

**The President's News Conference**

*February 20, 2026*

*The President.* Wow, got a lot of people. That's a new record. We set a record every time.

Well, thank you very much for being here. The Supreme Court's ruling on tariffs is deeply disappointing, and I'm ashamed of certain members of the Court—absolutely ashamed—for not having the courage to do what's right for our country.

I'd like to thank and congratulate Justices Thomas, Alito, and Kavanaugh for their strength and wisdom and love of our country, which is, right now, very proud of those Justices.

When you read the dissenting opinions, there's no way that anyone can argue against them. There's no way.

Foreign countries that have been ripping us off for years are ecstatic. They're so happy, and they're dancing in the streets, but they won't be dancing for long, that I can assure you.

The Democrats on the Court are thrilled, but they will automatically vote no. They're an automatic no, just like in Congress. They're an automatic no. They're against anything that makes America strong, healthy, and great again. They also are a, frankly, disgrace to our Nation, those Justices. They're an automatic no. No matter how good a case you have, it's a no.

But you can't knock their loyalty. It's one thing you can do with some of our people.

Others think they're being politically correct, which has happened before—far too often with certain members of this Court, and it's happened so often with this Court; what a shame—having to do with voting, in particular, when in fact, they're just being fools and lapdogs for the RINOs and the radical-left Democrats. And not that this should have anything at all to do with it, they're very unpatriotic and disloyal to our Constitution.

It's my opinion that the Court has been swayed by foreign interests and a political movement that is far smaller than people would ever think. It's a small movement.

I won by millions of votes. We won in a landslide. With all the cheating that went on—there was a lot of it—but we still won in a landslide. Too big to rig.

But these people are obnoxious, ignorant, and loud. They're very loud, and I think certain Justices are afraid of that. They don't want to do the right thing. They're afraid of it.

This was an important case to me, more as a symbol of economic national security and also, I would say, just for our country itself—so important—because we're doing so well as a country. We've never done so well.

The good news is that there are methods, practices, statutes, and authorities—as recognized by the entire Court in this terrible decision and also as recognized by Congress, which they refer to—that are even stronger than the IEEPA tariffs available to me as President of the United States.

And, in actuality, I was very modest in my ask of other countries and businesses because I wanted to do—and I—it's very important—I wanted to be very well behaved because I wanted to do anything—I didn't want to do anything that would affect the decision of the Court, because I understand the Court. I understand how they are very easily swayed. I wanted to be a good boy.

I have very effectively utilized tariffs over the past year to make America great again. Our stock market has just recently broken 50,000 on the Dow and, simultaneously and even more amazingly, broken 70—broken 7,000 on the S&P—two numbers that everybody thought, upon our landslide election victory, could not be attained.

Think of that: Nobody thought it was possible to do it within 4 years, and we did it in 1 year. They said, "You'll never be able"—you'll go back and you read the geniuses, read their statements. All of the Nobel Prize winners in economics, they said, "No, you couldn't do it in 4 years." Well, we didn't do it in 4 years. We did it in 1 year. We broke every record in the book, and we're continuing to do so.

Tariffs have likewise been used to end five of the eight wars that I settled. I settled eight wars, whether you like it or not, including India-Pakistan, big ones, nuclear—could have been nuclear.

Prime Minister of Pakistan said yesterday at the great meeting that we had—the Peace Board—he said yesterday that "President Trump could have saved 35 million lives by getting us to stop fighting." They were getting ready to do some bad things.

But they have given us great national security, these tariffs have, and, together with our strong borders, reduced fentanyl coming into our country by 30 percent when I use them as a penalty against countries illegally sending this poison into our country to poison our youth.

All of those tariffs remain. They all remain. I don't know if you know that or not. They all remain. We're still getting them, and we will after the decision.

Guess there's nobody left to appeal to. But again, those three people—such respect. I've had a lot of respect for them anyway, but such great respect.

But other alternatives will now be used to replace the ones that the Court incorrectly rejected. We have alternatives. Great alternatives. Could be more money. We'll take in more money, and we'll be a lot stronger for it. We were taking in hundreds of billions of dollars. We'll continue to do so.

To show you how ridiculous the opinion is, however, the Court said that I'm not allowed to charge even \$1. I can't charge \$1. Can't charge a dollar. I would have used 1 penny, but we don't make the pennies anymore. We save money. Can't charge \$1 to any country under IEEPA—not \$1—I assume, to protect other countries. This must have been done to protect those other countries—certainly not the United States of America, which they should be interested in protecting, and that's what they're supposed to be protecting.

But I am allowed to cut off any and all trade or business with that same country. In other words, I can destroy the trade. I can destroy the country. I'm even allowed to impose a foreign-country-destroying embargo. I can embargo. I can do anything I want, but I can't charge \$1, because that's not what it says, and that's not the way it even reads.

I can do anything I want to do to them, but I can't charge any money. So I'm allowed to destroy the country, but I can't charge them a little fee. I could give them a little 2-cent fee, but I cannot charge. Under any circumstances, I cannot charge them anything.

Think of that. How ridiculous is that? I'm allowed to embargo them. I'm allowed to tell them, "You can't do business in the United States anymore. We want you out of here." But if I want to charge them \$10, I can't do that.

It's incorrect. Their decision is incorrect. But it doesn't matter, because we have very powerful alternatives that have been approved by this decision.

You know, they've been approved by their decision, for those that thought they had us.

And they're saying that I have the absolute right to license but not the right to charge a license fee. So, think of that. I have the right to license. It's a very powerful word. In many ways, license is more powerful than tariffs. In fact, I was thinking about using it, but they came up with the idea that I can license—just like the people that were opposing me told them to do—but not the right to charge a license fee. Think of that.

Whoever heard of such a thing? What license has ever been issued without the right to charge a fee? You get a license; you charge a fee. It's automatic, but not with this Court.

But now the Court has given me the unquestioned right to ban all sorts of things from coming into our country, to destroy foreign countries, but—a much more powerful right than many people ever thought we even had, but not the right to charge a fee. How crazy is that?

Our country is the hottest country anywhere in the world right now, and it was a dead country 1½ years ago under an incompetent President. But now I'm going to go in a different direction, probably the direction that I should have gone the first time.

But I read the language. I'm very good at reading language, and it read our way 100 percent. But now I'll go the way I could have gone originally, which is even stronger than our original choice.

As Justice Kavanaugh—whose stock has gone so—you have to see; I'm so proud of him—wrote in his dissent, "Although I firmly disagree with the Court's holding today, the decision might not substantially constrain a President's ability to order tariffs going forward." So might—think of that. "The decision might not substantially constrain." And it doesn't. He's right. In fact, I can charge much more than I was charging.

So I'm going to just start: "Although I firmly disagree with the Court's holding today, the decision might not substantially constrain a President's ability to order tariffs going forward. That is because numerous other Federal statutes"—which is so true—"authorize the President to impose tariffs and might justify most (if not all) of the tariffs issued in this case"—even more tariffs, actually. "Those statutes include"—think of that. "Those statutes include, for example, the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 (section 232)"—all of these things I know so well—"the Trade Act of 1974 (sections 122, 201, 301); and the Tariff Act of 1930 (section 338)."

All clear, but it's a little bit longer process. I thought I'd make things simple, but they didn't let us do that.

I would like to thank Justice Kavanaugh for his—frankly, his genius and his—great ability. Very proud of that appointment.

In actuality, while I am sure that they did not mean to do so, the Supreme Court's decision today made a President's ability to both regulate trade and impose tariffs more powerful and more crystal clear rather than less. I don't think they meant that. I'm sure they didn't.

It's terrible. And to think that the Democrats who oppose this—only because they want to go the opposite way. They'd like to pack the Court. They want to put on 21 people. They want to pack the Court, pack the Supreme Court. Maybe they should do it. Maybe they would be better off if they did it. They want to pack the Court. They want to do anything to hurt our country.

There will no longer be any doubt—and the income coming in and the protection of our companies and country will actually increase because of this decision. I don't think the Court meant that, but it's the way it is. Based on longstanding law and hundreds of victories and even—as I was pointed out before—even thousands of victories over the years to the contrary, the Supreme Court did not overrule tariffs. They merely overruled a particular use of IEEPA tariffs, and essentially, it's the use to get a fee.

I can do anything I want with IEEPA. Anything. I just can't charge anybody for it. I can license. I just can't charge them. It's ridiculous.

But it's okay, because we have other ways, numerous other ways.

The ability to block, embargo, restrict, license, or impose any other condition on a foreign country's ability to conduct trade with the United States under IEEPA has been fully confirmed by this decision. So now there's no doubt, because, you know, there were a lot of questions about tariffs because no President was smart enough to use them to protect our country from those countries and businesses that were ripping us off.

You took a look at the deficits that we had with some of these countries. It was disgraceful, what they got away with for many, many decades.

But now we know, because this decision affirms all those things that some people weren't sure about.

In order to protect—and it says so. In order to protect our country, a President can actually charge more tariffs than I was charging in the past period of a year under the various tariffs authorities. So we can use other of the statutes, other of the tariff authorities—which have also been confirmed and are fully allowed. Therefore, effective immediately, all national security tariffs, under section 232 and existing section 301 tariffs—they're existing; they're there—remain in place—fully in place and in full force and effect.

Today I will sign an order to impose a 10-percent global tariff under section 122, over and above our normal tariffs already being charged, and we're also initiating several section 301 and other investigations to protect our country from unfair trading practices of other countries and companies.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I say quite simply, which I've said for a long time: Make America great again. And interestingly, we've already made it great, so I don't have to use that, but I don't think we'll ever give up on MAGA. MAGA is always going to be with us.

If you have a few questions, you can let us know.

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

But just to end. So we're going forward. We will be able to take in more money, and there'll no longer be doubt, because there was always doubt.

I know the people that brought the lawsuit, and, you know, they're sleazebags—major sleazebags. But I know them, and they're foreign-country centric. They were sending things into our country, and the people representing them knew full well. But they were sending things into our country, and they were beneficial to other countries, but very, very bad for us. And I stopped it, and we'll just keep it going.

So we have more of a—we have a totally firm decision now, and I don't think the Court meant it, because the Court doesn't show great spirit toward our country, in my opinion. A lot of bad decisions. But there are usually ways around it.

This is something we could have done—as Justice Kavanaugh said, we could have done this originally, but we're doing it now. And the numbers could be far greater than the hundreds of billions we've already taken in.

Yes. Yes, please.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*Q.* President Trump——

*Q.* Mr. President, I'm very curious, you've spoken about——

*The President.* I didn't call you.

In the red.

### *Supreme Court Associate Justices*

*Q.* Thank you so much, Mr. President. Justice Thomas and Alito, as you know, are the most conservative constitutional Justices. Do you think that you'll get to appoint two more Justices later this term with similar ideologies? And what type of vetting process will they go through to ensure they uphold——

*The President.* I don't know, but they're——

*Q.* ——the Constitution?

*The President.* ——great Justices. That's all I could say. And I hope they're going to be around a long time. I hope they're going to stay healthy. They're great people. They're great—and Justice Alito too, to add to the group.

*Q.* What's your message to Americans——

*The President.* These are great—these are great men. They're with a great love of our country and a great understanding of the law.

Please.

### *Tariffs/National Economy*

*Q.* Mr. President, are you going Congress to take additional action on tariffs now? Have you spoken to Leader Thune?

*The President.* No, I don't need to. It's already been approved. I mean, I would ask Congress and probably get it.

When people look at the real numbers, and you look at hundreds of billions of dollars that have come into our country—yesterday, I was at a steel plant, as you know, and I went to a great, great place; great plant; great, wonderful people, and they were telling me—I said to them—you were there, a lot of the press in this room. Of course, I don't think the plane is big enough to take the press in this room, but a lot of the press right here were in Georgia.

And I said to the owner, if—I made a speech at a factory. They make steel products. And I said: "How are you? Nice to meet you. How's business?" "President, I'd love to kiss you." This is a very powerful man. I don't want to be kissed by that man. [*Laughter*] But a very powerful, strong man. He's been in the steel business for many years. His father started it.

And he said, "Sir, I want to kiss you." I said, "Why?" He said, "Because we were down to working 1 hour a week, and then you came in and imposed tariffs, and all of that foreign junk that they were dropping into our country stopped. And we're now going to double shifts 7 days a week, and we may be very soon going to 24 hours, around the clock, almost 7 days a week." He said, "Sir, I want to kiss you so badly." And I said, "No, thank you."

[*Several reporters spoke at once.*]

But, you know, what? He just—and just to finalize it. He said, "All"—this a great place in Georgia. He said, "All up and down the highway, same exact answer, sir. We were all going out of business. We were going to go bankrupt. We were all going out of business. And now every one of us are thriving, and we're hiring people like we haven't"—he said, "like I've never"—and he's been in business for, I think, 45 years—"like we've never hired before."

That's because of tariffs. And we're going to keep it going the same way. And it's—you're going to start to see the results in a year from now. When all those factories start—that are under construction right now—you see all the construction numbers are so good—those construction workers are building factories that are going to be open, including—not only AI, which is big, but car plants coming in from Canada, who ripped us off for 30 percent of our market; Mexico ripped us off for a big portion. Over the years, they've taken our market. They've taken our cars. They manufacture them in Japan, Germany, and all over the place because nobody standing in this position—the position I have as President of the United States—had the insight, the courage—well, I don't know what it is—to charge tariffs.

You can make your product outside. You can put our people out of business. You can put everybody on the unemployment rolls. But if you're going to make a car in some other country, you're going to pay a 15-, 20-, 30-percent tariff. And those things would have never happened. We wouldn't have lost our business.

Same thing with, as an example, Taiwan. Taiwan came in. They stole our chip business. They made chips. For 30 years—longer—they made chip, chip, chip, and they put our companies—Intel would be, now, the largest company. I saved Intel. I literally saved it at the beginning of this administration. And now all those companies in Taiwan are building factories in Arizona, Texas, and various other places because they don't want to pay tariffs. They're all pouring into the United States.

But just like that great patriot said yesterday, "Sir, what you've done, nobody thought was possible." And Steve Moore, a highly respected economist, came into my office yesterday. He said: "You've done something nobody has ever done. Twenty-two Nobel Prize winners in economics said we would, right now, be in a recession. And you—said, 'No, we're going to have a booming country. We're going to have a booming country.' You were right. All 22 were wrong, and you were right."

This country is booming, and it's booming because of the election on November 5. And it's booming for another reason: It's booming because of tariffs.

Yes, please. Go ahead.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*Q.* Thank you, Mr. President. What will you——

*Q.* You said—you said ahead of this decision that——

*The President.* Go ahead.

*Q.* Thank you, Mr. President.

*Q.* ——if the Supreme Court ruled——

*The President.* Yes, please. Go ahead.

### *Legal Challenges to U.S. Tariff Policy*

*Q.* Thank you, Mr. President. What will you say to foreign nations who seek to renegotiate their deals? And what did you mean a moment ago when you said that the Supreme Court has been "swayed by foreign interests"?

*The President.* Well, I think that foreign interests are represented by people that I believe have undue influence. They have a lot of influence over the Supreme Court. Whether it's through fear or respect or friendships, I don't know, but I know some of the people that were involved on the other side, and I don't like them. I think they're real slimeballs.

And got to do what's right for the country. You've got to do what's right for the Constitution. That's why I respect so much Justice Thomas and Alito, Kavanaugh, because they not only dissented, their dissent is so strong. When you read their dissent—you know, a lot of times, you'll read a dissent, and it's like, well, you don't know. It could go either way. There's no other way.

The good news is, it's like Justice Kavanaugh said—very strongly said: You have other ways you can go. You don't have to go that way. You can go other ways. There are numerous other ways you can go.

And frankly, this should have been done by Presidents many years ago. They allowed our country to be eaten alive. We lost 50 percent of our car business. Make—we used to make cars. We made all the cars. And then Mexico came, Canada came, Japan and Germany. But they're all coming back now. They're all coming back at record levels.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*Q.* Mr. President——

*The President.* No, you're—you——

*Q.* ——do you regret appointing Amy Coney Barrett——

*The President.* Please. Please.

*Q.* Do you regret appointing Amy Coney Barrett——

*The President.* I'm not—I'm not——

*Q.* ——to the Supreme Court——

*The President.* ——talking to you. I'm talking——

*Q.* ——as well as Neil Gorsuch?

*The President.* I don't talk—I don't talk to CNN. It's fake news.

Go ahead, please.

*Q.* Mr. President, yesterday you made the case that the economy is the hottest it's been in a long time.

*The President.* Right.

### *Supreme Court Decision on the Administration's Tariff Policy/Fentanyl*

*Q.* January jobs report beat expectation, CPI report beat expectation, real wages are up. What would you tell Americans who are worried that this decision will kind of throw the economy that you have projected going in the right direction at a very rapid pace off—off track?

*The President.* Well, thank you for the question, and I will say this. We really are at a very important point. I've been waiting for this decision so long. They could have made this decision a long time ago, not complex. They're wrong on it. It's a ridiculous decision, but they should have released this a long time ago.

We waited months, and that gave uncertainty. Now we have certainty, and I think you're going to see the country get much stronger because of it.

Look, we were ripped off by almost every country in the world. If you look at the surpluses, almost every country in the world that did business with us, our people were stupid. And I blame Presidents for it, because they're ultimately the leader. We were being ripped off by almost every single country in the world—had massive—some massive surpluses.

China had hundreds of billions of dollars in surpluses with the United States. They rebuilt China. They rebuilt the army. We built China's army by allowing that to happen. I have a great relationship with President Xi, but he respects our country now.

No, what we've done—I charged China a 20-percent tariff as a penalty for sending fentanyl in, and that was 20 times more than they could make by selling fentanyl. And I said, you know, at some point, you're going to say, like—and they have reduced it. You know, fentanyl is down by more than 30 percent coming into our country. Part of that is a strong border. We have a strong border now.

But thank you. Thank you for your question.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*Q.* Mr. President, sir, you——

*The President.* Yes. Go ahead.

### *Tariffs*

*Q.* Sir, you warned once in a—in a social media post that if the Supreme Court did this—shot down your tariffs—the U.S. would be, quote, "financially defenseless." Are we financially defenseless right now?

*The President.* No, because we're doing something in a different way. We're doing something in a very powerful way, and we're using things that some people thought we should have used in the first place, but it's more complicated. It's a little more complicated. The process takes a little more time, but the end result is going to get us more money. And I think it's going to be great.

Yes, please. Peter [Peter Doocy, Fox News], go ahead.

### *Implications of the Supreme Court Decision on Tariff Revenue*

*Q.* Thank you, President Trump. So, since Liberation Day, there's about \$175 billion in tariff revenue that is now in limbo. Do you have to refund \$175 billion?

*The President.* No, think of it—think of it, Peter. Very fair question. They take months and months to write an opinion, and they don't even discuss that point. We've taken in hundreds of billions of dollars—not millions, hundreds of billions of dollars.

And so I said, "Well, what happens to all the money that we took in?" It wasn't discussed. Wouldn't you think they would have put one sentence in there saying that—keep the money or don't keep the money, right? I guess it has to get litigated for the next 2 years.

So they write this terrible, defective decision—totally defective—it's almost, like, not written by smart people, and what they do: They don't even talk about that. Your question is very basic. That was the first question I asked, also, to make you feel good. *[Laughter]*

I said, "What about all the money that we've taken in?" "Sir, they don't discuss that." How crazy is that?

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

### *Tariff Revenue*

*Q.* Mr. President, what you're saying is—are you saying that you don't plan to honor refunds for companies that file for them?



*The President.* I just told you the answer, right? I told you the answer. It's not discussed. We'll end up being in court for the next 5 years.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

Go ahead. Green. Green.

### *U.S. Trade Policy*

*Q.* Thank you, Mr. President. When you were talking about the relationship with countries that you have sought trade deals with, do you anticipate that they will seek to renegotiate those? What do you say to them? And do you view this as a potential undermining power for your negotiations——

*The President.* Well, we're going straight ahead with 10 percent straight across the board, which was—you have the absolute right to do, and that's taking place. That's a lot of money coming into our country. And then, during that period of about 5 months, we are doing the various investigations necessary to put fair tariffs or tariffs, period, on other countries. So we're doing that, period.

But we're immediately instituting the 10 percent provision, which we're allowed to do. And in the end, I think we'll take in more money than we've taken in before.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

### *Federal Assistance to Farmers/Tariff Revenue*

*Q.* Mr. President, you've used the tariff revenue to pay for a host of Federal policies. You claim that they will pay for them. What happens to those——

*The President.* Well, like the farmers. We took care of farmers. You know, the farmers were mistreated by foreign countries very badly—very, very badly. And last week, I gave them \$12 billion out of tariff money.

We intend to—out of tariff money, because we're going—just so you understand, we have tariffs. We just have them in a different way. And now they've been confirmed by the Supreme Court of the United States, so there's no longer that question out there about tariffs.

And we'll be taking in hundreds of billions of dollars. And countries that have treated us badly will have to pay a price for treating us badly, and countries that have been good to us will be treated very well.

We just left—the top person in a place called Vietnam just left my office. Great gentleman, strong and smart. He said, "You know, I think this means you're allowed to charge us more tariffs than before."

And Canada said to Jamieson—I might want to say it, Jamieson—but Canada said, "I hope you win this decision, because if you don't win, you'll actually be allowed to charge us, with a little additional work, higher tariffs."

Jamieson, do you want to comment on that?

*U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson L. Greer.* [Laughter] Yes, sir. So, to the President's point, we have a lot of tools out there. We have section 122, which will be implemented today—it will be signed today and implemented very shortly. We have section 301 investigations, which are incredibly legally durable, where we can address—investigate and address unfair trading practices that have led to our huge trade deficit.

And so you can look forward in the coming days and weeks to seeing all of that come out, and we're going to keep continuity in the program. We're going to keep addressing this so that the deficit can keep going down. That's the trend it has, and we can make America great again, sir.

*The President.* Yes.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

### *The President's Use of Tariffs*

*Q.* Several of Republicans in Congress have supported this decision by the Supreme Court, and Hakeem Jeffries, the Democratic leader, has called you a "wannabe king." Why wouldn't——

*The President.* And I call him a low-IQ.

*Q.* But why wouldn't——

*The President.* He doesn't even know any—I watched him the other day interview, the guy doesn't even know what a tariff is.

*Q.* But there's been bipartisan criticism——

*The President.* No, not bipartisan.

*Q.* ——of the tariffs.

*The President.* Excuse me.

*Q.* There are several——

*The President.* A few people.

*Q.* ——Republicans have said that.

*The President.* Yes, a few people.

*Q.* But why wouldn't you just work with Congress to come up with a plan——

*The President.* I don't have to.

*Q.* ——to push tariffs through?

*The President.* I have the right to do tariffs, and I've always had the right to do tariffs. And it's all been approved by Congress, so there's no reason to do it. All we're doing is, we're going through a little bit more complicated process—not complicated very much, but a little more complicated than what we had. We'll be able to take in tariffs—more tariffs, and the congresspeople——

*Q.* But the House just voted down——

*The President.* ——and the Congress——

*Q.* ——the Canadian tariffs last week.

*The President.* Yes, but you know why?

*Q.* There's been votes in the Senate against it.

*The President.* Yes, because we lost two Republicans or three Republicans, because they're not good Republicans.

What you don't say—see, you don't say that we had—that we got 215 votes to——

*Q.* You need 218 for——

*The President.* No——

*Q.* ——something to pass though, sir.

*The President.* Yes, sure, we do. We might have lost three votes, and we got—and what was the score on the Republican side? 215 to 3, right? But you don't say that.

We have great unity. There's great unity in the Republican Party, and I hope everyone's going to vote Republican, because otherwise you won't have a country left, because these people have been destroying—they are destroying our country.

Please.

### *U.S. Trade Policy*

*Q.* Mr. President, the 122 tariffs at 10 percent.

*The President.* Yes.

*Q.* Is that going to be for 150 days? Or do you want to charge that indefinitely?

*The President.* We have a right to do pretty much what we want to do, but we're going to charge it starting, effectively—I think it's 3 days from now.

Yes, please.

### *Domestic Manufacturing Investment/Tax Code Reform/Crime Rates/Interest Rates*

*Q.* Mr. President, you speak to a lot of factory workers, a lot of manufacturing workers. What does the Supreme Court ruling say? What's that message to those factory workers?

*The President.* Well, I think the factory workers are happy because we're now telling them that they're going to——

Look, the man I met with yesterday, who owned a factory, was out of business. He was out of business, and now he's employing five times—in fact, I walked in, he's got a brandnew crane, a brand—I said, "How old is that crane?" "We got it in December." He's allowed to write it off in one—[*inaudible*].

The "Great Big Beautiful Act" gave no tax on tips, no tax on Social Security, no tax on overtime. He said, "This "Great Big Beautiful Bill," frankly, has been the best thing that's ever happened for the workers of the—much more so than for rich people." The only thing it does for rich people: It allows them to hire a lot more people.

But when I saw him, and then he said, "It's all up and down the line"—this is a place in Georgia—all up and down other factories doing different—not only steel products, different—he said, "every one of us was out of business. We could barely make it." I mean, he—some of them were down to less than an hour a week. Think of it: 1 hour a week to make just a few little trinkets or whatever they make. Now they're going round the clock.

I had it—a month ago, I went to Michigan, went to Ford, and I met with Bill Ford, the head of Ford. And we were in one of the biggest plants, an original plant from the early 1900s, where—by the way, just—I might add this, it's not really relevant, but it's all relevant—murders are down—the lowest since 1900, around the time that he had this plant. That's 125 years; we have the lowest murder rate. Okay. And our crime is way down in the country.

The factories that we're talking about, the people that we're talking about, they are so thrilled with Trump. So, whether we charge IEEPA tariffs or whether we charge tariffs under a different section, that's what we're going to be doing.

There's no way we can—this is what happened to our country. This is why we owe \$38 trillion, which we'll get rid of in pretty good course.

We have a very incompetent Fed Chairman who likes high interest rates. For political reasons, he likes them. But we're going to have somebody very good. Interest rates should come down very substantially. I think it—we should pay—we should pay the lowest interest rates on the planet. There should be no country—and we don't do that. We're number 38. This is just bad policy for a long period of time.

But what's happened is we've made America strong again. We've made America great again.

We should pay—as an example, the country of Switzerland. We were getting almost no tariffs from then. We had a \$40 billion deficit, and the Prime Minister called me up. She said, "But we are a small country," because I said we're going to raise it to 39 percent from nothing. That would have rendered them not very successful, as opposed to, right now they're considered elite. But if we put a tariff, they would—and I realized then, she said, "But, sir, we are a small country." I said: "You're a small country with a big deficit for us. You're making a lot of money off the United States."

If we do that—a lot of these elite countries, they're elite because we let them make so much money. And I want them to do well, but I don't want them to do well on the backs of the American taxpayer.

So I appreciate your question. Think it's a reasonable answer.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

#### *U.S. Supreme Court Decision on the Administration's Use of Tariffs/U.S. Military Readiness*

*Q.* Evening, President Trump. You said that you were disappointed with that, but were you surprised with this decision? What are—what you felt when you—found?

*The President.* I was surprised because I thought that what we did was, number one, according to—I mean, I read the paragraphs. I read very well, great comprehension. I read everything there is to read. And I said, "We can't lose this case."

But we can when judges are political, when they want to be politically correct, when they're catering to a group of people in DC maybe. I don't know what it is. Because when you read it, there's no other interpretation. We have—there is no other interpretation.

But it's okay, because what has come out—and I'll say it for the third time and maybe the last time in a while—is that we've taken the uncertainty of tariffs out, because we had uncertainty. We got sued by sleazebags—I know them well—that are very outside-country—China-centric—but outside-country-centric, and they're going to end up not doing as well as they did before.

America was becoming really, really—we're strong again.

Hey, we have the strongest military. I built—I rebuilt the military in the first term. We have the most powerful military. We make the best equipment. And even them, you know, we have to—we can do much better. We have people that get paid a lot of money to manufacture Patriot missiles and Javelins and all the different things, but when you want them, they're too slow. And we put them on notice, and they're going to make—we're—our country is building a lot of things right now. And our country is doing really well, and we're going to keep it that way.

The bottom line is that the word "certainty" is now in the equation. Every single thing I said today is guaranteed certainty. It's been tested, as Jamieson said, a thousand times. We—literally, I

said, "Hundreds of times." He said, "Sir, actually thousands of times," and won in all of the courts. And we're just going back to that.

And the problem is that we had other Presidents that weren't into trade. Maybe they weren't business-oriented. Maybe they weren't smart. We had some dummies too, you know? I'll respectfully say we had some real dummies.

So——

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

So we are going to keep it going just as before, probably more so, but it's—you're no longer going to be asked—every time I got up, you'd ask, "Well, what happens if you can't charge tariffs?" Now we can.

And by the way, in their decision, they specifically said we can do these. We have alternatives.

Yes.

### *U.S. Trade Policy*

*Q.* On the deals that were negotiated using IEEPA tariffs.

*The President.* Yes.

*Q.* Do those stand now or are they—have to be redone?

*The President.* Well, some of them stand. Many of them stand. Some of them won't, and they'll be replaced with the other tariffs.

### *U.S. Supreme Court Justices*

*Q.* Mr. President, the Supreme Court Justices who ruled against this—the policy, striking it down, are they still invited to your State of the Union next week?

*The President.* Yes.

*Q.* And will you speak with them?

*The President.* Yes, they are invited. Barely. Barely.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

Three are happily invited. No, no, they're barely invited. Honestly, I couldn't care less if they come. Okay?

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

Go ahead, you.

### *India-U.S. Trade*

*Q.* Thank you, Mr. President. On the—deal, which is—the framework, which is signed—to be signed with India sometime soon.

*The President.* Yes.

*Q.* Will that stand now?

*The President.* Yes, it does.

*Q.* And on the decision——

*The President.* Nothing changes.

*Q.* Nothing changes?

*The President.* No, nothing changes. We're—they'll be paying tariffs, and we will not be paying tariffs.

Our deal with India is they pay tariffs, we—this is a reversal from what it used to be, as you know. India—and I think Prime Minister Modi is a great gentleman—a great man, actually. But he was much smarter than the people that he was against, in terms of the United States. He was ripping us off in India. So we made a deal with India, and it's a fair deal now. And we are not paying tariffs to them, and they are paying tariffs. We did a little flip.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*Q.* And the markets are up, as of now, for this——

*The President.* No, the India deal is on. Yes.

*Q.* Thank you so much, Mr. President.

*The President.* All the deals are on. It just—we're just going to do it a different way.

*Syria*

*Q.* Thank you so much, Mr. President. I think there's another war that you stopped, and you should take the credit, which is in Syria.

Secretary Rubio, after his meeting in Munich with the Syrian Foreign Minister and the Kurdish general Mazloum Abdi, he said that President Trump was directly involved with—*[inaudible]*—to stop the fighting between the Kurds and the Syrians. How will your administration will make sure that this peace is sustained? And do you support the idea of——

*The President.* Well, it's a very different topic, and so I don't want to spend a lot of time. But all I can say is that the President of Syria, who I essentially put there, is doing a phenomenal job. He's a rough guy. He's not a choirboy. A choirboy couldn't do it. But Syria is coming together—really coming together well. And thus far, he's been very good to the Kurds.

Yes.

*Iran/U.S. Diplomatic Engagement/Political Violence*

*Q.* Mr. President, what's your message to the Iranian people after two rounds of talks with them? Do you have any message to the Iranian people?

*The President.* The Iranian people——

*Q.* Between Iranian people——

*The President.* ——in Iran?

*Q.* Yes.

*The President.* Or people here?

*Q.* People in Iran.

*The President.* They'd better negotiate a fair deal. They'd better negotiate.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

You know, the people of Iran are a lot different than the leaders of Iran.

*Q.* Yes, I'm speaking about the people.

*The President.* And it's very, very—a very sad situation. But 32,000 people were killed over a relatively short period of time. They were going to hang eight hundred—2 weeks ago—hang—hang—some by crane—they lift them up with a tall crane, and they play them around the square. They were going to hang 837 people.

And I gave them the word: If you hang one person, even one person, that you're going to be hit right then and there. I wasn't waiting 2 weeks and negotiating, and they gave up the hanging. They didn't hang 837. Supposedly, they didn't hang anybody.

But no, I feel very badly for the people of Iran. They've lived like—they've lived in hell.

Please.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

#### *Supreme Court Decision on the Administration's Tariff Policy*

*Q.* Thank you, sir. Mr. President, you mentioned multiple times foreign influence over the Supreme Court. Do you have evidence of that? And if not, will you investigate that?

*The President.* You're going to find out. You're going to find out.

Yes.

#### *Europe/Energy Sources/Migration Issues*

*Q.* What alternatives are you going to put into place in your relationship with Europe? And also, those tariffs that has been called illegal, how going—how they're going to go impact the relationship with Russia that—you sanctioned some countries—

*The President.* Well, I want Europe to strengthen up. Europe has gone woke. Europe is not recognizable when you go into so many places. Not all countries. You look at—you look at Hungary. You look at Poland, Czech, Slovakia. There are some countries that have gone very much the opposite. Some really—and some others.

But Europe has to be strong, and they've become soft and not recognizable.

You go into some of the countries—I don't want to be specific, but I think everyone knows what I'm talking about—and they're not recognizable. They've become—the environmentalists have taken over. They've got windmills destroying their fields and their beautiful meadows and their oceans, and they're paying a fortune.

No, Europe has to get smart. Europe is getting killed on two things: energy and immigration. And if they don't solve both of them fast, European—Europe is not the same place.

Yes, please.

#### *Supreme Court Associate Justices*

*Q.* Mr. President, Justices Gorsuch and Barrett, are you surprised in particular by their decision today? And——

*The President.* I am.

*Q.* ——do you regret nominating them?

*The President.* I don't want to say whether or not I regret. I think their decision was terrible. Yes.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

I think it's an embarrassment to their families, you want to know the truth—the two of them.

Yes.

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*Q.* Mr. President, do you think the tariff will be higher as——

*Q.* Mr. President, specifically on that \$2,000——

*The President.* Say it again, please.

*Q.* ——tariff check——

*Q.* Mr. President——

*The President.* I didn't call you. I didn't call you.

*Q.* You didn't call me?

*The President.* Please.

### *Tariffs*

*Q.* Yes, Mr. President, to be clear, do you believe at the end of implementing these new tariff tools, the tariff rate and tariffs will ultimately be higher than they currently are?

*The President.* Potentially higher.

*Q.* How much higher?

*The President.* It depends. Whatever we want them to be. But we want them to be fair for other countries. And you know, we have some countries that have treated us really badly for years, and it's going to be high for them. And we have other countries that have been very good, and it's going to be very reasonable for them.

Yes.

*Q.* Thank you, Mr. President——

*Q.* Specifically on the tariffs question—I mean, on the \$2,000——

*The President.* I didn't call you. I didn't call you.

### *India-U.S. Relations*

*Q.* Mr. President. Thank you, Mr. President. Do you have any plans to travel to India for the Quad summit? And how do you think your relationship with India is right now?

*The President.* I think my relationship with India is fantastic, and we're doing trade with India. India pulled out of Russia. You know, India was getting its oil from Russia, right? And they pull way back at my request, because we want to settle that horrible war where 25,000 people are dying every month. And my relationship with Prime Minister Modi is, I would say, great.

I also stopped the war between India and Pakistan, as you know. There were 10—10 planes were shot down. That war was going and probably going nuclear.

And just yesterday the Prime Minister of Pakistan said, "President Trump saved 35 million lives by getting them to stop." That's—and I did it largely with tariffs. I said, "Look, you're going to fight, that's fine, but you're not going to do business with the United States. And you're going to pay a 200-percent tariff, each country." And they called up, and they said, "We have made peace."



Okay? I just want to thank you all. Look, great certainty has been brought back to the economy of the United States and actually the economy of the world, because we generate so much in the world. We're the biggest in the world, and we're now the strongest by far.

We were a country that was dead one and a half years ago. Now, we have the hottest country in the world. We're going to keep it that way.

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

*Q.* Thank you, Mr. President.

*Q.* Did you say 32,000 were killed in Iran, sir?

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 1:20 p.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif of Pakistan; Andrew Saville, president, Coosa Steel Corp., and his father Earl Dean Saville, Jr.; Stephen Moore, senior visiting fellow in economics, Heritage Foundation; General Secretary Tô Lâm of Vietnam; House Minority Leader Hakeem S. Jeffries; William C. Ford, Jr., executive chairman, Ford Motor Co.; Chairman of the Federal Reserve System Board of Governors Jerome H. Powell; Kevin M. Warsh, the President's nominee to be Federal Reserve Chairman; former President Karin Keller-Sutter of Switzerland; Supreme Court Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr., and Associate Justices Sonia M. Sotomayor, Elena Kagan, and Ketanji Brown Jackson; and President Ahmad Husayn al-Shara' of Syria. He also referred to Proclamation 11012. A reporter referred to Minister of Foreign Affairs Asaad al-Shaibani and Commander in Chief of Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) Mazloun Abdi of Syria.

*Categories:* Interviews With the News Media : News conferences, February 20.

*Locations:* Washington, DC.

*Names:* Alito, Samuel A., Jr.; Barrett, Amy Coney; Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Ford, William C., Jr.; Gorsuch, Neil M.; Greer, Jamieson L.; Jackson, Ketanji Brown; Jeffries, Hakeem S.; Kagan, Elena; Kavanaugh, Brett M.; Keller-Sutter, Karin; Lâm, Tô; Modi, Narendra; Moore, Stephen; Powell, Jerome H.; Roberts, John G., Jr.; Saville, Andrew; Saville, Earl Dean, Jr.; Shara', Ahmad Husayn al-; Sharif, Shehbaz; Sotomayor, Sonia M.; Thomas, Clarence; Warsh, Kevin M.; Xi Jinping.

*Subjects:* 2024 Presidential election; Automobile industry, strengthening efforts; Board of Peace; Canada, trade with U.S.; China, President; China, synthetic opioid supply chain; Crime rates; Economic improvement; Europe, energy sources; Europe, migration issues; Farmers, Federal assistance; Federal Reserve System; Free and fair trade; House minority leader; India, Prime Minister; India, relations with Pakistan; India, relations with U.S.; India, trade with U.S.; Iran, diplomatic engagement with U.S.; Iran, political unrest and violence; News media, Presidential interviews; Opioid epidemic, efforts to combat; Pakistan, Prime Minister; Pakistan, relations with India; Semiconductor manufacturing; Steel and aluminum, U.S. tariffs on foreign imports; Stock market; Supreme Court Associate Justice; Switzerland, trade with U.S.; Syria, President; Tariffs; Tax Code reform; U.S. diplomatic efforts, expansion; U.S. military readiness, improvement efforts; U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Learning Resources, Inc. v. Trump* concerning tariff policy; U.S. Trade Representative; Vietnam, General Secretary.

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