

public, to have the discussion about renaming our military bases and about the future of these war memorials in public, to conduct open hearings where military families and veterans and the local community can be heard and where we can seek and find common ground together. That is all I am asking for. And all I am asking for is a vote on this.

Yet, here today, on the floor of the U.S. Senate, I have been told that we cannot even have a vote. We can't even call the roll on this. No, we just have to swallow it and move on as the woke cancel culture moves on, steamrolling our history and our traditions, and, yes, our best traditions as Americans.

You know, our military bases are more than walls and fences. They are more than lines on a piece of paper in a 1,000-page bill. Our bases are full of life and history. They are hallowed ground for the soldiers and veterans who have trained and served at them. They enrich local communities with their legacy. They form fond memories, and they help relationships endure. They have meaning that transcends any one person or even a place, and that history belongs to all of us. So all of us should debate this together and move forward together. I am sorry that we have been denied an opportunity to do so today.

I yield the floor.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. 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 Russell Vought, of Virginia, to be Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Mitch McConnell, Marsha Blackburn, Joni Ernst, John Boozman, Steve Daines, Cory Gardner, Pat Roberts, Mike Rounds, Mike Crapo, Roger F. Wicker, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Lamar Alexander, Shelley Moore Capito, Rob Portman, Roy Blunt, John Barrasso, John Thune.

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 Russell Vought, of Virginia, to be Director of the Office of Management and Budget, 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. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI), the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH), the Senator from Arizona (Ms.

MCSALLY), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNG). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 47, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 130 Ex.]

#### YEAS—47

Alexander	Fischer	Portman
Barrasso	Gardner	Risch
Blackburn	Graham	Roberts
Blunt	Grassley	Romney
Boozman	Hawley	Rounds
Braun	Hoeven	Rubio
Capito	Inhofe	Sasse
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Collins	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Lankford	Shelby
Cotton	Lee	Sullivan
Cramer	Loeffler	Thune
Crapo	McConnell	Toomey
Cruz	Moran	Wicker
Daines	Paul	Young
Ernst	Perdue	

#### NAYS—44

Baldwin	Harris	Rosen
Bennet	Hassan	Sanders
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Schatz
Booker	Hirono	Schumer
Brown	Jones	Shaheen
Cantwell	Kaine	Sinema
Cardin	King	Smith
Carper	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Casey	Leahy	Tester
Coons	Manchin	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Warner
Duckworth	Merkley	Warren
Durbin	Murphy	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Peters	Wyden
Gillibrand	Reed	

#### NOT VOTING—9

Burr	Markey	Murray
Enzi	McSally	Tillis
Hyde-Smith	Murkowski	Udall

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 47, the nays are 44.

The motion is agreed to.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Cloture having been invoked, the Senate will resume executive session to consider the Vought nomination.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination of Russell Vought, of Virginia, to be Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

The Senator from Arkansas.

#### HONG KONG AUTONOMY ACT

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, what is happening at this moment in Hong Kong is a tragedy, a crime, an affront to the civilized world. In a year in which so much has happened, we may look back in the near future and view this moment in Hong Kong as the single biggest moment of the year. It is not getting enough attention, though, because the Communist Party is using the pandemic as cover for its crimes against Hong Kong.

Under the cover of night, the Communist Party's puppets in Hong Kong have enacted a security law that threatens to sweep aside the traditions and freedoms that have made that city such a special place. While the Chinese Communist Party hasn't yet rolled in tanks, as it did in Tiananmen Square, the effects of this law are no less chilling to democracy.

The security law imposes broad prohibitions on what it calls subversive activities. What kinds of activities? Activities like waving flags or chanting a slogan like "Hong Kong independence" or "Hongkongers, build a nation." In other words, the security law criminalizes basic elements of peaceful protests and democratic change that Hongkongers have used for years and that set them apart from their fellow citizens on the mainland.

The new law also erodes the rights of the accused that are essential to a fair legal system. The Chinese Communist Party isn't interested in rights or fairness. It is interested in control—total control—and this law exerts total control over the people of Hong Kong.

Under the new law, protesters accused of such vague crimes as separatism and collusion can be smuggled away to mainland China to be tried in Communist courts. The so-called crimes don't even have to be committed in Hong Kong in order to be punished; the new law could encompass expatriates with foreign citizenship living overseas—even here in America. So simply meeting with a U.S. Senator, like me or Senator MCCONNELL or Senator SCHUMER or Senator VAN HOLLEN, could land a Hongkonger in prison for a lifetime. The China Communist Party thus is extending its iron rule beyond its own shores to our free soil.

Those convicted under the new law could face life imprisonment, alongside the many underground church leaders, Uighurs, Tibetans, Falun Gong members, and other persecuted individuals the Chinese Communist Party has already "disappeared."

Indeed, the crackdown is already underway. The Chinese Communist Party's agents in Hong Kong rounded up as many as 300 protesters this week for what it called unlawful assembly. Some of the protesters were arrested under the supposed authority of the new security law. Their fate at this moment is unknown.

The takeover of Hong Kong may seem like an event far away, especially when we have so many problems at home. But the same could have been said after the Second World War when Stalin and the Soviet secret police dropped an Iron Curtain over Eastern Europe. Czechoslovakia and Poland were far away, too, but the brutal repression of their people showed the world what was at stake in the titanic struggle between freedom and communism.

We face the same sort of titanic struggle today, and it is not limited to Hong Kong. All across the periphery,

the Chinese Communist Party is acting aggressively. It has essentially invaded India and killed 20 Indian soldiers. In the South China Sea, it has attacked or otherwise threatened vessels from Vietnam, Malaysia, and the Philippines and has repeatedly and increasingly encroached on Taiwanese and Japanese airspace.

But in Hong Kong, the security law proves most clearly that the Chinese Communist Party will not abide by its commitments, whether to its own people or to foreign nations. Through actions this week, Beijing has effectively torn up the joint declaration it made with Britain to govern the peaceful handover of Hong Kong just as cynically as China has broken its commitments to the United States, to the World Trade Organization, to the World Health Organization, and others.

And, of course, this law exposes once again the hideous nature of communism, which is so paranoid and insecure it can't tolerate even a tiny outpost of freedom within its borders. No wonder. Freedom is an attractive, precious, and contagious thing. The way of life enjoyed by the citizens of Hong Kong could give the wrong ideas to the 1 billion Chinese yearning for freedom elsewhere in the country. Nothing could be more threatening to the Chinese Communist Party's rule.

Now the party has begun the takeover that Hongkongers have long feared. Those of us with freedom to speak and act on their behalf must do so now, as one of the great citadels of Asia slips into the totalitarian darkness. While dark days may lie ahead for Hong Kong, one day the future will return the sunny highlands of freedom to that small citadel.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

F-22 RAPTORS

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I have come to the floor to talk about one of the favorite things I get to do all week, and that is to talk about some Alaskans who are making a difference. We call this our "Alaskan of the Week."

It means that I get to speak about my State, usually an individual, maybe a couple of people, but every now and then I like to mix things up and keep people on high alert because the people I am going to talk about in Alaska are the ultimate people—Americans—on high alert. As opposed to recognizing one or two, I am going to recognize a bunch of Alaskans, an impressive group, who work day and night, not only to keep Alaska safe but to keep America safe. They will be doing it this weekend, the Fourth of July—24/7, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, always on high alert.

As we are heading into the Fourth of July weekend, Russia is once again in the news, and we have been debating the National Defense Authorization Act on the Senate floor, a very critical bill that I am fully supportive of,

which funds our military and pay raises for our troops. I thought it would be very appropriate to highlight the hundreds of men and women in my State who stand watch and patrol the northern skies of Alaska and America to protect our Nation. They are unsung heroes. You don't hear a lot about them in the news, but we certainly appreciate them. I think all Senators and all Americans do, which is why I want to talk about them today.

They are our brave servicemembers who fly and maintain our F-22 Raptors—this amazing stealth fighter; our E-3 Sentrys, which are also known as AWACS, which are like the quarterback in the sky of aircraft; our Alaska Guard KC-135 Stratotankers; our brave members of the Alaska Rescue Coordination Center, who operate HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopters and H-130 Hercules aircraft, should we need a search and rescue mission; and our Active-Duty members and guardsmen, who maintain, monitor, and track threats from other countries for our country, particularly threats coming from Russia. These brave men and women—hundreds of them—are keeping guard day and night over the northern skies of America.

When the Russians fly their Bear bombers and fighter jets into or near American air space, these intrepid Americans are on duty to ensure that our F-22s are there to intercept and greet the Russian pilots and aircraft who threaten to move into our air defense identification zone, or ADIZ, as we call it. They are there waiting and intercepting Russian bombers. These airmen keep us all safe. As I mentioned, they are all worthy of the great title Alaskans of the Week.

Before I get into exactly what these men and women do to guard our Nation—and they do it round the clock; they are doing it right now, by the way, and will be doing it the Fourth of July, by the way—I would like to talk a little about Russia and Alaska and our close geography. I want to give a little geography lesson. There are actual places in Alaska where you really can see Russia from your house.

Russia and Alaska are divided by the Bering Strait, which is about 55 miles at its narrowest point. In the middle of the Bering Strait sit two islands, Big Diomedes, which is actually Russian territory, and Little Diomedes, which is part of Alaska, part of America. They are less than 2½ miles apart from each other, nearly touching. In the words of a New York Times reporter, it is the place where "the two great continental powers reach across the map and all but touch, like the outstretched figures in Michelangelo's 'The Creation of Adam.'" It is a little dramatic, but you get the point—Little Diomedes and Big Diomedes.

On a clear day, you can see Russia from St. Lawrence Island, which is also Alaskan, and even from our mainland, in Wales, AK. During the Cold War, the Alaska-Siberia frontier was called not

the Iron Curtain but the "Ice Curtain," which we needed to stay closed.

Much preparation was put into keeping Russia from invading or infiltrating the United States from its northern flank—from the Arctic, from Alaska. In the early Cold War years, our government recruited and trained fishermen, bush pilots, trappers, and many, many in our patriotic Native Alaskan communities throughout the State to stand guard for America during the Cold War. And so many Alaskans did this for decades. It was their patriotic duty guarding the northern flank of our great Nation.

There were the great Eskimo scouts of the Alaska National Guard, who knew the land better than anyone else could. They were so patriotic with their love of this Nation.

It is still unclear how many Russians were able to get to our lands, but stories do abound in Alaska about strangers speaking Russian showing up in communities unannounced—five men emerging from the water in wet suits over olive-drab uniforms, the color of the uniform of Soviet Special Forces. Go to any one of our Native Alaska communities, and today, you will still hear such stories.

Something that is very clear and very well known is that between 1961 and 1991, the U.S. military intercepted thousands of long-range Soviet bombers and reconnaissance aircraft when they were moving into American airspace. We used our aircraft back then, the F-102s, F-106s, and later, F-4s, F-15s. Then, like now, our aircraft were superior to the Russians and that was certainly one of the reasons we won the Cold War.

This is still going on today. This is still a threat. The Russians continue to flex their military muscle, from Ukraine to Siberia, and they have added new Blackjack bombers to the mix and their SU-35 fighters. They still come close to American airspace via flights near Alaska. That is where our F-22 pilots and those who support them come in.

Just in the last 6 months, our Alaskan F-22s, shown here, have intercepted 10 Russian Bear bombers. We are starting to see Cold War levels of intrusions into American airspace and, of course, our patriotic men and women—young men and women, by the way—flying these great aircraft, going after these big Bear bombers. There were 10 missions already, and it is just July 2. What are they up to?

Air Force Gen. Terrence O'Shaughnessy, who commands NORAD and these forces, ultimately, and U.S. Northern Command, linked the uptick in Russian military flights off Alaska's coast to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and Russia's testing of our military readiness. They are testing us, but we are ready for them.

In essence, that is what we have been doing all week—debating and getting ready to vote on final passage of the