

Russia's aggression cannot—cannot—be allowed to continue cost-free.

I understand my friend and colleague from Kentucky would like changes to the bill. Those changes are not acceptable to the Democratic majority, as we have just heard. So I think there is a simple way to solve this. We should vote on Senator PAUL's amendment, and then we should pass the supplemental, and we should do it today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, on behalf of myself and Leader MCCONNELL, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 366, S. 4190, Senator KENNEDY's bill on Ukraine oversight; that the bill be considered read a third time and the Senate vote on passage of the bill; further, that upon disposition of the Kennedy bill, the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 368, H.R. 7691, a bill to provide aid to Ukraine; that the only amendment in order be the Paul amendment, which is at the desk; that the Senate vote on the Paul amendment with 60 affirmative votes required for adoption; that the bill be read a third time and the Senate vote on passage of the bill, as amended, if amended; and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all without intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Reserving the right to object, my oath of office is to the U.S. Constitution, not to any foreign nation. And no matter how sympathetic the cause, my oath of office is to the national security of the United States of America.

We cannot save Ukraine by dooming the U.S. economy. In March, inflation hit a 40-year high. Gasoline alone is up 48 percent, and energy prices are up 32 percent over the last year. Food prices have increased by nearly 9 percent. Used vehicle prices are up 35 percent for the year, and new vehicle prices have increased 12 percent or more.

Yes, inflation doesn't just come out of nowhere; it comes from deficit spending.

The United States spent nearly \$5 trillion on COVID-19 bailouts, leading to one of the highest and most sustained levels of inflation in U.S. history.

Americans are feeling the pain, and Congress seems intent only on adding to that pain by shoveling more money out the door as fast as they can.

This bill under consideration would spend \$40 billion. This is the second spending bill for Ukraine in 2 months, and this bill is three times larger than the first.

Our military aid to Ukraine is nothing new, though. Since 2014, the United States has provided more than \$6 billion in security assistance to Ukraine.

In addition to the \$14 billion Congress authorized just a month ago, if this bill passes, the United States will have authorized roughly \$60 billion in total spending for Ukraine.

For those who say this is not enough, for those of you in this Chamber who say that our military spending is never enough, let's put \$60 billion into perspective.

According to Elias Yousef, a security assistance expert at the Stimson Center, Kyiv would become the largest yearly recipient of U.S. military aid of the past two decades.

Except for the top five countries, \$60 billion is more than every other country in the world spends on their entire military expenditures.

If this gift to Ukraine passes, our total aid to Ukraine will almost equal the entire military budget of Russia. And it is not as if we have that money lying around. We will have to borrow that money from China to send it to Ukraine.

The cost of this package we are voting on today is more than the United States spent during the first year of the U.S. conflict in Afghanistan. Congress authorized force, and the President sent troops into the conflict. The same cannot be said of Ukraine.

This proposal towers over domestic priorities as well. The massive package of \$60 billion to Ukraine dwarfs the \$6 million spent on cancer research annually, and \$60 billion is more than the amount the government collects in gas taxes each year to build roads and bridges. The \$60 billion to Ukraine can fund substantial portions or entire large Cabinet Departments. The \$60 billion nearly equals the entire State Department budget. The \$60 billion exceeds the budget for the Department of Homeland Security and for the Department of Energy. And Congress just wants to keep on spending and spending.

Our allies and partners have sent aid to Ukraine. Some of them even broke longstanding traditions by sending military assistance. Germany, Poland, the United Kingdom, and others are stepping up to defend Ukraine like never before.

In other words, it is not all about us. It isn't that we always have to be the Uncle Sam, the policeman who saves the world, particularly when it is on borrowed money. Yet the United States accounted for nearly half of what has been spent so far.

With a \$30 trillion debt, America can't afford to be the world's policeman. The United States is trying to recover from the \$1.6 trillion we spent on wars in the Middle East, not to mention the \$5 trillion borrowed for COVID.

We should not forget that the Soviet Union collapsed, in large part, not because it was defeated militarily but because it ran out of money. In an attempt to save Ukraine, will we doom the United States to such a future?

In the past 2 years, the United States has borrowed more money than at any

time in our history. We are already experiencing the greatest rate of inflation in over four decades. The assault on monetary discipline is untenable, and it cannot go on forever. Unless we put an end to the fiscal insanity, a day of reckoning awaits us.

Congress should evaluate the cost of continuing down this path. The biggest threat to the United States today is debt and inflation and the destruction of the dollar. We cannot save Ukraine by killing our economic strength.

So I ask to modify the bill to allow for a special inspector general. This would be the inspector general who has been overseeing the waste in Afghanistan and has done a great job.

Therefore, I ask the Senator to modify his request so that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 368, H.R. 7691; furthermore, that the Paul amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time; and that the Senate vote on passage of the bill, as amended, with a 60-affirmative vote threshold for passage.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the leader so modify his request?

Mr. SCHUMER. Reserving the right to object, it is clear from the junior Senator from Kentucky's remarks, he doesn't want to aid Ukraine. That is not the case for the overwhelming majority here.

Again, all he will accomplish with his actions here today is to delay that aid, not to stop it. It is aid that is desperately needed by a valiant people fighting against authoritarianism and defending democracy. So I will not modify it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection to the original request?

Mr. PAUL. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Tennessee.

MEXICO

Mr. HAGERTY. Madam President, I am here today to discuss worrying developments in Mexico—one of the United States most important international partners and our neighbor to the south.

The nearly 2,000-mile border that our nations share, both binds us together and presents a series of challenges, including illegal immigration, drug control, and human trafficking.

But as we work through these difficult issues, our robust economic relationship has provided a firm foundation to strengthen and stabilize our efforts with an eye toward the future.

The innovative U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement—or USMCA, as it is called—has deepened the connections between our two economies, such that Mexico is now one of our largest and most strategic trading partners.

However, actions over the past year by the government of Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, better known as AMLO, have weakened that bond and are threatening the economic and diplomatic ties of our two nations.

Through increasingly arbitrary and aggressive moves against companies based here in the United States and their lawfully owned assets in Mexico, the Mexican Government has abused its permitting and regulatory powers in ways that violate the letter and the spirit of our trade agreements and the special relationship that exists between our two countries. These decisions directly impact critical sectors of the U.S. economy, from agriculture to energy and mining, from transportation to tourism.

These capricious actions, which are falsely labeled as "reforms," risk substantially undermining confidence in the commercial rule of law in Mexico, and these actions also risk jeopardizing the essential economic relations in North America.

Further, these actions likely violate our trade agreements by abrogating contracts, stripping investors of value, and eliminating private competition and oversight, thereby sending a clear message to U.S. capital markets that Mexico is no longer safe nor profitable for investing.

Earlier this month, AMLO even threatened to jail political opponents and investors who stand in his way, desperately attempting to impose a state-centered, anti-free-market agenda. If not quickly corrected, these actions risk choking off the economic relationship between our two nations.

Many important supply chains stretch across the U.S.-Mexico border, supporting millions of good jobs and making both countries more attractive for capital investment. This is certainly true for my home State of Tennessee. Because of that success, I have advocated for further expanding the integrated North American supply chain for critical industries as a better and more stable alternative to manufacturing and exporting from communist China.

Utilizing the successes of the USMCA as the backbone for a renewed vision of North American competitiveness would benefit both American and Mexican prosperity, as well as both of our nations' national security. It would also better align the economic strategies and national interests of our two countries.

But without a basic respect for private property and the rule of law, that mutually beneficial progress will not happen. In fact, failing to protect private property and the rule of law will inevitably lead to the disintegration of economic ties.

Therefore, I urge President Lopez Obrador to reverse course before more damage is done. Instead, we should be looking for opportunities to work together to attract investment and unlock economic opportunity that is presented by the global rebalancing of supply chains away from communist China. Let's seize the opportunity together rather than damage our shared interests for short-term political gains.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to enter into a colloquy with my colleagues Senator WHITEHOUSE and Senator BLUMENTHAL.

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

UKRAINE

Mr. GRAHAM. Madam President, we will get into this in a minute, but I want to respond to something that was said just a few minutes ago.

What would it cost America if Putin continues to slaughter Ukraine and gets away with it? What kind of world do you want to live in?

Let's see if I have got this right. I can understand not wanting to get involved in wars. If you have ever been in one, if you have ever been in a war zone for any time period, you understand war is a horrible thing. If you have ever been in the military, you understand some of your buddies don't come back when you have wars.

But what I don't understand is this idea that not only are we not going to engage in a war against a thug and a bully like Putin but, when somebody like Ukraine is fighting like tigers, we are not going to help them either.

So this idea about this aid package costing too much, put it in the context of what happens to the world if Putin continues to rewrite the map of Europe. If we don't get Ukraine right, then China will invade Taiwan. And 90 percent of all the semiconductors and high-end chips come out of Taiwan.

Why do you have the cops? Because if people go up and down the streets breaking into stores and ransacking the community, nobody wants to live there. I would rather have the rule of law versus the rule of gun. Sometimes, you have to pay a price. Ukrainians are paying the ultimate price. They are fighting like tigers. They are dying by the thousands to stand up to an enemy of the United States and mankind.

Putin is a war criminal by any reasonable definition, and if you think he is satisfied with Ukraine, you are miscalculating him like we did in the last century with Hitler. In June of last year, Putin talked about the Russian Empire being recreated. Well, it is just not Ukraine that he considers a legal fiction; it would be Moldova. And when you look at his view of recreating possibly the former Soviet Union, there are NATO nations in his crosshairs.

What does it matter to the United States, if Europe is in a constant state of turmoil, that you have Russia toppling one democracy after another? It means a lot to us. We can't live in a world that way—or at least, I choose not to live in a world that way.

To the American people, \$40 billion is a lot of money, but if we can stop Putin in Ukraine, it would be the best money you could ever spend. Let's don't be penny wise and pound foolish. They are running out of ammo. They are kicking the Russians' ass all over Ukraine. They are doing the fighting

on behalf of freedom itself, and we should be the arsenal of democracy. The EU should spend more. The Germans are giving lethal weapons. Everybody can do more.

And there is a problem with baby formula. I would like to get more baby formula on the shelves, but letting Putin win in Ukraine doesn't help the problem of babies here in America. If you care about raising your children, you need formula, but you need a world where you can travel and trade without chaos.

Who is going to run the world in the 21st century: the communist dictatorship in China, people like Putin, or a world order where the rule of law really matters more than the rule of gun?

So this package has been stalled, but it will get over the finish line.

To the people in Ukraine, Senator PAUL's request to have an inspector general overseeing the money actually makes sense to me. I don't know why we didn't do that before, but his argument that this package is way beyond what the market should bear misses the point of what we are engaged in here.

The outcome of Ukraine matters because if you don't stop Putin there, he keeps going. This doesn't end. Have you learned nothing from World War II? Go watch a movie about World War II. How many people appeased Hitler to the point that 50 million people eventually died? Putin is not going to stop in Ukraine unless somebody stops him.

Here is the good news: His army was oversold; and with the weapons we have delivered to Ukraine, plus our allies, the Ukrainian military and citizenry are dismantling the Russian military. It would be an enormous blow for freedom and stabilize the world if we could stop Putin in Ukraine. And the Ukrainians are not asking us for soldiers; they are asking us for weapons.

And if you don't think Russia under Putin is a foe to the United States and all we believe in, you haven't been paying attention to what has been going on for the last 20 years.

So we have a moment in time here to go all in in terms of economic assistance. Their economy is in shambles because they are under siege. They are fighting like tigers. The weapons we have given them, they have put to good purpose. The Democrats and Republicans are now united around the idea that it is a good thing to help Ukraine.

To my Republican colleagues who vote against this package, what is your alternative? Don't go to Poland anymore. Don't go to Ukraine and say: We are with you. If you vote against this package—and there are a million reasons to vote against anything—you are missing the point. The world hangs in the balance here. If we don't get Ukraine right and stand up to Putin, there goes Taiwan.

I am tired of being lectured to by people who have no understanding of