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Fact-checking the second Trump-Biden debate

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President Trump yet again broke the fact-check meter at the second presidential debate, while Democratic nominee Joe Biden made relatively few gaffes. Here's a roundup of 25 of the most noteworthy claims that initially caught our interest, virtually all of them by Trump. As is our practice, we do not award Pinocchios when we do a roundup of facts in debates.

“He called [Black people] super predators. And he said that, he said it, super predators, and they have never lived that down.”

— **Trump**

Trump keeps mixing up his opponents. Hillary Clinton used the term “super predator.”

The “super predators” line comes from a 1996 speech in New Hampshire, where Clinton spoke in support of the 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act, which her husband, Bill Clinton, had signed into law. “But we also have to have an organized effort against gangs,” Hillary Clinton said. “Just as in a previous generation, we had an organized effort against the mob. We need to take these people on. They are often connected to big drug cartels. They are not just gangs of kids anymore. They are often the kinds of kids that are called super predators — no conscience, no empathy. We can talk about why they ended up that way, but first, we have to bring them to heel.”

“He has caused the deficit with China to go up, not down with China. Up, not down.”

— **Biden**

Biden is wrong. The goods-and-services trade deficit with China increased in the beginning of Trump's presidency, but it has fallen during his trade war and the slowing worldwide economy, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The trade deficit grew from \$337 billion in 2017 to \$380 billion in 2018, but it fell to \$308 billion in 2019. In the first six months of 2020, the trade deficit was \$130 billion, compared with \$164 billion in 2019.

“2.2 million people modeled out were expected to die.”

— **Trump**

Trump loves to use this statistic. But it's incredibly misleading.

Trump is citing a possible death figure that was a worst-case scenario produced by Imperial College London, which assumed that 81 percent of the population became infected — 268 million people — and that 0.9 percent of them would die. It did so by also assuming people took no actions against the coronavirus — nobody avoided crowded elevators, wore masks, washed their hands more often, or bought gloves or hand sanitizer — which the study acknowledged was

unrealistic: “It is highly likely that there would be significant spontaneous change in population behavior even in the absence of government-mandated interventions.”

Moreover, even the 1918 flu pandemic is believed to have infected no more than 28 percent of the population, making the 81 percent figure suspect, Alan Reynolds of the Cato Institute noted. Trump routinely mentions this figure to suggest he saved that many people from death, even as the actual death toll rises far above many of his earlier predictions. On March 29, he even said that a “very good job” would be if the death toll was between 100,000 and 200,000 dead. That assessment appears no longer operative.

“He said, ‘Don’t worry, it’s going to go away ... maybe inject bleach.’ He said he was kidding when he said that. A lot of people thought it was serious.”

— **Biden**

“I was kidding on that.”

— **Trump**

At a coronavirus briefing in April, Trump offered his idea for a cure after a presentation that mentioned that disinfectants can kill the novel coronavirus on surfaces and in the air.

“I see the disinfectant that knocks it out in a minute, one minute,” Trump said. “And is there a way we can do something like that by injection inside, or almost a cleaning? Because you see it gets inside the lungs and it does a tremendous number on the lungs, so it would be interesting to check that.”

The question, which Trump offered unprompted, immediately spurred doctors, lawmakers and the makers of Lysol to respond with incredulity and warnings against injecting or otherwise ingesting disinfectants, which are highly toxic.

The next day, after widespread criticism, Trump said it was not intended as a serious suggestion.

“I was asking a question sarcastically to reporters like you just to see what would happen,” Trump said in the Oval Office in response to a question.

There was no indication when he made the initial remarks that they were not a real recommendation.

“Nancy Pelosi said the same thing. She was dancing on the streets in Chinatown in San Francisco.”

— **Trump**

Under fire for reacting too slowly to the coronavirus pandemic, Trump has tried to turn the tables and repeatedly argued that House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) was actually slower than he was, citing a visit Pelosi made to San Francisco’s Chinatown on Feb. 24 and falsely claiming she was “dancing” during the visit.

He accused her of causing many deaths, when there have been none in Chinatown and relatively few in San Francisco. He says she urged street fairs and parades, but that’s not true. She advocated patronage of Chinese businesses. In terms of suggesting he took the crisis seriously and she did not, that’s a stretch. Contrary to Trump’s claim, she never suggested the virus did not

exist. In Chinatown, she urged people to take precautions and to be vigilant. A day later, she called for a broader, more forceful response. The president, meanwhile, continued with happy talk for at least two weeks afterward.

“His own person who ran that for him, who, as you know, was his chief of staff, said it was catastrophic. It was horrible. We didn’t know what we were doing.”

— **Trump**

Trump overstates what was said in 2019 by Ron Klain, who had been Biden’s chief of staff during the 2009-2010 swine flu pandemic.

Klain was addressing a question on the development of a universal flu vaccine, and he warned that relying just on a vaccine would not be enough, as the vaccine developed for that event arrived too slowly. “It’s just purely a fortuity that this isn’t one of the great mass casualty events in American history,” he said. “Had nothing to do with us doing anything right. Just had to do with luck.” (Most of the vaccine arrived too late to vaccinate much of the public before the pandemic peaked, a government report later said.)

But Klain was not speaking broadly about the swine-flu response by the Obama administration, which was generally praised. He said nothing about Biden’s role. Klain told The Fact Checker that he was warning against overreliance on vaccines. “What I was trying to say was that if one relies only on vaccines as your major strategy, and vaccines are late, then you are screwed, and really bad things can happen,” he said. “You could argue that what Trump has been doing the past few months — downplaying testing, downplaying masks, downplaying tracing and other public health measures, while promising a cure/vaccine is ‘just around the corner’ — proves my point: The U.S. death rate from covid post-June is unmatched in the world.”

“Look at the states having a spike, they are the red states, the states in the Midwest, in the upper Midwest, that is where the spike is occurring significantly.”

— **Biden**

Biden is mostly right on this. When adjusted for population size, the states with the biggest spikes in recent weeks are North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Wisconsin, Idaho, Nebraska, Utah and Wyoming.

“Joe got three and a half million dollars from Russia, and it came through [Russian President Vladimir] Putin because he was very friendly with the former mayor of Moscow, and it was the mayor of Moscow, his wife. And you got three and a half million dollars. Your family got three and a half million dollars.”

— **Trump**

Trump is referring to an allegation in a recent report released by the GOP majority of the Senate Homeland Security Committee: “Rosemont Seneca Thornton, an investment firm co-founded by Hunter Biden, received \$3.5 million in a wire transfer from [Yelena] Baturina, who allegedly received illegal construction contracts from her husband, the former mayor of Moscow.” The report said the wire transfer was part of a “consultancy agreement” but does not allege any illegality in the transaction.

Allegedly, at the time of the transfer, Baturina was living in the United Kingdom with her late husband, Yuri Luzhkov, who died in 2019. But Hunter Biden's lawyer said the claim that Hunter Biden received \$3.5 million from Baturina is false.

"The Senate report falsely alleges that Hunter Biden had a financial relationship with Russian businesswoman Yelena Baturina and that he received \$3.5 million from Baturina," said Biden's lawyer George Mesires in an email. "Hunter Biden had no interest in and was not a 'co-founder' of Rosemont Seneca Thornton, so the claim that he was paid \$3.5 million is false."

The Senate report claimed that "Luzhkov used his position as mayor to approve over 20 real estate projects that were built by a Baturina-owned construction company and ultimately generated multibillion-ruble profits for his family."

Trump at one point hoped to be part of Moscow real estate projects overseen by Luzhkov when Luzhkov was mayor between 1992 and 2010. In an interview before his death, Luzhkov told Russia's Interfax news agency that Trump planned to build a large underground mall in Moscow during the mid-1990s. "Trump was in Moscow," Luzhkov said. "He had contacts on matters related to the construction of the Okhotny Ryad underground mall on Manezh Square." But the deal did not come to fruition.

"We learned this president paid 50 times the tax in China [compared with his U.S. tax bill], has a secret bank account with China, does business in China."

— **Biden**

"I was a businessman doing business, the bank account you're referring to, which is — everybody knows about it — it's listed, the bank account was in 2013. That's what it was. It was open and it was closed in 2015, I believe."

— **Trump**

Trump never disclosed that he had a Chinese bank account. The New York Times revealed its existence in a report published this week and also reported that Trump had accounts in Britain and Ireland.

Trump has refused to release his tax returns and instead offers his financial disclosures filed with government ethics officials. Those disclosures are not as detailed as the tax returns would be. The Times said it obtained data from his tax returns for its report.

"The foreign accounts do not show up on Mr. Trump's public financial disclosures, where he must list personal assets, because they are held under corporate names. The identities of the financial institutions are not clear," the Times reported. "The Chinese account is controlled by Trump International Hotels Management L.L.C., which the tax records show paid \$188,561 in taxes in China while pursuing licensing deals there from 2013 to 2015."

Trump said he believed the account was closed in 2015. That's not what his lawyer said.

"No deals, transactions or other business activities ever materialized and, since 2015, the office has remained inactive," Trump lawyer Alan Garten told the Times. "Though the bank account remains open, it has never been used for any other purpose."

“President Trump, this week you called Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation’s best-known infectious-disease expert, quote, ‘A disaster.’”

— NBC moderator Kristen Welker

“I get along very well with Anthony, but he did say, ‘Don’t wear masks.’ He did say, as you know, ‘This is not going to be a problem.’ I think he’s a Democrat, but that’s okay.”

— Trump

In a call with his campaign staff Monday, Trump said, “People are tired of hearing Fauci and all these idiots.”

Fauci never said anything like “This is not going to be a problem.” He spoke as a scientist, evaluating the data in front of him. From the start, he warned of the need to be vigilant.

On Jan. 20, Fauci told CNN: “It really is an evolving situation, and we have to be prepared for the worst. I mean, I don’t think there is cause for panic on anyone’s part, but we certainly need to be following it and watching this very carefully.”

A month later, on Feb. 22, he also told CNN, “If this evolves into a pandemic, there’s no way we in the United States are going to escape having more infections in this country.” On Feb. 29, on “The Today Show,” Fauci was asked whether daily routines should be changed. “Right now, at this moment, there’s no need to change anything that you’re doing on a day-by-day basis. Right now the risk is still low, but this could change,” he responded. “When you start to see community spread, this could change and force you to become much more attentive to doing things that would protect you from spread.”

He added: “I mean, this could be a major outbreak. I hope not. Or it could be something that’s reasonably well-controlled.”

As for Trump’s claim that Fauci advised people not to wear masks, some important context is missing.

Fauci said he advised against masks at first because of early fears that N95 masks needed by hospital workers would quickly run out of stock. Once science indicated that the virus was spread by people who were asymptomatic, the guidance was updated, because even fabric masks can help halt the spread if everyone wears them. (Trump has claimed falsely that 85 percent of mask-wearers catch the coronavirus.)

“I don’t regret anything I said then because in the context of the time in which I said it, it was correct. We were told in our task force meetings that we have a serious problem with the lack of PPEs [personal protective equipment] and masks for the health providers who are putting themselves in harm’s way every day to take care of sick people,” Fauci said in an interview with InStyle magazine.

“When it became clear that the infection could be spread by asymptomatic carriers who don’t know they’re infected, that made it very clear that we had to strongly recommend masks,” he said. “In the context of when we were not strongly recommending it, it was the correct thing. But our knowledge changed and our realization of the state of the outbreak changed.”

Trump has claimed repeatedly and without evidence that Fauci is a Democrat. The director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases has worked under both Democratic and Republican administrations since 1984.

His voter registration shows he is an independent, not a Democrat or Republican. (Here's our full guide to Trump's complaints about Fauci.)

“They [the Obama administration] tried to meet with him [North Korean leader Kim Jong Un]. He wouldn't do it. He didn't like Obama. He didn't like him. He wouldn't do it.”

— **Trump**

Trump has faced criticism for meeting three times with North Korea's Kim Jong Un without achieving progress on denuclearizing the country.

He often counters, as he did in the debate, that at least Kim is willing to meet with him, while President Barack Obama could not get a meeting.

Trump has never produced evidence that Obama sought a meeting — and all of the evidence shows the claim is false. We've given it Four Pinocchios.

Obama's North Korea strategy was to shun Kim. He gradually escalated sanctions on North Korea while refusing to negotiate with Pyongyang until it gave up its nuclear weapons program, a policy that came to be known as “strategic patience.”

“Nobody has done more for the Black community than Donald Trump. And if you look, with the exception of Abraham Lincoln, possible exception, but the exception of Abraham Lincoln, nobody has done what I've done.”

— **Trump**

Trump appears to base this assertion on pre-coronavirus employment figures and some relatively minor actions taken during his administration. Historians say this claim is ridiculous.

Trump has taken few actions specifically on behalf of African Americans.

Lincoln freed the enslaved people in the Confederacy and pressed for passage of constitutional amendments to give them equal status under the law. President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which also had lasting impact on the lives of African Americans. These legislative victories were not easy, requiring Johnson to build coalitions with Republicans and liberal Democrats to defeat the powerful segregationists in his own party who dominated the South. (The final vote for the Civil Rights Act bill was 73 to 27, with 27 Republicans in favor and six opposed. Among Democrats, 46 voted for the bill and 21 rejected it.)

Trump is never one to be modest, but this kind of bragging is simply ridiculous.

“We released 38. They got 38,000 prisoners. You got nothing done; 38,000 prisoners were released from federal prison. We have there were over a thousand people who were given clemency.”

— **Biden**

The federal prison population did decline for the first time in decades under the Obama administration — but not by 38,000 people, as Biden suggests.

Data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics found that from 2009 to January 2017, the federal prison population declined by more than 19,000, marking the first significant decline since the Carter administration.

So where did Biden come up with 38,000? He is probably mixing up the number of people released from prison with the more than 36,000 prisoners who petitioned Obama for pardons or commutations. Of those, Obama issued a record 1,900, according to Justice Department data.

“Catch-and-release is a disaster. A murderer would come in, a rapist would come in, a very bad person would come in. We would take their name. We have to release them into our country. And then you say they come back. Less than 1 percent of the people come back.”

— **Trump**

Most of this is false.

The phrase “catch-and-release” usually serves as shorthand for U.S. immigration authorities’ practice of releasing undocumented migrants into the country while they await immigration hearings, rather than keeping them in custody. With some exceptions, only children and asylum seekers are eligible for this kind of release. Those convicted of crimes are not eligible for release.

Trump’s claim that less than 1 percent of people released into the country show up to their court hearings is false.

The data show that immigrants overwhelmingly attend their hearings. Judges ordered “in absentia” deportations in 14 percent of cases in fiscal 2013, a rate that rose to 25 percent in fiscal 2018.

Flip the numbers and that means 75 percent to 86 percent of migrants did show up for court. Justice Department officials say that since migrants who are in detention always attend their hearings — they have no choice — the right way to measure whether migrants show up in court is to look only at those who were never held in detention facilities. Using that measure, 59 percent showed up for immigration hearings in 2018.

But researchers at the Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse (TRAC) at Syracuse University studied the question and came up with a much higher number: 81 percent of migrant families attended all their court hearings. ([Here is our detailed fact check.](#))

“While he was selling pillows and sheets, I sold tank busters to Ukraine.”

— **Trump**

Trump, as always, claims he did more than President Barack Obama. But to dismiss Obama’s aid to Ukraine as “pillows and sheets” is ridiculous.

While the Obama administration did not send lethal aid, in 2015 it provided Ukraine more than \$120 million in security assistance and had pledged an additional \$75 million worth of equipment, including unmanned aerial vehicles, armored Humvees, counter-mortar radars, night-vision devices and medical supplies, according to the Pentagon’s Defense Security Cooperation

Agency. The Trump administration provided many of these same items, but in March 2018, the White House also approved the sale of Javelin missiles, a shoulder-fired precision missile system designed to destroy tanks, other armored vehicles and helicopters.

In a call on July 25, 2019, Trump asked for “a favor” after President Volodymyr Zelensky said Ukraine was ready to buy more Javelins. During the Obama administration, U.S. officials were concerned that the Ukrainian military lacked the capability to handle weapons such as Javelins, but the country had indeed achieved that capability by the time Trump took office.

Ironically, Foreign Policy magazine reported, Trump initially did not want to provide Javelins to Ukraine, but eventually aides convinced him that it could be good for U.S. business. Nevertheless, the sale was mostly symbolic. The Trump administration insisted that Javelins could not be deployed in a conflict zone, so they are stored in western Ukraine, far from the front lines of the ongoing conflict against pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine.

“They went through everything I had, including my tax returns ...”

— Trump

In fact, special counsel Robert S. Mueller III and his team did not get access to Trump’s tax returns, according to a recent book by Andrew Weissmann, one of the prosecutors.

“Early on, we issued a subpoena to Deutsche Bank in connection with Paul Manafort’s finances, and the White House got wind of that and demanded to know whether we were investigating the president’s finances,” Weissmann told NPR’s “Fresh Air.” “As you recall, he had very publicly said that was a red line, that if there was an investigation into his finances, that was something that was intolerable and should not happen. Obviously, that’s quite a red flag that there may be something there. ... So early on with that admonition from the president with respect to Deutsche Bank, the decision was made that we will not cross that red line, that it wasn’t worth it, as we were first starting out, to risk our being fired.”

“ ... and they found absolutely no collusion and nothing wrong.”

— Trump

Mueller revealed significant criminal activity by some of Trump’s campaign advisers, several of whom have been convicted, and by Russian individuals and entities.

The special counsel concluded Russian government actors successfully hacked into computers and obtained emails from people associated with the Clinton campaign and Democratic Party organizations, and then publicly disseminated those materials through various intermediaries, including WikiLeaks, to sow discord in the United States, hurt Clinton and help Trump.

“Although the investigation established that the Russian government perceived it would benefit from a Trump presidency and worked to secure that outcome, and that the Campaign expected it would benefit electorally from information stolen and released through Russian efforts, the investigation did not establish that members of the Trump Campaign conspired or coordinated with the Russian government in its election interference activities,” the special counsel’s report says.

Mueller declined to reach a decision on whether to bring obstruction of justice charges against Trump. The special counsel also did not make an explicit recommendation to Congress on impeachment.

But Mueller spent half of his report laying out a sustained effort by Trump to derail the investigation, including an effort by the president to have Mueller removed. The Mueller report lays out several episodes in which prosecutors found that Trump met all the elements of an obstruction offense.

One, his efforts to remove Mueller. Two, his efforts to curtail the investigation. Three, his order to former White House counsel Donald McGahn to deny the attempt to remove Mueller. Four, his pardon-dangling remarks about former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort.

“If we had confidence after a thorough investigation of the facts that the President clearly did not commit obstruction of justice, we would so state,” the report says. “Based on the facts and the applicable legal standards, however, we are unable to reach that judgment. The evidence we obtained about the President’s actions and intent presents difficult issues that prevent us from conclusively determining that no criminal conduct occurred. Accordingly, while this report does not conclude that the President committed a crime, it also does not exonerate him.”

“Nobody has done what I’ve done, criminal justice reform. Obama and Joe didn’t do it. I don’t even think they tried because they had no chance at doing it. They might have wanted to do it.”

— **Trump**

Reducing racial disparities in the criminal justice system has been a bipartisan project for both the Obama and Trump administrations.

A 1986 law sponsored by Biden when he was a senator required a five-year mandatory minimum sentence for trafficking in 500 grams of powder cocaine or 5 grams of crack, a ratio of 100 to 1.

Obama signed the bipartisan Fair Sentencing Act in August 2010, repealing the five-year mandatory sentence for first-time offenders and reducing the sentencing disparity to 18 to 1 for repeat offenders. In other words, an offense involving 500 grams of powder cocaine still required a minimum sentence of five years. But the threshold for a five-year sentence was raised for crack cocaine offenses, from 5 grams to 28 grams.

The Fair Sentencing Act applied prospectively, meaning the crack cocaine disparity was reduced only for offenses that occurred after Obama signed the law in 2010. Trump and his son-in-law and adviser, Jared Kushner, pushed for a new round of changes in the criminal justice system, bringing together a bipartisan coalition of Democrats, Republicans, libertarians, the American Civil Liberties Union and others, prevailing on Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) to post the bill for a vote, and weathering criticism from conservatives such as Sen. Tom Cotton (R-Ark.). The result was the First Step Act, which Trump signed in 2018.

The First Step Act builds on what Obama did by making the 2010 reform to crack sentencing laws retroactive. But it goes well beyond that, for instance, by shortening mandatory minimum sentences across the board for nonviolent drug offenses at the federal level.

“Preexisting conditions will always stay. What I would like to do is a much better health care. ... Always protect people with preexisting. So I’d like to terminate Obamacare, come up with a brand new, beautiful health care.”

— **Trump**

The Affordable Care Act, enacted in 2010, guarantees that insurers must sell plans to people with preexisting health conditions, from cancer, asthma and heart disease to diabetes, mental illness and other ailments.

The law says that people in the same geographic area and age group who buy similar plans must pay similar prices.

Trump has been trying to undo the law since taking office. He has promised a replacement plan for nearly four years that he has never produced.

As coronavirus cases reached a new high on June 25, the Trump administration filed a brief in the Supreme Court arguing that the entire Affordable Care Act, including its coverage guarantee for patients with preexisting conditions, “must fall.”

If the court strikes down the law, as Trump is asking, patients with preexisting conditions would be left exposed. Insurers could once again deny them coverage, sell them junk plans with meager benefits or charge them exorbitant prices.

We have given Trump’s claim a Bottomless Pinocchio — our worst rating. He keeps repeating it at every turn. Buyer beware.

“China is paying, they’re paying billions and billions of dollars. I just gave \$28 billion, I just gave \$28 billion to our farmers.”

— **Trump**

“Taxpayer.”

— **Biden**

“Money. That’s what taxpayers’ money. And I know the taxpayer, as it’s called China.”

— **Trump**

Through Oct. 14, the Trump tariffs have garnered about \$65 billion on products from China, according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

But Biden has the better side of this argument, economists say. The tariffs — essentially a tax — are generally paid by importers, such as U.S. companies, who in turn pass on most or all of the costs to consumers or producers, who may use Chinese materials in their products. So, ultimately, Americans are footing the bill for Trump’s tariffs, not the Chinese. The president is fooling himself if he thinks otherwise.

Moreover, as Trump noted, the China tariff revenue has been reduced by payments the government has made to farmers who lost business because China stopped buying U.S. soybeans, hogs, cotton and other products in response. As of December 2018, the government said it would cut nearly \$9.6 billion in checks, including \$7.3 billion to soybean farmers, \$580

million to pork farmers and \$554 million to cotton farmers. At the time, only about \$8 billion had been collected on Chinese goods. Trump then announced an additional bailout for farmers of \$16 billion in 2019, for a total of \$28 billion.

“I’ve got the NATO countries to put up an extra 130 billion going to 420 billion dollars a year.”

— **Trump**

Trump falsely claims this is \$130 billion a year, rather than over four years. The \$420 billion figure is for eight years.

Throughout the 2016 campaign and his presidency, Trump has demonstrated that he has little notion of how NATO is funded and operates. He repeatedly claimed that other members of the alliance “owed” money to the United States and that they were delinquent in their payments. Then he claimed credit for the money “pouring in” as a result of his jawboning, even though much of the increase in those countries’ contributions had been set under guidelines arranged during the Obama administration.

Since 2006, NATO guidelines have asked each member country to spend at least 2 percent of its gross domestic product on defense. In 2014, NATO decided to increase its spending in response to Russia’s seizure of Ukraine’s Crimea region, with the goal of reaching 2 percent in each country by 2024. This money does not end up in NATO’s coffers, as Trump often asserts. (Direct funding, for military-related operations, maintenance and headquarters activity, is based on gross national income — the total domestic and foreign output claimed by residents of a country — and is adjusted regularly.)

Trump’s \$130 billion figure comes from a NATO estimate that its European members and Canada will spend \$130 billion additionally on defense over the four years between 2016 and 2020. (The \$130 billion is an estimate for cumulative defense spending through 2020, in 2015 dollars, as an increase over 2016 spending.)

But NATO figures show that the defense expenditures for NATO countries other than the United States have been going up — in a consistent slope — since 2014. As we noted, that’s when NATO decided to boost spending in response to Russia’s seizure of Ukraine’s Crimea region.

“For the first time, we don’t need all of these countries that we had to fight war over because we needed their energy. We are energy-independent.”

— **Trump**

Flat-out false. The United States continues to import millions of barrels of oil per day. “In 2019, the United States imported about 9.14 million barrels per day (MMb/d) of petroleum from about 90 countries,” according to an Energy Information Agency report, with 48 percent coming from Canada and 11 percent from Persian Gulf countries.

“Look, their real [climate] plan costs \$100 trillion.”

— **Trump**

The Green New Deal is an ambitious, 10-year plan backed by many Democrats — but not Biden.

The plan, sponsored by Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) and others, aims to reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2030; retrofit all buildings for energy efficiency; build out a “smart” energy grid and high-speed rail; guarantee jobs, health care, housing and higher education to all; and more. Biden’s plan is more limited, and he has never signed on the Green New Deal.

Anyway, Trump’s \$100 trillion cost estimate for the Green New Deal is suspect. The American Action Forum, which describes itself as a center-right think tank, analyzed the proposal and estimated that it would cost from \$50 trillion to \$93 trillion.

This study often is characterized by Republicans as saying that the Green New Deal would cost \$93 trillion, but the authors are more circumspect. They stress that they came up with a range of estimates, not one hard number, and their analysis includes several caveats. (Here’s our detailed fact check.)

“He doesn’t come from Scranton. That’s like one of the — he lived there for a short period of time.”

— **Trump**

Biden was born in Scranton, Pa., in 1942 and lived there until age 10. His family has deep roots in the area dating to 1851.

“I do rule out banning fracking.”

— **Biden**

“He was against fracking. He said it. I will show that to you tomorrow. ‘I am against fracking,’ until he got the nomination, went to Pennsylvania.”

— **Trump**

Biden’s position on fracking, or hydraulic fracking, is the same now as it was during the Democratic primary season. He did not switch after clinching the nomination.

Fracking is a drilling technique that uses high-pressure water and chemical blasts to access natural gas and oil reserves underground. The technique has facilitated a boom in U.S. energy production over the past decade, but it has been controversial, the target of climate-change activists and many Democrats.

In swing-state Pennsylvania, it’s a key issue because of the fracking jobs sustained by operations along the Marcellus shale formation. Biden says he would not grant new fracking permits on federal lands but would allow existing operations to continue. About 90 percent of 982,000 wells in the United States are on private lands, subject to state and local regulation, according to the Bureau of Land Management.