

in the southern part of the city and took the chapel and set it aside for visitors to come pay their respects. The Presiding Officer wouldn't believe the lines that went on for blocks, men and women in uniform and everybody else—myself, my wife, folks in the city—paying their respects to Ella French. She was an extraordinary person.

The gun that killed her was a straw purchase gun. What does that mean? Somebody went into a Federal gun dealer and said: I want to buy a gun. They looked and checked, and that person had no criminal record. The person bought the gun, turned around, went outside, and handed it to a convicted felon, who then turned around and killed this policewoman. That is a straw purchase.

Unfortunately, for too long, we have treated that as a bookkeeping crime, a misdemeanor, nothing serious. It is serious. Straw purchases are a way to avoid the prohibition under the law of a person with a criminal record buying a gun. We ought to treat it as a serious matter.

I have appealed to all the U.S. attorneys in my State, and I hope all Senators will talk to the U.S. attorneys across the Nation. Take straw purchasing seriously. This is not a bookkeeping error; this is a deadly crime that can kill innocent, good people like Ella French and maimed the officer who was with her. So we ought to take that seriously.

This weekend that I just referred to, the previous one, with 37 shootings, 1 of them was on Sunday night. Madam President, they went to the scene afterwards and found 68 cartridges—68. The people in the neighborhood said it sounded like a war zone. Two of the cartridges were from an AK-47, a military assault type rifle, which has no place anywhere except in the military or maybe some police application, but in this case, it was being used in a shootout between two people in cars.

I don't understand what happened next. They ended up finding one of the people who were involved in the shooting. He had a gun. He had a gun illegally. He doesn't have a firearm identification card, required under Illinois law. After taking a look at the facts of the situation, they plan on charging him with a misdemeanor. What is going on here? A misdemeanor for a shootout on the streets of Chicago with 68 cartridges on the ground afterwards?

Whether it is a straw purchase treated as a bookkeeping error or a shootout with an AK-47 treated as a misdemeanor, we have to send the word out that this is unacceptable—not just in Chicago but unacceptable across this country.

If you want to legally own a gun, store it properly, use it properly and legally, I am all for it, and I think that is what the Second Amendment is all about. But what is going on on streets of Chicago, the streets of East St. Louis, Rockford, and so many other

cities is a shootout with a massive amount of guns that are finding their way onto the streets. So we have to take that seriously.

CONFIRMATION OF LADON A. REYNOLDS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, let me just close by saying that last week, the Senate did a great job filling another critical law enforcement vacancy in Chicago. We confirmed Oak Park Police Chief LaDon Reynolds to be our Northern District's next U.S. marshal. That seat has been vacant for almost 4 years. It is a critical position for reducing crime, apprehending fugitives, and protecting our judges.

Marshal Reynolds is the man for the job. Breaking the cycle of violence in Chicago and across America requires the best. All of us need to pull together: families, schools, community organizations, law enforcement, the public health community, faith leaders, the business community, and more. I am glad that the HEAL Initiative is a start in that direction. We have more work to do, and we cannot allow any petty Washington politics to get in the way.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. DUCKWORTH). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Joshua Frost, of New York, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

STUDENT LOAN FORGIVENESS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, there has been a lot of noise about canceling student debt. That has been going on for quite a few months, but it seems to have taken on a new life here within the last week to 10 days. That whole talk is worse than closing the barn door after the horse has escaped; it is like buying a new horse but leaving the barn door open. If all student

debt was gone tomorrow, we would be right back where we started when this whole new crop of students graduate.

Last month, the administration unilaterally extended all the pause on paying back student loans for all borrowers until the end of August, regardless of need. It doesn't matter that all Americans are back to work now, if they want to be back to work. It doesn't matter if the borrower is making six figures and can afford to pay off their loans.

The latest extension will bring the cost of this student loan payment pause up to about \$150 billion. Just to put that \$150 billion in context, the entire Department of Education budget for this year is about half of that amount at \$80 billion.

Higher education advocates have been calling for the doubling of the Pell grant. That is the program that targets aid to those with the most financial need. It is a noble goal to double the Pell grant; but, of course, Congress needs to find the money somewhere to do just that.

Now, instead, the Biden administration is spending billions of dollars to allow high earners with graduate degrees to not pay their loans with no say from the Congress of the United States. And you know the President of the United States has been debating for months—maybe starting at the beginning of his term—did he really have the authority to do it. He has expressed the opinion, at least on the \$50,000 figure, that he didn't figure he had the authority to do it. I question whether he has that authority at all.

If you want to help those who owe more in student loans than they can afford to pay, we need to fix the student loan program on the front end. In other words, we need to change the incentives and give colleges a reason to bring down tuition. Right now, a high school student looking at college is often in the dark about what they will end up paying to attend college and to get that degree. It is no wonder that prices rise when students don't know even what those prices are. And students are encouraged, of course, to borrow the maximum even if they don't need that maximum, because that is what the Federal law requires.

So in response to this problem about a Federal policy encouraging students to go into more debt than they need to get their degree and also about the rising tuition costs because colleges think they can raise their tuition at will because the Federal Government is going to come in and help the student, I have introduced three bipartisan bills to give students the information they need to make the choice that works best for them. My bills would make it easier for students to see how much each college would cost, what aid they are going to be getting, and what their average salary versus student loan payments would be. The answer isn't to cancel student debt only after students have gotten in well over their heads, it

is to stop them from getting into that situation in the very first place. And it certainly wouldn't be done unilaterally from the White House with no say from this Congress on the \$150 billion program.

Now, even worse, the benefits of just canceling or pausing student debt are mainly going to those at the top of the income range. Graduates with the most debt also tend to be those with the longest degrees and they are now doctors or lawyers. These people, doctors and lawyers, might have plenty of debt now, but people with graduate degrees are also much more likely to have a higher salary and much higher lifetime earnings.

Are the two-thirds of the Americans without college degrees somehow less deserving of a free \$10,000 or \$50,000 in canceled debt than doctors or lawyers? And what about those people that have already paid off their loans? Are they going to bear the costs of people that borrowed too much when this is forgiven at the \$10,000 or \$50,000 level?

I am sure many Iowans would be happy to have their car loans or mortgages paid off. Is there any thought about what this can lead to? It is pretty clear. Canceling debt is not a solution. Instead, I have been glad to see many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle join my bills to prevent excess student debt in the very first place.

We need to help students by giving them the information they need to find the best college for their needs at a cost they can afford. Otherwise, forgiving student debt is a slippery slope to a lot of other interests wanting debt forgiveness.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

UKRAINE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I want to begin by responding to a particularly disgusting comment made over the weekend by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. As the Russian Army continues slaughtering civilians, Foreign Minister Lavrov did what many others who now reside in the dustbin of history have done before him—resort to anti-Semitism to defend his nation's action.

As the highest ranking, Jewish elected official in the United States, I take particular umbrage at what Mr. Lavrov said. Asked on Italian television yesterday to defend his nation's invasion of Ukraine, Mr. Lavrov repeated the deranged conspiracy that Ukraine is dominated by Neo-Nazis and dismissed President Zelenskyy's own Jewish heritage by saying:

I believe Hitler also had Jewish origins.

He also added:

We have been hearing the wise Jewish people say that the biggest anti-Semites are the Jews themselves.

I have only one word for this: "sickening." It is sickening. Mr. Lavrov's comments are just sickening and deserve to be condemned by all who oppose the dangers of anti-Semitism. They tap into the very old and very poisonous notion that the Jewish people themselves were the architects of the worst human atrocities in modern history even when they were aimed at Jews themselves.

Mr. Foreign Minister, you are fooling no one. The war crimes committed by Russia are as plain as day for the world to see. And to justify Russia's violence with appeals to anti-Semitism is sickening; it is dangerous. It is chilling to see Russia's top diplomat—he should not be called a diplomat after saying that. It is chilling to see Russia's top foreign policy person so casually spread disinformation about the history of the Holocaust in order to advance Mr. Putin's political and military agenda.

I condemn Mr. Lavrov's comments in the strongest possible terms, and every individual who wishes to guard against the poisons of anti-Semitism should do the same.

Now, Madam President, over the weekend, Speaker PELOSI led a delegation of House Members to Ukraine and met with President Zelenskyy to pledge our country's support for the Ukrainian people.

We have the obligation to demonstrate that support by approving another round of Ukrainian emergency funding. Now that President Biden has made a formal request for \$33 billion, our appropriators are hard at work turning the request into legislation. It is my hope that a bipartisan agreement can be reached very soon and that the Senate can begin processing this aid package on the floor as early as next week.

Quickly approving this emergency funding for Ukraine is essential to helping the people of Ukraine in their fight against Russia. Again, I expect both sides to work quickly, decisively, and with bipartisan cooperation to get this aid out the door and onto the President's desk, just as we did for the first round of aid back in March.

I will also work to include a provision that arms the Federal Government with the tools needed to liquidate assets the United States seized from Russian oligarchs, such as yachts, mansions, private jets, art collections, and the like.

Specifically, the Senate should expand existing forfeiture laws that will turn up the heat on these corrupt individuals who made their own ill-gotten gains from the vicious, evil, dictatorial Vladimir Putin. We need to go after these crooked oligarchs. They have gotten rich off Putin's regime. Their ill-gotten gains should have no safe ref-

uge within the United States, and it would be great if the proceeds from these assets would be used to support the Ukrainian people. I think that is the right way to go, and I will work to see that the Senate acts in this space.

Two months into the war, it is clear that support from the United States and our allies has been essential in helping Ukraine resist Russia's invasion. But the bloodshed is very likely far from over, and the cost borne by the Ukrainian people has been immense. According to the U.N., at least 3,000 civilians have been killed since the start of the war, and the true number is unfortunately, sadly, far higher than that in all likelihood.

The United States thus has a moral obligation to give the Ukrainian people the tools they need for as long as they need them, more money for Javelins, Stingers, howitzers, Switchblade unmanned aerial munitions, and much more. And make no mistake, the Senate will move swiftly to get an emergency funding package passed and sent to the President's desk.

CORONAVIRUS

Madam President, on COVID, now, in addition to providing emergency funding to Ukraine, the Senate must also keep prioritizing another round of funds to fight COVID and keep our families safe.

On Ukraine funding and COVID funding, Republican obstruction will not serve the American people. Instead of threatening political games, I urge Senate Republicans to work with us to get moving on COVID funding A-S-A-P.

Over the past few months, the United States has made unmistakable progress in getting life closer to normal than at any other point since the spring of 2020. But as we all know, all it takes is another nasty variant to force new closures of our schools, our businesses, our churches, our communities.

Meanwhile, every day that we don't act to pass new COVID funding is another day that other nations place orders on the remaining supply of vaccines, testing, and therapeutics—in particular, therapeutics.

God forbid another variant begins spreading across the country, and we don't have the tools, the medicines, the vaccines, the testing in place to respond simply because our Republican friends have blocked our ability to fund now the ability to buy those materials, those vaccines, those therapeutics, and keep them on the ready if and when a new variant hits.

If Republicans continue to obstruct more funding, then a few months from now we could be in the terrible situation of not having enough vaccines to save lives, enough tests or testing to monitor disease, and enough therapeutics to reduce the severity of cases of COVID when they come.

Let me say that one more time. If Republicans continue to obstruct more funding now, then a few months from now, we could be in a terrible situation of not having vaccines to save lives,