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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable CINDY HYDE-SMITH, a Senator from the State of Mississippi.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, in these difficult and challenging times, remind us that the Earth belongs to You, and You have not abandoned it. Unite us with the understanding that You are our Father, and we are all members of the human family. We pray for all who have been impacted by the pain of this crisis season. Use our Senators to make the weak strong, the sick healthy, and the broken whole. Lord, surround those who have been shaken by anguish with Your divine presence and peace.

We pray in Your loving Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, June 4, 2020.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable CINDY HYDE-SMITH, a Senator from the State of Mississippi, to perform the duties of the Chair.

CHUCK GRASSLEY,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

PAYCHECK PROTECTION PROGRAM

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, yesterday evening, the Senate passed a few targeted changes so that Senator COLLINS' and Senator RUBIO's historic Paycheck Protection Program will continue to protect American workers and small businesses through this pandemic.

Back in March, these Senate leaders hand designed this plan to push unprecedented assistance to working families and Main Street businesses. Once again, in April, they led the charge to refill their popular and successful program with more money so it could help even more Americans. In the weeks since, our colleagues have continued to track the program's operation and recommend further tweaks where necessary.

In recent days, both Senator COLLINS and Senator RUBIO helped to strengthen and improve the House's proposed PPP modifications before it actually passed the bill and sent it over to us, and I know the senior Senators from Maine and Florida have already identified several more technical fixes for the new legislation that, I hope, Congress will address.

Talk about legislation making a difference. Thanks to Senator COLLINS, Chairman RUBIO, and our other colleagues who helped to make this program a success, the PPP has delivered more than a half a trillion dollars in relief and has literally saved tens of millions of American jobs.

So, as we continue to stay nimble and continue our efforts, I just had to

thank and recognize the architects of this historic program—the senior Senators from Maine and Florida—for helping to soften the blow of this pandemic for so many American families.

CHINA

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, on an entirely different matter, today marks the 31st anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre in Beijing.

Because of China's censorship and disinformation, we still do not know how many brave Chinese people were killed by their own government on June 4, 1989. Conservative estimates say hundreds. Others say thousands—a burst of violence against peaceful democracy protesters, weeks of arrests, roundups, and executions, and then total silence.

Never since have the Chinese people been able to freely and openly remember the atrocity. Never outside the oasis of Hong Kong has a single formal gathering on Chinese soil been permitted to commemorate the victims. Now even that oasis of freedom is at risk. We learned this week that, under new pressure from Beijing, Hong Kong is refusing to permit the annual candlelight vigil for the first time ever. This year, the Chinese Communist Party wants no candles lit even in Hong Kong—just more darkness.

It was 31 years ago that brave Chinese flooded that public square and others across their nation in the fervent hope that economic liberalization would also lead to a less authoritarian, more open society. What they got were bodies littering the ground.

A shocked world sanctioned the PRC, but as time passed, the world relaxed somewhat and returned to a strategy of welcoming China into our global public square, bringing the PRC into international institutions in the hope that an included China would actually play by the rules. Time and again, those

● This “buller” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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hopes have been dashed. The last few months have been their own tidy case study in what kind of global actor the so-called People's Republic has chosen to be.

Their response to the coronavirus pandemic that started in their own country was to silence their own doctors, imprison their own people, shut down important research, and lie to the rest of the world while hoarding supplies for themselves. The CCP's selfishness and failures fueled a worldwide catastrophe, and, ever since, they have tried to use that catastrophe as a smokescreen for other aggression.

While they thought the rest of the world was distracted, China has cracked down on Hong Kong; conducted provocative military exercises near Taiwan; expanded its bullying into the South China Sea; pressured the Philippines; and literally initiated physical fighting with India in the Himalayas.

Oh, and according to press reports, China has also found the time to mount online disinformation campaigns to hurt America and divide us among ourselves. Bad actors linked to Beijing have reportedly flooded Twitter to exploit the death of George Floyd and increase hostility among Americans. Even in official channels, CCP leaders mock America and imply our society is no better than their tyranny.

Now, as an aside, some Democrats here in Washington seem to have swallowed the Chinese propaganda and set out to amplify it themselves, including from right here on the Senate floor.

Yesterday, right here in the Senate Chamber, the Democratic leader explicitly compared America men and women in uniform to the Chinese murderers who committed the massacre in Tiananmen Square. Leader SCHUMER said that, when he saw images of American men and women in uniform standing near the recently defaced Lincoln Memorial and protecting the right to peaceful protest, "You cannot help but think of Tiananmen Square." That is what he said.

I am sure Beijing was thrilled with this shameful comparison. A propaganda victory for Communist China, gift-wrapped with the compliments of the Democratic Party, delivered just in time for this bloody anniversary.

Imagine being so consumed by partisanship that you deliberately link the brave American men and women who stop violence, protect peaceful protests, defend citizens' constitutional liberties, and defend against violent riots to the Chinese butchers who gunned down crowds of peaceful dissenters who were begging for the same rights our military defends.

In America, the police help peaceful marchers march. Over there, they gun them down. If anyone is having trouble distinguishing these things, the problem is not with our Nation—it is with them.

Now, these recent examples of Chinese hostility are just symptoms of a

fundamental problem that has come into focus. Decades ago, the United States and the rest of the world made a calculated bet that welcoming China into the fold would cause it to mend its ways.

It was 20 years ago that President Clinton argued for admitting China into the WTO because "economic innovation and political empowerment . . . will inevitably go hand in hand." Many smart people made that wager—in both parties—but we should never have used words like "inevitable."

President Clinton also said: "China has been trying to crack down on the internet. . . . Good luck!" Back in the year 2000, the transcript says, that was greeted with laughter. Well, no one is laughing now.

China's leaders have pounced on every inch of economic space the world has afforded them—and then some. They have cheated on trade and have stolen foreign technology. They have executed on long-term plans to dominate key global industries. They have weaponized foreign aid to bring developing countries under their thrall. So the Chinese economy has leapt forward. The Chinese people enjoy greater prosperity, which they sorely need after decades of Communist mismanagement, but all of this money and innovation have not brought the people any more freedom. They have given CCP elites better high-tech tools with which to oppress their own people and more leverage with which to undermine the international system.

Rather than importing liberty into China, this economic integration seems to have been rather more successful at exporting its authoritarian preferences to the rest of us. Right here in the United States, we have seen Hollywood make a gross habit of self-censoring films to avoid offending the Chinese Communist Party. We have seen the NBA prioritize its profits in China and throw an employee under the bus who spoke out for Hong Kong. The same elites, institutions, and businesses that feel totally free to critique our own society—and rightly so—increasingly walk on eggshells around President Xi and his cronies.

And free speech is hardly the only front where China poses an international threat. A recent major report from an interagency task force found that China's deliberate economic aggression and targeting of our industrial base is a significant national security vulnerability for the United States, and many other nations are awakening to that same reality.

Back in March, a CCP-controlled newspaper threatened to cut off pharmaceutical exports to the United States and "plunge" Americans "into the mighty sea of coronavirus" if we did not play more nicely with Beijing. One month later, Chinese officials threatened a boycott of Australia because our Australian friends wanted to investigate the origins of the pandemic.

Earlier this year, the Director of the FBI explained that China's criminal conspiracies against the United States and our companies make the CCP the "greatest long-term threat" to America's information security, intellectual property, and, by extension, our "economic vitality." Once again, our allies and partners are being victimized by the very same tactics.

One outside report found that the "United States is losing between \$400 billion and \$600 billion per year in intellectual property theft as a matter of provable losses, and that figure does not account for second-order losses such as jobs and infrastructure." Let's put that in perspective. Congress has been working hard on the huge, historic Paycheck Protection Program. It has pushed out a half a trillion dollars for American workers. Well, by this estimate, China reaches into our country and steals the equivalent of that entire program every single year.

China does not play by the rules, not in Hong Kong, not in the WHO, not in the WTO, not in international trade. Year after year, on issue over issue, it has chosen the path of aggression. So there will be consequences.

Just this week, the U.K. is reportedly continuing to back away from plans to work with Huawei, and Prime Minister Boris Johnson is impressively preparing to offer visas so that Hongkongers who want to know their freedoms and liberties are secure can take refuge in the United Kingdom instead. In Japan, Prime Minister Abe is taking major steps to strengthen Japan and check China's economic aggression. It is a good thing, too, because defending American security, American interests, American prosperity, and the international system cannot be a go-it-alone operation.

There will be steps the United States will take on our own, but just as the entire free world stands united today to remember Tiananmen Square, so we will need to stand together to prevent the world's public square from heading toward a similar domination by China. We will need to keep our friends and partners close. China can try to repress its own people, but the United States of America will never fall silent. We will never go dark. We will keep the candles lit. We will protect our people and their bright future.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.