

that I have visited with, many over the past week. Yes, this is their assumption. It is their assumption that anything the White House does is coming from a place of bad faith. It is not coming from “how do we make the lives of Tennesseans and all Americans better?” It comes from a place of “how do we gut our institutions? How do we roll back; and how do we exert our control, power, control, government control, Big Government?” That is what people are seeing.

Think about it. It has taken only 11 months for the people to lose their faith in this administration. No amount of ad hoc bipartisanship is going to pull the Biden administration out of the hole that they have dug for themselves by refusing to do the bare minimum for the American people. They have had 11 months to do something, to do anything, to show us they care about more than politics. And the fact that they haven't been willing to do that has been probably the biggest failure of President Biden to date.

And I think that is probably saying something. When people look at what is happening in Washington, here is what they are seeing: They see a President who proactively kills jobs, who destroyed our potential for energy independence, who let conditions along our southern border descend into chaos rather than challenge the disgraceful racial politics pushed by radicals in the Democratic Party. And they see their elected representatives waging war on our most fundamental constitutional rights, eroding ballot integrity and providing cover for disastrous economic policies that have done nothing but kill jobs and drive prices through the roof. Yes, inflation is real.

Congressional Democrats have squandered an entire year creating an illusion of enthusiasm for their broken agenda, which is a feat they were only able to accomplish by refusing to acknowledge the damage caused by their reckless tax-and-spending spree.

If they had even pretended to prioritize appropriations, the debt ceiling, or passing a fiscally responsible budget, they might have had a chance to salvage a little bit of credibility. But, oh, no, that is not what they did.

The American people are living in the real world, where debt burdens matter, and you can't fire up a money printer if you blow your budget or have a wish list you can't afford.

What the American people see isn't just a refusal to govern, but a refusal to acknowledge that these problems matter. These things actually matter to people: how much we spend matters; being job and business friendly matters; integrity, it matters.

For almost a year, the Biden administration has been hiding from allegations that the Obama-Biden Justice Department spied on an incoming President.

Back in August, I led a letter with more than 40 of my Republican colleagues demanding an update on the

status of Special Counsel Durham's inquiry into the Crossfire Hurricane investigation.

The American people have been waiting a long time to see those results. There is nothing the administration can do to force them to accept or even tolerate the malice and corruption we know fueled the actions of the Obama-Biden Justice Department, and equal justice matters to the American people.

But I suppose it is too much to ask that our chief law enforcement officers stay true to the law when the President himself has been so preoccupied with this reckless agenda that it appears he forgot about his role of being Commander in Chief.

In terms of governance, national defense is about as fundamental as it gets. And here we are, a week before Thanksgiving, and just now we are getting the NDAA to the floor.

I, along with other members of the Armed Services Committee, negotiated and deliberated our way through 143 amendments—many of those bipartisan—and we approved the final product 23 to 3.

Now, that is about as bipartisan as it gets. But you haven't seen that come to the floor. Even the House Democrats, working on their own version of the bill, have had enough with the Senate, and they are saying so publicly. They understand, just as we do, that this country will have to be able to defend itself.

We should be doing all we can to prioritize defense policy because you can be sure our competitors and our adversaries abroad are doing all they can to elevate themselves, to defend themselves.

Tonight, President Biden is scheduled to meet virtually with Xi Jinping and to discuss “ways to responsibly manage the competition” between the U.S. and China.

Only it is really not competition. They are our adversary. We don't need a summit to figure out a response to Chinese aggression. The solution is staring us in the face: If you want to manage the competition, you set yourself up to win the fight.

That is how you manage your competitors. That is it. No secret.

And I don't discount the importance of diplomacy, but Xi Jinping and his lieutenants in the Chinese Communist Party have proven time and again that their standing operating procedure is rooted in a desire to control the world—to control the world—order, rather than to work within it. Competition they are not interested in. Dominance, yes, they are interested in.

If we start engaging with China from anything other than a position of strength, we will lose. And right now, Joe Biden projects nothing but weakness.

For almost 3 years, I have chronicled in excruciating detail the war the Chinese Communist Party is waging against our Nation's ideals. I have done

this in hopes that my colleagues across the aisle would understand that delaying action or maintaining the status quo will not save us from our most belligerent and dangerous adversary.

And yet, somehow, seeing it all laid out in black and white wasn't even enough to get action. Seeing the evidence of genocide in Xinjiang wasn't enough.

Reading verified reports that Beijing manipulated multiple international organizations in their shameless coverup of the origins of COVID-19—that wasn't enough.

Listening to Chinese officials threaten our pharmaceutical and medical supply chains—not enough.

Watching the Chinese Communist Party attack freedom fighters in Hong Kong and threaten our friends in Taiwan wasn't enough.

Seeing the pernicious effects of the Belt and Road Initiative on the global balance of power wasn't enough.

Not even the knowledge that Beijing gets closer than ever to testing the limits of our nuclear deterrence capabilities—that was not enough.

Madam President, I yield to the majority leader.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I thank my colleague from Tennessee for yielding, and in a few minutes, I intend to take the first procedural step to begin consideration of the annual Defense policy bill. With cooperation, the Senate can and should move through this important legislation that we attend to each year.

This year, we will amend the Defense bill to include the U.S. Innovation and Competition Act, the historic manufacturing and innovation bill that the Senate passed earlier this year on a strong bipartisan basis and which will help tackle our Nation's supply chain crisis. Our supply chain crisis needs attending to, and we cannot wait. Members from both sides of the aisle have expressed interest in getting this done.

Passing USICA would be an essential far-reaching step that Congress could take to help fight inflation, help increase American workers' wages, and relieve strained supply chains, particularly with regard to the current devastating chip shortage that is hurting the auto industry, the tech industry, and so many other industries. We cannot allow us to become dependent on foreign chips, especially when we do—we do the groundbreaking technology.

We are also working with the Speaker and our colleagues in the House and Republican colleagues in the Senate to find a path forward to get this important legislation over the finish line before the end of the year.

It is also my intention to have an amendment vote on the bipartisan legislation, repealing the 2002 Iraq war AUMF. This measure was reported on a bipartisan basis out of the Foreign Relations Committee earlier this year,

and the NDAA is the logical place to have that vote on the Senate floor.

The Iraq war has been over for nearly a decade. An authorization passed in 2002 is no longer necessary in 2021. In no way will repealing this measure impact our ability to keep Americans safe nor impact our relationship with Iraq.

We will have other votes on amendments on the Defense bill as well. I look forward to working with our colleagues on the other side of the aisle to move this important process forward.

So now I am going to move cloture on the NDAA.

I have some words to say about my dear colleague, Senator LEAHY, and some words to say on Build Back Better, but I will come at a later moment because I know my friend from Tennessee is waiting to do those things tonight.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 144, H.R. 4350, the National Defense Authorization Act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows: Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 144, H.R. 4350, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2022 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.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

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 motion to proceed to Calendar No. 144, H.R. 4350, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2022 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.

Charles E. Schumer, Jack Reed, Jon Tester, Jeanne Shaheen, Margaret Wood Hassan, Angus S. King, Jr., Alex Padilla, Sherrod Brown, Mark Kelly, Tim Kaine, Jacky Rosen, Tina Smith, Ben Ray Lujan, John Hickenlooper, Christopher A. Coons, Raphael Warnock, Mazie Hirono.

Mr. SCHUMER. Finally, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory

quorum call for the cloture motion filed today, November 15, be waived.

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

Mr. SCHUMER. I yield the floor, and I thank the Senator from Tennessee for her courtesy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

CHINA

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, as I have been saying, it has been so difficult to get people to realize what we are facing from the Chinese Communist Party. They are an adversary, and seeing the evidence of genocide in Xinjiang didn't seem to be enough to persuade people.

Then you have the reports that Beijing manipulated multiple international organizations when it comes to the origins of the COVID-19 virus. That wasn't enough.

Hearing the Chinese officials threaten our pharmaceutical and medical supply chains in the midst of a pandemic—that didn't seem to be enough.

Watching in horror as the Chinese Communist Party threatened the Hong Kong freedom fighters and as they have threatened our friends in Taiwan—that didn't seem to raise the attention for them that this is not our friend.

They are not a competitor. They are an adversary.

We have seen these effects of the Belt and Road Initiative on the global balance of power. They still haven't said: We have to deal with China.

Not even Beijing going out here and pushing their nuclear power has seemed to push some of our colleagues across the aisle, as they have not paid attention to what is happening with our nuclear deterrent capabilities and what China is doing.

So it leads a lot of Tennesseans that I talk to say: What is it going to take for Joe Biden and his administration to take these global threats seriously?

If you look at what is going on in China and that doesn't do it, are you looking at Iran? Are you looking at Russia and how they are posturing troops on the Ukrainian border?

What is finally going to get them to say: China is an adversary, the new "axis of evil"—with Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea. These are adversaries. They are intent on global dominance and taking us down.

You know, and I have to tell the Presiding Officer, I think that the answer to that question, if we look at these threats, it really frightens a lot of people.

When I talk to our veterans, as I did last week, many of them—it frightens them when they see the nonchalance in attitude of this administration as we talk about these issues that are threatening our Nation's security and freedom at home and abroad. When you talk about inflation, when you talk about crime in the streets, when you talk about what is happening in our schools, when you talk about what is happening globally, people see this as a

threat to their life here. They see it as a threat to our security abroad.

My hope is that what we will see is real governance and real leadership that will come from the Senate. And also we would like to see this come from the administration, that people would see decisions made in good faith, not decisions made in bad faith or trying to dismantle the institutions of this government.

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 Executive Calendar No. 401, Graham Scott Steele, of California, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

Charles E. Schumer, Jacky Rosen, Thomas R. Carper, Alex Padilla, Tim Kaine, Richard J. Durbin, Elizabeth Warren, Jeff Merkley, Christopher A. Coons, Catherine Cortez Masto, Richard Blumenthal, Sheldon Whitehouse, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Gary C. Peters, Martin Heinrich, Brian Schatz, Chris Van Hollen.

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 Graham Scott Steele, of California, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, 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. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. HAWLEY), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Missouri (Mr. HAWLEY) would have voted "Nay."

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 55, nays 38, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 466 Leg.]

YEAS—55

Baldwin	Duckworth	Klobuchar
Bennet	Durbin	Leahy
Blumenthal	Feinstein	Lujan
Booker	Gillibrand	Manchin
Brown	Graham	Markey
Cardin	Hassan	Menendez
Carper	Heinrich	Merkley
Casey	Hickenlooper	Moran
Collins	Hirono	Murphy
Coons	Kaine	Murray
Cortez Masto	Kelly	Ossoff
Crapo	King	Padilla