

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany and an Exchange With Reporters in Chandler's Cross, United Kingdom

December 4, 2019

President Trump. Well, thank you very much. We had a very successful NATO meeting. I think it was one of the most successful. We're just discussing that the best, certainly, that I've been—I've been to three of them now, and this was really something very special. There's great spirit. A lot of people are putting up a lot of money. We have \$130 billion more. And within 3 years, we'll have \$400 billion more put up by other countries. So that's really something. And it was a great meeting.

We're going to have, right now, a bilat with Chancellor Merkel of Germany. We have many things to discuss, including trade. We're doing a lot of trade, and we have been doing a lot of trade. And we will have a successful meeting, I'm sure.

I just want to thank you very much. We had some good talks already. Thank you very much, Angela. Thank you.

Chancellor Merkel. Well, yes, I would agree that we had a very successful meeting, indeed, on this occasion, the 70th anniversary of NATO. We discussed a number of strategies that are very important to secure the future of this alliance. And it was a very constructive debate that we had, and this is why I'm also very satisfied with the meeting.

And now we shall talk about bilateral issues.

President Trump. That's right. Okay? Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you.

Q. Mr. President, Mr. President——

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey/Turkey's Incursion Into Northern Syria/Kurds/Withdrawal of U.S. Military Forces From Syria

Q. Could we talk—can we ask you about the Erdogan meeting, sir?

President Trump. Yes.

Q. Did you discuss with——

President Trump. We had a meeting with——

Q. Did you discuss with him the NATO commitment that they protect——

President Trump. I discussed with him everything. We discussed a lot. We had a meeting, unscheduled. But we've already put out a notice. It was a very good meeting, I think. We discussed Syria. We discussed the Kurds. We discussed numerous things. And we're getting along very well.

The border, and the safe zone, is working out very well. I thought it would. And I give a lot of credit to Turkey for that. The cease-fire is holding very much so, and I think people are surprised. And maybe, someday, they'll give me credit, but probably not. But that worked out well. They've been trying to do this for a hundred years. That border is a mess for a long time.

We pulled our soldiers out; we took over the oil. We have soldiers where the oil is. That's the way I like it. And they can police their own border, and that's what they're doing. They can use other countries if they want. If they want to spend the time and energy, they can do. But this is a

border that's been under siege for many, many decades, and it was time for us to leave, and we left. And it's been holding very nicely. So we're very happy. We talked about that.

Q. And are they committed to protecting—the NATO commitment to protect the Baltics and Poland?

President Trump. Oh, yes, they've been very good. I think that, frankly, a lot of people pay great respect to Turkey for the work that they've done. And we had a number of mentions where they were mentioned specifically. No, they've been doing a good job, and they've been doing a good job also on the border and the safe zone. And they have held—I mean, obviously, there were some skirmishes. That's been around for a long time. But they've been—the cease-fires held very, very well.

Personal Attorney to the President Rudolph W. Giuliani

Q. Mr. President, can you explain why your personal attorney, Rudy Giuliani, would need to talk to the budget office?

President Trump. I really don't know. You'd have to ask him. Sounds like something that's not so complicated, frankly. But you'd have to ask him. No big deal.

U.S. Sanctions Against Iran

Q. Mr. President, Germany has welcomed six more countries into INSTEX, making it nine countries now that are circumventing U.S. sanctions against Iran. Have you talked about that with the Chancellor and—

President Trump. No, but we will. I haven't talked—

Q. Yes. What would you say to her?

President Trump. I'm not going to say what I'm going to say—[laughter]—but we will be talking about it. We'll be talking about a number of things. We'll have a good meeting. Okay?

Russia-Germany Nord Stream II Natural Gas Pipeline

Q. Mr. President, will you put sanctions on Nord Stream II? Will the U.S. put the sanctions on?

President Trump. Say it again.

Q. Will the U.S. put sanctions on Nord Stream II?

President Trump. Well, we haven't really determined that yet. I do think it's a problem, but it's a problem that Germany is going to have to work out for themselves. Maybe for Germany it won't be a problem. I hope it's not, actually. But we'll be talking about that, Nord Stream.

Nuclear Weapons Stockpiles/Russia-U.S. Relations

Q. And, Mr. President, what did you respond to President Putin's offer on a moratorium for medium-range missile systems, which he made in the end of October? President—

President Trump. We're talking to Russia about many things, including a cessation on nuclear and nuclear creation. It's, in my opinion, the biggest problem the world has today. I think it's bigger than any other problem the world has today. And we're working very hard on it. And he wants to see something happen and so do I, and so does China.

European Union-U.S. Trade/U.S. Trade Negotiations

Q. Mr. President, do you talk about trade issues with Europe as well? Car sanctions?

President Trump. We're going to be talking about everything, yes. Trade is very important. We're—Germany is a very big trading partner, but it's been really the European Union. And we are—we've been discussing it for quite a while. It's been a little tough for the United States. We've had a very bad imbalance for many, many years, for decades, actually. And we're discussing that right now. So I think we'll come—I think we're going to come—I think we'll come to a satisfactory conclusion.

Chancellor Merkel. One word.

President Trump. Yes.

Chancellor Merkel. I think that the fact that there is a new Commission in place and also in the leadership of a new President of the European Commission, that now we have a very good basis to resume our trade talks as well.

President Trump. Meetings have been set up, and we'll talk. And I believe that it will work out very well for everybody. And I think it should. We have some very tough barriers to get over, they have—they've created barriers, as Angela knows very well, and making it very hard for the United States, really, to openly trade. And that can't be done.

And so we're going to be talking about that and other things. I think we will solve it. We do a lot of business, but they do much more business than us. And we're going to make—we're going to change it up. I've been saying this for the last 6 months, for the last year. And we've made progress, but we will make a lot of progress. And we just want fairness. We have to have fairness in trade not only with the EU, but with many other countries.

We're talking to China, as you know. Those discussions are going very well, and we'll see what happens. But we're talking to China. We're talking to others. We made a deal with South Korea. We made a deal with Japan. The Japan deal is a partial deal. It's—the rest will come next year. But we've made already many deals.

We're looking—the big is the USMCA with Canada, Mexico. And Nancy Pelosi has to get that approved. She has to put it out for a vote. She doesn't have to talk to anybody. She doesn't have to talk to any of her Democrats, because they'll approve it, and their constituents want it approved very badly. So that's where we are.

We have—we've made a lot of deals. And this is a deal, I think, that's going to be—the EU is actually one of the more difficult deals we have, because it's gone on for a long time unchecked. But it'll get there, I'm sure.

Prime Minister Justin P.J. Trudeau of Canada/Canadian Defense Spending

Q. Did you see the video of Prime Minister Trudeau talking about you last night?

President Trump. Well, he's two-faced.

Q. Do you think that Germany is too naïve concerning—

President Trump. And honestly, with Trudeau, he's a nice guy. I find him to be a very nice guy. But you know, the truth is that I called him out on the fact that he's not paying 2 percent. And I guess he's not very happy about it. I mean, you were there. A couple of you were there. And he's not paying 2 percent, and he should be paying 2 percent. It's Canada. They have money. And they should be paying 2 percent. So I called him out on that, and I'm sure he wasn't happy about it, but that's the way it is.

Look, I'm representing the U.S., and he should be paying more than he's paying, and he understands that. So I can imagine he's not that happy, but that's the way it is.

5G Cellular Communications Technology

Q. Mr. President, where are you in terms of persuading other allies, in terms of allowing China to build 5G networks?

President Trump. Well, I'm not working very hard on that. But I do think it's a security risk. It's a security danger. And I spoke to Italy, and they look like they're not going to go forward with that. We spoke to other countries. They're not going to go forward. Everybody I've spoken to is not going forward. But how many countries can I speak to? Am I going to call up and speak to the whole world? It is a security risk, in my opinion, in our opinion. We're building it, and we've started. But we're not using Huawei.

German Defense Spending

Q. Will you tax Germany for not paying enough in terms of defense spending?

President Trump. Well, Germany is a little bit under the limit, I will say that. But we'll talk about that now. Okay?

Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you. I think what we'll do is, just for purposes of this: We'll be having a meeting with the 2-percent people, and we're having another meeting with Denmark, and then we'll probably go directly back to Washington.

Greenland

Q. Will you address Greenland during that——

President Trump. Because I can't imagine—I can't imagine—will we discuss Greenland? What do you think? Tell we. [*Laughter*] Huh?

Q. Do you still want to buy Greenland?

President Trump. That's a very—that's a good—she must be in the real estate business. [*Laughter*] That's a very good question.

So we'll go directly back. I think we've done plenty of press conferences. Unless you're demanding a press conference, we'll do one, but I think we've answered plenty of questions.

And, again, let me just finish by saying we've had a tremendous 2 days. I think NATO is stronger than it's ever been. A lot more money is being produced by a lot of countries, and they're enthusiastic about it. And within 3 years, you're going to be talking about four—committed to \$400 billion more and not by the United States, by other countries.

So it's been very successful today, and there's great spirit. Okay? Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:13 p.m. at the Grove hotel and resort. In his remarks, he referred to Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi; and President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia. Chancellor Merkel referred to President of the European Commission Ursula von der Layen of the European Commission. Chancellor Merkel spoke in German, and her remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Categories: Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters :: Chandler's Cross, United Kingdom; Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Germany, Chancellor Merkel.

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