ANITA POWELL: Egypt has said that they will support South Africa’s case at the ICJ against Israel for genocide. How is that affecting the negotiations right now, the situation in general? And, you know, what is — what is Washington’s message to Cairo about this decision on their part?

JAKE SULLIVAN: I can’t say that it’s helpful to the discussions between Egypt and Israel to try to sort out the humanitarian assistance and access issues. But I do know that Egypt, Israel, the United States, the United Nations, we are all trying to work together to figure out a way forward. So, last question.

KIMBERLY HALKETT: Okay. Thank you. You said at the start of this that you don’t believe what’s happening in Gaza is genocide. What criterion are you using?

SULLIVAN: We’re using the internationally accepted term for genocide, which includes a focus on intent. And it’s not just me standing here at this podium. In the context of this International Court of Justice case at The Hague, the United States actually made a presentation backed up by legal analysis, which I would invite you to read because it lays out all of —

HALKETT: Okay. Because I looked up —

SULLIVAN: — those criterion.

HALKETT: — Francesca Albanese, the Special U.N. Rapporteur on human rights in Palestine presented one in March. Her — she presented it in Geneva. The three criterion she used, citing international law, three acts: Israel’s intent to destroy national ethnic, racial, or religious groups; serious bodily or mental harm to a group; inflicting on a group conditions of life calculated to bring physical destruction, in whole or in part, with imposing measures intended to prevent birth within the group; process of erasure of the native Palestinians. So, those three things are happening. How can you say genocide is not being committed?

SULLIVAN: As I just told you, I think the best way for me to answer that question is actually to ask you to look at the laydown that we gave which —

HALKETT: I just laid out — are you saying this isn’t happening?

SULLIVAN: — I’m sorry, I thought you asked me how I can say it. I’m saying I’d like you to look at the United States’ —

HALKETT: I just did.
SULLIVAN: — ca — ca —

HALKETT: I’m asking: Are you saying this isn’t happening?

SULLIVAN: — ca — do you mind if I finish answering your question before you interrupt?

HALKETT: I’m challenging you to say — are you saying that she’s a liar?

SULLIVAN: The United States has laid down at the International Court of Justice in writing, in detail its position on this issue, and I’d ask you to read it. Thank you.

HALKETT: Are you saying that it doesn’t line up for them with what she’s saying?

(....)

3:18:21 p.m.
4 minutes and 42 seconds

EDWARD LAWRENCE: So, Warren Buffett this month said that taxes will have to be raised to pay for the national debt. He said the government may want to decrease spending. So, with — we've had announcement after announcement of — of taxpayer money being doled out — we’ve seen almost weekly now. Is the federal government spending too much money?

KARINE JEAN-PIERRE: So, let me just say a couple things that Warren Buffett did say that we certainly agree with and I'll quote him: “The wealthy are definitely under taxed, relative to the general population,” which is why the President has a plan to make sure that wealthiest among us, the billionaires and big corporations pay their fair share and we've been very clear about that. They pair — the pay their fair share in order to pay for — for his investments in America and cut the deficit by $3 trillion and it — and Buffett also said it “doesn't matter bother him to pay taxes” and so it has been very clear — the President has said that he will not raise taxes on anyone making less than $400,000. That is what the President has said. Warren Buffett pretty much agrees with us. We agree, obviously, with him, and this is very different than what Republicans want to do. They put out their plan. They put out what they want to do. They want to cut Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid give tax breaks to billionaires and corporations. We do not agree with this and what we want to do is continue to make sure that we're lowering cost for Americans for families, whether it is Big Pharma — fighting Big Pharma, lowering health care costs, making sure that we go after corporation as we — as we — you hear us talk about junk fees. Those are the ways that we want to move forward. That's what our focus is.

LAWRENCE: So, increase taxes to pay the debt?

JEAN-PIERRE: We — on — but let's be really, really clear — right — on billionaires and big corporations, who Warren Buffett him — said — himself said — as you started asking me about Warren Buffett, he says that they are under taxed, and that is something that the President agrees on. And he believes, if we are able to do that — to tax corporations and billionaires, that would
pay for his investments in America and cut the deficit by $3 trillion. That is something the President has been very clear about since day one.

LAWRENCE: One more, if I could, on China and the tariffs that are coming — so, in July of 2019, then-candidate Biden said that tariffs on China are abusive policy. Has the President changed his mind and now believes tariffs work?

JEAN-PIERRE: So look, I'm not. I'm not. So look, I'm not — I'm not — I'm going to be really mindful — gonna — gonna let — and due — in due order. you'll — you'll hear directly from the President, directly from us, so don't want to get ahead of that. Jake said it really well when he was here. We have always had concerns on China's unfair trade policies. We've been very clear about that and the last administration — when they did the trade deal with China, what it did is it failed to increase American — American exports or boost manufacturing. That is not something the President wants to see. He has been doing the opposite, making sure that American manufacturing is created here — right here in America. And so, that is something that he has been very focused. He says he wants to protect American workers, protect businesses — American business. That's what the President wants to do. He spoke about this when he was in Pittsburgh not too long ago, talking about making sure that it — we see fair business practices as it relates to American workers and American businesses. So, don't want to get ahead of that, but we've been very, very clear on how we move forward on these types of practices of trade practices and what we want to see and that is the framework, as Jake Sullivan said here moments ago that we move forward.

LAWRENCE: Alright, so he now believes tariffs work?

JEAN-PIERRE: I'm just going to be really mindful, not get ahead of what we're — what we're about to announce soon and what we have been really, really clear about is protecting workers, Protecting businesses, and we have called out China's unfair trade policies. And so, we're going to continue to do that. [TO WEGMANN] Go ahead, Phil, in the back.

PHILIP WEGMANN: Thank you. There's new reporting in The Wall Street Journal found that the FD — FDIC director Martin Gruenberg, disrespected, disparaged and treated unfairly officials there and he was known to be someone who can control his temper. Obviously, President Biden said early on in his administration that he would fire on the spot anyone who bullied or unfairly belittled coworker. So, has the president seen those reports and —

JEAN-PIERRE: Yeah.

WEGMANN: — if those reports proved to be accurate. Will he take action?

JEAN-PIERRE: So I don't have any personal announcements to make at this time. The FDIC administrator — chairman to be exact — made, apologized, and spoke to this. And so, certainly I would — I would send you there. The FDIC is independent agency, so would refer you to them as to anything else coming out from the FDIC on this particular matter, but I just don't have any policy — personnel announcement to make at this time.
CRISTI LONDONO: Some recent polls and I know said the President doesn't govern looking at polls, but several; have shown his popularity eroding amongst young people and also non-whites and it's not only related to Israel. Is he aware of that? Is he gonna try to refocus his messaging or tweak it to speak directly to those groups that have felt left?

JEAN-PIERRE: So, look, and I — I — I — look — um — you know, going to be mindful about this upcoming election, not going to comment about that — the 20224 election or how these polls will affect the 2024 elections, going to be super mindful. But more broadly, you know, we believe that young Americans support — support the President's agenda more broadly — right — an overwhelming way and the President has stood on many — has stood with young Americans on many of the issues that they care about because you said beyond — beyond what's happening in the Middle East. And so, when it comes to climate change — right — that's something that he's been very clear about, and has been the most progressive president on that particular issue, and he's going to continue to do that. We understand as well that, while the economy is turning around, and you've heard me talk at the top about the 15 million — million jobs created and what we've been able to do to turn around the economy — we understand that prices are too high and young people in particular are feeling that and so, we're going to continue to work on those issues. We're going to continue to do everything that we can to lower cost. I talked about the situation in the Middle East and how young Americans are feeling about what they're seeing in Gaza, and we understand how painful it is — this moment is for them. That's why we've been working so hard to try to get a deal that would lead us to a ceasefire, get hostages home, and make sure that we get that humanitarian aid. Let's not forget that the U.S. has led the effort in getting humanitarian assistance into Gaza and so, going to be super — kind of super — super mindful about the particular polling questions, but we do believe that, you know, we want to make sure that we have an economy that works for young people. We want to make sure that we listen to young people and hear them out. We want to make sure that we continue to work on some of the issues that the President has talked about, whether it's student debt relief — this is something that the President is not going to stop him from doing the work that he has been very clear about wanting to deliver for the American people, including — including young Americans.

LONDONO: On his messaging to minorities?

JEAN-PIERRE: Well. And what do you mean, spec — like — what do you mean, like, specifically — specifically about that?

LONDONO: Hispanic voters.

JEAN-PIERRE: Yeah. Well, not going to speak to Hispanic voters — or voters, more — more
specifically, but if you look at what the President has been able to accomplish for different communities, we have seen an economy that he has created right that he's wanted to create that is not a trickle down economy, that — that is very much from the bottom up, middle out, and you've seen unemployment go down for the Hispanic community. You've seen wealth. We talk about wealth gap closing, the wealth — well — gap and making sure that we're creating jobs for Latino — Hispanic communities. That's more specifically. [RECORDING ENDS] I think we've created more than four million jobs in this administration for that particular community. We've seen as well for the black community — African-American community. We've been very consistent — you've heard me lay out what we've been able to do for Asian Americans with this — with the President’s economic policy. So, we are very, very committed to making sure that communities that are normally seen to be left behind are not left behind as it related to the President’s economy policy. You see that when he fights Big Pharma. When he’s fighting Big Pharma, lowering costs, that helps communities that you’re asking about. When we’re talking about junk fees, that helps communities that you’re asking me about. And so, when we’re talking about expanding ACA, we expanded that for DREAMers, for DACA recipients. That’s because — and you heard this President say this last week, because he understands that DACA recipients — many of them are part of our military, right? They’re part of what makes this country great. And so, those are actions that the President’s going to continue to take and continue to have those conversations and, certainly, message that.