

ago, Harvard President Abbott Lowell proposed a numerical quota on Jewish students. His reasoning?

The anti-Semitic feeling among the students is increasing, and it grows in proportion to the increase in the number of Jews.

So one Harvard president says that the presence of Jews causes anti-Semitism. A hundred years later, another says that calls for Jewish genocide really depend on the context in which they are made. Frankly, you would be forgiven for wondering whether anti-Semitism isn't just business as usual at Harvard.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. President, now on one final matter, this week, the United Nations wrapped up its latest conference on climate change. World leaders took private jets to Dubai, and the Biden administration's Special Climate Envoy, John Kerry, returned triumphant with a joint statement condemning the evils of coal power.

Elite liberals sure are obsessed with killing jobs in places like Kentucky. But that is only the half of it.

Yet again, the maximum hardships the Biden administration is happy to heap on American workers and consumers are producing no meaningful benefits on the world stage. The past 3 years have been an endless parade of canceled permits and new regulations that make it harder than ever to produce affordable and reliable American energy.

By canceling the Keystone XL Pipeline on day one, President Biden also canceled as many as 59,000 jobs that were needed to build it. And, now, the President's envoy has returned with another meaningless pledge that doesn't even compel the world's biggest emitters of carbon.

Just look at the numbers. U.S. emissions are projected to fall by 4 percent this year. Meanwhile, China's are projected to increase by twice as much. Last year, Beijing green-lit four times as much new coal power as they did the year before, but the Biden administration apparently wants us to believe it is American producers and job creators and workers who aren't pulling their weight.

So the U.N. climate conference is a good reminder that the elite leftwing obsession with self-inflicted climate penance is not just an American problem.

Canada's Liberal government, for its part, has a bold new plan: paying farmers to make sure their cattle don't burp so much. Apparently, Canada's plan is to build around a carbon credit—the nebulous commodity that supposedly negates carbon emissions from activities like flying private jets, except, in this case, the subjects aren't elites looking to ease their conscience on the way to a conference in Dubai. They are the workers who put food on the table.

Canada's so-called "Reducing Enteric Emissions from Beef Cattle" proposal would grant carbon credits to farmers

who feed their cows special diets to reduce burping.

Well, it sounds an awful lot like the way Washington bureaucrats like to tell middle-class Americans what kind of car to drive and what kind of stove to use. It also sounds entirely ridiculous.

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. MORAN. 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.

The Senator from Kansas.

FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, the list of things that we can do but haven't done is extensive. It is long.

We need to chip away at that list and get our work done as 2023 comes to a close. Today, I want to highlight the urgent need to pass a long-term—a long-term—not a continuation of little, short extensions but a long-term FAA reauthorization legislation.

The current FAA reauthorization expired on September 30, in which a subsequent extension was passed until the end of this year—that is not many days away.

Congress is now progressing toward another short-term extension until mid-March 2024.

I serve as the lead Republican and ranking member of the Aviation Subcommittee on the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, and I stated at the very beginning of my tenure in that position the importance of passing a long-term reauthorization. And I am here today to continue to beat that drum.

Continuous short-term extensions are detrimental to the Agency, the industry, and the flying public. This is about public safety. We have been genuinely and rightfully concerned about the flying public, and reauthorization of the FAA bill, as we have developed it, is an important component of making people safer as they fly.

Multiple-year reauthorization is necessary for long-term planning and growth of the civil aviation industry.

I come from the air capital of the world, Kansas, and we know the importance of this piece of legislation in our ability to compete globally and to defend our Nation in this time of national security needs.

Multiple-year reauthorization allows for planning and growth, including the maintenance and modernization of aviation infrastructure and technologies. If the United States is to remain a leader in the aerospace domain, it is critical that we provide the FAA the resources and the tools they require.

We spent months working on the legislation. It is designed to and will improve the capabilities of the Federal

Aviation Administration. The U.S. House of Representatives has passed an FAA reauthorization, and they did so last July. Unfortunately, the Senate has yet to move a bill out of the committee.

In November, the Aviation Subcommittee convened once again to address the close calls and near misses that have recently plagued our Nation's air space—incidents that indicate, now more than ever, that our aviation system needs certainty and stability provided, in part, by long-term authorization by Congress.

While I was pleased to see my colleagues come together this past October in a vote of 98 to 0—98 to nothing—in the Senate to confirm Mr. Mike Whitaker as the FAA Administrator, I implore—I request—my colleagues to once again find that collaborative spirit, that way forward, to address FAA reauthorization.

Our colleague in the House, the House Transportation chairman, SAM GRAVES, recently held a hearing on the consequences of a failure to pass a long-term FAA reauthorization bill. While the hearing touched on a myriad of issues that continued FAA extensions would present, the witnesses particularly highlighted these items: airport programs and project delivery impacts due to uncertainty in planning; the inability of the FAA to adjust to emerging technologies; and workforce issues for the entire aviation system, particularly air traffic control staffing, which has led to continued delays and cancellations for the flying public.

Mr. Rich Santa, president of the National Air Traffic Controllers Association, summarized it this way—and I am quoting him:

The single most important action Congress can take for the safety of the national airspace system would be to pass a long-term, comprehensive FAA Reauthorization bill [and put it] into law before the end of the year.

Our aviation system cannot make needed advancements and improvements if we continue to allow the status quo, which has near-term and long-term implications.

So, once again, I stand ready to work with my colleagues, the chairman and the ranking Member of the full committee; my colleague Senator DUCKWORTH from Illinois, my chairman of the subcommittee that I am the ranking member of. I stand here ready to not only encourage my colleagues but to put my work where my mouth is and make sure that we take every step possible to find that sweet spot, that needle—which I don't think is that small of a needle hole—to get us FAA reauthorized long term. Our aviation system depends upon it and, most importantly, my Kansas constituents and all Americans depend upon, for their safety, this piece of legislation.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois.

ISRAEL

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise to speak on two issues, but, first, I would

like to ask unanimous consent that the New York Times article entitled “We Are No Strangers to Human Suffering, but We’ve Seen Nothing Like the Siege of Gaza” be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Times, Dec. 11, 2023]

WE ARE NO STRANGERS TO HUMAN SUFFERING,
BUT WE’VE SEEN NOTHING LIKE THE SIEGE
OF GAZA

(By Michelle Nunn, Tjada D’Oyen McKenna,
Jan Egeland, Abby Maxman, Jeremy
Konyndyk and Janti Soeripto)

We are no strangers to human suffering—to conflict, to natural disasters, to some of the world’s largest and gravest catastrophes. We were there when fighting erupted in Khartoum, Sudan. As bombs rained down on Ukraine. When earthquakes leveled southern Turkey and northern Syria. As the Horn of Africa faced its worst drought in years. The list goes on.

But as the leaders of some of the world’s largest global humanitarian organizations, we have seen nothing like the siege of Gaza. In the more than two months since the horrifying attack on Israel that killed more than 1,200 people and resulted in some 240 abductions, about 18,000 Gazans—including more than 7,500 children—have been killed, according to the Gazan health ministry. More children have been reported killed in this conflict than in all major global conflicts combined last year.

The atrocities committed by Hamas on Oct. 7 were unconscionable and depraved, and the taking and holding of hostages is abhorrent. The calls for their release are urgent and justified. But the right to self-defense does not and cannot require unleashing this humanitarian nightmare on millions of civilians. It is not a path to accountability, healing or peace. In no other war we can think of in this century have civilians been so trapped, without any avenue or option to escape to save themselves and their children.

Most of our organizations have been operating in Gaza for decades. But we can do nothing remotely adequate to address the level of suffering there without an immediate and complete cease-fire and an end to the siege. The aerial bombardments have rendered our jobs impossible. The withholding of water, fuel, food and other basic goods has created an enormous scale of need that aid alone cannot offset.

Global leaders—and especially the United States government—must understand that we cannot save lives under these conditions. A significant change in approach from the U.S. government is needed today to pull Gaza back from this abyss.

For a start, the Biden administration must stop its diplomatic interference at the United Nations, blocking calls for a cease-fire.

Since the pause in fighting ended, we are again witnessing an exceptionally high level of bombardment, and at increasing ferocity. The few areas left in Gaza that are untouched by bombardment are shrinking by the hour, forcing more and more civilians to seek safety that does not exist. Over 80 percent of 2.3 million Gazans are now displaced. The newest Israeli offensive is now forcing them to cluster on a tiny sliver of land.

The bombardment is not the only thing brutally cutting lives short. The siege of—and blockades surrounding—Gaza have led to a critical food scarcity, cutoffs of medical supplies and electricity, and a lack of clean water. There is barely any medical care to be found in the enclave and few medications. Surgeons are working by the light of their

mobile phones, without anesthetics. They are using dishcloths as bandages. The risk of waves of waterborne and infectious disease will only grow in the increasingly overcrowded living conditions of the displaced.

One of our colleagues in Gaza recently described their struggle to feed an orphaned infant who had been rescued from the rubble of an airstrike. The baby had not eaten for days after her mother’s death. Colleagues could only scrounge up powdered milk—not formula, not breast milk, and not a nutritionally suitable infant food—to help stave off her starvation.

Before the war, hundreds of truckloads of aid were needed each day to support Gazans’ daily existence. Only a trickle of that required aid has made it into Gaza in the two months since the war began. But even if more were allowed in, our work in Gaza is dependent on ensuring our teams can move safely to set up warehouses, shelters, health clinics, schools, and water, sanitation and hygiene infrastructure.

Today our staff members are not safe. They tell us they’re making the daily choice of staying with their families in one place so that they can die together or go out to seek water and food.

Among leaders in Washington, there is constant talk about preparing for the “day after.” But if this relentless bombardment and siege continue, there will be no “day after” for Gaza. It will be too late. Hundreds of thousands of lives hang in the balance today.

So far, American diplomacy in this war has not delivered on the goals President Biden has conveyed: protection of innocent civilians, adherence to humanitarian law, more aid delivery. To stop Gaza’s apocalyptic free fall, the Biden administration must take tangible measures, as it does in other conflicts, to up the ante with all parties to the conflict and bordering countries.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken once said of the war in Ukraine that the targeting of heat, water and electricity was a “brutalization of Ukraine’s people” and “barbaric.” The Biden administration should acknowledge that the same holds true in Gaza. While it has announced measures to deter violence against Palestinian civilians in the West Bank, Mr. Blinken and his colleagues should apply similar pressure to stop violence against civilians in Gaza, too.

The harrowing events unfolding before us are shaping a global narrative that, if unchanged, will reveal a legacy of indifference in the face of unspeakable suffering, bias in the application of the laws of conflict and impunity for actors that violate international humanitarian law.

The U.S. government must act now—and fight for humanity.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this article is authored by some remarkable people: Michelle Nunn, president and chief executive of CARE; Tjada McKenna, chief executive of Mercy Corps; Jan Egeland, secretary general of the Norwegian Refugee Council; Abby Maxman, president and chief executive of Oxfam; Jeremy Konyndyk, president of Refugees International; and Janti Soeripto, president and chief executive of Save the Children U.S.

I would like to take a minute to read two paragraphs from this essay, which I have just entered into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

It reads as follows:

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more than two months since the horrifying attack on Israel that killed more than 1,200 people and resulted in 240 abductions, about 18,000 Gazans—including more than 7,500 children—have been killed, according to the Gazan health ministry. More children have been reported killed in this conflict than in all major global conflicts combined last year.

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I think this essay is worthy of all my colleagues and for the public to read it. I hope they saw it initially in the New York Times and will read it now.

Now I ask consent to go to a separate, unrelated topic.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LUJAN). Without objection.

FIRST STEP ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, 5 years ago, Congress came together to pass the First Step Act, the most important criminal justice reform legislation in a generation. I am happy to come to the floor today with my colleague and friend Senator BOOKER of New Jersey and celebrate this momentous anniversary.

The First Step Act passed the House and Senate by overwhelming bipartisan majorities and was supported by a broad coalition from across the political spectrum, including former President Donald Trump, who signed it into law. I was proud to champion this landmark legislation with the help of Senators BOOKER, GRASSLEY, and LEE. It took months of bipartisan negotiation and painful compromise, but the net result was a historic victory that significantly improved our system of justice.

I am thankful for the tireless efforts of many dedicated advocates who never gave up hope that this law could be passed. It was a dramatic change to finally acknowledge that just being tough on the so-called war on drugs was not enough.

I often think back to my early days in the House of Representatives, during the 1980s, when the crack epidemic was devastating America. I vividly remember, in 1986, when the Nation reeled from the news that a Maryland basketball player named Len Bias had died from a heart attack induced by cocaine. All of the evidence points to it having been powder cocaine. Somehow, his death, nevertheless, became a public symbol of the crack epidemic.

Members of Congress were desperate to do something to stop the despair caused by drugs in our communities and to punish the dealers who were trafficking this new, highly addictive product. So we passed legislation, the Anti-Drug Abuse Act, that established mandatory minimum sentences for distribution of specific quantities of