



REMARKS

INTERVIEW OF
PRESIDENT TRUMP
AND ELON MUSK
BY SEAN HANNITY, “THE
SEAN HANNITY SHOW”

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Roosevelt Room

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Q Mr. President, great to see you again.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Thank you.

Q How are you?

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

Q Elon Musk.

MR. MUSK: Hi.

Q Great to see you.

MR. MUSK: Thanks. Thanks for having me.

Q I've been reading a lot about you. I've got to start with this. So, he's working for free with DOGE. He's — he's kind of put a lot of his life on hold, and you sued Twitter a number of years ago. You just made him pay you \$10 million?

THE PRESIDENT: That's right. That's right.

Q That's — that's right. (Laughs.)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I sued — I sued from long before he had it.

MR. MUSK: Yeah. Yeah. (Inaudible.)

THE PRESIDENT: And, I mean, they really did a number on me, you know. And I sued, and they had to pay. You know, they paid \$10 million settlement.

Q You're okay with that?

MR. MUSK: I mean, I left it up to the lawyers and, you know, the team running Twitter. So, I said, "You guys do what you think is the right — makes sense."

Q I think it's funny.

THE PRESIDENT: I think —

Q Because —

THE PRESIDENT: — it's a very low — I was looking to get much more money than that.

Q So, you gave him a discount w- — in the lawsuit?

THE PRESIDENT: He got — oh, he got a big discount. I don't think he even knows about it.

Q He's become one of your — if you read and believe the media — he's become one of your best friends. He's working for free for you. He's —

MR. MUSK: Well, I love the president. I just want to be clear about that.

Q You don't care about that?

MR. MUSK: I — no, I love the pr- — I —

Q You love the president?

MR. MUSK: I think — I think President Trump is a good man, and — and he's, you know — I — I —

THE PRESIDENT: That's the way he said that. You know, there's something nice about. (Laughter.)

MR. MUSK: No, it is. I, you know —

THE PRESIDENT: It is.

MR. MUSK: Because, I mean, the president has been so — so unfairly attacked in the media. It's truly outrageous. And I've sp- — at this point, spent a lot of time with the president, and not once have I seen him do something that was mean or cruel or — or wrong. Not once.

Q You know, I've known him for 30 years.

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

Q And I've never seen anybody take as much as he's taken.

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

Q And we've discussed this. And I'm like, "How do you deal with it?"

THE PRESIDENT: Did have a choice? (Laughs.) I didn't have a choice.

Q Well, you would say that to me. I'm like, "What — what am I going to do? Worry about it?"

THE PRESIDENT: That's the only thing I can say.

Q And, you know — and then culminating in two assassination attempts, which resulted in your endorsement.

MR. MUSK: Well, I was going to do it anyway, but that was —

Q That was it?

MR. MUSK: — a precipitating event, yeah.

THE PRESIDENT: That speeded it up a little bit?

MR. MUSK: Yeah. Yeah.

Q The day of the assassination?

THE PRESIDENT: Nice. I didn't know that.

MR. MUSK: Yeah, it just — it sped it up, but I was going to do it anyway.

Q Mr. President, with your indulgence, I'm convinced that people only know a little bit about Elon. I don't think they know everything about Elon, because as I studied for and prepared for this interview, I learned a lot about you that I didn't know. I think people will think about Tesla. Democrats are demonizing you and — and trying to make the country hate you.

I just want people to understand you a little bit better, and the person that you've gotten to know and have now put a lot of trust in.

THE PRESIDENT: Sure.

Q And, you know, just — let's go over a little bit of your bio, starting —

MR. MUSK: Ah, okay.

Q — with PayPal and how you became involved in Tesla and SpaceX and Neuralink —

MR. MUSK: This — this could take a while.

Q — and all these —

MR. MUSK: I mean, you know, I — I think the way you think of me is, like, I'm a technologist and I try to make technologies that improve the world and make life better.

Q You can show them your shirt.

MR. MUSK: Yeah, and that's why, like, my t-shirt says "tech support" — (laughter) — because I'm here to provide the president with — with technology support.

And now, that — that may seem, like, well, is that a silly thing? But actually, it's a very important thing, because the president will make these executive orders, which are very sensible and good for the country, but then they don't get implemented, you know?

So, if you take the — for example, all the funding for the migrant hotels, the

president issued an executive order: Hey, we need to stop taking taxpayer money and — and paying for luxury hotels for illegal immigrants —

Q It's crazy.

MR. MUSK: — which makes no sense. Like, obviously, people do not want their tax dollars going to — to fund high-end hotels for — for illegals. And yet, they were still doing that, even as late as last week.

And so, you know, we went in there, and we were like, “This is in violation of the presidential executive order. It needs to stop.”

So — so, what we're — what we're doing here is — is — one of the biggest functions of the DOGE team is just making sure that the presidential executive orders are actually carried out. And this is — I just want to point out, this is a very important thing, because the president is the elected representative of the people, so he's representing the will of the people. And if the bureaucracy is fighting the will of the people and preventing the pres- — the president from implementing what the people want, then what we live in is a bureaucracy and not a democracy.

Q Yeah. You — you're both aware — you have to be keenly aware that the media and — and the punditry class — not that — you know, I think you've proven they have no power anymore, because they threw everything they had at you, and they didn't win. And that was, you know, the New York Times, Washington Post, three networks, every late-night comedy show, two cable channels — they — they just threw — they threw everything — lawfare, weaponization.

THE PRESIDENT: It's true.

Q And now I see they want you two to start — they want a divorce. They want you two to start hating each other. And they try — “Oh, President Elon Musk,” for example. You do know that they’re doing that to you?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I see it all the time. They tried it, then they stopped. That wasn’t — they have many different things of hatred.

Actually, Elon called me. He said, “You know they’re trying to drive us apart.” I said, “Absolutely.”

You know, they said, “We have breaking news: Donald Trump has ceded control of the presidency to Elon Musk. President Musk will be attending a Cabinet meeting tonight at 8 o’clock.” (Laughter.) And I say — it’s just so obvious. They’re so bad at it.

I used to think they were good at it. They’re actually bad at it, because if they were good at it, I’d never be president because I — I think nobody in history has ever gotten more bad publicity than me.

I could do the greatest things; I get 98 percent bad publicity. I could do — outside of you and a few of your very good friends. It’s, like, the craziest thing.

But you know what I have learned, Elon? The people are smart. They get it.

MR. MUSK. Yeah. They do, actually. Yeah.

THE PRESIDENT: They get it. They really see what’s happening.

MR. MUSK: Yes.

Q And at the end of this interview, I — what I would like is, I — I want people to know the relationship and know more about you.

What is the relationship, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I respect him. I've always respected him. I never knew that he was right on certain things, and I'm usually pretty good at this stuff. He did Starlink. He did things that were so advanced and nobody knew what the hell they were.

I can tell you, in North Carolina, they had no communication. They were wiped out. Those people were — you know, they had rivers in between — land that never saw water, all of a sudden, there was a river and a vicious — like, rapids. People were dying all over. They had no communication.

They said, “Do you know Elon Musk?” And they didn't really know I knew him. I said, “Yeah.” They said, “Could you get Starlink?” It's, like, the first time I ever heard of it. I said, “What's Starlink?” “A communication system that's unbelievable.”

Q I have it.

THE PRESIDENT: And he — yeah. And he said — I called him, and I said, “Listen, they really need it.” And he got, like, thousands of units of this communication, and it saved a lot of lives. He got it immediately. And you can't get it. I mean, you have to wait a long time to get it. But he got it to him immediately.

And I said, “That's pretty amazing.” And I didn't even know he had it.

We watch the rocket ships, and we watch Tesla.

I think, you know, something that had an effect on me was when I saw the rocket ship come back and get grabbed like you grab a beautiful little baby. You grab your baby. It just —

MR. MUSK: Just hug the rocket.

THE PRESIDENT: I'd never seen —

MR. MUSK: Everyone — right. Everyone needs (inaudible) —

Q You hug the rocket. You hug the rocket.

MR. MUSK: — (inaudible) rockets.

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah. No, but — and he said, “You know, you can't really have a rocket program if you're going to dump a billion dollars into the ocean every time you fly. You have to save it.” And he saved it. First time —

Q That's ever been done.

THE PRESIDENT: — I've ever seen that done. Now nobody else can do it.

If you look at the U.S., Russia, or China, they can't do it, and they won't be able to do it for a long time. He has the technology. So, you learn — I wanted somebody really smart to work with me, in terms of the country — a very important aspect. Because, I mean, he doesn't talk about it. He's actually a very good businessman. And when he talks about the executive orders — and this is

probably true for all presidents: You write an executive order and you think it's done, you send it out; it doesn't get done. It doesn't get implemented. They don't implement it.

They — maybe they're from the last administration — and they are, in some cases. You try and get them out as fast as you can. But I could — as soon as he said that, I said, "You know, that's interesting." You write a beautiful executive — and you sign it and you assume it's going to be done, but it's not. What he does is he takes it, and with his hundred geniuses — he's got some very brilliant young people working for him that dress much worse than him, actually —

MR. MUSK: Yeah, they do.

THE PRESIDENT: — they dress in just t-shirts. (Laughter.) You wouldn't know they have 180 IQ.

Q Wait. Wait. So, what — he's — he's your tech support?

MR. MUSK: I —

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. He is —

MR. MUSK: I actually virtually am tech support.

THE PRESIDENT: He's much more than that.

MR. MUSK: I actually am tech support, though. But that's —

THE PRESIDENT: But he gets it done. He's a leader. He really is a — he gets it done. You get a lot of tech people, and you have people, they're good with tech,

but they — he gets it done.

You know, I said, in real estate, you had guys that would draw beautiful renderings of a building, and they'd draw the rendering, it would be great, and you'd say, "Great. When are you starting?" But they were never able to get it built. They couldn't get the finances. They couldn't get the approvals. It would never get done. And then you have other guys that are able to get it done. You know, they could just get it done.

I was in real estate. Same thing in this. He gets it done.

So, when he said that — he said, "You know, when you sign these executive orders, a lot of them don't get done, and maybe the most important ones," and he would take that executive order that I'd signed, and he would have those people go to whatever agency it was — "When are you doing it? Get it done. Get it done." And some guy that maybe didn't want to do it, all of a sudden, he's signing — he just doesn't want to be bothered.

Q Does — do a lot of those executive orders have to be codified into law to — do you need the Republican Congress to follow up?

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah, and they will. A lot of them will be. Yeah.

Q They will?

THE PRESIDENT: Look, in the meantime, we have four years. The beauty is, we have four years. That's why I like doing it right at the beginning. Because an executive order is great. I mean, the one problem — it's both good and bad, because when they did all these executive orders, I've canceled most of them. They were terrible. I mean, we were going to go radical left, communist, okay?

It was crazy. Their —

MR. MUSK: Really crazy.

THE PRESIDENT: — executive orders were so bad, if they ever got them codified, you'd never be able to break them. So, the damage that Biden has done to this country — and it's not even Biden; it's the people that circled him in the Oval Office, okay? — but the damage they did to this country, in terms of, let's say, open borders — you know, there's so many things, but open borders, where millions of people poured into our country, and hundreds of thousands of those people are criminals. They're murderers. They're drug dealers. They're gang members. They're people from prisons from all over the world.

And we have a great guy, Tom Homan, and he is doing so incredibly. You saw the numbers. They're down like 96 percent.

Q Ninety-five percent.

THE PRESIDENT: He is a phenomenal guy. And Kristi Noem is doing an unbelievable job. And he wanted her. He said, "She's so tough." And I said, "I don't think of her as that way. You know, she's very nice." He said, "No, she's so tough." And she is. I see her with the horses. She's riding the horse. Let's — (laughter) — she's great.

But the team we have is — is really unbelievable.

But those executive orders, I sign them, and now they get passed on to him and his group and other people, and they're all getting done. We're getting them done.

Q Let me go back a little bit to your background, because —

MR. MUSK: Sure.

Q — it's beyond impressive. You were the chief engineer, for example — you were an early believer in Tesla. You became the CEO and — and then the chief engineer, which was phenomenal. SpaceX, same thing, which is unbelievable.

I mean, you were the first company — private company to send astronauts successfully into — into space, first private company to send astronauts into orbit.

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

Q That's — that's pretty deep.

THE PRESIDENT: He's going to go into orbit soon.

Q Okay.

MR. MUSK: (Laughs.) Yeah.

THE PRESIDENT: No, he's going to go to Mars. He's going to fly on his —

Q Starlink.

MR. MUSK: At some point, yeah.

Q As in (inaudible) —

MR. MUSK: But they say — they always ask me, like, “Do you want to die on Mars?” And I say, “Well, yes, but not on impact.” (Laughter.)

Q Star- — Starlink is in 100 countries.

This is going to be hard. I feel like I’m interviewing two brothers here.

MR. MUSK: You go ahead.

Q Starshield, which could be used for national defense.

MR. MUSK: Yeah, it is already being used for national defense.

Q Then you have a — what is it called? Optimus, a part of Tesla.

MR. MUSK: They’re a robot, yeah.

Q A robotic arm. Then you have an AI arm. And then you have something that really fascinated me, and it’s called Neuralink.

MR. MUSK: Yes.

Q You might help the blind to see and people with spinal cord injuries that they — that they can recover, where in the past — how close is that to becoming a success?

MR. MUSK: At Neuralink we’re — we’ve ha- — we’ve implanted Neuralink in three patients so far, who are quadriplegics, and it allows them to directly control their phone and computer just using their mind, just by thinking. It’s like

— so, we call this product Telepathy, so you control your computer and phone just by thinking, and it's possible to actually control the computer and phone faster than someone who has working hands.

Then the next step would be to add a second Neuralink implant past the point where these — the neurons are damaged, so that somebody can walk again and so the pe- — they can have full-body functionality restored. And —

THE PRESIDENT: And you like Bobby, right?

MR. MUSK: I like Bobby, actually. Yeah. I — I supported Bobby Kennedy. I think he — you know, he's unfairly maligned as someone who is anti-science. But I think he — he isn't. He just wants to question the science, which is the essence of the science — the scientific method, fundamentally, is about always questioning the science.

Q Well, they didn't tell us the truth about COVID.

MR. MUSK: Correct.

Q That's for sure.

MR. MUSK: Yes.

Q And we learned a lot with the Twitter files. And that just, then, raises a question. You're the richest man in the world. You may not like that part.

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah.

Q You're pretty competitive.

MR. MUSK: I mean, it's neither here nor there.

Q I've known you a long time.

MR. MUSK: I don't think it matters.

Q But —

THE PRESIDENT: That's why I became president.

Q — he's on your team.

THE PRESIDENT: (Inaudible) —

Q Well, that's true. He can't top that.

THE PRESIDENT: He's good. You know, I wanted to find somebody smarter than him. I searched all over. I just couldn't do it. I couldn't. I couldn't.

Q You really tried hard.

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't find anyone smarter, right? So, we had to — we had to, for the country.

Q But this is the thing —

THE PRESIDENT: So, we settled on — we settled on this guy.

MR. MUSK: Well, thanks for having me.

THE PRESIDENT: (Laughs.) Yeah.

Q So —

MR. MUSK: I'm just trying to be useful here.

Q But this is the interesting — but this is where we are as a so- — a society. And I — I hate to do this to you, but I'm going to do it anyway. You're doing all of these things. At DOGE, nobody at DOGE gets paid a penny, correct?

MR. MUSK: Well, actually, some people are federal employees, so they do.

Q Oh, okay.

MR. MUSK: Yeah. They're (inaudible). But it's fair to say that the software engineers at DOGE could be earning millions of dollars a year and instead of earning a small fraction of that as federal employees.

Q Okay. So, just —

THE PRESIDENT: And they're very committed people.

MR. MUSK: Yes.

Q So — you're — you're committed to helping the blind see, people with spinal cord injuries recover.

MR. MUSK: Yes.

Q You're committed to getting to Mars. You're committed to rescue — you're going to help rescue, next month, two astronauts that I think were abandoned. They — they dispute that in an interview.

THE PRESIDENT: When are you — when are you getting them?

MR. MUSK: At the — at the president's request, we — or instruction, we are accelerating the return of the astronauts, which was postponed, kind of, to a ridiculous degree.

THE PRESIDENT: They got left in space.

Q They've been there. They were supposed to be there eight days. They're there almost 300.

THE PRESIDENT: Biden.

MR. MUSK: They were put —

Q Yeah.

MR. MUSK: Yes, they were left up there for political reasons, which is not good.

Q Okay, it's not good. Now, if I had the weight and pressure of doing that successfully on my shoulders, I think I'd be, you know — but you — when we spoke before we did this interview, you were very confident. You think this will be a successful mission.

MR. MUSK: Well, we don't want to be complacent, but we have brought

astronauts back from the space station many times before, and always with success. So, as long as we're not complacent —

THE PRESIDENT: When are they — when are you going to launch?

MR. MUSK: I think it's about — about four weeks to bring them back.

Q About four weeks?

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

THE PRESIDENT: And you have the go-ahead.

MR. MUSK: We're being extremely cautious.

Q Yeah.

THE PRESIDENT: You now have the go-ahead.

MR. MUSK: Yes. Well, thanks to you —

THE PRESIDENT: They didn't have the go-ahead with Biden.

Q What's that?

THE PRESIDENT: He was going to leave him in space. I think he was going to leave them in space.

Q Well, it's like the (inaudible) —

THE PRESIDENT: He considered it a —

Q — growing up, lost in space.

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah, he didn't want the publicity. Can you believe it?

Q Unbelievable. And so —

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

Q — I want to echo something that the president said and then ask an overarching question. So, people in — get hit with Hurricane Helene, they have no communication with the outside world. You come to the rescue. You donated that, I believe?

MR. MUSK: Yes. Yes.

Q You donated to the people of —

THE PRESIDENT: He saved a lot of lives. In North Carolina, he saved a lot of lives.

Q And California, after the wildfires?

THE PRESIDENT: California. But, I mean, in North Carolina, where they were really in trouble, they had no communication, people were dying.

Q Nothing.

THE PRESIDENT: They were dying of starvation. He saved a lot of lives in North Carolina.

Q Okay. Now you're going to rescue astronauts. And now — again, you do — you do all of this — I would think liberals would love the fact that you have the biggest electric vehicle company in the world.

MR. MUSK: Yeah. I mean, I used to be adored by the left, you know.

Q Not anymore.

MR. MUSK: Le- — less so these days.

Q He killed that, huh?

MR. MUSK: I mean, less —

THE PRESIDENT: I really (inaudible) —

MR. MUSK: Well, I mean, this — this whole sort of, like, you know — it was — they call it, like, “Trump derangement syndrome.” And I didn't — you know, you don't realize how real this is until, like, it's — you can't reason with people.

So, like, I was at a friend's birthday party in L.A., just a birthday dinner, and it was, like, a nice, quiet dinner, and everything was — everyone was behaving normally. And then I happened to mention — this was before the election, like a month or two before — I happened to mention the president's name, and it was like they got shot with a dart in the jugular that contained, like, the methamphetamine and rabies. Okay? (Laughter.)

And they're like, "Why?" And I'm, like, "What is wrong — like, guys, like" — you just can't have, like, a normal conversation. And it's like — it's like they become completely irrational.

Q He — he has no idea, if you're friends with him —

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

Q — you pay a price. You know, it's like, I walk into a restaurant in New York, and it's like half the room gets daggers and they want to —

MR. MUSK: The eye-daggers — eye-daggers level is insane. (Laughter.)

I mean, there was, like — I had, like, some — some invitation because — so, I got invited to, like, so- — basically, a big, sort of, damn — damn event like that was — but I'd received the invitation, like, the beginning of last year and then — and I still attended, even after I'd endorsed President Trump, and I didn't realize how profoundly that would affect, you know, how I was received. (Laughter.)

I mean, I walk into the room and I'm getting just the dirty looks from — from everyone. Like, if looks could kill, I would have been dead several times over.

Q But that was not — (laughter) — before Trump

MR. MUSK: (Inaudible) —

Q Before Trump: "BC" —

MR. MUSK: — ashes on the floor. (Laughs.)

Q — or “BT.” Before Trump, that never happened. Right?

MR. MUSK: No.

Q No. So —

MR. MUSK: I — I just — doesn't seem strange? Like, what — what is up with this total, like, madness?

Q You're smarter than me. Can you — I actually think that there's a level of irrationality. It's almost like a trigger and —

MR. MUSK: It totally triggers.

Q And it's like — look, I — I've been on TV — this is my 29th year. I've been on radio 35 years. I will — I've gone hard in the paint to — for candidates that lost.

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

Q And guess what? I get over it.

MR. MUSK. Sure. Yeah, yeah.

Q And I just keep doing my show, and I just — you know, I come back to fight another day.

So, here's the big — then this is the million dollar or billion dollar — I'm among billionaires — question. So, you have all this going on and you stop, in a way — you're still doing it — and you partner with him. And this is what you get for it from the Democrats. You get “nobody voted for Elon.” Well, nobody voted for

any of your Cabinet nominees. Okay? “People are dying because of DOGE cuts.” I’ll give you a chance to respond to all that. “What DOGE is doing is illegal.” “Elon Musk is” — more street vernacular for a male body part. “It’s a constitutional crisis.”

MR. MUSK: How c- — why — why are they reacting like this?

Q Well, first of all, do you give a flying rip? Number one. And —

MR. MUSK: Well, I guess we must be — if we’re the target, we’re doing something right. You know, if — like, they wouldn’t be complaining so much if they — we weren’t doing something useful, I think.

What — all we’re really trying to do here is restore the will of the people through the president. And — and what we’re finding is there’s an unelected bureaucracy. Speaking of unelected, there’s a — there’s a vast federal bureaucracy that is implacably opposed to the — the president and the Cabinet.

And you look at, say, D.C. voting. It’s 92 percent Kamala. Okay, so we’re in 92 percent Kamala. That’s a lot.

Q Yeah. They don’t like me here either.

MR. MUSK: I think about that number a lot. I’m like, 92 percent. That’s, basically, almost everyone. And so — but if — but how can you — if — if the will of the president is not implemented, and the president is representative of the people, that means the will of the people is not being implemented, and that means we don’t live in a democracy, we live in a bureaucracy.

And so, I think what we're seeing here is the — sort of, the thrashing of the bureaucracy as we try to restore democracy and the will of the people.

Q You —

MR. MUSK: Is this making sense? I mean — sorry.

Q Y- — no, of course it does. I mean, to me, if you look at our framers and our founders — and you've really become a student of history, Mr. President, and we've ta- — we've had conversations both on air and off air — and if we talk about constitutional order or transformational change, nobody can argue that what's happening here is going at the speed of light.

But however, what were the principles of our framers and our founders? They wanted limited government, greater freedom for the people — and we'll get to the specific cutting of waste, fraud, and abuse. That — that is your goal, is it not?

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah. And my goal was to get great people. And when you look at what this man has done, I mean, it was something — I knew him a little bit through the White House. Originally, I'd see him around a little bit. I didn't know him before that, and I respected what he did. And he fought hard. You know, he was a — he was maybe questioned for a while. He was having some difficulties. It was not easy doing what he did.

I mean, how many people have started a car company and made it really successful and made a better car where it's, you know, beating these big companies that that's all they do is cars? I mean, it's really amazing the things that he's done.

But I didn't know it as much then as now. I mean, the fruits have sort of taken hold.

But I wanted great people, and he's a great person. He's an amazing person. He's also a caring person. You know, he uses the word "care."

So, they sign a contract in a government agency, and it has three months. And the guy leaves that signed the contract, and nobody else is there, and they pay the contract for 10 years.

So, the guy is getting checks for years and years and years, and he's telling his family, obviously — maybe it was crooked, maybe he paid to get the contract, or maybe he paid that they didn't terminate him. But, you know, we have contracts that go forever, and they've been going for years, and they're supposed to end in three months or five months or two years or something, and they go forever. So, the guy is either crooked — you know, where he knew this was going to happen — or he's crooked because he's getting payments that he knows he shouldn't be getting.

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

THE PRESIDENT: But they're finding things like that. They're finding things far worse than that. And they're finding billions — and it will be hundreds of billions of dollars' worth of fraud. I say waste and abuse, but fraud, waste, and abuse. And he's doing an amazing job.

And he attracts a young, very smart type of person. I call them high-IQ individuals, and they are. They're very high Q and — high IQ. And when they go in to see the people and talk to these people — you know, the people think they're going to pull it over. They don't. These guys are smart, and they love the country. You know, there's a certain something.

But he uses the word "care." So, people have to care. Like, when I bought Air Force One —

MR. MUSK: Exactly.

THE PRESIDENT: — I negotiated the price. It was \$5.7 billion, and I got it — I got them down \$1.7 billion. Now they're not building the plane fast enough. I mean, they're actually in default — Boeing. They're supposed to —

Q When is it —

THE PRESIDENT: They've been building this thing forever. I don't know —

Q This is the new Air Force One?

THE PRESIDENT: — what's going on.

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

THE PRESIDENT: We don't build the way we used to build. You know, we used to build like a ship a day, and now to build a ship is, like, a big deal, and we're going to get this country back on track. We could do it, but so many things — it takes so long to get things built and get things done.

And a lot of it could be something we've been discussing. The regulators go in and they make it impossible to build. They make it very difficult to build anything, whether it's a ship, a plane, or a building or anything. And some of them do it because they want to show how important they are. Some of them do it maybe because they think they're right. They use the environment to stop progress and to stop things. It's always the environment. "It's an environmental problem." It's not an environmental problem at all. But they do a lot of things.

And, by the way, speaking of that, Lee Zeldin is going to be fantastic in the position. So important. He could take 10 years to approve or disapprove something, or he could do it in a month. You know, just as good.

Q Sure.

THE PRESIDENT: And I think you're going to see some fantastic — a fantastic job done by him. He's a tremendous guy.

Q Newt — you echoed something when I had just met you, and it was very similar to what Newt has been saying, that we're — he brought this country to the dance. This is the opportunity to be transformational, and to have, I would argue, a — the most consequential presidency if we — if we'd really dig down and do something that had never been done before, and that is get rid of this bureaucracy. And I'm going —

MR. MUSK: Yes.

Q — to get to specifics. You say the same thing. It's not done yet.

MR. MUSK: Absolutely.

Q And what did you mean by that?

MR. MUSK: Well, I mean the — w- — winning the election is really the opportunity to fix the system. It is not fixing the system itself. So, it's an opportunity to fix the system and to restore the power of democracy.

And, you know, people — like, it's funny how — how often it — you — when these attacks occur, the thing that they're accusing the administration of is what they are guilty of. They're saying that things are — are being done are unconstitutional, but what they are doing is unconstitutional. They are guilty of the crime of which they accuse us.

THE PRESIDENT: That's always the first thing they do.

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

THE PRESIDENT: "He's in violation of the Constitution." They don't even know what they're talking — well, they know.

MR. MUSK: It's absurd.

THE PRESIDENT: It's just a con job. It's a big con job. And they're so bad for the country, so dangerous and so bad.

And the media is so bad. When I watch MSNBC, which I don't watch much, but you have to watch the enemy on occasion, the level of arrogance and — and cheating and — they're just horrible people. These are horrible people.

Q They lie.

THE PRESIDENT: These are horrible people.

Q They tell conspiracy theories.

THE PRESIDENT: They lie, and they start up with the Constitution. They couldn't care less about the Constitution.

CNN, likewise. I mean, I watched them asking questions with, you know, the hatred with the — why — I said, "What are you asking the question with such anger? You're asking me a normal question." But you see the bias. The bias is so incredible. Those two are bad.

PBS is bad. AP is bad. CBS is terrible.

I mean, CBS now — they changed an answer in Kamala. They asked her some questions. She answered them like, you know, a low-IQ person. The opposite of him — the absolute opposite. But she gave a horrible answer. They took the entire answer out, and they put another answer that she gave 20 minutes later into the — in- — as the answer.

Q It was part of her word salad.

THE PRESIDENT: I've never even heard of that be- — I thought I heard of it all.

MR. MUSK: Right.

Q That wh- — “60 Minutes” once — one — wanted to do an interview with me, and I said, “Live to tape.”

MR. MUSK: Yeah, exactly.

Q They said, “No.” And I said, “No” —

MR. MUSK: Right.

Q — “No deal.”

MR. MUSK: Exactly. They can- —

Q Like, this interview will —

THE PRESIDENT: I've never even heard — you know, I've seen where they take a sentence off or something and they'll do — but they —

Q Sometimes you cut for time o- —

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. They took the entire — this long, terrible statement that she made and put another.

Nobody's ever seen what's happening. And, you know, the people that do all this complaining, they're very dishonest people.

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

Q Yeah. I — I'm going to, just for the sake of saving time —

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah.

Q — because I could spend — and I've done this on radio and TV, I — I can spend an hour finding the outrageous amounts of money being spent abroad,

like USAID.

MR. MUSK: Sure.

Q And I do want to mention a couple, but I'm going to —

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

Q — scroll it and —

MR. MUSK: Well — well, I guess, at a high level, I think it's what the president mentioned earlier, which is that in order to save taxpayer money, it comes down to two things: competence and caring. And —

THE PRESIDENT: That's right.

MR. MUSK: — and when — when president was shown the outrageous bill for the new Air Force One and — and then negotiated it down, if he had — if the president had not applied competence and caring, the price would have been 50 percent higher — literally, 50 percent higher. The president cared. The president was competent. The price was not 50 percent higher as the result.

And so, when you add more competence and caring, you get a better deal for the American people.

THE PRESIDENT: But we could take — we were talking about this yesterday. I could take — give me thousands of bills — any — I could pick any one of them, and I could —

MR. MUSK: Yes, exactly.

THE PRESIDENT: — take all thousand. And let's say it's a bill for \$5,000 — just \$5,000, and it's done by some bureaucrat. And if he would say, "I'll give you three. I don't want to pay you five. It's too high. I'll give you three." But they don't do that. If a guy sends in a bill for \$5,000, they pay \$5,000. They expect to be cut. Everybody expects to be cut. When you send in a bill, you expect to be cut. They send in the bill higher, for the most part. This is true with lawyers, legal fees. When they send in legal fees, you — I can cut — I wish I had the time, I would save so — but I could cut these bills in half — much better than half.

But you offer people a much lower number because you know they — they actually put fat — I'm not even saying it's — it's like a way of business. They put

more on because they expect to be negotiated. When you send in a bill to the government, there's nobody to negotiate.

MR. MUSK: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: You send it a bill for \$10,000, and they send you a check back for \$10,000. If you would call them and said, "We'll give you five." "No, no, no. I need more than five." "We'll give you a five." "I'm not going to pay any more than five." "Make it six." "No, I'm not going to make it six." And you'll settle for \$5,500. You've just cut the bill almost in half, and it took, like, two minutes. When did that stop? But —

Q (Inaudible) the art of the deal?

THE PRESIDENT: — that's caring. No, it's not even the art of the deal. It's caring. He uses the word —

MR. MUSK: It's — it's competence and caring.

THE PRESIDENT: — it's caring.

Q Yeah.

THE PRESIDENT: It's — it's a certain competence, but I think it's more caring.

MR. MUSK: I — if you —

THE PRESIDENT: (Inaudible.)

MR. MUSK: Actually, if you add either ingredient — either competence or caring — you'll — you'll get a better outcome. But it stands to reason —

Q Right. People don't want to do this (inaudible.)

MR. MUSK: — that's the reason that if you don't have competency and you don't have caring, you're going to get a terrible deal. And the problem is that the American taxpayer has been — been getting a terrible deal, because — look at the last administration. Can you — can anyone — can any reasonable person say that last administration was either competent or caring?

Q But they lied to us and said that Joe didn't have a cognitive decline.

MR. MUSK: They fully lied.

Q They said the borders were closed. They said that the borders were secure. They said that —

MR. MUSK: Right.

Q You know, they said Obamacare would save —

MR. MUSK: They flat out lied.

Q They flat out lied —

MR. MUSK: It was insane.

Q — on many occasions.

MR. MUSK: Yes.

Q I tell my audience all the time: Don't trust government.

MR. MUSK: Yes.

Q So, the — I want — as I scroll this information, and it's — it's — I'll scroll a lot more than I'll mention to both of you, and this is the cost savings. I want you — I want people at home to understand this part: The average American makes \$66,000 a year.

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

Q Okay? We have \$37 trillion in national debt.

MR. MUSK: Yes.

Q Now, all the money I'm about to mention and what we're going to scroll on our screen — and all of this is going to foreign countries. It is not being spent here in America —

MR. MUSK: Yes.

Q — for better schools, law and order.

MR. MUSK: I — I think the average taxpaying American should be mad as hell because their tax money is being poorly spent.

Q I'm mad. It's stealing from —

MR. MUSK: It's a — it's an outrage —

Q — our kids and grandkids.

MR. MUSK: Yes, and the — and people —

THE PRESIDENT: And a lot of fraud, Sean. A lot of fraud.

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: And a lot of kickbacks.

They're sending money out. They're not that stupid. These people aren't that stupid. They're sending for transgender — something having to do with the opera, and they're sending out \$7 million —

MR. MUSK: (Laughs.) Literally.

THE PRESIDENT: — \$7 million. (Inaudible) —

Q You just stole my next line. I can't believe that.

THE PRESIDENT: No, it's incredible.

Q I was going to mention that.

THE PRESIDENT: No, but it's incredible: \$7 million.

Now, you know they — they're not so stupid. They're sending all this money. They expect to get a lot of it back. And that's what happens.

Q Okay. So, let's go through it.

MR. MUSK: Yes, they're — a bunch of —

Q So, for the average person at home —

MR. MUSK: — this stuff is round-tripping. To the president's point, they'll — they'll make it sound like it's going to help some people in a foreign country, but then they — then they get kickbacks.

Q All right. Let me go to the ne- — to the fir- —

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

Q — to the second question first. I want to know, because people like Joni Ernst, and — and House —

MR. MUSK: Yeah, Joni — Joni Ernst has been —

Q They tried to get —

MR. MUSK: — has tried for a long time, and she's actually got a lot of good data. Senator Ernst has been really helpful, actually.

Q Okay, but they — they actually hide what the real purpose of the spending is.

MR. MUSK: That's true.

Q In other words, they — and — and h- — this is a question: How did you decipher? It will say, "Humanitarian blah, blah, blah in Serbia or Afghanistan."

We've been giving money to China for crying out loud, which I think is nuts.

MR. MUSK: Well, we're giving money to the Taliban.

Q Money to the Taliban?

MR. MUSK: Like a lot.

Q All right. So —

MR. MUSK: (Laughs.) I'm like, for what?

Q But they —

MR. MUSK: I — I want to see pictures of what they did.

Q But they try to obscure it, and — and — but then you got to the bottom line, which is what I'm now scrolling on the screen —

MR. MUSK: Yes.

Q — and that is: \$20 million on a Sesame Street show in Iraq; \$56 million to boost tourism in Tunisia and Egypt; \$40 million to build schools in Jordan; \$11 million to tell the Vietnamese to stop burning trash; \$45 million for DEI scholarships in Burma; \$520 million for consultant-driven ESG investments in Africa; DEI programs in Serbia; the president's favorite — I'm sure you — you love that taxpayer money was spent on a DEI musical in Ireland or a chan- — transgender opera in Colombia or a —

MR. MUSK: If I could, like, it sounds like —

Q — transgender comic book in Peru.

MR. MUSK: It sounds like — it sounds like how can these things be real? But this is actually what was done.

Q Okay. The — I —

MR. MUSK: It — it sounds like a comedy sketch or something. It's like —

Q I have 20 pages of this.

MR. MUSK: Right. It's not — the list is a mile long.

THE PRESIDENT: The one thing you didn't mention, the media. The media is getting millions of dollars.

MR. MUSK: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Now, they say Politico, which is a radical left —

Q Subscriptions.

THE PRESIDENT: — you know, garbage magazine or — or program. I guess they have magazine and they have some — some media of all types. \$8 million.

I hear the New York Times got a lot. I hear they get subscriptions — where they have subscriptions but maybe the paper is not sent. I have no idea if that's true or not, but it's — they call it subscriptions. Lots of subscri- — to different media, not just the Times — maybe the Times, and maybe not the Times.

Q A million dollars in subscriptions is a lot.

THE PRESIDENT: Well — but — but millions of dollars going to media that's radical-left, crooked, dishonest media.

MR. MUSK: Well — well, Reuters — this is actually really wild: Reuters got like — something like \$10 million for something that was literally titled “mass disinformation campaign.”

Q Well —

MR. MUSK: That was on the purchase order. Well, I — I thought that was a little bold. (Laughs.)

Q I will tell you what was bold is when you released —

MR. MUSK: I'm like —

Q — the Twitter files.

MR. MUSK: — shouldn't you at least try to call it something else? (Laughs.)

Q The Twitter files — how they targeted him; how Twitter, at the time, worked closely with the FBI, the CIA; and, even before the release of Hunter's very real laptop, they were feeding them disinformation. That —

MR. MUSK: Absolutely.

Q — you found all that out.

MR. MUSK: Well, I think —

Q That's called transparency, right?

THE PRESIDENT: The FBI has to be rehabbed. The FBI —

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

THE PRESIDENT: What's happened with the FBI and the DOJ is just — their — their stock has gone way down. I mean, their reputation is shot.

Q And intelligence.

THE PRESIDENT: And I think Pam is going to do great. I think Kash is going to do great. I think they have to do great or we have a problem.

But when you look at what they did, the raid of Mar-a-Lago — the raid of Mar-a-Lago — you look at what they did, their reputation is shot.

Q It is.

What — you were going to say, Elon?

MR. MUSK: Well, no, I was going to say that I think probably a — like, a lot of people still —

Q How — how did you find (inaudible)?

MR. MUSK: — still believe, like, the Russia hoax, even though you've done a lot to combat that. The — you know, the — the Steele dossier was an incre- — a massive scam that was concocted by Hillary Clinton and her — her campaign.

Q She bought and paid it — for it —

MR. MUSK: Right.

Q — Russian disinformation.

MR. MUSK: There was — it was — the — people still think the — the Russia hoax is real. Like a lot of people s- — because they never — they never heard the counterpoint. I mean — I mean, a bunch of people should be in prison for that. That was a — that was outrageous election interference, creating a fake Russia hoax.

Q How much — if you had to put a number on it, how much do you think you've identified waste, fraud, abuse, corruption at this point? And again, we've been — we're going to be scrolling this throughout the program.

MR. MUSK: Well, the — the overall goal is to try to get a trillion dollars out of the deficit. And if we — if we — if the deficit is not brought under control, America will go bankrupt. This is a very important thing for people to

understand. A country is no different from an individual, in that if an individual overspends, an individual can go bankrupt, and so can a country.

And — and the out- — the massive waste, fraud, and abuse that has been going on, which is leading to a \$2-trillion-a-year deficit, that — that’s what the president was handed on Jan. 20th, a \$2 trillion deficit. It’s insane.

Q For this fiscal year?

THE PRESIDENT: Two trill- — yeah. We inherited it.

MR. MUSK: Two —

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah. And inflation is back. I’m only here for two and a half weeks.

Q That was January —

THE PRESIDENT: Inflating is back —

Q — you were there for a week.

THE PRESIDENT: No, think of it, inflation is back. And they said, “Oh, Trump infla-” — I had nothing to do with it. These people have — have run the country. They spent money like nobody has ever spent. They were — they were given \$9 trillion to throw out the window — \$9 trillion, and they spent it on the Green New Scam, I call it. It’s the greatest scam in the history of the country. One of them. We have a lot of them, I guess. But one of them.

Q Well —

THE PRESIDENT: Dollar-wise, probably —

Q — and DEI —

THE PRESIDENT: — it is.

Q — and wokeism —

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah, yeah.

Q — and transgenderism —

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that’s all part of it. Yeah.

Q — and LGBTQ+.

MR. MUSK: Yes.

Q And, by the way, not in America — other countries, not here.

THE PRESIDENT: You know, the amazing thing is when you see, like, the teaching of DEI: \$9 million. How do you spend \$9 million to teach no matter what it is?

MR. MUSK: Right.

THE PRESIDENT: You could teach physics.

MR. MUSK: Exactly. Totally.

THE PRESIDENT: You could go to MIT for a lot less.

MR. MUSK: It's (inaudible) expensive. (Laughs.) Expensive.

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah, the teaching —

MR. MUSK: Expensive BS.

THE PRESIDENT: — of DEI.

Q Well, I think it would be better spent on —

THE PRESIDENT: No, it's a kickback. It's got to be a kickback. Nobody is that — nobody could do that. Nobody is —

Q Well, it —

THE PRESIDENT: Nobody is giving — to assess the dialog of an audience coming out of a theater: \$4 million.

Q How much do you believe, Elon, you've identified in — in waste, fraud, abuse, corruption now? And how much —

MR. MUSK: Well —

Q — do you anticipate you will?

MR. MUSK: Sure. Well, the — I — I think —

THE PRESIDENT: One percent.

MR. MUSK: (Laughs.)

THE PRESIDENT: No, because it's so massive. It's — this is —

MR. MUSK: Yeah, exactly.

THE PRESIDENT: — huge money. Huge money. Look —

Q So, what we've found now is one percent?

MR. MUSK: Well, we've j- — we've just gotten started here.

THE PRESIDENT: As good as they are, they're not going to find some contract that was crooked — you know, crooked as hell. And, I mean, there's going to be so much that isn't found. But what is found — I think he's going to find a trillion dollars.

MR. MUSK: Yeah, I think so.

THE PRESIDENT: But I think it's a very small percentage compared to what it is. I mean, he could tell you about treasuries; he could tell you about a woman that worked for Biden that became a very wealthy woman while she was working for him. Right?

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

Q Yeah, I know who you're talking about.

MR. MUSK: I mean, there are some strange situations where people — where, you know, someone's working for the government earning \$200,000 a year, and then, suddenly, they're worth tens of millions of dollars within a few years.

Where'd the money come?

Q How'd they earn it?

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

Q They have a private company on the side?

MR. MUSK: We're just curious. Like, can you —

THE PRESIDENT: While they were working.

MR. MUSK: Can you show us — because, like, in order to be worth tens of millions of dollars, you'd have to start a company, or you've got to get some kind — the compensation has got to come from somewhere. So, how does a civil servant with — earning \$200,000 a year suddenly, within a span of a few years, be worth tens of millions dollars?

Q W- —

MR. MUSK: So, I just want to connect the dots here.

Q All right, s- —

MR. MUSK: Maybe there's a legitimate explanation, but I don't think so. (Laughter.)

Q So, you know, and this gets to kind of the heart of where I am. I — I looked at your work, and I look at this amount of money, and I get angry. And I don't get v- — I'm not an angry person.

MR. MUSK: Sure.

Q I don't get angry. I get a- — I get annoyed sometimes, but I don't get angry. And I did live paycheck to pay- — paycheck a part of my life. And I think of, you know, the working men and women in this country that the — 56 percent of which cannot afford a \$1,000 emergency after four years of Harris and Biden.

MR. MUSK: Sure.

Q Okay? That is serious, you know, financial trouble. Or they're putting bare necessities on credit cards.

And I'm looking at this and I'm thinking, well, how much — when we — when all is said and done, we could have written a check or cut the taxes or fixed our schools —

MR. MUSK: Yes. Yes.

Q — or deported these illegals that we keep finding, known terrorists, cartel members, gang members.

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

Q And — and we're not doing it.

THE PRESIDENT: Sean, the saddest thing is they don't talk about the individual lines. I could go on your show right now, I could get a list that I have on the beautiful Resolute Desk in the Oval Office, and it's got 40 points, and all they are is the heading of what this money is.

You don't have to go deep into it, and you see it's, you know, all different things and it's so ridiculous.

I mean, normally, when you look for fraud, you're looking for one thing out of a hundred. Here, out of a hundred, 95 are going to be bad. I mean, they're — and they're so obvious just by the heading.

But they never mention that. They only mention, "This is a violation of our Constitution. This is a" — the word they give, you know, it's like a sound bite —

“constitutional crisis.” It’s a new thing, “constitution-” — But they never mention about where the money is going.

MR. MUSK: Yes. Exactly.

THE PRESIDENT: And when people hear that — I had a very smart man, John Kennedy — he’s actually a very smart man. He said, “Sir, you should just go on television and just read the name of the topic that you’re giving all the money — just the topic that you’re giving this money to, and don’t say anything more,” and he’s right.

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

THE PRESIDENT: And I’ll do it at some point, you know, when — But they never talk about where the money is going. They just talk about, “It’s a constitutional crisis.”

It’s so sad. And honestly, I think they’re bad people. I used to give them the benefit of the doubt, but you almost think they hate the country. I think they hate the country. They’re sick people.

Q Remember, what they can’t — what they couldn’t accomplish at the ballot box, what they can’t accomplish legislatively, now they’re using the courts.

MR. MUSK: Yes.

Q And they c- — they’re trying to bury you in lawsuits.

THE PRESIDENT: That’s right. You know the good news, though? They’ve lost their confidence. They’re not the same people.

Q I think you’re right.

THE PRESIDENT: They’re — they’re not the same people.

This election was brutal for them. We won every swing state. We won by millions and millions of votes. We won everything. We — all 50 states went up — all 50. It’s never happened.

Q Popular vote.

THE PRESIDENT: Every one. All 50 states went up.

They’ve lost their confidence. I see it. And they’re — they’re just swirling and twirling. They don’t know what the hell is happening. They’re much different.

They're just as mean, but they're not getting to the point.

Q Why do you invite them into the Oval Office nearly every day?

MR. MUSK: (Laughs.)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the media — you're talking about the media.

Q Yeah, your friends in the media.

THE PRESIDENT: The media — no, they're — you know, the anger that — they ask questions so angry — a question — a normal question. I give them an answer. They — but they — I say, "Why are you so angry when you ask a question?" Just a standard question. And, I don't know, there's something —

Q They haven't had a- — they haven't been allowed in that office for the last four years, and here you're giving them access.

Let me go to an area that I think is key, and — and you talked about this in recent interviews, and that is: We don't need a Department of Education. Okay. And what some people are trying to do is stoke fears that, "Oh, my gosh, my kid is not going to get the money for education."

THE PRESIDENT: (Laughs.) Yeah.

Q Or "grandma's Social Security and Medicare." This was a big promise of yours on the campaign trail.

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah. Yeah.

Q So, I really want to give you both an opportunity to assure the American people you will keep — that money will be allocated for students, but with higher standards. For example, I would assume associated with monies given or vouchers.

THE PRESIDENT: (Inaudible) so much and — and then Elon goes. But, look, Social Security won't be touched —

Q Won't be touched.

THE PRESIDENT: — other than if there's fraud or something — we're going to find it; it's going to be strengthened — but won't be touched. Medicare, Medicaid, none of that stuff is going to be touched. It's just —

Q Nothing. I want you to —

THE PRESIDENT: (Inaudible) don't have to.

Now, if there are illegal migrants in the system, we're going to get them out of the system, and all of that fraud. But it's not going to be touched.

School — I want to bring school back to the states, so that Iowa, Indiana — all these places — Idaho, New Hampshire — there's so many places, the states. I figure 35 really run well.

And right now, it's Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, China — China, can you imagine? — has top — top schools. We're last.

So, they have a list of 40 countries. We're number 40. Usually we're 38, 39, but last time, we were number 40. And what I say is you've got to give it back.

So, it doesn't work.

I'll tell you what we're number one in: cost per pupil. We spend more money than any other country by far — it's not even close — per pupil. Okay? So, we know it doesn't work.

So, we spend the most and we have the worst — right? — the worst result.

When we give that — when we give that back to Indiana, when we give that b- — back to Iowa and back to a lot of the states that run well — they run well, a lot of them — 35, 37, 38 — now, you're going to have 10 laggards, but you're going to have 5 real laggards, but that's going to be okay.

Take New York — you give it to Westchester County, you give it to Suffolk County, you give it to Upstate New York, and you give it to Manhattan — but you give it to four or five subsections. Same thing in California. Los Angeles is going to be a problem, but you're going to give it to places that run well. We can change education

Now, school choice is important, but that will get care — taken care of automatically.

We want to bring education back to the states. You will spend half the number. And I'm not even doing this —

Q So, you're leaning more towards grants not vouchers, like to parents?

THE PRESIDENT: I'm not even — I'm not even doing this to save, but you will save. It will cost you much less money. You get a much better education. If you go to some of these states, you'll be the equivalent of Norway, Sweden, Denmark — places that really have a good school system. You'll have — those places will be the equivalent, and your overall numbers will get so much better.

Q Do you want standards associated with the money?

THE PRESIDENT: The only thing I want to do from — from Washington, D.C., is make sure they're teaching English, reading, writing —

Q Math and science.

THE PRESIDENT: — and arithmetic. Okay?

Q Science? Science might help.

THE PRESIDENT: Okay. A little science. You know —

Q Computers.

THE PRESIDENT: — you're not going to have much of a problem with that, but that's it.

Do you know, we have half the buildings — I mean, you look at Department of Education —

MR. MUSK: It's empty.

THE PRESIDENT: Look at the real estate and the —

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

THE PRESIDENT: — the level. For what? To — to — I mean, for — what do they do?

We have really bad educa- — the teachers — I love teachers. I respect teachers. And, by the way, there's no reason why teachers can't form a union. They can do whatever they want to do, if it's back in the states. So, we're not looking to hurt the teacher — I'm — I'm going to help the teachers. I think the teachers should be incentivized, because a good teacher is like a good scientist, is like a great doctor.

MR. MUSK: Sure.

THE PRESIDENT: It's a valuable commodity.

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

THE PRESIDENT: I think they should be incentivized.

MR. MUSK: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: So, I'm totally for the teachers.

MR. MUSK: Absolutely.

Q I interview a guy a lot on radio. He's from Wichita, Kansas. And he started —

THE PRESIDENT: Right.

Q — as a medical doctor. Started Atlas.MD, and he's now — he's rolled it out nationwide. Concierge care, \$50 a month, 24-hour access to a doctor.

THE PRESIDENT: Right.

Q You know, they use a lot of telemedicine now as part of it — very innovative. He negotiates directly with pharmaceutical companies. People — if they have high blood pressure, they walk out with their medicine. They have high cholesterol, they walk out with their medicine. And they pay pennies on the dollar.

You mentioned —

THE PRESIDENT: By the way, forms of that could be done.

Q Forms of that?

THE PRESIDENT: Forms of that could be done.

Q Innovation.

THE PRESIDENT: We got hurt when we didn't get the vote on Obamacare. I made Obamacare — I had a choice: I could let it rot and win a point, or I could do the best you could do with it. And that's what I did. We did a great job with it, and we made it sort of work, but it's lousy. We could do so much better.

And when you say — you go to certain areas, they — they have doctors round the clock. They have great medical care for a fraction of what we're paying right now.

There are things we could do.

But, look, just overall, this man has been so valuable. I hate to see the way they go after him. They go after him. It's so unfair. He doesn't need this. He wants to

do this.

First of all, this is bigger than anything he's ever done. He's done great companies and all, but this is much — you know, this is trillion — everything's trillions, right?

MR. MUSK: Yeah. The numbers are crazy.

Q To go back to my original point —

THE PRESIDENT: He can save —

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

Q But let me — give him his \$10 million back.

MR. MUSK: Well — well — I — no. So, people ask me, like, “What's — what's the — what's the — what's, like, the — what's your biggest surprise in — in D.C.?” And I'm like, “The sheer scale.”

Q It's massive. So, you love the challenge?

MR. MUSK: Well, I mean, to —

THE PRESIDENT: He'll never do anything bigger.

MR. MUSK: To the president's point —

THE PRESIDENT: That's the only thing you can say, “He'll never do anything” —

MR. MUSK: But, I mean, you do something slightly better, and you save billions of dollars for the American taxpayer — just slightly better. Slightly. (Laughs.)

Q When you say “tech support” —

MR. MUSK: You go one percent better, and it's, like, you know, tens of billions of dollars saved to the American taxpayer.

Now, if I may address the point that you — the question you asked earlier, which is, you know, how do we assure people that —

Q They want to know.

MR. MUSK: Yeah, how do we assure people that we're going to do the right thing, that their — that their Social Security benefits will be there, that their — the medical care will be good and s- — and — in fact, how do we make it —

ensure that there's better medical care in the future? How do we improve their benefits? How do we make sure that their Social Security check goes further than it did in the past and not — it doesn't get weakened by inflation?

So, the — if we — if we address the — the massive deficit spending, the sort of — the — the waste in the government, then — then we can actually address inflation.

So, provided the economy grows faster than the money supply, which means you stop the government overspending and the waste, and the output of real useful goods and services exceeds the increase in the money supply, you have no inflation.

Q Yeah.

MR. MUSK: And — and you also drop the — the interest payments that people pay, because if the government keeps —

Q Way too high.

MR. MUSK: Yes. The — the reason the interest payments are so high is because the — the national debt keeps increasing. So, the — the government is competing for — to sell debt with — for — with — with the private citizens. This drives up the interest rate.

So, if you have a — if you have a — if you cut back on the deficit, you actually have an amazing situation for people, because you get rid of inflation and you drop the interest rates. And that means people's mortgage payments go down, their credit card payments go down, their car payments go down, their student loans go down. Everything — their — their life becomes more affordable and they're standard of living improves.

Q How quickly? Because I think people are suffering now. We're still living under the Biden-Harris economy.

THE PRESIDENT: But, Sean, you have states right now —

Q Yeah.

THE PRESIDENT: You have some states that operate that way. They operate as well as any corporation. They really operate well.

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

Q Florida.

THE PRESIDENT: They have surpluses. They ha- — they don't —

MR. MUSK: Texas is — has a surplus, for example.

Q Yeah.

THE PRESIDENT: When they — when they look at New York and — and California and some of these places that should have an advantage — I mean, there's a big advantage — or Pritzker does such a bad job in Illinois; it's horrible how bad he is — and they don't have that advantage.

You know, New York has stock exchange and a lot of things. And California has the weather and the beautiful water and all the thing- —

MR. MUSK: California has — has great weather. The most expensive weather on Earth.

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah. (Laughter.) But — but —

Q I like Florida.

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

THE PRESIDENT: But some states operate the way he's talking about.

Q Efficiently.

THE PRESIDENT: When you go into some of these states, you're going to find very little. You're going to find almost nothing. They really operate well — big surpluses, low taxes. And —

Q You know, my taxes went up the first time you were president, because you took away the SALT deduction —

THE PRESIDENT: I — well, I did.

Q — which, by the way, I thought was the right decision.

THE PRESIDENT: It was the right decision — in fact, Reagan tried to do it — because it rewards badly run states.

But at the same time, it's a tough — it was — it's tough for the states. I mean, it really is tough for the states.

The sad part is it rewards really badly run states.

Q Yeah.

THE PRESIDENT: And Reagan tried to do it. He was unable to do it. I got it done.

Q You got it done, and —

THE PRESIDENT: And now we're going to give some back.

Q A little bit.

THE PRESIDENT: Because you know what? We've got to help them.

Q It's only a little.

THE PRESIDENT: We've got to help.

Q Because otherwi- — we're encouraging people to elect high taxes, spen- —

THE PRESIDENT: Nobody had any idea it would be that devastating. I did the right thing. I got something that Reagan couldn't do. I got it done, where everybody is — are the same. But you know what? We've got to help them out.

Q Reagan had the Grace Commission, some of the best business minds in the country.

THE PRESIDENT: Right.

Q And they came up with recommendations. Congress adopted none of them, and none of them were implemented.

I've got to ask this question, because the media is obsessed about it: What — what if there is a conflict? In other words, because you do business — it was funny, when it came out the other day, that there was going to be, I think, \$400 million — billio- — I don't know if it was millions or billions — a lot of money on Teslas that Joe Biden's administration w- — did with Tesla, and —

MR. MUSK: I'm not familiar with that.

Q You're not even familiar with it? But —

MR. MUSK: I — I don't think — are you talking about, like, the Inflation Reduction Act stuff or —

Q It was some — it was a purchase order of Tesla vehicles.

MR. MUSK: Oh. Oh, that was — that was incorrect. There was s- — like, there's some sort of — the media claim that there was, like, \$400 million worth of

Cybertrucks —

Q That was it.

MR. MUSK: — being bought by the DOD.

Q And that he gave it to you.

MR. MUSK: No — well, first of all, that was —

THE PRESIDENT: No, actually, it was —

MR. MUSK: Th- — it was fa- —

THE PRESIDENT: It was Biden.

Q It was Biden.

THE PRESIDENT: And you know Biden wouldn't give him much.

MR. MUSK: But — but it wasn't even — it was fake news, six weeks to Sunday.

Tesla is not getting \$400 million for Cybertrucks. And the — and the — and this alleged —

Q That's what it was, Cybertrucks.

MR. MUSK: This — yeah. This alleged award occurred in December, before the president took office. So, it's — it's fake on multiple levels. There i- — Tesla isn't getting \$400 million. And even if it — even if it was, which it isn't, it was awarded during the Biden administration.

Q Okay, but you're — you — you —

MR. MUSK: It's total fake news.

Q There — there is —

MR. MUSK: It's fake on, like — it's like multiple leveral —

Q There is some integration —

MR. MUSK: — multiple layers of fake.

Q So, you're — you're tasked now — and I pray to God this is successful. I really do. I wish you Godspeed.

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

Q You know, "Godspeed, John Glenn."

THE PRESIDENT: It's — it's going to be, by the way. I really believe it's going to be.

Q But — but there —

MR. MUSK: Oh, yeah.

Q But there are legitimate areas —

THE PRESIDENT: Because the country is going to do well beside this.

This is cutting. We're only talking about cutting.

We're also going to make a lot of money. We're g- — we're taking in so much money.

Q But what about his business? What if — if there is —

THE PRESIDENT: Then we won't let him do it.

Q — a contract he would otherwise get?

THE PRESIDENT: We're not going to let him do it. He — if —

Q You're not going to let him do it?

THE PRESIDENT: If he's got a conflict — I mean, look — he —

Q Y- — now y- —

THE PRESIDENT: He's in certain areas — I mean, I see this morning — I didn't — I didn't know, but I said, "Do the right thing" — where they're cutting way back on the electric vehicle subsidies.

MR. MUSK: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: They're cutting back.

Q You're losing —

THE PRESIDENT: Not only cutting back —

Q It hurts you.

MR. MUSK: Correct.

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah.

Now, I will tell you —

Q You don't care?

MR. MUSK: Well —

THE PRESIDENT: He's probably not that happy with it, but that would have been one thing he would have come to me and said, "Listen, you got to do me a

favor. This is crazy.” (Laughter.) But this was in the tax bill. They’re cutting back on the subsidies.

I didn’t — I wasn’t involved in it. I said, “Do what’s right, and you get” — and they’re coming up with the tax, but it’s just preliminary.

But I mean, if he were involved, wouldn’t you think he’d probably do that? Now, maybe he does better if you cut back on the subsidies. Who knows. Because he figures — he does think differently. He thinks he has a better product, and as long as he has a level playing field, he doesn’t care what you do —

MR. MUSK: Exactly.

THE PRESIDENT: — which he’s very — he’s told me that.

MR. MUSK: Yeah. I mean, I haven’t asked the president for anything ever.

THE PRESIDENT: It’s true.

Q And if it comes up, how — how will you handle it? (Inaudible.)

THE PRESIDENT: He won’t be involved.

MR. MUSK: Yeah, I’ll — I’ll re- — I’ll recuse myself if it is a conflict.

THE PRESIDENT: If there’s a conflict, he won’t be involved.

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

THE PRESIDENT: I mean, I wouldn’t want that, and he won’t want it.

MR. MUSK: Right. And — and also, I’m getting a — sort of a daily proctology exam here. You know, it’s not like I’ll be getting away from something in the dead of night.

Q Welcome to D.C. If you want a friend, get a dog.

MR. MUSK: Well, I do have a dog, but I also have friends. (Laughter.) My dog loves me, poor little creature.

THE PRESIDENT: You know the truth was —

MR. MUSK: I need to bring him to D.C.

THE PRESIDENT: He's — I know every businessman. I know the — the good ones, the bad ones, the smart ones, the lucky ones. I know them all. This guy is a ver- — he's a brilliant guy. He's a great guy. He's got tremendous imagination and scientific imagin- — far beyond — you know, you keep talking about a technologist and all, but you're much more than a technologist. You are that. But he's also a good person. He's a very good person, and he wants to see the country do well.

And I know a lot of great businesspeople, really great business people, but, you know, they're not really, in some cases, very good people. And I know people that would try and take advantage of the situation.

This guy is somebody that really cares for the country, and I saw that very early on. I saw it, really, a long time ago when I got to know him. He's a very different kind of a character.

That's why — you know who loves him: young people that are very smart and that love the country. He's got, like, a tremendous following, because that's what he's — he's a good person.

And he doesn't need this. He didn't need this, and he's doing this to help the country. If I didn't win this election, this country was — I don't think it could have made it. I don't — I mean, we're allowing criminals — millions of criminals into our country, where everything is transgender, it's men playing in women's sports.

I mean, none of this stuff — you could go — I could give you a hundred things. It's almost like they're trying to destroy the fabric of — of the country, of the world, because the world was following us. Now the world is following us out of this pit.

We've done a lot. I'll tell you what, in three weeks, we've done more — I think we've done more — in — in terms of meaningful, not just dollars — than maybe any president ever. And a lot of people are saying that.

Q Shock — it's been shock and awe.

THE PRESIDENT: I mean, if we can keep it going at this level, this country is going to be at a level that it's never seen before.

Q You know one of the things you did that I really thought was pretty clever and smart and fair, and that was reciprocal tariffs.

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah, reciprocal.

Q Ta- — I didn't know India charged so much. I didn't know the European Union to charge them.

MR. MUSK: Yeah, totally.

Q I didn't know Canada was charging us.

THE PRESIDENT: Everybody. Everybody. Everybody but us.

Q Brazil, why?

THE PRESIDENT: And I was doing it — you know, I charged China tariffs. I took in hundreds of billions of dollars, and I was doing that. But when we got — we had the greatest economy in history. But then we got hit with COVID, and we had to solve that problem, because I was doing it — and now I said, I want to come back and do the recipri- — because every country in the world almost — we have a deficit with almost every country — not every one, but just about, pretty close.

And — but every country in the world takes advantage of us, and they do it with tariffs. They makes — make it — it's impossible for him to sell a car, practically, in, as an example, India. I don't know if that's true or not, but I think —

MR. MUSK: The tariffs are like 100 percent import duty.

THE PRESIDENT: The tariffs are so high —

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

THE PRESIDENT: — they don't want to — now, if he built the factory in India, that's okay, but that's unfair to us. It's very unfair.

And I said, "You know what we do?" I told Prime Minister Modi yesterday — he was here. I said, "Here's what you do. We're going to do — be very fair with you." They charge the highest tariffs in the world, just about.

Q 36 percent?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, much — much higher.

MR. MUSK: It's 100 percent on — auto imports are 100 percent.

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah, that's peanuts. So, much higher. And — and others too. I said, "Here's what we're going to do: reciprocal. Whatever you charge, I'm charging." He goes, "No, no, I don't like that." "No, no, whatever you charge, I'm going to charge." I'm doing that with every country.

MR. MUSK: It seems fair.

Q Don't you —

THE PRESIDENT: (Laughs.) It does.

MR. MUSK: It's — it's like fair is fair.

THE PRESIDENT: Nobody can argue with me. You know, the media can't argue — I said — they said, "Tariffs — you're going to charge tariffs?" You know, if I said, like, 25 percent they'd say, "Oh, that's terrible." I don't say that anymore —

Q Can I — (inaudible) —

THE PRESIDENT: — because I say, "Whatever they charge, we'll charge." And you know what?

Q They stop.

THE PRESIDENT: They — then they say, "Oh, that sounds fair."

MR. MUSK: All the president is saying is that —

Q (Inaudible.)

MR. MUSK: — it needs to be at a level playing field and — and fair and square.

Q Yeah. And how does — how —

THE PRESIDENT: And we're going to make a lot of money and a lot of businesses are going to come pouring in.

MR. MUSK: How can you argue with a fair and square situation?

Q Don't — don't you think most of them will look at the — the — for example, without America, China's economy will tank. They need our business.

THE PRESIDENT: They do. Everybody needs us.

Q Everybody needs it.

THE PRESIDENT: And you know what?

Q Do- — don't you think they'll stop?

THE PRESIDENT: We only have so long left where we're in this position. We're the bank, and the bank is getting smaller and smaller and smaller. We — we're the bank. We got to do this now. We can't wait another 10 years and have a shell of a country left, because that's what was going to happen.

Q Mr. President —

THE PRESIDENT: This country — if I didn't win this election and have people like this man right here that really do care, because that's the other word — if you don't care, you could be the smartest guy in the world, it's not going to matter. But if we didn't win this election, I'm telling you, we would not have had a country for very long.

Q How quickly —

MR. MUSK: May I say —

Q — do you balance the budget and — and when do we start paying down that debt?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, potentially, very quickly, between what he's doing and with income coming in from tariffs and other things. I mean, I hope we can — I don't want to give a date, because then these people are going to say, "Oh, well, he didn't make the date." But I think we can do it very quickly.

We would have never done it if this didn't happen. Never. It would have never been — it would only get worse and worse, and ultimately, it would have exploded.

This country was headed down a very bad track. And the whole DEI thing, that was — that was a trap. That was a sick trap.

Q (Inaudible.)

MR. MUSK: (Inaudible.)

THE PRESIDENT: And, you know, we've destroyed that. That's gone. That's pretty much gone.

Q I agree.

MR. MUSK: (Inaudible) —

Q We're not — we're not funding it.

MR. MUSK: If — I really want to — I really want to emphasize to people that — this is a very important point — if we don't solve the deficit, there won't be money for medical care. There won't be money —

THE PRESIDENT: Right.

MR. MUSK: — for Social Security. We either solve the deficit or all we'll be doing is paying debt.

Q Nobody —

MR. MUSK: It's — it's got to be solved, or there's no medical care, there's no Social Security, there's no nothing. That's got to be solved. It's not optional. America will go bankrupt if this is not done. That's why I'm here.

Q The president's —

THE PRESIDENT: Europe takes advantage of us.

MR. MUSK: And — and I'd like to also just send a message — like, because, as the president said, like, this — there's a lot of rich people out there. They should be caring more about the country because — the reason they should be caring about — more about country is: America falls, what do you think is going to happen to your business? What do — what do you think — do you think you're be going to be okay if — if the ship of America sinks? Of course not.

Like, what — what I'm doing here, what the president is doing is it's just long-term thinking. The ship of America must be strong. The ship of America

cannot sink. If it sinks, we all sink with it.

THE PRESIDENT: Sean, you're a —

Q This is what — this is what drives you?

MR. MUSK: Yes.

Q This is important. It says “tech support.” So, you're not trying to be president, as the media suggests. You are really here because your heart and your passion is this. And the president described you as being — this is the biggest thing you ever done. Now you trying to bring sight to —

THE PRESIDENT: There could be nothing bigger. There's nothing —

Q You're sending ships up to Mars — you know, spaceships up in the sky all the time —

THE PRESIDENT: That's peanuts.

Q — and saving astronauts. That's pretty big.

THE PRESIDENT: That's peanuts compared to what we're talking about.

Q It's peanuts?

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah.

Q Do you agree with that?

MR. MUSK: Well, it's esse- — it's essential that America be healthy, that America's economy be strong. And — and if that — if — basically, like, my concern is like, if — if — America is the central pillar holding up Western civilization. That pillar must be strong. If that pillar falls, the whole roof comes crashing down.

THE PRESIDENT: Including his ships.

MR. MUSK: There's no place to hide.

THE PRESIDENT: Including his ships going up.

MR. MUSK: There's no place to run.

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing. There's nothing left.

Q Why — why, if this is your goal, your motivation, you're losing money in the process, you're offeri- — you do all these nice things for people for free; you're trying to solve, you know, blindness; you're going to rescue astronauts; you help

the people in North Carolina, California; you're cutting money that was sent abroad that's not helping the American people, then why the rage —
MR. MUSK: Actually, I think it was like —

Q But why this rage?

MR. MUSK: — it was not helping the American people and hurting people overseas, to be clear.

Q Why this rage against you now? First, they hated him. Now they hate both of you.

MR. MUSK: Well, I think we're seeing an antibody reaction from — from those who are receiving the — the wasteful and fraudulent money.

Q They're being exposed.

MR. MUSK: Yes.

Q Nobody wants to be exposed when you're corrupt.

MR. MUSK: I'll — I'll tell you a lesson I learned at PayPal. You know who complained the loudest — the quickest and the loudest and with the most amount of righteous indignation? The fraudsters. That's who complained first, loudest, and — and they would generally have this immense overreaction. That's how we knew there were the fraudsters. That's how we knew. There's a tell.

Q What di- — I've never — I've never met you before today.

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

Q And it's nice to meet you, by the way. Thank — thank you for doing this. You guys are really friends. I could s- — you guys — I could see you kicking up your shoes.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, he doesn't do this kind of thing. And the way I figured that you'd get to know him is if I did it with him. I said, "Come on, let's do it together." He doesn't do this.

I think he's smarter not doing it, overall. Because, you know, I mean, he's done very well without doing it. But he doesn't feel it's really worthwhile. He wants the product to speak for itself, or whatever he does speak for itself. But he views it as — you know, does it matter?

And I'm doing this with you today because I wanted to have people understand him. And I think it's very important — I disagree with him. I think it's very important that they do understand him.

He doesn't need this. He doesn't need it. Now, I happen to think it's made him very popular. I think it — he's more popular now because there are so many people — you know, you're talking about the radical left — they have the lowest ratings. MSNBC is dying. CNN is dying. They're all dying. The New York Times is doing lousy. The Washington Post is doing horribly. They're all doing badly because people don't buy it anymore.

But I think it was important that he do this one interview. You've been a very fair guy. I think you were the right guy to do it. If we could get some radical left guy — and he'd do just as well, frankly, because it's all about common sense.

Q They would attack him —

THE PRESIDENT: But this — Sean —

Q — as being unconstitutional, not — a fascist.

THE PRESIDENT: — to me this was a — it was important for people to understand, he's doing a big job. He's doing a very thankless job. He's doing a thankless job, but he's helping us to save our country.

Our country was in serious trouble, and I had to get the best guy, somebody with credibility, because if he were just a regular, good — very good, solid businessman, he wouldn't have the credibility. He's got the best credibility for this.

And people also know he's an honest guy. He's an honest guy. He's just a very, very smart guy who's done amazing things. And this will be the biggest thing he's ever done, because, you know, his companies are all great. But if this country goes bad — I guess where he is a little selfish is this. He knows one

thing and probably doesn't think — but if his — if this country goes bad, his stuff is not going to be worth very much, I can tell you.

MR. MUSK: Well, I'd say, if the — if the ship of America sinks, we're all go- — going down with it. You know, this idea that people can escape to New Zealand or some other place is false. If the central pillar of Western civilization that is America falls, the whole roof comes crashing down and there is no escape.

Q It's amazing, since you've been elected, to watch Canada, Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia — I — I was shocked at the statements that Vladimir Putin made about you. I — I was shocked at the hostage release. I was shocked that Venezuela had done it — had done it. Zelenskyy wants a deal. Putin wants a deal.

THE PRESIDENT: All good statements.

Q King Abdullah was interested.

THE PRESIDENT: You mean by that all good statements. Look, they respect the president of this country. They respect — they did not respect the last president. They laughed at him, and they laughed at our country, and he's done great damage to our country.

Q Have foreign leaders told you what they thought of Biden?

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah, they have, but I'd rather not say. They — they have. It's not — it — look —

Q It's the obvious.

THE PRESIDENT: He was not George Washington, let's put it that way.

MR. MUSK: (Inaudible.)

THE PRESIDENT: Not the greatest.

Q Sorry, if that's (inaudible).

THE PRESIDENT: He's done a tremendous disservice.

Q Will you be here —

THE PRESIDENT: And, by the way, the Democrats have done a great disservice, and they ought to get their act together and use a little judgment, and they ought to work with us on straightening out this mess that —

Q Who? John Fetterman?

THE PRESIDENT: — a lot of people have —

Q Maybe? Who — what Democrat is not radicalized?

THE PRESIDENT: Actually, you mention John.

Q John Fetterman.

THE PRESIDENT: He's become the best voice in the Democrat party. You know, I had lunch with him, and I thought he was terrific, but he's a much different man than he was before he had this difficulty. He used to be radical left, and I think he became much smarter, actually. He's really — he's really a voice of reason. But the Democrats have to get together. They have to get their act together, because the stuff they — they talk about makes no sense. It makes — none whatsoever. And they must know it. They must know.

MR. MUSK: Yeah. I mean, like, the country has spoken very clearly and rejected the core tenets of the Demo- — Democratic Party. The country voted t- — fo- — I mean, the country made the — America has made its vote clear. The president won the popular vote decisively. The Republicans won the House. Repub- — Republicans won the Senate. What more do you need?

The Democratic Party needs to take a hard look in the mirror and — and change their ways.

Q I think they went from shock, denial, into the depression stage of grief, and now they're in the rage stage, where I anticipate they'll stay for four years, and if they get the chance, they'll want to impeach him 10 times. Do you anticipate you'll be here in four years? My last question.

MR. MUSK: I'll — I'll be as helpful as long as I can be helpful.

THE PRESIDENT: That's a good question. I mean, I was thinking about that just now. I said, "I wonder how long he's going to be doing it." You can't get somebody like this. He cares, and he's brilliant, and he's got energy.

You need energy, also, in addition to those other things.

You know, I have a lot of guys that are very smart, but they have no energy. They want to sleep all day long. You need a lot of energy. He's got a lot of energy.

He's doing a great job.

If there's any conflict, he — he will stop it. But if he didn't, I'd stop it. I'd see if there's a conflict. I mean, we're talking about big stuff.

But he's under a pretty big microscope.

MR. MUSK: Yeah, seriously.

THE PRESIDENT: I mean, everybody is watching him. If there's a conflict, you're going to be reading about it within about two minutes after the conflict.

MR. MUSK: Exactly. There — there's — the possibility of me getting away with something is 0 percent — 0.0. I — I'm scrutinized to a ridiculous degree.

And — and the other thing is that we — you know, what — what's — you know what's better than saying "trust — trust me" is just full transparency. So, what we're doing with — with the DOGE — DOGE dot — just go to DOGE.gov. You can see every single action that's being taken.

And now —and I want to be clear, we are going to make some mistakes. We're not going to be perfect. Nobody bats a thousand. But we're going to fix the mistakes very quickly. That's what matters: not that you don't make mistakes, but that you fix the mistakes very fast.

THE PRESIDENT: And you're going to ask the other side, when they talk about, "This is a constitutional crisis," you got to a- — what are they paying for? Where are those tax — because when you read off the list of things, it's a big con job. See, when they talk Constitution —

MR. MUSK: Totally.

THE PRESIDENT: — it's a total con job.

MR. MUSK: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: They never talk — and I watch some of the shows —

MR. MUSK: It's specifics — they avoid specifics.

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah, when you start talking about how did — how come they spent money on transgender here and transgender there —

MR. MUSK: Yeah, totally.

THE PRESIDENT: — and all the stuff in some country that nobody ever heard of, they don't want to talk about it. They just talk about, "This is a constitutional crisis."

Q It shocks the conscious.

THE PRESIDENT: The money is being squandered purposely — tremendous theft, tremendous kickbacks, everything — and we're straightening it out. And thank goodness. I look up, and I say, "Thank you," because I think if it went on for four more years, it would not be salvageable. You wouldn't be able —

MR. MUSK: Absolutely.

THE PRESIDENT: You wouldn't be able to save it.

Q You believe, too, that when you were in Butler, came within a millimeter being assassinated —

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah.

Q The day you endorsed him, that was that day.

MR. MUSK: Yes.

Q But you had been planning on it?

MR. MUSK: Yeah.

Q Pretty — I think everybody will never forget that iconic blood on your face. "Fight, fight, fight." I actually was afra- — watching it and thought you might drop again. You know, I didn't know if it had hit you. You can sometimes get up and then the blood starts to accumulate. It was scary — pretty scary.

MR. MUSK: Well, I mean, th- — this is how you know someone's true character, because everyone can say they're brave, but the president was actually shot. Okay? Courage under fire. "Fight, fight, fight," blood streaming down the face. That's true courage. You can't fake that.

Q Yeah. Thank you both.

Mr. President, thank you, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much.

Q Appreciate it. Elon, thank you for your time. Really nice to meet you.

END

1:01 P.M. EST

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