

**Remarks at the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library in Medora, North Dakota
July 1, 2026**

The President. Well, I want to thank everybody. This is an honor. We love you, and you've been so nice to me with those votes. We set every record in the book.

But today we come to the heartland of America to pay tribute to a man who embodied the heart and soul and fight and spirit of our country as much as anyone who ever lived—and he's a very special man, and that's why I'm here—President Theodore Roosevelt. And he loved your community, he loved your State, and he was quite something. He was really quite something.

And here, beneath the wide-open sky of the Badlands—they call it the "Badlands." I said, "What's that all about?" [*Laughter*] It's pretty cool. It's a pretty cool name, I have to tell you.

On the steps of the Burning Hills, we dedicate a living monument to a legend, a statesman, a soldier, a frontiersman, and a true American hero. This is a very exciting thing for me.

And number one, I have to tell you, because this was a inaugural flight of a certain airplane called "Air Force One" after 37 years. And it's a great plane, and we have a—we had a lot of fun with Doug and everybody coming over. But we talked about Theodore Roosevelt a lot, because he was something that was really very special.

Number two, because I'm honoring Theodore Roosevelt, and that's the man who I have long admired. He's one of the few. I don't admire too many people, I have to tell you. [*Laughter*] There's not a lot of people out there.

And number three, I'm back in North Dakota because I won this State with the most votes in the history of the Presidency. Thank you. Thank you very much.

And number four, I have two teleprompters that aren't working, and here I stand.

But T.R. once observed that "I would not have been President"—about himself—had he not been—and "had it not been for the experience in North Dakota." He had a great experience here. It really shaped him so, so much.

So there could be no better place for this new national treasure than the Rough Rider State. I met some of the Rough Riders. They are rough riders. They're good riders too. They were very impressive.

Today, 107 years after he passed into eternity, Theodore Roosevelt's Presidential Library opens its doors in the small town, but very great town—and today it's a very famous town, because that's all they're talking about—of Medora—opens its arms to the entire world. The entire world is watching. It's not a big town, but it's a very powerful town because of what was left behind.

I want to thank the thousands of people who worked so hard to make this project a reality. And you really did; you made it a beautiful reality. Very few places—very few places will top it.

And starting with the man who put the library in its first funding—think of this, did so much. He raised so much money. He did so many different things. He really did. He had a very complete life, when you think. He was a real man of many forms of genius and without whom it would never have been possible. Secretary of the Interior. And I'll tell you what, I thought he was an oilman, and he wasn't. [*Laughter*]

I saw him on a debate, because this guy was actually going against me. Can you believe it? *[Laughter]* But I thought he was very impressive. I thought his wife Kathryn was even more impressive, to be honest with you. And so impressive that I said: "He's a good man. That guy is all right." *[Laughter]*

But he's been fantastic. He's been a tremendous Secretary of the Interior, and the best ever. There's never been a Secretary of the Interior like Doug Burgum. Thank you very much. Thank you. *[Applause]* Never been.

And you know, Doug called me, and he said: "Would you do me a favor? He's really fantastic"—because I did not know the gentleman too well. But he said, "Kelly Armstrong is fantastic. Would you endorse him for Governor?" And I did, and he won easily.

Kelly Armstrong. Great job you're doing. Great job.

And two of my very good friends, two warrior Senators—they're tough cookies. They're tough. Oh, I wish they could get their way. We could get a couple of little things passed, like voter identification. Like proof of citizenship.

It's called SAVE America. You know, that's pretty good. SAVE America. Can you imagine? We have a hundred percent of the Democrats against it and four or five Republicans, if you can believe that. What are they all about?

Audience members. Boo!

The President. But these two people are with us all the way: John Hoeven and Kevin Cramer. Senators. They're great. Two great guys.

And a Congresswoman who fights and gets what she wants, and she's very respected: Julie Fedorchak. Thank you, Julie. Thank you. Very, very respected.

And we have our Ambassador, Monica. Where's Monica? Monica. Monica Crowley. Fantastic.

Acting Secretary of the Navy Hung Cao. And we're building a lot of ships. Building a lot of ships.

North Dakota House Speaker Robin Weisz. Thank you. Thank you. Doing a great job. State House Majority Leader Mike Lefor. Mike. Thank you, Mike. State Senate Majority Leader David Hogue. Thank you, David.

And all of the Members of the North Dakota Legislature. I hear every single one. I'm not going to introduce you. You have no chance of that. I'll be here all day, but you're all here, and we love you. And you've been with us from day one. Thank you very much. Thank you.

And the CEO, who's done a fantastic job. He took me around. I thought it would be maybe 10 minutes, 5 minutes. I've been doing this for 2 hours. *[Laughter]* Thank goodness I love the subject, or I would not have put up with it. *[Laughter]*

Doug said, "You could come in"—you know, I'm prosecuting a war, which we're winning very easily, by the way. But I said: "Doug, let's fly in. We'll do 10, 15 minutes. I know I'm going to love it, and then I'll get out." *[Laughter]* "Oh, absolutely, sir."

So then time comes. He got me making speeches. I was over there 2 hours. I know more about that museum than the people that built it. *[Laughter]* But that's okay, because they did a very good job. I can report that they did a really good job.

The CEO of the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library, who really did give me a tremendous amount of knowledge, I mean, about things that I never would have thought could have been possible about how great this man was: Ed O'Keefe. Ed, thank you very much.

And two of my sons are here, Eric and Don.

And, Bettina, thank you very much. Don just got married. Bettina, thank you. It's going to be great. Thank you very much.

But the members of the Roosevelt family and countless foundation staff, donors, and supporters—everyone's here. And I understand that one local construction worker delayed his retirement by 4 years just to be involved with the building and they heard I was going to come.

I was coming even when I wasn't President. I had agreed to come, and they said, "Well, when we do it, you're going to be President." So that was during that ridiculous time—that ridiculous—that ridiculous 4-year period of time. They asked me to come. I said, "I'd love to come," and I said, "I may or I may not be President." They said: "We don't care. We want you to be there." And I always remember that.

But they said: "You're going to win. You know that. If you run, you're going to win." It turned out we did, quite easily, actually.

And today I can tell you that we can see why it was worth it. It's really amazing. They've done an amazing job, beautiful job. And you know, they've done it for—from love.

Jobs that are done from love are always better than jobs where you sort of have to follow a plan. They made lots of changes, and they—every one of them was good. And I think I know about every one of them. [*Laughter*] I've—after 2½ hours, I learned every single one of them. [*Laughter*]

But I want to really thank everyone who greeted me at the train station, because that was so famous. That was such a famous train.

The last one was President Dwight Eisenhower, and he was actually a very good President. People don't realize. He was a general—good general. And he was—actually, built the Interstate Highway System. I'd say that alone is pretty good. See, did—he was a good—and I was—he was the last one. He was on the back of the exact same train.

So the head of the railroad—she was fabulous, and they were explaining all about the train. And they said, "Wow, this is really some history." And the crowd—we had thousands of people over there. It was fantastic.

But I have the picture of President Eisenhower in the back of the train—the same exact train. I checked it out, because I said: "You know, we don't want to make any mistakes, because the fake news is watching, and they'll say, 'It wasn't.'"

Audience members. Boo!

The President. "It wasn't the same train. It wasn't the same train." [*Laughter*] No, they've been pretty nice to me lately. Look, when you do as well as we're doing, they have to be nice, I guess. They've been pretty nice.

And I want to give a very special thanks to the patriots who gave us such an incredible escort from town. We had more law enforcement—you know, I love law enforcement.

Now, according to—according to the people that are running on the other side in many places, they want to defund the police.

That's not going to happen. That's not going to happen.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. We see them all the time. They said they're "Social Democrats." Doesn't it sound pretty? They're actually Communists, but we'll get into that a little bit later. They're not going to win. They're not going to win anything. They've got some very unattractive candidates, I have to say. *[Laughter]*

During my first term, it was a privilege to sign the bill that helped get this incredible project underway and transferring 90 acres. We took it right out of the Federal Government. We ripped it away from the Federal Government. They don't know it's missing. They still haven't figured out what the hell happened. *[Laughter]*

And today, the artistry and scholarship, technical skill on display right here and in that museum, in particular, is just fantastic. It's really great. Things that—they actually gave me—you know, we're going to build our museum in Miami. They got me a lot of ideas, Doug. You gave me a lot of ideas, Doug. But they really did it well. Incredible.

I even had a conversation with Theodore Roosevelt. I had a—I said: "What did you think about the Panama Canal? Do you consider that your greatest achievement? How do you feel about the fact that the Democrats gave the Panama Canal away to Panama for \$1?"

Audience members. Boo!

The President. You know, he built the Panama Canal, preceded, really, by a man who was actually—he was the tariff king: William McKinley. He was the President, and they took his name off Mount McKinley, and I put it back on because it deserved it. Put it back on. But McKinley, actually, he was assassinated, but he made tremendous amounts of money, made our country very rich.

And then Teddy Roosevelt, as the Vice President, he got in, and he did some incredible things. But one of them—I think one of the most amazing—maybe a lot of people would say the parks. You could say a lot of different elements of his success. So incredible.

But he built the Panama Canal. It was the most expensive project to this day, if you bring the dollars forward, ever built in history.

Thirty-eight thousand people died. They died 95 percent from mosquitoes, malaria. Ninety-five percent. You expected almost to die. They paid workers from the United States. Mostly they came in and, mostly, I must say, men. It was a little different time. Today, we'd have men and women, but they had all men. And they paid them massive amounts of money, more than they were making as workers in the United States.

Such a fascinating thing, the Panama Canal. I've studied it long and hard, and when they made—when they gave it away—\$1. One dollar.

But they died from the mosquito, and they died from the snake. They have a viper, a snake that, if you get bit, you're in trouble. If you get bit, you were dead. You were dead. And that got about—that wiped out about 5 percent. We lost 38,000 people building the Panama Canal. Our people. Thirty-eight thousand people died building the Panama Canal.

It opened, and from day one, it was very successful. And we gave it away. We gave it away. It was the most expensive thing we ever built, and it was also the most profitable thing we ever built. That's a nice combination, a little bit like Venezuela. We did a good job in Venezuela.

But—and we're actually doing equally as well with the Islamic Republic of Iran. Maybe you've heard of it.

But think of it: the Panama Canal. So we gave it away. The first thing they did—you know what they did? They raised the prices for the ships by four times, and they didn't lose one ship. And then they raised it again, twice, and they didn't lose one ship. All they did is make tremendous amounts of money for years and years.

How stupid was that? And now China is trying to take over the Panama Canal, and we're not going to let that happen. Okay? And that was not part of the script, because I don't really have a script, because this thing doesn't work.

[At this point, the President pointed to the teleprompter.]

[Laughter] It's appropriate. The one on my right is slightly better than the one on my left. The one on my left is a waste of time. It's a little like politics. The one on my right is a little bit. It's not great. I'd give it about a 2 on the scale of 10.

And this afternoon I'm pleased to announce that through the National Endowment for the Humanities, we will be awarding the library \$750,000 to support the opening exhibits during the first year. So they're getting a nice check. Getting a nice check.

And, as you know, this week, Americans all across our Nation are filled with joy and excitement and anticipation as we prepare for one of the proudest moments in our history: 250 years. Think about that.

Three days from now, we will celebrate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. What a document that was. And this week, we look back on 250 years of glorious freedom, and we took so much time and so much effort.

And by the way, on July 4, it's going to be approximately 107 degrees out—*[laughter]*—and I'm going to go, and I'm going to make a really long speech—*[laughter]*—just to show that I can do anything. It's going to be 107.

But you know what? They also predicted—the fight that we had 3 weeks ago was unbelievable at the White House. They said—they said a week before, 6 days, 5 days, 4 days, 3 days, 2 days, 1 day—they said it was going to rain. It was going to be horrible. You're going to have to cancel the fight. "Sir, we're going have to cancel"—this was a big event. This was one of the highest rated fights in history.

It was on CBS national on a Sunday night, not a Saturday night. Saturday nights are called "Death Valley" for television. I know a lot about ratings. *[Laughter]* But Sunday night is very good, and it was broadcast on CBS, the network. And it got among the highest ratings any fight has ever gotten.

But they said it was going to rain. And I talked to Dana White. I said: "Dana, I don't know. This is bad." "Sir, it's 100 percent chance of rain." I said: "You sure? Like, maybe 90?" No. "One hundred percent, sir." *[Laughter]*

So it was 7 o'clock, and it wasn't raining. Then it started at 8 o'clock, and we were going to delay it till 12 o'clock, midnight. I said, "That's not good."

But it wasn't raining at 8 o'clock, and it wasn't raining at 8:30. *[Laughter]* And we had the fight on time. And it never rained. Never rained. So you never know about—you never know about weather forecasting, do you? With all the money we spend—we spend all that money. That's happened before.

We had a big march in Washington. You remember that. That was going to be rained out. "Sir, we're going to have to change it." Rained out. Never rained. So we're getting pretty good at that. *[Laughter]*

But this is a time to rediscover the indomitable spirit that built our country and all that will ensure America always remains the most exceptional nation on the face of the Earth.

We're not going to let Communists get in our way. We're not going to let anyone get in our way. Not the Communists. It's a very unattractive lot. They're not going to do it. They're not doing anything. Those people, what they're doing—oh, they're so stupid. *[Laughter]* They're so stupid. *[Laughter]*

There could be no better place to begin this rediscovery than with the life, times, and passions of Theodore Roosevelt. He had great passion.

The colonel, they called him, was an American man. He was really a great "he-man." He was an American man through and through. His chest swelled with American optimism, confidence, enthusiasm, pride. His heart beat with an unyielding sense of America's destiny and pride. And that pride was bigger—the biggest word for him, I think, was "pride." He was a proud—he was a proud man.

But I'm a proud man. I'm proud of our country. I'm proud that 2 years ago we had a country that was a laughingstock all over the world, and now we have the hottest country anywhere in the world, the most respected country anywhere in the world.

But, as a young boy, I saw that he loved Lincoln. And Lincoln's casket would pass through a Nation torn apart by civil war. I don't know if you know that. I think—Teddy Roosevelt, I think, is probably his biggest—I was trying to get that today, and I think it came pretty loud and clear.

Abraham Lincoln was the person that he most respected, most admired, most looked up to. He has a beautiful picture of Lincoln that he had in his—one of his rooms, one of his very important rooms where he lived. And it's at the library.

By the end of the 60 years, T.R. had transformed his country by the reach of his vision—he had a great vision—and by the force of his will into one of the greatest places, one of the greatest empires, one of the most incredible countries, ready to take its rightful place as the strongest and most respected Nation anywhere in the world.

They didn't have people that didn't—couldn't—they had no idea where they were. They didn't have people that couldn't walk up the steps. See those steps? *[Laughter]* They didn't have people that had no idea where the hell they were. They didn't have people that said: "Let's have open borders so millions and millions of people can pour into our country from prisons all over the world."

Audience members. Boo!

The President. They didn't have those people. They had strong, smart people like Teddy Roosevelt.

Today, America is stronger and more respected. Right now.

I'll tell you, the King of Saudi Arabia—I was with him a year ago. Smart guy. Good guy. He said to me, "Sir, you know, it's amazing." And this was as we were—just started to really—and we've made a lot of progress since then, you see the numbers. Factories being built all over the country at a level that we've never had before.

But he said, "You know, 1 year ago, during the Biden"—Sleepy Joe—"during the Biden administration," he said: "1 year ago, your country was dead. We gave up on your country." They were looking at China. They were looking at others to protect them. They were looking at other countries. "And now you have the hottest country anywhere in the world." He said that. And it's true. Now it's even more so than it was then. Hottest country anywhere in the world.

So Theodore Roosevelt and his Presidency fell exactly at the halfway mark between the founding in 1776 and the place we are today in 2026.

And here are five lessons. And I wanted to write these because you can learn from some people—not from too many. *[Laughter]* From a lot of them, you don't want to learn much. But you can learn from him. And here are five lessons that are really extraordinary and life offers to all Americans on the threshold of our 250th year.

First of all, the life of Theodore Roosevelt reminds us that Americans never give up. We don't give up. You know, if you really look back 2 years ago, I can see people wanting to give up. I can see them wanting to give up. He never stopped, never quit, never surrendered in pursuit of his dreams.

He had a dream, a very complex dream. He did. Because of the way he traveled, the way he moved, the fact that he ended up here, it turned out to be one of the most impactful things he ever did, ending up right here where we are. But his pursuit of the American Dream never ever stopped. It was really amazing.

He was plagued by asthma—very, very bad, very serious. He was having a hard time breathing for much of his life, but he went out, and he was told by his doctor that he'd have to live very quietly. He'd have to—this is as a young man he was told you'd have to be and have a very quiet life. You have to be nice and easy. And he did just the opposite.

He had a frickin' wild life, right? *[Laughter]* He was wild. He just didn't want to take that. He didn't want to listen to his doctor. He didn't want to be quiet. He wanted to be great. He actually wanted to be great, and that's what he turned out to be.

Young Theodore replied: "Doctor, I'm going to do all the things that you tell me not to do, and I've got to live the sort of life that you've described. I don't care how short it is. I just want to live my life the way I want to live my life." It was great. I mean, who would say that?

The next year he sailed the Atlantic, and he summited the Matterhorn just to prove that he could do these things, just to prove his doctor wrong. He knew his doctor. He wanted to prove him wrong. Maybe it wasn't smart, but it worked out okay.

But again and again, he summoned the will to transcend tragedy and triumph and defeat heartbreak with hard work. He worked hard, and I found that out. I mean, if you love what you do, it's not work. That's one thing I will tell you. People say I work hard, but it's not work because if you love it—I love making America great again. I mean, I'm having a good time, so it's not work. We call it work, but it's not.

In his library, we find his diary open to the page from 1884 when his mother and his wife died on the very same day in the very same house, totally unrelated—just a tragic moment, but unrelated. There wasn't an accident where both of them were killed; they just died. Then he came back home, and he said: "What happened? They're both dead." Different parts of the house. Had nothing to do—it's just an amazing—wife was very young. Mother was older, but she was getting by.

"The light has gone out from my life," he wrote, but Theodore Roosevelt did not surrender to fate. He came here to Medora and made himself fate's master. And I said, "I want to be fate's master." He wanted to turn the tables, and he really showed that that's what Americans can do. That's what people can do. Beyond Americans, that's what people can do if they really believe and they set their mind to it, and if they're competent.

I mean, you have to be competent. You have to be smart. It's nice to say anybody can do it. *[Laughter]* Not anybody can do it. *[Laughter]* They like to say, "Oh, anybody can do it." No, no.

But he was a special person. He arrived at this town narrow-chested, 140 pounds. He looked pretty bad to the people here, because they're pretty tough people around here. It never changed.

He was sick. He was shattered from the death of these two people that he loved the most, and his body and his spirit were pretty much broken—not broken enough, but pretty much broken. If they were broken all the way, he wouldn't have been able to do what he did.

He left here 2 years later. He weighed 40 pounds more, and he was strong as an ox. They say it was 40 pounds of muscle. I don't know how the hell that happened. *[Laughter]*

They didn't have modern-day drugs. Of course, the modern-day drugs don't do that either, do they? In fact, they actually take away the muscle. That's not good. "How are we doing, Doctor?" "Well, you lost a lot of muscle. That's not good."

But we didn't have any of that. He went—he was 40 pounds of steel, the vital man of vigor who would become President of the United States not that long after he left. Wow, that's amazing. I know what it takes to do that. It's tough.

As a sheriff's deputy, he heard three thieves had stolen the only boat in town, so he built another and, over 3 days, chased the criminals 300 miles. He wanted—oh, those poor criminals.

We need a little bit more of that in our country, don't—but we do pretty good. We have the best border we've ever had. We do pretty good. Think of it. We have the best border, strongest border. We went from the worst border in history in 3 months to the best border in history. So, we do okay.

But he was a man who could get crushed beneath a horse—he was crushed—get up, and he kept riding. People said: "You've got to get back. We've got to get you to"—"No, no, no, I'm going to keep riding."

He could take a bullet to the chest, stand up, and keep speaking. He had a little luck. He had a lot of paper there. *[Laughter]* I saw it today—a bullet hole right through both of them. But so he—lucky. Got lucky.

But other people wouldn't have done what he did. He could feel sick, and he was often feeling sick. Deep in the Amazon jungles, he would get extremely sick. And maybe he shouldn't have been there. He knew what was happening. It was a very dangerous place from that standpoint—from the standpoint of catching some pretty bad diseases, and he caught them. And yet, he carried on when he was half dead, and most people think he was going to die. They thought he was going to die. They said, "Teddy Roosevelt is going to die," but he carried on, and he was still standing. He never sat. He never rested. He just kept going.

As America turns 250 years old, we look at this remarkable man, and we recall that with effort, determination, and drive, there is nothing that Americans of competence cannot do. Nothing.

Our ancestors were the people who raised up New York City from the marshes of Manhattan and then ventured into the Dakotas to carve up a life in the place that they called "hell with the fires burned out." I don't know what the hell that's supposed to mean. *[Laughter]* "Hell with the fires burned out." That doesn't sound so nice.

But you did, and you've become a tremendously wealthy State, a very successful State with low taxes. I mean, you have great government. You have great government—these people right over here and the people I introduced. But other places have good land. They have valuable assets under their land, and they're losing.

You know, California was our third biggest oil-drilling State, Doug, not so long ago. It's got tremendous amounts of oil. Nobody knows that. It was third after Texas. Years ago, it was a big

oil drilling. Now they won't drill because the environmental lunatics have said, "Don't do it." And it's not a State that's doing very well. In fact, it's doing extremely poorly. One of the most beautiful States in the world—best weather, best everything.

From winning our independence to laying the railroads, taming the West, and planting our flag on the Moon, nothing great that America has ever done has come without staggering effort, and it's never come easy. It's been, really, an unflagging persistence that drove us into greatness. We had the persistence of great people, great men, great women. They were persistent. They never gave up.

This country was built on the conviction that just because something is hard to do, that only means that Americans try even harder, and they succeed almost all the time. Because whatever the obstacle, whatever the challenge, it's no match for American grit. And you have it probably as much or more than any other place there is. May—you have American grit.

And second, Theodore Roosevelt reminds us all that to be a great nation and to be a free nation, we must have courage. Without courage, you have nothing.

As T.R. once put it, "Freedom is not a gift that lasts long in the hands of cowards." How about that? Doesn't last long in the hands of cowards. What a great statement.

I want to use that—I shouldn't have said it. I would have used that statement—[laughter]—and I wouldn't have attributed it to T.R., and they would have said: "Oh, what a great statement that is. Trump made a brilliant speech." [Laughter]

What do you think, John? Would I get away with that? Kevin? I don't know. Maybe not. But that's a great statement. That's a beautiful thing to say.

But in the West, he tracked a 1,200-pound grizzly. My two boys know all about that. I say: "Are grizzlies dangerous? Is a grizzly bear dangerous?" I looked at Eric and Don. They know more about that stuff than any human being, I tell you. [Laughter] They said, "They're real dangerous, Dad." I said, "Are they violent bears?" They said, "They're really violent." Right, fellas? You said they are violent, but that doesn't scare them. Just be scared, okay? And get the hell out of there. [Laughter] But we want to keep you around.

But when it roared, a big one, and it wanted to strike him, and it was going rapidly—they're very fast. I just learned that on a beautiful airplane coming over here. He shot it squarely between the eyes, and it fell, touching, him but not able to destroy him.

When he heard a man here threaten to kill him—right here, one of your tough people. Is he around by any chance? Would you please stand up? [Laughter] He rode to his house. He rode to the man's house, knocked on his door. The man threatened to kill him. He said, "I'm going to kill Roosevelt." And he declared that "I've come over to see what you want to begin with." And "How do you want to begin the killing?" he said. "How do you want to begin? I'm right here in front of you. How do you want to begin the killing?" That's a little different kind of a guy.

By a coincidence of history, it was exactly 128 years ago today that Colonel Roosevelt gave our Nation one of the greatest examples of American courage the age-old chronicles of military valor have ever seen.

After commandeering a ship to Cuba for the volunteer regiment, he personally raised and trained his incredible Rough Riders—the Rough Riders—I saw the Rough Riders. Where the hell are the Rough Riders—look at these guys. I wish I looked like that. If I looked like them, I would have been President 20 years ago. [Laughter] You guys are great. Thank you. They can really ride those horses. They led us, and they were going faster than the car. [Laughter]

I said to my guys, "Is there any danger in the way they're riding?" "Yes, there's danger, sir. But they're great riders." You guys are fantastic. Thank you.

But he led the Rough Riders in their heroic charge up San Juan Heights. And with malaria coursing all throughout his veins—he was really sick—Colonel Roosevelt galloped into a hail of Spanish bullets. And when his horse came to a wire fence, he leapt off the horse. He jumped off the horse, and he started running toward the enemy. I don't know if that was smart, but he made it. *[Laughter]*

Then he looked over at the next hill, and he grabbed his men. He said, "Fellas, let's do it again," and he did it again and again. The Rough Riders' victory at San Juan Heights led directly to the collapse of the Spanish line.

Ah, the Spanish. They're members of NATO, but not very good members of NATO. *[Laughter]* They say, "No, we don't want to help other people." What are we doing, huh? They are not behaving nicely, but they will learn.

Soon after, they relinquished their grip on Cuba and Guam, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico. And they were all ours. They all—we got them all. And speaking of Cuba, after many, many decades, it's coming our way. Coming our way.

But, for his actions that day, T.R. was celebrated as a hero and eventually awarded the congressional Medal of Honor. That's a big deal.

And I'm thrilled to announce that, just moments ago, 128 years after the Battle of San Juan Heights, it was my really great privilege to deliver his library and a very special little gift. In fact, I gave it to Doug and the president, a man who did such a good job in helping to build it. Doug raised a lot of money, got a President to be out here all day instead of 15 minutes. *[Laughter]*

And I gave that medal—I took it off the—we have a beautiful room, the Roosevelt Room. This Roosevelt, by the way. And I took it off the wall, brought it over, and we just presented it. And it's going to be in your library now for a long, long time. And it will be displayed alongside the Medal of Honor earned by his brave son. His son was brave. It's genetics. You know, it's like the racehorse theory. Right? Fast horses. Theodore Roosevelt Jr., on D-day, he also received that incredible acknowledgement.

Except for Arthur and Douglas MacArthur—Arthur was his son; Douglas MacArthur, great general—they're the only father and son pair to receive our Nation's highest military award for courage above and beyond the call of duty.

Now, as I see my two beautiful sons sitting there, I think I'm going to give one to myself, one to them, and we'll have a threesome. Okay? *[Laughter]* I'll pick out one of the two. I'll give them the congressional Medal of Honor for something. *[Laughter]* For their genius at hunting. And I'll get one for taking on "Russia, Russia, Russia" or something. And we'll have a third pair.

No, I'm only kidding. But I have seriously thought about—now, this is dangerous to say because the fake news is up there all over the place. *[Laughter]* And when I joke—I always—I learned early on: Don't be sarcastic in politics. But I actually said a few times that I've seriously thought of giving myself the congressional Medal of Honor. *[Laughter]*

Now, everyone knows I'm doing it with a chuckle, but then they report, "He wants to give himself the congressional." *[Laughter]* So I don't say that anymore. It's very dangerous to say.

But it is the highest award, and they had a father-son get it, and that's a tremendous tribute to a genetic pool.

As we enter the 250th year, Americans must never forget we are a historic and heroic people with a heroic spirit and a heroic purpose. And in this world, we are a very special group.

American courage won our independence. It liberated millions and millions from slavery, rescued billions from tyranny, and sustained American liberty for two and a half centuries.

And we're not going to lose it to this group of losers. Oh, can you imagine? Have you seen these people? Have seen these people? The press is just building them up. They're losers. Okay? [Laughter] They're nasty people, but they're losers. We'll teach them. We're going to teach them. They're not going to hurt our country.

Without courage, there is no America today. If you don't have courage, we wouldn't have America today. Wouldn't—we wouldn't be close.

Third, Theodore Roosevelt believed in the America that really works and worked. He refused to accept failure, mediocrity, corruption, decay, or decline, and neither should we. That's why we can't take this nonsense that's going on right now. We're not going to take it.

The first public cause he ever supported was a bill to fix the streets in New York City. He was very New York City—and New York—centric. You know that. That's where he came from. He was—pretty rich family.

As the Civil Service Commissioner, he fought tooth and nail to return Federal hiring to a principle called "merit." "Merit." Isn't that nice to hear? And by the way—by the way, do you know a little while ago—not in yesterday's decisions, where we actually had a good day except for birthright citizenship, which will work out some way.

But we had something called—do you know what we're talking about? We had something that gives back tremendous power to the President of the United States. And we won that, I think, 6 to 3. And it was taken away from another Roosevelt. It was taken away from FDR in 1932. It was taken away, and for almost a hundred years, that's been up for grabs. *Slaughter*—it was called the *Slaughter* case. And a lot of people didn't think it would ever be won, and we won it 2 days ago in the Supreme Court. It gives power back to the President at a time where the President really needs power. A great decision.

It was the most important—and we won some others too. It was the most important decision of all of them, I think. But we'll take care of the birthright citizenship, because that was not meant for rich people from other countries. That was meant for—actually, it was meant for the babies of slaves.

If you look at it, it was a month after the Civil War ended that it went through. That's because it was meant for the babies of slaves. It wasn't meant for rich people from China. It was—they came over in Gulfstreams. It was meant for the babies of slaves.

So I believe—no, I know they got it wrong, but that's okay because they gave us something that nobody thought. But they also gave us something in one of the sessions a year ago. It was called merit. Our country now is based again on merit.

So, if you're a student with very average marks and you looked a certain way or you acted a certain way or whatever, and you get into the finest school in the world, and then you're somebody else that looked a certain way or acted a certain way and you have all A-pluses and you have all great marks and board numbers that are through the roof, way above other people, but you don't get in, they get in.

It's all over with. It's based now on merit. I don't even know if people know. The fake news didn't want to cover it. To me, that's one of the greatest decisions. And that took courage of the Supreme Court, because our country became great because of merit. We became great because of merit.

And when you look at those soldiers that we have standing there at Washington, DC, where we ended up—so we had the—one of the most unsafe cities, places—our capital—anywhere in the country, and now we have one of the absolute safest. You can walk anywhere in Washington. Washington—and we fixed up the monuments, and Doug was fantastic. We had 78 monuments, fountains, statues. We have the reflecting pond, which we did the best job of all. And they came in with box cutters, and they cut it up, but it's working fine. And I let a little water out. We're going to redo it a little bit.

But we fixed it up after a hundred and—think of it. It was 1922 that it came about, and from the day it was built, it leaked. From the day it was built, it didn't work. But when it did, when they had water, it was beautiful. It reflected Washington—the Washington Monument. It reflected Lincoln and Washington. Think of it. How beautiful. How beautiful.

And these people went in and cut it up, and they got caught. We'll see what happens with them, but they got caught. But they put a big gash, 350 feet long. Think of that—350-foot gash along the side of this very expensive material.

But we'll have it all—it's already good. We wanted to have it done for July 4, and it was done for July 4. And it's operating right now, but we'll let a little water out. We'll fix it up very quickly, Doug, and it will be just as good.

But we have, for the first time ever—what they don't say—we spent a very small amount of money too. What they don't say is Barack Hussein Obama—have you heard of him?

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Barack Hussein Obama spent tens of millions of dollars trying to fix it, and it was a disaster. Sleepy Joe Biden spent millions of dollars trying to fix it, and he was unable to do it. But we did it, and it works beautifully. It's a beautiful—we got rid of the algae, which they put in. They put in algae. Who the hell put in algae?

They had a couple of people with signs, "Protect the algae." [*Laughter*] Can you believe this? This world has gone crazy. [*Laughter*]

But today I'm proud to say that, after 4 years of decline, America is once again a nation that has strong borders, is respected by everyone—all countries all over the world. They respect your President, and they respect you. When they respect your President, they respect you.

And we solve problems, and we take things on, just like Theodore Roosevelt took things on. He took them on directly, right at them. He stared in their face. But our laws will be enforced, our laws will be protected, and our law enforcement is respected again.

You know, one of the things that I'm most proud of: When I was running in the campaign, and even before I announced, you could not get people to join the military. We had the worst years we've ever had under Sleepy Joe Biden. He had no idea what the hell he was doing. And people were ashamed of our country. And you couldn't get him to join.

And then we had a beautiful day, November 5, and we won it by a lot. We won by just a lot. It was incredible. We beat a woman named Kamala. We beat a brilliant young woman named Kamala, who had no clue.

She was the border czar. She never went to the border. She never called the Border Patrol. I said: "Fellas, you ever get a call from Kamala? She's the border czar." "No, sir. She never called." I used to call them every other day. "How we doing on the border?" Two months and we had a border that was perfect. Two months. But Kamala never called, and she never went. So, for 4 years, she was the border czar. She never went to the border. It's not—doesn't typically play out very well. And we had the worst border in the world.

But these are the people that were running our Government, and we were a laughingstock all over the world. Not anymore. They don't laugh at us anymore.

A Government that was honest and accountable was the number-one demand of the Declaration of Independence. They want honesty. They want respect.

And on this anniversary, we recommit ourselves to upholding that righteous legacy, and that's why I'm here. I'm in a State that I won by a landslide, but I won a lot of them by landslides, in all fairness. *[Laughter]* But this was a beauty. This was a beauty.

And I refuse to tell you—my son said, "Dad, don't say that." So I won't.

I refuse to tell you who got more votes: me or the legendary—and he was great—Theodore Roosevelt. I refuse to say—*[laughter]*—because you'll say: "He's a braggart. He's a terrible human being. He's a horrible person." So I refuse to say. I told my son, "I will not say." Thank you. Thank you for giving me some good advice, Eric Trump and Don Trump.

T.R. was also a staunch and ferocious opponent of a thing called communism. You've been hearing a lot about that lately. He said: "The doctrines of communistic socialism, if consistently followed, mean the ultimate annihilation of civilization." Other than that, he thought it was wonderful. *[Laughter]*

As we're seeing now, Communism is the greatest threat to our country, including—I believe this. You know, when I said it, I said, "Boy, that's pretty severe," but I think it's true. It's the biggest threat to our country, including World War I, World War II, Pearl Harbor, September 11.

I think it's a—a bigger threat—potentially a bigger threat than that, because it's like a cancer that spreads, and you'd better stop it fast. We will never let the United States become a Communist country. Won't happen. And four, three—you know, thank you.

Fourth, Theodore Roosevelt believed in an America that thinks big. He thought big. He was a big thinker. He was a tremendously big thinker.

On the Fourth of July in 1886, he spoke in Dickinson, North Dakota—anybody from Dickinson?—and said: "Like all Americans, I like big things; big prairies, big forests and mountains. I want them big." He wants big wheat fields. He wants tremendous railroads. Let them be big and beautiful and powerful. And herds of cattle. He wants everything big. He wants big factories, steamboats. He wants everything big.

It was cool. I mean, I thought. It was great, because I feel that way. *[Laughter]* I feel that—I've always felt that way.

Theodore Roosevelt wanted a big future, and he had big dreams for America. And thanks to him, we built the Panama Canal—that beautiful Panama Canal. That is not managed the way it should be, but we won't talk about that now.

But he did all of these incredible things with parks and everything else. And we vanquished every foreign power from the hemisphere, and he raised the American flag on the far side of the world.

He had our American flag planted on every part of the world. He would call—or whatever they did in those days—"Is the flag over there? Is the flag"—he wanted that flag to fly boldly in other countries and other parts of the world.

We built the "Great White Fleet." Did you ever hear of the "Great White Fleet?"

We used to build ships. We're going to start very soon building them again. We're building them like—wait till you see. Although, we do build the greatest submarines ever in—ever in the world. We're 15 years ahead on submarines and other things.

We do other things great, but we're going to start with the ships again. We used to build a ship a day. And now they got out of that. A lot of bad—a lot of people that didn't know what the hell they were doing in running our country.

Theodore Roosevelt understood that the grand and righteous ambition is not a vice; it is a American virtue. Having ambition is a positive thing, he said, not a negative thing. And it won us our country, and it's been among the greatest forces for good. It's been the greatest thing: our attitude and the attitude toward our country and making our country great—by some people. Not all Presidents were like that. I don't want to get involved with talking about the individual Presidents.

But we had some good. We had a few great. We had a couple. But we had some good, but we had some really bad ones, and they set us back very, very substantially. In particular, the last one.

A nation, like an individual, either rises or falls, builds or decays, lives or dies by this. As we look into the future of our 250th year, it's time that we get out there and we expand our aspirations and our ambitions and build the country that will inspire the entire world for a generation. So that's what we're doing.

Again, we have more money being invested in the United States of America by other countries and people than ever before, by many, many times over. The fake news doesn't like talking about it, but they see what's happening. Look at the stock market. Every day, it's hitting a new high. I think it's 82 times now. In a short period of time, 82. And that's a good thing, not a bad thing.

And all of you that have 401(k)s, which are many—who has a 401(k)? Four-oh-one-k, yes. Big percentage of the audience. Everyone that has a 401(k) is setting records right now in your 401(k). Your wife, your husband, your kids, they all think you're a genius. I'm the genius. I'm the one that—I'm only kidding. *[Laughter]*

No, I told the story the other day for a first time. A policeman came up to me—a big, strong, good-looking guy—and he said, "Sir, I want to thank you." He was almost sort of crying. I said, "What do you want to talk to me about, Officer?" He was standing on line. He was watching as I shook hands with people.

Some of these people are extremely strong in shaking hands. They break your hand because they're so—"Sir, thank you very much." The guy is an NFL offensive lineman. "Sir, I'd like to thank you very much." "Wha!"—*[laughter]*.

But he came up to me and he said, "Sir"—I was leaving—"I want to thank you so much." "Why?" "My 401(k) is up 84 percent. My wife was disgusted with me for years. We just—it was just going in the wrong direction. But it's up 84 percent this year, and I just want to thank you, sir, because it's really helped me with my marriage. My wife is respecting me again. She thought I was an idiot." *[Laughter]*

This is a big, strong guy. But the women, you—you know the women rule. You know that. We know. All the guys in there, you know.

This guy is a big, powerful guy, and he was petrified of his wife. *[Laughter]* But you know what? He said: "My wife now respects me again. She thinks I'm a genius. She thinks I'm Warren Buffett. She thinks I'm one of the greatest investors."

But they are up. But everybody in this room, there's not one person here that hasn't been going up 50, 60, 70, 80 percent—your 401(k)s. You're making a lot of money. Everybody is.

And we have more people working today than any time in the history of our country. We have more people working today than at any time.

And we inherited a tremendous inflation problem from Biden. We inherited the worst inflation in history—48 years, they say, but let's say history. It was the worst inflation, and prices were high, and those prices are all coming down. And you see fuel is coming way down. It's dropping like a rock, just like I said. Because those boats are coming out of the Hormuz Strait. They're coming out by numbers that nobody ever saw.

We're setting records, actually. The oil is dropping. We have some great oilmen here. I don't know if they're happy or sad. I don't give a damn if they're happy or sad. I want the prices to go down, and the oil is dropping like nobody thought possible. But I told you it would.

Total control. We have total control of everything. This is just the beginning of the golden age of America. We're in the golden age of America, and America is going to experience something that I can truly say, I believe, the best is yet to come. It's going to be coming—and it's here.

But it's coming at speeds that nobody thought possible.

Finally, Theodore Roosevelt understood that whatever our background, we are all Americans. We're Americans first, united under one flag, and we don't wipe our hands on a flag.

Did you hear the person? One of our Communist—one of our Communist people.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. But they cleaned it up. The press cleaned that statement up. You know that, right? She didn't use the word "hand." She used a different word—a disgusting word. They're disgusting pigs. She didn't use the word "hand." They said "hand." She used another word. You know what word I'm talking about. These people are a disgrace.

That's why Theodore Roosevelt boldly fought for what he called "the new nationalism"—the word "nationalism" is a very interesting word—putting the needs of the whole nation and all of these people above partisanship, lobbyists, crooked politicians.

That's this—one thing with these guys, they are honest as hell. I'd let you know if they were crooked. If John or Kevin were crooked, I'd say, "They're crooked pols." But they're honest. Maybe they're too honest, actually. We've got to get a little action going here, fellas.

But no, these are great politicians. They're great people. That's why you put them back in office in record numbers, the two of them, all the time.

But T.R. knew that true patriotism demanded caring for the worker, the environment, and the health and culture and integrity for the Nation itself. He was something special. He was a really great man. He was a man the likes of which you may never see again, but we'll all get close and we'll all try and duplicate what he's done, because he was a man of unbelievable genius and unbelievable toughness and principle.

So I want to just say that it's an honor to be with you. It's an honor to be asked to represent our Nation in the opening of what will be a truly great library, museum, or center. Call it what you want. And he deserves it as much as anybody that's ever been President of the United States, which is such a great honor.

And I just want to thank everybody for being here on this extremely hot day. It's a beautiful day, and it's a beautiful State, and I want to thank you all.

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

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:28 p.m. in the Burning Hills Amphitheatre. In his remarks, he referred to Sens. Susan M. Collins, A. Mitchell McConnell, Lisa A. Murkowski, and Thomas R. Tillis; U.S. Chief of Protocol Monica Crowley; Katie Farmer, president and chief executive officer, BNSF Railway; Dana F. White, Jr., president and chief executive officer, Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC); King Salman bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia; Master Chief Special Warfare Operator Britt K. Slabinski, USN (Ret.), president, Medal of Honor Society; Cameron M. Thiers, Sophie Dennison-Gibby, and Justin T. Carreno, who were arrested and charged for allegedly removing pieces of the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool, and former Olympic canoeist David C. Hearn, who was charged with allegedly damaging the Reflecting Pool; former Vice President Kamala D. Harris, in her capacity as the 2024 Democratic Presidential nominee; Warren E. Buffett, chairman and former chief executive officer, Berkshire Hathaway Inc.; and New York Democratic congressional candidate Darializa Avila Chevalier. He also referred to S. 1383; and his daughter-in-law Bettina Anderson.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library in Medora, ND.

Locations: Medora, ND.

Names: Anderson, Bettina; Armstrong, Kelly M.; Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Buffett, Warren E.; Burgum, Douglas J.; Burgum, Kathryn; Cao, Hung; Carreno, Justin T.; Chevalier, Darializa Avila; Collins, Susan M.; Cramer, Kevin; Crowley, Monica; Dennison-Gibby, Sophie; Farmer, Katie; Fedorchak, Julie; Harris, Kamala D.; Hearn, David C.; Hoeven, John H., III; Hogue, David; Lefor, Mike; McConnell, A. Mitchell; Murkowski, Lisa A.; Obama, Barack; O'Keefe, Edward F.; Salman bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud, King; Slabinski, Britt K.; Thiers, Cameron M.; Tillis, Thomas R.; Trump, Donald J., Jr.; Trump, Eric F.; Weisz, Robin; White, Dana F., Jr.

Subjects: 2024 Presidential election; Acting Secretary of the Navy; Air Force One, VC-25B bridge aircraft; Alaska, reinstatement of Mount McKinley within Denali National Park and Preserve; America's 250th birthday celebration; Armed Forces, U.S., recruitment efforts; BNSF Railway; Border security; Citizenship; Constitutional roles and separation of powers; District of Columbia, beautification and renovation projects; District of Columbia, law enforcement improvement efforts; Election security and integrity, strengthening efforts; Inflation; Iran, commercial transit through Strait of Hormuz; Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool, renovation work; Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool, suspected vandalism; Medal of Honor; North Dakota, Governor; North Dakota, President's visit; North Dakota, Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library in Medora; Oil and natural gas, domestic production; Oil markets and prices; Panama Canal, ownership and operations; Safeguard American Voter Eligibility Act; Saudi Arabia, King; Secretary of the Interior; Shipbuilding, domestic expansion efforts; Stock market; U.S. Border Patrol; U.S. Chief of Protocol; Ultimate Fighting Championship Freedom 250 Event; Venezuela, relations with U.S.

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