

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2019

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Prime Minister Boris Johnson of the United Kingdom and an Exchange With Reporters in New York City

September 24, 2019

President Trump. Well, thank you very much, everyone. It's great to be with my friend, Boris Johnson. He just got a position that he's having a very easy time with. It's much easier than he thought. [*Laughter*] I was just saying, "Is it tougher or easier?"

Prime Minister Johnson. That's right.

President Trump. He said, "Well, it's"—I guess, what he expected. I think it's pretty much what you expected.

Prime Minister Johnson. It is. It is.

President Trump. And he's doing a fantastic job. Not easy. But doing a really good job. And I think you're going to make great progress come October, come November. But great progress for the country, long term.

Prime Minister Johnson. October. October. October the 31st. We—[*inaudible*].

President Trump. The results are going to be—the results are going to start to show in November. But it looks to me like he has made some great progress. So it's an honor to have him here.

We're going to be discussing trade. We can quadruple our trade with U.K. And we can, I think, really do a big job. Bob Lighthizer is here, our Trade Representative. Your trade representative is here. And they're already scheduled today to continue negotiations.

But we can have substantially more trade with U.K., and we look forward to doing that. So we'll talk about other things also. It's great to have you, Boris.

Prime Minister Johnson. Donald, thank you very much. It's great to be here. And I certainly hope that we can make a lot of progress quite fast on trade. We've got our Secretary of State for International Trade, Liz Truss, is here.

President Trump. Right.

Prime Minister Johnson. We hope to get going on that, always remembering that the NHS is not for sale. [*Laughter*] But everything else—there's a huge amount we can—we can do.

And I guess we'll also talk a bit about Iran——

President Trump. We'll be talking about that.

Prime Minister Johnson. ——and some of those difficult issues where I think we share a common perspective, and we want to dial things down, but also make sure that people in the Gulf don't get the wrong idea——

President Trump. Right.

Prime Minister Johnson. ——about what they can get away with. That's a complicated issue. But we hope to make progress there as well.

President Trump. We'll be talking about many things, and we look forward to it. And we'll start in just a minute.

So thank you very much, everybody. Thank you.

Q. Prime Minister Johnson, some of your critics are saying that you should resign because you misled the Queen with regard to shutting Parliament down. How do you respond to that?

Prime Minister Johnson. Well, as I said earlier on—thank you very much. As I said earlier on, let's be absolutely clear: We respect the judiciary in our country; we respect the court.

I disagree profoundly with what they had to say. I think it was entirely right to go ahead with a plan for a Queen's speech. This is a—this is the longest period we haven't had a Queen's speech for 400 years. We've got a dynamic domestic agenda we need to be getting on with: more police on the streets, investment in our National Health Service, improving our education. We need to get on with that.

And frankly, I think we need to get on with Brexit. That's the overwhelming view of the British people. Whether they voted to leave or remain, they want to get this thing done by October the 31st. And that's what we're going to do.

Q. Mr. President——

President Trump. That was a very nasty question from a great American reporter. I'm shocked.

Prime Minister Johnson. Was that—no, was that an American reporter?

President Trump. That's an American reporter.

Prime Minister Johnson. Was it? I thought——

President Trump. And he's a good one.

Prime Minister Johnson. But I think he was asking a question, to be fair, that a lot of British reporters would have asked me.

Q. Mr. President——

President Trump. Well, now that we have that out of the way—he's not—I'll tell you, I know him well: He's not going anywhere. Don't worry about him.

Q. Mr. President——

President Trump. Okay, go ahead. Any other questions?

Q. Mr. President——

British Exit From European Union

Q. Any advice for the Prime Minister as to how he should deal with the judges?

President Trump. No, I think he's dealing very well. Everything I see here is what—look, I've watched it very closely. He's a friend of mine. I tend to watch friends closer than enemies, but the enemies you have to watch in a different way.

I think he's doing very well. It's a complicated subject, but they took a vote, and the vote was—I was there. I happened to be there the day of that vote.

Prime Minister Johnson. Were you there on the vote?

President Trump. I made a prediction, even. I even made a prediction. And it was a correct prediction. And you know, that was a long time ago. And it takes a man like this to get it done. And they have to get it done; otherwise, it would be a terrible thing to do it any other way.

I don't see another vote. I don't see anything happening. I think he's going to get it done.

Q. Do you think he will get——

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, are you afraid for your job?

Judicial Review/The President's Immigration Policies

Q. Mr. President, what was your reaction when you heard these U.K. supreme court decision? What was your reaction to it?

President Trump. I had no reaction. I just asked Boris. And you know, to him, it's another day in the office. He's a professional. It's just another day in the office.

Prime Minister Johnson. Yes, well, it's—tomorrow is another day in Parliament. That's what—that's what he means. *[Laughter]*

President Trump. You know, we had—we had, Boris, the first couple of months, we had been—I think we were oh-for-7 with the Supreme Court. And since then, we won the wall, we won asylum, we won some of the biggest ones. We've had a great streak going.

But we—we started off, we were 0 for 7. And then, as you will report—in fact, the first time we won, you were, like, shocked that we won. And since then, we've almost run the table. We've won a lot of decisions. So I'm sure that's going to happen to you.

Prime Minister Johnson. Well, we're not counting our chickens. And we're full of respect, as I say, for the justices of our—*[laughter]*—supreme court. But we're going to push on. We're going to respect what the court had to say, but we're going to get on and deliver Brexit. That's the—I think that's what the British people want to see.

President Trump. In other words, he's been very nice to the court, please. Okay? *[Laughter]* He has——

Q. Mr. President——

President Trump. He has total respect for the court.

Yes, Jeff *[Jeff Mason, Reuters]*.

U.S. Assistance to Ukraine

Q. Mr. President, on a separate subject, can you explain why aid to Ukraine was stopped?

President Trump. Because I think that other countries should be paying also. Why is the United States the only one paying to Ukraine? And I've been talking about this for a long time, not only with respect to Ukraine, but a lot of other countries.

But frankly, why isn't Germany—I just met with the Chancellor—why isn't Germany, why isn't France, why aren't these other countries paying payment? Why are we paying all the time? And nobody has given, I believe, more to Ukraine. You know, President Obama used to send pillows and sheets. I sent antitank weapons and a lot of things to Ukraine. We think that it's very important and both—by the way, I don't know if you know it or not, that payment was made.

But I wanted to get other countries. Other countries should also pay, because frankly, it affects them more. I mean, that's a barrier. That's a wall between Russia and the U.K. And they don't pay. And why are they not paying? Why is it always the United States that's paying? And I made that loud and clear. I told that to Mick Mulvaney. I told it to a lot of people. Where's Mick? Wherever he is. But I told it to a lot of different people. I told it to Mike. I told it to two Mikes. I told it to Steve.

Secretary of the Treasury Steven T. Mnuchin. Yes.

President Trump. I keep asking the same—I said it to Wilbur Ross. I keep asking the same question: Why is it that the United States is always paying these foreign countries and other foreign countries that, frankly, are much great—much more affected, and they're not?

So I said: "Hold it up. Let's get other people to pay." And then, everybody called me: "Oh, please can we pay?" And I said—and there was never any quid pro quo. The letter was beautiful. It was a perfect letter.

It was—unlike Biden, who—by the way, what he said was a horror. And ask how his son made millions of dollars from Ukraine, made millions of dollars from China, even though he had no expertise whatsoever. Okay? So what he did was a real problem. With us, there was no pressure applied, no nothing.

Okay, folks. Thank you very much. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:35 a.m. at United Nations Headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany; Acting White House Chief of Staff John M. "Mick" Mulvaney; Vice President Michael R. Pence; Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo; and former Vice President Joseph R. Biden, Jr., and his son Hunter. A reporter referred to Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom.

Categories: Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters :: New York City; Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : United Kingdom, Prime Minister Johnson.

Locations: New York City.

Names: Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Biden, R. Hunter; Johnson, Boris; Lighthizer, Robert E.; Merkel, Angela; Mnuchin, Steven T.; Mulvaney, John M. "Mick"; Obama, Barack; Pence, Michael R.; Pompeo, Michael R.; Ross, Wilbur L., Jr.

Subjects: Commerce, Department of : Secretary; Communications : News media :: Accuracy and fairness; Europe : European Union :: United Kingdom, membership status; Foreign policy, U.S. : Foreign aid policies and funding; Germany : Chancellor; Immigration and naturalization : Refugees; Iran : International diplomatic efforts; Judiciary : Judicial review; Mexico : Border with U.S., infrastructure and security; New York : President's visits; State, Department of : Secretary; Trade Representative, Office of the U.S.; Treasury, Department of the : Secretary; Ukraine : U.S. assistance; United Kingdom : European Union, membership status; United Kingdom : Prime Minister; United Kingdom : Relations with U.S.; United Kingdom : Trade with U.S.; White House Office : Assistants to the President :: Acting Chief of Staff; White House Office : Vice President.

DCPD Number: DCPD201900652.