any idea that—what was—frankly, I said it during the debate, and I say it now: He didn't have much of an idea what was going on.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

But you shouldn't be—I mean, essentially, whoever used the autopen was the President. And that is wrong. It's illegal. It's so bad. And it's so disrespectful to our country.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

#### *U.S. Servicemembers Stationed in Germany*

*Q.* Mr. President, will you leave the German—your troops in Germany?

And if I may ask a question to the Chancellor, to answer in German for the German audience: How has your first encounter been?

The troops.

*President Trump.* The answer is yes. We'll talk about that, but if they'd like to have them there, yes. We've—we have a——

*Q.* So, you're not going to withdraw any?

*President Trump.* We have a lot of them, about 45,000. It's a lot of troops. That's a city, when you think of it.

*Chancellor Merz.* More than that. Yes.

*President Trump.* That's good economic development. They're highly paid troops, and they spend a lot of money in Germany. But the relationship with Germany is very important. Yes, we'll—we'll be doing that. No problem.

*Chancellor Merz.* May I say a few words in German to those Germans?

*President Trump.* Yes, please.

*[Chancellor Merz spoke in German; no transcript was provided. Several reporters then spoke at once.]*

*President Trump.* Do you speak English—because you speak such good English, is it as good as your German, would you say? Do you feel—*[laughter]*—no, do you feel——

*Chancellor Merz.* No, it's not my mother tongue.

*President Trump.* ——more comfortable in——

*Chancellor Merz.* No, it's not my mother tongue, but I try to understand almost everything and to——

*President Trump.* Yes, very good.

*Chancellor Merz.* —to speak as good as I can.

*President Trump.* Very good. You know, it's an achievement, actually.

*Chancellor Merz.* Thank you.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*President Trump.* Go ahead, please.

*The President's Legislative Agenda/Former White House Senior Adviser Elon R. Musk/Tax Code Reform/Inflation/Border Security*

*Q.* Thank you, Mr. President. The criticism that I've seen and I'm sure you've seen regarding Elon Musk and your "Big Beautiful"—

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Q.* —"Bill," what's your reaction to that? Do you think it, in any way—

*President Trump.* Yeah.

*Q.* —hurts passage in the Senate, which, of course—what is you're seeking?

*President Trump.* Well, look, you know, I've always liked Elon, and so I was very surprised. You saw the words he had for me, the words of—and he hasn't said anything me that's bad. I'd rather have him criticize me than the bill, because the bill is incredible. It's the biggest cut in the history of our country. We've never cut—it's about \$1.6 trillion in cuts. It's the biggest tax cut. Tax—you would say, people—people's taxes will go way down. But it's the biggest tax cut in history.

It's—we have—we are doing things in that bill that are unbelievable. And when you look at what we're doing for small businesses, for people, for middle-income people, all of the things that we're doing, nobody has ever seen anything like it.

And you know, Elon is upset because we took the EV mandate and—you know, which was a lot of money for electric vehicles, and, you know, they're having a hard time, the electric vehicles. And they want us to pay billions of dollars in subsidy. And you know, I—Elon knew this from the beginning. He knew it for a long time ago. That's been in there—that's been—I would say, J.D., that hasn't changed. That's been right—

*Vice President Vance.* That's right.

*President Trump.* —from the beginning. Mister—I think, Mr. Secretary, that hasn't changed at all, right from the beginning.

But I know that disturbed him. He wanted—and rightfully, you know, he recommended somebody from—that he, I guess, knew very well; I'm sure he respected him—but to run NASA, and I didn't think it was appropriate, and he happened to be a Democrat—like totally Democrat. And I said: "You know, look, we won. We get certain privileges. And one of the privileges, we don't have to appoint a Democrat."

NASA is very important. We have great people. General Caine is going to be picking somebody with our—we'll be checking him out and seeing.

But he wanted that person—a certain person—and we said no. And you know, I can understand why he's upset.



Remember, he was here for a long time. You saw a man who was very happy when he stood behind the Oval desk and—even with a black eye. I said: "Do you want a little makeup? We'll get you a little makeup." But he said, "No, I don't think so," which is interesting and very nice. He wants to be who he is. So you could make that statement too, I guess.

Look, Elon and I had a great relationship. I don't know if we will anymore. I was surprised, because you were here—everybody in this room, practically, was here as we had a wonderful send-off. He said wonderful things about me. You couldn't have nicer. Said the best things.

He's worn the hat, "Trump was right about everything," and I am right about the "Great Big Beautiful Bill." We call it a "Great Big Beautiful Bill" because that's what it is.

And, again, biggest tax cuts in history, biggest economic development moves anywhere. We've never done anything like it.

Business is spurred. And I don't know if you've seen the numbers, but the numbers came out. Even the CBO, which is run by Democrats, said that we're going to be doing—you know, I'd like you to discuss it, the \$2.8 billion—a trillion that CBO—this is some—a group of people that are Democrats. They're very hostile to us. They just came out with phenomenal numbers, what it does.

Do you want to mention that, Scott?

*Secretary of the Treasury Scott K.H. Bessent.* Yes, sir. So what we've seen is, we keep hearing from the CBO that there's going to be a large deficit from the bill, which we disagree with. But using the CBO scoring, they came out and scored the tariff revenue—we think it will be the minimum—of \$2.8 trillion over the 10-year window, which actually puts the bill in surplus if you include the tariff revenue, which they won't do.

*President Trump.* It gives you a tremendous surplus. But we're not allowed to use that. For some reason, they say "scoring." Nobody knows what "scoring" means. Maybe a couple of people, but nobody.

Somebody sits in the background. They say, "Well, we're not going to allow that." They're not allowing other things that we have that are tremendously profitable for our country.

But if you saw the other day, CNBC, they came out with numbers, and the people on the show—very good people; I've watched them for a long time—they couldn't believe the numbers, how good they are. The numbers were incredible. And that was personal income and also very low inflation.

We have very low inflation. We're down to 2 percent now, and maybe even lower than that. And when I took it over, it was a mess.

Remember, we had the worst inflation, probably, in the history of our country. They say 48 years, but let's say that's—I think it's worse than that. So we had the worst inflation in the history of our country under the Biden administration. Now we're down to a beautiful number: 2 percent.

You'd actually like to keep it there. Better than zero is 2 percent. It's going down maybe to one. And 1 percent is, like, perfect. That's perfect. You don't want to have zero, for certain reasons that are—that nobody is very interested to listen to. But we have almost perfect inflation.

Grocery prices are down. Everything. Remember eggs? Eggs—we weren't going to buy another egg for the next 20 years; they was so expensive. Right? Remember? You guys all hit me about eggs. Eggs have come down 400 percent. Everybody has eggs now. They're having eggs for breakfast again.

But if you look at gasoline—very important—I think always the most important, because it's the—energy is a big—the biggest factor. That's what happened. He screwed up our energy policy, and everything went up because energy went up, but now energy is way down. And they have states where you're at \$1.98 a gallon for gasoline.

So the costs have way—have come way down. And one of the things I ran on was that.

I ran on the border. We have the best border in the history of our country: 99.99 percent. It was—last week, three people came in. Two of them for medical reasons. We let them in because one of them had a heart attack. I think that was a nice thing to do. And one of them had something else.

So we've never had—I had very good numbers for 4 years, but we really topped it. And I want to thank Kristi and Tom Homan. They've done a fantastic job. But nobody mentions that anymore.

Remember, a few months ago, the border was a total disaster. People were coming in by the hundreds of thousands of people a day, a week, a month. I mean, we had a month—2 million people came in in 1 month. The border was being overrun and—a lot of bad people: criminals, murderers, drug dealers. We had some of the worst people in the world coming in from all over the world. It's totally closed.

And you know what? People are coming into our country, but they're coming in legally. So, we've done a great job.

Elon knew that. Elon endorsed me very strongly. He actually went up and campaigned for me. I think I would have won—Susie would say I would have won Pennsylvania easily anyway, even if the Governor ran—the real Governor, not the Governor from Minnesota, who's a—I mean, he's a sick puppy, that guy. That poor guy, I feel sorry for him. *[Laughter]* But they made a bad choice with him.

But what—if you picked Shapiro or anybody else—I spoke to him recently about his—you know, his house being set on fire, which was terrible. But if they picked him, I would have won Pennsylvania. I won it by a lot.

But I'm very disappointed, because Elon knew the inner workings of this bill better than almost anybody sitting here. Better than you people. He knew everything about it. He had no problem with it.

All of a sudden, he had a problem, and he only developed the problem when he found out that we're going to have to cut the EV mandate, because that's billions and billions of dollars.

And it really is unfair. We want to have cars of all types. Electric—we want to have electric, but we want to have a gasoline combustion. We want to have different—we want to have hybrids. We want to have all—we want to be able to sell everything.

And when that was cut—and Congress wanted to cut it—he became a little bit different, and I can understand that. But he knew every aspect of this bill. He knew it better than almost anybody, and he never had a problem until right after he left.

And if you saw the statements he made about me, which I'm sure you can get very easily—it's very fresh, on tape—he said the most beautiful things about me. And he hasn't said bad about me personally, but I'm sure that'll be next.

But I'm very disappointed in Elon. I've helped Elon a lot.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*U.S. DOGE Service*

*Q.* To that end, Mr. President, did he—I just want to clarify. Did he raise any of these concerns with you privately before he raised them publicly? And this is the guy you put in charge of cutting spending. Should people not take him seriously about spending now? Are you saying this is all sour grapes?

*President Trump.* No, he worked hard, and he did a good job.

And I'll be honest, I think he misses the place. I think he got out there, and all of a sudden, he wasn't in this beautiful Oval Office, and he wasn't—and he's got nice offices too, but there's something about this one.

I was telling the Chancellor, "This is where it is." People come in here—even from Germany, they come in, and they——

*Chancellor Merz.* [Laughter] Even from Germany. You're right.

*President Trump.* ——walk into the Oval Office——

*Chancellor Merz.* You're right.

*President Trump.* ——and it's just a special place.

It's—you know, World War I, it started, and it ended here—and World War II and so many other things. Everything big comes right from this beautiful space. It's now much more beautiful than it was 6 months ago. A lot of good things are happening in this room.

And I'll tell you, it's not—he's not the first. People leave my administration, and they love us, and then at some point, they miss it so badly. And some of them embrace it, and some of them actually become hostile. I don't know what it is. It's sort of Trump derangement syndrome, I guess they call it. [Laughter]

But I—we have it with others too. They leave, and they wake up in the morning, and the glamour is gone. The whole world is different, and they become hostile. I don't know what it is. Someday you'll write a book about it, and you'll let us know.

Yes.

### *President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia/Ukraine/The President's Foreign Policy*

*Q.* Mr. President, speaking of ending wars in this room, you were very critical of Vladimir Putin a couple of days ago. What kind of play is he playing, from your perspective? What are his—[inaudible]?

*President Trump.* Well, look, he's—he got hit. He's been doing hitting. So I understand it, but he got hit hard, and he's—I don't think he's playing games. I think he—I've always said he wanted the whole thing. I thought he wanted the entire—everything having to do with Ukraine.

That's something that would have never happened if I were President. The election was rigged. I didn't get to be President, but I got to be President now, and I think it's a much more important Presidency, other than a couple of things like that. The war would have never—would have never happened. The war with Ukraine, with Putin would have never happened, ever. Not even a chance.

And it didn't happen for four years, and it wasn't thought of. I used to talk to him about Ukraine a lot—it was the apple of his eye—but he would have never done what he did.

And I think we're—mistakes were made by him, but I think mistakes were made by other people. The President should have never allowed that war. Biden should have never allowed that war to happen. If you had a—the right guy in here, that war would have never happened.

Israel would have never happened with Hamas. That would have never happened. The attack on Israel would have never happened because Iran was broke. They had no money. They had no money to give to Hamas or Hizballah or anybody else. And all of that would have never happened.

Inflation wouldn't have happened. It was caused mostly by energy, and the Biden administration messed up my great energy policy. We were down into the \$1.90 a gallon, and it would have never happened. It was caused by energy and their bad spending on the "green new scam" and other things that they spent on.

But all of those things would have never happened. But maybe most importantly, the war, Chancellor, with Russia would never have happened with Ukraine. It was something that would have—you know, I dealt with Putin a lot. There was no chance. Zero.

And you know, a lot of people say, "How do you know?" For 4 years, it didn't happen. There was never a chance of it happening. And he understood the consequences. Now—it's a shame.

I mean, when you see all of those people—they came out with a report today that—that millions of people—millions of people have died. Much more than people thought. And I've been saying that for a long time.

The amount of death in that war is far greater than the news has been reporting or than—frankly, that either side has been reporting. It's a very sad thing.

And I can tell you, just speaking for the Chancellor, because we speak about it, he feels the same way. He wants to see it ended.

*Chancellor Merz.* Absolutely.

*President Trump.* Would you like to say something?

*Chancellor Merz.* Absolutely. And I'm here, Mr. President, to talk with you later on on how we could contribute to that goal.

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Chancellor Merz.* And we all are looking for measures and for instruments to bring this terrible war to an end.

And may I remind you that we are having June 6 tomorrow. This is D-Day anniversary, when the Americans once ended a war in Europe. And I think this is in your hand, in specific. In ours.

*President Trump.* That was not a pleasant day for you.

*Chancellor Merz.* No, that was not a pleasant—well——

*President Trump.* This was not a great day.

*Chancellor Merz.* ——in the long run, Mr. President, this was the liberation of my country—[laughter]—from Nazi dictatorship.

*President Trump.* That's true. That's true.

*Chancellor Merz.* So—and we know what we owe you.

But this is the reason why I'm saying that America is, again, in a very strong position to do something on this war and ending this war. So let's talk about what we can do jointly, and we are ready to do what we can. And you know that we gave support to Ukraine and that we are looking for more pressure on Russia, the European Union did, and we should talk about that.

*President Trump.* We will talk about it.

*Chancellor Merz.* Yes.

*President Trump.* And you know, it's good timing. The numbers for our country are through the roof—the economic numbers—because of the election and because of tariffs and other things—a lot of things. But we've had some of the best numbers we've ever had. They were reported yesterday, the day before, and even today. Our country is doing really well.

I think that one of the things you'll be most interested in is that 6 months ago we were having a hard time getting anybody to join our military. I mean, they just couldn't do it. The numbers were record low. We couldn't get people to join the military. It wasn't me. This was before I got there. The past administration.

But 6 months ago, a year ago, the numbers were record low. You couldn't get them to join. That included the police. And you couldn't get them to join.

Now we just hit the highest number in the history of our country—we think, but very close—but the highest in the history of our country recruitment, joining the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, police forces all over the country.

*Chancellor Merz.* What did you do for that? What was the reason?

*President Trump.* Spirit. They love our country again. You know? You're going to do the same thing. Spirit.

That we have—great spirit is back in our country. And it's very simple. And you know, it was only, Susie, 6 months ago—right?—that you got reports—you're the one that released them—that you couldn't get anybody to join the military. And now we're stocked. Every service now is packed, and we have waiting lists of people trying to get in. As good as we've ever had in the history of our country.

So that's an honor. That's a great honor.

*Chancellor Merz.* Great.

*President Trump.* Yes.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

No, you've asked. You've had enough.

Go ahead, please.

#### *Russia/Ukraine/U.S. Trade Policy*

*Q.* Mr. President, so would you consider to put more sanctions on Russia, because this discussion is going on now for weeks and months, and you tweeted about it once——

*President Trump.* Yeah.

*Q.* ——but then nothing happened, so——

*President Trump.* Yes, when I see——

*Q.* ——what will you do?

*President Trump.* When I see the moment when we're not going to make a deal, when this thing won't stop——

*Q.* Is there a deadline for you?

*President Trump.* ——in that moment—yes, it's in my—my brain, the deadline. We're not—when I see the moment where it's not going to stop—and I'm sure you're going to do the same thing—we'll be very, very tough. And it could be on both countries, to be honest. You know, it takes two to tango.

But they'll be—we're going to be very tough. Whether it's Russia or anybody else, we're going to be very tough. That's a bloodbath that's going on over there. And when I see the moment where I say, "Wow, they're going to just keep fighting"—you know, I gave the analogy yesterday when I spoke to President Putin—I had a 2-hour-and-15-minute call with him.

Sometimes—and this is me speaking maybe in a negative sense—but sometimes you see two young children fighting like crazy. They hate each other, and they're fighting in a park. And you try and pull them apart. They don't want to be pulled. Sometimes you're better off letting them fight for a while and then pulling them apart.

And I gave that analogy to Putin yesterday. I said, "President, maybe you're going to have to keep fighting and suffering a lot"—because both sides are suffering—before you pull them apart, before they're able to be pulled apart.

But it's a pretty known analogy. You have two kids, they fight, fight, fight. Sometimes you let them fight for a little while. You see it in hockey. You see it in sports. The referees let them go for a couple of seconds. Let them go for a little while before you pull them apart.

And maybe——

*Q.* What did Putin answer?

*President Trump.* Maybe—and I said it. And maybe that's a negative, because we're saying, "Go." But a lot of bad blood. There's some bad blood between the two. I have to deal with it, and the Chancellor has to deal with.

It's incredible, the level of—there's a great hatred between those two—between those two men, but between the warring parties. Great hatred.

*Russia/Ukraine/India/Pakistan*

*Q.* But what made——

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*Q.* ——what made you say and believe, apparently, that there is no immediate peace?

*President Trump.* What?

*Q.* That there is no immediate peace—there will be no——

*President Trump.* Well, I can't—I'd love to have immediate, if I could.

*Q.* But why do you think that?

*President Trump.* If I could. But we don't have immediate, you know. It's like—I'd love to have that. I'd like it to start.

Right now, we would leave a room—if we knew the war could end, we'd say: "Forget about you guys. Forget about trade." Right?

*Chancellor Merz.* Yes.

*President Trump.* We'd say, "Let's go settle it."

There's some additional fighting that's going to go on. You know, he was—he attacked, and they attacked pretty harshly. They went deep into Russia. And he actually told me—I mean, I—I made it very clear. He said, "We have no choice but to attack, based on that," and it's probably not going to be pretty. I don't like it. I said: "Don't do it. You shouldn't do it. You should stop it." But, again, there's a lot of hatred.

And you know, I'm very proud of the fact that, with India and Pakistan, I was able to stop that. And those are nuclear powers. That would have really—that was getting close to being out of hand. And I spoke to some very talented people on both sides, very good people on both sides.

And I said, "You know, we're dealing with you on trade"—Pakistan and India—"right now." I said, "We're not going to deal with you on trade if you're going to go shooting each other and whipping out nuclear weapons that maybe even affect us," because, you know, that nuclear dust blows across oceans very quickly. It affects us. And I said, "If you're going to do that, we're not going to do any trade deals."

And you know what? I got that war stopped. Now I hope we don't go back and we find out that they started, but I don't think they will. They were both good. They were well-represented there. I want to congratulate both countries because, as you know, the leader of India, who's a great guy, was here a few weeks ago. We had some great talks. We're doing a trade deal. And Pakistan, likewise, they have very, very strong leadership. Some people won't like when I say that, but you know, it is what it is. And they stopped that war.

Now, am I going to get credit? I'll never get credit for anything. They don't give me credit for anything. But nobody else could have done it. I stopped it. I was very proud of that.

I wish we could do the same thing with Ukraine and Russia. And at some point, it will happen. I believe that. And if it doesn't happen and if I see somebody's out of line, if Russia is out of line, we'll be—you'll be amazed how tough.

Remember this: They like to say that "I'm friends with Russia"—I'm not friends with anybody. I'm friends with you. *[Laughter]* I'm not friends with—I want the right thing to happen for our country, for everybody, for humanity.

But I'm the one that stopped the pipeline. It's called Nord Stream 2. Until I came along, nobody ever heard—not one person in this room ever heard of Nord Stream 2. You probably did—

*Chancellor Merz.* Yes, I did. *[Laughter]*

*President Trump.* —because it went to Germany. And he's the only one it hurt.

*Chancellor Merz.* Knowing that this was a mistake. Yes. Right.

*President Trump.* But I stopped him. I stopped it.

Yes, and you've said that openly—

*Chancellor Merz.* Yes.

*President Trump.* —it was a mistake. Because—and I used to go with Angela. I'd say: "Well, wait a minute. We're spending all this money to defend you against Russia, and then you're giving Russia billions of dollars a month. What kind of a deal is that?" You know, which was—but you said it better than anybody else. I appreciate it.

But I'm the one that stopped it. And that was the biggest economic development job, if you want to call it that, in the history—think of it—in the history of Russia. That was a massive—it's

the biggest pipeline in the world, going to go all over Europe, not only to Germany. You know, they're Germany, but then they were branching off all over to Europe.

Nobody ever heard of—not one person of you heard of it. And I stopped it. It was dead. And then they say I'm friends with Putin. I got along with him. He respected me. I respected him. It would have never happened. But I stopped Nord Stream 2.

When Biden came in, almost the first week, he approved it. He let it be built. And then they say that I wasn't tough on Russia. Putin said to me: "You know, you're 'not tough on Russia.' You stopped the biggest, most important job we've ever done. You stopped it." And Biden came in, and he let it be built.

And I'll tell you what, I will never forget the day. I had it totally stopped. They weren't building. They gave up on it. They weren't able to. And then Biden came in, and he let him build. I couldn't believe it.

Okay. One or two questions more, please. Any questions for the Chancellor?

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*Ukraine/U.S. Security Assistance*

*Q.* Will you continue to—will the U.S. continue——

*President Trump.* Go ahead, for the Chancellor.

*Q.* That would be one for——

*President Trump.* I like his answers much better. *[Laughter]*

*Q.* Well, the first one, would you continue to support Ukraine?

*President Trump.* Yes, I'm with Ukraine. We just signed a big deal on rare earth with Ukraine. And we want to—I want to—you know, what I'm—I'm for stopping killing, really. That's what I'm for. Again, a war that would have never started, should have never started. I want to see the killing stop.

We spent \$350 billion—much more than Europe, but Europe spent a lot also.

*Chancellor Merz.* Yes.

*President Trump.* I mean, they spent way over \$100 billion.

*Chancellor Merz.* Yes.

*President Trump.* So you're talking about close to \$500 billion went into that whole thing. And it's not even the money. And I know, with you too, it's—it's a lot of money, but it's the death that's being caused.

We went to the Middle East—I went last week to the Middle East. We took in \$5.1 trillion. That's many, many times—that's 30, 40 times, 50 times more than what we're talking about. It's five-point—think of that—\$5.1 trillion of investment with one trip that lasted 4 days.

So it's not the money. It's a little the money, but it's not the money—the big thing. The big thing is the death. The death of—and—and really, the decimation. You've lost a whole culture.

You know, Ukraine had the most beautiful turrets—they call them "turrets," the little towers, beautiful towers—the most beautiful in the world. They're all now laying on their side, blown to smithereens. It will never happen again.

They've taken away the culture of a country. They've taken away the heritage of a country. It's a terrible thing.



But most importantly, again, is the death. Five thousand-plus people a week. Soldiers are being killed. He doesn't want that, and I don't want that.

Okay. One more.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

Yes, please.

### *Germany-U.S. Trade*

*Q.* Thank you. Mr. President, do you support the Graham bill on putting high tariffs on China and others?

*President Trump.* I have not looked at it, but they'll be guided by me. That's the way it's supposed to be. They're going to be guided by me. No, I haven't looked at it.

It's a bill on sanctions, et cetera. When they take—I'm a very quick study. At the right time, I'll do what I want to do. But it could very well be okay. I'll have to see. But they're waiting for me to decide on what to do, and I'll know maybe very soon. It's a harsh bill, yes. Very harsh.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*Q.* How about one more on the autopen, Mr. President? Can you take one more on the autopen?

*Q.* May I have a question to the Chancellor?

*President Trump.* Go ahead. Go ahead.

*Q.* Yes? I would like to have a question——

*Chancellor Merz.* Go ahead.

*Q.* ——to the Chancellor as well because——

*Chancellor Merz.* Please.

### *Ukraine/Russia*

*Q.* Do you agree with the analogy the President made on the war between Russia and Ukraine as being a fight between two kids? Is that how you view that as well? And how do you——what do you actually want the U.S. President to do in this Ukraine war?

*Chancellor Merz.* Well, I think we both agree on this war and how terrible this war is going on, and we are both looking for ways to stop it very soon.

And I told the President before we came in that he is the key person in the world who can really do that now, by putting pressure on Russia. And we will have this debate later on again, how we can proceed jointly between the Europeans and the Americans.

And I think we are all in—we are having the duty to do something on that now, to stop it——

*President Trump.* That's right.

*Chancellor Merz.* ——after 3½ years, which is really terrible. Look at the kids—the kids which were kidnapped from—from Ukraine to Russia.

*President Trump.* That's right.

*Chancellor Merz.* This is all terrible.

And so, we are talking about instruments, measures, what we can do. And my personal view is clear on that. We are on the side of Ukraine, and we are trying to get them stronger and stronger, just to make Putin stop this war. And this is our—this is our approach.

*President Trump.* We get satellite pictures of the war field——

*Chancellor Merz.* Yes.

*President Trump.* ——and you don't even like to look at them, right?

*Chancellor Merz.* It's terrible.

*President Trump.* It's so——

*Chancellor Merz.* It's really terrible.

*President Trump.* Bodies, arms——

*Chancellor Merz.* Yes.

*President Trump.* ——heads, legs, all over the place. You've never seen anything like it. It's—it's so ridiculous. For what?

*Chancellor Merz.* And this is only by Russian weapons against Ukraine.

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Chancellor Merz.* This had never happened with Ukraine weapons against Russia. Never. Ukraine is only targeting military targets—not civilians, not private, not energy infrastructure.

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Chancellor Merz.* So this is the difference, and that's the reason why we are trying to——

*President Trump.* Right.

*Chancellor Merz.* ——do more on Russia, how to stop this war.

*President Trump.* Well, in this case, I'm talking about the battlefield—you know, the soldiers on soldiers. But you could also say that too with the cities.

*Chancellor Merz.* Yes.

*President Trump.* You know——

*Chancellor Merz.* Yes.

*President Trump.* ——the cities are being hit also. So it's a terrible, terrible thing.

All right. One——

*Q.* On Greenland?

*President Trump.* Somebody said autopen. Did I hear the word "autopen"?

*Former President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.*

*Q.* I have an autopen question. Yes, I was just curious——

*President Trump.* Because I think it's the biggest scandal maybe in the last hundred years in this country.

*Q.* So—so——

*President Trump.* So, when I hear that word, I think it has to be discussed, because the fake news will try and, you know, hide it. And we can't do that.

But go ahead.

*Q.* Well, that's why I'm asking. Have you uncovered any evidence that anything specific was signed without President Biden's knowledge or by other people in the administration acting illegally?

*President Trump.* Well, I don't think Biden would know whether or not he signed it. I don't think so.

*Q.* I'm asking if you've uncovered any of that information.

*President Trump.* No. But I've uncovered, you know, the human mind. I was in a debate with the human mind, and I didn't think he knew what the hell he was doing. So, you know, it's just one of those things, one of those problems.

We can't ever allow that to happen to our country. The danger our country was in. And I know some of the people that worked with him—radical-left, horrible people. And I could give you the name of some of the people that used the autopen, because I'm here, and I ask questions about people that were here also. There are a lot of people that were here when that happened, and they're here right now. And they'll answer your question very accurately.

But I know some of the people that used that autopen, and those are not the people that had the same ideology as Joe Biden. These were radical-left lunatics that used that. And they didn't get elected. He didn't get elected, either, actually.

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

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:44 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany; Secretary of Commerce Howard W. Lutnick; U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson L. Greer; Peng Liyuan, wife of President Xi Jinping of China; Jared Isaacman, whose nomination to be Administrator of the National Space and Aeronautics Administration was withdrawn on May 30; Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. J. Daniel Caine, USA; Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi L. Noem; White House Border Czar Thomas D. Homan; White House Chief of Staff Susan Wiles; Gov. Joshua D. Shapiro of Pennsylvania; Gov. Timothy J. Walz of Minnesota, in his former capacity as the 2024 Democratic Vice Presidential nominee; President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine; and Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India. He also referred to H.R. 1. Reporters referred to Mohamed Sabry Soliman, suspect in the incendiary attack in Boulder, CO, on June 1; and Sen. Lindsey O. Graham.

*Categories:* Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, White House; Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Germany, Chancellor Merz.

*Locations:* Washington, DC.

*Names:* Bessent, Scott K.H.; Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Caine, J. Daniel; Greer, Jamieson L.; Homan, Thomas D.; Isaacman, Jared; Lutnick, Howard W.; Merkel, Angela; Merz, Friedrich; Modi, Narendra; Musk, Elon R.; Noem, Kristi L.; Peng Liyuan; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Shapiro, Joshua D.; Trump, Melania; Vance, James D. "J.D."; Walz, Timothy J.; Wiles, Susan; Xi Jinping; Zelenskyy, Volodymyr.

*Subjects:* 2024 Presidential election; Armed Forces, U.S., recruitment efforts; Border security; China, trade with U.S.; Congressional Budget Office; Egg prices; Egypt, relations with U.S.; Electric and hybrid vehicles, promotion efforts; European Union, trade with U.S.; Foreign university students, U.S. visa policy; Gasoline costs; Germany, Chancellor; Germany, defense

relationship with U.S.; Germany, relations with U.S.; Hamas political-paramilitary organization; Illegal immigration; India, Prime Minister; India, relations with Pakistan; Inflation; Iran, regional involvement; Israel, attacks by Hamas of October 7, 2023; Joint Chiefs of Staff; Lebanon, Hizballah political-paramilitary organization; Massachusetts, Harvard University in Cambridge; Minnesota, Governor; National Aeronautics and Space Administration; Oil and natural gas, domestic production; Pakistan, relations with India; Pennsylvania, Governor; Refugees and migrants, U.S. admission policy; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Russia, President; Russia, U.S. sanctions; Secretary of Commerce; Secretary of Homeland Security; Secretary of the Treasury; Small businesses, promotion efforts; Tariffs; Tax Code reform; U.S. DOGE Service; U.S. Trade Representative; Ukraine, President; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Ukraine, U.S. assistance; Vice President; White House Border Czar; White House Chief of Staff.

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