

*Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2019*

**Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Prime Minister Viktor Orban of Hungary and an Exchange With Reporters**

*May 13, 2019*

*President Trump.* Thank you very much. It's a great honor to have with us the Prime Minister of Hungary. And Viktor Orban has done a tremendous job in so many different ways. Highly respected. Respected all over Europe. Probably, like me, a little bit controversial, but that's okay. That's okay.

*Prime Minister Orban.* It's okay.

*President Trump.* You've done a good job, and you've kept your country safe.

We'll be discussing NATO. As you know, Hungary is a proud member of NATO, and we are—we've really gotten to know each other a little bit. We'll be discussing trade, very much so, and lots of other subjects. We'll be meeting with representatives of Hungary later on, with the Prime Minister. And we'll spend some very good time together.

So, Mr. Prime Minister, thank you very much for being at the White House. Thank you very much. It's a great honor.

*Prime Minister Orban.* Definitely with you.

*President Trump.* Thanks.

*Prime Minister Orban.* May I have a word?

*President Trump.* Yes, please.

*Prime Minister Orban.* So, President, thank you very much for the invitation.

*President Trump.* Thank you.

*Prime Minister Orban.* May I just say here that we are proud that so many Hungarians contributed to the tremendous progress of United States.

*President Trump.* That's right.

*Prime Minister Orban.* I'm very happy to be here again, may I say, to be young again.

*President Trump.* Yes.

*Prime Minister Orban.* I was 20 years ago, first time here.

I have some expectations for this meeting this afternoon. First of all, to strengthen our strategic alliance; then, to discuss global political issues, because so many changes are going on, and we have some similar approaches. And I would like to express that we are proud to stand together with the United States on fighting against illegal migration——

*President Trump.* That's true.

*Prime Minister Orban.* ——on terrorism, and to protect and help the Christian communities all around the world.

So, President, thank you very much for the invitation.

*President Trump.* And you have been great with respect to Christian communities. You have really put a block up, and we appreciate that very much.

So we're going to have some meetings now. A lot of subjects under discussion. And the relationship is very good with Hungary. Thank you all very much.

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

*Q.* Mr. President, what's your reaction to China's decision today to retaliate on tariffs and the market reaction to that?

*President Trump.* Well, the reaction is very simple. China has been taking advantage of the United States for many, many years. I'm not just talking about during the Obama administration. You can go back long before that. And it's been taking out four hundred, five hundred, six hundred billion dollars a year out of the United States. And we can't let that happen.

We're in a very strong position. Our economy has been very powerful; theirs has not been. We've gone up a lot since our great election in 2016. And if you look at the numbers, they've gone down quite a bit.

We're dealing with them. We have a very good relationship. Maybe something will happen. But we're going to be meeting, as you know, at the G-20 in Japan. And that will be, I think, probably, a very fruitful meeting.

But we're taking in, right now, hundreds of billions of dollars. We're taking in billions of dollars of tariffs. And those tariffs are going to be tremendously—if you look at what we've done thus far with China, we've never taken in 10 cents until I got elected. Now we're taking in billions and billions.

Now, it went up, as of Friday, very substantially. It's 25 percent on \$200 billion. So now the total is 25 percent on \$250 billion. In addition to that, we have another \$325 billion that we can do if we decide to do it.

So we are taking in tens of billions of dollars. We've never done that before with China. We've never done that before with anybody, frankly, because we've been taken advantage of on all of our trade deals, practically.

This is a very positive step. I love the position we're in. There can be some retaliation, but it can't be very, very substantial, by comparison. And out of the billions of dollars that we're taking in, a small portion of that will be going to our farmers, because China will be retaliating, probably, to a certain extent, against our farmers.

We're going to take the highest year, the biggest purchase that China has ever made with our farmers, which is about \$15 billion, and do something reciprocal to our farmers so our farmers can do well. They'll be planting. They'll be able to sell for less, and they'll make the same kind of money until such time as it's all straightened out.

So our farmers will be very happy, our manufacturers will be very happy, and our Government is very happy because we're taking in tens of billions of dollars. I think it's working out very well.

Again, we do much less business with China than they do with us. If you take a look at \$100 billion versus \$600 billion—and just so you understand, we don't have to pay any tariffs if you're a manufacturer in this country. You pay nothing. Open your division, or open up your product. Have it made in this country as opposed to made in China. Or, if you don't want to do that—and that would be the ideal; that's what it used to be a long time ago when we were smart, when we had an economy that was really something very special. Now we're having a period of tremendous growth and tremendous success like we haven't seen for a long time.

But in the old days, we made our product, and we took our product, and that's what it was. Now we go to China, and we buy it. Not anymore.

And if they don't want to pay tariffs, make it here, or buy it from another country that's a nontariffed country. So whether you go to Vietnam or so many others, you can do that.

So the bottom line is, we are taking in tremendous amounts of money. It already started as of last Friday, but it really started 7 months before that. It's in the form of tariffs or taxes, and it had a tremendous impact.

If you looked at the first quarter—which is always, historically, the worst quarter—we were at 3.2 percent. People were very surprised. Well, a lot of that was the tariffs that we were taking in from China. So we're in a very good position, and I think it's only going to get better.

*Q.* [Inaudible]—with Xi directly?

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

*Q.* Mr. President, can you guarantee a trade deal with China by June 1?

*President Trump.* We're in a great position right now, no matter what we do. Yes, I think China wants to have it, because companies are already announcing that they're leaving China because they can't do that: they can't compete if they're in China, with the tax.

So what a lot of companies are going to be doing, quite naturally, is leaving China and going to other countries so they don't have to pay the tariff. That's something that's a problem for China. They don't want to have that. And we don't want to have that necessarily happen to China.

But we had a deal with China; it was 95-percent there. And then, my representatives—as you know, Secretary Mnuchin and Bob Lighthizer—Ambassador Lighthizer—they went to China, and they were told the things that were fully agreed to we're not going to get anymore; they're going to unagree to them. That's not acceptable.

I said: "Good. That's fine. Put on the tariffs." And again, so we have tens of millions of dollars pouring into our coffers, the coffers of the U.S. Treasury.

*Q.* Mr. President, will you work with Xi directly?

#### *Iran*

*Q.* Are you at war with Iran? Are you seeking regime change there?

*President Trump.* We'll see what happens with Iran. If they do anything, it would be a very bad mistake. If they do anything, I'm hearing little stories about Iran. If they do anything, they will suffer greatly. We'll see what happens with Iran.

#### *China/Russia*

*Q.* Mr. President, will you meet with Mr.—President Xi directly at G-20?

*President Trump.* I'll meet with him directly, yes. I'll be meeting with President Xi of China. Yes.

*Q.* What about President Putin? Will you also meet with him at G-20?

*President Trump.* Yes, I'll be meeting with President Putin also.

#### *Russia*

*Q.* On Russia, Secretary Pompeo is there—or is heading there. What message do you have for him to send to Putin?

*President Trump.* I think the message is that there has never been anybody that's been so tough on Russia, but at the same time, we're going to end up getting along with Russia. It makes sense to get along with Russia.

Nobody has sanctioned Russia like I have. Nobody has talked about the pipeline going to Germany and various other places like I have. I said it's very unfair, having to do with the United States and NATO. There has been nobody that's ever done—and if you really look at something big, our energy business—we're now the biggest in the world. We're bigger than Russia. We're bigger than Saudi Arabia. We're bigger than anybody. That it all happened since I've become President, because I've made it so that you can do that. And we're taking in a lot of money.

Look, our country is doing really well. We've probably never done this well before, and it's going to continue. We have tremendous signs. As far as the deal with China is concerned, believe it or not, it's very important, but it's a very, very small part of the kind of numbers that we're doing right now, since my election.

*Q.* Will Don McGahn be——

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

*Q.* Will you pursue the \$325 billion in tariffs? The additional tariffs, are you going to pursue that?

*President Trump.* I haven't made that decision yet. We have the right to do another \$325 billion at 25 percent in additional tariffs. That is a tremendous amount of money that would come into our country. I have not made that decision yet.

#### *Investigation Into Russia's Interference in 2016 Presidential Election*

*Q.* Should Don McGahn be held in contempt of Congress?

*President Trump.* I don't know anything about what's going on. I can tell you that there has never been anybody so transparent as the Trump administration. And it was no collusion and no obstruction. And we're wasting a lot of time with that stuff. But the Mueller report came out; it was a very good report for us.

*Q.* If you're so transparent, sir——

#### *Hungary*

*Q.* Mr. President, are you concerned about democratic backsliding in Hungary under this Prime Minister?

*President Trump.* Well, people have a lot of respect for this Prime Minister. He's a respected man. And I know he's a tough man, but he's a respected man. And he's done the right thing, according to many people, on immigration. And you look at some of the problems that they have in Europe that are tremendous, because they've done it a different way than the Prime Minister. But I'll let him speak to that question.

Mr. Prime Minister, please.

*Prime Minister Orban.* "From the people, by the people, for the people." This is the basis for the Hungarian Government. So it's a Government which is elected by the Hungarian people several times, so we are happy to serve our nation.

*Q.* What about democratic reforms, sir?

*Prime Minister Orban.* We have a new constitution accepted in 2011, and it's functioning well.

*Q.* Mr. President, you talked about——

*Hungary/North Atlantic Treaty Organization*

*President Trump.* Don't forget they're a member of NATO and a very good member of NATO. And I don't think we can really go into too much of a discussion unless that's mentioned.

Yes.

*Congressional Oversight of Executive Branch/U.S. Economy*

*Q.* You talked about transparency, sir. If you're so transparent, why continue to block these House Democrats who are looking for information from Secretary Mnuchin and others?

*President Trump.* Because they're asking for things that they're not entitled to. I could ask them. I assume, if they ask me, I could ask them for the same kind of thing. They wouldn't want to do it. All they're doing is trying to win an election in 2020.

And I think we're in very good shape. We're have the strongest economy we've ever had. We have the single best employment numbers we've ever had—and unemployment numbers.

You know, it's very interesting, but, Mr. Prime Minister, as of today, we have the most number of people working in the United States that we have ever had at any time in the history of our country. Almost 160 million people——

*Prime Minister Orban.* Congratulations.

*President Trump.* ——are working. So that's a big number.

*Prime Minister Orban.* Congratulations.

*President Trump.* I just saw the final number. We're close to 160 million people. If you look at African American, Asian, Hispanic unemployment, it's the lowest number it's ever been.

So we're doing really well. And all the Democrats want to do is find any way they can to stop it. They're putting their own personal goals ahead of the country, and you can't do that. You just can't do that.

And we have a wonderful Attorney General. He's done a very, very good job. And I'm sure it'll all work out.

*Investigation Into Russia's Interference in 2016 Presidential Election/2020 Presidential Election*

*Q.* On your campaign, sir, will you commit to not using any information stolen from a foreign adversary? Will you make that commitment?

*President Trump.* Well, I never did use, as you probably know. That's what the Mueller report was all about. They said, "No collusion." And I would certainly agree to that; I don't need it. All I need is the opponents that I'm looking at. I'm liking what I see. [*Laughter*]

*Iran*

*Q.* Mr. President, are you concerned about the attacks on oil tankers in the Middle East?

*President Trump.* We'll see what happens. It's going to be a bad problem for Iran if something happens, I can tell you that. They're not going to be happy. They are not going to be happy people. Okay?

*Q.* What do you mean by that, sir?

*Q.* Have you had any contact——

*President Trump.* You can figure it out yourself. They know what I mean by it.

Okay, does anybody else have a question other than these two? *[Laughter]* Any questions for the Prime—are there any questions for the Prime Minister, please?

#### *Rescue of U.S. Hostage From Captivity in Burkina Faso*

*Q.* Mr. President, what can you tell us about this American citizen that was rescued by the French in Africa?

*President Trump.* Yes, the French did a great job.

*Q.* Who is she? Was it coordinated with your administration?

*President Trump.* The French did a great job, and we appreciate it very much. And I've already communicated that feeling. We worked with them on intelligence, and we were able to get that person back. And we thank the French very much. Great job.

*Q.* Who is she? Who is she? Or what was she doing there?

*President Trump.* I don't want to tell you that now. I'll tell you at some later date, I'm sure. Okay?

#### *Aid to U.S. Farmers*

*Q.* The farmer aid package, sir, the \$15 billion, can you elaborate on what that looks like or where that's coming from?

*President Trump.* Well, it's being devised right now. It's something that has taken place over the years. And if you would like, speak to Sonny Perdue, Department of Agriculture.

We love our farmers. We take care of our farmers. Our farmers have been incredible. No country can get in the way of our farmers. Our farmers are great patriots, and they've done a fantastic job. So our farmers are going to be very well taken care of.

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

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:14 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Department of Justice Special Counsel Robert S. Mueller III. A reporter referred to former White House Counsel Donald F. McGahn II.

*Categories:* Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters :: White House; Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Hungary, Prime Minister Orban.

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*Names:* Barr, William P.; Lighthizer, Robert E.; Mnuchin, Steven T.; Mueller, Robert S., III; Obama, Barack; Orban, Viktor; Perdue, George E. "Sonny"; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Xi Jinping.

*Subjects:* Agriculture : Domestic production, strengthening efforts; Agriculture, Department of : Secretary; Burkina Faso, kidnapped French and U.S. citizens, rescue; Business and industry : Manufacturing industry :: Strengthening efforts; China : President; China : Relations with U.S.; China : Trade with U.S.; China : U.S. tariff structure, strengthening efforts; Commerce, international : Group of Twenty (G-20) nations; Economy, national : Improvement; Elections : 2020 Presidential and congressional elections; Employment and unemployment : Unemployment rate; Energy : Domestic production, promotion efforts; France : Relations with U.S.; Hungary : Immigration policy, enforcement; Hungary : Prime Minister; Hungary : Trade with U.S.; Iran : International diplomatic efforts; Iran : Regional involvement; Justice, Department of : Attorney

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