

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Adewale O. Adeyemo, of California, to be Deputy Secretary of the Treasury.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

NOMINATION OF ADEWALE D. ADEYEMO

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, the Senate is debating the nomination of Wally Adeyemo to serve as the next Deputy Treasury Secretary. I expect his nomination is going to pass with a big, bipartisan margin, but I want to take a few minutes to lay out a few reasons why every Senator ought to support this nominee.

First, you hear a lot these days about how Members of the Senate are looking for unity. Three weeks ago, the Finance Committee approved the Adeyemo nomination unanimously by voice vote, and you can't get more unified than that.

That unanimous vote followed an excellent hearing, in which Mr. Adeyemo demonstrated his command of all the various issues the Treasury is confronting today. A severe jobs crisis. Worsening inequality. A dangerous shortage of domestic manufacturing in critical areas of our economy. Intense economic competition with China, including job rip-offs and trade cheating that have undermined American workers for too long. And many other big challenges.

Members understand that there will be policy disagreements with the other party, but Mr. Adeyemo made it clear that he wants to work on a bipartisan basis to confront these challenges. Members take him seriously on that and trust him because he has done it before at the Treasury as a member of the Obama administration.

Second, the pandemic economic crisis is far from over, and it is essential that the Treasury Department has its leadership team in place. COVID cases and deaths are still tragically high. Jobless claims are still incredibly high—they spent an entire year above the previous peaks. So millions of families in Oregon and around the country are still walking an economic tightrope, and that is one of the key reasons why Senate Democrats passed the American Rescue Plan earlier this month.

The Treasury is right at the center of the enormous effort to implement that legislation. It is extraordinarily challenging work. Getting relief payments out to tens of millions of Americans in a timely way. Saving millions of jobs at the State and local level, particularly teachers, firefighters and municipal workers. Launching a landmark expansion and reinvention of the child tax credit to cut child poverty in half. This is difficult work. It requires the kind of strong and committed leadership that Wally Adeyemo will bring to the Treasury Department.

I am also looking forward to working with him on the issue of shell companies. Late last year Congress passed landmark legislation to end the use of

anonymous shell companies in the United States. Several members of the Finance Committee had spent years working to get that legislation passed. Now that it has become law, it is up to the Treasury Department to write strong rules and implement it. This is a vital challenge, and it is a long time coming. So I am very much looking forward to working with Mr. Adeyemo once he is confirmed. He is as highly qualified as they come. He is also a history-making nominee because he will be the first African American Deputy Treasury Secretary.

I support his nomination 100 percent. He got 100 percent of the Finance Committee's support a few weeks ago. I believe he will have strong bipartisan support from the Senate, and I urge all Members to vote to confirm this nomination.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to the nomination of Wally Adeyemo for Deputy Secretary of the Treasury.

The U.S. Treasury Department plays a significant part in enforcing American foreign policy through economic sanctions. We know that sanctions work and that the strong application of these measures against adversaries, including Communist China, Iran, North Korea, Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua, are essential to holding the brutal dictators and their enablers who hold power in these nations accountable.

Communist China is the biggest threat our Nation faces. Communist China is committing a genocide against the Uyghurs, stripping Hong Kongers of their basic rights, and continues to threaten to take Taiwan by force. I am concerned that Mr. Adeyemo does not understand the risk Communist China poses to our national and economic security and to our allies. Communist China is not a strategic competitor; they are an adversary and must be treated as such. Any U.S. official who thinks that Communist China can play a positive role in the world is mistaken.

I am also concerned that Mr. Adeyemo will not be strong when standing up to Castro's Communist regime in Cuba. I cannot support anyone who will back a return to the failed Obama-Biden appeasement policies, which did nothing to help the Cuban people and allowed Havana to extend its reach and expand its control, giving power to other ruthless dictatorships in Latin America.

Currently, our Nation is on track to reach \$30 trillion in debt. We have to get serious about Federal spending and the impacts it will have on our children and grandchildren. President Biden's massive spending policies are already causing the cost of living in America to rise. I cannot support candidates who think the solution to America's economic woes is more government, more taxes and more regulation, not more individual opportunity. That is wrong and will only send us

further into debt and our families further into despair. We need to focus on growing the economy and growing jobs in order to preserve the American dream.

For all these reasons, I oppose Mr. Adeyemo's nomination and urge my colleagues to do the same.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Adeyemo nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

MORNING BUSINESS—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

ALEXEI NAVALNY

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I rise this afternoon to call attention to a courageous Russian hero who is in danger even as I speak. He is a man who has consistently stood up to Vladimir Putin and his cronies and has, on numerous occasions, placed his own life in jeopardy to bring the truth to light. The lawless thugs in the Kremlin often avoid saying his name in public, but here on the Senate floor, I am proud to stand in solidarity with Alexei Navalny.

It was just last August that Alexei Navalny, Russia's foremost opposition leader, was poisoned with a deadly nerve agent. Millions of us remember seeing the video of his being stricken on an airplane and hearing his painful cries, the crew members unsure how to soothe his pain. Thanks to the quick diplomatic work of our friends in Germany, Mr. Navalny was evacuated to Berlin, where he received expert medical attention and, against all odds, recovered from this poisoning.

An ordinary man would have stayed safe and very far away from the Kremlin, but Alexei Navalny is no ordinary man. He is a Russian patriot who envisions a different kind of Russia, one where citizens have a say in government, where freedom blooms, and where the President does not siphon away funds intended for hospitals in order to build secret palaces or to enrich members of his kleptocracy.

So, 3 months ago, Mr. Navalny returned to Russia, knowing full well the dangers he would face. Immediately upon his arrival, he was arrested at the airport for a parole violation, which resulted from his hospitalization, which resulted from his poisoning. He now sits in one of the most notorious penal colonies in Russia, known for its psychological torture. He has been deemed a flight risk and is awakened eight times a night under the guise of monitoring his whereabouts. His lawyers were recently prevented from seeing him. Reports are that he is suffering from severe back pain and other health

concerns and has received inadequate medical care.

This is a familiar sounding story, but one thing is clear: The Russian dictatorship is terrified of Alexei Navalny. He is a threat to them because he has exposed their unbridled corruption and urged voters to demand that the government respect their rights. Because of that, Alexei Navalny's life is in danger at this very moment.

The tens of thousands of demonstrators who turned out across Russia to support this jailed opposition leader send an unmistakable message to the Kremlin: You cannot suppress the voice of the people indefinitely.

Freedom-loving Americans and freedom-loving people around the world are, today, crying out for justice for Alexei Navalny. He endures the suffering of many before him—in Russia, people like Sergei Magnitsky and Boris Nemtsov and, abroad, people like Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Gandhi—whose legacies and movements did not rot while they were in prison but, instead, helped to bring down oppressive governments.

At this point, I yield to the Senator from Colorado for a brief intervention before I close with a thought or two.

Mr. BENNET. Madam President, I rise on behalf of Senator CARDIN, who is a Democrat from the State of Maryland and an original cosponsor of this bill with Senator WICKER, to say what he would have said if he had been here today, which is that Alexei Navalny is a Russian patriot, that he is a prisoner of conscience, and that we need to stand up to Russia's human rights violations.

Thank you.

Mr. WICKER. In reclaiming my time, I appreciate the work of my friend Senator CARDIN.

Senator COONS from Delaware was also here, but, unfortunately, he had to leave.

They also wanted to make it clear that, on a bipartisan basis, on both sides of the aisle, the U.S. Senate stands for freedom-loving people in Russia and for their spokesman, Alexei Navalny. We intend to shine the light of public opinion on the actions of the Russian kleptocracy and dictatorship with regard to prisoners and patriots like Alexei Navalny.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

CONFIRMATION OF ADEWALE O. ADEYEMO

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, before we hear from Senator BOOKER and Senator BENNET and Senator WARNOCK on one of the best things this Senate has done in my career, that being the extension of the child tax credit and the earned income tax credit, I just want to say a few words about someone we just voted on at the Department of the Treasury who is so, so important, Adewale Adeyemo, who will be Janet

Yellen's—one exemplary Treasury Secretary—Chief of Staff. He is a terrific public servant.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO, the Presiding Officer, and I were talking a few minutes ago about the importance of the Treasury Department in so many things from the child tax credit, to the pension bill, to so many things that we do that matter—getting the \$1,400 checks out and making sure our tax system is fair.

Senator BENNET and I serve together with Senator CORTEZ MASTO and others on the Committee on Finance. What that means and what we are trying to do on that committee is to take away the 50-percent-off coupon from corporations that shut down production in Reno or in Boulder or in Cleveland or in Newark and move overseas. They get, essentially, a 50-percent-off coupon on their taxes. We need to close those loopholes. We need a Treasury Secretary, and we need Adewale Adeyemo, who will make a huge difference in our work there.

So I thank Senator SCHUMER and those on both sides of the aisle for finally confirming him today and getting him to work.

I yield to Senator BENNET, who, I think, is going to start or, maybe, Senator BOOKER.

Less than 2 weeks ago, President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan into law. He ushered in some of the most transformative economic policies to come out of Washington in generations.

By expanding access to and eligibility for the child tax credit and the earned income tax credit, the American Rescue Plan is going to lift 10 million kids above or closer to the poverty line and put money in the pockets of 17 million American workers across the country.

I want to start out by noting that both the income—low-income and middle-income families and workers potentially qualify for these credits, and they will be issued periodically via check and direct deposit. American workers should know this was a profound change that will benefit you.

American workers also have to know that they won't have to wait until next year. You won't have to start to see advanced payments of these credits 6, 7, 10 months down—you will see them as early as July. And because of the changes that we made, if you didn't previously qualify because you didn't have a high enough income, you could be eligible now.

I am so proud to be here today alongside Senator BROWN, Senator BENNET, Senator WARNOCK, the Presiding Officer, who are in large part responsible for this powerful lifeline to the American people and, critically, for our children.

Senator BENNET, Senator BROWN, Senator WARNOCK, thank you. You are champions who have been fighting in and out of the Senate and understand not just the economic urgency but the

moral urgency to address poverty. And that is really what we are all here to talk about—the urgency of the crisis of poverty and specifically child poverty.

In America, this is unacceptable. In the wealthiest Nation on the planet Earth, the question of poverty is not one of inevitability; it is one of policy choice. It is not if we can do something; it is will we do something.

Tonight, I am going home to Newark, driving very soon, where I have lived over the past 20 years. I am proud to call Newark home. I am proud to be a part of a community of people who take care of each other. I am proud to be part of a community that is rich with dignity, rich with activism and intellect and engagement.

But we are also a community, like so many others in America, that still struggles. According to the last census, the median income for the census tract that I live in was about \$14,000 per household, and that was before the dual public health and economic crises of the COVID pandemic.

And in my community, like many others, urban and rural, across America, adults aren't the only ones struggling; our kids are too. In fact, the poorest age group in America is our children, with one in six American kids living in poverty. It is nothing less than a moral obscenity that the richest Nation in the world should have the highest rates of child poverty in the developed world.

For adults, poverty has a technical definition. It is a federally defined guideline—an amount of annual income that you fall under that also takes into account how many people are in your household.

For kids, poverty is defined by what they experience every single day, by what happens to them. It is growing up being more likely to deal with food insecurity, not knowing where your next meal will come from or when it will come. It is facing housing insecurity. A quarter of kids living in poverty will have gone through an eviction before they turn 15 years old.

Kids in poverty have worse health outcomes, worse educational outcomes, and are more likely to become entrapped in our broken criminal justice system. And kids who grow up in poverty are more likely to be poor as adults.

Study after study has shown how children who live in poverty have higher levels of stress hormones. The stress of poverty literally affects their brains. It inhibits brain development. It is violence against the brain of a child.

One child poverty expert described the stress hormones that are constantly released in kids growing up in poverty as similar to the feeling that an adult would get after a car crash—every single day. This is violence.

We know that when a child experiences poverty, there are lifelong psychological and physiological effects they carry with them. Study after study after study has borne this out.