

students with disabilities were still significantly overrepresented in disciplinary action.

What we need is a Department of Education that is going to stand up for kids on problems that we know exist. I was stunned that this is a candidate who doesn't even acknowledge the urgency in protecting LGBTQ kids. And at a time of such crisis, Secretary Betsy DeVos continues to fail to protect the rights of all of our students, just this week, she called discrimination against LGBTQ students in schools "an issue for Congress and the courts to settle," abdicating any responsibility.

That is unacceptable, and I don't understand. We have children who are literally under attack. We face a crisis in this country when it comes to LGBTQ youth. This is not an argument over facts. The facts are clear: LGBTQ youths face a stunning level of prejudice and discrimination inside and outside of schools, starting at a young age. We know that LGBTQ youths are two times more likely than their heterosexual peers to be physically assaulted in school. LGBTQ youths are four times as likely to attempt suicide.

According to the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 34 percent of gay and lesbian youth students were bullied on school property, and 13 percent report not going to school because of fear for their safety. This kind of harassment has no place in our classrooms or schools or anywhere in the United States. It is far too common, from discriminating disciplinary practice to physical violence against our kids, and we have work to do in this country to keep all children safe, to treat all children equally, to give every kid a fair shot in schools to make it and thrive. Yet we are trying to elevate someone to one of the most significant positions in our land to protect children who has a disregard and an apathy toward the compelling and continuing problems in our schools.

When I think about the role of the Federal Government in protecting children, I think about a picture that, as soon as I walk out of my office, the picture is there, and it is that picture from Norman Rockwell of Ruby Bridges trying to walk to school, at the age of 6, to become the first Black child to attend a White elementary school in the South. The photo of her—and the famous painting—is jarring when you see it. It is a reminder to me every day when I leave my office about the roles and responsibilities we have in this body. The hate that was being spewed on her—Ruby Bridges—was plainly evident.

I am telling you, if you visit schools right now and talk to some of our children who are being bullied and intimidated, they can speak to that kind of hate as well. You can still feel the pain and hatred echoing from our past, and you can see it. You can see it echoing in our present. She was determined, and, most importantly, she was not

alone. At the age of 6, walking to school, Ruby Bridges walked not alone but, as Norman Rockwell's picture captures, she walked with Federal Marshals, and they stood with her. She was not alone. She had government folks who said: Your rights are my rights. Your future is my future. We pledge an oath to be a nation of liberty and nation not for some but for all—that "injustice anywhere," as King said, "is a threat to justice everywhere."

The Federal Government alone is not enough to educate our kids. It is about local communities that keep them safe. It is about those soccer coaches. It is about the drama teacher. It is about the love and the kindness and the nurturing environment that is the common standard in all of our schools in America in every State. We have seen from history that there is a role for us to play in keeping folks safe. There are aberrations in our country where hatred still thrives, where discrimination still exists, where there is a role for us to play, and we can't surrender that role.

We can't retreat from our vigilance in protecting every child in America. That is why the Office for Civil Rights and the Department of Education are so critical and must be led by someone who understands our history and understands the urgent work that still needs to be done. We need a person in this role who is committed to every single child no matter who they are and a person who sees within that child their truth, their divinity, their limitless potential, their promise, and how we as a nation need them to succeed.

We have a long way to go. There is work still to do. Children in this country who are hurting now need champions in positions of high office. That is why I oppose the nomination of Mr. Marcus. He is not the person, by his own testimony, who sees our children, who will protect all of our children, who understands their crises, and hears their cries. I will be voting against his nomination.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The Senator from Oklahoma.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, arguably, the most significant bill to be introduced and passed every year is the National Defense Authorization Act. Yesterday, the leader moved to proceed to that bill, but then there was some objection. Senator REED and I have spent some time and have been very concerned about getting this started. We passed this out of committee in record time and share the commitment that this bill is a matter fitting for the Senate's deliberative process. We want to have an amendment process, and we proposed this, but there was some objection to it yesterday.

I think an open legislative process is one of the hallmarks of the democracy that we ask our servicemembers to protect and defend. They are out there on

the line. We owe them everything that is in an annual bill. In fact, that bill has actually been passed every year. For the past 57 years, we have had a national defense authorization act. What we wanted to do this time, which would have been different from the last time, was to have had an open amendment process—heard a lot of amendments and had a lot of discussion on the floor. We intended to do that but were disappointed that there was an objection to that yesterday. That is why we have been working on satisfying those objections, and I think we have done this.

I believe, by 12 noon or after the 12:30 vote, we are going to be in a position to go ahead and ask that the majority leader restate his motion to proceed and that it will be passed without objection. I am looking forward to that. I think we need to get started. I don't need to go into the arguments, as others are waiting for the floor right now, but we want to get this bill started immediately.

It is not just to make sure we have the pay raises for our kids who are out there risking their lives, and it is not just that we have to keep up with the commitments we have made. We have gone through some dry years over the last 10 years. When I go around the country and talk to groups, there is this assumption that America has the best of everything, but that is not true anymore. That is one reason there is a sense of urgency on this.

Take artillery, for example. The two things you use to measure the artillery capability of a country are those of range and rapid fire, and we are out-ranged and out-rapid fired by both Russia and China. They have other systems that are better than ours.

Right now, one of the most modern systems is hypersonic warfare. A lot of people are not aware of this, but it allows us to go five times the speed of sound with a weapon. We have been developing this for some time. However, now we have found out that both Russia and China have been ahead of us on this. This bill is going to put us in high gear and make sure this development actually happens.

Our triad system, our nuclear triad, is also one on which we have not been doing anything for the last 8 or 10 years, and now Russia and China have gotten ahead. This is something we are not going to tolerate.

We have the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019, and we are going to get to it today. I will mention that we are actually hoping for a couple of amendments to take place this afternoon. These have to be agreed to and have been agreed to by both sides. Boozman amendment No. 2276 is a study to suggest the permanent stationing of our troops in Poland. The second one is the McCain fellowship amendment, by Senator REED, amendment No. 2284.

I, and I am sure Senator REED—I speak for him too—would like to get

started on some amendments today instead of waiting around until Monday. Doing so will put us a lot further ahead than we otherwise would be. Our anticipation is to get this thing done by next week, and I think we can do it.

I thank those who had some objection to moving to this bill. I very much appreciate their working with us. I think it will be completed, and I anticipate that the majority leader will have a motion that he will make after the 12:30 p.m. vote today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

TARIFFS

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I rise to sound the alarm about the President's decision to impose steep tariffs on our trading partners.

Make no mistake, we are not, as some administration officials have suggested, in the leisurely early innings of a baseball game. We are in the nascent stages of a full-scale trade war. Despite the President's statement that this war will be easily won, any student of history knows that unlike a baseball game, in which a winner is guaranteed, a trade war only guarantees there will be losers.

Free trade allows the most efficient allocation of labor and capital. Protectionism, on the other hand, stifles innovation and reduces productivity. Recognition of this philosophy has been as close to a consensus as this body has achieved in more than 70 years, and the application of these principles has provided the foundation for growth and prosperity that was unimagined by previous generations.

If tariffs aimed at our adversaries produce disastrous results, what will happen when we target our allies?

Imagine claiming that imports from Canada represent a national security threat. Well, that is exactly what we are doing. Canada is our largest trading partner—a trading partner, coincidentally, with whom we enjoy a trade surplus. Just yesterday, we learned of a phone call in which Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau challenged the President's use of national security as a justification for levying tariffs against a steadfast ally. These new tariffs imposed on our allies will not and are not going unanswered. A number of them have already introduced retaliatory measures.

In March, when the tariffs on steel and aluminum were first announced, I proposed legislation to block their implementation. Yesterday, I joined with a bipartisan group of Senators, led by Senator CORKER, in introducing legislation to rein in the President's use of section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 to justify protectionist measures. This bipartisan group includes Senators from coast to coast and from across the political spectrum.

The Constitution grants Congress the preeminent role in regulating trade and tariffs. Congress must show leadership on this issue. We are elected to be

leaders, not followers here. It is not our charge to just go along because the President shares our party affiliation, to throw out our long-held beliefs just because they might complicate our political standing.

PROTECTING THE VALUES OF FREEDOM

Now, Mr. President, let me speak for a few minutes on our unique standing in the world and the opportunities and responsibilities that come as a result of that standing.

From its very creation, the United States of America has played a vital role in world leadership. Our Founding Fathers showed how a band of colonies could not only break free from a despotic monarchy but could build a functional democracy on the sturdy scaffold of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. They entrenched this hallowed trio of principles within our Declaration of Independence, making America the first country in the world to be born not of accidents of geography or of Tribe but of an idea—a powerful idea—the idea of freedom.

More than 100 years later, at the turn of the 20th century, one that would come to be called the American Century, President Theodore Roosevelt used his inaugural address to highlight America's role: A country that had broken free from tyranny had a moral obligation to help others do likewise.

Roosevelt said:

Much has been given us, and much will rightfully be expected from us. We have duties to others and duties to ourselves; and we can shirk neither. We have become a great nation, forced by the fact of its greatness into relations with other nations of the earth, and we must behave as befits a people with such responsibilities.

This declaration alerted Americans that the Nation had arrived at a new position of global leadership, and it remains as true today as it was then.

The 20th century saw the United States transition from being merely one voice for freedom and liberty to become the preeminent leader of that sacred cause across the world. In the 40 years that followed Roosevelt's speech, American men and women would twice be called on to fight for peace in the face of World War. Hundreds of thousands of Americans would selflessly lay down their lives for the freedom of others.

Indeed, nowhere in our national history has that been more clearly displayed than 74 years ago yesterday, when, on the beaches of Normandy, thousands of Americans paid the ultimate sacrifice to free our European allies from the most unspeakable tyranny the world has ever known.

Yet this Nation's transformation into an indispensable nation, a necessary nation, was not crafted by military might alone. It was our efforts to build up international institutions and norms aimed at fostering democratic ideals and free market principles that truly secured the global leadership some would now squander.

I believe President Reagan best described the importance of this broader

American role when, during an address to the British Parliament, in the depth of the Cold War, he said this:

Our military strength is a prerequisite to peace, but let it be clear we maintain this strength in the hope it will never be used, for the ultimate determinant in the struggle that's now going on in the world will not be bombs and rockets, but a test of wills and ideas, a trial of spiritual resolve, the values we hold, the beliefs we cherish, the ideals to which we are dedicated.

By 1945, the United States had contributed about half of the world's entire economic activity, and, in 1991, we emerged from the Cold War as the world's sole superpower. The Soviet Union was in a glorious free fall, shedding republics by the day. Eastern Europe was squinting out into the light of liberation for the first time in 40 years. Free markets and free minds were sweeping the world.

I vividly recall the fall of the Berlin Wall. At the time, I was in Africa, assisting in the transition to democracy of the newly independent country of Namibia, as it shrugged off the shackles of apartheid.

A continent away, a dissident playwright, Vaclav Havel, emerged from a Communist prison to become the President of a liberated Czechoslovakia. In appearing before a joint session of our Congress, he praised the powerful inspiration of American democracy, and he thanked us for liberating Europe, once again, "from the tyrant's grip."

Both 1945 and 1991 were moments of American global success, when this Nation could have easily chosen to have turned inward and to have left the rest of the community of nations to fend for themselves or we could have simply maintained our dominance through sheer economic supremacy and military strength. We chose neither.

Instead, we chose to build the foundations of a global order based on the values we venerate, the beliefs we cherish, the ideals we aspire to—a world in which leaders must earn the respect of their peers, not through the coercive tactics of bluster and threat but through the virtues of their actions and the wisdom of their policies.

Winston Churchill famously opined, "Democracy is the worst form of Government except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time." It was a wry acknowledgment that however messy it may sometimes seem in practice, democracy's genius lies in its regular renewal of the people's mandate, what Thomas Jefferson called the "consent of the governed."

It is our responsibility to be the premier example of this democratic order. This is the golden thread that leads all the way back to our Founding Fathers, but today that golden thread of continuity is in danger of being snapped.

Today we appear to be turning our back on this responsibility—a responsibility upheld by previous generations—the same generations that crafted the Marshall Plan to rebuild Europe and Japan after World War II, helping to