

RECESS

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess until 2:15 p.m.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:23 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. LUJÁN).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant 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. 364, Michael G. Whitaker, of Vermont, to be Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration for the term of five years.

Charles E. Schumer, Maria Cantwell, Christopher A. Coons, John W. Hickenlooper, Sherrod Brown, Richard Blumenthal, Tim Kaine, Sheldon Whitehouse, Martin Heinrich, Christopher Murphy, Alex Padilla, Gary C. Peters, Chris Van Hollen, Brian Schatz, Jeanne Shaheen, Patty Murray, Catherine Cortez Masto.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Michael G. Whitaker, of Vermont, to be Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration for the term of five years, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN), the Senator from Utah (Mr. ROMNEY), the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT), and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) would have voted "yea" and the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) would have voted "yea."

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 94, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 262 Ex.]

YEAS—94

Baldwin	Brown	Collins
Barrasso	Budd	Coons
Bennet	Butler	Cornyn
Blackburn	Cantwell	Cortez Masto
Blumenthal	Capito	Cotton
Booker	Cardin	Cramer
Boozman	Carper	Cruz
Braun	Casey	Daines
Britt	Cassidy	Duckworth

Durbin	Lummis	Schmitt
Ernst	Manchin	Schumer
Fetterman	Markey	Shaheen
Fischer	Marshall	Sinema
Gillibrand	McConnell	Smith
Graham	Menendez	Stabenow
Grassley	Merkley	Sullivan
Hagerty	Moran	Tester
Hassan	Mullin	Thune
Hawley	Murkowski	Tillis
Heinrich	Murphy	Tuberville
Hickenlooper	Murray	Van Hollen
Hirono	Ossoff	Vance
Hyde-Smith	Paul	Warner
Johnson	Peters	Warnock
Kaine	Reed	Warren
Kelly	Ricketts	Welch
Kennedy	Risch	Whitehouse
King	Rosen	Wicker
Klobuchar	Rounds	Wyden
Lankford	Rubio	Young
Lee	Sanders	
Luján	Schatz	

NOT VOTING—6

Crapo	Padilla	Scott (FL)
Hoeven	Romney	Scott (SC)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WELCH). On this vote, the yeas are 94, the nays are 0.

The motion is agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all postcloture time be considered expired at 5 p.m. today.

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

Mr. DURBIN. For information of the Senate, Members should expect two rollcall votes starting at 5 p.m.

ISRAEL

Mr. President, much has been said and written about the horrific Hamas terrorist attack on Israel on October 7. The wanton slaughter of more than a thousand Israelis and an estimated 200 hostages still being held is hard to fathom. One fact tells the grim story. More Jews died on this day than any time since the Holocaust. It was not just another bad day in the Middle East. It was a premeditated slaughter of historic proportion.

The crisis that has followed has touched many in my home State of Illinois who have family in Israel. On Friday, I was relieved to learn of the release of Natalie and Judith Raanan from Evanston who were being held as hostages by Hamas in Gaza. Another two women, thankfully, were released yesterday. Now the Hamas terrorists must release the remaining hostages captured on October 7. I pray every moment for their safe return.

Throughout my career in Congress, I have supported U.S. assistance to help Israel defend itself from those bent on its destruction. I am not naive. I know the creation of the nation of Israel was controversial in its time. It still is to many today. Yet it struck me that the people of that region deserve an opportunity to live in peace, to find one refuge in the world they can count on. And I have always supported Israel because of that.

I will strongly support the President's proposed supplemental request to help Israel, Ukraine, and other urgent humanitarian needs.

The Hamas attack, which had nothing to do with solving the problems between the Jewish people and the Palestinians, was really not advancing a two-state solution or even seeking long-term peace. It was a reminder that there are still those in the region who refuse to accept Israel's right to exist—literally, their right to exist—and will take any actions to destroy it.

But in acknowledging Israel's understandable rage and pain, I believe President Biden gave wise counsel to learn from America's mistakes made after the similarly traumatic attacks on 9/11. I remember that day. I was in this building, just outside the Chamber, 9/11/2001. I couldn't imagine what had happened to our Nation as we were evacuating the Capitol to stand out on the lawn and pray another airplane was not directed toward the Capitol or the White House.

It changed America in some ways for the better. We were united. We were determined. We were really in focus with one another to try to make this a safe country for our kids and grandkids. And it divided us as well. We made some decisions which were thoughtful, wise, and stood the test of history and some that did not.

Hamas, just like al-Qaida in those days, must be destroyed. But Israel should be wary of the kind of overreach we found after 9/11. You do not want an ill-thought occupation of Gaza to become your Fallujah. You do not want to dehumanize the innocents on the periphery who are not your enemy and will have to be your neighbors in the future.

Hamas is a terrorist organization that has a long and cynical history of hiding its military essence among and around innocent civilians. They dare their enemies to attack, only to realize the collateral damage is going to be devastating. It makes any effort to root them out and rescue hostages extraordinarily difficult.

Let us be clear, the Palestinian people are not Hamas. As a democracy, Israel must follow the rules of war and not target civilians or conduct disproportionate or indiscriminate attacks. We are already seeing a distressing humanitarian crisis building in Gaza, which has the potential to become worse.

As such, I joined several Senate colleagues in calling for the U.S. humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, a move President Biden made last week. The suffering of the Palestinians cannot be ignored. Tom Freidman said it even better last week when he said:

Hamas has not only taken [Israel] hostage; it has taken [Gaza civilians] hostage as well.

The passions and pain from these events are not limited to the Middle East. They are manifesting in all of our Nation, even in my State of Illinois. Ten days ago, a 6-year-old Palestinian-American, Wadea Al-Fayoume, was murdered in a suburb of Chicago in a mindless, heartbreaking act. Almost

every hour of every day, there has been a photograph of this beautiful little boy in a "Happy Birthday" hat standing, smiling, looking at the camera. It is hard to imagine he answered his door, and simply because he was a Palestinian descendant, he was attacked by a crazed man who killed him and then attempted to kill his mother. I was glad President Biden mentioned Wadea last week in an address to the Nation. I have that family in my thoughts and prayers as they grieve for the little boy and the mother who continues to recover. There have also been fears of a bomb threat at a synagogue outside of Chicago. A weekend protest in Skokie ended in shots fired.

President Biden was eloquent when he reminded us such hate must stop and we are all Americans. I have my differences with George W. Bush, but I think one of the most profound things he said or did after 9/11 was to announce publicly that he did not believe those who believed in the Muslim faith were wrong at the heart. He believed that it was a religion of peace that some were trying to corrupt. Those statements were so critical at the time when hatred could line up at just any moment.

Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and anti-Arab hate have no place in America or anywhere in the world.

During my time in Congress, I have been an advocate of a two-state solution, one that provides safe and secure nations for both the Israeli and Palestinian people. There have been attempts at peace and two states offered some hope—Israeli peace with Egypt and Jordan, and the Oslo Accords.

Some leaders, such as former Israeli Prime Minister Rabin and Egyptian President Sadat paid with their lives pursuing peace. But for too long, spoilers on both sides undermined a peaceful two-state solution. They pursued narrow, selfish political goals, too often determined to stay in power above all else. Settlements have expanded, as have continued eruptions of violence.

Regional powers have claimed to care about but only paid lip service to the Palestinian people. The Palestinian authority has been mired in corruption and a lack of new leadership for more than two decades, too often at the very expense of the Palestinian people.

I know it will be hard, but I hope out of the ashes of pain of this crisis, there will be a renewed focus on a two-state solution. Out of the devastating Yom Kippur war came the unimaginable at the time—a historic peace treaty between Egypt and Israel that still endures. With the right leaders on both sides, it can be done.

We here in the United States have a responsibility for a renewed push towards finding a solution that allows Israel and Palestinian children to, once and for all, live together safely and peacefully.

I yield the floor.

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

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

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, 10 days ago, the family of Omer Neutra lit 23 candles on his birthday cake. But unlike previous birthdays, the candles kept burning because Omer wasn't there to blow them out.

Omer is one of the more than 200 people in Israel who were taken hostage by Hamas. The grandson of Holocaust survivors, he is an avid athlete and loves the New York Knicks.

He deferred his acceptance to Binghamton University to spend a gap year in Israel before he joined the IDF. On the day of the attack, he was working as a tank commander defending the Gaza border. He was last seen being forcibly removed at the hands of Hamas terrorists.

Since Omer's abduction, my office has been working with his family. We are doing everything we can to secure his safe release and the release of all the Americans who are still unaccounted for in Israel. I am grateful that the two American hostages released on Friday are doing well, but there are still several American citizens, many of whom may be injured or unwell, who remain in captivity. We must not stop fighting until all of them are safe.

On Thursday, I met with the family of 3-year-old Abigail Mor Edan. Her family told me the harrowing story of her and her two siblings. Abigail's brother Michael and her sister Amalia locked themselves in a closet while their mother was slaughtered in their home. Abigail was with her father who was shot while holding on to her. His body was later found, but Abigail is still missing.

I also met with the family of Keith and Aviva Siegel, grandparents who were kidnapped from kibbutz Kfar Aza. Keith is an American citizen and was seen being abducted with his wife.

The family of Itay Chen has been in contact with my office too. Itay is a 19-year-old who was born in New York City and is now serving in the IDF. He was supposed to return home to his family in just a few days to celebrate his brother's bar mitzvah.

Another hostage, named Sagui Dekel-Chen, is a U.S. citizen who was last seen fighting off the terrorists. His pregnant wife and two young daughters survived while hiding in their family's safe room.

I have also heard from the family of Judy Weinstein, who was born in New York State. She and her husband Gad were on a walk when the air raid sirens blared. The couple hid face down in a field as hundreds of rockets rained overhead. Judy called an ambulance because she and her husband had been shot, but the ambulance was unable to reach them, and the couple is now missing.

None of these people—these innocent people—deserve to be abandoned. They

are Americans. We must fight for them as if they were our own sons, our own daughters, our own grandmothers and grandfathers. These people are our family, our lifeblood, our heart and soul.

My commitment to these families is that we will not give up on them. We will go to the ends of the Earth to bring their loved ones home. And my message to the terrorists is: We will not give in. Your darkness and your evil will not destroy us.

We will keep our hope alive and rally around these families. We will light our loved ones' candles and never blow them out.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes prior to the scheduled rollcall vote.

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, last week, the Biden administration proposed a spending package that included funding meant for humanitarian relief—\$3.5 billion for migration and refugee assistance in Ukraine, Israel, and Gaza; \$5.7 billion for the U.S. Agency for International Development. The Biden administration says that our money will pay for "life-saving humanitarian programming in Israel and areas impacted by the situation in the West Bank and Gaza."

We have two problems to address. First, the U.S. Government is scared to call the terrorist attack a terrorist attack. Second, this is just one more embarrassing example of the Biden administration's two-faced approach to the people of Israel.

I have spoken at length about the money pipeline between Iran and Hamas, but there is a similar pipeline that appears to be running between Hamas and the U.S. taxpayer. Every dollar we send that is earmarked for Gaza or the West Bank is another dollar Hamas can put into their pocket.

Last week, I spoke about the U.N. Relief and Works Agency and how this false humanitarian mission has been corrupted by Hamas and terrorist sympathizers. This has been confirmed by multiple NGOs, the media, Joe Biden's own advisers, and whoever published and then deleted this post from the UNRWA Twitter account.

Hamas stole those supplies and UNRWA covered it up. Remember, this is a U.N. body that pulls 93 percent of its funding from global government. In 2021 alone, UNRWA took \$338 million from the United States, \$118 million from the European Commission, and

hundreds of millions of dollars from individual European nations.

Since 2021, Biden has sent UNRWA a billion dollars. A billion dollars. USAID funds more than \$21 billion worth of UN programming, and they sent millions of dollars to UNRWA. And now the President is ready to send them billions more. If the American people knew what their tax dollars were actually being used for, they would be outraged. And I believe it is time for them to know.

We know that Hamas steals UNRWA money and supplies and stores their weapons in UNRWA facilities. We also know that they fill those facilities with human shields. But something that hasn't gotten nearly enough attention is how our tax dollars are radicalizing the next generation of Hamas extremists.

UN Watch published a report in March exposing UNRWA-affiliated schools for what they are: indoctrination centers. Bear in mind, this is UN Watch that published this report and exposed the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees for what they were doing. One employee shared an Instagram post calling a teenage Palestine Islamic Jihad fighter who was killed in a shootout a "little cub who fights like a thousand lions." That was an employee of the U.N. Relief and Works Agency who shared that Instagram post calling a teenage Jihadi fighter a "little cub who fights like a thousand lions."

A teacher posted a picture of Hitler with the caption:

Hitler, are you sleeping? Wake up, honey, there are still some people you need to burn.

UN Watch also found official curriculum from last year celebrating Dalal Mughrabi. In 1978, she led a band of PLO terrorists in a massacre that left 38 Israeli civilians dead. Thirteen of her victims were children. Another piece of propaganda written for ninth graders described the firebombing of a U.S. bus as a "barbecue party." One UNRWA teacher assigned seventh grade boys anti-Semitic poetry that urged the students to expel Israelis "with blood and flesh" from Palestine. All of this was subsidized by the American taxpayer.

Hamas is responsible for the October 7 massacre in Israel. But anyone who believes that Hamas is a solo actor is willfully ignorant. They have support. And right now, Biden's foreign policy is providing much of that support, not only through the money pipeline but through his absolute refusal to keep Iran in check. This isn't just a U.S. problem. It is a worldwide problem that we will not solve until the money stops flowing and Hamas is eradicated.

Fortunately, at least when it comes to UNRWA, accountability is built in. Global governments provide that funding, which means we can take it away. The United States needs to step up and lead.

I have introduced legislation to halt that funding until Iran is expelled from

the U.N. and investigated for violations. We have to get this job done. Our legislation would accomplish two goals. It will destroy that pipeline of taxpayer dollars from the United States to Hamas and disrupt the Biden administration's policy of appeasement toward Iran.

Everything President Biden has done has made this world more dangerous. But nothing has had more immediate and catastrophic consequences for our allies than his refusal to treat the Iranian regime like the dangerous adversary that it actually is. He sent Robert Malley, Ariane Tabatabai, and other Iranian assets to renegotiate the failed nuclear deal. Administration officials allowed Ms. Tabatabai's security clearance to stand even after it became clear she was operating under the advice of Iranian officials. He agreed to hand over a \$6 billion ransom payment and then insisted that the world's most prolific state sponsor of terror would dedicate every penny to humanitarian aid.

And in the hours following the worst massacre of Jews since the Holocaust, he insisted that there was no connection between Iran and Hamas and their terrorist acts. Never mind that a week later, Hamas leadership met with the Iranian foreign minister in Qatar.

Biden's foreign policy is fatally flawed; that has become evident. And if we don't force him to reverse course, he will further endanger the American people and our allies and our safety and security.

I yield the floor.

VOTE ON WHITAKER NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Whitaker nomination?

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT).

The result was announced—yeas 98, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 263 Ex.]

YEAS—98

Baldwin	Casey	Gillibrand
Barrasso	Cassidy	Graham
Bennet	Collins	Grassley
Blackburn	Coons	Hagerty
Blumenthal	Cornyn	Hassan
Booker	Cortez Masto	Hawley
Boozman	Cotton	Heinrich
Braun	Cramer	Hickenlooper
Britt	Crapo	Hirono
Brown	Cruz	Hoeven
Budd	Daines	Hyde-Smith
Butler	Duckworth	Johnson
Cantwell	Durbin	Kaine
Capito	Ernst	Kelly
Cardin	Fetterman	Kennedy
Carper	Fischer	King

Klobuchar	Paul	Stabenow
Lankford	Peters	Sullivan
Lee	Reed	Tester
Lujan	Ricketts	Thune
Lummis	Risch	Tillis
Manchin	Romney	Tuberville
Markey	Rosen	Van Hollen
Marshall	Rounds	Vance
McConnell	Rubio	Warner
Menendez	Sanders	Warnock
Merkley	Schatz	Warren
Moran	Schmitt	Welch
Mullin	Schumer	Whitehouse
Murkowski	Scott (FL)	Wicker
Murphy	Shaheen	Wyden
Murray	Sinema	Young
Ossoff	Smith	

NOT VOTING—2

Padilla Scott (SC)

The nomination was confirmed.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

CLOTURE MOTION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

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. 116, Jessica Looman, of Minnesota, to be Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division, Department of Labor.

Charles E. Schumer, Bernard Sanders, Christopher Murphy, Mazie Hirono, Tammy Baldwin, Margaret Wood Hassan, Richard J. Durbin, John W. Hickenlooper, Tina Smith, Sheldon Whitehouse, Catherine Cortez Masto, Brian Schatz, Gary C. Peters, Jacky Rosen, Alex Padilla, Michael F. Bennet, Jeff Merkley.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum called has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination Jessica Looman, of Minnesota, to be Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division, Department of Labor, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 51, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 264 Ex.]

YEAS—51

Baldwin	Cardin	Fetterman
Bennet	Carper	Gillibrand
Blumenthal	Casey	Hassan
Booker	Coons	Heinrich
Brown	Cortez Masto	Hickenlooper
Butler	Duckworth	Hirono
Cantwell	Durbin	Kaine