

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2020

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion With African American Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters

June 10, 2020

The President. Well, thank you very much. We're with friends of mine and members of the African American community, and we're going to be talking about law enforcement, education, business, health, and various other things.

As you know, tomorrow we're going to Dallas. We're going to start our rallies back up now. We've had a tremendous run at rallies. I don't think there's been an empty seat in—since we came down in the escalator with the First Lady. That was with the future First Lady, at that point. It's been an amazing thing to behold.

And we're going to be starting our rallies. The first one, we believe, will be probably—we're just starting to call up—will be in Oklahoma—in Tulsa, Oklahoma. A beautiful, new venue, brandnew. And we're looking forward to it. They've done a great job with COVID, as you know, in the State of Oklahoma. We're going to be coming into Florida—do a big one in Florida, a big one in Texas. They're all going to be big. We're going to Arizona.

We're going to North Carolina at the appropriate time. The Governor is a little backward there. He's a little bit behind. And unfortunately, we're going to probably be having no choice but to move the Republican Convention to another location. That will be announced shortly. But we'll have no choice. We wanted to stay in North Carolina very badly. We love it. It's a great State, a State I won. Many, many friends. Many relatives, frankly, that live there. And we'll see how it all works out, but the Governor doesn't want to give an inch.

And what he's doing is losing hundreds of millions of dollars for his State. But we'll probably have no other recourse but to move it to another State. We have a lot of States that want it: Texas, Georgia, Florida. We have many, many States that want it. But we've given them everything we can—North Carolina, a special place—but I think we're going to probably end up giving you an announcement pretty soon.

We are doing well in so many ways. You see what's going on with Nasdaq; we just broke another record yesterday. Some good news came out of the Federal Reserve today, I think, some very good news. We're really doing a financial comeback. The jobs numbers were fantastic.

Now, we'll have some other job numbers come up over the next few weeks, and we'll see how that goes. But I think it's really good, and we're on our way to a very big comeback.

I'd like to ask some of the folks that I'm with today to say a few words. They've been really supporters and friends of mine. They understand life. They understand, I think, the Black community better than anybody I know. And I will tell you, Ben Carson is an example of exactly what I'm talking about. He's been my friend from the first day we met, I think.

Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Benjamin S. Carson, Sr. Yes.

The President. And we met—we were opponents, but we were never really opponents. Ben is a very exceptional guy. He's done a fantastic job at HUD. But I'd like to maybe start with Ben to say a couple of words, and go to Darrell and the rest of us.

Let's say a few words to the press, if you would, please. Ben.

Secretary Carson. Thank you, Mr. President. We're here obviously to talk about some of the concerns in the Black community that have risen to a point that, you know, people all around the

world are making their voices heard. This is an opportune time to do something about it because this administration has already established a record of actually solving problems, problems that other people just talk about and have talked about for many years.

[At this point, Secretary Carson continued his remarks, concluding as follows.]

And I think some of the things that have already been done, we will get back to those quickly. You know, this was an intentional stopping of the economy, of an amazing economy. The fundamentals of that economy are still in place. We will recoup that, and we will move further on.

And your philosophy, of course, has been that a rising tide floats all boats. And that's why you don't spend a lot of time with identity politics. We want everybody to be successful.

The President. That's right.

Secretary Carson. And we're going to do everything we can to help you do that.

The President. Well, as I've been saying, Ben, I think that the economy will be—next year, will be maybe the best it's ever been. You can already see it with the stock market, how it's been going up, because you have a lot of smart people that are betting on exactly what I'm saying. Because the stock market is almost as high as it was prior to the plague floating in from China.

It was a plague that floated in from China. Now they're learning that it may have been much earlier, which bears out exactly what I've been saying. You saw that word yesterday: that it may have come in a lot sooner than we were told.

A friend of mine is Darrell Scott. And he's a great guy, and he's a—got tremendous heart. At the same time, he's a tough cookie. I think that's what maybe attracted me to him, unfortunately. I didn't get attracted to the good parts, but that's a good part too. *[Laughter]*

Darrell, say a few words, please.

New Spirit Revival Center Founder and Senior Pastor Darrell Scott. We're here today—and thank you, Mr. President, for allowing us to come—our Nation is at a juncture where we're facing another challenge, but this administration has become used to challenges. It's been one challenge after another. And we've pressed pause, but we're ready to press play now and continue in the positive initiatives regarding the Black community.

[Pastor Scott continued his remarks, concluding as follows.]

And here we are now, and we're facing another challenge, and we're going to come up with some great solutions to these problems that are confronting this country. And I'm just glad to have a seat at the table and to have my input received.

The President. Well, your input has been very important, Darrell.

Pastor Scott. Thank you.

The President. You know that. And it is true: I've known Darrell a long time. He didn't want anything. What he wanted was just to have a voice so he can make certain positions known. And he's done that very well, better than anybody I can think of.

Another great voice in the Black community is Wayne. *[Laughter]* Wayne, you've been my friend for a long time. Wayne Dupree. His show is a phenomenon. It's a great success. And people listen, and they respect what you have to say.

Go ahead, please.

"The Wayne Dupree Show" host Wayne Dupree. Well, my name is Wayne Dupree. I met President Trump when he was a businessman. As a matter of fact, he—I've—he's given me five interviews: two of them in person, three on the phone. And when you're talking about somebody who is not with the mainstream media—somebody who just has a small voice, but has a desire to make changes with his voice—to reach out to a billionaire in New York, and without hesitation, he gave me those interviews. And I think he's a natural leader.

[*Mr. Dupree continued his remarks, concluding as follows.*]

But, I mean, I'm glad that he has changed things here in DC. I just—but my daughters and my son and my family, they want to see a lot more positive things coming from the White House.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Dupree. They—they want to see your leadership, and they also want to see things change for the better in this country. I know you can do it. I know you can do it.

The President. We'll do it. We'll do it, Wayne.

Go ahead, please.

Raynard Jackson and Associates LLC President and Chief Executive Officer Raynard Jackson. My name is Raynard Jackson. And thank you, Mr. President; thank you, Darrell, for inviting us to this roundtable here. I'm from St. Louis originally and live in Virginia. But what I'd like to say to you, Mr. President, is kind of off the beaten path. I'd like to say to all the media assembled here that I wish they would quit lying about what you've done, specifically for the Black community.

[*Mr. Jackson continued his remarks, concluding as follows.*]

So to all these folks on MSNBC, CNN, Roland Martin: What? Are you afraid to have real Black Republicans who know what the hell they're talking about? If you want to know the truth, if you want us to dissect the Obama economy, let's do it. And I think, Mr. President, your record would win the debate.

Thank you.

The President. Thank you very much. And you know, it's interesting you say that, but you go down the list of criminal justice reform and all of the things we've done: Opportunity Zones, the best unemployment rate in the history, just before the plague came in. And it's going to be back again soon. I think it's going to be back again, a lot sooner than people think. I think last week was a reflection of that, the jobs numbers.

But you look at all of the things we've done. We've now worked on prison reform—so important—and so many other things.

But when you look at the economics, when you look at how well the Black community has been doing under this administration, nobody has done anything like we've done.

And a big thing is criminal justice reform. I keep hearing about, "Oh, criminal justice reform," and everyone is trying to take the credit. And that one, I will say, we will take the full credit, because they couldn't have done it without us. [*Laughter*] And I'm not sure, frankly, that the previous administration tried. They may have, but they certainly couldn't get it done.

And the people that came into my office really asking very nicely for help, these people that are supporters of mine. But once we got it, they took the full credit for themselves, and that's okay too. But we got done criminal justice reform and all of the other things.

I think that one of the—one of the elements that people aren't talking about are the Opportunity Zones that we did with a great Senator. Your friend from South Carolina, right? We did it with Tim. And it was his idea. And I said—it was a big idea, it was a bold idea, and it's worked much better than at our wild—in our wildest dreams, we couldn't have thought that that was going to happen.

So we did many, many things, and we're going to continue to do many things. One of the elements that I talk about is—and I was telling this to Darrell before—that 42, 44 people would come to see me every year: the heads of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities. And they would come up here, and I got to actually know them.

And the first year they came, I thought it was a normal meeting. They were asking for a lot of money, which they were having a hard time getting from previous administrations, and we got it for them. The next year they came back, I said, "Oh, what are you guys back for?" He said, "Well, we want the money again." I said, "Aren't we working long-term deals?" "No." And you got the money. And then, the third time, I said: "I see. You come"—so they made you for years—many years—for decades, they had to come back, keep coming back, keep coming back. Not like a lot of others. "Will they get it?" And they kept coming back and asking for money.

And I said: "What's this all about? Why do you have to come every year? Why don't we make a longer term deal?" And we made, I think, a 10-year deal. And they were all funded up, and they were all set. And that's Historically Black Colleges and Universities. And they play a tremendous function.

I got to be friendly with some of them. I won't tell you what some of them said: how bad it was about the past administration and past administrations. But they were treated very, very badly, and I treated them very good.

So they don't have to come back. I said, "The only bad thing is, I won't see you people anymore, maybe for a long time." [*Laughter*] And they were okay with that. You know, they can—now they can focus on what they really do, which is education.

So we've done a lot for the Black community, and we've done a lot for all communities. And it's a great honor to have you folks with us. And thank you very much.

Did you have anything to say, by the way, fellas?

Sirius XM's "Sonnie's Corner" program host Sonnie Johnson. Excuse me, I—

Mr. Scott. Right down here.

The President. Please, go ahead.

Ms. Johnson. So my name is Sonnie Johnson. I'm the host of "Sonnie's Corner." I am probably the most Trump-ish out of everybody in this room, so you're—you're going to have to forgive me. The Black community is not doing okay. Like, I understand the perspective and the desire to put out this talking point, but it's not. Okay?

[*Ms. Johnson continued her remarks, concluding as follows.*]

And I would like to see a challenge from you to see how many in the Black community can put their names on the side of a building coming out of this. If we're really going to reshape and reform the way that we do this, issue that challenge, because that's what we need more now than ever. And we need it to be focused and centric on the Black community, not into letting people come in and gentrify areas that are traditionally ours.

The President. And you don't need closed police departments.

Ms. Johnson. No.

The President. Do you agree with that?

Ms. Johnson. No, we need the police. But if you take a take a term like—if you take a look at what happened in Ferguson—because Ferguson is, like, where Black Lives Matter really came out. I ain't going to say it was born because, you know, people will fight about that. But if you go back and you look at Ferguson, the DOJ did a report on Ferguson, and what came out of that report was that the mayor's office was using the police force as a taxation unit. So they were forcing interactions between police and the citizens as a way for them to raise money and bring money into the mayor's office. That was causing overpolicing.

So it is not the fault of the police, nor is a part—the fault of the citizenry what the legislator and the executive branches of city government are putting into legislative practice.

The President. Very good. Well stated. [Laughter]

Wayne, what do you think? Good job?

Mr. Dupree. Very good job.

The President. I think a very good job. Good job. Thank you. Thank you, Sonnie. Appreciate it.

Mr. Dupree. Great job.

Fellas, go ahead. Please.

Office of American Innovation Deputy Director Ja'Ron K. Smith. Well, you know, she—she said a lot of the things that—[laughter].

The President. She said a lot. [Laughter]

Deputy Director Smith. —I don't know if I can say it any better than that, but just that a lot of these things are systemic. I think what we've done, through your leadership, is start to break down that system and fight back. You know, Opportunity Zones, HBCUs, criminal justice reform, those are reversing some systemic issues.

[Deputy Director Smith continued his remarks, concluding as follows.]

But one thing we've done over the last couple of weeks is listen to individuals, and now we have solutions. And those are things we're going to continue to work through as an administration, because it's about results. And I think a lot of people are leaning on you because you're result-oriented. It's not about just us talking here; it's about what we're going to produce out of this meeting.

Mr. Dupree. And you know what? That's the thing: A lot of people that listen to the show, or calling on the show, they want to see those results. If you go into the Black community and you tell people a type of statistics, they go, "Oh, okay, yes, great." But if you show ground-moving, ground-shaking, things growing up from the bottom, you know, that—those Opportunity Zones, or more jobs—or more jobs than what they are right now—but if you start showing those things and you know, a little friendly drive-through—[laughter]—"Hey, President Trump here," they—believe me, there are many people that are on these online boards and, like I said, the call-ins and whatnot—they do support President Trump. They know what happened in the Obama administration. They know what you're doing. They also see what the media is doing to you. So don't think that you are alone. It's just that they need to hear more from you.

The President. I agree with that. That's true. It's the only way you get through the media, because the media is almost a hundred-percent negative. It's incredible.

Ms. Johnson. But that's not the only thing that's impeding the progress of the legislation that you put out. So let's take Opportunity Zones: If the Opportunity—Opportunity Zones pass from a Federal level, they then go down to the State and then are allocated on a local level.

[*Ms. Johnson continued her remarks, concluding as follows.*]

And yes, it will include police. It will include schools. It will include all the necessity of civilization, but it will also include more investment, ownership, and entrepreneurship from the citizens in those communities.

Secretary Carson. You'll be happy to know that this administration has recognized that problem. The community development financial institutions, the credit unions, the local banks have been excluded from a lot of the dissemination of the funds previously. That's been recognized—

The President. That's right.

Secretary Carson. —and is in the process of being corrected right now.

The President. Okay.

Ms. Johnson. And that goes a long way.

Urban Revitalization Coalition Cochairman Kareem Lanier. Mr. President, you've been nothing short of historic for Black America. I don't say that because I have to, because I can say whatever I want to say as a free citizen here in the U.S. You've been nothing short of historical. Criminal justice reform was historical. We were getting locked up at unprecedented rates. You undid the 1994 crime bill, and we are forever thankful for that. Even the Opportunity Zones, we can be critical of a lot of things, but the Opportunity Zones—incentivizing people that have money to put the money where we needed most, which are in these urban and rural neighborhoods. HBCUs. The whole—I can go down thing after thing.

[*Mr. Lanier continued his remarks, concluding as follows.*]

These are things that are historic, and we believe that you are the President to get these things done for the Black community. You've done some great things for us already, and we're relying on you, and we appreciate everything you've done, Mr. President. You've been amazing.

The President. Thank you. Thank you very much.

Mr. Lanier. You're welcome.

The President. That's beautiful. Well said.

Your friend, right?

Pastor Scott. Yes.

The President. He's a good man too. For a long time we're known him.

Okay, thank you all very much. And we'll see you tomorrow. We'll see you tomorrow in Dallas. Thank you.

Q. Mr. President, your—[*inaudible*]. May I ask you a quick question about your—[*inaudible*].

The President's Travel to Dallas, Texas/President's Commencement Address at the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, New York

Q. I wanted to ask you about tomorrow.

The President. Yes, we're going to a place called Dallas tomorrow. I think it's going to be a great trip. Meeting some very good friends. And we'll come back tomorrow night.

We're going on Saturday, as you know, to West Point. We're giving the commencement address, which will be very exciting. The cadets wanted that very much. So we're going to have them a little bit separated, a little social distancing, but we have the full class at West Point. And it was postponed because of the problem. It was supposed to be a month ago. We're going to do it. And that will be on Saturday.

So that will be very exciting. And I think a lot of you are going to be with us. And we're going to pay honor, really, to those incredible students and cadets. And they're going to be the future military leaders of our country.

Thank you all very much. Thank you.

Q. Why do you think the Confederacy——

The President's Campaign Rally in Tulsa, Oklahoma

Q. When are you going to Tulsa, sir?

The President. Friday night. It will be Friday, Friday night.

Q. Of next week?

The President. Next week.

Q. Thank you.

Q. Mr. President, the Confederacy——

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:04 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Roy A. Cooper III of North Carolina; and Sen. Timothy E. Scott.

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