

## NORTH KOREA

On another matter, Madam President, North Korea, over the last few weeks, we have seen an on-again, off-again routine from the Trump administration when it comes to the potential summit between President Trump and Kim Jong Un. Now that the meeting will seemingly proceed as planned, we want to make sure that the President's desire for a deal with North Korea doesn't saddle the United States, Japan, and South Korea with a bad deal.

We are all hoping the President succeeds. We are all rooting for peace. We very much hope he will be able to achieve a strong and enduring agreement because the danger of a nuclear-armed, ICBM-equipped North Korea is very, very real to the United States. But the President needs to be willing to take time to construct a good deal, and if he finds that one is not achievable, the President must be willing to walk away from the table.

In a letter to the President, Senator MENENDEZ and I strongly urged the administration to ensure that any agreement with North Korea meets five key principles.

First, North Korea must dismantle or remove every single one of its nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons.

Second, North Korea must end the production and enrichment of uranium and plutonium for military purposes and permanently dismantle its nuclear weapons infrastructure. That means test sites, all nuclear weapons research and development facilities, and enrichment facilities have to be destroyed.

Third, North Korea must continue to suspend all ballistic missile tests.

Fourth, North Korea must commit to anytime, anywhere inspections for both its nuclear and ballistic missile programs, including all nondeclared, suspicious sites. If inspectors reveal any violation, we must be permitted to implement snapback sanctions.

Lastly, any agreement between the United States and North Korea must be permanent.

If President Trump meets with Kim Jong Un and reaches a deal that meets these principles, he will have made the world a much safer place. But if he tries to reach a deal with Kim Jong Un just for the sake of reaching a deal, and if the agreement fails to live up to the principles we have laid out, then he will have been bested at the negotiating table yet again.

These five principles are the lens through which Senate Democrats will evaluate any deal with North Korea. If the deal doesn't live up to these standards, then the President should not expect Democratic support in the Senate if he tries to lift sanctions to implement an agreement.

## HEALTHCARE

Finally, Madam President, on healthcare, today, health insurers in the State of Washington proposed an average rate increase of 19 percent. In my home State of New York, insurers

are requesting an increase of 24 percent, half of which they said is due to the Republicans' repeal of the healthcare coverage requirement.

Following rate increases in Virginia, Maryland, Vermont, and Oregon, these increases confirm what we already know to be a trend: The policies of the Trump administration and congressional Republicans are driving up healthcare costs for millions of Americans.

President Trump promised the American people that healthcare would be "far less expensive and far better" but once again has failed to deliver. Instead of "far less expensive and far better," Americans have gotten health coverage that is far more expensive and will be far worse, and it is a direct result of Republican policies and President Trump's actions.

President Trump has deliberately sowed major uncertainty in the marketplace. He will start offering expanded junk insurance plans, and congressional Republicans repealed the coverage requirement in their tax bill. Each of those actions, taken separately, have destabilized our healthcare system. Taken together, these policies are causing chaos, skyrocketing rates, and the return of dark days in which people with preexisting conditions faced higher premiums, denied care, and medical bankruptcy.

On healthcare, as on many issues, President Trump made bold promises but has failed to deliver the results that middle-class Americans need and expect. On healthcare, he has swung at the ball and struck out.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

## "GASPEE" DAYS

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, the night spanning June 9 and 10 marks the anniversary of a key chapter in American history—one whose first shots spurred our Nation on toward independence from Britain, yet one that remains unfamiliar to most Americans today, which is why I come here each year to tell the tale of the *Gaspee* Raiders.

I encourage my colleagues and all students of history to explore this chapter in more depth, in histories such as "An Empire on the Edge" by Nick Bunker or "The Burning of Her Majesty's Schooner *Gaspee*: An Attack on Crown Rule Before the American Revolution" by Steven Park.

Here is the tale in brief form.

It is 1772. Tensions between England and the Colonies have grown increasingly strained. Rhode Island is a seafaring, trading colony, without much regard for His Majesty's taxes. King

George III stations the revenue cutter HMS *Gaspee* under the command of Lieutenant William Dudingston, in Rhode Island waters. The *Gaspee*'s mission: to interdict smuggled goods and enforce the payment of the Crown's taxes.

Lieutenant Dudingston was an arrogant sort, who quickly became infamous for destroying fishing vessels, seizing cargo, and flagging down ships only to harass, humiliate, and interrogate the colonial sailors. According to Gabriel Weis in his 1916 "Guide to Newport, Rhode Island," "This unprincipled ruffian had ruthlessly ravaged the Rhode Island coast for several months, destroying unoffending fishing vessels and confiscating everything he could lay hands on."

Rhode Island seamen and traders chafed at the harsh tactics of Dudingston. A number of them delivered a petition seeking relief against the *Gaspee* to Rhode Island Chief Justice Stephen Hopkins, later a signer of the Declaration of Independence. On this occasion, Hopkins provided a legal opinion saying that British officers were obliged to present their orders and commission to Rhode Island's Governor before entering local waters, asserting a measure of colonial sovereignty.

Dudingston, of course, refused such an impudent notion and threatened to hang any man who tried to oppose the *Gaspee*. His first mistake, in the winter of 1772, was to seize a sloop named "Fortune," along with its cargo of rum and sugar, from Nathanael Greene, the wealthy son of a Quaker minister. As Daniel Harrington wrote in the Providence Journal last year, "the patriotic fervor . . . sweeping the colonies [had] seemed to elude [Nathanael Greene] until Dudingston snagged his Fortune and ignited the righteous spirit of resentment that now consumed him."

After first suing Dudingston for the return of his ship—and winning—Nathanael Greene would join the Revolutionary cause, ultimately commanding Rhode Island's army and then rising in General Washington's ranks to become the commander of the Southern Campaign of the Revolutionary War. During the war, General Cornwallis wrote to his wife: "That damned Greene is more dangerous than Washington."

Thank you very much, Lieutenant Dudingston, for igniting Nathanael Greene's righteous spirit.

Dudingston's various provocations continued until they reached the breaking point on June 9, 1772, when he set his sights on the sailing vessel *Hannah*, traversing Narragansett Bay from Newport to Providence. The *Gaspee* ordered the *Hannah* to stop and allow a search. On board the *Hannah*, Captain Benjamin Lindsey refused and continued on his course to Providence, ignoring warning shots fired by the *Gaspee*. Knowing that his *Hannah* was lighter and had a shallower draft than the *Gaspee*, Lindsey raced up Narragansett Bay and over the shoals off Pawtuxet

Cove. The heavier *Gaspee* kept up its chase of the *Hannah* but ran aground in the shallow waters off Namquid Point. The *Gaspee* was stuck fast on the shoal in a falling tide.

Captain Lindsey sailed on to Providence and, with the prominent merchant John Brown, later the founder of Brown University, rallied local patriots to a meeting at Sabin's Tavern, in what is now Providence's East Side. The Rhode Islanders gathered there made a fateful decision.

The British Navy was the most powerful military force on the planet. The British Crown was the most powerful political force on the planet. The Rhode Islanders had managed to strand one of His Majesty's vessels, a symbol of their oppression, helpless in an outgoing tide.

They resolved to attack.

In the early moonless hours of June 10, several dozen men—perhaps benefiting somewhat from the refreshments of Sabin's Tavern—led by John Brown and Abraham Whipple, shoved off in longboats from Providence, with blackened faces and muffled oars, to row through 6 miles of dark waters for the *Gaspee*.

As the boats surrounded the *Gaspee*, Whipple called out and demanded Lieutenant Dudingston surrender his ship. One witness later recounted his demand in this form—forgive me for the language involved, but it is historically correct.

I am the sheriff of the county of Kent, God damn you. I have got a warrant to apprehend you, God damn you; so surrender, God damn you.

Dudingston refused this polite offer and instead ordered his men to fire upon any men who attempted to board. The determined Rhode Islanders then forced their way aboard the *Gaspee*, and a struggle ensued. In the melee, Lieutenant Dudingston was shot in the groin and arm by musket balls. Gabriel Weis wrote: "The attack on the '*Gaspee*' caused the first bloodshed in the struggle for American independence, and was the first resistance to the British Navy."

Brown and Whipple's men soon overpowered the British crew and took control of the ship. Brown ordered one of his Rhode Islanders, a physician named John Mawney, to tend to Dudingston's wounds. He survived. They transported the captive Englishmen safely to shore and then returned to the abandoned *Gaspee* for one final act of defiance to the Crown and riddance to the ship: The Rhode Islanders set the *Gaspee* afire.

Now, the *Gaspee* was a gunship, and gunships store gunpowder, and the gunpowder is kept below decks in a powder magazine. The *Gaspee* burned until—wham—its powder magazine exploded, blasting into the Rhode Island night what remained of His Majesty's meddling ship, her debris flying across the blast-lit waters of Narragansett Bay.

Word quickly spread of the Rhode Islanders' daring raid. The news was

spread through pulpits and pamphlets up and down the Colonies, stoking the flames of revolution. The furious King George offered huge rewards for the capture of the insolent rebels. A trial in England was announced, but in characteristic, impressive solidarity, not one Rhode Islander would step forward to identify a single one of the raiders. The royal threats broke vainly against the silent solidarity of the Rhode Islanders. The royal nooses hung empty. The story of the *Gaspee* is just one part of a daring Rhode Island resistance, stretching across the years and months before the *Gaspee* incident, into that explosive night on Narragansett Bay, and on throughout the Revolution.

His Majesty's Navy had not heard the last of Abraham Whipple, for instance. In 1775, Abraham Whipple was in command of a small fleet facing off against the British frigate the HMS *Rose*. The captain of the British ship sent a menacing and accusatory note to Captain Whipple:

From Captain Sir James Wallace of the *Rose*:

You, Abraham Whipple, on the 10th of June 1772, burned His Majesty's vessel, the *Gaspee*, and I will hang you at the yard-arm.—James Wallace.

To which note Whipple replied with acerbic brevity:

To Sir James Wallace, Sir:  
Always catch a man before you hang him.—Abraham Whipple.

By the way, Rhode Islander John Millar, two centuries later built a replica of the HMS *Rose* which obtained a starring role in the movie "Master and Commander" as Captain Aubrey's warship, the *Surprise*.

Rhode Island is proud of our role in sparking our Revolution. We have made a tradition of celebrating the *Gaspee* incident with our annual *Gaspee* Days celebration and parade in Warwick, just ashore of where the *Gaspee* was led aground.

This year, the Rhode Island State Archives is staging a new exhibit called "*Gaspee* Raiders: Pirates or Patriots." King George was pretty clear about which, but we are pretty clear also about which. There, visitors can learn about the events of June 1772 and even experience the entire *Gaspee* Affair in virtual reality.

Much of the world does not remember the burning of the *Gaspee*, but we do not forget. Beyond our State borders, most Americans think of other events as catalysts of the Revolutionary War. More than a year after the *Gaspee* incident, up in Massachusetts, some Boston worthies fortified their courage with strong drink and pushed tea bales off the deck of a British vessel. That is not bad—I guess it ruined the tea—but, personally, I think it is more impressive more than a year earlier to have blown up the British ship and shot its captain, but, for whatever reason, the Boston Tea Party is the better known historical event.

In fact, many of my colleagues, having heard me give this speech, tell me

they never even heard this story. Maybe it is because Massachusetts had two of our first Presidents, the Adams' father and son, and they talked it up. Maybe after the war, Rhode Islanders just went home to their farms and boats and businesses while Massachusetts wrote the early history books. Whatever the reason, the seizing and burning and blowing up the *Gaspee* deserves a more prominent place in Revolutionary history.

We are the State that first enshrined separation of church and State in the New World. Samuel Slater sparked America's Industrial Revolution with his mill in Pawtucket, and we drew first blood in the fight for American independence that night on Narragansett Bay. The *Gaspee* Affair is not a peculiar, drunken anomaly; it is part of a robust and early resistance by a proud colony, now a proud State.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The 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 nomination of Robert Earl Wier, of Kentucky, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Kentucky.

Mitch McConnell, John Hoeven, John Kennedy, Johnny Isakson, Jerry Moran, Cory Gardner, John Cornyn, Thom Tillis, James E. Risch, Pat Roberts, David Perdue, Mike Rounds, John Thune, Roy Blunt, Richard Burr, Tom Cotton, Jeff Flake.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Robert Earl Wier, of Kentucky, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Kentucky, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator