

Listening Comprehension

June 21st, 2022

THE PRESIDENT: Good evening, everyone. Well, we're preparing to wrap up another busy day in Scotland. I think we got a lot done. We've had a lot of good, substantive meetings, and — with my fellow leaders. And most of all, it was critically important for the United States to be here at COP26, back in the Paris Agreement, raising domestic climate ambitions and demonstrating a commitment to support the rest of the world, particularly those countries that are on the frontlines of the climate crisis.

Today — today, I spoke to leaders of forested nations, island nations, developing countries. And my message to them was: The United States is going to be their partner as we meet this climate crisis.

And I want to thank the United Kingdom and Prime Minister Johnson for hosting us — hosting the world at a critical moment, as well as — I met with Prince Charles, who's put together a very significant operation over the last six, seven years of trying to bring in the private sector into — to work on a number of these issues.

Glasgow must start — be the start, as I — you're tired of hearing me say it — but a decisive decade of action so we can keep a limit of 1.5 degrees within the reach of us and the rest of the world.

And we have to keep accelerating our progress. Today's agreement by more than 100 countries, representing 85 percent of the world's forests, to halt and reverse deforestation by 2030 is a great example — a great example of the kind of ambition we need. And the United States is proud — proud to have initiated and supported it.

For our part, the United States is going to keep raising the ambition and delivering the goal that we are reducing U.S. emissions by 50 to 52 percent, as Secretary Kerry has talked about, from the 2005 levels by 2030. This decade, we have to make significant progress.

And, by the way, I might note parenthetically: I can't think of any two days where more has been accomplished dealing with climate than these two days.

Overall, in the past two days, I've announced a series of initiatives that are going to make sure we hit the target of including, today, two new rules to reduce methane losses of new and existing oil and gas operations and from natural gas pipelines.

Thanks to the effort of — our joint effort with the EU, we've grown the Global Methane Pledge — you remember, I raised it when I spoke to the United Nations — from 9 countries signing on to that pledge in September at the United Nations to more than 100 countries have signed on. It's about half the world's methane emissions, 70 percent of the world's global GDP.

We've made commitments to promote climate-smart agriculture, spur innovation, catalyze private finance to clean — for a clean economy, and to drive high-standard, clean climate-resilient infrastructure through the Build Back Better initiative.

We had a great meeting today, where we sat and talked about the whole focus of my Build Back Better initiative, which is adopted by the — by the G7 — was that everything should be focused on — as we help with the infrastructure of the rest of the world, which needs it badly — focused on climate. Climate.

The example is: If you build an oil well, if you — excuse me — if you build a gas or oil refinery, you're going to have that for next 30 years. Well, why not invest now if we're going provide for the help for nations in — in solar capacity or wind capacity?

So, the point is: Although the — we also brought through the — the new President's Emergency Plan for Adaptation and Resilience. We called it — I'm getting tired of acronyms, I have to admit to you, but it's called "PREPARE." We're going to support climate adaptation efforts to more than a half a billion people worldwide.

We also released our overall long-term strategy that outlines how we'll get to net zero — net zero emissions by 2050.

You know, we know that this is — this must be a whole-of-society effort. And I also want to thank the representatives from the private sector and from labor and philanthropies, civil societies, who are dedicating themselves to the climate action efforts we're all making here. That leadership — together with action by state, local, and Tribal governments — has been essential in the United States.

That's why, despite the previous administration's pulling us out of the Paris Agreement and refusing even to acknowledge there was a climate crisis, we still brought down emissions during that period.

I also want to acknowledge the passion and power of the young people and the activists who are doing such vital work to remind us of our moral obligation to future generations.

But, look, as I said yesterday, it's not just a moral imperative; it's an economic imperative as well. Investing in our clean energy future is an enormous opportunity — enormous opportunity for every country to create good-paying jobs and spur a broad-based economic recovery.

As I've said — you've heard me say it before to my colleagues as well: When I think of climate crisis, I think of jobs. And that's what the Build Back Better framework will do for the American people.

It's going to bring historic investment in clean energy addressing the climate crisis. It's going to cut greenhouse gas emissions by well over a gigaton by 2030.

It's going to save consumers money in their energy bills and — with tax credits for things like installing solar panels and weatherization of their homes.

It's also going to provide manufacturing credits to make sure the United States is competing in energy markets of the future, like solar panels and wind turbines.

And it's also going to accelerate electric vehicles and electric school buses and build a nationwide network of 500,000 charging stations to power them.

It's about jobs. It's about competitiveness versus complacency. It's about making the world safer, cleaner, healthier — a place for our children, and children all around the world, to look to the future in a way that they can't now.

I — and so, there's so many other things that have happened today that I feel good about.

But let me start, if you will, by — I'll be happy to take your — your questions.

Phil, you got a question? I watch you on TV a lot.

Q Thank you very much, Mr. President. We noted your disappointment with Chinese actions on climate in Rome and also the lack of willingness for Chinese President Xi Jinping to show up at either the G20 or COP26. But I wanted to ask more broadly: When you assess where things stand right now in U.S.-China relationships after your first 10 months in office — your diplomats have had difficulty engaging in a substantive manner with some of their counterparts; you have a Chinese military that has tested a hypersonic missile this summer, it is building its nuclear capability — what is your general assessment of where things stand? And are you concerned that the potential for armed conflict has grown over the course of your first 10 months in office?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, let me start off by addressing the first part of — not the question, the statement. And that is that I indicated that China and Russia not showing up — and Saudi Arabia — was a problem. We showed up. We showed up.

And by showing up, we've had a profound impact on the way I think the rest of the world is looking at the United States and its leadership role.

I think it's been a big mistake, quite frankly, for China — with respect to China not showing up. The rest of the world is going to look to China and say, "What value added are they providing?" And they've lost an ability to influence people around the world and all the people here at COP — the same way, I would argue, with regard to Russia.

With regard to the more profound question about am I worried about an armed conflict or some — that accidentally occurring with China: No, I'm not. But I have had, as I've said before — and I think we've talked about this, Phil, but I may be mistaken — that I think, as I've said, I look at China — and I've had hours of conversations with Xi Jinping, both in person when I was Vice President and since I've been President, at least five or six hours' worth of conversations on the telephone, and I'm going to be having a virtual summit with him — I've made it clear: This does — this is competition; it does not have to be conflict. There is no reason there needs to be conflict.

But I've also indicated to him, and I've — so I don't — I'm not reluctant to say it publicly — that we expect him to play by the rules of the road. We're not going to change our attitude toward what constitutes international airspace, international sea lanes, et cetera.

We also have made it clear that we have to work on dealing with things like cybersecurity and a whole range of other issues. But I — I'm not looking for, I don't anticipate there will be a need for — to be — there be physical conflict. But, you know, as you've heard me say this before — my dad had an expression. He'd say, "The only conflict worse than the one that's intended is one that's unintended" — one that's unintended. And so, in my meetings with him virtually coming up — we haven't set the exact date yet — I want to make sure there's no misunderstanding. It's competition, not conflict. And so, there's no — no unintended. Yeah, Peter.

Q Mr. President, you're touting on this visit your \$1.75 trillion plan that includes climate, but your party is still not united behind it. Senator Joe Manchin yesterday called it "budget gimmicks," "shell games," and a "recipe for economic crisis." Today, he said he never signed off on the framework. So, do you have a specific commitment from Senator Manchin to support your Build Back Better bill? Yes or no? And how do you respond to those criticisms? And I have a quick follow-up.

THE PRESIDENT: Number one, I'm not going to talk about the specifics of my conversations. He will vote for this if we have in this proposal what he has anticipated, and that is looking at the fine print and the detail of what comes out of the House in terms of the actual legislative initiatives. I believe that Joe will be there. With regard to the issue of whether or not he thinks that he's worried about this being inflationary or going to be a negative impact on the economy, I think that I've made it clear to Joe and will continue to — we will — that — I apologize to repeat it, Peter, but 17 Nobel laureates in economics said it's going to lower inflation, raise wages, increase competition, create 2 million jobs a year, et cetera. And so, I think that— I understand that Joe is looking for the precise detail to make sure nothing got slipped in, in terms of the way in which the legislation got written, that is different than he acknowledged he would agree to. But I think we'll get this done.

Q And then, a follow-up: You mentioned the word "inflation" there. You recently said you have no short-term answer to bring down gas prices. But, as you know, it's not just gas prices now. Rents are up. The cost of everyday items are up. Inflation in the U.S. is at a 13-year high. So, when specifically should Americans expect those prices to come down?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, look, first of all, the significant reason why prices are up is because of COVID affecting the supply chain. I mean, I know you — I'm not trying to be instructive; I know you know this. Number one. Number two, if you take a look at, you know, gas prices and you take a look at oil prices, that is a consequence of, thus far, the refusal of Russia or the OPEC nations to pump more oil. And we'll see what happens on that score sooner than later. Number three, I think if you take a look at what we're talking about — you look to this coming Thanksgiving — you know, we're in a situation where we find that we are in a very different circumstance. Last Thanksgiving, you know, I — as I said, this year, we're working on the supply chain issue. But last Thanksgiving, I sat down with my wife, my daughter, and my son-in-law. This Thanksgiving, we're all in a very different circumstance. Things are a hell of a lot better, and the wages have gone up higher — faster than inflation. And we have generated real economic growth. It doesn't mean these dislocations aren't real. They do affect people's lives. For example, one of the reasons why I decided to talk about the need to deal with the operation and the gouging that occurs in some of the pricing of beef and chicken and other things is that that's why I think I indi- —that's why I indicated to you we're going to look at whether or not there's a violation of antitrust laws and what they're doing. So, there's a lot to look at. But the bottom line is that I think that — and anyone who would prefer, as bad as things are in terms of prices helping — hurting families now, trade this Thanksgiving for last Thanksgiving.

Q Thank you, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Jen Epstein, Wall Street Journal.

Q Bloomberg.

THE PRESIDENT: I mean — excuse me. I beg your pardon.

Q Bloomberg. (Laughs.)

THE PRESIDENT: I hope I —

Q (Inaudible.)

THE PRESIDENT: I got it. I got it.

Q Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: And especially since my granddaughter works for you guys, in a different circumstance. So, I — I got it. I'm in trouble.

Q Well, I'm going to ask a very Bloomberg question to begin, which is: Have you decided who you will nominate to chair the Federal Reserve Board? And if not, can you speak a little bit about what you're thinking about as you consider your choice for Fed chair and the other seats that are open?

This is the latest that a President has gone without nominating somebody the year before a nominee needs to be selected. And are you concerned about potentially having a short timeline, especially if you're not going to re-nominate Jay Powell?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no, and no. No, I'm not going to discuss it with you because that's in train now. We'll be making those announcements fairly quickly. It's been in train for some time, number one.

Number two, I also would indicate that I think we're going to have plenty of time to make sure all the major nominees are able to be cleared in time that — where their terms would expire.

And number three, I've given a lot of thought to it, and I've been meeting with my economic advisors on what the best choices are, and we've got a lot of good choices. But I'm not going to speculate now.

Nancy, CBS. I think you had your hand up. I'm sorry. Did you?

Q Yep. Thank you very much, Mr. President. Some of the commitments you made here won't happen unless Congress passes future legislation. How do you convince Republicans and even some Democrats to get behind more spending if they look at this conference and say, "China isn't meeting these global goals. Russia doesn't intend to meet these global goals. India doesn't plan to. Why should we?"

THE PRESIDENT: Because we want to be able to breathe and we want to be able to lead the world. Look, I mean it sincerely: I think — presumptuous of me to say, to talk for another leader — but the fact that China, trying to assert, understandably, a new role in the world as a world leader — not showing up? Come on.

Listening Comprehension

June 21st, 2021

1. Listen for gist: give this listening a title.

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2. Listen for details

listen for 3 phrases

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listen for 3 phrasal verbs

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listen for 3 passives

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3. Choose one grammar point worth highlighting

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4. Explain the following words/phrases:

delivering the goal

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which needs it badly

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this must be a whole-of-society effort

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5. Listen for the most frequent word/phrase uttered by Joe Biden

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6. Listen for a colloquialism uttered by Joe Biden

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7. Translate the following sentences from Italian into English:

Desidero anche ringraziare la passione e la forza dei giovani e degli attivisti che stanno portando avanti un lavoro importantissimo per ricordarci dei nostri obblighi morali nei confronti delle generazioni future.

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La Cina non sta rispettando questi obiettivi globali. La Russia non intende rispettare questi obiettivi globali. L'India non ha nella sua agenda questi obiettivi globali. Perché dovremmo farlo noi?

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Il fatto che la Cina stia cercando di affermare, comprensibilmente, un nuovo ruolo nel mondo in qualità di leader mondiale e poi non si presenta? Ma fatemi il piacere.

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8. Translate the following sentences from English into Italian:

if you will

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We noted your disappointment with Chinese actions on climate in Rome and also the lack of willingness for Chinese President Xi Jinping to show up at either the G20 or COP26.

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we expect him to play by the rules of the road

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