

News host Tucker Carlson began his prime time show with another deranged rant on the conspiracy theory known as the “great replacement.” This racist theory, which asserts that a conspiracy exists to replace White Americans with immigrants and people of color, motivated a White supremacist to gun down 10 Black Americans in a grocery store in my home State of New York, in Buffalo, just over 2 months ago.

Here is what Mr. CARLSON said last night, among many deranged things. These are his words:

Sometime around 1965, our leaders stopped trying to make the United States a hospitable place for American citizens, their constituents, to have their own families. . . . They just imported new people. That’s literally what happened.

Can you believe someone said that on a national network and the network does nothing about it?

There is only one way to describe what Mr. CARLSON is doing: He is stoking racial resentment among his viewers. It is deranged. It is dangerous. It is racist.

Not long ago, views like “replacement theory” were only found in the darkest places in disturbed minds. Now someone as prominent as Carlson is spreading night after night to an audience that often tops 3 million viewers. And it is not an isolated incident. According to one measure by the New York Times, Mr. CARLSON has spewed rhetoric that echoes “replacement theory” at least 400 times on his show since 2016—400 times. This is not a one-off, what he just did last night.

The more that MAGA radicals like Carlson spread “replacement theory,” it is not out of the question that racially motivated violence will further ignite the country. FOX News should be ashamed that they are enabling these racist views and giving them an enormous platform on their network. It is dangerous and un-American for one of the biggest news networks in the world to amplify conspiracy theories that are eerily similar to those cited by the Buffalo shooter.

I urge Carlson to stop spreading “replacement theory” or else risk seeing more tragedies like the one we saw in Buffalo last month.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, one of the most important bills that we take up every year is the National Defense Authorization Act, or NDAA, legislation authorizing funding for our military men and women and the defense of our country.

The Senate Armed Services Committee passed this year’s bipartisan bill a month ago, and we have less than 2 months of floor time left in the fiscal year.

The Senate Democrats’ focus this month is on a last-ditch effort to pass some version of their Build Back Better tax-and-spending spree in hopes, I have to assume, of eking out a few more votes in November. Apparently, the National Defense Authorization Act will just have to wait.

As it does every year, this year’s NDAA authorizes funding for critical military priorities. The fiscal year 2023 NDAA continues the modernization efforts begun several years ago in the wake of the 2018 National Defense Strategy Commission report, which warned that our Nation’s readiness had eroded to the point where we might struggle to win a war against a major power like Russia or China.

It authorizes funding to improve quality of life for our military members and their families, which is not only something we owe these men and women who sacrifice so much for us but is also essential for recruiting and retaining members of our all-volunteer force. It authorizes funding to enhance our nuclear deterrence, a key priority with continued nuclear threats from traditional powers like Russia and rogue states like Iran and North Korea.

And it continues our strong support for Ukraine. Ukraine no longer dominates every front page, but for 5 months now, Ukraine has been fighting a heroic war against Russian aggression. Thanks to support from allies in Europe and from our own country, Ukraine is still holding out. In a war that many experts thought could see Kyiv fall within a matter of days, Ukraine is approaching day 150 of resisting Vladimir Putin’s Soviet-style aggression. In fact, Ukraine continues to strike painful blows against the Russian military, which has now turned to Iran for military support.

Later today, Olena Zelenska, wife of Ukrainian President Zelenskyy, will be addressing Congress. She and her husband have been a beacon for Ukrainians during this brutal war; and President Zelenskyy’s iron determination, his tireless leadership, and his unflagging commitment to his people inspire all those who love freedom.

Ukraine is, in many ways, standing up for the whole free world right now, sending the message that Russia’s unprovoked aggression will not be allowed to stand. And the least we and other free nations can do is ensure they have the resources they need to carry out their fight. Russia’s war against Ukraine reminds us that nations that value freedom and security must stand together.

Finland and Sweden are looking to stand with other free nations by joining the NATO alliance. Vladimir Putin has turned the historic positions of neutrality in Finland and Sweden into robust public support to join the alli-

ance, and both of these countries will strengthen the capabilities and geostrategic position of NATO.

Yesterday, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations reported the treaty concerning their accession to NATO, and I hope the Senate and administration will soon complete their respective roles and approve Finland and Sweden’s membership.

One priority for me in every National Defense Authorization Act is ensuring that the men and women of Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota have everything they need to successfully carry out their mission. Right now, my priority is ensuring Ellsworth remains a responsive and lethal component of global strike command, with the B-1 bomber leveraging the Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile and its Long Range Anti-Ship Missile derivative.

As we look to the future, I am working to ensure the base continues to receive full funding for the many equipment and support facilities that will be needed for the B-21 Raider mission at Ellsworth. I worked to ensure full funding for the first of these facilities in last year’s NDAA, including a low-observable coating restoration facility, a wash rack and maintenance hangar, an expanded flight simulator facility, and more.

This year’s NDAA continues that work with additional funding for the low-observable coating restoration facility, as well as funding for two additional construction projects—a weapons generation facility and a radio frequency facility—that will be needed to ensure Ellsworth is fully able to conduct the nuclear and stealth B-21 missions.

I have had the privilege of visiting the B-21 production site in Palmdale, CA. And while the program remains heavily classified, I can say the six planes under production are impressive feats of American engineering and that we are honored that South Dakota will be the first State to host the mission.

But it is not just about the hardware and cutting-edge systems. Our greatest asset is our people, including the pilots, the maintainers, and all of the men and women who have answered the call to serve. That is why I am focused on ensuring our men and women in uniform have not just the military support they need but the support they need for their families.

More military families will be moving into the Ellsworth area with the arrival of the B-21 mission—as many as 250 people per year, including 100 dependents. I am committed to ensuring that the infrastructure is in place to provide ample facilities for these families.

To that end, I worked to include in this year’s NDAA an extension of an authority for the Secretary of Defense to adjust basic allowance for housing rates if an installation is experiencing a sudden increase in the number of servicemembers assigned there. This will ensure that families at Ellsworth

and elsewhere will have the resources they need to secure appropriate accommodations.

I am also working to ensure that the Douglas School District is able to integrate and support Air Force members' children and provide sufficient classroom space. This NDAA would provide \$15 million in impact aid for schools experiencing force structure changes like the anticipated growth at Ellsworth with the arrival of the B-21 mission.

I am grateful to Senator ROUNDS for his assistance getting this through the committee's markup and to our State's at-large Representative, Congressman JOHNSON, for his work to get it included in the House-passed bill. This expanded program should be a good first step to help ensure that Douglas School District is able to expand to meet the needs of new Ellsworth families.

The House of Representatives, to its credit, voted on its version of the National Defense Authorization Act the other day. But, unfortunately, the House legislation's total funding authorization is lower than the Senate bill's number. That is a concern, not only because we have a lot of priorities to fund but because inflation is currently cutting into the military's spending power.

Inflation affects American families and businesses, but it also has a serious effect on our Nation's security. As prices soar across the economy, the military is able to do less with the dollars that it has and that can affect troop readiness and the military's ability to keep up with needed programs and purchases, from weapons to vehicles to aircraft and ships.

It is essential that the final House and Senate bill include the Senate's top-line funding number.

In his 1793 annual message to Congress, George Washington said:

There is a rank due to the United States among nations which will be withheld, if not absolutely lost, by the reputation of weakness. If we desire to avoid insult, we must be able to repel it; if we desire to secure peace, one of the most powerful instruments of our rising prosperity, it must be known that we are at all times ready for war.

In other words, "Peace through strength."

These words hold true in every age. The surest method of securing peace is ensuring we are prepared for war. As Russia's unprovoked attack on Ukraine reminds us, there will always be nations who threaten peace and freedom. And the surest way to prevent these powers from destroying freedom is to ensure that we present a powerful threat of our own, a credible deterrent that stops these nations and other bad actors from wanting to tangle with us. There is no more a certain way to invite war than to be unprepared to meet the bullies and the dictators of the world.

The National Defense Authorization Act is one of the most essential pieces

of legislation we take up each year because it helps ensure that our Nation is equipped to defend itself and to deter aggression.

I hope that the Democratic leadership will consider deferring its tax-and-spending plans to take up this important national security legislation in the near future.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that in addition to myself, both Senators GRASSLEY and CARPER be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each before the scheduled vote.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore.

Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO JEAN TOAL EISEN

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today as the current chair of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies because I want to pay tribute to the clerk who has worked with me for the last 6 years but who has been in public service here for the Federal Government for 27 years, including 26 years of service in the U.S. Senate, and that is Jean Toal Eisen, who is going to be retiring from the Federal Government.

And Jean is here along with two other members of the staff of the CJS Subcommittee, Blaise Sheridan and Michael Bednarczyk, as well as three members of my staff, Ariel Marshall, Janelle DiLuccia, and Chad Kreikemeier, my chief of staff.

We are here because we think it is important, and I especially think it is important to recognize the people who make this body run. And it is people like Jean, who have dedicated their whole careers to this institution, who allow us to—who mean that we can, on occasion, get things done that make a huge difference for the people of this country.

And I know I speak for all the members of the Appropriations Committee and its staff when I say that Jean will be sorely missed.

Just last week, as I looked at the breathtaking images captured from NASA's James Webb telescope, I thought about Jean. It is no exaggeration to say that those images exist, in no small part, because of her work on this subcommittee. And they serve as a fitting capstone for her distinguished career.

And, of course, then I thought about other ways that Jean's influence will endure, ensuring millions of people will get access to broadband because of her work on the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act—and there were many late nights that she and other members of my staff and Senator COLLINS' staff worked with the Commerce Department to try and ensure we could get those broadband sections done—and then also helping survivors of domestic

violence, sexual assault, and child abuse receive access to critical services because of Jean's successful efforts to release more resources from the Crime Victims Fund. In fact, every year that I have been chair of Commerce, Justice, and Science, because of Jean's efforts, we have maximized funding in the Office of Violence Against Women so that each year over year we have done better.

She has also been there to ensure that the next generation of STEM innovators and leaders get record investments in the National Science Foundation and NASA. And it is really appropriate that we are considering bipartisan chips innovation legislation on the floor this week, Jean's last in the Senate, because she played a central role drafting and negotiating this critical legislation that will bolster American manufacturing and protect our national security interests.

And though Jean will no longer be in the Senate, her legacy is already felt everywhere, and the American people are better for it. Jean's journey in the Senate began as a staff assistant for Senator Ernest Hollings of South Carolina, her home State Senator.

Later, she served on the staff of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation as senior adviser and deputy policy director for Chairman Dan Inouye, before serving as deputy policy director at the U.S. Department of Commerce.

And since 2010, she has served on the CJS Subcommittee, and from 2014 to 2017, she was the deputy staff director of the Senate Committee on Appropriations for Chair Barbara Mikulski, who I know if she were here would also be on the floor to sing Jean's praises.

I have had the pleasure of having Jean as my clerk since 2017, when I took over the CJS Subcommittee as Vice Chair. And I think that words really can't capture Jean's personality, but I would be doing a disservice to this body if I didn't try to give a sense of why Jean is one of the most effective staffers on Capitol Hill.

And I think the first thing to know is that Jean always gives you the truth—whether you want to hear it or not. The second thing to know about her is that she always has a sense of humor, even when the going gets tough, and all of us who have been here through tough challenges know that maintaining a sense of humor is absolutely critical.

Her colleagues will remember her as incredibly knowledgeable, kind, and pragmatic because, at heart, Jean is a problem-solver. She understands that the U.S. Government is one of the most impressive institutions the world has ever seen, and she has dedicated her career to improving it.

Jean is also the proud mom of her daughter Pat, who is a rising sophomore at Longwood University and is, among other things, a saxophonist in the school's "Stampede" Athletic Pep Band.