

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

The resolution (S. Res. 192) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

KIDS TO PARKS DAY

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 193, submitted earlier today.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 193) designating May 18, 2019, as "Kids to Parks Day".

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. KENNEDY. I further ask that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 193) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

COMMENDING THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 61, S. Res. 96.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 96) commending the Government of Canada for upholding the rule of law and expressing concern over actions by the Government of the People's Republic of China in response to a request from the United States Government to the Government of Canada for the extradition of a Huawei Technologies Co., Ltd. executive.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. KENNEDY. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 96) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of March 6, 2019, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 2019

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Wednesday, May 8; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two Leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, morning business be closed, and the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Bianco nomination under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senators MENENDEZ and WHITEHOUSE.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 20 minutes.

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

MUELLER REPORT

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I come to the floor to once again discuss U.S. policy toward the Russian Federation. I fear this body is in the grips of a paralysis that has rendered us flat-footed in the face of a multitude of threats from Russia. This is not a paralysis due to a lack of knowledge, lack of facts, or lack of intelligence. It is a paralysis of our politics, a paralysis born out of a lack of political will to do what is necessary in the absence of Presidential leadership, a lack of will to stand up for our national security, a lack of will to defend our Democratic institutions, a lack of will to fulfill the oath that every single Member of this Chamber swore to uphold.

The inaction from this body since the beginning of the year on Russia has been astounding. It gives me no pleasure to think that political considerations could be compromising the Republican majority's willingness to respond robustly to the Russia threat, but how else can I explain why the party of Reagan has gone missing? What force, other than politics, can explain our failure to demand the administration robustly respond to Russia's seizure of Ukrainian ships in the Kerch Strait in the high seas in international waters? What force other than politics can explain our feeble response to Russia's chemical attack in the United Kingdom? What force other than poli-

tics can explain our failure to thwart Russia's hand in Syria and allow Putin to sit back and enjoy the political instability spawned in Europe by the resulting migration crisis? What force other than politics can have us playing right into Putin's hands? What force other than politics can explain the remarks made earlier today by Majority Leader McCONNELL in which he suggested that Democratic efforts to assess the full and unredacted Mueller report are impeding the ability of this body to shore up our election security?

Well, that is really rich. I might remind the American people that it was the majority leader who, when presented by top intelligence officials in the Obama administration with Russian efforts to help President Trump's candidacy, blocked efforts to inform the public?

Look, I am not here today to talk about conspiracy or obstruction or President Trump. Make no mistake, those issues are deeply concerning, and contrary to the majority leader's words, the case is not closed. The case is not closed. However, there will be other opportunities to address these issues, and when it comes to shoring up our defenses, we are running out of time.

So as the ranking member on the Foreign Relation Committee, I am here to flash a red warning light about what the Mueller report means for our national security, what it means for America's geopolitical standing with respect to Russia, what it means for our credibility on the world stage as Democratic institutions are attacked.

I am worried that in the face of Russian aggression, we are getting lost, not in the fog of war but in the fog of politics, and our inaction today will have consequences that outlast any Presidency, haunting us for years or even decades to come.

Let's review what we know about the Russian threat and how long we have known about it. It was over 2 years ago, in January of 2017, when the Director of National Intelligence determined that Russia interfered in the 2016 election. Our intelligence community released that assessment that concluded Russia's efforts to influence the 2016 Presidential election "demonstrated a significant escalation in directness, level of activity, and scope of effort compared to previous operations."

They concluded that this attack was ordered by President Putin himself and that "Putin and the Russian Government developed a clear preference for President-elect Trump."

They concluded Russia's efforts "[B]lend[ed] covert intelligence operations—such as cyber activity—with overt efforts by Russian Government agencies, state-funded media, third-party intermediaries, and paid social media users or 'trolls' to undermine our 2016 elections."

In addition, our intelligence community warned that "Moscow will apply lessons learned from its Putin-ordered

campaign aimed at the U.S. Presidential election to influence future efforts worldwide, including against U.S. allies and their election processes.”

That was more than 2 years ago. Today, thanks to the work of Special Counsel Robert Mueller, we now have a more thorough understanding of Russia’s interference in 2016. While much remains redacted, the special counsel’s report describes in painstaking detail the scope of Russia’s interference and the sophistication of their tactics.

Here is what we know.

First, Russian officials interfered in the U.S. Presidential election in support of Putin’s preferred candidate and attempted to make inroads with his campaign.

Second, the Russian Government and individuals with strong ties to the Kremlin carried out what Mueller concluded was a “sweeping and systematic” campaign to influence and sway the support of U.S. voters.

Third, the St. Petersburg-based Internet Research Agency, or known by its acronym IRA, sought to use social media and embedded employees to influence U.S. voters in an effort that was funded in large part by an oligarch with known links to Putin. The IRA’s malign social media influence campaign was nothing short of, in his words, “information warfare.”

The Internet Research Agency employees created fake social media personas and posed as American citizens on sites like Facebook and Twitter. These Russian operatives were keenly aware of the politics of division. They capitalized on sensitive social and political issues, from immigration policy to police brutality, in an effort to divide Americans against each other.

They targeted voters in key swing States in an effort to dissuade certain demographics from turning out on election day. They staged real political rallies by masquerading as activists, and they destroyed evidence in an attempt to avoid detection and impede U.S. investigations.

Fourth, the Mueller report confirms that Russian military intelligence deployed “multiple” units to engage in “large-scale cyber operations to interfere with the 2016 U.S. presidential election.”

Officers with the GRU, Russia’s intelligence agency, hacked into Democratic campaign networks and individual email accounts in order to steal emails and other sensitive information. Armed with those stolen emails, GRU officers timed the release of damaging information in order to maximize their impact. Subsequent releases were conspicuously timed in an apparent effort to help their preferred candidate.

Russian hackers also conducted cyber surveillance of at least 20 State election systems, and the Kremlin intended to use this information to cast doubt on the legitimacy of a Clinton victory.

This revelation should shake us to the core because, clearly, President

Putin understands that for our democracy to work, the American people must have faith in the results of our elections. Chip away at that faith, and you chip away at our democracy itself.

Russian intelligence operatives, GRU operatives, also targeted employees of a voting technology company and successfully installed malware on their computer networks.

In a handful of States, they gained the capacity to actually manipulate and even delete voter registration data. To top it all off, Russian hackers successfully infiltrated the network of at least one county government in Florida.

Finally, following the election, Putin unleashed handpicked oligarchs to push back against anticipated U.S. sanctions. Let’s remember who these Russian oligarchs are. They are billionaires handpicked by Putin who solidified his grip on power not only by oppressing the Russian people but also by systematically seizing their assets and transferring them to a select group of cronies and allies through business dealings, real estate transactions, shares of companies, shell corporations, money laundering, and more.

These oligarchs act as an extension of Putin’s power. They advance Russia’s economic influence and do Putin’s bidding around the world. According to the Mueller report, that is exactly what they did after the 2016 election.

They reached out to the President’s inner circle and members of his transition team to begin laying the groundwork for what Putin wanted in return for his help during the campaign—most prominently, protection from further sanctions and relaxation of those sanctions imposed for Russia’s illegal invasion of Ukraine.

This short summary of the Mueller report’s findings should be offensive to any American elected official. This short summary should spur anyone to action to shore up the security of our elections at home and counter Russian aggression abroad.

Indeed, just last week, FBI Director Wray warned that Russia continues to pose a very significant counterintelligence threat. He also said that 2018 was a dress rehearsal for the big show in 2020.

This report cries out for action. It screams for legislation, and it demands preparation in advance of 2020.

We are in trouble, people. We can argue with each other, we can score political points against each other, but the United States of America remains in Russia’s crosshairs, and we must act. Putin has set his sights on us again in 2020.

The Russian Government continues to pursue the eroding of democracy as we speak across Europe. It has partnered with dictators and war criminals in the Middle East. In Venezuela, Putin clearly sees an advantage in prolonging a destabilizing conflict in our hemisphere. He and his cronies are selling arms, striking oil deals, and

robbing the Venezuelan people of future prosperity all to prop up Maduro’s criminal regime.

So while President Trump may claim that “Putin is not looking to get involved” in Venezuela, we already know he is.

The Mueller report is the wake-up call of the century. It is a clarion call to action. We must treat it as a preview of what is to come.

We already know some of the actions that are worth taking. Senator GRAHAM and I have a bipartisan bill called the Defending American Security from Kremlin Aggression Act or DASKA. I have come to this floor to talk about it again and again, but in the wake of the Mueller report, I wonder, where is our sense of urgency? Where is our outrage? Where is our sense of collective responsibility? If my colleagues take nothing else from the Mueller report, they should at least be willing and eager to respond to what Russia did to us 2 years ago and what FBI Director Wray tells us they will continue to do.

The Defending American Security from Kremlin Aggression Act will ensure our diplomats have the tools to advance our interests and stand up to the bully in the Kremlin. The bill includes new sanctions but also provisions designed to harden our democratic institutions and make us less vulnerable to attack.

Our bill would improve our ability to coordinate with Europe on the Russia challenge. It would invest in Democratic institutions in countries most vulnerable to Kremlin aggression because we must remember that Russia’s attack in 2016 did not occur in a vacuum. It is part of Putin’s larger mission to disrupt democracies around the world from his support for dictators from Syria and Venezuela to Russian meddling in the political affairs of our European allies.

DASKA would also increase transparency with respect to real estate sales in the United States that we know is a go-to strategy for Russian oligarchs looking to launder money.

I know many of my colleagues have no interest in learning more about the President’s own business dealings with these unsavory figures and whether those relationships influence his decision making about U.S. foreign policy, but we should agree, at least, that we must do more to prevent Russia from getting American businesses and leaders financially entangled in Russia’s tentacles like the NRA.

DASKA would also protect our NATO alliance. Senator GRAHAM and I have included an important provision that would prevent any President from pulling the United States out of NATO without Senate approval. To pull our Nation out of a military alliance so vital to America’s security when we could have stopped it from happening would be a tragedy fit for the ages. A Senate vote was required to get us into the North Atlantic treaty, it should be required in any attempt to get us out.

This is critical to providing a sense of security and stability to our allies in NATO.

Finally, DASKA also includes new sanctions pressure on Moscow, including on Russian oligarchs complicit in the spread of Russia's malign actions. In addition, it includes increased sanctions on Russia's energy and financial sectors.

The bill has specific sanctions on the Russian shipbuilding sector to the extent that Russia continues to interfere with the freedom of navigation in the Kerch Strait or anywhere else and was complicit in the November attack.

In the final analysis, we have a few peaceful tools of diplomacy to address malign actors around the world: the court of international public opinion, insofar as a government or a leader in question cares about such things; our trade and aid as an inducement to behavior change; then there is the denial of trade or aid or access to our financial institutions, which we call sanctions.

President Putin is willing to use his military as a means of first resort to advance his interests. We are not. Therefore, sanctions are our tool of peaceful diplomacy. They are how we send the message and how we seek to defend ourselves.

Now I must state that growing up in New Jersey, I learned that if you didn't confront the bully in the schoolyard, his reign of terror would never end. He would create a climate of fear. He would create a climate of intimidation until you whacked him in the head with a 2 by 4, until you said enough is enough, until you made clear that you and your fellow students wouldn't accept that kind of behavior. If you didn't stand up for yourself, the bully would press ahead.

Ladies and gentlemen, that is what we have in Vladimir Putin. He will continue to push and push until he meets resistance, until he meets a 2 by 4. That is what we have in DASKA.

We have a responsibility in this body, a responsibility shared by all 100 Senators, to protect our national security and the integrity of our democracy. It is our most solemn responsibility. Some may not care. Some may think we have done enough to deal with the Russian threat, but our intelligence experts disagree, Bob Mueller disagrees, FBI Director Wray disagrees, and clearly those living under the threat of Kremlin aggression in Eastern Europe disagree.

This body has come together before. I have seen it. We came together in 2017 to pass the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act, or CAATSA, but since then we have struggled to get this administration to fully implement the law. Are we supposed to just throw up our hands and say, "Oh, well," and hope they will see the light or are we supposed to demand nothing less than rigorous enforcement and take legislative action if needed?

I stand firmly for the latter, and I hope a majority of my colleagues will

stand with me. It is long past time we send another message to the world and, most importantly, to the Kremlin that the Senate is prepared to defend American interests. We will not tolerate intrusions by a hostile foreign power. We will not leave our democratic institutions vulnerable to further interference. We will not allow any foreign adversary to meddle in our democracy.

The breadth of Russian interference laid out by the Mueller report demands the kind of comprehensive foreign policy response put forward in DASKA. The American people deserve a markup and a full vote in the Senate to make that happen.

I will just say, as the elected leaders of this country, we owe Americans action. We owe them fulfillment of our oath. We owe them a robust and unflinching defense of our democracy and our values. Enough with the delays. Enough with the excuses. Enough with the politics.

We have legislation ready to bolster our defenses. We have strong bipartisan support for it. Let's mark up the bill now. Let's send a clear and unequivocal message to Putin that we will not tolerate a repeat performance in 2020.

I would just say that this is not about President Trump. It is not about the last election other than that they attempted to influence it and that we should recognize and want to deal with it. But it is about preserving our national security, our democracy, and our interest in the world.

Putin is unbridled. This institution, Republicans and Democrats, have always joined together to meet Russia's challenge when Russia posed a challenge. The party of Reagan is absent. The party of Reagan is absent on this. If this had been going on during the Obama administration, I would have been peeling people off of the Capitol ceiling.

Let's get to work. Let's defend our interests. Let's stand up together. Let's send Putin a message. Let's defend our democracy.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. 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.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Before I begin, let me say how nice it was to be with the Presiding Officer in her home State at the McCain Institute this weekend.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, pick up the paper these days, and it is hard to miss the headlines about corporate America getting serious about reducing carbon emissions. Companies are purchasing renewable power. They are moving into carbon-neutral

office buildings. They are purchasing electric vehicle fleets. They are developing new technologies and products for the transition to a carbon economy. Many are forcing some degree of sustainability out of their supply chains. All of this is important work and the companies that are leading in these areas deserve real applause.

But—you know there was going to be a "but," and here it is—corporations alone reducing their own carbon emissions or designing new low-carbon technologies will not win the fight against climate change. If you want to fail on climate change while looking good, that will work, but if you actually want to win—if you want to keep us between 1.5 and 2 degrees in temperature increase—you will fail.

A new report, "The Blind Spot," from the Environmental Defense Fund, makes crystal clear that individual corporate efforts to reduce their own carbon emissions will not be enough. Here is what it says: "While voluntary actions by companies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions are important, only public policy can deliver the pace and scale of reductions necessary to avoid the worst impacts of climate change."

"Public policy"—that is us. That is Congress.

EDF is not alone. Report after report has shown that we will fail without government action. But as engaged as so much of corporate America is in greening its own operations, they are almost totally absent from the halls of Congress when it comes to climate change—AWOL, no place.

So government sits, stalled by the fossil fuel industry, and does nothing serious. As a Senator, I am an inhabitant of this political ecosystem. I observe how this works. Consider this the field report of the biologist who lives in the jungle.

The sad reality of our political ecosystem is that post-Citizens United, the power of big industries seeking influence in Congress has exploded. Where previously, big special interests had muskets, Citizens United gave them artillery. On climate change, one industry, the fossil fuel industry, is deploying its artillery of big money and big threats here in Washington like nobody else.

It is no surprise. They are defending a \$700 billion per year fossil fuel subsidy just in the United States, according to the International Monetary Fund. They have a huge interest—a multihundred billion dollar interest—in preventing legislation that would reduce consumption of their fossil fuels.

So they spend hundreds of millions of dollars on lobbying and elections. They fund dozens of phony front groups and trade associations to engage in all sorts of climate denial and obstruction. They hide their influence in dark-money channels. They pollute the public sphere as badly as they pollute the atmosphere.

In our political ecosystem, they are a big and dangerous predator. Ask