

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025

Remarks Prior to a Working Lunch With President Javier Milei of Argentina and an Exchange With Reporters

October 14, 2025

President Trump. Well, thank you very much. It's a great honor to have the leader of Argentina, a place that I love, I've been to, and one of the most beautiful places in the world—President. And I really want to thank you very much.

He's MAGA all the way. He's "Make Argentina Great Again." I heard about him when he was campaigning, and even before his campaign. He's a great economist, and he was saying a lot of very correct things, and he was very much in a conservative mode. And I heard all about you as you were running and even before you were running, because as a tremendously talented economist, you were getting a lot of good writeups. And I appreciated that.

But he was "Make Argentina Great Again." It worked. I actually sent him some hats for his early part of the campaign. And then he called me. He wanted a lot more. [*Laughter*] And I said: "When does it stop? When will it stop?" And it stopped with him winning, and he's become very popular.

And he's on the verge of a breakthrough, I think. I think he's really on the verge of a tremendous economic success. And I know that Scott Bessent is helping, and our great Scott is doing a job, and he feels very strongly about it.

And, Scott, do you want to say just a couple of words about that, please?

U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Scott K.H. Bessent. Yes, sir. The President is fighting a hundred years of bad economic history and policy, and is——

President Trump. Both Presidents.

Secretary Bessent. Both. Both.

President Trump. We're fighting bad—[*laughter*]——

I thought he was talking about the U.S. President when he said that.

Secretary Bessent. And there—there's a midterm election coming up. We think he's going to do quite well and then continue his reform agenda.

Mr. President, as you said, President Obama had a big opportunity during his term, which he wasted. Many governments in Latin America went center-right, and the U.S. ignored them. We are not going to ignore our allies. It is economic strength. We're using our economic strength to create peace, just as you've done all over the world. And it is much better to form an economic bridge with our allies, people who want to do the right thing, than have to have—shoot at narco-gunboats.

So we think that this is an opportunity for the Argentinian people and that President Milei is the one to do it. He's got a great Cabinet. He's got a great team who we've worked with over the past weeks.

President Trump. And the election is coming up very soon, and it's a very big election being watched by the world, because he's done an incredible job. But with that comes some pain, and they have some pain, and now they're coming out of it. I think the victory is very important. Your poll numbers, I hear, are pretty good, but I think they'll be better after this.

And you know, our approvals are somewhat subject to who wins the election, because if a Socialist—or, in the case of New York City, a Communist—wins, you feel a lot differently about making an investment. I think, Scott, you'd feel that if somebody that had no chance—in other words, if somebody wins and has no chance of ever having a great economy because of that philosophy, you would put a halt to what we're doing.

Secretary Bessent. Yes, sir. And we're confident that President Milei is going to do well. We've been criticized by a couple of American Peronists, like Senator Warren. [*Laughter*] So—and she and—

President Trump. That's a compliment. [*Laughter*] She has no idea what she's doing. She's a nasty, horrible Senator.

Go ahead.

Other than that, I like her very much.

Secretary Bessent. Yes, and she and her protégé in New York, Mamdani, who I don't even think he's a Peronist. I think he's more of the—

President Trump. Communist.

Secretary Bessent. Communist chauvinismo.

So we are—we stand with the President and what he stands for in the hope for the Argentinian people. And, President Trump, just like you, he carries the young people. So it's hope for the future. The Argentines have made the decision to shake off a hundred years of bad policy. They went from one of the richest countries in the world to a ton of debt. And I think that with the bridge the U.S. is giving them and the strong policies, that Argentina can be great again.

President Trump. Thank you very much.

Please, go ahead. Please.

[*At this point, President Milei spoke in Spanish; no translation was provided.*]

President Trump. Thank you. Thank you very much.

Do we have an interpreter that wants to—you all either have that—has everyone understood? Because I think you made a very important, profound statement, actually, but we could have it interpreted if you want. Does anybody want it interpreted? Would you like that?

Q. Yes, Mr. President.

President Trump. Would you like it? Can the interpreter speak what—do we have somebody set up for that? If you want—

Interpreter. I did simultaneous. So, if the President would like to repeat his statement, we can do it.

President Trump. No, that's okay. Don't worry about it. We'll leave it that way.

So it's an honor to have you here, and I just want to tell you that your career has been an amazing one, and it's going to continue with the election. You're going to win the election. We're going to endorse you. I'm going to endorse you today. Fully endorse you. And I—you know, people in Argentina like me. A lot of people like me. I'm even surprised myself.

But we had a great week, we had a great weekend, we had a great period of time in the Middle East. It was very comprehensive. It went very rapidly, and I think it's going to lead to something that's going to be unrecognizable, certainly for the Middle East.

What's taken place in the last few days, people can't believe it. I've never seen anything like it. I've never seen the love and the spirit. And I've done a lot of things. I've done a lot of deals. I've done a lot of political deals, where countries come into line or whatever. But I've never seen anything like this, the level of love.

And it has to do with the mystique of the Middle East, I think, because if I did other countries—I did seven other settlements of wars, complete settlements of wars. And it was very well received, but—but this is something—I've never seen anything like it.

The media covered it very fairly. And even the fake news—of which we have a lot—they actually covered it fairly for a change. And I appreciated that. We have to get back to that. So important.

But I just want to say it's a pleasure to be with you, and we're going to have lunch. And we'll take a couple of questions from the news, and I'm sure they'll be extremely non-hostile and friendly. Like, J.D. went through a very friendly interview with George Slopapoulos, who was nice enough to pay me \$16 million the last time. We came—he had to pay \$16 million to me, which was good. It was worth it. It was worth having somebody lie. If you get \$16 million, that's good.

But J.D. had a very nasty person interviewing him, and we can't let that happen. Just is inappropriate to cut off a highly respected Vice President of the United States mid-sentence. [Laughter] It was—I guess it's one way to win an argument. That was the only way——

Vice President James D. "J.D." Vance. Yes, sir.

President Trump. ——he was going to win the argument. So it was pretty inappropriate. I want to tell you that.

So thank you very much. Do you have something there?

President Milei. Yes.

President Trump. Oh, good. Thank you.

[*President Milei spoke in Spanish; no translation was provided.*]

Yes. I'll get it.

[*President Milei handed a framed letter to President Trump.*]

That's fantastic. Thank you very much.

Minister of Foreign Relations, International Trade, and Worship Gerardo Werthein of Argentina. When he did this letter, Mr. President, your settlement in the Middle East wasn't done.

President Trump. Ah.

Minister Werthein. So we have to do a new letter——

President Trump. Let's do that——

Minister Werthein. ——to include that, because this is a very important——

President Trump. You'll have to add one extra sentence, or paragraph.

Minister Werthein. Exactly.

President Trump. That's good. Thank you very much. This is a great——such a beautiful statement. Thank you very much.

Minister Werthein. You're welcome.

That's beautiful. Thank you.

Q. Mr. President——

President Trump. Okay.

Q. Mr. President, how is this Argentine——

President Trump. Why don't we talk about Argentina first and——

Go ahead. How is Argentina going?

Q. Mr. President, how is this Argentina——

Q. Are you worried about the influence of China in Argentina?

President Trump. Go ahead.

Argentina/U.S. Financial Assistance

Q. How is this Argentina rescue package "America first"? And is this rescue package meant to help President Milei's party in the coming election?

President Trump. No, it's helped—it's really meant to help a good financial philosophy, where Argentina can, after 20 years of disaster—because it was very successful at one point, and it can be again, like Venezuela. Venezuela was very, very successful, and now it's a dictatorship.

So we can—when we can help our neighbors—you know, we're making tremendous progress in South America. South America, Marco was telling me, my—he's like our great expert here. He really knows it. But you were telling me that so many of the countries are coming our way. And we had, a few years ago—when I—when I just came back—so I've been here now almost 9 months, but when I just came in, I was amazed to see how poorly we've done. We lost so many, and one of them was Argentina. Would be lost if he wasn't there. And I think he will be there, because the people recognize he's done an amazing job. He took over a real mess.

So did I take over a mess. I took over a mess by, you know, the Biden group. And Obama was—he started it. I'll tell you, Barack Hussein Obama started it.

Could you give a couple of words on South America?

U.S. Secretary of State Marco A. Rubio. Yes.

President Trump. You were telling me so well yesterday how well we're doing. Go ahead.

Secretary Rubio. Well, first of all, we have now 8 or 9, 10 countries—Argentina being foremost among them—that have aligned with the United States on issue after issue in international community events all over the world. They're—in fact, these great allies, like Argentina, but I can go into others—Costa Rica, you know—I don't want to leave anybody out—El Salvador, you know.

But I think one of the more promising developments is, later this month, there'll be an election in Bolivia after 25, 30 years of anti-American——

President Trump. That's right.

Secretary Rubio. ——hostile government. Both of the candidates running in that election, in the runoff election, want strong and better relations with the United States, and another transformative opportunity there.

But—so I think this is important. This is our hemisphere. It's where we live. And having strong neighbors such as this——

President Trump. And great progress has been made, really—tremendous—

Secretary Rubio. And we'll make more. Absolutely.

President Trump. —over the last 9 months. Really, over the last 9 months.

Yes, please.

Argentina-U.S. Trade

Q. Mr. President, from Argentina, Buenos Aires.

President Trump. Yes.

Q. Do you imagine soon a free trade—

President Trump. Sure.

Q. —agreement with Argentina? Could it be possible soon?

President Trump. Yes, it will be. Well, we're going to discuss some of it today. But no, we're—we want to help Argentina. And we want to always help ourselves, but we want to help Argentina.

And one of the ways we can do—they have great product, and we used to do a lot of trade, and then—if you look at what the Democrats—well, they didn't know. They didn't know. Honestly, they didn't know what they were doing. But a lot of that trade disappeared. And they have great product. So we will be trading with Argentina—and it will be helpful to them, and it's helpful—it's good for us also.

China's Purchase of Argentinian Soybeans

Q. Mr. President, was China trying to draw a wedge between the U.S. and Argentina by buying soybeans from Argentina and not U.S. farmers? And—

President Trump. I would say so.

Q. And China on—

President Trump. China—

Q. —the port fees—

President Trump. China likes to draw wedges.

Q. They've increased port fees on U.S. ships too.

President Trump. Yes, sure. I mean—I guess that's natural. It's China, and it's natural. But it's not going to mean anything in the end.

Argentina/China/U.S. Financial Assistance

Q. Mr. President, from Argentina. Should Argentina end the China swap and close the space base in Neuquén?

President Trump. I don't think you should be doing business much with—you can do some trade, but you certainly shouldn't be doing beyond that. Certainly shouldn't be doing anything having to do with the military with China.

Q. Okay.

President Trump. And if that's what's happening, I'd be very upset about that. Yes.

Q. What about the swap?

President Trump. You do understand that, Scott, right? You do understand that.

Q. Mr. President—Mr. President, what about the swap? Because it's so important for our— for Argentina, this swap—

President Trump. Okay. Go ahead.

Q. —with the Central Bank.

Secretary Bessent. The American assistance is not predicated on the swap with China being closed. Any reporting to that effect is incorrect.

Q. But you said—

Q. Mr. President—

Q. Sorry. But you said that Argentina has to expose China from your business and for your agenda. And the swap is so important for Argentina.

Secretary Bessent. No, I was referring more to ports, military bases, observation facilities that have been created in Argentina.

Q. Than the swap? More than the swap?

Secretary Bessent. More than the swap.

Q. Okay. Thank you, Mr. President.

President Trump. He was referring to that.

Yes, behind you, please.

Argentina/U.S. Financial Assistance

Q. Yes, President. From Argentina. What's the benefit for United States in helping this way Argentina?

President Trump. Just helping a great philosophy take over a great country. Argentina is one of the most beautiful countries that I've ever seen, and we want to see it succeed. It's very simple.

I mean, we don't have to do it. It's not going to make a big difference for our country, but it will in terms of South America. If Argentina does well, you're going to have others following, and a lot of others are following. You have countries in South America that 2 years ago would have never even been thought of to go as democracies or as just countries that want to do fair and balanced trading.

And now, all—I mean, you mentioned Bolivia, but you—there are numerous other countries that are coming our way.

And Brazil—as you know, I had a very good conversation with the President. I met him at the United Nations before I went up to speak. And then I found that I didn't have a speech because I had no teleprompter. They turned off my teleprompter purposely. *[Laughter]* They made it impossible for me.

Q. But you do not have—

President Trump. But it didn't silence me. I spoke without, and it was a good speech. I mean, it was a good speech.

Q. But, I mean, you don't have a—

President Trump. But no, I'm—think of that. You go into the United Nations, I'm speaking in front of 158 leaders and the whole world, and I look at my teleprompter, and it's dead. They

killed my teleprompter. They wouldn't let the man that operate it into the booth. Can you believe that?

Q. But first—I mean, you don't have any specific interest, in economic terms, for the state?

President Trump. I do have—no, I want to see it succeed. I think it's going to be great, and we will benefit also. But it's not that big a benefit because it's not that big a country. But it's a very important country, and it's a country that can be very successful.

There are some countries that will never be successful. This is a country that has great potential if it has the right leadership, and you have the right leadership with this man right here. Okay?

Argentina/Currency Valuation/BRICS Bloc of Nations

Q. Mr. President, would you support dollarization?

President Trump. I would say that I'll leave that up to my economic people. But I like the dollar. I'm very strong on the dollar. And anybody who wants to deal in dollars, they have an advantage over people that aren't. But we're—for the most part, we're keeping it that way.

I think if Biden would have—you know, Biden, that group, would have gotten—like, meaning, Kamala—you wouldn't have the dollar as your currency anymore. You wouldn't have a world domination by the dollar if I didn't win this election.

And now the domination—like BRICS. I told anybody who wants to be in BRICS, that's fine, but we're going to put tariffs on your nation. Everybody dropped out. They're all dropping out of BRICS. BRICS was an attack on the dollar, and I said, "You want to play that game, I'm going to put tariffs on your—all of your product coming into the U.S." They said, "Like I said, we're dropping out of BRICS." And BRICS is like—they don't even talk about it anymore.

Scott, do you want to add to that, please?

Secretary Bessent. We're very happy with the current currency arrangement.

Q. Mr. President, a question on Gaza.

Q. Mr. President——

President Trump. You're ABC fake news. I don't want it.

Go ahead, Brian [Brian Glenn, Real America's Voice], please.

Q. First of all, congratulations——

President Trump. I don't take questions from ABC fake news. After what you did with Stephanopoulos to the Vice President of the United States, I don't take questions from ABC fake news.

Brian, go ahead.

U.S. Cease-Fire Agreement Between Hamas and Israel/ABC Program Host Alyssa Farah

Q. Yes, sir. First of all, congratulations on achieving peace. You're indeed the peacemaker.

On a lighter note——

President Trump. Hard to believe, right? Did you ever think I was going to be called a peacemaker?

Q. Actually, I did.

President Trump. I did——

Q. I saw some of the actions you were——

President Trump. I did too. [*Laughter*]

Q. Yes.

President Trump. Go ahead.

Q. But on a lighter note, Alyssa Farah, she is one of the hosts on ABC's show "The View." She said a while back, I'll quote: "If Trump gets the Israeli hostages out, I promise I will wear a MAGA hat for 1 day on this show and say, 'Thank you for doing it.'" Your response?

President Trump. Well, did she put the hat on?

Q. Well, she hasn't got the hat yet.

President Trump. Who is it? Which one?

Q. Alyssa Farah.

President Trump. Oh, yes. Well, she used to work for me. So she used to work here. I'll tell you about Alyssa. She worked here. She gave me the most beautiful letter when, you know, the administration—the time came up, the election was rigged, I left. She gave me the most beautiful letter you've ever seen. I was a great President. What a great job. Some of the letter has been quoted. This is Alyssa, who I never thought was very outstanding. I figured she would not make it, and she didn't have a big role here either.

And then we had January 6, and she left after that or before that, but she gave me the most beautiful letters. And then even months after she left and while we weren't here any longer, she sent another letter—glowing letter, beautiful letter. And then she got hired by "The View," and they gave her a couple of bucks, and she changed her view very quickly.

I never thought she'd make it. Never thought she had what it took in any way. You know what that means. But she's on "The View." But it just shows what a fraud "The View" is, because this woman gave me letters and statements. She said I was the greatest President in her lifetime. Now, she's not that old, so I didn't consider it a great compliment, but—I've had better.

Q. Can we send her a hat? Maybe she'll——

President Trump. More recently I've had "the greatest President of them all." I like that much better, because—I said, "Does that include Washington and Lincoln?" "Yes, sir, it does." I said, "I like that person."

[*Several reporters began asking questions at once.*]

So I think she's a total—I think she's a joke.

Hamas/Hostages Held in Gaza, Palestinian Territories

Q. Mr. President, on Gaza. How long will it take Hamas to disarm? And can you guarantee that is going to happen?

President Trump. Well, they're going to disarm, and—because they said they were going to disarm. And if they don't disarm, we will disarm them.

Q. How will you do that?

President Trump. I don't have to explain that to you.

But if they don't disarm, we will disarm them. They know I'm not playing games. Okay?

Now, we did something monumental. We got the hostages back. That was the first thing we had to do: above all else, get the hostages back. Now, they misrepresented because we were told they had 26, 24 of dead hostages—if we can use those terms—and it seems as though they don't have that, because we're talking about a much lesser number. But that's a very tough subject.

"I want them back." That's what they said. "I want them back."

Also, they said they were going to disarm. And initially speaking, they needed—you know, they did take out a couple of gangs that were very bad—very, very bad gangs. And they did take them out, and they killed a number of gang members. And that didn't bother me much, to be honest with you. That's okay. They had a couple of very bad gangs. You know, it's no different than other countries.

Like Venezuela sent their gangs into us, and we took care of those gangs. We have—Washington, DC, is one of the safest cities in the country. It was one of the worst cities in the country if you go back just a little while ago. Right? Now it's safe. You can walk to work. Isn't that nice?

But we have told them we want disarm, and they will disarm. And if they don't disarm, we will disarm them. And it'll happen quickly and perhaps violently. But they will disarm. Do you understand me?

Q. Yes. You say "quickly"—

President Trump. Because you always—everyone says, "Oh, well, they won't disarm." They will disarm. And I spoke to Hamas, and I said, "You're going to disarm, right?" "Yes, sir. We're going to disarm." That's what they told me.

They will disarm, or we will disarm them. Got it?

Okay, next.

Q. What is the deadline, sir? You say "quickly"—

Q. Mr. President—

Q. Sir, you say "quickly," but what is the deadline you're going to put on them—

President Trump. A reasonable—

Q. —before you take action?

President Trump. —period of time. Pretty—pretty quickly. A reasonable period of time.

Q. Congratulations on the peace you achieved in the Middle East, first of all.

President Trump. Thank you very much.

Q. And my question is regarding Argentina. Does continued—

President Trump. Are you from Argentina?

Q. I'm from Argentina. Yes.

President Trump. I love the Argentina. *[Laughter]*

I like them much better than ABC—than ABC—than ABC fake news.

Vice President Vance. Me too, sir.

President Trump. Yes, go ahead.

Argentina/U.S. Financial Assistance/New York City/Use of Military Personnel in U.S. Cities

Q. Does continued U.S. support for Argentina depend on the results of the upcoming legislative elections and the ability of the Government to pass long-lasting reforms through Congress?

President Trump. Well, I think if they don't do that, we're not going to be around very long. Scott, can you handle that one, please?

Secretary Bessent. We're confident that the President's party will—and the coalition will do well in the election. And this aid is predicated on robust policies, and going back to the failed Peronist policies would cause a U.S. rethink.

President Trump. It's a little bit—it's a great question. It's a little like New York. You know, we—you're reading in Argentina about New York. We have a problem. We have a Communist who's 33 years old, doesn't know a damn thing. Practically, he's never worked a day in his life, and he sort of caught on, right?

And I'm not going to send a lot of money to New York. I don't have to. You know, the money comes all through the White House. And if they're going to be sending us stupid policies—I mean, communist policies, which has proven, for thousands of years, doesn't work. You know, we don't have to prove it again. We're not going to ruin one of our great cities, because we'll make that great. We will clean up the crime in about 30 days. Took 12 days to do Washington, DC, so New York is bigger.

And Chicago, we've already made a lot of progress despite fighting from the government. But we'll—Chicago is doing great.

Memphis is doing really great. You know, we have great support there from the political leaders. They said, "Please come in and clean up crime." And we love it. We've—in 1 week, Memphis is so good. It's so much better. We'll have it—within a month, we'll have that into a safe city again.

And all of these cities, we want to clean them up. We don't like that opposition.

But if somebody is going to be a communist mayor of New York—it's a fluke if he gets in. They're a lot of failed people that he's running against. I mean, we have failed—you have inferior candidates or something, because it's impossible to think that New York City can have a communist mayor. He's a Communist. He's not a Socialist, by the way. There's a big difference. He's a Communist. He's down and dirty. He's a Communist.

He hates police. He wants to get rid of all police. I mean, how can a policeman—he hates Jewish people, and yet he's got Jewish people supporting. Hates Jewish people.

So it comes through the White House. The funding for New York and for every place comes through the White House. And I'm very generous, and I was always very generous with New York, even when you had opposition there. But I was always very generous. But I wouldn't be generous to a Communist, a guy that's going to take the money and throw it out the window, because you're talking about hundreds of billions of dollars. And we're not going to let somebody get into office and squander the taxpayer money from this country. We're not going to let it happen.

So it's a little bit like that with—if you take a look—Argentina. If the President doesn't win, I know the person that he'd be running against, I believe, probably. We probably have the person. The person is extremely far left and a philosophy that got Argentina into this problem in the first

place. So we would not be generous with Argentina if that happened. If he loses, we are not going to be generous with Argentina. Okay?

Venezuela/Former President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.

Q. Mr. President, you talk about the Argentina important in the Latin America. What is your plan for Venezuela? What is the terrorism—the narcoterrorism in the President Maduro, what is your plan about it?

President Trump. Well, Venezuela has done a couple of things very badly. Number one, we get drugs and all of that, but we get something, in a way, worse, because they're a big purveyor of drugs, but we—WE have worse.

What they do very well is they send their criminals into the United States, and they send Tren de Aragua—that you know very well; you're from Venezuela, I assume—and they send them in by the thousands, literally. And these are the worst of all. And they empty their prisons into the United States. They empty their mental institutions into the United States.

And because we had a President who is low IQ, he didn't realize what was going on. And the people that are high IQ that surround him, but they happen to be lunatics—radical left—they're highly intelligent, radical-left lunatics. Okay? So, in a way, that's worse than having a guy like Biden. But they ran the show.

You heard about the autopen. The person that auto—that really operated the autopen, but it was really the people that told the person that operated the autopen what to do, those are the people that really were President. Okay?

So we're not going to stand for it in this country.

And by the way, that autopen thing is under serious investigation. Just this—I don't think you care, because you're from Argentina. You couldn't care less about that. But I just want to say, because I do the weave. You know the weave? [*Laughter*] I cover a lot of different subjects.

But the—but the people that are involved in that autopen scam—because he barely signed anything. I mean, this guy—I don't know how you can be President. He barely signed it. But the only thing we can find for sure is that he signed Hunter's piden—his pardon. "Hunter's piden." I like that. That's a combination.

So we are going to work very much with the President. We think he's going to win. He should win. And if he does win, we're going to be very helpful. And if he doesn't win, we're not going to waste our time, because you have somebody whose philosophy has no chance of making Argentina great again.

Q. What's your——

Q. Do you think Argentina——

President Trump. Steve [Steve A. Holland, Reuters]. Go ahead, Steve.

Q. Just to check something——

President Trump. Steve. Go ahead, Steve.

Hamas/Gaza, Palestinian Territories

Q. Just to check something. You said Hamas assured you that they would disarm. Was that a direct conversation or through——

President Trump. Through my people.

Q. ——Mr. Witkoff or——

President Trump. Through my people.

Q. Okay. Thank you.

President Trump. At the highest level.

Q. What's your advice for——

Q. Do you think Argentina——

President Trump. And it was meant for me.

Yes.

Argentina/China/Lapse in Federal Government Appropriations

Q. What's your advice for President Milei and Argentina, as a political leader?

President Trump. My advice is to hold strong to his principles, because he's right and he's proving that he was right.

He's got one problem. He's got people that are giving him tremendously bad press, even though they know it's wrong. He's got to hold true to his principles, because he's going to win. He's going to win.

He's doing the right thing. Everybody knows he's doing the right thing, but you have a radical-left, sick culture that's a very dangerous group of people, and they're trying to make him look bad. I believe he's going to win out.

Q. And where is—[inaudible]—with China and this house?

President Trump. China?

Q. The Chinese—you know——

President Trump. Well, you have to be careful with China. Look, we have——

Q. ——there's a base in Patagonia.

President Trump. Everybody deals with China. We—they have to deal with us too. You have to be careful with China.

Look, I have a great relationship with President Xi, but sometimes it gets testy because China likes to take advantage of people and they can't take advantage of us. But we have a fair relationship with China, and I think it will be fine. And if it's not, that's okay too. You'd have to do—you have to do and go where the punches are thrown. You've got to put up the blocks. We have a lot of punches being thrown, and we've been very successful.

Look, we have the most success—I think we're the most successful we've ever been as a country. We have now close—I've been saying 17. We have, I think, close to, or maybe even exceeding, \$18 trillion going to be invested in the United States. That's more money than ever invested in any country before, even countries with much bigger populations, like India or like China. Nobody has ever had \$18 trillion invested in the country. We have, and that's because of November 5 election, because I won.

Oh, if she won, you'd be negative. You'd have people getting out of the country. This country would have been—we would have been in a major depression. If she won, we would have been 1929.

They'd like to see that anyway. That's why they keep the government closed. They have a shutdown based on nonsense. They want to give away 1.5—think of it—they want to give away \$1.5 trillion to people that come into the country illegally.

And as you know, the borders now are closed, but when they hear that they get the greatest health care package in the world—and they have no money, but they're living okay in another country—they head up, and they start forming caravans. And they try and come into our country.

But the big problem is, they want to give—they want to give health care to people that should not get health care. They want to give health care to illegal immigrants by the—by the millions.

Look at Gavin Newsom, what he's done. He's ruined. California. He gives health care to anybody.

And I guess they do it for votes. I actually think it's bad politics, but I guess they do it for votes.

So I'm with this man because his philosophy is correct. And he may win, and he may not win, but I think he's going to win. And if he wins, we're staying with him, and if he doesn't win, we're gone.

Peace Efforts in the Middle East

Q. How can the Argentina can help to the peace process—to the Middle East peace process?

President Trump. They can help by doing well. If Argentina does well, that's helpful, because they know we help Argentina. So, if Argentina is successful, that's great, because they view us as somebody that helped Argentina and they did well, and the United States maybe will help them, and they're going to do well. So the success of Argentina would be a great feather in the cap of the U.S.A., because we're helping them, right? Do you understand?

Q. Yes, do you think that the—it could help—

President Trump. Yes, please, behind you. Behind you.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization/Spain

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Last week, you said that NATO should consider expelling Spain.

President Trump. What?

Q. You said that NATO should consider expelling Spain. Would you support that?

President Trump. What?

Q. Expelling Spain.

Vice President Vance. Should NATO consider expelling Spain.

Secretary Rubio. Kicking them out of NATO.

President Trump. Oh. I'm very unhappy with Spain. They're the only country that didn't raise up their number to 5 percent. Every other country in NATO raised up to 5 percent, and Spain is doing very well off our backs. So I'm not happy with Spain. Spain gets protection, and they know—you know, look, they're sort of in the semi middle of it, so they're going to get protected automatically. Even if you don't want to protect them, you're protecting them because of the way they're located.

And I think what Spain did is a very bad thing for NATO. I think it's very unfair to NATO. It wouldn't matter if you said you're not going to protect them, because they're pretty much protected. You know, what are you going to do—go through the other countries and "Let's go attack Spain," right? So I think what they did is not nice. I think it's very disrespectful to NATO.

In fact, I was thinking about giving them trade punishment through tariffs because of what they did, and I may do that. I think unbelievably disrespectful. Spain. The only one—out of all the countries in NATO, the only one that said that is Spain. And I think that's—I think they should be punished for that.

Yes, I do.

Lapse in Federal Government Appropriations/2024 Presidential Election/Inflation

Q. Mr. President, on the shutdown——

Q. On the Government shutdown, you have the money to pay the troops on——

President Trump. I do.

Q. ——October 15? Okay. How——

President Trump. I actually have a man who is a very wealthy person—you'll know that when I tell you this—who called—a donor, a great gentleman—and he said, "If there's any money necessary, shortfall, for the paying of the troops, then I will pay it." Meaning he will pay it. How about that?

I said: "Look, we're not going to need it. We're going to take care of our troops." But this was a position that's being forced upon us by Democrats, and all they have to do is just sign a piece of paper saying, "We're going to keep it going the way it is."

You know, there's nothing—it's not like—it shouldn't even be an argument. They've signed it many times before.

I don't want to bore you with the fact that Schumer said 100 times, "You should never close up Government." But Schumer is a weakened politician. I mean, he's going to finish his career as a failed politician. He's a failed politician. He's allowed the radical left to take over the Democrat Party. So, if they write books about that, if they write books about him, they're going to have to say that he—his career ended by allowing the radical left to take over the party.

I mean, I won an election in a landslide because people are not into the radical left, and the Democrat Party is. People didn't want to see men playing in women's sports. They didn't want to see transgender for everybody. They didn't want to see all of the different things that they do that's so crazy. Open borders.

I mean, the biggest—the worst thing that he did to us—it's not inflation, because we fixed inflation. Prices are way down. I don't know if you saw that gasoline went to \$58 just now for—did you see what—what's going on with gasoline?

Q. We track that.

President Trump. No, \$58 a barrel.

Q. Yes, we track that.

President Trump. Nobody can believe it. I'm very proud of that. You know why? Because we're pumping like we've never pumped before.

Because with—if you get the gas price down, everything else comes down. It's very simple.

And he went away from my policies, and you had the greatest inflation—the last administration had the greatest inflation in the history of our country. And now, as you know, groceries are down. It's all down. It's—we're doing it.

Illegal Immigration/U.S. Military Recruitment

Q. But on the shutdown, are you settling in for a long—is this going to be a long term? Are we thinking months?

President Trump. It's up to them. All they have to do is just vote to extend. We don't need a—we're not saying we want money, we don't—all we need is a right to extend. They want a—a right to extend, but they want \$1.5 trillion so they can give it away to illegal immigrants, the people that are invading your cities. And many of these people, for whatever reason—I mean, I understood this; I called it a long time ago—these countries are run by people I know, friends of mine.

Like, I know this gentleman. I hope you haven't sent—he probably did too. Why not?

They send up their worst people. They send up people that are criminals. They send up people from jails. And at best—the best ones they send up are people that don't work very hard and that are on a social form of welfare. And they're sending those people into the United States. I don't blame them. I'm angry at them, but I don't blame them.

But I'm really angry at Biden and Kamala and that group of lunatics for allowing it to happen, because it's the hardest thing.

Now, you know, we're sending them out. It's incredible the job that Kristi and Tom Homan and the—the whole group is doing. But we shouldn't have to be doing that. We're doing—we're doing a lot of work on getting people out of here. Tren de Aragua has caused tremendous damage.

And our soldiers are great. You know, our soldiers are now based on merit. They're not based on woke, because we won the case in the Supreme Court, which was the bravest case. I have such respect for the Supreme Court because of what they did with merit, because our country was built on merit. Countries are destroyed on woke. You know, I made a statement, and I hated to make it, because it sounded bad, but everything turns to you-know-what when it goes woke. You remember the term. I don't like to use it, because you might have some children listening, but it turns bad.

And no—we have the hottest country right now anywhere in the world. That's why he's here. That's why every other country wants to meet here too. But we only have so many hours in the day and days in the week. But we've got the hottest country. Think of it. We were a dead country a year and a half ago, and now we have the hottest country anywhere in the world. It's pretty good. Did a good job.

Okay, any other questions? Yes, go ahead. You, please.

The President's Schedule

Q. Would you like to visit Argentina soon? There's an invitation for that?

President Trump. What does that mean?

Q. Do you like to visit Argentina soon?

President Trump. I do. I would love to. I'm just a little busy. [*Laughter*] I would love to. I'd love to go to Argentina. I'd like to be like Biden. I'd like to go to the beach. You know? My legs are not quite as thin as his. My legs are slightly heavier. My arms are slightly larger. My body is a little bit larger than his. I'm not sure it would be appreciated on the beach, but I'm not going to take a chance. You won't see me in a bathing suit. [*Laughter*] You won't see in a bathing suit sitting on a beach in Argentina, falling down and not being able to lift a three-ounce chair meant for old people to lift and he couldn't lift it. So he had a problem. He spent too much time at a

beach. Somebody told him that he looked good in a bathing suit, and you'd see this guy at the beach all the time. I never quite understood it.

Steve, go ahead.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine/Russia

Q. Could you preview your meeting with Ukraine President Zelenskyy on Friday? Do you expect to talk about weapons? Is there going to be a package approved?

President Trump. Yes, no, we have an interesting meeting going. And look, I'm very disappointed, because Vladimir and I had a very good relationship. Probably still do. I don't know why he continues with this war. This war has been so bad for him. He's going into 4 years of a war that should have beaten—he should have won that war in 1 week. He's now going to soon be into his fourth year. He's lost a million and a half soldiers, probably, close—certainly in terms of wounded and no legs and no arms, and all the things that happen in horrible wars.

It's a horrible war. That's the biggest thing that's happened since World War II, in terms of death. It's bigger than any of them. I settled eight of them. The biggest is—is that, in terms of death. Incredible. I think India-Pakistan had great potential too. We did a great job on that one.

But he's got to really settle this war. And, you know, they have long lines waiting for gasoline in Russia right now. Right? They have long lines. Who thought that was going to happen? And all of a sudden, his economy is going to collapse. And I'd like to see him do well. I mean, I had a very good relationship with Vladimir Putin, but he just doesn't want to end that war. And I think it's making him look very bad. He could end it. He could end it quickly.

And I have to tell you, I give credit, because who would think that Ukraine could have fought Russia for 4 years to essentially a standstill? Now, there has been some early—early, you know, before they knew what the hell was happening, because it happened quick. Biden should have never let that happen. That's a war that should have never happened, but it did. But it's not making Russia look good. I will tell you that.

Q. And will you—Tomahawks in Ukraine?

President Trump. We'll be talking about Ukraine, yes. I mean, I have the President coming in on Friday, and we'll—I know what he has to say. He wants weapons. He would like to have Tomahawks. Everyone else wants Tomahawks—and we have a lot of Tomahawks. Tomahawk is a—do you need any Tomahawks in Argentina? [*Laughter*]

Q. [*Inaudible*—Tomahawks.

President Trump. You need them for your opposition, I guess—because, see, in this country, they use Tomahawks for the opposition. I don't do that. I'm much nicer. The Democrats would use them if they had the chance. They're sick people.

Go ahead.

Argentina/U.S. Financial Assistance

Q. Are you worried that this plan with Argentina can fail?

President Trump. Anything can fail. Anything can fail. You never know. That's why I say Putin should do something about the war, because so far, I mean, it's turned out to be very bad for him. But anything can—so this plan can fail. Sure, it can fail. But it's got a better chance—I would say, Scott, it's got a better chance of success than failure. And if it's successful, it's a—it's an unbelievable success. It can transform your country into—into greatness. It's got a great chance.

We'd like to give it a chance. Anything can fail, but we'd like to give it a chance. And we think—because he's made so much progress. I mean, the work that he's done over the last 4 years is incredible, and it would be a shame to lose that progress. He's very close to having a big success.

Pentagon/Press Restrictions/White House Press Access

Q. Mr. President, will you consider removing restrictions on the press that report at the Pentagon? And have you spoken to Secretary Hegseth about this?

President Trump. I have, yes. Well, he's finding—I think—I mean, I think I can speak for him. I'll let him speak for himself. But I think he finds the press to be very disruptive in terms of world peace and maybe security for our Nation. The press is very dishonest. Not you, but the press is very dishonest.

You have something to say, Pete?

Secretary of War Peter B. Hegseth. Well, I very much appreciate the question, because it was interesting to watch. We had a chance to go along on the historic trip of Middle East peace, which our generation of veterans never dreamed would be possible. So you would think that the Pentagon press corps, of all press corps, would be front and center across the board on wanting to give credit to the President for forging this kind of peace. And instead, what they want to talk about is a policy about them, which simply says maybe the policy should look like the White House or other military installations where you have to wear a badge that identifies that you're press, or you can't just roam anywhere you want.

It used to be, Mr. President, the press could go anywhere—pretty much anywhere in the Pentagon, the most classified area in the world, or also, that if they sign on to the credentialing, they're not going to try to get soldiers to break the law by giving them classified information. So it's commonsense stuff, Mr. President. We're trying to make sure national security is respected, and we're proud of the policy.

President Trump. You know, we have an option here to—as you know, the press, years ago, moved into the White House. Used to be across the street. We could move them. You're lucky I'm president, because we could move them very easily across the street. They used to be there. They would have more room. We have a beautiful, nice space. You can sit all by yourselves and have fun. Instead, you walk around the White House talking to anybody that can breathe. And, you know.

But I find that when it comes to war, and now our great Department of War—we have some great people over there—I think it's sort of—it bothers me to have soldiers and even, you know, high-ranking generals walking around with you guys on their sleeve, asking them. Because they can make a mistake, and a mistake can be tragic. They can do it innocently too. They can—you know. And they're not press people. They don't really deal with the press. So they're not really necessarily good at it, although I think it's mostly instinctual one way or the other. You're either good at things or you're not.

But I could see you being bothered by that. So you have them in an area, and you treat them fairly, but they're not allowed to go into——

Secretary Hegseth. Much like the——

President Trump. ——somebody's office and sit with them for 10 hours.

Secretary Hegseth. Yes, sir.

President Trump. Yes. I can understand.

Q. Mr. President, Boston—

President Trump. Go ahead.

Mayor Michelle Wu of Boston, Massachusetts/Governor Gavin C. Newsom of California

Q. Boston had some street takeovers that we saw. Are you—is the mayor—are you going to work with or try and work with the mayor of Boston?

And then, they have a World Cup—they have several World Cup games. And I know Argentina knows about World Cups. They have several World Cup games. Could those games move to cities that do work with you, like Washington, DC?

President Trump. They could. We could take them away. I love the people of Boston, and I know the games are sold out, but your mayor is not good. There are worse than her. At least she's intelligent. You know, some are extremely low IQ. Those bother me more. She's intelligent, but she's radical left. And they're taking over parts of Boston. [*Laughter*] That's a pretty big statement, right?

We could get them back in about 2 seconds. All she has to do is call us. We'll go in and take them back. But she's afraid to because she thinks it's bad politically. She could take them back too.

The Boston police are great. I mean, I know them. They love me. She'll never tell them to go after Trump because they love me, and I love them. And I got a tremendous police vote and military vote, you know, and firemen vote. All of them.

No, I think she is hurting Boston. The answer is yes. If somebody is doing a bad job, and if I feel there's unsafe conditions, I would call Gianni, the head of FIFA, who's phenomenal, and I would say, "Let's move it to another location." And he would do that. He wouldn't love to do it, but he'd do it. Very easily he'd do it. And this is the right time to do it.

If I thought Boston was doing something that was going to be—cause safety conditions for the, you know, World Cup—I could say the same thing for the Olympics, because, you know, we have events that are in different locations for the Olympics. It's based in L.A. If I thought L.A. was not going to be prepared properly, I would move it to another location, if I had to. On that one, I'd probably have to get a different kind of a permission. But we would do that.

Gavin Newsom, he's got to get his act together, because had we not gone in at the beginning of my term, had we not gone in with a very strong, powerful force, they would have lost L.A. Now, you already lost 25,000 houses to fires. You've got a big scar right in the middle of the city. And that should have never happened, because they should have the water flowing in from the Pacific Northwest.

All they had to do is open up the valves. He didn't want to do it. And he didn't want to do it for—he says, for environmental reasons. I don't believe that. But you know, for some reason he didn't want to do it. Lost 25,000. You had no water in the fire pumps. You had no water in the sprinkler systems in the ceilings. There were no houses that—normally, the things would go in the—you—you might not have lost—you might not have lost two houses. So, if he doesn't play ball, we're going to have to be very tough with him. He's done a bad job.

You know, just to finish off on that. So, when we went in, we did a phenomenal job. We went in with great force, and that was the end of it. We put it out. We extinguished that fire, which was agitation, and it was a very dangerous position to be in. And we went in, did a great job.

But the head—the chief said we could have never done this without President Trump and without the Federal Government coming in. Okay, that was it. He said that. Now, 2 or 3 weeks later, he said, "Oh, we could have done it." But he knows he couldn't.

The city was going to be taken over if I didn't go in. And you have to remember that. Los Angeles was going to be taken over. And we have it where the chief said it, I believe, numerous times. But that was as it was happening. That was a rough one. That was nasty. And if we saw a situation like that, yes, we'd be forced to make a move.

Boston better clean up their act. That's all I can say.

Go ahead. One more question.

Q. Mr. President, should Federal workers——

Q. Mr. President, talking about——

President Trump. Yes, please.

Lapse in Federal Government Appropriations/Federal Program Eliminations

Q. Do you feel any urgency to end the shutdown in the next week, 2 weeks? Or would you be fine if this crisis ended in November and then toward the holidays with folks not getting paid?

President Trump. Well, you know, the shutdown—we've had many, many shutdowns, and this is a shutdown that shouldn't have happened. A group of people brilliantly decided to make it after the election. I said, "Thank you very much." In other words, "Give it to Trump instead of Biden." So it shouldn't happen. And likewise, debt ceiling shouldn't have.

But the big—"Great Big Beautiful Bill" solved the debt ceiling problem for 2 years.

Q. Is there a point where you would reach out to all parties and try to cut a deal?

President Trump. No, no. Here's what's happening in the shutdown though. Honestly, can I put it in plain words for you? And you're a smart guy, so you'll understand, but a lot of people don't. The Democrats are getting killed on the shutdown, because we're closing up programs that are Democrat programs that we were opposed to. So we're being—and they're never going to come back, in many cases. So we're being able to do things that we were unable to do before.

So we're closing up programs that are Democrat programs that we wanted to close up or that we never wanted to happen, and now we're closing them up, and we're not going to let them come back.

The Democrats are getting killed. And we're going to have a list of them on Friday, closing up some of the most egregious socialist, semicomunist—probably not full communist; we're saving that for New York—but semicomunist programs, and we're closing them up.

We're not closing up Republican programs because we think they work. So the Democrats are getting killed, but they're not telling the people about that. I say it. Nobody—well, I haven't said it probably as bluntly as I just said it.

But—so we are closing up Democrat programs that we think—that we disagree with, and they're never going to open again.

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

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:01 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to New York State Rep. Zohran K. Mamdani, in his capacity as a New York City mayoral candidate; George R. Stephanopoulos, coanchor, ABC's "Good Morning America" program; President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva of Brazil; former Vice President Kamala D. Harris,

in her capacity as the 2024 Democratic Presidential nominee; former White House Communications Director Alyssa Farah; R. Hunter Biden, son of former President Biden; Senate Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer; Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi L. Noem; White House Border Czar Thomas D. Homan; President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia; Giovanni V. Infantino, president, Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA); and Chief of Police Jim McDonnell of Los Angeles, CA. Secretary Rubio referred to Bolivian Presidential candidates Rodrigo Paz and Jorge "Tuto" Quiroga. A reporter referred to U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East Steven C. Witkoff. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on October 20.

Categories: Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, White House; Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Argentina, President Milei.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Bessent, Scott K.H.; Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Biden, R. Hunter; Farah, Alyssa; Harris, Kamala D.; Hegseth, Peter B.; Homan, Thomas D.; Infantino, Giovanni V.; Lula da Silva, Luiz Inácio; Mamdani, Zohran K.; McDonnell, Jim; Milei, Javier; Newsom, Gavin C.; Noem, Kristi L.; Obama, Barack; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Rubio, Marco A.; Schumer, Charles E.; Stephanopoulos, George R.; Vance, James D. J.D.; Warren, Elizabeth A.; Wertheim, Gerardo; Wu, Michelle; Xi Jinping; Zelenskyy, Volodymyr.

Subjects: 2021 civil unrest and violence at U.S. Capitol; 2024 Presidential election; Argentina, elections; Argentina, Minister of Foreign Relations, International Trade, and Worship; Argentina, President; Argentina, relations with China; Argentina, relations with U.S.; Argentina, U.S. assistance; Border security; Brazil, President; California, 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles; California, Governor; California, political demonstrations in Los Angeles; China, President; China, relations with Argentina; China, trade with U.S.; District of Columbia, law enforcement improvement efforts; Economic improvement; Federal Government appropriations, lapse; Federal programs, improvement efforts; Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup; Gaza, conflict with Israel; Gaza, hostages held by Hamas; Hamas political-paramilitary organization; Health insurance, access and availability; Illegal immigration; Illinois, crime in Chicago; India, relations with Pakistan; Inflation; Israel, military operations in Gaza; Massachusetts, political demonstrations in Boston; News media, fairness and accuracy; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Pakistan, relations with India; Public debt limit; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Russia, President; Secretary of Homeland Security; Secretary of State; Secretary of the Treasury; Secretary of War; Senate minority leader; Spain, defense spending level; Tariffs; Tennessee, law enforcement improvement efforts in Memphis; U.S. diplomatic efforts, expansion; Ukraine, President; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Ukraine, U.S. assistance; Venezuela, drug trafficking; Venezuela, human rights issues; Venezuela, Tren de Aragua criminal organization; Vice President; White House Border Czar.

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