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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Our Father in Heaven, we sing of Your steadfast love and proclaim Your faithfulness to all generations. Lord, make us one Nation, truly wise with righteousness, exalting us in due season.

Today, inspire our lawmakers to walk in the light of Your countenance. Abide with them so that Your wisdom will influence each decision they make. Lord, keep them from evil so that they will not be brought to grief, enabling them to avoid the pitfalls that lead to ruin. Empower them to glorify You in all they think, say, and do.

We pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore 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.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HYDE SMITH). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 1 minute in morning business.

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

THE JUSTICE ACT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, it was a sad day yesterday when we didn't get enough votes because the

Democratic leader didn't want Democrats to vote. We did get four of those votes from that side of the aisle, but the police reform bill didn't come out.

Senate Republicans are taking a step in advancing real change on this issue in our country. We have heard calls for police reform and are responding—not only because of George Floyd's murder in Minneapolis a few weeks ago but also because of peaceful demonstrations around the country on this issue calling for police reform.

Senator SCOTT is the leader of the JUSTICE Act. I am a cosponsor. It encourages States to stand as partners in addressing police reform. If State and local police departments don't comply with the provisions of the JUSTICE Act, such as training officers on deescalation and use-of-force and ensuring consistent use of body-worn cameras, they will not receive Federal funding for police action.

Iowa has made significant changes already, and a number of other States have followed Iowa's example. The Iowa Legislature unanimously passed police reform issues very much like what is in the Scott bill, and, working with leaders of color in Iowa to accomplish this goal, it went very smoothly through the Iowa Legislature. I got a firsthand report from my grandson, who is speaker of the Iowa House. The Iowa House is divided 53 to 47, but both houses of the Iowa Legislature passed these reforms unanimously.

Why can't Senate Democrats let us go forward with the Scott bill? All we need are four more Democratic votes. If it can happen in the Iowa Legislature, it ought to be able to happen here.

We have a role to play in the Senate, but let's not forget that, while we are doing that, we are also encouraging our State partners to also lead the charge in effecting real change. In fact, 50 State legislatures—every municipality—ought to be moving forward on police reforms of not only our type but

whatever they may think is best for their States or municipalities.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

THE JUSTICE ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, the American people have been asked to swallow a number of contradictions over the past few weeks. I have already discussed some of them here on the floor.

Many citizens were told by their mayors that small religious services were just too dangerous. At the same time, massive political protests were not just allowed but encouraged.

Americans have been told they should very carefully distinguish good people from bad apples if they are talking about protests and riots, but they must not make the same distinction if they are talking about the police.

Recently, the country was informed by hysterical journalists that a rational policy essay from our colleague Senator COTTON was just too inflammatory to publish, but the Speaker of the House can say Senator TIM SCOTT and his 48 cosponsors are “trying to get away with . . . the murder of George Floyd,” and Democrats just cheer her on—cheer her on.

Americans have been ordered to rethink and relearn our Nation's history by a movement that is itself so historically illiterate that they mistake George Washington, Ulysses S. Grant, and a 19th-century abolitionist for enemies of justice and destroy their monuments.

One common thread seems to connect all this: The far left wants you to play by one set of rules if you think like they do and a completely different set of rules if you dare to think anything else.

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



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Well, yesterday here in the Senate, the latest absurdity was added to the list. Our Democratic colleagues tried to say with straight faces that they want the Senate to discuss police reform while they blocked the Senate from discussing police reform. They declared that Senator SCOTT's bill, which contains many bipartisan components, which literally contains entire bills written by Democrats, was beyond the pale. Senator SCOTT offered a wide-open, bipartisan amendment process, and they walked away.

Over in the House, when Democrats shoot down every Republican amendment in committee and allow zero amendments on the floor, you can bet it will be anointed a big, big success.

Now, as an aside, I could not help but notice that in the Democratic leader's lengthy remarks yesterday morning, he did not once address or acknowledge the junior Senator from South Carolina as the author of the JUSTICE Act—not one time. Not one time did the Democratic leader address Senator TIM SCOTT as the author of the legislation he was trashing.

I cannot see why the Democratic leader talks right past Senator SCOTT as if he were not leading this discussion, as if he were barely here. All I can say is that it was jarring to witness, especially in a national moment like this. Senator SCOTT was the leader of the working group. He wrote the bill. He has been studying and working on and living these issues since long, long before the Democratic leader came rushing to the microphones on this subject a few weeks ago.

I can certainly take all the angry comments my colleague from New York wants to throw my way. I don't mind. But if he would like to learn something about the substance of this issue, he might want to stop acting like Senator SCOTT hardly exists and learn from the expert who wrote the bill.

The American people know you do not really want progress on an issue if you block the Senate from taking it up. They know that most police officers are brave and honorable and that most protesters are peaceful. They know our country needs both. We need both. The American people know they don't need history lessons from common criminals who are dragging George Washington through the dirt. They know prayer is no less essential than protest. They know that a politician who compares a policy disagreement to a brutal murder has just permanently forfeited the moral high ground to the grownups who want solutions.

Some forces are desperate to divide our country any way they possibly can, but if people of good will and common sense stick together, the radical nonsense will not stand a chance.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, on a completely different matter, the Senate does not have the luxury of letting these disagreements prevent needed bipartisan progress on other fronts.

While the House has been missing in action on the longest spring break in human history, the Senate has been conducting the people's business alone. We have confirmed nominees. We have conducted critical oversight. We passed historic legislation for our national parks and public lands. We have kept a close watch on the bad actors abroad who would love nothing more than to take advantage of a distracted and divided United States.

Today, months of focused work from our colleagues on the Armed Services Committee will let the Senate start to move toward this year's National Defense Authorization Act. Thanks to Chairman INHOFE and the committee, for a 60th straight year, the Senate has an opportunity to lay out our priorities for the U.S. military with a united voice. Chairman INHOFE and Ranking Member REED guided a collaborative, bipartisan process.

The committee considered 391 amendments and reported out their final bill on a nearly unanimous basis. The result is legislation that honors the unique sacrifices of our men and women in uniform, from authorizing a pay raise for Active-Duty personnel to ensuring high-quality housing, health, and childcare services for families stationed at home and abroad.

Their product will help ensure our military continues to attract the next generation of warfighters and leaders and that those men and women will have cutting-edge equipment and tools to face off with competitors and defend our security and our interests around the world.

In just the last several weeks, China has grown even bolder in its supposed "enforcement" of disputed waters and picked deadly fights with the world's largest democracy in the Himalayas. Russia has deployed aircraft to within eyesight of U.S. airspace and has kept testing the free world's tolerance for cyber attacks. North Korea has threatened a new round of the Korean war. Iran continues to flout international agreements and fuel instability throughout its region. Terrorists prey on the instability to advance their own extreme violence.

Clearly, those who mean us harm will not wait for America's domestic challenges to fade away, and they certainly will not wait for the United States to quit bickering. So, notwithstanding all our other differences, I hope and expect this body will be able to put partisanship aside and honor the bipartisan tradition that has defined this crucial bill for decades.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021—Motion to Proceed—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 4049, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to S. 4049, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2021 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

JUSTICE IN POLICING ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, the House of Representatives will pass the Justice in Policing Act today—a comprehensive, strong bill to bring lasting change to police departments across America and tackle the extremely large and difficult problem of police bias, police violence, racial bias, and the lack of transparency and accountability in law enforcement.

Unlike the Republican policing bill, the Justice in Policing Act will fully ban choke holds. The Justice in Policing Act will ban no-knock warrants in Federal cases, not just study them like in the Republicans' bill. Unlike the Republicans' bill, the Justice in Policing Act will also bring sorely needed accountability to police officers who are guilty of misconduct, including qualified immunity reform, use-of-force standards, and policies to end racial profiling.

My Republican colleagues should look to the House today if they want to see what a serious attempt at policing reform looks like and if they want to understand why their bill failed to earn enough votes to proceed yesterday.

The Republicans' policing reform bill failed because it was not a serious enough effort at reform. The legislation itself was so threadbare, so weak, and so narrow, it could hardly be considered a constructive starting point. That is why more than 138 civil rights organizations, which want nothing