

Remarks During a Cabinet Meeting and an Exchange With Reporters
July 31, 2017

The President. Good morning. This is our first Cabinet meeting with General Kelly. He will be Chief of Staff, as you know. We all know him, we respect him, admire what he's done. And at Homeland, what he has done has been nothing short of miraculous. As you know, the border was a tremendous problem and now close to 80 percent stoppage. And even the President of Mexico called me; they said their southern border, very few people are coming because they know they're not going to get through our border, which is the ultimate compliment. So I just want to congratulate him on the great job he's done with Homeland Security, and I have no doubt that he will be an absolutely superb Chief of Staff.

We were discussing a little while ago, before the meeting, how well we're doing, however. We have the highest stock market in history. We have a GDP, on Friday—it got very little mention, although I guess in the business areas it did. But it got, I think, very little mention; 2.6 is a number that nobody thought they'd see for a long period of time. Remember, I was saying we will hit 3 at some point in the not-too-distant future, and everybody smiled, and they laughed, and they thought we'd be at 1. And 2.6 is an unbelievable number, announced on Friday.

Unemployment is the lowest it's been in 17 years. Business enthusiasm is about as high as they've ever seen it. In fact, it is as high—the highest point in 28 years according to a certain graph and a certain chart. The manufacturers are—the enthusiasm level is incredible. We have a lot of tremendous things going. We have some interesting situations that we'll handle: North Korea, Middle East, lots of problems that we inherited from previous administrations. But we'll take care of them. We'll take care of them very well.

But overall, I think we're doing incredibly well. The economy is doing incredibly well and many other things. So we're starting from a really good base. I predict that General Kelly will go down, in terms of the position of Chief of Staff, one of the great ever. And we're going to have a good time, but much more importantly, we're going to work hard, and we're going to make America great again. It's all about making America great again. That's what we're going to do. That's what I said. That's how we won this big election. And that's what we're in the process of doing and continuing.

And, General, it's really great to have you on board, and thank you very much.

White House Chief of Staff John F. Kelly. Thank you, sir.

The President. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you very much, everybody.

North Korea

Q. Mr. President, what more can you do about North Korea, sir?

The President. We'll handle North Korea. We're going to be able to handle North Korea. They—it will be handled. We handle everything. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:07 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Chief of Staff Kelly in his former capacity as Secretary of Homeland Security; and President Enrique Peña Nieto of Mexico.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Cabinet, meetings with President; Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters :: White House.

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