

Washington have not tackled the government's largest expense—mandatory spending programs such as Social Security and Medicare. This debt crisis does not only present a fiscal problem, it is inextricably linked to the global security concerns we are seeing today.

In order to have a strong foreign policy, we have to have a strong military, but to have a strong military we have to have a vibrant and growing strong economy. There is no secret that down through history the countries that have had the strongest militaries, and therefore the most secure foreign policy, are those that had the most vibrant economies of their day. Under this President's foreign policy decisions, he has created a power vacuum and put the country in a much weaker position.

Today our enemies don't fear us and our allies don't trust us. Just three decades ago we brought down the Soviet Union with the power of our ideas and the strength of our economy. Look at the world today. Over the past 7 years, we have seen the rise of a global security crisis that is unrivaled in my lifetime. We have seen the rise of traditional rivals such as China and Russia grow more aggressive. We have seen North Korea and Iran actually collaborate on nuclear proliferation. We have seen Syria cross red lines and terrorism fill power vacuums in the Middle East and around the world.

Last week North Korea claimed to have successfully completed its fourth nuclear weapons test with a much more powerful weapon than they possessed before. This is a sobering and stark reminder of the true consequences our country faces when our President shows weakness in the face of these radical regimes. And not only have we witnessed weaknesses, but we have also seen this President naively trust a country like Iran, the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism today.

Since President Obama announced his dangerous Iran deal in July despite strong bipartisan opposition, Iran has actively accelerated its ballistic missile program and continued financial support for terrorism in the region, in violation of the very sanction we just heard on this floor.

Iran has fired rockets near U.S. warships, fomented unrest in Yemen, taken more Americans hostages, refused to release an American passenger who has been held for 3 years, convicted an American journalist of spying, banned American products from being sold in Iran, and renewed its support for Hamas and Hezbollah terrorists.

From the beginning, President Obama didn't listen to military advice and prematurely pulled our troops out of Iraq, creating another power vacuum. ISIS, of course, we now know, grew into that power vacuum and sprouted influence not only in the Middle East but in Africa and Asia as well.

Last November, this President told the American people in a news interview:

We have contained them. They have not gained ground in Iraq. And in Syria if they'll come in, they'll leave. But you don't see this systematic march by ISIL across the terrain.

Well, we now know ISIS is not being contained in their ability to wage war against the West and will stop at nothing to deliver terrorism even to the shores of America. The President's plan has failed, it is plain and simple, and we sit here today with no strategy to defeat ISIS.

The world needs to see decisive action from the United States, not empty rhetoric that can't be backed up. We need a new leader who takes every threat of any size seriously. Moving forward, nothing can go unchecked and unmet without relentless American resolve.

No matter how we measure it, President Obama's economic and foreign policies have indeed failed. Time and again, he has refused to change course when his policies didn't work, when they didn't help the American people, whom he claims to champion. Instead, this President has created the fourth arm of government—the regulators—and they are sucking the very life out of our free enterprise system today. Now, fewer people are working, wages are stagnant, incomes aren't growing, the debt is soaring, and the world is much more dangerous than it was 8 years ago.

But tonight we will also hear from this President about his optimism for the future. Well, I get that. I share that optimism but only because I believe we can do better. We can do a lot better. We can tackle our national debt crisis. We can save Social Security and Medicare. We can defeat terrorism once and for all. We cannot do it without bold leadership, however. We cannot do it without a sense of urgency or responsibility. We cannot do it unless the political class in this town—Washington, DC—finally puts national interests in front of self-interests. We cannot do it without the will and support of the American people.

I believe in America. Georgians believe in America. Americans believe in America. Americans have always risen to the crisis of the day, and I believe we will rise to this crisis. But Washington needs to really listen to the American people, focus on solutions they support, and unite our Nation to make sure our best days are indeed ahead of us. We owe it to our children and our children's children, and the time to move is right now. The time for rhetoric has ended.

We need to face up to the two crises we have today: the global security crisis and our own debt crisis, which are interwoven together.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. Ayotte). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I withdraw the motion to proceed to S. 2232.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is withdrawn.

#### AMERICAN SECURITY AGAINST FOREIGN ENEMIES ACT OF 2015—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 300, H.R. 4038.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 300, H.R. 4038, a bill to require that supplemental certifications and background investigations be completed prior to the admission of certain aliens as refugees, and for other purposes.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 300, H.R. 4038, an act to require that supplemental certifications and background investigations be completed prior to the admission of certain aliens as refugees, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, Rob Portman, John Thune, Tom Cotton, Steve Daines, James M. Inhofe, Mike Crapo, Thom Tillis, Roger F. Wicker, Lindsey Graham, Pat Roberts, John Cornyn, Shelley Moore Capito, John Boozman, Michael B. Enzi, James E. Risch, John McCain.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived with respect to this cloture motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I further ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, the cloture vote occur at 2:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 20, and that if cloture is invoked, then the time be counted as if it had been invoked at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, January 19.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business,

with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### TRIBUTE TO THOMAS BURR

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, today I wish to honor and congratulate Mr. Thomas Burr, the Salt Lake Tribune's Washington correspondent and newly inaugurated president of the National Press Club. Tommy has worked for the Salt Lake Tribune for 14 years, including 10 years as a correspondent here in Washington. Utah is privileged to have such a reputable journalist covering our Nation's capital.

In addition to his role as the Tribune's Washington correspondent, Tommy has also served as the president of the Regional Reporters Association and chairman of the Congressional Standing Committee of Correspondents. Moreover, he is one of the youngest members ever to join the Gridiron Club & Foundation.

Tommy is a native of Salina, UT, and the son of Ann Burr and the late James Burr. A graduate of Snow College and Southern Utah University, Tommy covered the Presidential campaigns of Mitt Romney and Jon Huntsman and was named the top regional reporter in Washington for a record three times by the National Press Club. He is the second Utahn to hold the title of press club president.

Founded in 1908, the National Press Club bills itself as the "World's Leading Professional Organization for Journalists." Since its inception, the organization has hosted monarchs, heads of state, U.S. Presidents, and prominent thought leaders such as Martin Luther King and the Dalai Lama. As president, Tommy will focus on building the press club's long-standing efforts to expand press freedoms worldwide. He also intends to boost membership and speak out for journalists who face government restraints.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the achievements of Tommy Burr and thank him for his contributions to the great State of Utah. On a personal note, I am grateful for my friendship with Tommy and look forward to many more stories to come. I wish him the very best in his new role as president of the National Press Club.

#### REMEMBERING DIANA TABLER FORBES

Mr. McCAIN. Madam President, today I wish to pay tribute to a dedicated, long-time public servant, wife, and mother, Diana Tabler Forbes. Diana died peacefully at her home in Alexandria, VA, on December 28, 2015, after a courageous 3-year battle with esophageal cancer.

Diana was a truly remarkable public servant. For over three decades, she served senior government leaders from both the executive and legislative

branches of government in the areas of military health and personnel policy.

Throughout her career, Diana often played a central role in responding to both international crises and domestic challenges. From 2004 until her retirement in 2013, she served as the senior professional staff member primarily responsible for oversight of the military health system on the Senate Armed Services Committee, serving me as ranking member and previously Chairman John Warner. In that role, she helped shape the legislative response to improving care and services to wounded, ill, and injured military servicemembers following a series of Pulitzer prize-winning Washington Post stories on health care support provided at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. Additionally, Diana played an instrumental role in developing legislation that established TRICARE benefits for military reservists and their families; provided community support for military families with disabilities; expanded combat casualty care research; and ensured access to healthcare services for servicemembers suffering from behavioral health conditions, like post-traumatic stress, and from traumatic brain injury.

In 2001, Diana was the senior health leader in the Pentagon on September 11. After relocating to other government buildings following the attack on the Pentagon, she oversaw the coordination of military medical support in both Washington, DC, and New York City.

Shortly after the U.S. invasion of Iraq and the toppling of Saddam Hussein's regime, Diana volunteered to serve in Iraq as a civilian in 2003, where she played a key role in the reconstruction of health systems in Iraq while serving as an adviser to the coalition provisional authority with U.S. and coalition forces in Iraq.

During the 1990s, Diana served in executive positions within the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Health Affairs, and helped oversee and implement many of the major components of the military health system now in place today, to include the establishment of TRICARE—the military's global health benefit that serves 9.5 million Americans today.

Following her retirement from Federal service, Diana continued to serve others. She remained closely connected with the Department of Defense, and she supported military servicemembers and families on the board of the National Military Family Association.

Diana's limitless energy and passion for the well-being of servicemembers and their families was legendary. She ensured everyone in Congress remembered who we served and why we served them. She knew how to cut through the bureaucracy and provide real solutions for those in need.

I express my sympathy to her husband, Ripley Forbes; her daughter, Meredith, a schoolteacher in Alexandria; and son, Jonathan, a junior at

Virginia Commonwealth University. As they mourn, they should know that Diana's legacy lives on in them and in the many thousands of servicemembers and their families that she selflessly served.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

#### EXECUTIVE MESSAGE REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate a message from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

(The message received today is printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

#### PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

#### REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE UNION DELIVERED TO A JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS ON JANUARY 12, 2016—PM 36

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States which was ordered to lie on the table:

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice President, Members of Congress, my fellow Americans:

Tonight marks the eighth year I've come here to report on the State of the Union. And for this final one, I'm going to try to make it shorter. I know some of you are antsy to get back to Iowa.

I also understand that because it's an election season, expectations for what we'll achieve this year are low. Still, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the constructive approach you and the other leaders took at the end of last year to pass a budget and make tax cuts permanent for working families. So I hope we can work together this year on bipartisan priorities like criminal justice reform, and helping people who are battling prescription drug abuse. We just might surprise the cynics again.

But tonight, I want to go easy on the traditional list of proposals for the year ahead. Don't worry, I've got plenty, from helping students learn to write computer code to personalizing medical treatments for patients. And I'll keep pushing for progress on the work that still needs doing. Fixing a broken immigration system. Protecting our kids from gun violence. Equal pay for equal work, paid leave, raising the minimum wage. All these things still matter to hardworking families; they are still the right thing to do; and I will not let up until they get done.