

Remarks at a Document Signing Ceremony and an Exchange With Reporters
September 19, 2025

The President. Well, thank you very much. As you know, we passed the continuing resolution in the Republican House today. It was an amazing vote, actually. It showed we want to keep things going and going properly. It was good for a lot of reasons. The Republicans want to keep Government open.

But in the Senate, we have 53 Republicans total, and we need 60 votes. That means we need Democrat votes. I want to thank Senator John Fetterman. He wants to keep the country open.

We're doing so well as a country. We're doing probably better than ever before, if you look at the stock market and other indicators. We have tremendous investment coming in—record investment coming. Everything is going well, but the Democrats are unhappy about that because they don't want it to go well. I think they actually dislike our country greatly.

So they want to shut down the country. They want to have open borders. They want to stop the fighting of crime, where we've been very successful. DC, as you know—Washington, DC, is—it's a hot place right now. Everyone is having dinners. They're going out every—all over. There's very little crime. It's—they haven't seen numbers like this in many, many years.

And other places. As you know, we're going into Memphis. We'll soon be going into Chicago. We've already had people out there and—and in there, and FBI has been there. And we've brought the numbers down, but we're going to be bringing them down a whole lot.

But I guess they want crime and we fight crime, and it's a pretty big difference.

They want to have men play in women's sports. They want transgender for everybody. And if they don't get everything that they want—all these things that they want that are proven so badly—they want to close our Government down.

We're not going to let bad things happen to our country. We're not going to approve things that we shouldn't be approving.

Just today the House Democrats voted against condemning the political assassination of Charlie Kirk. Who could vote against that? The condemning. All they're saying: "Please condemn the assassination of a human being." And they said, "No, we're not going to do that."

Remember this: We had an election very—a very short time ago. Republicans won Presidential. We won the popular vote by a lot. We won all seven swing States. We won the Electoral College by a lot. We won most U.S. counties in a total landslide. So we won most—it's a very big statistic—we won the counties in a number that I don't believe has been hit before: 2,600 counties versus 525 counties for the Democrats.

So the Democrats really should start respecting what takes place at the voter booth. In many cases, it's not a voter booth because they have mail-in voting, which is a very corrupt situation. But despite that, we won in a landslide. And we have to remember, when you win the election, elections have consequences.

So we'll continue to talk to the Democrats, but I think you could very well end up with a closed country for a period of time. And we'll take care of the military. We'll take care of Social Security. We'll take care of the things that we have to take care of.

A lot of the things the Democrats fight for—which, in many cases, aren't very good things—will not be able to be paid. So we'll watch and see how they do with that. They'll have to handle their constituents pretty carefully.

So we're proud to announce that we won the House. We did fine in the Senate, but we need 60 votes. So we have 53 Senators, and we need 60 votes. That means the Democrats have to vote in the Senate, and I don't think they will be voting.

Now, what we are doing—we're really here today to talk about something else, which is the Gold Card, which is going to bring a lot of money into our country, which is going to reduce taxes and lots of other good things. But we'll save that for a little bit later.

Why don't we do this first, and then we'll talk about the Gold Card. Okay?

Any questions?

China-U.S. Relations/TikTok/2024 Presidential Election/Federal Government Appropriations

Q. Mr. President, on TikTok?

Q. Your call with President Xi, sir? Your call this morning with President Xi?

The President. It was great. I had a great call with President Xi. And, as you know, he approved the TikTok deal. And we're in the process. We have some great investors—big—some of the biggest in the world. American investors. Great people. And we look forward to getting that deal closed.

Q. Is it fully approved? The Chinese statements didn't necessarily communicate that.

The President. Well, I think—I think so. I mean, when you say "fully approved," I don't know what that means. We have to get—we have to get it signed. I guess there could be a formality. I found his word to be very good. President Xi and I had a long talk. We talked for almost 2 hours. And it started at 8 o'clock in the morning, and it—I think it was a very good talk.

We talked about trade. We talked about war. We talked about a lot of things. We talked about Russia-Ukraine, obviously, and Gaza. We talked about a lot of subjects. It was a long call. It was a good call. We have a very good relationship.

But the TikTok deal is well on its way, as you know, and the investors are getting ready. And I think China wanted to see it stay open too. They wanted to see it. And I can tell you, the young people in our country wanted to see it stay open very badly because—and if you take a look at my numbers, no Republican has ever done anything like we—we had—we got massive numbers of youth vote. And by the way, helped very much by Charlie Kirk.

So Charlie was very much in favor of TikTok. He liked TikTok. And he said, "You know, you should use it." And other people said that too, and I used it. And I don't know if I have the all—I think I set records. I looked at numbers that are phenomenal. We'll pass them out to you. And it had a—you know, probably a pretty big effect on the election, because we won the election by a lot.

So we are in a situation where, in a little while—meaning a number of days—we'll probably—I don't know if you can make a deal with these people. I think these people are crazy.

You know, again, anybody who wants open borders and don't want to fight—they don't want to fight crime. They hate to fight crime. And in Chicago, last weekend, you had 11 people killed—murdered—and you had 28 shot. And those numbers have been pretty consistent all

throughout a period of time, whether it was 4 people, 5 people, 6 people, 11 people, 12 people killed, murdered. And they don't want to spend money to fight crime.

And it's not even much money. Relatively speaking, it's very little. But we're going there anyway. It doesn't make any difference. We're going to Chicago. We're going to Memphis next. And we're going to clean up the crime in the cities, because we have to do that. Okay?

TikTok Ownership/2024 Presidential Election

Q. Mr. President—on TikTok, Mr. President. On TikTok, Mr. President. With this deal today, are you confident that the CCP won't be exerting control——

The President. Yes, we're going to——

Q. ——over TikTok?

The President. We're going to have a very tight control. And look, it's—it's an amazing thing that's been created. There's tremendous value with TikTok. And I'm a little prejudiced because I, frankly, did so well on it. You know? It got me numbers that nobody has ever even heard of before.

So a lot of people want it. The young people of this country want it badly. The parents of those young people want it badly. And so, we were able to work out a deal with China. And it's a very good deal for us. It's a very—I hope it's a good deal for them.

China/TikTok/2024 Presidential Election

Q. With the deal, would you be confident in a—or would you accept a deal where China controls the algorithm of TikTok?

The President. Well, it's all being worked out. We're going to have very good control. We have American—these are American investors, all of them, and they all love our country. They're all very well-known people—very famous people, actually, financially. And they'll have control of it.

And I just—I want to say I want to thank President Xi, because he was a gentleman, and we've just had a good relationship.

And we wanted people—a lot of people in this country want it to be open.

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

And, again, if it weren't open—if it weren't open, maybe—I don't know, I think we won by so much, it wouldn't have mattered. But we got a lot of votes. We got a lot of Republican votes from very young people.

Go ahead, Jeff [Jeff Mason, Reuters].

Estonia/Russian Military Activity

Q. Thank you, sir. Russian jets entered Estonia's airspace today for 12 minutes. Do you see that as a threat to NATO?

The President. Well, I'm going to have to look at it. They're going to be briefing me in a short while, so I'll let you know about it tonight or tomorrow.

Q. What's your take in general, just being informed of that?

The President. Well, I don't love it. I don't love it. I don't love when that happens. This could be big trouble, but I'll let you know later. They're going to brief me in about an hour.

Freedom of Speech/2024 Presidential Election/News Media

Q. And a follow-up on Charlie Kirk. There's been a lot of talk about free speech this week. Do you see a difference between cancel culture and consequence culture?

The President. Well, I don't—I mean, your question is a little trick question. I like——

Q. It's not meant to be.

The President. I'm a very strong person for free speech. At the same time, when you have networks that—where I won an election—like, in counties, I guess it's 2,600 to 525. That's called landslide—a landslide times two. When you have that kind of—that level of popularity or voter support, as I did in the last election, and yet 97 and 94 percent—different numbers; you see different numbers with different stats—but 97, 94, 95, 96 percent of the people are against me in the sense of the—the newscasts are against me. The stories are 90—they said, 97 percent bad. So they gave me 97—they'll take a great story, and they'll make it bad.

See, I think that's really illegal, personally. You can't take—you can't have a free airwave—you're getting free airwaves from the United States Government, and you can't have that and say—and somebody that just won an election—and I had to go through this during the election. I think it's a miracle that I can win when 97 percent of the stories on the networks are bad—or whatever it may be, whether it's 89. It doesn't matter. It's a tremendous number. You know it. You report it all the time. And it changes.

But when you have that kind of a negative reporting—fake, negative reporting—when they take a great story and they make it into a bad story constantly—that's what they do.

Look, "60 Minutes" took Kamala's answer, and they threw it out and they gave her a different answer so that she sounded competent. When things like that happen, George Slopapopoulos from your network—right?—George Slopapopoulos had to pay \$16 million to me because of what he said. And that's ABC. You had to pay more than that. Your network had to pay more than that.

So I think it's very sad. But I think that reporting has to be at least accurate—at least accurate, to an extent. Again, when somebody is given—97 percent of the stories are bad about a person, that's no longer free speech, that's no longer anything. That's just cheating. And they cheat. And they become, really, members of the Democrat National Committee. That's what they are, the networks, in my opinion. They're just offshoots of the Democrat National Committee.

Go ahead.

Q. Mr. President, thank you.

The President. Go ahead.

National Security Adviser Position/The President's Foreign Policy

Q. Liam Cosgrove with ZeroHedge. People are still anticipating who your pick for National Security Adviser will be. They're worried Marco Rubio is a little overworked, and one of the reported frontrunners is Michael Anton from the State Department. He——

The President. He's good.

Q. He's just authored the National Security Strategy. Also in the mix is Mike Flynn——

The President. Good.

Q. ——and Steve Witkoff. Can you give us an indication of who you're——

The President. Well, they're all good. No, we'll make a decision soon.

Q. Okay.

The President. But we're doing very well. You know, I settled seven wars. More than that, I think. But actually, we settled seven wars. I have—we're working on Gaza. It's a tough one, but we'll get it done somehow. And we're also working with Russia and Ukraine. They hate each other so much, you wouldn't believe it.

Q. And are you considering——

The President. President Putin and President Zelenskyy, they hate each other to a level that you wouldn't believe, so they're having a little bit of a problem with that.

Federal Reserve System Leadership/National Economy

Q. And are you considering Stephen Miran for Fed Chair?

The President. I hadn't thought of it too much. He's doing a great job. Just got approved. He's—his vote was a very good one. The Fed should have done more. You know, "Too Late" Powell—he's terrible. He's a terrible Chair. I think he's just terrible.

But despite that, we're powering through it. We have another record stock market today. We're at very, very high levels, and we're at the highest levels. So we're setting records. Many, many days during my administration we've set records.

And we'll see what happens with 50,000. Fifty thousand is a pretty big number. Never come close. We're not so far away from it.

So that's because they see what's happening. Not so much what's happening exactly right now, but they see all the plants that are being built. They say—see the kind of investment that's going to be made, when you take \$17 trillion. So Biden had \$250 billion. Okay? Or putting a simpler way, they had much less than a trillion, but they had less than a trillion for 4 years. I have \$17 trillion for 8 months. Nobody has ever seen anything like it.

And I think they're looking at that, and they're saying, when those plants open—right now, they're being built, a lot of them, and some are starting over the next year. It takes a while, but we're getting fast permits. And when those plants get built, I don't think there'll be anything like what we're going to experience.

Yes.

Federal Communications Commission Chairman Brendan Carr/Network Television Licensing

Q. Mr. President, if I could, on the tough subject of free speech, Ted Cruz compared Brendan Carr to a mob boss, the way he's threatening television stations and saying it's absolutely dangerous for the Government to determine which speech is okay and which is not. What's your reaction to Ted Cruz?

The President. I think Brendan Carr is an incredible American patriot with courage. You know, it used to be—I remember, in the old days, that networks would have to get licensed, relicensed, and it was always a big deal. You know, they had to show honesty and integrity.

When you have a network—again, I'll use the same numbers—whether it's 90 or 94 and 97, all different numbers—but when you have networks that give somebody 97-percent bad publicity or 94 percent bad publicity, I think that's—I think that's dishonesty.

And you know, they're getting free airwaves, right? You know that, right? They get them for nothing. These airwaves, they make millions and millions of dollars. The news makes millions of

dollars. ABC, your network—I mean, your network wrote very badly about me, and they had to pay me \$16 million.

Q. So do you think you have a right——

The President. I wasn't looking for that.

Q. ——or that Brandon Carr has a right to take away the licenses——

The President. No, I think Brendan Carr is a patriot. I think Brendan Carr is a courageous person. I think Brendan Carr doesn't like to see the airwaves be used illegally and incorrectly and purposely horribly.

Doesn't like to see a person that won the election in a landslide get 97 percent bad publicity before the election. I mean, it's amazing that I won the election with that. But here's what happened: The people have given your networks no credibility. They don't give them any credibility, Jon [Jonathan Karl, ABC News]. If they did, they wouldn't vote for me. They wouldn't have voted for me.

When you look at—I mean, you could also say the liberal media, the liberal left, when you look at these stories and papers—but we're not talking about that. We're talking about—I assume you're talking mostly about the networks.

Q. Yes.

The President. But they have a licensing procedure, and you can read it as well. They have to show honesty and integrity. And when they take a——

Q. Who determines that?

The President. When they take a good—well, I think the people decide. That's why I'm president.

When they take a——

Q. So that means you decide whether——

The President. When they take a great success, like you often do, and you make it into like it's a loser or you put a negative spin on it, I don't think that's right.

So I think Brendan Carr is a great American patriot, so I disagree with Ted Cruz on that.

United Nations General Assembly/The President's Schedule/U.S. Airstrikes on Iranian Nuclear Facilities/Russia/Ukraine

Q. Will you be going to the U.N. next week? You're going to the UN?

The President. I'll be at the U.N. I'll be making a speech, yes.

Q. And are you meeting any other world leaders? Can you give us a little preview?

The President. Well, many of them.

Q. Any—can you tell us who?

Q. Who are you meeting, Mr. President? Syria? Zelenskyy?

The President. Well, I'm just—I'm meeting many of them. They're being set up.

Q. What is your goal from attending that meeting? What do you hope to get out of it?

The President. World peace. Nobody has done a better job than I've done on world peace. Nobody has settled so many—so many wars as I have.

You know, I've been here probably a little bit more than 8 months, and I've settled seven. And that doesn't include the destruction of a vast potential nuclear disaster in Iran, which we wiped out—totally, as I say, obliterated. We obliterated it. It's been turned—right with this beautiful plane right here. We just ordered some more of them, by the way. The B-2 bomber. Just ordered some more of them, the more updated version. Not that we needed that. We just need the plane, because it was so flawless.

These pilots flew 37 hours flawlessly. Not an engine problem, not a—not a screw, not a bolt came loose. It was an amazing—compare that to many years ago—Jimmy Carter. Same—same country, with the helicopters and the problems and the prisoners and the hostages. What a mess.

No, these planes flew 37 hours without a stop. They fueled up. We had 52 tankers fueling the planes along the way. It was an incredible—and every single bomb hit its mark. And then we fired 30 of them from submarines—from a submarine. What a job that was.

And I don't even include that. But that stopped a war. That stopped maybe a catastrophic war.

Q. Mr. President——

So, you know—so, I think that nobody has ever done anywhere near that. Now, on top of that, we're working very hard to get Russia-Ukraine settled. We'll see what's going to happen there. I hope we're going to get it done.

President Xi and I spoke to—about it, and I believe that he really would like to see it done also, and I think he's going to work with us to help.

Q. What was your message to——

Q. Mr. President, on the U.N.——

The President. Say it?

Russia/Ukraine

Q. What was your message to President Xi on the war in Ukraine? What are you asking him to do?

The President. Well, it's the same as his message to me. He would like to see it done. He would like to see it—I believe he would like to see it ended, yes. I do believe.

Gaza, Palestinian Territories/Hamas Attacks of October 7, 2023, on Israel

Q. Mr. President, these two wars that you were talking about—Gaza and Ukraine—are escalating at the same time you're going to take the stage at the U.N.—back on the stage after these years. Do you plan to setting any kind of red lines for these two countries? And you've said before——

The President. Well, we're going to see.

Q. ——you are frustrated with Putin.

The President. Yes.

Q. Are you also frustrated with Netanyahu?

The President. We have a long time to go before I get up and speak at the U.N., because every day is a long time when it comes to Gaza and it comes to Israel and the Middle East. So we have a long time to go. But——

Q. Any red lines that you plan to——

The President. —you know a lot of my opinions. And remember this: You can't forget October 7 either. People are forgetting October 7. They forget it too quickly. That was one of the worst days in world history. It was the most evil attack that I think you could really say. Babies were involved. Little babies were involved and having their heads chopped off and all of the things that took place. You can't forget that. I don't forget that. A lot of people do, but I don't.

Yes, please.

Q. But how about—just one more, Mr. President.

Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan/Former President Joseph R. Biden, Jr./Pardons and Commutations

Q. On Bagram, Mr. President. On Bagram.

The President. Go ahead, please.

Q. What goes into retaking Bagram? Does that require boots on the ground?

The President. We'll see what happens with Bagram. We're talking to Afghanistan. It should have never been given up. It was the most embarrassing day in the history of our country. There was no reason to give it up.

I was leaving Afghanistan. I was leaving. I was the one that got it down to 5,000 soldiers, but we were going to—we were going to keep Bagram, the air base. It's a—I said it yesterday, and we had an incredible trip, as you know, to U.K., and I said it during the press conference. It's one of the most powerful runways ever built, in terms of weight, length, and load, what it can—what it could take. And we just gave it up for nothing. We gave it up for no—there was no reason to give it up. We weren't going to leave Bagram.

Joe Biden didn't know what he was doing. We had a man that didn't know what he was doing. We had a man, by the way, that didn't approve. If you take a look at what's happening in Congress, we had a man that signed everything with—almost everything with an autopen. And he didn't tell the people from the autopen, whoever was using it—the one man that used it predominantly said that Biden only spoke to him twice, and it was only about the weather. Okay? It was about nothing.

So those pardons that he gave are illegal. He gave illegal pardons. And that includes the congressmen that destroyed and deleted all the information from J6. They deleted everything, because it turned out that they were wrong. It turned out that I offered 10,000 National Guard or soldiers, whatever they wanted, and you wouldn't have had a problem. And they turned it down. Nancy Pelosi turned it down, and the Mayor of Washington, DC, turned it down.

They deleted everything, and they destroyed it. Illegally destroyed it. And Biden gave them a pardon. And Biden gave a lot of other people pardons that, frankly, would be in jail if it wasn't for those pardons. But those pardons now are illegal, according to just about everybody.

New York State Attorney General Letitia James/Senate Confirmation Process

Q. On Letitia James, are you disappointed that the U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia has not prosecuted Letitia James? Do you intend to fire him?

The President. Well, we're going to see what happens. I am not following it very closely. It looks to me like she's very guilty of something, but I really don't know. I know that the U.S. attorney from the Eastern District or from that district——

Q. Yes.

The President. —in Virginia, that he was approved by two Democrat Senators who, in my opinion, are among the worst. And when I learned that two Senators, Democrats—because, as you know, it's very hard—with the blue slip, it's very hard for a Republican to get somebody approved, if you have one Senator that's a Democrat because of an old custom. It's not a law. It's a custom. It's a ridiculous custom. But if you have a Democrat Senator, you have to get that Senator to approve. Well, in this case, we had two.

When I saw that he got two Senators—two gentlemen that are bad news, as far as I'm concerned—when I saw that he got approved by those two men, I said, "Pull it, because he can't be any good."

Yes.

U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia Erik Siebert/Senate Confirmation Process

Q. So, you want him fired? You want him out?

The President. Yes, I want him out, yes. When I learned that he was blue-slipped through by two Democrat Senators in Virginia, people that would never vote for—they're people that haven't voted for us for probably years. Okay? Probably years. Two—in my opinion, two bad guys. You know who they are: Warner and Kaine. Two bad guys. Bad Senators too. They do a terrible job for the people of Virginia.

But when I saw that he got approved by these two terrible people that haven't voted—they just don't vote, no matter what it is. We could give them the greatest deal ever, and they still wouldn't vote. And they voted for this guy. And I have other people—judges, and I have U.S. attorneys from other States where I have the same situation, and they can't get approved.

So, when I learned that they voted for him, I said, "I don't really want him." Okay.

Q. On Ukraine——

Q. Do you want—do you want——

Q. Have you seen the——

Q. Do you——

The President. No, no. Behind you, please.

Ukraine/Russia

Q. Have you seen the polling, the Gallup poll out of Ukraine, that shows 23 percent less than a quarter of Ukrainians actually support continuing the war against Putin? We saw the European leaders come here and try to say the words—the world is united for the war effort, but Ukrainians have war fatigue themselves.

The President. Well, I don't blame them.

Q. Have you seen the poll? And your thoughts on it?

The President. I don't blame them. It's a war that never should have started. It's a war that never would have happened. If I were President, that war never would have happened, ever. That's a disgrace that that war happened. And they're losing anywhere from 5- to 8,000 people a week on that war, which is the worst since the Second World War. That's a war that should have never happened.

Q. And have you considered cutting——

The President. Would have never happened, and it didn't happen for 4 years. When I was here, it didn't happen.

Go ahead.

Ukraine/U.S. Security Assistance/North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Q. Have you considered cutting funding, even promises made by the Biden administration?

The President. Well, we're not spending any money on the war. You know, we're being paid for everything we send, unlike Biden. He gave them \$350 billion, and it's just—it was shocking. We're not spending any money on the war. The war is being funded by NATO. NATO is buying our equipment.

In fact, we're—I don't want to make money on that war. I don't want to, but we are actually making money on that war because they're buying our equipment, as you know.

But we—NATO, as you know—and very important—is funding the entire thing. They're paying for the missiles, for the tanks. They're paying for any—anything that's sent over there, it goes to NATO, and then NATO does what they want with it. In this case, I guess they give it to Ukraine.

It's a very sad war. It's a war that never should have happened.

Go ahead, please.

TikTok Ownership/2024 Presidential Election

Q. Going back to TikTok, could you tell me: Is the U.S. Government going to take a board seat in the company? And will the U.S. Government get——

The President. A what?

Q. A board seat within the company.

The President. Well, we're going to announce that. Are you talking about TikTok?

Q. Yes, with TikTok.

The President. Yes, we're going to announce it. But it's a great deal for our country. It's a great deal for all of the young people in the country that wanted it—and people generally. I was happy with it.

Look, I wasn't a fan of TikTok, and then I got to use it, and I became a fan. And, you know, it helped me win the election in a landslide. So I think that it's a deal that's going to be great. And it's also controlled by very powerful and very substantial American people. All American—by the way, all American people.

Q. After your conversation——

Q. Mr. President——

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Go ahead, please.

Domestic Manufacturing Investment/Tariffs

Q. Mr. President, a question from Newsmax. Last year, before you took office, there was an estimated 6.8 million men not actively seeking work of prime working age. So, if you and Secretary Lutnick could talk about the efforts your administration is taking to help our American gentlemen get back to work.

The President. Yes, well, what we're doing is we're building plants all over the United States. And frankly, because of tariffs, we're taking in trillions of dollars. Trillions of dollars.

And countries that have ripped us off for years—and everyone knows this—countries that have ripped us off for years like nobody has ever been ripped off before, they're now having to pay up. They're paying a lot of money to America, and we're reducing taxes with that money. And we're doing things that we were never able to do before.

So it's—you're going to have a lot of jobs. You're—the jobs are being created right now.

And the tariffs are protecting our country, and we didn't use—you know, tariffs were used against us, but we didn't use them against others. But we're really better at it than anybody else, and we've taken in—we will have taken in trillions of dollars. Nobody has ever seen anything—even people that were against the tariffs, now they see the way they're working.

And by the way, with no inflation, with no problem. We're just building up cash, and we're using that cash to reduce taxes, reduce debt, and other things. It's a great thing to watch.

And your honest reporters are saying they've never seen anything like what's happening. Our country is becoming very rich again, only because of tariffs. If we didn't have it—if we didn't have—if I didn't get elected, this country would be—it was a dead country. Look, we were a dead country a year ago, and now we're the most successful, most vibrant country anywhere in the world.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Hello, Sean [Sean Spicer, NewsNation].

Q. Good evening, sir. How are——

The President. Nice to see you.

Q. Good to see——

The President. You look good on television.

Q. Thank you, sir. I try.

The President. Good.

Q. Tonight, in a few minutes, Steve Bannon will appear on my show.

The President. Good.

Secretary of the Treasury Scott K.H. Bessent/Secretary of State Marco A. Rubio

Q. He floats the idea that you should dual-hat Secretary of Treasury Scott Bessent not only as Treasury secretary but as interim Fed Chair. Would you be willing to entertain that?

The President. In other words, he likes Scott.

Q. He—yes, sir. Very much.

The President. So do I. And I like Steve too.

Q. Well, would you like to see that—him dual-hatted as Fed Chair?

The President. Well, it's certainly an interesting—dual hat. We can save a little bit of salary. I think I could maybe make a deal where we just give him one salary. You know, I have a couple of them.

Q. I don't think he needs it, sir.

The President. I have Marco—no, I don't think so.

Q. Neither does Secretary Lutnick, either.

The President. And we have Marco, who's got about three positions, right? Who's—he's doing great also. No—no, I don't think that's going to be necessary.

Actually, I went to Scott, and I talked to him about that position, and he loves what he's doing right now. So, you know, he's not in the mix because he's—he loves being secretary of the Treasury.

Virginia Republican Gubernatorial Candidates

Q. Quick follow-up. Today is the first day of early voting in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Are you planning on campaigning for Winsome Sears, John Reid, or Jason Miyares?

The President. Well, I'm going to have to look at some of them. As you know, you know, it's sort of a semilocal election. I've been watching, and I've been seeing the ads.

Q. Well, I would appreciate it, as a Virginia voter, just so you know.

The President. Who do you like? Of the group, who do you like?

Q. The whole—the whole ticket, sir.

The President. All of them? You like them?

Q. All of them. Yes, sir.

The President. All right. We'll—I'll take a very strong look.

Q. Thank you, sir. Appreciate that. My take——

The President. Okay? For you, I'm going to look.

Q. I appreciate that.

Q. Mr. President——

Vaccine Recommendations/COVID-19 Vaccine Deployment

Q. Secretary Kennedy's—Secretary Kennedy's panel on vaccine changed its——

The President. Yes.

Q. ——broad recommendations on COVID-19 vaccines today. Are you comfortable with that change, or would you like to see Americans take the vaccines that were developed under your tenure?

The President. Yes. Well, the vaccines, according to a lot of people—and if you look at charts—have had a tremendous—you know, Operation Warp Speed was—just according to just about everybody, it was one of the greatest things that any president has ever done in this country. So we're very proud of it. I'm very proud of it.

I'm also very proud of Regeneron and some of the things that came out of, you know, all of the labs and all of the research that we've done. So I don't know exactly what the final determination is, but I had the vaccine. I was very happy with it. Here I am, right? Here I am.

Q. Have you had it again—have you had it again recently?

Secretary of Health and Human Services Robert F. Kennedy, Jr./Autism Spectrum Disorders/COVID-19 Vaccine Deployment

Q. Bobby Kennedy—Bobby Kennedy seems to be undoing what you did with——

The President. No, I put him in——

Q. ——Operation Warp Speed.

The President. I put him in there because I want to have opposite views. That's okay.

I think we're going to have something very, very big coming up soon on autism. Autism is totally out of control. And one of the biggest—one of the most important things that, in my opinion, I had to do is to see what's going on with autism. And we're going to have a news conference early next week on autism, and I think you're going to see some things that are amazing that we've learned that somebody else wouldn't have learned. It's out of control—autism. Out of control. And I think we maybe have the reason why.

Q. But is Bobby going to—is Bobby Kennedy going too far in unwinding the vaccines——

The President. Well, I don't know. He's saying for older people——

Q. ——and saying bad things about your vaccines?

The President. Yes, he's saying for older people. A lot of people agree with that. And—but I can tell you this: Operation Warp Speed—one of the greatest things a President has ever done for this country—and, you can say, the world—because when we came up with that vaccine, the whole world opened up.

But I put Bobby there as somebody that will go either way from—and I want—you know, I want the facts, but I also look at facts from Pfizer, where they spent a lot of money, and the other drug companies. They spent a lot of money on finding out the results after the fact, and the results were amazingly good.

Q. Mr. President, after your conversation with——

Hostages Held in Gaza, Palestinian Territories

Q. I'm wondering if you've seen the video put out by former Israeli hostages. It's addressed to you. One is a widow of one that died, and these are people who are freed thanks to you, but they're actually encouraging you to force a cease-fire—force Netanyahu to a cease-fire. And they didn't address it to him because they think you're the one who might actually listen to them and get it done. They're worried that the hostages who are still there are more at risk if the war continues. Your thoughts on it, if you saw it?

The President. Well, they might be. They also—maybe they'll be freed because of that. You know, you never know how it's going—look, war, I was saying, yesterday—war, a lot of strange things happen. A lot of results take place that you would never think were going to happen.

As you know, I was able to get most of the hostages out. We're down to 20. And we have 32 dead people. You know that. We have 32—maybe more—38. But between 32 and 38 people that were dead. Mostly young people. And I've dealt with some of the parents.

And we got all our Americans out, as you know, but—and now we're talking about mostly Israelis. But I dealt with parents, I spoke to parents, and they want the body of their son—I believe in almost all cases sons—but they want the body of their cherished, beautiful son—they want the body back as much as—as though he were alive. It's so sad to see.

But I've dealt with the mothers and fathers. "Please, sir, please. The body of my son." They know he's dead, and they want—they just want him back. They want him back as much as—as though he's alive. I mean, it's very terrible. And you know, we have very close to 40 bodies that are included in the whole thing, but we have 20—probably 20 that are living. It might be a little bit less, because a couple of things.

Look, young people don't die. Okay? They just don't die. They can take a lot. But these—a lot of people died in these horrible tunnels. They're mostly in the tunnels. I know a lot about it.

I got them out. I got them out. But I always said, the last 20—when you get down to the last 10 or 20, it's going to be very tough. It's a nasty situation.

You can't forget October 7. But it's a nasty situation. Terrible. It's a terrible thing.

Gaza, Palestinian Territories/Hamas Attacks of October 7, 2023, on Israel

Q. Mr. President, on Gaza. The U.N. concluded this week that Israel committed genocide in Gaza. What are your thoughts on that?

The President. Well, I haven't seen that. I'm looking at it. But did anybody commit genocide on October 7? What do you think about that? That was genocide at the highest level. That was murder, genocide. You can call it whatever you want. But little babies were chopped in half.

Q. And in Gaza now?

The President. Arms were cut off people. Heads were cut off people.

Q. And in Gaza now?

The President. That's genocide. That's genocide also, I guess, right?

TikTok

Q. On TikTok: You referred to getting a fee from that deal. What is that fee going to be? The U.S. government is going to——

The President. Well, it hasn't been fully negotiated, but we'll get something from the standpoint that we worked hard——

Q. [Inaudible]

The President. ——we put up a lot, we spent a lot of money on letting this come and letting this—you know, it's a very, very big deal. It's very—it's a very powerful deal.

And the United States really—I see it. I mean, people were saying: "Save TikTok. Save TikTok." So many people. It's a big thing. And you know, China can be very proud that they were able to get that started. And so I very much appreciate President Xi is working with us on that. Very much.

Q. Mr. President, are you aware——

"Antifa" Organization/Domestic Terrorist Organization Designations/Crime in U.S. Cities/Public Safety Concerns in Chicago, Illinois/District of Columbia

Q. Mr. President, on antifa: What comes next after designating antifa a terrorist organization?

The President. Well, we have others that we're going to designate too.

Q. Who?

The President. We're going to look at the people that have funded antifa, see who they are, where they came from, and why they did.

Have you seen Portland at all? If you take a look what's happening in Portland, it's—this has been going on for years. It's just people out of control. They're crazy. We're going to stop that very soon.

Q. What are the other groups?

The President. We have to get rid of a couple of other problems first. We're going to get rid of the problems in Memphis, where you can't even walk a block without getting shot. We're going to get rid of the problems in Chicago. Chicago is a great city, and we have to save it. We have to save it.

I told you I had the head of the Union Pacific Railroad in my office. And I said: "So what do you think? You go to every city. You have railroads in every—you have the biggest railroad, beautiful railroad." He's a great guy. I said, "What do you think?" He said: "Sir, save Chicago. Don't let it go down. Save it." The way he said it was so meaningful to me. It was so like—it was, like, terrible. In a way, it was terrible. "Save Chicago."

You know, who would ever think that we'd be sitting here talking about saving Chicago? Chicago is a great city. They have a terrible mayor. Terrible. He's at, like, 5-percent approval rating. He's an incompetent person. They have an incompetent Governor, in my opinion. He's incompetent. Eleven people get shot, and he says crime is in a good—

I mean, they're losing four, five, six people a week, getting killed by bullets, by knives. And then he says how wonderful it is, Chicago. So—well, it might be wonderful for him.

I think they're afraid. Look, he's not a stupid guy. I really believe they're afraid to say—politically, I guess, from an ideology standpoint, from a Democratic standpoint, he's afraid—he is afraid to say the fact that they have a very unsafe, very dangerous city. He should say, "I'm going to call President Donald Trump, and I'm going to ask him to send in the troops, to send in the National Guard, and clean this hell hole up," because Chicago can be a great city again.

Q. Will you do New York?

The President. I'll tell you what: Washington, DC, is a great place again. It's booming, and the restaurants are booming. And 6 months ago, 7 months ago, nobody could go outside.

And even just walking around the White House, people here are thanking me for what I've done. They're thanking me. They're saying thank you. And I almost know what they mean, because they can walk to work. And even when they took Uber and they took other forms of transportation, they felt unsafe because their car was hijacked while they're in there. They take a car and it's being hijacked as they get into the car. And they did that for safety. And now we have a safe place.

You know we've taken 1,500 people out of—career criminals have been taken out of Washington, DC. And we weren't very nice about it.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

The President's Meeting With Union Pacific Chief Executive Officer Jim Vena

Q. What do you think of that rail merger? Did you discuss it with the Union Pacific CEO?

The President. I did. I did discuss it, and I don't want to make a comment on it, but Union Pacific is a great railroad, and they want to add a railroad that had a mistake in a place very close to my heart. You know, a lot of people say that that was the place where I got off to a very good start. It was a rough thing that happened. Well, they're trying to buy that railroad that had the problem. And it sounds good to me, to be honest with you. It sounds good to me.

I'm a very big fan of the head of the railroad, the head of the Union Pacific. He started as a—very low on the totem pole, started his job very low, and became the chairman of the company over a 45-year period. But I asked him about different cities. He said St. Louis is tough. We

talked—you know, he sort of stops at many of them. And New Orleans—we have to save New Orleans.

Q. New York?

Federal Law Enforcement Support in Memphis, Tennessee

Q. Mr. President, when are you going to give details on Memphis?

The President. We're going to be going into New York too, yes.

Q. Mr. President——

The President. And we're going to be going in——

Quiet. You're really obnoxious.

Q. I'm not obnoxious, but I'm trying to ask you: What about your plans for Memphis?

The President. You are really obnoxious.

Q. I'm not obnoxious——

The President. Okay.

Q. ——but I am asking: What are your plans for Memphis?

The President. Okay.

Q. Many people want to know about the numbers——

The President. I'm not going to talk to you until I call on you.

Q. What are your plans for Memphis, Mr. President?

The President. So who else? Yes, go ahead.

Freedom of Speech/News Media/Border Security/Illegal Immigration

Q. Yes, I just to settle this free speech question, because you've said that you restored free speech in America.

The President. Yes.

Q. Is that free speech including for people who are harshly critical of you, for your political opponents, for people who say things you don't like——

The President. I've become immune to them.

Q. ——who treat you unfairly?

The President. I've become immune to it. There's never been a person that's had more unfair publicity than me. And that's why your network made me \$15 million or \$16 million, I believe, to be exact. George Slopapopoulos. And that's why CBS paid me a lot of money, too. And that's why I sued the New York Times 2 days ago for a lot of money, because I——

Q. The judge—[inaudible].

The President. Well, I'm winning. I mean, I'm winning the cases. And the reason I'm winning is because you're guilty, Jon. You're guilty. ABC is a terrible network, a very unfair network, and you should be ashamed of yourself. NBC is equally bad. I don't know who's worse. I think they're equally bad.

And you know, for you to stand there and act so innocent and ask me a question like that——

—

But look——

Q. Do you think you have a right to stop——

The President. You paid a big price because you were dishonest, Jon. The reason I won that lawsuit is because you were dishonest. You were proven to be dishonest. And so you can't sit back and just say, "Oh, well, what do you think?"—you know, like you're some wonderful person. You're not a wonderful person. Frankly, you're a terrible reporter. You know it, and so do I.

Okay, here's what we're going to do.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Here's what we're here's what we're going to do: We're going to talk about something that's going to reduce our taxes greatly, that's going to, hopefully, bring some great people into our country.

You know, as you know, right now nobody is coming in because we've succeeded in closing—we've closed the border very successfully. I think you will agree. We had nobody come in for the last few months. I mean, it was actually—said zero. Even I can't believe zero, but the numbers are put out by very impartial people or people that have a tendency to be on the left. And they actually said, for the last 3 months, nobody came in.

We have a very strong border. It's a closed border. People are coming into our country, but they're coming in legally. It's a beautiful thing to watch.

But we are doing something where, rather than coming into the border—25 million people came into our country during Biden. One of the saddest things—the worst thing I—look, he was horrible in inflation. He was horrible in just about everything you could be. I don't think he was good at—he wasn't even fair on anything. He was a horrible—it was a horrible administration. He was the worst President in the history of our country, and we have to mop it up.

The hardest thing that we have to do is to get rid of the criminals that he allowed into our country from prisons, from mental institutions, gang members, drug dealers. And we're getting them out, and we're getting them out fast, and we're making America safe again—great again, but we're making America safe again. And it's an honor to do it.

But this is something—this was an unforced error. What they've done is just an unforced error.

So I'm going to ask Howard to speak. Howard has done a fantastic job. As you know, Secretary of Commerce. And I'm going to ask Howard and Will.

Will, could you just give a quick description of what we're doing and what we're signing, et cetera? And——

White House Staff Secretary William O. Scharf. Yes, sir.

The President. I will do that. Go ahead.

Staff Secretary Scharf. So we have two items for your attention today, sir. A major focus of your administration has been shifting the conversation and shifting the policy dynamics around the issue of immigration: closing the border, preventing illegal immigration, but also, as is the case with the Executive order in front of you, opening new pathways for truly extraordinary people to come contribute to America instead of taking away from it.

So this Executive order is entitled "The Gold Card." It will set up a new pathway, a new visa pathway, for foreigners of extraordinary ability who are committed to supporting the United

States for a payment of \$1 million to the U.S. Treasury, or, if a corporation is sponsoring them, \$2 million by that corporation. And that will give them access to expedited visa treatment as part of this new Gold Card program.

The President. And one of the biggest problems we have is that people, they go to the best schools, and they do great, and they get great marks, and then they're thrown out of the country; you're not allowed to stay. This way, a corporation will be able—sort of like a signing bonus in baseball or football—a corporation will be able to get them to stay in the country. And I think it's going to be tremendously successful.

Howard, would you say a few words about it, please?

Secretary of Commerce Howard W. Lutnick. Sure.

So, historically, the employment-based Green Card program led in 281,000 people a year. And those people, on average, earned \$66,000 a year on average, and they were five times more likely to go on assistance programs of the government.

So we were taking in the bottom quartile, below the average American. It was illogical. The only country in the world that was taking in the bottom quartile.

So what we are doing now is, we are going to stop doing that. We're going to only take extraordinary people at the very top. Instead of people trying to take the jobs from Americans, they're going to create businesses and create jobs for Americans. And this program will raise more than \$100 billion for the Treasury of the United States of America.

The President. Which we'll use for cutting taxes and paying down debt. We think it's going to be very successful.

Essentially, we're having people come in, people that, in many cases, I guess, are very successful or whatever. And they're coming in. They're going to spend a lot of money to come in. They're going to pay, as opposed to walking over the borders, and they may come from jails, prisons, and everything else. These people don't. They're very productive people. And they're going to pay \$1 million. A corporation is going to pay \$2 million. And it's going to raise billions of dollars—billions and billions of dollars—which is going to go to reduce taxes, pay off debt, and other good things. So I think it's going to be very successful.

U.S. Technology Companies/Special Immigration Program/Gold Card/Immigration Reform/Federal Law Enforcement Support in U.S. Cities

Q. Are the big techs on board with this, Mr. President?

The President. What?

Q. The big techs—are the big techs on board with this decision? You just got them here for dinner.

The President. What's going to—I wish you'd speak more clearly. I really—give me—give it to me again.

Q. Are the big techs, the CEOs, on board with this decision? Did you talk—

The President. The tax?

Q. Big techs.

Q. Techs.

Q. Technology companies.

Q. Did you talk to them about this?

The President. Yes, big tech. It's every company. It's big tech, it's big tech. It's big everything. Okay?

Q. The CEOs who came here to have dinner with you——

The President. It's a company, I said. It's not a tech company. It's tech companies and everything else.

It's companies having a hard time getting people to be able to stay in the country. It's very difficult.

Now, if you want to walk through the border, you can have no problem. People say, "Well, the best way to come in is walk right through the border." But they can't do that anymore, because under our administration, the border is totally closed. You can only come in if you come in legally, and that's the way it's been, and that's the way it should be.

And we're taking a lot of people out of the country that are here from prisons, from jails, from mental institutions and even insane asylums, people that are crazy. We're taking them out of the country. We're getting them out of the country, because you can't have a country like that.

And I tell you, Kristi and Tom Homan and all of the people that have worked so hard on this, they've done an unbelievable job, and I think we're getting great marks for it. People feel safe. Washington, DC, is just the beginning.

Other—you know, we brought the numbers down in Chicago a little bit by having the FBI in there for the last 5 months. We brought the numbers down in Memphis a little bit, but now we're going for the big one. Now we're going to go for the big one.

But we set ourselves up very well in Chicago, Memphis, New Orleans a little bit, going in early just to see what was happening. You know, we study it. We're studying the site. It's sort of like war. I mean, I hate to tell you, it's like war. Some of these people are really bad. They're really, really sick people, they're dangerous people, they're killers, they're murderers, drug dealers. And can't have it. You can't have a country like that.

It's so beautiful to see in Washington, DC, that people are walking down the middle of the street, and they go into restaurants. And you are, too. And half of you were mugged. I mean, I don't know if she's here now—I don't see her—but you know, some people were badly mugged that were reporters. Two of the people right standing in the back of the room were mugged. And not going to have that anymore.

And if you look at the crime stats in Washington, DC, you have a safe place again. They were afraid to go to a restaurant because the restaurant would be held up while they're having dinner. And so they'd be mugged going there, and assuming they escaped the mugging, they'd go to the restaurant and then they're held up. This is how bad it's been.

Yes.

Restriction on U.S. Entry of Certain Nonimmigrant Workers

Q. To follow up on the visa question, I think this may be the next thing that you're signing, but for the H-1B visa action that you're doing today——

The President. Yes, that's going to be next. We'll talk about that.

Q. You're very close to the technology CEOs.

The President. Yes.

Q. Are they concerned about that?

The President. I think they're going to be very happy. Everyone's going to be happy. And we're going to be able to keep people in our country that are going to be very productive people. And in many cases, these companies are going to pay a lot of money for that, and they're very happy about it.

Okay, we'll talk about that next. All right? Okay.

[*The President signed an Executive order titled, "The Gold Card."*]

My friend, why don't you keep that? Okay?

Secretary Lutnick. Thank you.

The President. Done such a good job.

Okay? It's phase one.

Jon, are you happy?

Q. Sure.

The President. Good.

Okay, let's go.

Staff Secretary Scharf. Thank you, Mr. President. One of the most abused visa systems in our current immigration system has been the H-1B nonimmigrant visa program. This is supposed to allow highly skilled laborers who work in fields that Americans don't work in to come into the United States of America.

What this proclamation will do is raise the fee that companies pay to sponsor H-1B applicants to \$100,000. This will ensure that the people they're bringing in are actually very highly skilled and that they're not replaceable by American workers. So it will protect American workers but ensure that companies have a pathway to hire truly extraordinary people and bring them to the United States to work.

The President. We need workers. We need workers. We need great workers. And this pretty much ensures that that's what's going to happen.

I think, Sean, you agree with that?

Secretary Lutnick. Well, they're \$100,000 per year.

[*The President signed a proclamation titled, "Restriction on Entry of Certain Nonimmigrant Workers."*]

So the whole idea is: No more will these big-tech companies or other big companies train foreign workers. They have to pay the government \$100,000. Then they have to pay the employee.

So it's just not economic. If you're going to train somebody, you're going to train one of the recent graduates from one of the great universities across our land, train Americans, stop bringing in people to take our jobs. That's the policy here. A hundred thousand dollars a year for H-1B visas. And all of the big companies are on board. We've spoken to them about the Gold Card and this.

The President. They love it. They love it. They really love it. They need it.

Go ahead, Sean.

Special Immigration Program/Gold Card/Illegal Immigration/2024 Presidential Election/National Economy/Tariffs/Tax Code Reform

Q. Mr. President, it seems like there's two categories of visa programs: the H-1B that a lot of people believe take American jobs, and then the Gold Card and programs like EB-5 that add value and jobs to America. Is that sort of how you look at the visa program?

The President. Well, ideally, look, if somebody has got the people, they're not going to want to spend \$100,000 as an example, on your second category. So it's not taking jobs.

And we need certain jobs. We need certain skill jobs that we don't have. But they won't be taking jobs because, you know, ideally, the people are going to want to—they're not going to——

Q. It looks like these people are investing in America and creating jobs.

The President. Right. That's right.

Q. So that's what I'm asking, is——

The President. They're really investing.

Q. ——it seems like you have two categories. One, that Secretary Lutnick—the Gold Card and EB-5 that create jobs, add investment. And then there's other ones that seem to take—you know, whether it's a J1, an O, or an H-1B, that take U.S. jobs.

The President. Yes, that's pretty correct. I would say that's a correct assessment.

But the main thing is, we're going to have great people coming in and they're going to be paying. I mean, it's wonderful to say, "Oh, gee, this is"—we took in 25 million people that—look, many criminals. Jails were open from Venezuela, from many other countries, and they were let out of jail and poured into our country.

Our poor country, how it suffered with this—with this stupid President that we had and the stupid people that surrounded him, right around this desk. These liberal, crazy people that have destroyed—they could have destroyed—if we didn't win this election, our country would have been dead. Our country was dead. Think of it.

And I've said this many—the King of Saudi Arabia said, "Your country was dead." One year—they thought it was dead. This country couldn't have survived another year of those people running it.

And now we have the hottest country anywhere in the world. Think of that. And this is going to help. And we're taking in hundreds of billions of dollars. This will be taking in—the Gold Card—will be taking in hundreds of billions of dollars, and companies will be able to keep some people that they need. You know, they need people of expertise, great expertise.

And it's going to—I think it's going to be a fantastic thing. And we're going to take that money, and we're going to reduce taxes, we're going to reduce debt. We have a very, very strong country. We—assuming everything works out great with the lawsuit that we have—we have a lawsuit that's inspired by foreign countries that ripped us off for 25 years.

But assuming we win that, we hopefully win it—it's in the Supreme Court of the United States—we have a country that—no stopping us. There's no—we're rich. We'll be rich. We can take care of poor people. We can take care of our military. We can take care of everything. We can take care of beyond the country. We can help take care of the world.

If we don't, it'll just be the same struggle that we've had for years, where other countries charged us tariffs and they ripped us off. Our country has been ripped off more than any country in the history of the world, and now we are—we're doing what we have to do.

We're taking in billions and billions of dollars at levels that nobody has ever seen—trillions of dollars—and we're using it to reduce debt, we're using it to reduce taxes. The "Great Big

Beautiful Bill" is a big tax reduction. It's being paid for by the tariffs, and people are paying a lot less money in taxes. They're being—think of it: no tax on tips, no tax on Social Security, no tax on overtime. It's an unbelievable phenomena. It's—it really is. It's the Golden Age. We're making it the Golden Age. Without the tariffs, it would be impossible.

And China, for years, charged us tariffs, and they continue to do it, and so do other countries. Most countries, they charge us. They were ripping—look, the European Union—as you know, I get along very well with them—but they ripped us off so badly. There's never—nobody has ever seen anything.

Now, the European Union is paying us \$950 billion, and they're paying us \$750 billion to buy our energy, and they're okay with it. They signed the agreement. You know, it's not like anybody forced them to do it. They're okay with this.

Tariffs are making our country very rich again, and we'll be able to take care of our debt. We'll be able to take care of our taxes, lower taxes. We'll be able to take care of Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security. We're going to be a rich country again. Without tariffs, we'd be in very big trouble.

Q. Mr. President, do you still want Europe to pay——

Q. What are your options, Mr. President?

Special Immigration Program/Gold Card/Public Safety Concerns in U.S. Cities

Q. H-1B visas are sometimes used by people——

Q. ——a hundred-percent tariffs on China?

Q. Excuse me.

H-1-B visas are sometimes used by people already in the country legally, on other visas or student visas. Does this apply to them or to renewals? Or does it only apply to people applying for the first time from abroad?

Secretary Lutnick. Renewals. First times. The company needs to decide do they want—is that person valuable enough to have \$100,000-a-year payment to the Government, or they should head home and they should go hire an American.

Q. It's an annual payment?

Secretary Lutnick. The whole idea—it's annual, and it's for total. It can be a total of 6 years. So \$100,000 a year. So either the person is very valuable to the company and America, or they're going to depart, and the company is going to hire an American. And that's the point of immigration: Hire Americans and make sure the people coming in are the top, top people.

Stop the nonsense of letting people just come into this country on these visas that were given away for free. The President is crystal clear: Valuable people only for America. Stop the nonsense.

Q. And the \$100,000, that's on top of the salary? That's just a fee, right, Mr. Secretary?

Secretary Lutnick. Yes, a fee to America.

The President. The country [company; White House correction] would rather not have to pay \$100,000, but they'd rather—how do you do that? You hire Americans.

So there's an incentive to hire American, but there may be instances where it's better off doing, through expertise or whatever it may be.

But they're both unbelievable, whether it's the Gold Card or anything else that we talked about today. And that includes talking about freedom of speech, because our country has been decimated by bad people, very bad people, people that love crime. They love crime.

Explain it to me. They don't want to have our military go in and save lives. But when you go and ask the people, "Do you mind having the National Guard come in if it meant safety?"—they look at the question like, "What's wrong? What kind of a stupid question is that?" Of course, they do.

We want to have—we're going to have a safe country again. We're not going to have people shot. Eleven people shot? Think of it. In Chicago, over a period of 6 or 7 weeks, 55 people were murdered, and then you have a Governor saying how wonderful it is. It's not wonderful. It's very unsafe.

There's not a place in the world—you go outside, you go to Afghanistan, you go to different places all over the world that you hear about—it's 20 percent of what's happening in places like Chicago. And you think of them as unsafe. Mexico City. You hear Mexico City, it's a tough place, dangerous place. It's—the crime rate is lower.

Think of it—what's happening to our country. What's—we're not going to let it happen. And I think I got elected largely for that reason.

So we're going to have a safe country again. We're going to have a great country again. We're doing unbelievably. We have the highest stock market in history, where the most investment we've ever had, ever as a country, coming in. And we're very simple. You know, they said, "How did you get elected?" I got elected because I'm going to make America great again. That's what we're doing. We're making America great again.

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:47 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Charles J. Kirk, founder and executive director of Turning Point U.S.A, who was assassinated while speaking on the campus of Utah Valley University in Orem, UT, on September 10; former Vice President Kamala D. Harris, in her capacity as the 2024 Democratic Presidential nominee; George R. Stephanopoulos, coanchor, ABC's "Good Morning America" program; Michael Anton, former Director of Secretary of State Marco A. Rubio's Policy Planning Staff; former National Security Adviser Michael T. Flynn; U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East Steven C. Witkoff; President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia; President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine; Stephen Miran, member, Federal Reserve System Board of Governors; Sen. R. Edward "Ted" Cruz; Rep. Nancy Pelosi, in her former capacity as Speaker of the House of Representatives; Mayor Muriel E. Bowser of Washington, DC; former White House Chief Strategist and War Room podcast host Stephen K. Bannon; Mayor Brandon Johnson of Chicago, IL; Gov. Jay R. "J.B." Pritzker of Illinois; Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi L. Noem; White House Border Czar Thomas D. Homan; Iris Tao, White House correspondent, Epoch Times; and King Salman bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia. He also referred to H.R. 5371. Reporters referred to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel; Virginia Republican gubernatorial candidate Winsome Earle-Sears and candidates for Lieutenant Governor John Reid and attorney state general Jason Miyares; Michal Lubanov, wife of Israeli hostage Alex Lubanov, who was kidnapped alive in the Hamas attacks of October 7, 2023, and died in captivity in August 2024; and Steven Merryday, judge, U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on September 22.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Document signing ceremony; Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, White House.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Anton, Michael; Bannon, Stephen K.; Bessent, Scott K.H.; Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Bowser, Muriel E.; Carr, Brendan; Cruz, R. Edward "Ted"; Fetterman, John K.; Flynn, Michael T.; Harris, Kamala D.; Homan, Thomas D.; James, Letitia; Johnson, Brandon; Kaine, Timothy M.; Kennedy, Robert F., Jr.; Kirk, Charles J.; Lutnick, Howard W.; Miran, Stephen; Noem, Kristi L.; Pelosi, Nancy; Powell, Jerome H.; Pritzker, Jay R. "J.B."; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Rubio, Marco A.; Salman bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud, King; Scharf, William O.; Siebert, Erik; Stephanopoulos, George R.; Tao, Iris; Vena, Jim; Warner, Mark R.; Witkoff, Steven C.; Xi Jinping; Zelenskyy, Volodymyr.

Subjects: "Antifa," designation as terrorist organization; 2021 civil unrest and violence at U.S. Capitol; 2024 Presidential election; ABC News; Afghanistan, withdrawal of U.S. military forces; Autism spectrum disorders; Border security; China, President; COVID-19 pandemic; COVID-19 vaccines; District of Columbia, law enforcement improvement efforts; District of Columbia, Mayor; Economic improvement; Estonia, Russian military aircraft in airspace; European Union, trade with U.S.; Federal Bureau of Investigation; Federal Communications Commission; Federal Government, appropriations legislation; Federal Reserve System; Freedom of speech; Gaza, conflict with Israel; Gaza, hostages held by Hamas; Illinois, crime in Chicago; Illinois, Governor; Immigration reform; Inflation; Iran, U.S. airstrikes on nuclear facilities; Israel, attacks by Hamas of October 7, 2023; Israel, military operations in Gaza; Manufacturing industry, domestic investment; National Guard; Network television licensing; News media, fairness and accuracy; News media, Presidential interviews; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Pardons and commutations; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Russia, President; Saudi Arabia, King; Secretary of Commerce; Secretary of Health and Human Services; Secretary of Homeland Security; Secretary of State; Secretary of the Treasury; Senate confirmation process; Special immigration program; Tariffs; Tax Code reform; Tennessee, law enforcement improvement efforts in Memphis; TikTok; U.S. diplomatic efforts, expansion; U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East; U.S. visa policy; Ukraine, international military aid; Ukraine, President; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Ukraine, U.S. assistance; United Nations General Assembly; Utah, assassination of Charles J. Kirk in Orem; Vaccine research and development; Virginia, off-year election for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and attorney general; White House Border Czar; White House Staff Secretary.

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