

which just celebrated 50 years of being an All-Volunteer Force, is their belief that if they do so, they will have to put a lot of their lives on hold, that others who don't join the military will move ahead while they might find themselves limited or put on hold by conditions beyond their control.

What message does it send to someone who is thinking about going into an ROTC Program and being an officer, going to a service academy; what message does it send to someone who might be a young officer who is thinking "Do I make this a career or do I leave and go somewhere else?" when a single Member of this body has decided to take it upon himself to punish hundreds of officers and block their professional advancement because of something they had nothing to do with?

We should be sending a message to these officers that we are proud of them. We should be sending a message to them that we are thankful to them for the sacrifices they and their families have made. We should not be sending a loud message that we are going to hold their careers hostage, disrespect them, delay or postpone their appointments.

I would urge my colleague from Alabama, but what I really want to urge is I want to urge the Republican minority in this because I don't want to see Members of this body enable this kind of behavior because where do we stop? All the hundred Members of this body could find things in the Pentagon they are not happy about. It might be the travel policy for Senator TUBERVILLE. It might be cluster munitions for someone else. It might be whether the military is doing enough to battle sexual harassment for somebody else. We can all find things in the Pentagon that we are not wild about, and to the extent that we do, we should be trying to persuade our colleagues to make the policies better. But when we make that effort in good faith and fall short, the last thing we should do—the last thing we should do—is take our own disappointment out on and punish people who are serving this country who have had nothing to do with the policy we disagree with.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

#### MANHATTAN PROJECT

Mr. HAWLEY. Madam President, today, there are new revelations, new evidence about the extent of the radioactive contamination that has plagued the St. Louis area since the forties.

Where did this radioactive contamination come from? Simple, it came from the Federal Government. Beginning in the forties in the Manhattan

Project, St. Louis was a center of development for uranium. But what did the Federal Government do when the Manhattan Project concluded? Well, we know more today after 15,000 pages of documents that had previously not been released were obtained by a parents' rights group in St. Louis and shared with news organizations.

Here is what we learned. The Federal Government gave this radioactive waste, fobbed it off, onto companies in the region—who did what?—who poisoned the water, who poisoned the soil, who poisoned the air, and the government knew about it. Oh, yes, they knew about it. They knew about it for decades, and for year upon year upon year, they played down the threats. They tried to hide the evidence. They told the people of St. Louis: Oh, everything is fine. Don't be worried. Don't worry at all. It is all fine.

Meanwhile, kids were playing along a creek filled with radioactive waste. Kids were going to school in buildings contaminated by the waste. Residents were coming out to houses, building homes in areas contaminated.

And then the government wonders why the levels of cancer and autoimmune diseases and rare genetic disorders have spiked in the St. Louis region. Oh, we know. We know. It is because of the radioactive material from the Federal Government dumped into the St. Louis water and air and soil.

Let's just review what we have learned. We now know that as early as 1949—that is right, 1949—the Federal Government paid a contractor—a private contractor—to dispose of waste. But instead, that contractor left the radioactive waste in steel drums sitting out in the open in the elements, right next to a creek called Coldwater Creek, familiar to just about everybody who lives in the St. Louis region.

It is familiar because whole housing developments and neighborhoods and—oh, yeah—schools have been built along Coldwater Creek. As early as the forties, that radioactive waste begins to leech out of those steel drums into the water.

And it gets worse. The same Federal Government paid another contractor to dispose of other waste. And what did they do? Rather than dispose of it, they drove it to a public landfill. And in the early seventies, they just dumped the waste right into the landfill. They dumped it right into the landfill.

"How did this happen?" you might ask. Well, as it turns out, that is a violation of Federal law.

You think?

But what did the Federal Government do about it in the seventies, when they learned that this government-paid contractor had carried out this illegal act? Did they prosecute him? Did they fine him? Did they at least have a hearing and ask some questions? No, no, and no. They did nothing. So the waste seeped into the soil, spread into the soil, and all the time the people of St. Louis were told: Don't worry. Don't worry. It is all going to be fine.

In 1976, government tests—government tests—revealed that the levels of radiation in the creek water were at extremely dangerous levels—1976. Here we sit in 2023, and we are told by the same Federal Government—the EPA, Department of Energy, Army Corps—that the cleanup of Coldwater Creek won't be done until at least 2038.

Earlier this year, the school alongside Coldwater Creek, an elementary school, had to close, apparently permanently, because of radioactive contamination found inside the school. In response to that, this body took action and passed my bill to mandate Federal cleanup of the school and, if it can't be cleaned up, a new school to be built.

I thank my colleagues for their unanimous support for that activity, but that is not going to be enough. No, it is clear today that further action is needed because the Federal Government has caused this harm. I want to be crystal clear about this. This is not the people of St. Louis saying that we had a weather incident, which would be bad enough. It is not a natural disaster, which would be terrible. No, no, no, this is their government using them, essentially, as human guinea pigs. This is their government dumping radioactive material into their water, into their soil, and then lying to them about it, not even for a year or 2 years but for three-quarters of a century.

And it still continues today. As I stand here, the Army Corps of Engineers insists there needs to be no further testing either around the elementary school, which is now closed, or anywhere else in the St. Louis region. And, at the same time, the EPA is admitting that the radioactive contamination of the soil has spread further than they previously admitted.

I mean, what is it going to take to get some basic justice for the people of St. Louis? We are talking about working people. These are people who moved to these regions of the city in search of a quiet neighborhood, a good school for their kids, an opportunity for a better future. These are parents who allowed their kids to play in the creek because wasn't it awesome to have a creek right by their neighborhood. These are parents who sent their kids to the school trusting they would get a great education. And what did they get instead? Exposure to radioactive contamination.

This shouldn't happen in this country. When it does happen, the Federal Government should make it right. That is what needs to happen now. I am sick to death of hearing the excuses from this government for decades on end. I am sick of the lies that they have told to the people of St. Louis, to working people from neighborhoods all across the city, that everything is just going to be fine: Just trust us; it is all going to work out.

I am tired of this administration, which has still refused to answer my repeated pleas—repeated—to mount a cleanup effort at Jana Elementary

School, to clean up Coldwater Creek. All we get is finger-pointing and blame-shifting. The Department of Energy says it is the Army Corps' fault. The Army Corps says it is the Department of Energy's fault. Heck, for the recent news reports, the Department of Energy wouldn't even comment. They referred the reporter to the Department of Justice. I mean, what is next?

Here is what needs to happen next. It is time for this body to act. In the past, when we have asked citizens—members of this Nation—when we asked them to bear unique burdens, when we have put them in harm's way, we have said: If you will serve your country in this way, we will stand with you. That is essentially what the people of St. Louis have been asked to do.

The Manhattan Project was a national project for war. The people of St. Louis have borne the burden of it. It is time for the government to make it right.

What should happen is this. The Federal Government should pay medical bills for any single resident who has contracted cancer or an autoimmune virus or genetic disorder because of exposure to radioactive contamination. The Federal Government needs to act.

I will introduce legislation that will create a fund to make the people of St. Louis whole. Sadly, for some, it is too late. This has been going on for decades and too many members of our community have already been lost to cancer, to disease, to the hazards that were imposed on them by their government without their knowledge and without their consent. But that is no reason not to act now. We should act and act swiftly to provide remediation, to provide support for every member of this community who has suffered because of the actions of the Federal Government. We have done it in the past. We have done it for our veterans. We have done it for other folks who have been negatively impacted by the nuclear program dating back to the forties. We should do it now in the city and region of St. Louis. I will introduce legislation that will provide this support, that will provide this justice to the people of St. Louis.

I will close by saying this. It is justice that we are talking about. This is not a handout to the people of St. Louis. They are not asking for a giveaway. They are asking for some basic fairness. When their government imposes on them disease and disaster because of nuclear contamination, the least their government can do is to make it right. And I will come to this floor as long as it takes until we make it right for the men and women and children of St. Louis.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

#### BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, if cloture is invoked on the Kotagal nomination, all

postcloture time be considered expired at 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, July 13; further, that if cloture is invoked on the Uhlmann nomination, all postcloture time be considered expired and the vote on the confirmation be at a time to be determined by the majority leader in consultation with the Republican leader; further, that following the cloture vote on the Uhlmann nomination, the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each; further, that at 1:45 p.m., the Senate proceed to executive session to vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the Bloomekatz nomination.

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

Mr. SCHUMER. For the information of the Senate, the 4 p.m. votes will be the last votes of the day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to be allowed to speak for 10 minutes prior to the scheduled vote.

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

#### REMEMBERING LOWELL PALMER WEICKER, JR.

Mr. MURPHY. I come to the floor to talk about one of the greatest citizens, leaders, and public servants in the history of my State, Lowell Palmer Weicker, Jr., who died June 28.

We held services for him in Greenwich on Monday, and I want to celebrate him for a moment with my colleagues, because they don't make them like Lowell Weicker any longer.

Lowell Weicker served virtually every capacity you could helping to lead our State. He was a first selectman. He was a State representative. He was a Congressman. He was a Senator here in this Chamber, and he was a Governor. But throughout his long, storied tenure as an elected official—for most of that time a Republican, as Governor an Independent—he led a life that was led by one simple axiom: Do what is right.

He put his principles, his convictions, and what he thought was right for our State above every other political consideration—certainly above party. He bucked his party here over and over and over again. His autobiography was titled "Maverick." But he also made decisions for the betterment of the State that ran directly contrary to his own political interests. And I will talk about the most famous of those decisions, those calls that he made, in a moment, when he was Governor.

I got to know Lowell Weicker only in the last decade of his life, and I am sorry for that because he played a very big role in my decision to pursue public service as a vocation.

Lowell Weicker was born in Paris. He was raised on Park Avenue in Manhattan and Oyster Bay on Long Island. He followed his father's footsteps through prep school, to college at Yale. He graduated Yale in 1953, University of

Virginia Law School in 1958. He served 2 years in the Army as an artillery officer.

He began his political career as a local representative serving his town of Greenwich. He was a State representative, and then he was first selectman. He ran first for Congress in 1968. He unseated a three-term Democrat representing Fairfield County. And from that first race, you could see that Lowell Weicker was going to be a different kind of political leader.

He ran to the left of his Democratic opponent on the issue of Vietnam. He ran for Congress as a Republican who opposed President Nixon's war. And as Congressman, he staked out a series of contrary positions to his party, earning him, early on, the reputation of someone who was just going to do what he thought was right over and over and over. Later in life, he said: There is going to be this crucial moment in your career. The question is whether you mature or whether you are going to be an ideologue. Lowell Weicker was never an ideologue. And there is no question of whether he matured. He was proud of the fact that he changed his stance on issues over the course of his career.

When he got to Congress, he supported prayer in schools. He ended up as a Senator, here, successfully leading the opposition to President Reagan's push for a constitutional amendment to allow organized prayer in public schools. He changed. He matured. He didn't run from that. He was proud of it.

In the Senate, he is probably best known to be the first Republican to call for President Nixon's resignation. Speaking about his Republican Party that he was so proud of, he said:

Let me [be] clear, because I have got to have my partisan moment, Republicans do not cover up; Republicans do not go ahead and threaten; Republicans do not go ahead and commit illegal acts; and, God knows, Republicans don't view their fellow Americans as enemies to be harassed. . . . I can assure you, this Republican and those I serve with, look upon all Americans as human beings to be loved and won.

In 1981, he was the only Republican to vote against President Reagan's first budget. As I mentioned, he fought hard against that constitutional amendment to allow organized prayer in schools because he came to believe very deeply in the separation of church and State. But maybe what defines Lowell Weicker's career in the Senate, more than Watergate, was his ability to see the future. He always talked about the fact that he was living for the future.

When standing up for people living with HIV and AIDS was controversial, Lowell Weicker was leading the fight on the Senate floor to put early money into AIDS research. When it wasn't a foregone conclusion that we would make sure that people with disabilities had access to buildings in this country, Lowell Weicker wrote the Americans with Disabilities Act. It passed just