

We have previously seen the damage that a politically motivated IRS can do. We saw the apparent leaking of taxpayer information recently, which is supposed to be confidential by law. And we can remember the IRS targeting controversy under the Obama administration.

Bureaucrats at the IRS subjected conservative groups that they disagreed with politically or ideologically to a different level of scrutiny than left-leaning groups. And, unfortunately, with this sort of huge investment in the IRS, it looks like the Biden administration simply wants to weaponize the IRS once again.

But that is just the start of it. A massive portion of the President's budget stems from two of the programs he has already told us about—one being the \$2.6 trillion American Jobs Plan, which relies on a very generous interpretation of the word “infrastructure,” and it reads like the Green New Deal 2.0: more than \$200 billion to build or retrofit more than 2 million affordable and sustainable places to live; a civilian climate corps; and an unrealistic 100-percent renewable-generated electricity by 2035.

His budget includes a range of other spending to address climate change, including over \$1 billion to help other countries—not Americans, not the United States, but other countries—to lower their emissions.

I am sure China will be glad to take our money while continuing to build coal-fired powerplants to meet the demands of their growing economy.

Then there is a broad range of spending from President Biden's \$1.8 trillion so-called American Families Plan—you have got to love the names of these pieces of legislation—which includes everything from universal preschool and free community college to mandatory paid leave policies and using the Tax Code to disguise more Washington spending.

If you read through the President's budget, which, as he said, reflects his values, you see the incredible way that President Biden is simply caving in to the radical left. Mothers are no longer called mothers. They are now called “birthing people”—unbelievably.

Well, it is one thing for far-left activists to use these kinds of terms on Twitter, but it is entirely different to diminish the role of women in an official government document. Women are more than “birthing people,” and I think it is insulting to women to characterize them or define them by that.

The President doubled down on the woke ideology by proposing taxpayer funding for abortion. We know abortion is enormously controversial in our society, but this is a jarring break from a decades-long bipartisan, consensual ban provided by the Hyde amendment. It is also stands in stark contrast in the views of most Americans. The majority of Americans say they oppose using taxpayer dollars to support abortions because they are morally or religiously opposed to the practice.

Adding to the list of absurdities is a massive expansion of welfare. We already know that under the COVID-19 relief bills, the administration has argued in favor of paying people more not to work than they would earn if they did work.

A number of Governors—more than 20 of them now—have refused the \$300 weekly supplement because of their concern that this was actually discouraging people from returning to work.

We are hearing from employers all across the country that it is hard, if not impossible, for them to find the workforce they need to get the economy growing again. Business owners in my State—and I would bet across the Country—are already struggling to find a reliable workforce following the overly generous pandemic-related unemployment benefits that our Democratic colleagues insisted upon.

We can't continue to discourage Americans from going back to work, because our economy will never recover if we stay on that path.

Overall, the President's budget would dramatically increase the size of government and the role it plays in our everyday lives, especially with education—as my friend Senator TIM SCOTT has said, putting Washington even more in the middle of Americans' lives, from the cradle to college. Is that really what the American dream is all about—more and bigger government intervening in our lives, denying us the freedom to make our own choices and to seek our own way?

It is no wonder that the White House rolled out the President's budget so quietly. Frequently, a lot of this happens on Friday afternoons after the press has left and nobody is paying much attention.

While President Biden has told us what he values over and over again, his budget actually speaks to much more. This is not the plan of someone who is fighting for a strong national defense and a swift economic recovery. This budget prioritizes climate justice over American military servicemembers. It further hampers our economic recovery at the expense of hard-working taxpayers, and it prioritizes the restriction of wealth over the prospect of economic growth, which would lift all boats. It digs the United States deeper and deeper into debt, creating a massive financial pit that our children and grandchildren will have to dig their way out of. We are writing the checks, but they will pay the bills, and that, I believe, is immoral.

It is all well and good to tell the American people that you value the same things they value—freedom, security, prosperity—but this, which in President Biden's own words reflects his values, this is not a blueprint to rebuild America. This is, indeed, strong evidence that President Biden has bowed down to the woke political left in his own base and is ready to bury the United States and future generations with unprecedented debt.

When he released his budget, President Biden said, “Where we choose to invest speaks to what we value as a Nation.” The President of the United States has made clear what he values. The Nation? Its future? Its prosperity? Its security? Not much.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The Senator from Oklahoma.

#### FOURTH OF JULY

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, I often come to this floor to be able to speak about news of the day, disagreements that we have, ways that we can solve a problem we have as a nation. Today, I come to tell a story.

In 1774, an Englishman met Benjamin Franklin. They spent a lot of time together in conversations, and Franklin convinced this young sailor and writer and young friend to move to America, to move to his hometown, to Philadelphia. A few months later, 1774, he did.

Franklin saw something in this young man that no one else saw. That Englishman who loved freedom and who saw the glaring injustice of the British Crown, 2 years later, on January 10, 1776, wrote a short pamphlet that changed the course of history.

The man's name was Thomas Paine, and the short work that he wrote was called “Common Sense.” It was the first publication that declared we should call for independence for these 13 Colonies. It didn't include his name because if it included his name, it would have been a certain death warrant from the King, but it made the case for freedom for each person, for an elected government rather than a monarchy, and the case for religious liberty. In short, he made the case for the United States of America.

He wrote these words:

The cause of America is, in great measure, the cause of all mankind. Many circumstances have, and will arise, which are not local, but universal, and through which the principles of all lovers of mankind are affected, and in the event of which, their affections are interesting.

He wrote about the rule of law and how that would be different than living under a monarchy, and he challenged the young colonists to be able to pursue more.

He wrote:

But where says some is the king of America? I'll tell you Friend, he reigns above, and doth not make havoc of mankind like the Royal Brute of Great Britain. Yet that we may not appear to be defective even in earthly honors, let a day be solemnly set apart for proclaiming the charter; let it be brought forth placed on the divine law, the word of God; let a crown be placed thereon, by which

the world may know, that so far we may approve of monarchy, that in America the law is king. For as in absolute governments the king is law, so in free countries the law ought to be king.

He wrote:

As to religion, I hold it to be the indispensable duty of [every] government, to protect all conscientious professors thereof, and I know of no other business which government hath to do therewith.

Suspicion is the companion of mean souls.

He wrote and he said:

It affords us a larger field for our Christian kindness. Were we all one way of thinking, our religious dispositions would want matter for probation; and on this liberal principle, I look to the various denominations among us, to be like children of the same family, differing only, in what is called, their Christian names.

He shared a lot of great ideals in "Common Sense." He challenged the colonists to dream of an America that would set the example for the world.

Thomas Paine's ideas weren't all great, and we didn't accept all of his ideas. In fact, he wrote a long section in "Common Sense" saying that when we form our own Constitution, we should take these 13 Colonies and we should elect a President and alternate among each State, so each State would, in turn, have a different President for the whole group. It is a fairly terrible idea that we never implemented. But this passion about the law being king, we did; this passion about religious liberty, we did; this passion that America would be an example to all mankind, we did.

One hundred fifty thousand copies of "Common Sense" were printed. That is an enormous number for that time period. On that January day when the first printings of "Common Sense" started being passed around the Colonies, it fanned the flame of that spark of freedom in the hearts of the colonists.

By June 11, 1776, Congress had appointed a committee of five to draft the Declaration: John Adams of Massachusetts, Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania, Thomas Jefferson of Virginia, Robert Livingston of New York, and Robert Sherman of Connecticut—by the way, I think two redheads in that group.

The Declaration ended with this simple paragraph. We are familiar with that Declaration. It said:

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name and by the Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these united Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States.

It ended with this:

And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of the Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.

And they gave their all. John Hart, one of the signers of the Declaration,

from New Jersey, ended up hiding in the woods that December of 1776, just a few months later, while the Hessian soldiers hunted him across the countryside. He died before the war's end.

Richard Stockton, also of New Jersey, wasn't so lucky. He was dragged from his bed, thrown into prison, and treated like a criminal. His home was looted, his fortune stripped away.

Thomas Nelson of Virginia: He commanded the militia and served as a Governor during the Revolution. He had to instruct the artillerymen to fire at his own house when the British started using it as their headquarters. Nelson had used his personal credit to raise money for the cause. The Revolution left him in distress, and he was unable to ever recover what he had lost.

Thomas Heyward, Arthur Middleton, and Edward Rutledge were three South Carolina signers who served in their State's militia and were captured when the British seized Charleston. They spent the rest of the time in prison. They pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor.

By that December, when all of this was going on to all of these signers of the Declaration, Thomas Paine wrote again, and this time, he wrote directly to the patriots serving with George Washington. In the freezing winter, on December 23, 1776, Thomas Paine wrote these words:

These are the times that try men's souls; the summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of [their] country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: It is dearness only that gives every [living] thing its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as FREEDOM should not be highly rated.

It is a good thing for us to be able to stop and reflect on these simple words: What we obtain too cheap we esteem too lightly. Sometimes I am afraid that, as we approach the Fourth of July each year, we will have forgotten the sacrifices of previous generations. In our time period and in this wealthy moment in our Nation's history, we seem to esteem too lightly what was obtained too cheaply, and we forget the great sacrifices of the past.

Generation after generation of American history has set an example of how we have worked for a more perfect Union. Generation after generation has served each other and the children who have come after them so that they could have a better future. It is our generation's turn. The generation that I speak of could have never dreamed of the Capitol that stands on this hill. The generation that I speak of could have never dreamed of the 50 States that would cover this continent, but they did dream this, because it is in Thomas Paine's introduction: "The

cause of America is in great measure the cause of all mankind."

This Fourth of July, we should recommit ourselves to the cause of freedom, the future of our Nation, and the service to our children and the children not yet born. We are still a great nation, conceived in liberty, born to greatness if we are willing to work and sacrifice and give for each other. No generation in the history of the world has inherited more than we have—no generation. We should not receive it too cheaply or hold it too lightly.

Ironically, as I end my story of an Englishman who became a writer and the inspiration of a nation, I must tell you the end. Thomas Paine died a bitter and broken man. He remained a revolutionary in the fight. He could never stop searching for the next revolution. He went off to France to support the French Revolution and almost lost his head for it. He ended up in prison there. He came back to America and determined that George Washington wasn't as loyal as he was. He spent his last years writing against President Washington: that he was the real traitor and that he wasn't strong enough. He ended up dying alone, isolated, rejecting his faith—and a bitter man.

My fellow Senators and fellow Americans, the war has been won. Freedom, that gift, has been passed on to us. Let's protect it. Let's cherish it. Let's pass it on.

Each generation should be passionate about passing that on to the next generation. That is why, on this Fourth of July, it is not just a day off; it is not just a day to be at the mall; it is not just a great day to be at a lake—it is a great day to contemplate how you will serve our Nation in the days ahead in this generation and how you can pass on the freedom that we have to our children.

Our Nation still needs people who will build on the foundation of liberty. We need writers and soldiers and farmers and moms and dads. We still need people who will run for city council and the school board, people who will pick up trash in the neighborhood, people who will march in a protest and then intentionally go love people and work for the reconciliation of broken relationships. We need people who will start new businesses, give to non-profits, get involved in their churches, and love their neighbors as themselves.

We are free, but as the Bible says in 1 Peter 2, we should live as free people but not use our freedom as a coverup for evil.

Those of us who have freedom should help others to live in the same freedom we have and to serve with joy. That is the legacy that was passed on to us. That is the legacy we should pass down.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

#### TRIBUTE TO LYDIA JACOBY

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, it is Thursday, and it is my favorite time