

**Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Secretary General Mark Rutte of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and an Exchange With Reporters**  
*October 22, 2025*

*President Trump.* Well, thank you very much. It's an honor to have a friend of mine—a very good friend of mine. We've become friends, actually, through the trials and tribulations of everything. Mark Rutte, Secretary General of NATO, highly respected, every country—almost every country in Europe. I think you can almost take away the "almost" pretty soon.

*Secretary General Rutte.* Yes.

*President Trump.* But they all have great respect for the leader, and he is the leader. And we've had some very good discussions today, and things are going along pretty well as regarding Ukraine-Russia.

We thought it would be a little bit easier. That's turned out to be tougher than the Middle East. The Middle East was supposed to be the tough one, and we've solved that puzzle, but this one will get solved also. So I want to just say it's an honor to have you, Mark. Thank you very much.

*Secretary General Rutte.* Thank you so much for hosting again. And we were texting, I think it was on the day when you were in Israel and in Egypt, this tremendous success you had under your leadership, bringing peace to the Middle East.

*President Trump.* Thank you.

*Secretary General Rutte.* And then we texted each other and said, "And the next big thing has to be Ukraine-Russia." And I want to help, NATO wants to help, my colleagues want to help to basically deliver on your vision of peace in Ukraine.

And I really want to thank you for everything you're doing, including breaking the deadlock with Putin——

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Secretary General Rutte.* ——starting the dialogue in February when you came in as president in January, but also for everything you did with NATO.

The fact that we are now at this 5 percent, the huge success in The Hague at the NATO summit; the fact that Europeans are also stepping up when it comes to Ukraine—basically, the weapons from the U.S. being delivered to Ukraine, paid for allies; and Europeans coming together to discuss how can we sustain Ukraine post a peace deal.

All of this as evidence of your leadership of pushing the Europeans and the Canadians to do more, to deliver, and to equalize in spending with the U.S.

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Secretary General Rutte.* So, on all of this—and today we will talk more on how we can really bring Ukraine to the next phase and get this terrible war, this—and all the bloodshed ended.

*President Trump.* And, as you know, we are going to be making a big trip next week. Some of you are going with us. We'll be going to Malaysia, South Korea, and Japan.

In South Korea, I'll be meeting with President Xi of China. We'll have a pretty long meeting scheduled. We can work out a lot of our questions and our doubts and our tremendous assets

together. So we look forward to that. I think something will work out. We have a very good relationship, but that will be a big one.

We canceled the meeting with President Putin. It just—it didn't feel right to me. It didn't feel like we were going to get to the place we have to get, so I canceled it. But we'll do it in the future. But next week, we'll be with many of you in those locations that I told you. Then it's back to Washington.

So thank you very much, everybody.

Yes, please.

### *Russia/U.S. Sanctions*

*Q.* Mr. President, can you tell us a little bit about why you're elevating sanctions against Russia right now? What's the—

*President Trump.* I just felt it was time. We've waited a long time. I thought that we'd go long before the Middle East.

And, Mark, as you know, we did the Middle East plus seven.

*Secretary General Rutte.* Yes.

*President Trump.* So we did seven different wars from—

*Secretary General Rutte.* Absolutely.

*President Trump.* —from Pakistan and India to so many.

*Secretary General Rutte.* Yes. Azerbaijan, Armenia, Africa.

*President Trump.* Which they said was impossible to do.

*Secretary General Rutte.* Yes.

*President Trump.* All these wars, I did. And the one that we have left—we have one left. It will be nine. We have one left, and I think we'll get that done too.

*Secretary General Rutte.* Yes.

*President Trump.* I think we're on our way to getting it done.

*Secretary General Rutte.* Absolutely. We have to. Yes.

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

*President Trump.* Yes, please.

*Q.* Mr. President—

### *Russia/Ukraine*

*Q.* Mr. President, do you have a timeline for when you think this war is going to be over because of your leadership?

*President Trump.* No, I don't have a timeline. You can't have—in war, it's hard to have a timeline. You know, so many things happen in war.

Go ahead.

### *Ukraine/U.S. Security Assistance*

*Q.* What about Tomahawk missiles? Putin is definitely afraid of Tomahawks.

*President Trump.* Well, the problem with the Tomahawk that a lot of people don't know, it will take a minimum of 6 months, usually a year to learn how to use them. They're highly complex. So the only way a Tomahawk is going to be shot is if we shot it, and we're not going to do that.

But there is a tremendous learning curve with a Tomahawk. It's a very powerful weapon, very accurate weapon. And maybe that's what makes it so complex. But it will take a year—it takes a year of intense training to learn how to use it. And we know how to use it, and we're not going to be teaching other people. It will be—it's too far out into the future.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*President Trump.* Yes, please.

#### *Russia/U.S. Sanctions*

*Q.* Thank you, Mr. President. I saw, Mr. President, that you said as recently as yesterday that you still believe that Putin wants to end the war.

*President Trump.* Yes, I do.

*Q.* But then today you took this step to ratchet up the sanctions and put more pressure on him.

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Q.* What else are you going to do to encourage him to get there or can you explain why you do believe that he wants peace?

*President Trump.* Yes, it's a good question. Today is a very big day in terms of what we're doing. Look, these are tremendous sanctions. These are very big. Those are against their two big oil companies. And we hope that they won't be on for long. We hope that the war will be settled. We just answered, having to do with the various forms of missiles and everything else that we're looking at, but we don't think that's going to be necessary.

We would like to see them just take the line that has been formed over quite a long period of time and go and let's—you know, go home. Last week, they had almost 8,000 soldiers killed. Many Russians were killed last week.

*Secretary General Rutte.* Yes.

*President Trump.* Many Ukrainians were killed last week. We think it's ridiculous, and we'd like to have it end.

#### *Russia/Ukraine*

*Q.* Why do you think he wants peace though? Why do you still believe that?

*President Trump.* I think they want peace. I think they both want peace at this point.

*Secretary General Rutte.* Mm-hmm.

*President Trump.* It's been—you know, it's almost 4 years. You're going into 4 years. And if I were President, it never would've started. But yes, it's time.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

#### *Lapse in Federal Government Appropriations/National Economy/Illegal Immigration*

*Q.* Mr. President, on the shutdown. Will you—do you plan to meet with Democrats before you head to Asia? And if not—

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Q.* —why not meet with the Democrats?

*President Trump.* Well, I think it's a shame that it's shut down, because we have the greatest economy—as you were saying before——

*Secretary General Rutte.* Yes.

*President Trump.* —we have the greatest economy in the world right now by far, the United States. We have almost 18 now—it was 17, now it's \$18 trillion being poured into our country. And it's no time for shutdowns.

I don't think it's affecting what we're doing, but it's—it's too bad for a lot of people. We have a lot of good people that aren't working right now that should be. And it's because the Democrats want to try and renegotiate a deal that they had negotiated.

They want \$1.5 trillion given to illegal immigrants who came into the country. And it's going to hurt the health care of citizens of our country that have been paying into it, that have been working hard for it, that really deserve it. So we're never going to do that. It's not going to happen.

*Q.* But, Mr. President——

*President Trump.* And I will tell you, there are a lot of good Democrats that really want to make a deal. And I think—all we need is five Democrats, because we have a great support on the Republican side. So I think we need five Democrats, and there are a lot of them that want to make a deal.

So I think at some point——

*Q.* But, Mr. President, will you——

*President Trump.* —at some point, common sense will prevail.

Go ahead. You can finish up.

#### *U.S. Airstrike on Suspected Drug-Trafficking Vessel in the Eastern Pacific*

*Q.* On the drug boat strike in the Eastern Pacific.

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Q.* Can you explain to us what that was about, how it was conducted?

*President Trump.* Yes. Sure.

*Q.* Who these people were?

*President Trump.* Well, they had one today in the Pacific. And the way I look at it, every time I look, because it is violent, and it is very—it's amazing the—the weaponry that everyone that—you know, they have these boats that go 45, 50 miles an hour in the water. And when you look at the accuracy and the power—look, we have the greatest military in the world. We have the greatest weapons in the world, and you see a little bit of it there: one shot, every one dead center. And the only way you can't feel bad about it is, you realize that—you won't feel badly about it is you realize that every time you see that happen, you're saving 25,000 American lives. Every one of those boats that gets knocked out is saving 25,000 American lives. Not to mention the torn-up families all over the country.

And whenever I see that, I think—I say to myself, "I just saved 25,000 lives." I will say that there are very few boats traveling on the water right now. Actually, that includes fishing boats,

that includes any other kind of boat, but there are very few boats traveling on the water. So now they'll come in by land at a lesser—to a lesser extent, and they will be hit on land also.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

Go ahead. In the back, please.

### *U.S. Counternarcotics Efforts*

*Q.* Do you believe you have legal authority if they do come, these——

*President Trump.* Yes, we do.

*Q.* ——the terrorist cartels to——

*President Trump.* We have legal authority, right?

*Q.* But to strike them in the U.S.?

*President Trump.* We're allowed to do that. And if we do by land, we may go back to Congress, but we have—this is a national security problem.

*Q.* What is that authority?

*President Trump.* They killed 300,000 people last year—drugs—these drugs coming in. They killed 300,000 Americans last year, and that gives you legal authority.

We have a national security problem—really, I will say this: When you look at the people we're dealing with—and we know them. We know the people coming in. We know the boats. We know everything else. We're allowed to do it. It's in international waters. If we don't do it, we're going to lose hundreds of thousands of people.

Now, they'll be coming in by land a little bit more because they're not coming in by boat anymore. There are no boats in the water. There are no more boats. We know the boat almost immediately. You know, it's pretty unusual when you see somebody with a fishing rod and five engines on the back of the boat. *[Laughter]* You know, you don't need that to go fishing.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

Wait, wait, wait.

And we will hit them very hard when they come in by land. And they haven't experienced that yet, but now we're totally prepared to do that. We'll probably go back to Congress and explain exactly what we're doing when we come to the land. We don't have to do that, but I think, Marco, I'd like to do that.

You may respond to that if you want.

*U.S. Secretary of State Marco A. Rubio.* Yes. Well, I mean, the question is, bottom line, these are drug boats. The—if people want to stop seeing drug boats blow up, stop sending drugs to the United States.

*Q.* But does it matter if it's in the United States? If you were——

*Secretary Rubio.* Well, these are all in international waters. The boat——

### *U.S. Drug Interdiction Efforts*

*Q.* But would you do a strike in the United States? Or if there was American citizens involved?

*Secretary Rubio.* Well, that's a different matter. Now you're talking about a law enforcement matter.

In this particular case, they are people traveling on international waters headed towards the United States with hostilities in mind, which includes flooding our country with dangerous, deadly drugs. And they're going to be stopped. And that's what's happening.

And in the case last week, you saw there was a submarine. It was a submarine. It was a submersible. That's a drug boat all the way through.

We know what these boats are. The President just said it. We track them from the very beginning. We know who's on them, who they are, where they're coming from, what they have on them. And you know, if you're running drug boats, you're in grave danger.

*President Trump.* And drug usage is way down. And drug usage coming from the sea—they call it "ocean drugs," a little term that they use—the ocean drugs is very close to nonexistent right now. I wouldn't want to be in one of those boats heading away.

You know, they're driving happily to destroy the lives of people. And they end up, that's the end of them. So the ocean drugs and the sea drugs—"drugs by sea" they call it, also—that's almost down to nothing, as you can imagine.

So they continue to come in by land and a little bit less because they see something is going to happen. They don't like it. They see something, and they're right. Something very serious is going to happen—the equivalent of what's happening by sea. And we are going to Congress just to tell them what we're doing, just to keep them informed. We have to do it for national security; we have to do it to save lives.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia*

*Q.* Mr. President, Secretary Bessent said that—Secretary Bessent said that Vladimir Putin had not been honest and forthright in his talks with you. Just wondering if you could tell us a little bit more about your feelings about that.

And also, if I may, to—[inaudible]—Rutte, just your thoughts on whether Ukraine should get Tomahawks. Thank you.

*President Trump.* Well, I think that in terms of honesty, the only thing I can say is every time I speak with Vladimir, I have good conversations and then they don't go anywhere. They just don't go anywhere. So in that sense.

But no, look, he's fighting a war. He's in a war. It's two very competent sides, and that's the way war is. You never know with war.

But I would say that it's time—it's time to make a deal. A lot of people are dying. You know, they're not Americans, but they're people, they're souls, and they're dying by the thousands. Worst since World War II. And we really should stop it.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*Secretary General Rutte.* And to your other question. The——

*President Trump.* Yes. Yes, please.

*Secretary General Rutte.* Sorry, to your other question. This has been consistent from this President when we first met again after your reelection in Mar-a-Lago in November. You said we have to stop the killing. This is close to your heart——

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Secretary General Rutte.* ——and this is your vision. That's why this war needs to end.

When it comes to Tomahawks or whatever system, it's up to individual nations to decide whatever they want to supply to Ukraine. NATO doesn't take a position.

But I can assure you this, when the President called me in July and said we want to, again, send weapons into Ukraine, paid for by our allies, the Canadians and the Europeans, that was an important moment, and that is now taking place. And the Ambassador, myself, we are working hard at this. Already a couple of billion dollars of weaponry into Ukraine from U.S., paid for by allies.

So I'm not going to comment about the Tomahawks, but when it comes to U.S. and all the support for Ukraine, it is there and it is close to the President's heart, and I know this.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

#### *Ukraine/International Military Aid*

*President Trump.* I will say this—and Mark, you know, can say it better than anybody—the European nations and Canada have really pulled together. And it's beyond even that. I mean, it's——

*Secretary General Rutte.* Yes.

*President Trump.* ——it's really beyond that.

*Secretary General Rutte.* I was with the Australians and New Zealanders——

*President Trump.* Right. I mean, if——

*Secretary General Rutte.* ——Japan, they all want to help.

*President Trump.* ——if you want to really add them up, we could really add them up. But NATO, basically, European and Canada and a lot of other nations, they've really band together. They are not happy about what's happening with Russia and Ukraine. They're not happy at all. Neither am I.

*Q.* Mr. President——

*President Trump.* Jeff [Jeff Mason, Reuters].

#### *White House Ballroom Construction Project*

*Q.* Sir, just changing the topic slightly, I see you've got the——

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Q.* ——model of the White House and the ballroom. Many people were surprised the entire East Wing is being demolished because you had said initially that the ballroom would just touch——

*President Trump.* Yes. Well, certain areas of it——

*Q.* ——or would not be touched. What happened?

*President Trump.* Yes. Certain——

*Q.* Can you tell us what happened?

*President Trump.* Certain areas are being left. We determined that—after really a tremendous amount of study with some of the best architects in the world, we determined that really knocking it down, trying to use a little section. You know, the East Wing was not much. It was not much left from the original. It was—over the course of a hundred years, it was changed. The columns were removed, and it was a much different building. Then a story was added on in

1948, 1949. There was a story added on, which was not particularly nice. And the building was very, very much changed from what it was originally. It was never thought of as being much. It was a very small building. And rather than allowing that to hurt a very expensive, beautiful building that frankly they've been after for years.

You have that—I brought these along so people could see, but it's a—you know, there's a—relative—nobody has actually seen anything quite like it.

*[At this point, the President held up architectural drawings and other renderings.]*

I think it will be one of the great ballrooms anywhere in the world. It's about \$300 million. It's set to do many, many things, including meetings of foreign leaders, including the honoring of foreign leaders.

You can see this. This is a plan. If—it's got tables so that you honor a foreign leader, we have a proper space. Right now we have a space that, with tables, holds about 79 people. And this is a proper kind of a thing.

Now, what the White House was doing, as you know, is they were putting tents out on the lawn.

This is an interior shot of the ballroom. I think there'll be nothing like it. And it's being paid for a hundred percent by me and some friends of mine, donors to it. The Government is paying absolutely nothing.

We're also working with the military on it because they want to make sure everything's perfect, and the military is very much involved in this. They want to make sure everything is absolutely beautiful. You can see the kind of interiors that we're talking about. That's an interior of the ballroom. And it's the highest level. And you see it goes beautifully with the White House. I mean, the mix is beautiful.

So, over the years, many Presidents have made changes. This, obviously, would be the biggest change. But this was something they've wanted for at least 150 years. Many of you have gone to the events where they had, as an example, President Xi, or they had, you know, a leader of one of the countries, including the King and the Queen from your favorite country, frankly.

*Secretary General Rutte.* Absolutely.

*President Trump.* But where they'd be honored, and there'd be in a tent out on the lawn, and it would——

*Secretary General Rutte.* Yes.

*President Trump.* ——rain and it was a disaster.

Brian [Brian Glenn, Real America's Voice] is shaking his head. You know what I'm talking about.

And so I thought I'd bring this out because this is going to be probably the finest ballroom ever built. And we're doing it no cost to the country. It's being put in—the money is being put in by me and donors, very great patriots actually.

And the spirit on the building of it is amazing. We are using little sections of footings and various other things, but that's sort of irrelevant.

In order to do it properly, we had to take down the existing structure. The way it was shown, it looked like we were touching the White House. We don't touch the White House. That's a bridge—a glass bridge going from the White House to the ballroom. Then you get into the lobby



of the ballroom. And then you go into the magnificent—the main room. And it's something that has gotten incredible reviews.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

#### *Communication Concerning the White House Ballroom Construction Project*

*Q.* Just to follow up on that—just to follow up on that, sir? I just want a quick follow-up on that question. Your response to people who——

*Q.* Why do you—sir, why do you believe—why do you believe, Mr. President——

*Q.* ——say that you haven't been transparent enough about this?

*President Trump.* I haven't been transparent? Really?

*Q.* That's—some of your critics feel that—*[inaudible]*——

*President Trump.* Really? I've shown—this to everybody that would listen.

Third-rate reporters didn't see it because they didn't look. You're a third-rate reporter, always have been.

*Q.* I'm just asking about your——

*President Trump.* So third-rate reporters didn't look, but anybody that asked, these pictures have been in newspapers. They've been all over the place. And you know, we're very proud of it. It's gotten great reviews. It's gotten really great reviews, so——

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

I think we've been more transparent than anybody's ever been.

#### *Russia/U.S. Sanctions*

*Q.* Why do you believe, Mr. President, that the sanctions that you're announcing today will push Putin to the negotiating table?

*President Trump.* Well, I don't know that they will. I think that they'll certainly have an impact there. They're massive sanctions. It's sanctions in oil, the two biggest oil companies—among the biggest in the world, but they're Russian. They do a lot of oil. And hopefully, it'll push—hopefully, he'll become reasonable and, hopefully, Zelenskyy will be reasonable too.

You know, it takes two to tango, as they say. And we're going to find out. They've had—they hate each other. These two people hate each other. You know that better than anybody.

*Secretary General Rutte.* Yes, sir.

*President Trump.* And it makes it more difficult than it should be. This should be easier to do, but the level of hatred between Zelenskyy and Putin is very substantial.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

#### *Russia/Ukraine*

*Q.* Will NATO—also——

*Secretary General Rutte.* But could I add one—can I add—could I add one thing?

*Q.* Will NATO also—*[inaudible]*——

*Secretary General Rutte.* Could I add one thing?

*President Trump.* Let him——

*Q.* —sanctions, Mr. Rutte? Thank you.

*Secretary General Rutte.* Could I add one thing?

What the President is doing today with these sanctions is putting more pressure, of course on both parts—in this case, on Russia. It's all about changing the calculus, making sure that Putin understands that the President's vision this weekend of having a cease-fire—stop where they are, as you literally said—that this has to be step one now. And for him to really accept that vision and to come to the table. And then you have to put pressure, and this is exactly what he did today.

*President Trump.* Along with Europe. I mean, Europe—look, these are becoming—they've actually become friends of mine. I think—

*Secretary General Rutte.* Yes, sir.

*President Trump.* —all of them.

*Secretary General Rutte.* Yes.

*President Trump.* We have a very close relationship. And they want to see it end too. They really want to see it end. But I can say they're totally committed. If this went on for 10 more years, Europe is behind them. I—they just can't let that happen. You can't let what's been going on—now, it should have never happened. It would've never happened if I were President. But it did happen. I inherited. This was Biden, a man who was, without question—you take a look at the new walkway, the "Presidential Walk of Fame," we call it. Biden is the worst President we've ever had, if he was even a President. The people that surrounded that desk made those decisions.

But this should have never happened. It wouldn't have happened. But it did happen. I inherited it. We're going to get it ended, hopefully, soon.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*Q.* Mr. President, thank you.

*President Trump.* Yes, please.

*Q.* You had a Truth Social post earlier this afternoon talking about a Wall Street Journal report as a fake story.

*President Trump.* Yes. Fake.

*Q.* It sort of framed—

*President Trump.* The Wall Street Journal is fake.

*Q.* So the story—

*President Trump.* Less fake than financial than it is on gossip.

#### *Ukraine/U.S. Security Assistance*

*Q.* Can you just confirm that my understanding of what's happening is accurate? As I understand it, that story framed it like we had just lifted, the U.S, a restriction on intelligence or weapons, recently.

*President Trump.* No, it said that I gave Ukraine permission to shoot missiles deep into Russia. I didn't do that.

Second of all, they're not using our missiles. They're using, I think, European missiles, or from someplace. But they're not using ours. And what they do, I don't control that. But I do control our missiles. They're not shooting our missiles in. It was a fake story.

*Q.* And the intelligence——

*President Trump.* Wall Street Journal is—does a lot of fake stories.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*President Gustavo Petro Urrego of Colombia*

*Q.* Thank you very much. The President of Colombia, in a recent interview, said that if you won't change, he thinks that people should get rid of you.

*President Trump.* We're talking about now Colombia the country, not the university.

*Q.* Country, yes.

*President Trump.* Go ahead. He said what?

*Q.* He said that if you won't change, then perhaps you need to be gotten rid of. Do you view that as a threat?

*President Trump.* Well, he's a thug and bad guy. He's a guy that is making a lot of drugs. We've just, as of today, stopped all payments going to Colombia—the country Colombia, also the school Columbia. [Laughter] No, we settled. We made a settlement with them.

But no, he's a thug, and he's a bad guy, and he's hurt his country very badly. They're doing very poorly, Colombia. They make cocaine. They have cocaine factories. They grow all sorts of crap that's drugs, bad drugs coming into the United States, goes, generally, through Mexico. And he better watch it or we'll take very serious action against him and his country. His country is—what he has led his country into is a death trap.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Please.

*Ukraine/North Atlantic Treaty Organization*

*Q.* Has the Secretary General presented his Ukraine peace plan to you. Are you prepared to be chairman of a board of peace?

*Secretary General Rutte.* Oh, there is no Secretary General peace plan. But I'm here—no, no, really—I really want to correct him because I saw some of that in the media. Of course, many people are thinking how to bring this terrible war to an end and supporting the President in doing that.

Why I'm here is to dialogue again with the President how I can be, how NATO, my colleagues and other colleagues in NATO can be of maximum support to get that done. But there is no peace plan on the table. I mean, if there is a peace plan, it is what the President said last Friday and Sunday—

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Secretary General Rutte.* ——which is: Stop where you are. Stop the fighting. [Inaudible]

*President Trump.* This is about NATO. We're a very proud member of NATO. We have a great relationship with the countries of NATO. I think made much better by our visit a few months ago when—

*Secretary General Rutte.* Yes, it was great.

*President Trump.* ——they agreed to 5 percent instead of 2 percent of GDP. That was a big concession. I think that was a concession that 2 years ago, nobody would have said—

*Secretary General Rutte.* Nobody. Even——

*President Trump.* Even a year ago.

*Secretary General Rutte.* Even 9 months ago, before you were elected.

*President Trump.* They—yes, they would've said that's not possible.

*Secretary General Rutte.* Absolutely.

*President Trump.* And the difference is they're paying 5 percent as opposed to not paying 2 percent. They we—a lot of them weren't paying—with the exception of Spain. I think you're going to have to talk to Spain——

*Secretary General Rutte.* We'll get there.

*President Trump.* Because Spain is not a team player. So other than—other than Spain, everybody's a hundred percent, and you could solve the Spain problem very easily, I think, you know, if you——

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Yes, Brian. Brian, go ahead.

#### *Domestic Agricultural Products/Gasoline Prices/Inflation*

*Q.* They soybean farmers, Mr. President——

*President Trump.* Yes, go ahead. And then we'll take Brian. Go ahead.

*Q.* The soybean farmers, are they going to be getting support from you soon? And—you your message to——

*President Trump.* Yes, well, they do.

*Q.* ——Xi ahead of your meeting?

*President Trump.* So what's happened, you could say with that, you could say with beef, with all of it, the beef—the ranchers, let's say, who have done a great job, have lost their shirts for many, many years. They've really been decimated, and I helped them a lot. I put tariffs on things coming into the country, including beef, and that gave them a chance to finally have a decent industry.

We are going to be talking to them. They're great people, but they've been hurt for 25, 30 years. They've been losing because other countries have taken advantage of them. And, by putting tariffs on, they've been able to make a few dollars. They've been able to have an industry.

But I also want to keep the beef prices low. So I'll be talking with the ranchers, and I'll be speaking with a lot of different people, including Scott and Howard, and we'll do something, because prices are way down in our country.

Energy is way down. I think you're going to see \$2 gasoline very soon. I see that it's \$2.50 in a lot of places—\$2.50. We were heading to 5, 6, and 7 dollars.

If Biden didn't go back to my policy toward the end, you would have seen—but he didn't go back to the full policy, and he missed the most important thing. So we were way up to—I think you're going to see \$2 gasoline. We could even break that number. That's a big difference.

The only—the cost that's really up is beef, and the fake news only wants to talk about beef. And what I did is I made it possible for those people to survive. They're incredible people, but they were being decimated by other countries, and I didn't want that to happen.

So prices are way down. Groceries are down. Everything is down. Energy is way down. Even interest rates with a bad Chairman of the Fed—he's terrible. He's a fool. But even interest rates are down.

So our country has never done better. We're going to take in, I think, 21—\$20-, \$21 trillion this year. No country has ever taken in more than 3, and we're going to take in \$21 trillion of investments because of the tariffs. If we didn't have tariffs, we would be a mess. We would be a national security problem, and we've done a job.

So I'm very happy about that. We're going to do something very quickly and easily on beef to get it down. The ranchers understand that. They're so happy for what I've done for—I saved them. I don't think you'd have any beef in this country if I didn't do that. So we're very proud of that.

Yes, Brian.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*Political Demonstrations in Los Angeles, California/Public Safety in the District of Columbia/Federal Law Enforcement Support in U.S. Cities*

*Q.* Yes, sir. Yesterday in Los Angeles, immigration officials were attacked by some protesters——

*President Trump.* Yes, sure.

*Q.* ——in an attempt to arrest the illegal alien. Gavin Newsom, other Democrats have used very aggressive language in terms of how to address ICE agents——

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Q.* ——out in the field. Is there any responsibility that we can place on Gavin Newsom and other elected officials for using such aggressive language?

*President Trump.* Well, Gavin has to be careful. Remember that when I first came in, they had a terrible riot in Los Angeles. They had the fires, which shouldn't have happened. They didn't have the water for the fires. They should have had the water coming in from the Pacific Northwest. They didn't have the waters. They didn't have water in the hydrants or the sprinklers. So they had the fires, and then they had the riot.

And if we didn't go and take care of that riot, you would have lost Los Angeles. You would have canceled the Olympics, which is, because of me, in Los Angeles.

And the police commissioner, the head of the police said: "If the President didn't come in, we would've lost Los Angeles. We did not have the capability of taking care of it." And he said it very strongly, and we did a great job. And within a week, it was all done. Within 1 day, it was done. But within a week it was all done. And then they go back to their normal practice of weakness, of not taking care of criminals—meaning taking care of putting them in jails where they should be.

Washington, DC—and you all are the best people for that, because Washington DC is now one of the safest cities. It was one of the most dangerous cities in the country. Now, Washington, DC, believe it or not—I'm embarrassed to say it in front of you—but Washington, DC, went from one of the worst, most dangerous cities to you can walk down the street, you can send your child to meet you at a location. Your child is going to be fine. We have a very, very safe city. One of the safest. And you know, very proud of that.

Memphis, by the way, is coming along fantastically. We're in Memphis right now.

We're—we had the FBI in Chicago. We're doing things. We haven't surged Chicago yet. When we do, Chicago will be—very quickly, a very, very safe city.

But if you look at what's happening in Memphis, it's great. But you've got to look at Washington. People are coming up to me, people that work in the White House, they're saying, "Thank you, sir." And I immediately know what they're thanking me about. It's thanking—they can walk to work. They would never walk to work a year ago. They can walk into work, and they feel safe and secure, and it's beautiful.

And I'll tell you what, it's really an honor to add that great ballroom to the structures in Washington. It's going to be one of the great ballrooms of the world, and I think it's going to be something you're all going to be very proud of.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

### *China-U.S. Trade*

*Q.* As it relates to your meeting that's coming up with President Xi, what do you hope comes out of that meeting? What deliverables come out of that meeting?

*President Trump.* I think we'll make a deal. I think we're going to make a deal on—the rare earth is the least of it.

Look, the tariffs are much more powerful than the rare earth. The rare earth is a disturbance, but there's a lot of rare earth around.

*Secretary General Rutte.* Yes.

*President Trump.* I'll tell you, I've had more calls on rare earth. We've got it. Everybody's—we'll make a deal on, I think, everything. I think we're going to make a deal on soybeans and the farmers. I think we're going to make a deal on maybe even nuclear.

You know, President Putin, in his call, mentioned to me about nuclear, where we do a deescalation. And I'm fine with that. I think it's good. I think it's a very appropriate thing.

We have the most nuclear weapons. Russia is second. China is actually third by a long way, but they'll be even within 4 or 5 years. Too many. And we are talking about deescalation. That's already being talked about.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

I think we'll add—we'll probably add China into the mix.

### *China/India/Russian Oil and Gas Supply*

*Q.* Mr. President can you convince President Xi to stop purchasing all of that Russian oil that's funding this war against Ukraine?

*President Trump.* Well, I think I'll be talking to them about it. I think it's a little bit of a different talk. India, as you know, has told me they are top—stop—you know, they're—it's a process. You can't just stop it. But by the end of the year, they'll be down to almost nothing.

That's a big thing. That was almost 40 percent of the oil. India, they've been great. Spoke to Prime Minister Modi yesterday. They've been absolutely great.

China is a little bit different. You know, they're a little bit different relationship they have with Russia. It was never good, but because of Biden and Obama, they got forced together. They should never have been forced together, but they're a little bit forced.

But they're—by nature, they're not—they can't be friendly. They can't be friendly. By nature, they can't—I hope they are friendly, frankly, but they can't be—the—you don't—you should not

have forced Russia and China together. And Biden did that and Obama did that. They forced them together because of energy, because of oil. And so they are closer they would—than they would normally be. I think I'll probably be talking about it.

What I'll really be talking to him about is how do we end the war with Russia and Ukraine, whether it's through oil or energy or anything else. And I think he's going to be very receptive. He would now like to—I don't—I'm not sure that he did at the beginning. He would now like to see that war end.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

#### *President Xi Jinping of China*

*Q.* Do you think Xi—Mr. President, do you think Xi plays an important role in terms of inserting himself and convincing Putin, who he speaks to regularly, to stop the war right now?

*President Trump.* Yes, I do. I think he can have a big influence on Putin. I think he can have a big influence on a lot of people. Look, he's a respected man. He's a very strong leader of a very big country. Yes, I think he can have a big influence. And we will certainly be talking about Russia-Ukraine.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

In the back.

#### *Ukraine/Russia*

*Q.* Thank you, Mr. President. Liam Cosgrove with Zero Hedge. My question is actually for the Secretary General.

Mr. Secretary, I don't know if you've seen this, but polling out of Ukraine shows a massive collapse in Ukrainian support for the war. A Gallup Poll had it just 23 percent. That's less than a quarter. Zelenskyy came out today praising President Trump's proposal for freezing the front lines of battle as part of a ceasefire. He said that's a good compromise.

So people view your coming here as, you know, you're lobbying the U.S. Government to continue its involvement in the war. You're obviously lobbying for more NATO weapons to be sent to Ukraine. But Ukrainians themselves don't want to fight the war. So how do you justify that morally?

*Secretary General Rutte.* Well, I'm lobbying only for one thing, and that is to make sure that we end this war. And I don't have to lobby the President because we totally agree on this, and this is what he has been doing from day one. Everything he could do to break the deadlock with Putin, get a dialogue going, dialoguing also with Zelenskyy, and getting this war done, it's crucial. And the fact that U.S. is now supplying weapons into Ukraine, paid for by allies, is extremely important. And that's now happening since 2, 3 months.

*Q.* But that's been happening for——

*Secretary General Rutte.* And about \$2 billion moving into Ukraine.

*Q.* —4 years and the war hasn't wind down. How do you—why do you think that'll wind it down now?

*Secretary General Rutte.* What do you mean?

*Q.* More weapons? You think more weapons will wind down the war?

*Secretary General Rutte.* No, I mean, there's more to be done. So what you need—what the President said this weekend: Stop where you are, so basically do a cease-fire, and then have all

your discussions about territory and whatever. But first, stop the war. This is what you said on Friday and on Sunday. We have to——

*President Trump.* It's a war—I mean, your question is really a fair one. It's a war that should have never started.

*Secretary General Rutte.* And—but it has to be ended.

*President Trump.* And you know—you know how I feel about it.

*Secretary General Rutte.* And now it has to be an end.

*President Trump.* But it's a war that should have never started. And we're not selling any weapons to Ukraine. We're selling them to NATO——

*Secretary General Rutte.* Yes.

*President Trump.* ——which is different from before with Biden. He just gave \$350 billion worth of weapons and cash right into Ukraine, and that was so foolish. But we sell them to NATO and, in theory, you can do what you want with them, you—it doesn't have to be Ukraine, but probably, it is mostly.

*Secretary General Rutte.* No, what nations are doing now is buying from this program and making sure that the supplies——

*President Trump.* Europe.

*Secretary General Rutte.* ——in Ukraine—so Europeans and Canadians.

And, for example, these are interceptors for the Patriot systems, crucial to protect the cities. Today, again, a Russian attack has killed children, or at least seriously wounded children in kindergarten in Ukraine. So we need to make sure that the air defense systems are in place and we need the U.S. systems to do that. And the Europeans are paying for that. And this is exactly the type of actions we needed. And the President is doing that and trying everything to get this war to end, starting with the ceasefire.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*Russia/Ukraine*

*Q.* Mr. President, do you still believe that Putin wants to take all of Ukraine?

*President Trump.* I always felt that way. I always felt he wanted to. When I was in my first term, I was with—you know, I was very close to him, relatively speaking. It was harder because of the Russia, Russia, Russia hoax. But I would talk to President Putin about Ukraine, and it was the apple of his eye. I'd say it was the apple of his eye. But it would have never happened. He knew the consequences were too great.

When we had a rigged election and all of a sudden I wasn't there, he said, "Wow." I think he looked at Afghanistan, how horribly that was handled, so stupidly. And I think that really gave him a little additional, you know, incentive. I always felt he wanted the whole thing, not a piece of it. But I think now he's willing to negotiate a little bit further, and I think he's willing to make a deal. We'll see. We'll see.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

We don't want him—we don't to have the whole thing.

Go ahead, please.

*Tariffs/The President's Foreign Policy*



*Q.* Thank you, Mr. President. You have this big tariffs case before the Supreme Court. It's November the 5th.

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Q.* You suggested that you might actually show up to the Supreme Court for oral arguments.

*President Trump.* Yes, I'd like to. I think it's one of the most important decisions we'll ever have for the Supreme Court. With tariffs, we're a strong, sound country. We are a nationally secure and internationally secure country. We're a very rich country.

Without tariffs, it's a slog for this country, a big slog. I think it's one of the most important decisions in the history of the Supreme Court. And I might go there. I really believe I have an obligation to go there.

We are doing so well as a country right now because of tariffs. And you have to understand, tariffs have been used against us for many years, decades. And to—I mean, just slowly but surely hurting our country so badly. That's why we owe \$37 trillion. We owe that because other countries have taken advantage of us over many, many decades, over many decades. And now, we're a rich country. We're taking in money like we've never done before. Without tariffs, that would not be happening.

And also, I solved, as you know, eight wars. Of the eight, five of them, maybe even six of them, are because of tariffs. The threat of tariffs on these nation—if you want to fight, that's okay. India and Pakistan, if you want to fight, that's okay, but you're going to pay tariffs and they're going to be very substantial. And we're in the midst of a trade deal. And they said, "We don't want to do that." Two days later, they call up, and they're not going to fight anymore. The peace—they have peace.

But I've done that. Out of eight, I would say six—six times, five times, six times—tariffs are vital to this country. And tariffs have been used against us by China, by every other country. And all we're doing is using them to negotiate fair deals.

And as you know, we made a fair deal with Japan. We made a fair deal with all of Europe, the European Union.

*Secretary General Rutte.* Yes. Yes.

*President Trump.* We made a fair deal with South Korea. These are countries that were taking so much money away from us, not sustainable. And now, we're taking in hundreds of billions and even trillions of dollars.

If this country is not allowed to have tariffs, if this country is not allowed to have the President of the United States negotiate on behalf of it with tariffs, we are put in a position where we're going to be a third-world country. We can't let that happen.

I think it's the most important case that we're going to have for many, many years to come—one of the most important cases we've ever had.

With tariffs, we're a rich, secure country. Without tariffs, we're a laughing stock. We'll be a laughing stock. And I don't want to have anything to do with that.

Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:11 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to King Willem-Alexander and Queen Máxima of the Netherlands; President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine; Gov. Gavin C. Newsom of California; Chief of Police Jim McDonnell of Los Angeles, CA; former President Barack Obama; President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of

Russia; President Gustavo Francisco Petro Urrego of Colombia; Secretary of the Treasury Scott K.H. Bessent; Secretary of Commerce Howard L. Lutnick; and Chairman of the Federal Reserve System Board of Governors Jerome H. Powell. Secretary General Rutte referred to U.S. Permanent Representative to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Matthew G. Whitaker. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on November 4.

*Categories:* Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, White House; Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Secretary General Rutte.

*Locations:* Washington, DC.

*Names:* Bessent, Scott K.H.; Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Lutnick, Howard W.; Máxima, Queen; McDonnell, Jim; Modi, Narendra; Newsom, Gavin C.; Obama, Barack; Petro Urrego, Gustavo Francisco; Powell, Jerome H.; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Rubio, Marco A.; Rutte, Mark; Willem-Alexander, King; Xi Jinping; Zelenskyy, Volodymyr.

*Subjects:* Afghanistan, withdrawal of U.S. military forces; Agricultural production, strengthening efforts; California, 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles; California, Governor; China, President; China, relations with U.S.; China, trade with Russia; Colombia, drug trafficking; Colombia, President; Colombia, U.S. assistance; Critical minerals, supply chain improvements; District of Columbia, law enforcement improvement efforts; European Union, trade with U.S.; Federal Bureau of Investigation; Federal Government appropriations, lapse; Federal Reserve System; Gasoline costs; Gaza, conflict with Israel; Illegal drugs, interdiction efforts; Illegal immigration; Illinois, crime in Chicago; India, Prime Minister; India, relations with Pakistan; India, trade with Russia; Inflation; Israel, military operations in Gaza; Japan, trade with U.S.; Netherlands, King; Netherlands, Queen; News media, fairness and accuracy; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Nuclear weapons, global disarmament efforts; Opioid epidemic, efforts to combat; Pakistan, relations with India; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Russia, oil supply and refining; Russia, President; Russia, U.S. sanctions; Secretary of Commerce; Secretary of State; Secretary of the Treasury; South Korea, trade with U.S.; Spain, defense spending level; Suspected drug-trafficking vessels, U.S. airstrikes in Caribbean Sea and Eastern Pacific; Tariffs; Tennessee, law enforcement improvement efforts in Memphis; U.S. diplomatic efforts, expansion; U.S. military readiness, improvement efforts; Ukraine, international military aid; Ukraine, President; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Ukraine, U.S. assistance; White House Ballroom construction project.

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