

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time.

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

The bill, as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

Mr. SCHUMER. I know of no further debate on the bill, as amended.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the bill, as amended?

Hearing none, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (S. 1064), as amended, was passed.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2021

Mr. SCHUMER. Finally, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Tuesday, November 2; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that upon the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Davidson nomination; further, that notwithstanding rule XXII, at 11 a.m., the Senate vote on cloture on the Davidson, Harris, and Coleman nominations in the order listed; and that following the cloture vote on the Coleman nomination, the Senate recess until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings; further, that at 2:20 p.m., the Senate vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the Prieto and Nayak nominations, in the order listed; that at 5:15 p.m., the Senate vote on confirmation of the Davidson nomination if cloture has been invoked; and that upon disposition of the Davidson nomination, the Senate resume consideration of the Harris nomination.

Finally, if any nominations are confirmed during Tuesday's session, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

Mr. SCHUMER. For information of Senators, there will be three rollcall votes at 11 a.m., two rollcall votes at 2:20 p.m., and one rollcall vote at 5:15 p.m.

If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous

order following the remarks of Senator CRUZ.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

THE MIDDLE EAST

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, I rise today to discuss the growing threats to American national security and to the security of our friends and allies in the Middle East.

Under President Obama and Vice President Biden, the policies put in place were a catastrophe for our allies in the Middle East and a boon to our enemies. They boosted the Muslim Brotherhood and criticized Arab governments that tried to crack down on religious extremists. They gave Palestinian groups tied to terrorism a veto over peace between our Israeli and Arab allies, and they elevated those groups.

They pushed the catastrophic Obama-Iran nuclear deal, which dismantled pressure on Iran and put the Ayatollah on a path towards a nuclear arsenal, while sending pallets of cash in the dead of night as ransom for hostages.

Of course, the Obama-Biden administration didn't tell the American people and didn't tell Congress what they were doing. Instead, they deliberately hid that information. They lied as long as they could about their policies, and they developed and built an echo chamber designed to drown out their critics.

I rise today because history is repeating itself, because I am deeply worried that President Biden and the Biden-Harris administration are returning to the very worst policies and the very worst tactics of the Obama years and that the consequences are going to be far worse.

Once again, the Biden-Harris administration is boosting the Muslim Brotherhood and other religious extremist groups in the Middle East. They are elevating the Palestinians at the expense of our Israeli and Arab allies, and they are dismantling pressure on Iran.

And, once again, they are hiding those details from Congress. They do not want Congress to know, and they do not want the American people to know. And, in some cases, unfortunately, they are outright lying.

I know that President Biden and his administration are refusing to answer, even lying about their Middle East policies, because I asked them. I asked them as part of questioning Barbara Leaf, the President's nominee to be the Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs.

Over the next several minutes, I will discuss the answers I got back.

Ms. Leaf has been—and will continue to be—at the center of the Biden-Harris administration's Middle East policy. She was responsible for Middle East policy from the very beginning of this administration as the senior director

for Middle East and North African Affairs at the National Security Council. In her new position to which she has been nominated, she would be America's most senior diplomat for the Middle East.

I asked Ms. Leaf written questions about Biden's administration's policies in multiple areas of Middle East policy, as part of her testimony in front of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Her answers ranged from deliberately nonresponsive to simply false and, throughout, thoroughly, deeply distressing.

For example, right now, today, the Biden-Harris administration is withholding \$130 million of assistance for security and counterterrorism from our Egyptian allies, allegedly on human rights concerns. What we don't know is exactly why they are doing it and exactly what the Biden-Harris administration is asking for.

Under the Obama administration, the United States repeatedly, inexplicably boosted the Muslim Brotherhood, which openly advocated terrorism against the United States. Those extremists were boosted at the expense of moderate Arab allies, and they consistently misled the public about their goals.

Here, the only reason the American public found out in the first place about this \$130 million is because the Washington Post revealed it. The Biden-Harris administration didn't explain to the American people what they were doing. It was only the reporting of journalists that revealed it, and we still don't know enough. We don't know the details.

The Post reported that the administration is withholding the aid until Egypt addresses certain human rights concerns. We don't know what they are. They apparently include releasing 16 unnamed prisoners. We don't know who they are.

So I asked Ms. Leaf about these details. I asked about the 16 people. I asked for their names, their institutional affiliations, what they were charged with. I also asked if they were American citizens. And if they were not, I asked whether they were involved in organizations that push Islamic extremism or anti-Semitism.

Ms. Leaf is obviously very familiar with the case. She wrote back over 1,000 words of highly technical responses. Here is just a third of her answer. That is the part we could fit on the poster board. Lots of words, lots of numbers, but, as you can see, not a single detail that I requested was provided.

Of the 16 people the Biden-Harris administration is demanding that Egypt release, you will see not a single name—not a one. Congress doesn't get to know who those 16 people are. The American people don't get to know who those 16 people are. The answer from Ms. Leaf to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is, to not put too fine a point on it, Go jump in a lake.

How many of those 16 are affiliated with terrorist organizations?

The answer from Ms. Leaf: Go jump in a lake.

How many of them are American citizens?

The answer from Ms. Leaf: Go jump in a lake.

Why is that? Why is that—that the Biden-Harris administration is extorting Egypt to release 16 prisoners, and yet they are embarrassed to say who those prisoners are?

Well, we do have some public hints about the sort of people that the White House and the congressional Democrats maybe tried to coerce our Egyptian allies into releasing. Buried inside a very recent Senate appropriations report, there is an instruction that seems very much like what we are seeing with these secret conditions. It came presumably from Senate Democrats, although we don't know who. No Senate Democrat has stood forward to own this language, but there is a Senate Democrat who authored this language. It says:

In making the certification required by subsection (a)(3)(A), the Secretary of State shall consider the cases of Ola Al-Qaradawi, Hosam Khalaf, Salah Soltan, Abdulrahman Tarek, and Mohamed El-Baqer. The Committee urges that humane treatment and fair trials be afforded these and other prisoners in Egypt.

So, apparently, for some unnamed Democrat who is unwilling to put his or her name to it, these names are people the United States should champion, and it suggests the sorts of people the Biden-Harris administration may be trying to extort Egypt into releasing.

Who are they?

Well, let's start with Salah Soltan. Who is Salah Soltan? He is a Muslim Brotherhood propagandist. He is a hate preacher. He is someone who goes on TV over and over again and preaches the most vicious sorts of libel against Jews.

Why are Senate Democrats trying to release vicious anti-Semites? If you go back to the appropriation language, why are they suggesting in the appropriation language that the United States should be fighting to release that anti-Semite and hate preacher?

We don't know because Senate Democrats aren't defending that position, and the administration refuses to answer.

Who are some of the other people on that list?

Well, you have Mohamed El-Baqer. He was a Salafist youth activist. He was part of the Revolutionary Youth who started the revolution, and he has been implicated in security violations.

How about Ola al-Qaradawi? She is the daughter of Yosef al-Qaradawi, who is one of the major voices for jihad inside the Muslim Brotherhood. The paper trail on her is deliberately opaque from both sides.

How about Hosam Khalaf? He is Ola al-Qaradawi's husband, and he has been allegedly connected to a Muslim Brotherhood offshoot.

How about Abdulrahman Tarek? Well, we don't know. His presence has not been accounted for publicly.

And yet these names mysteriously appear in a Senate appropriations report. When I asked Ms. Leaf about it, she provided 1,000 words and not a single name.

And I will tell you that, actually, the names on that list are not secrets from Congress. They have been provided to Congress in a classified form. So the Presiding Officer and I can go into a secure SCIF, and we can read it in the SCIF. We can read the names.

You know what we are not allowed to do?

Tell anyone what the names are.

Why is it that those names are classified?

They are classified because President Biden and Vice President HARRIS don't want the American people to know who it is they are trying to release.

There is no reasonable justification for those names to be classified. They are extorting our friend and ally, Egypt, to get 16 people released from jail, and they refuse to tell us who.

The American people have a right to know if the Biden administration is trying to pressure our allies to release Muslim Brotherhood extremists; if the Biden administration is trying to get our allies to release anti-Semites; and, if they are, to hear a justification for why. But Ms. Leaf, instead, simply defies the Senate and refuses to answer.

Let's turn now to Israel.

During the Trump administration, there was a decision to stand shoulder to shoulder with Israel, which led to an historic flowering of peace across the region. The name and framework for those peace agreements was the Abraham Accords.

This was something that the Obama administration said would never happen and something, unfortunately, tragically, that they were actively hostile to. The Obama administration insisted that Israel would have to make massive concessions to the Palestinians on their sovereignty—on the security of Israel—before there could ever be peace deals between the Israelis and their Arab neighbors.

When asked whether there could ever be peace like the Abraham Accords without a prior deal with the Palestinians, then-Secretary of State John Kerry said: "There will be no separate peace between Israel and the Arab world. . . . No, no, no, and no."

No ambiguity to what they thought—they don't want peace without massive concessions from Israel to the Palestinians.

Well, turned out President Obama and Secretary Kerry were tragically wrong, as they were on so many issues, and President Trump demonstrated that to the world. And, sadly, President Biden and Vice President HARRIS have never forgiven our Israeli allies and our Arab allies for that—for demonstrating that with strong, resolute clarity from the United States' un-

equivocal support of Israel, that peace could be the result. That was an outcome anathema to the foreign policy objectives of the current administration. As a result, there are many in the Biden administration that are enormously, deeply, seethingly hostile to the Abraham Accords.

At the beginning of the Biden administration, the State Department even issued internal guidance prohibiting the use of the phrase "Abraham Accords." Those words were verboten. You may not say those words. The instructions were instead to call them the "normalization agreements."

George Orwell is, no doubt, looking down from Heaven and smiling at the power of language to be redefined. There are no Abraham Accords. Now, they are normalization agreements.

Once again, the only reason that the public knows about this is because journalists revealed it. This time, it was the "Washington Free Beacon," but the details have never been clarified.

After those public reports, the Biden administration was forced to at least partially reverse that policy. They insisted they fully support the accords that must never be named. But it is not clear how true or how broad that reversal has been.

On September 13, U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., Thomas-Greenfield, gave a speech about the Abraham Accords in which she stubbornly refused to utter the words "Abraham Accords." Instead, following, apparently, the State Department guidance, she simply used the bland term "normalization agreements."

On October 13, Secretary Blinken met with Foreign Minister Lapid, and the spokesperson issued a formal readout from that meeting. Once again, the formal readout from the State Department carefully eschewed any mention of the Abraham Accords and used the bland term "regional normalization efforts."

This is conscious. This is deliberate. This is a pattern. It is a classic example of where congressional oversight is called for.

Madam President, many Senate Democrats claim to support the Abraham Accords. Now, I would note, I was at the White House for the signing of the Abraham Accords. Not a single Senate Democrat showed up for that historic peace agreement—none. Presumably because of partisan loathing of President Trump. But, nonetheless, congressional Democrats say they support the accords today. If that is true, we need to see congressional oversight.

So I asked Ms. Leaf for the specific guidance that was issued to the State Department. Give Congress—give the Senate—the written guidance prohibiting reference to the Abraham Accords. We know about it from public reports in the media. She and the State Department refused. They refused to provide that guidance to Congress. They refused to show it to the public. And, in doing it, it is not accidental.

She refuses to answer this question because they want to hide it from the American people, just like the names of the 16 prisoners they are demanding that Egypt release. Presumably, if the American people knew those names, knew the affiliations, knew the backgrounds, they would be outraged. Likewise, if the American people read the written guidance issued by this State Department, prohibiting uttering of the words "Abraham Accords," then the charade so many Democrats try to play in supporting those accords would be that much harder to maintain.

A third example, turning to Iran, perhaps more than anything else, first and foremost, this administration wants to return to the catastrophic Obama-Biden-Iran nuclear deal and to dismantle meaningful sanctions against the theocratic regime in Iran. From the earliest hours of the administration, the effort began to do exactly that.

As part of that push, the administration has quietly, and sometimes secretly, reduced pressure on Iran and released frozen Iranian funds. But the Ayatollah wants to see just how much he can get, and he may not think that President Biden will ever do anything meaningful. If the United States isn't going to impose pressure on Iran, there is no reason for the Ayatollah to return to the deal at all. He doesn't need to take "yes" for an answer for a deal because he is getting everything anyway.

And so since very early in the administration, the Biden-Harris officials have contemplated what has been called a "less for less" agreement in which they would reduce some pressure on Iran for something less than full compliance. You will only nuke some of us.

Once again, we only know about the existence of these considerations from public reports. In February and again over the summer, Reuters reported on administration officials contemplating these deals, the so-called "less for less" deals. We here in Congress know a little more but not much.

Congress and the public deserve to know what is being contemplated to reduce pressure on the Iranian regime, the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism and a regime that seeks—and, I believe, may well be willing—to use nuclear weapons to murder millions of Americans and millions of our allies.

I believe that if the Ayatollah had the ability to murder millions of Americans or millions of Israelis in the blink of an eye, the odds are far too high that this theocratic zealot, who glories in death and suicide, would be willing to do so.

And so I asked Ms. Leaf for the details of such agreements. Here is what she said in response:

There have been no such arrangements, deals, or agreements contemplated to reduce pressure on Iran.

That statement is false. It is categorically, directly, unequivocally

false. It is false testimony in writing to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Ms. Leaf knows it is false, and the State Department handlers who transmitted her written answer to the Senate know that it is false.

What is the Biden administration trying to hide? What deep details don't they want us to know?

This isn't just about policy disagreements, although I disagree vehemently with many of this administration's policies. I understand some people, some Democrats, will disagree. But even more fundamentally, this is about transparency and oversight. On that, there should be no disagreement.

And these questions are ones that go to the very core of this administration's Middle East foreign policy and of American national security. What extremists are President Biden and Vice President HARRIS trying to empower? Whom do they view as allies worth supporting in the region? What deals are being contemplated with the Iranian regime?

I asked Ms. Leaf for these details. She has, after all, been working right in the center of Middle East issues for this administration. She and the Biden-Harris administration are refusing to answer. The public has a right to know.

Let me also point out that President Biden, in recent days, said publicly that if Iran enters into a new nuclear deal, the United States would stay bound by it in perpetuity as long as Iran didn't renege on that deal. I want to be absolutely clear on something: President Biden has zero constitutional authority to make that commitment.

The Ayatollah in Iran could be forgiven for misunderstanding that. The Ayatollah, after all, is a total dictator with the ability to line up anyone who disagrees and execute them on the spot. But, thankfully, the President of the United States does not enjoy such dictatorial powers.

Under our Constitution, there are two ways, and two ways only, that a President can make a binding commitment on the United States of America. The first is through passing a law that passes the Senate, passes the House, and is signed into law by the President. If President Biden wishes to do so with any Iran deal, he is welcome to do so.

The second and the way, traditionally, that foreign policies agreements are handled is through a treaty—a treaty that is submitted to the Senate and ratified by two-thirds of the Senate. The chances that the Biden-Harris whatever disastrous nuclear deal they work out with Iran, the chances that that would be ratified by two-thirds of the Senate I can quantify exactly. There is 0.00 percent.

President Biden knows that. He knows that because the Senate has been unequivocal that this deal is disastrous and harmful for American national security, harmful for Israel, and harmful for our allies. And so, instead, President Biden makes an empty promise that he cannot commit.

In that, he is following in the footsteps of President Obama. President Obama made a similar promise, and President Obama knew it was a lie when he said it, and President Biden knows it is a lie when he says it.

History demonstrated that President Obama told a falsehood because the next Republican President, Donald J. Trump, ripped the Obama-Iran deal to shreds and withdrew from the deal, which was the right decision. I urged President Trump to do that.

Our allies and our enemies should mark my words on this: Regardless of whatever empty promises President Biden makes, he lacks constitutional authority to bind a subsequent administration. And I believe it is 100 percent certain that the next Republican President who is sworn into office will once again rip to shreds any disastrous deal negotiated with the Ayatollah and Iran.

So President Biden has 3 more years to try to give away the store, to try to send billions of dollars, perhaps on pallets in the dead of night like Barack Obama did, to fund theocratic terrorists who want to murder Americans and murder Israelis. But the Ayatollah needs to know, Europe needs to know, our friends need to know, our enemies need to know that President Biden's promises are empty words that will expire the instant his Presidency is over.

We don't have a dictator in this country. We have a constitutional republic. If President Biden wants to bind subsequent administrations, he can negotiate a treaty, submit a treaty to the Senate, and get it ratified. But he doesn't have the votes, and so instead he makes empty promises.

If President Biden and Vice President HARRIS were proud of the policies they are pursuing in the Middle East, they would give the American people the list of the 16 prisoners they are trying to force Egypt to release.

We know that multiple of the names Senate Democrats have put in the appropriations language are affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood. We know one is an anti-Semitic hate preacher. And we suspect that the administration knows full well that if it released those names, it couldn't defend them to the American people. It is counting on darkness and secrecy to hide their conduct.

I believe the Senate—both Republicans and Democrats—have an obligation to the American people to shine a light. If you are going to extort our allies to release prisoners, tell us now: Are they affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood? Are they anti-Semites? Are they a national security threat to the United States or our allies? The American people deserve to know.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.