

continues down the path they are on, they will find the stiff opposition that that path deserves.

NOMINATION OF SARAH BLOOM RASKIN

Now, on another matter, there is bipartisan Senate opposition to Sarah Bloom Raskin, President Biden's radical and unacceptable nominee for the powerful Federal Reserve Board position of Vice Chair for Supervision.

Runaway inflation is hammering American families. Democrats' reckless policies have backed the Fed into a very tricky corner. Just this morning, the new "Producer Price Index Report" showed wholesale inflation is up 10 percent—10 percent—over 12 months, tied for the worst year ever.

At a time like this, the Fed's independence is paramount. But President Biden's nominee for this powerful seat has spent years campaigning to turn the Fed from a nonpartisan central bank into a far-left superlegislature that voters cannot get rid of.

Explicitly and repeatedly, she has called for the Fed to go about picking winners and losers in accord with liberal ideological goals completely unrelated to the Fed's core duties.

The far left cheered Ms. Raskin's nomination for the same reason that Senators from both parties oppose it. She wants to take radical policy aims that liberals can't achieve through Congress and hardwire them directly into our financial system instead.

President Biden was literally asking for Senators to support a central banker—a central banker—who wanted to usurp the Senate's policymaking power for herself.

Ms. Raskin would have been a Vice Chair who sought to raise gas prices, raise home heating costs, and undermine the very institution of the Federal Reserve in the process.

It is not surprising that there is bipartisan Senate opposition to such a radical nominee. Even before one considers the unanswered ethical questions to which the Banking Committee has not been able to get straight answers, President Biden's selection wildly—wildly—missed the mark. It is past time the White House admit their mistake and send us somebody suitable.

NOMINATION OF KETANJI BROWN JACKSON

Now, on one final matter, what can the Senate conclude about a Supreme Court nominee from the nature of their fan club?

That is a question the Democratic leader answered very clearly a few years back. In 2005, Senator SCHUMER accused future Chief Justice John Roberts of being "embraced by some of the most extreme ideologues in America."

Our colleague continues:

That gives rise to a question many are asking: What do they know about you that we do not know?

That was Senator SCHUMER questioning the Chief Justice. Of course, there was nothing extreme about then-Judge Roberts, nor about mainstream scholarly groups like the Federalist

Society. But given Democrats' principle that the Senate ought to examine nominees' fan clubs, let's take a look at the loudest cheerleaders for President Biden's nominee, Judge Jackson.

Before the 2020 election, one far-left dark money group put Judge Jackson on their Supreme Court short list—well, not at first. She was left off their first version, but, shortly thereafter, the judge published a fiery 118-page opinion in a politically charged case that won attention and praise from liberal pundits.

One cable TV host observed that Judge Jackson's opinion was not standard legal writing, but was written with "a broader audience in mind."

Not long after, Judge Jackson was added to the next version of the activists' short list. Practically as soon as President Biden was sworn in, this group began spending big sums of money boosting Judge Jackson's profile. They put her face on posters around the Senate. They paid for billboards pushing Justice Breyer to retire.

This is a far, far-left group. They agitate for partisan Court packing. They drive around town trying to harass Justice Kavanaugh. They filed a frivolous ethics complaint against former DC Circuit Judge Tom Griffith. Last week on television, one of their board members said our Constitution—listen to this—our Constitution "is kind of trash."

This group's entire purpose and fundraising model is waging war on the legitimacy of the judiciary itself, and for some reason, these people desperately wanted Judge Jackson in particular to end up on our highest Court. Why? Well, Senators will need to explore that.

A representative from this radical outfit told the Washington Post that they like Judge Jackson for reasons that include her work "as a public defender and on the U.S. Sentencing Commission."

We are in the middle of a violent crime wave, including soaring rates of homicides and carjackings. Even last summer, when the pandemic posed a bigger challenge, more Americans said violent crime was a bigger problem than said COVID was.

Amid all this, the soft-on-crime brigade is squarely in Judge Jackson's corner. They wanted her above anyone else on the short list. And they specifically cite her experience defending criminals and her work on the Sentencing Commission as key qualifications.

As Leader SCHUMER once asked, what do these folks know that Senators may not? I hope the vigorous Senate process ahead, including all the necessary documents and records from Judge Jackson's time on the Sentencing Commission, may begin to shed more light.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I am glad I was on the floor to hear the Re-

publican leader's comments about our Supreme Court nominee, Ketanji Brown Jackson, because there are a couple of elements that he obviously inadvertently missed that he should have reported when he was talking about the support that she has received from across the political spectrum. He made her out to be a product and creation of some far-left political cause or movement, but she is much more than that.

He went on to say that Judge Thomas Griffith of the DC Circuit was harassed by the same special interest group that supports Judge Jackson. He missed one key element. I just received a letter within the last 2 weeks from Judge Thomas Griffith, a well-known, retired, conservative Federal judge, endorsing Ketanji Brown Jackson. How about that?

It doesn't sound like a special interest group to me. It sounds like a Republican-appointed judge who saw her in action and wants to make sure that she gets a chance to serve on the Supreme Court of the United States.

It makes a big difference because, if you take a look at what he had to say about her, Judge Griffith wrote:

Judge Jackson has a demonstrated record of excellence, and I believe, based upon her work as a trial judge when I served on the Court of Appeals, [that] she will adjudicate based on the facts and the law and not as a partisan.

That is exactly the opposite of the point that was being made by Senator MCCONNELL. She has the support across the political spectrum. He failed to mention that she has been endorsed by the Fraternal Order of Police.

Oh, she is supposedly suspect of being too liberal. Well, I can just tell you that she is a person of quality, integrity, and values, and she has the support across the political spectrum to prove it.

I believe she is going to be an extraordinary Justice on the Supreme Court, and President Biden made a good choice in selecting her.

UKRAINE

Mr. President, moving to a different topic, what does courage look like? What does the face of courage look like? Well, we see it every day on television out of Ukraine. We see individuals leaving their regular lives, grabbing a rifle to defend their nation, and being prepared to die in the process. That is the face of courage.

We see the face of courage in the President of Ukraine, an extraordinary individual, who once was a rising standup comedian and now is a rising standup President for his nation of Ukraine, risking his life every day to stay in Kyiv and to be there to inspire his people to resist Putin's barbaric invasion of that country.

We are going to see that tomorrow in the joint session of Congress. It is the first Zoom joint session of Congress that I have ever been in attendance, and I am glad we are doing it. For the last several weeks, I have been in touch

through Zoom conference calls with President Zelenskyy. He is a courageous man.

But courage is not limited to Ukraine. An event occurred yesterday in Moscow which bears our approval and consideration. On state-run television in Moscow, a woman was reading the propaganda that was on the show, when an employee of that same channel burst on to the set and interrupted the news broadcast.

Her name is—and I am going to try to pronounce her Russian name here—Marina Ovsyannikova—Marina Ovsyannikova. That is her, standing there holding a sign saying “no war.”

She was wearing a yellow and blue necklace, the colors of Ukraine.

And this woman, an actual editor at Channel One in Moscow, shouted:

Stop the war. No to war.

Their sign says:

Don't believe the propaganda. They are lying to you here.

It was signed in English:

Russians against war.

Now, this might have been something just viewed as a disruption, but in Russia under Putin, her actions constitute a crime.

What has happened to her? Well, we don't know. She disappeared shortly after this appearance on television.

Under a new law, she could be sentenced to up to 15 years in prison for using the word “war” to describe Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

But she was unbowed. Before her protest, she recorded a video which has been released through human rights group. I want to read for you what she said in this video:

Regrettably, for a number of years, I worked on Channel One and worked on Kremlin propaganda. I am very ashamed of this right now.

She said:

Ashamed that I was allowed to tell lies from the television screen. Ashamed that I allowed the zombification of the Russian people. We were silent in 2014 when this was just beginning. We did not go out to protest when the Kremlin poisoned [opposition leader Alexei] Navalny.”

She continued:

We are just silently watching this anti-human regime and now the whole world has turned away from us.

She told her countrymen and women:

Only we have the power to stop all this madness. Go to the protests. Don't be afraid of anything. They can't imprison us all.

I believe that if more ordinary Russians knew the truth about what Vladimir Putin is doing in Ukraine, they would join her protest.

Russian media aren't reporting the truth: that Russia has lost more soldiers in the first 20 days of its invasion of Ukraine than America lost in two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. And Russian media aren't reporting on Russia's war crimes in Ukraine, like the horrific shelling last week of a children's and maternity hospital in Mariupol.

Yesterday, we learned that the injured woman on the stretcher in this

photo had died, as had her baby. It was a type of outrage which the American people will never forget and shouldn't. This was an intentional target, this maternity hospital, by Putin. He has bombed health clinics and hospitals across Ukraine. That is the type of person he is. That is the type of war he wages. That is the type of war criminal he is. Every one of these attacks is a violation of international law.

At least three facilities that serve women and children have been subject to attack, and innocent civilians have been killed. Throughout Ukraine, continued explosions and the threat of shelling have forced hospital staff to move critically ill children and other patients into bomb shelters in the basements. Children suffering from cancer, wartime injuries, and other serious conditions have been forced to move to western Ukraine by bus and train.

Throughout Ukraine, critical medications—insulin, cancer drugs, and other infusions—are in short supply, but the world is responding. We have seen an outpouring of revulsion against Putin and his war crimes. But we have also seen an outpouring of compassion, as governments and ordinary citizens step forward to aid Ukraine.

Last Wednesday, a group of nine doctors and nurses from the Chicago area flew to Poland to volunteer to help Ukrainians fleeing the war. They brought with them 167 suitcases filled with medicines and medical equipment.

Advocate Christ Medical Center in Oak Lawn, IL, donated nearly \$500,000 in equipment—all paid for in donations raised in just 72 hours.

The group included Ukrainian Americans, Lithuanian Americans, Polish Americans, Syrian Americans, and Pakistani Americans. The trip was organized by a nonprofit group called MedGlobal. It was founded by a man who is my friend, and I am proud to say that, an amazing Syrian-American doctor named Dr. Zaher Sahloul.

Over the years, this organization has taken medical missions to Syria, Burma, and other places torn by the conflicts that do emerge in these areas.

On this trip, the doctors and nurses spent 2 days in Lviv, providing medical care alongside Ukrainian doctors. They then returned to the Polish side of the border to provide aid to refugees in local hospitals.

Let me say a word about the refugees who are currently inside Ukraine and leaving Ukraine. The estimate now is that a nation with a population of 40 million, Ukraine, has more than 3 million refugees. Let me put that in perspective for a moment. Three million refugees in a matter of 20 days of war—can you imagine? If it were the United States and a similar proportion of the population, it would mean moving the population of the State of Texas out of the United States in 3 weeks. That is what is happening because of the terrible war and invasion of Vladimir Putin.

Providing medical assistance doesn't stop with what I have read into the RECORD. Chicago is also blessed with one of the finest pediatric hospitals in America, Lurie Children's Hospital. Lurie Children's has shipped 1¼ tons—1¼ tons—of medical supplies and medical equipment to Ukraine.

Staff at Lurie Children's are now exploring with Federal officials how they might help bring some of Ukraine's most critically ill children to the United States for needed medical treatment. The hospital spokesman called me last week to say that she was initiating an effort nationwide in the United States to ask every children's hospital to pitch in. If there are kids in Ukraine or out of Ukraine now as refugees who are in desperate need of medical care, America is going to be there.

I am so proud of Lurie Children's and all the other children's hospitals across the United States. They are exploring the same opportunity and challenge. I applaud America's children's hospitals for answering the call over the next several days to provide medical support for pediatric patients in critical need. I urge our Federal Agencies to assist in logistical challenges. Together, we can save these children's lives.

Tomorrow morning, a truly heroic leader, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, will address a virtual joint session of Congress. He will ask Congress and the American people to stand with Ukraine, to defend democracy and human dignity and to bring this horrific war to an end. We must answer that call. This fight is not Ukraine's alone; this is a fight for democracy and the right of people to choose their own leaders, decide their own destiny.

I will close with these thoughts—one from Garry Kasparov, a chess grandmaster, Russian expatriate, and fierce critic of Vladimir Putin.

Yesterday, Garry Kasparov tweeted:

Letting Putin crush Ukraine and murder thousands of innocents in a European war of conquest will redefine the world order. So would stopping him. We choose by action or inaction which world we want to live in.

America should choose to stand with Ukraine.

Slava, Ukraini.

One last point. Zelenskyy made a very important observation when it came to Putin and his future. I don't know if there are enough brave Russians to stand up to him—I hope there are—to depose him from power in that country, but if they don't, we are naive to believe that Ukraine is the end of his conquest agenda. He wants to restore the Soviet Union, and many of us know what that means—the Baltics. It means Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, as President Zelenskyy reminded us, would be the next target. They are small. They are near Russian populations. They are near Belarus, which has become a pawn of Vladimir Putin, and they are vulnerable.

The only thing standing between the Baltics and subjugation by Vladimir Putin is the document known as the

NATO charter. It is an agreement of an alliance where every nation under that flag will stand to defend the other under attack.

Most of us don't remember, but after 9/11/2001, the NATO allies came together and said that the United States had been attacked under article 5 and that they were willing to defend us if the terrorism continued. That is the kind of solidarity which we needed then and which the world needs now.

The NATO alliance was, unfortunately, weakened under the last President, but they have come around now to become a powerful force.

Just last week on Thursday, 10 of the Ambassadors from European nations gathered in a room and talked to us about their solidarity behind our effort to support Ukraine. It was a positive meeting, a good feeling, and I am glad that the NATO forces understand their responsibility and are prepared to defend these countries that are involved.

There is one last point I want to make because it is so outrageous, I believe it should be reported. The question really comes down to an interview of Donald Trump, the former President of the United States, by Jeanine Pirro on FOX television. He called Putin's invasion of Ukraine a project to rebuild a Soviet empire that had been, in the words of Donald Trump, "full of love." Full of love, a Soviet empire?

Unfortunately, the former President has no knowledge of history, nor does he have any understanding as to what happened to the countries under the subjugation of a Soviet empire, how they were forcefully brought into that alliance, which they never wanted to be part of. He obviously doesn't recall that 4 million Ukrainians died in the famines of the 1930s under Joseph Stalin's Soviet rule.

At one point, Ronald Reagan called the Soviet Union an evil empire. For Donald Trump, it is "full of love." How can he be so far wrong and not see the obvious—that Putin is not the spiritual man he was once identified as? He is a ruthless war criminal, and innocent people are paying the price for his outrages.

E-CIGARETTES

Mr. President, there is something else that is going on on the domestic front. Each of us kind of defines our career in Congress as what is important to us, and when I came to the House of Representatives, I had a little planning behind the decision to take after the tobacco companies.

My family was touched by tobacco death, as so many families are. I lost my father when I was a sophomore in high school. I was 14 years old; he was 53. He died from lung cancer. Two packs of Camels a day did it to him.

I decided in the House of Representatives I would start to take what action I could to stop the tobacco companies in their deadly march across America. So one of the things I did was to ban smoking on airplanes, put the law into effect, and it has changed dramatically not just air travel but life in America.

I had no idea that that was a tipping point, and once we banned smoking on airplanes, people would say: Well, why didn't you include schools or office buildings or hospitals or veterans facilities or buses or trains? And the dominoes kept falling. Now it is peculiar, it is strange, should someone walk into a room and light up a cigarette. It just doesn't happen. So that much was done.

But the tobacco companies didn't stop, even after they were proven to be liars under oath before the U.S. House of Representatives when they were asked whether or not tobacco caused cancer.

My new cause, again, against tobacco companies relates to e-cigarettes and vaping.

It has been 6 months—6 months. That is how long past a court-ordered deadline the Food and Drug Administration is to finish its public health review of e-cigarettes—6 months. As an attorney, if my client were 6 months late in meeting a court order, there would be major consequences, but for the FDA, it appears to be business as usual.

Mind you, this is not some bureaucratic squabble. The issue at stake is whether or not the Food and Drug Administration will do its job to prevent children in America from getting hooked on e-cigarettes that are being peddled by big tobacco companies in violation of the law.

You see, the Tobacco Control Act, the law of the land, requires that tobacco products be reviewed by the FDA before they can even be sold. The law says tobacco companies must prove to the FDA that their product is "appropriate for the protection of public health." They can't meet that standard. Everyone knows it. If they don't meet it, they are not supposed to be sold in the United States, period. That is the law.

But instead of doing its job, the FDA turned a blind eye for years at e-cigarettes and vaping—many funded by the largest cigarette corporations like R.J. Reynolds and Altria. Those companies flooded the market with flavored e-cigarettes meant to hook our kids. The result: Millions of children became addicted to e-cigarettes. Big Tobacco intentionally targeted children with trendy advertisements and fruit- or candy-flavored nicotine products.

These actions and FDA's failure to regulate e-cigarettes were a flagrant violation of existing law, so in 2019, a Federal judge stepped in and called the Agency out for its abdication of responsibility. The judge found that the Food and Drug Administration "decided not to enforce the pre-market review provisions at all." So the Federal court gave the FDA a deadline. Listen carefully. It required the FDA to complete its review of the legality of all e-cigarettes being sold in the United States by September 9, 2021.

When that deadline arrived 6 months ago, FDA announced that it had denied millions of applications for e-cigarettes

that had no business on the market. That was important and long overdue. However, a new trend emerged. Vaping companies, including many whose products had been denied by the FDA, were attempting to circumvent the law by reinventing their products.

Many e-cigarette companies tried to use so-called synthetic nicotine. We know nicotine—it is the habit-forming drug that is included in tobacco cigarettes. So they decided that if they made nicotine not out of tobacco but out of other chemicals, they would escape the reach of law.

The day after the FDA ordered Texas-based VaporSalon to remove its products from the market, the company announced:

VaporSalon is switching to tobacco-free nicotine . . . the main purpose of this is to be outside of FDA's regulations.

They were very bold about it. They wanted to hook our kids with synthetic nicotine and were arguing the government couldn't stop them.

The e-cigarette most popular with children is known as Puff Bar. It uses synthetic nicotine to escape the reach of the FDA. They peddle these addictive cigarettes to our kids in flavors not designed for any adults. Listen to the flavors: Blue Raz, Lemon Ice, Watermelon.

FDA is asleep at the wheel. But Congress recognized this problem recently and did something about it. The fiscal year 2022 omnibus bill that passed last week contains a bipartisan provision that I worked on with Senators COLLINS and MURRAY. Our policy closes the synthetic nicotine loophole.

When President Biden signs that law today, we are going to see this law go into effect and clarify the FDA as the authority to regulate synthetic nicotine products and to keep those e-cigarettes off the market. Congress is saying clearly that we will not allow predatory vaping companies to target kids for profit. Now, it is the FDA's duty to do the same.

I recently voted for the new Director, Dr. Califf, and I said to him: I am going to watch you, and I am going to be on you like a hawk. You have a Federal legal responsibility to stop these e-cigarettes from being sold to our kids. Don't waste time.

I hope he doesn't. I hope the FDA will use their new authority.

JUUL and Puff Bar are two companies most responsible for fueling the youth vaping epidemic. They continue to be sold despite court-ordered deadlines and despite the fact they use these kid-friendly flavors and tactics.

So why has the FDA not removed them? Why are more teens and even preteens still getting hooked on e-cigarettes? FDA has the authority to clear all unauthorized e-cigarettes from the market and force their sellers to prove that their products—it is their legal responsibility to prove their products are appropriate for the protection of public health.

Good luck. They are not going to be able to do that, and we know it.