

serving as California's secretary of state, I had an opportunity to introduce Angela and two of our sons to Vin at a voter registration event before the game at Dodgers Stadium. He was just so incredibly gracious with my family; it is a memory that we will cherish.

But I also know that we weren't unique in that interaction with Vin. He always made time for fans—regardless of age, regardless of occupation—wherever and whenever he met them. You see, he wasn't just a sports broadcaster; he was a figure larger than life, and he made all of us feel like family.

Angela and I certainly join the Los Angeles community, the Dodgers organization, and baseball fans around the world in mourning the passing of Vin Scully. Our hearts go out to the entire Scully family.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 985.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of John Z. Lee, of Illinois, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Seventh Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 985, John Z. Lee, of Illinois, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Seventh Circuit.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Ben Ray Lujan, Jack Reed, Jacky Rosen, Tina Smith, Angus S. King, Jr., Patrick J. Leahy, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Christopher A. Coons, Alex Padilla, Chris Van Hollen, Margaret Wood Hassan, Elizabeth Warren, Jeff Merkley, Catherine Cortez Masto, Tim Kaine, Cory A. Booker.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 736.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Andre B. Mathis, of Tennessee, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 736, Andre B. Mathis, of Tennessee, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit.

Charles E. Schumer, Mazie Hirono, Martin Heinrich, Tim Kaine, Jack Reed, Jacky Rosen, Ben Ray Lujan, Christopher A. Coons, Alex Padilla, Sheldon Whitehouse, Sherrod Brown, Debbie Stabenow, Christopher Murphy, Patrick J. Leahy, John W. Hickenlooper, Tammy Baldwin, Angus S. King.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions filed today, August 7, be waived.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Carrin F. Patman, of Texas, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Iceland; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; and that the Senate resume legislative session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Carrin F. Pat-

man, of Texas, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Iceland.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Patman nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

APPOINTMENTS AUTHORITY

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the upcoming adjournment of the Senate, the President of the Senate, the President pro tempore, and the majority and minority leaders be authorized to make appointments to commissions, committees, boards, conferences, or interparliamentary conferences authorized by law, by concurrent action of the two Houses, or by order of the Senate.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

COLOMBIA

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, on August 7, Colombia's newly elected President Gustavo Petro and Vice President Francia Marquez will begin their 4-year term. Their election represents a sharp break from the past.

The new government is inheriting every imaginable problem. Regrettably, the country has made minimal progress since the signing of the 2016 Peace Accord that ended five decades of armed conflict with the FARC, and in some parts of the country, narcotics-related violence is worse. The previous government failed to make a dent in the number of assassinations of social leaders or to hold members of the armed forces and police accountable for past atrocities. Compounded by the public health and economic shocks caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and a flood of Venezuelan refugees, Colombia remains a highly polarized society, divided between urban elites and the impoverished countryside. It will take many years to reverse decades of deeply rooted neglect, discrimination, poverty, and lawlessness.

Since 2020, the United States has invested more than \$11 billion in a

counter-drug strategy in Colombia that was never sustainable and has largely failed, as it has failed in Mexico and Central America. As long as the demand for illegal drugs in this country remains high, the only solution in source countries like Colombia is a strategy based on sustainable social and economic development, a professional, accountable police force, and a judiciary that is independent, accessible, and that the people trust.

Colombia has the advantage of being a democracy with exceptionally talented people and extraordinary geographic and biological diversity. But if the underlying causes of conflict and poverty are not addressed, the country's future stability is far from assured. I urge the White House, the State Department, and the Defense Department against pursuing the same old failed strategies. With a new government in Bogota, there is the chance to avoid repeating past mistakes and to measure progress not in the short term by the amount of money spent or the number of hectares of coca destroyed, but by long-term investments in institutions and local communities. The people of rural Colombia need our support, but not in the form of myopic approaches that have consistently failed to get at the root of the injustice, impunity, and inequality they have been struggling with for generations.

The U.S. Congress will do its part to support a strategy designed by the Colombians that is not just more of the same, that is consistent with the peace accord, that has the support of civil society, and, most importantly, that has the support of rural Colombians who have paid the highest price of past policies that have failed them.

SOUTH SUDAN

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I have spoken twice this year about the despair and insecurity that are a daily reality for the people of South Sudan, despite independence 11 years ago that held so much promise and hope for that country.

On January 6 and 31, I noted that the country's independence was a result of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement—CPA—which took years of negotiations facilitated in part by the United States, Norway, and the United Kingdom. It provided a roadmap for political stability, economic development, respect for human rights, and justice. I further noted that since then, two former warlords, President Kiir and First Vice President Machar—who were never elected—have dominated the political landscape. It is they, throughout these formative years, who have had the executive power and the responsibility to turn the aspirations of independence into meaningful improvements in the lives of their people.

Eleven years later, the country is in a state of political paralysis, and its people are coping with a widening hu-

manitarian crisis, brought on by violence instigated by government security forces, severe flooding, skyrocketing fuel costs, and acute food shortages compounded by the war in Ukraine which was a major source of grain imports for South Sudan. Millions of people have been displaced from their homes by the fighting, flooding, and hunger.

I will not take time today to recount the litany of failures of the Kiir-Machar government which I enumerated in January and which have only worsened since then. Rather, I want to call the Senate's attention to a Vatican mission of peace, unity, and reconciliation to South Sudan in early July. The visit by Cardinal Pietro Parolin came at a time when the country's leaders are apparently, though not surprisingly, seeking to evade elections and extend their stay in office illegitimately, even though the peace agreement mandated that elections be held this December.

Kiir and Machar have now proposed extending their unpopular authoritarian rule for 3 years without the consent of the people of South Sudan. The parliamentary faction of President Kiir has passed a political parties bill in which they have changed political parties' registration requirements in order to limit those who could pose a serious challenge to their continued hold on power. The text of the bill that was negotiated and agreed to by the parties was changed by Kiir's parliamentary caucus and rammed through the Parliament despite boycott and serious objections from the other parties. All these actions provide sufficient evidence to suggest that President Kiir and Machar are determined to cling to power by any means necessary.

It is no secret that President Kiir and his Deputy Machar have made the conditions for holding free and fair elections impossible, for all the reasons noted earlier. The country's leaders have done nothing to prepare for elections, preferring instead to retain power by default. By fomenting civil unrest and violence and threatening and arresting their critics, they have transformed the peace agreement into a meaningless document. Rather than peace and prosperity, it has brought dictatorship, corruption, violence, and misery.

As I said on January 31:

The sad reality is that while the South Sudanese people won their independence from Sudan, they remain captives of the same ruthless and corrupt warlords who created so much ethnic conflict, bloodshed, and misery during the civil war and who have not been held accountable.

They simply reinvented themselves as political leaders, with a stamp of legitimacy from the international community, while continuing to act like the warlords they are and always were.

They have shown no interest in implementing the R-ARCSS or any other peace agreement.

They have shown no interest in the welfare of their people.

They have shown no interest in anything except holding onto power, avoiding justice, and enriching themselves.

Real peace requires justice, and it requires respect for fundamental rights regardless of ethnicity, race, or religion. It requires free and fair elections and equitable economic development. Cardinal Pietro Parolin conveyed a clear message to President Kiir and Vice President Machar. Their churches played an indispensable role in the international effort that culminated in the 2005 comprehensive peace agreement, and they, too, have a stake in its success. Above all, President Kiir and Vice President Machar should know that the world is watching.

The ethnic and political violence, displacements, and destruction of villages and food stocks perpetrated against South Sudanese civilians in different parts of the country, including by forces loyal to them, must stop.

The arbitrary arrests, sexual assaults and rape, forced disappearance, and killings of religious, civil society, and political leaders must stop and justice done for the victims.

Those currently detained arbitrarily must be released, including Kuel Aguer Kuel, the former governor of Northern Bahr El-Ghazal, and Pastor Abraham Chol Maketh.

The daily corruption in South Sudan, including illegal loans and growing debt burden that has impoverished the current and future generations, must end, and South Sudan must begin to feed and care for its own people from its existing resources, which are sufficient if used prudently.

President Kiir and Riek Machar are responsible for the chronic hunger, insecurity, economic, and political crises in the country, and they have the power to bring peace and stability to South Sudan, which is a matter of urgent priority.

But the country is certain to disintegrate further if Kiir and Machar continue to hold it hostage to their individual interests at the expense of the lives and livelihoods of the South Sudanese people. They must prepare to step down and allow the country to recover and rebuild from the ruins of their policies.

I commend South Sudanese civil society and pro-democracy movements, such as the People's Coalition for Civic Action—PCCA—for their efforts in creating awareness about the plight of the people of South Sudan and for their nonviolent campaign for freedom and democracy. They have our support.

Finally, I want to again urge the Biden administration to listen to the people of South Sudan. I commend recent steps by the State Department to recognize the fallacy of continuing to support a failed peace agreement that South Sudan's own leaders do not support, and I urge the European Union and Intergovernmental Authority for Development—IGAD—countries to take similar action. There is no point in admonishing two failed leaders to