

successful blueprint; yet nothing has been done.

Progress will be easier on climate if we take on the fossil fuel-funded front groups that are armed to the teeth with dark money political weaponry. With proper countermeasures like exposure, we can help achieve victory on climate by exposing the rightwing, dark money groups fomenting and funding climate obstruction very likely as part of a scheme to deceive the public.

I will end with an example from a book I read recently about a ship that went down.

In September 1857, the S.S. *Central America*, which was known as the “Ship of Gold,” set sail from California to New York City with nearly 600 passengers and crew and 30,000 pounds of gold from the California Gold Rush. A few hundred miles off the Carolina coast, a hurricane hit the S.S. *Central America*. In the teeth of the gales, the passengers and crew did everything they could. Stewards and waiters and other staff were taken off their regular duties to fight the storm, to fight the flooding. Passengers were put into service to save the stricken ship. Heavy cargo was thrown overboard. In fact, divers are, right now, down, recovering the gold that was thrown overboard to save the ship. The ship itself—its doors and panels—were broken up to help block the sea out or were thrown overboard to lighten the stricken ship. At the end—at the end—passengers and crew were side by side, deep in the hold, shoulder deep in water, desperately pumping to save the ship.

The lesson here: The passengers and crew did everything they could, but at each step, they started too late. They ultimately took all the necessary measures, but each one—each one—they took too late, and the ship sank.

I fear that that is the analogy for our present predicament. Indolence in the face of known danger is a particularly stupid form of cowardice. It is made worse here by a fossil fuel industry that pays people to block our efforts to save the ship.

For the steamship the S.S. *Central America*, there was another boat that stood by in the storm to help rescue passengers, and out of the 600 men and women on that ship, a few dozen were saved. Us? We have no other planet standing by. This is our chance for this ship of ours, and it is time to wake up. It is time to take self-rescue seriously by every available means—and fast.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

ENERGY POLICIES

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I want to talk about gas prices.

The people in West Virginia woke up this morning, and according to AAA, the average gas price in West Virginia is \$4.12 per gallon. Some parts of the

country are paying—probably the part that is the Presiding Officer’s country—more than \$5 or even more than \$6 per gallon of regular gas. Just up the street here in Washington, DC, at the gas station close to the Senate office buildings, it is \$5.19 per gallon. We have surpassed the highest recorded average gas prices ever, and that is quite alarming. Unfortunately, this has been all too predictable given the Biden administration’s domestic energy policy actions.

On day one of his Presidency, President Biden managed to immediately kill thousands of union jobs and paralyze America’s energy industry with the Executive orders that killed the Keystone XL Pipeline. At peak capacity, this pipeline would have delivered 830,000 barrels of oil per day to American refineries. It is pretty similar to what we are importing from Russia.

The President put a moratorium on all new oil and gas leases on Federal lands, moving America from the energy superpower that we have been back to having an increased reliance on foreign adversaries for fuel feedstocks. These are countries that have much laxer environmental rules than we have or that we will ever have.

The administration has also been openly anti-pipeline and anti-fossil fuel with its rhetoric, through its actions, and embodied by the people it has elevated to unaccountable leadership roles. Two by name are Gina McCarthy and John Kerry. This administration has instituted regulatory uncertainty at a time of record inflation.

The administration wants to make a new definition of WOTUS, which is a rule otherwise known as the waters of the United States, to regulate every pond and ditch—even on private lands all across the country. This will devastate energy production as well as hurt sectors like agriculture and home building at a time when their products are already in high demand and under immense inflationary pressures.

The administration is considering new, tighter methane regulations that will also raise our energy costs, including for home heating and, as we move to the next season, for home cooling and electricity bills.

It is revising the NEPA permitting process by undoing the streamlining that was done during the Trump administration. NEPA touches almost every single infrastructure project in our country. Think about it. We just passed an enormous infrastructure package, but if you add more and more redtape onto these infrastructure projects that we have bipartisanly passed through here, you are going to add more and more costs for producers and more and more costs for everyday Americans. This regulatory uncertainty is increasing energy prices for Americans across the board and is felt most acutely at the gas pump because we can see it so clearly every time we fill up, and we see it posted at the stations.

You also have an Energy Department that is slow-walking the build-out of LNG export terminals, which means we can’t export much needed energy to our allies as efficiently as we could be.

Endless regulatory delay and environmental lawsuits, including on permits already issued, delay more than pipelines and kill more than jobs. We have one in West Virginia, the Mountain Valley Pipeline, that is working hard to complete the last 5 percent of the pipeline to move the product. They also crush our economy with inflation and leave us and our allies more susceptible to bad actors like Russia, Venezuela, and Iran.

We are seeing the importance of energy independence play out in realtime with the destruction—the horrifying destruction—in Ukraine. Because of the Biden administration’s policies that I just outlined, we are not able to immediately provide an energy backstop to our European allies that are trying to break their Russian oil and gas habit. They are begging for our coal as we speak. It is the perfect storm for a global energy crisis. It almost sounds cliché to say, as it has been said so often, but energy security is our national security. Specifically, fossil fuel security will help keep us secure nationally.

So what is the Biden administration doing?

We have seen reports that the administration is discussing a possible trip soon to Saudi Arabia to convince the Kingdom to produce more oil. Well, he has tried this—and, oh, by the way, they won’t even take the President’s phone calls.

We know the administration is considering easing sanctions on Venezuela so they will produce more oil.

Once again, President Biden opened the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, even though it didn’t work the last time, costs the taxpayer, and depletes our own stockpile that we created from the last oil crisis to be used when the United States faces another crisis. But incentivizing oil and gas production in our own country or letting it move forward? No.

So, according to the administration and its actions, Saudi and Venezuelan and OPEC oil is good, but American oil is bad. OK. Got it. Rather than encourage American oil production, this administration would like to line the pockets of the Saudis, Nicolas Maduro, and, yes, Vladimir Putin.

You cannot hinder American oil and gas production in the name of reducing emissions and then nudge countries like Saudi Arabia and Venezuela to produce more. Emissions are emissions, no matter where it comes from. Emissions are emissions when it comes to global climate change.

And while I know the climate czar John Kerry is disappointed that war in Ukraine is distracting people from climate change—as we see 2 million people leaving that beautiful country—I don’t see our European friends trying

to secure alternative sources for more solar panels. Instead, they are worried about access to oil, coal, natural gas, and nuclear. That is because wind and solar aren't able to meet their energy demands.

And, sadly, with the energy decisions the Biden administration has made, American fuel won't be there to meet their needs either. We just don't have the physical infrastructure in place to export. We are producing more than we ever have—even in this regulatory purgatory—but that just underscores how much more we could be doing if the Biden administration's redtape and policies were not in place.

Right now, the world is begging for American leadership; Ukraine is begging for American leadership; Europe is begging for American leadership, and that includes energy leadership.

Putin is emboldened every day that the Biden administration flails on this issue.

The humanitarian crisis in Ukraine is completely heartbreaking. According to the United Nations, as I stated, more than 2 million people have been forced to leave their homeland. Tens of thousands of Ukrainians still in Ukraine are without food, water, or power. We have seen the haunting images of the bombings of schools, apartments, and hospitals, including, sadly and just horrifyingly, a maternity hospital just yesterday. Civilians are being targeted. Children are being orphaned. It is an absolute atrocity.

We cannot leave Ukrainian patriots and our European allies at the mercy of Moscow. We must address the poor energy policy decisions of the Biden administration in order to unleash full American energy production, support our allies in Europe, and stop funding Putin's war against Ukrainians.

We should be acting quickly. The security of the free world depends on this.

And I thank you for that.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

UKRAINE

Ms. ROSEN. Mr. President, for weeks, the United States and the world have witnessed the horrors that are unfolding in Ukraine, the result of Russia's unprovoked and unjust attacks on a sovereign nation and its people. Innocent men, women, and children have lost their lives. Homes have been destroyed, neighborhoods and businesses obliterated. Families and communities have been torn apart, some never to be reunited again.

Let's be clear: The blame for this chaos and devastation falls directly on the shoulders of one tyrant—one tyrant—Vladimir Putin. And no amount of hollow justifications, false equivocations, false flag operations, or outright propaganda will change that.

Putin, you are responsible. Putin, you will not prevail. Justice is com-

ing—coming for you and coming for your cronies.

And as appalling as the stories and videos of Russia's brutality have been, we have also seen incredible acts of heroism, kindness, and patriotism from Ukrainian leaders, the military, and, well, everyday citizens. The people of Ukraine have inspired the entire world with their resilience, with their courage, and with their determination to live in a free and democratic country.

This past week, I joined my colleagues in a call with President Zelenskyy, and I will say now what we said to him then. We are with you. And the people from Nevada, we are with you too.

From north to south, Nevadans have come together to voice their support for the Ukrainian people and their opposition to Russia's aggression and brutality. Nevadans agree that we can't sit idly by as Putin continues to terrorize—terrorize—the Ukrainian people. The horrific images that the world has seen, they require action. They require action. We cannot sit idly by and do nothing.

Here in Congress, we are working to give Ukraine more security assistance and to hold Putin accountable by crippling Russia's economy. And I call on every Senator in this body to vote yes on the omnibus package, which includes nearly \$14 billion to aid Ukraine's fight against Putin's forces and to support the Ukrainian people. This bipartisan legislation builds on the work that Congress and the administration have been doing over the past several weeks to confront Vladimir Putin head-on.

I applaud the Biden administration for so forcefully bringing together an international coalition of partners, a coalition that stands behind Ukraine's cause: the cause for freedom. But we must do more. We must do more to support Ukraine, to devastate Russia's economy, and to stop Putin's violent attacks.

President Zelenskyy made it clear in our call just this past weekend that Ukraine urgently needs fighter jets to defend itself. Let's heed his call and work closely together with our European partners that have these jets to provide Ukraine with the aircraft they desperately need and to find ways to compensate or backfill our allies' supplies.

We also must continue to strengthen the security of our NATO allies and demonstrate that the transatlantic community remains united. And we must do more to bring Putin's war to an end and make Putin himself feel the full consequences of his horrible actions. That means hitting Russia's economy where they will feel it most: energy.

Just this week, I cosponsored bipartisan legislation that would end all Russian energy imports to the United States. I am glad to see the Biden administration responded to this call and that the United States is now ending

all Russian energy imports, which are funding Putin's cruel, cruel, cruel, and unprovoked war. I am heartened to see the United Kingdom follow suit, and I call on all of our allies to do the same.

Another area where we can put pressure on Russia is through trade. As chair of the Commerce subcommittee that oversees trade policy, I strongly support legislation to strip Russia's most favored nation status at the World Trade Organization. And I am committed to pursuing additional actions that would severely weaken Russia's economy and drain Putin's war fund.

And our efforts are not only about defending Ukraine and stopping Russia, though stop them we must. This is about defending democracy and the fundamental right of a nation and its people to choose their own destiny—the fundamental right of a nation and its people to choose its own destiny.

America must make it clear that we will not stand idly by when an autocratic bully decides to invade another nation without provocation and without justification. The United States and our allies must leave no stone unturned to ensure that Vladimir Putin pays a steep price for his aggression against the people of Ukraine.

We—we—must continue to serve as a shield and a beacon for democracy and freedom for those in need. On behalf of the Battle Born State of Nevada, I stand with Ukraine and will continue fighting to make sure the United States stands proud and strong as a beacon of peace and security.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

INFLATION

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about inflation. And one thing is sure, Joe Biden is the President of high prices.

New numbers are out today. This morning, we found that inflation remains the worst it has been in 40 years—40 years. Now, we knew that today's inflation numbers were going to be bad for Americans and bad for the administration, but the numbers today are worse than people thought.

Prices rose nearly 8 percent in just the last year. That means we are now seeing more inflation in the last 13 months under President Joe Biden than we did in the previous 4 years. And families are suffering. Prices are going up, but wages are not keeping up. Last week, we found out that wages, in terms of an escalation, had slowed down a bit, which means that people are falling further and further behind. Wages just cannot keep up with the prices that continue to go up. Month after month after month, the American people have found themselves falling further and further and further behind.

I remember when Joe Biden told all of us that inflation would be “transitory.” He kind of laughed about it. He