

endorsed those conspiracies, and he let it happen, even though he could have done more to step in and stop it.

Instead of putting the Big Lie under scrutiny, FOX put it in prime time. And when reporters with the network tried to be accurate, tried to tell the truth, tried to set straight the lies their own network was spreading, they were reprimanded.

Carlson, who told his colleagues Powell is lying, called for a FOX reporter to be fired for fact-checking a tweet about the Dominion conspiracy. Shah, the senior vice president who said Powell was full of it, labeled an anchor a “brand threat” for cutting away from an accurate Trump White House press conference. Another reporter was scolded for fact-checking the Powell-Giuliani press conference, which leaders at FOX acknowledged was rife with dangerous conspiracies.

Let’s be clear. This was the No. 1 cable news outlet in America stifling the truth. This is so dangerous, and we cannot—we absolutely cannot—accept this.

Let’s not forget the nature of those lies. They weren’t just small white lies or debatable points. These were wild, sprawling conspiracies which were repeatedly debunked, including by FOX’s own fact checkers and which were actually designed to disrupt the peaceful transition of power, designed to undermine the cornerstone of our democracy, the public’s faith in our free and fair elections.

And they did.

On January 6, a violent mob, spurred by the lies that FOX spread, stormed this Capitol. And, now, as I detailed earlier, FOX hosts are lying about that. FOX News is discoloring our past when we should be learning from it—when we should be learning from it.

It is important to consider the scope of those lies as well. This wasn’t one anchor saying something dubious and network executives looking the other way. FOX engaged in a top-down, deliberate, and coordinated effort to push out lies to its viewers. We cannot ignore that.

Tucker Carlson can selectively edit as much footage as he wants, but I refuse to let him succeed in rewriting history and lying to the American people about the January 6 insurrection.

America has already seen what Tucker Carlson failed to show: windows being smashed in, officers being pushed and beaten and battered and pepper-sprayed, the floor of the House and Senate overrun by White supremacists in tactical gear, a gallows on the Hill, a mob chanting “Hang Mike Pence.”

I was here with one locked door between me and the violent mob shouting “Kill the infidels.” And when the dust settled, I walked with my colleagues through the halls, littered with broken glass, the offices that had been ransacked, and I stood here with my colleagues to cast a vote insurrectionists had stormed the building to stop. I will never forget that. Who could?

And I will never forget, and I will never let our country forget it, either, despite what FOX News has done and is doing to try and rewrite this chapter of our Nation’s history.

This is not how legitimate news organizations behave. How are viewers supposed to trust them? How am I supposed to trust that they will represent my positions fairly?

Now, I will say, there are reporters at FOX who are committed to the basic principles of objective journalism and the truth, and I respect them. And many reporters at local FOX affiliates are doing their best to report the honest truth to viewers in my home State of Washington and around the country. But do you know what? Even if I trust them to try and work in good faith, how do I trust they will not get overruled by the same executives who oversaw this election disinformation operation?

I think it is important to say, and it is also worth noting, that the lies about the election and insurrection may be the most egregious and dangerous examples right now, but there are many other ways the dishonesty at FOX News is poisoning the debate for important conversations and debate.

How are we supposed to debate climate change when half the conversation is fact-free denialism? How are we supposed to discuss public health when deadly vaccine misinformation is given one of the world’s biggest megaphones?

Here is the honest truth. Public figures and other media outlets need to grapple with this: Tucker Carlson is determined to make sure FOX News is not news at all.

FOX is a political vehicle for Rupert Murdoch and his rightwing causes. It is a political entity that will gladly push disinformation and lies if it means profits and political gain. Let’s just call it what it is.

So until FOX does a complete 180 to fix this, until Tucker Carlson apologizes and issues a comprehensive correction, until Mr. Murdoch and his executives stop with the lies and election conspiracy theories—and, by the way, they will have to give a real reason if they want us to believe them—until that happens, we should not pretend that Murdoch and Carlson are going to allow FOX News to be news at all. I certainly won’t. And I don’t say this lightly, but I encourage my colleagues to do the same.

The essence of our democracy is at stake, because what I was reminded, on January 6, is that democracy doesn’t happen just because we have it. Our democracy is only as strong as our commitment to it. We have to work for it. We have to make sure that it remains with us, and that is why I am on the floor speaking out today, because I will fight for our democracy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I, first, want to compliment the President pro

tempore of the Senate and her leadership here for now 30-plus years and her courage.

She saw January more up close than most of us did. I say to the Senator: I believe you were with your husband in your office and heard those sounds and, I assume, had those fears. I appreciate your courage then and how you have talked about it in specific terms. Your genuineness really matters. So thank you for that.

LOBBYISTS

Mr. President, we spent the past month responding to two crises in the lives of Ohioans: one in East Palestine, a community on the Pennsylvania border, a community that rail traffic runs through almost hourly—daily, certainly—and one to our banking system.

I want to explore both, but what happened in East Palestine, in Ohio, and what happened in the far west coast of our country, in the Silicon Valley in California, have one thing in common: They both follow the Wall Street business model—obsessed with short-term profits at the expense of everything and everyone else. They were aided and abetted by corporate lobbyists and the politicians who do their bidding, weakening rules meant to protect the people we serve.

(Mr. BOOKER assumed the Chair.)

Mr. President, a student of history is sitting in the Presiding Officer’s chair, and we both know that for much of the history of this country for the last 150 years, two of the most powerful lobbyists, two of the strongest, most aggressive, most involved companies—the railroads and the banks—have far too often had their way. They have had their way with Congress. They have had their way with regulators. And always—always—workers in New Jersey and workers in Ohio pay the price.

These two industries—railroads and banks—aided and abetted by corporate lobbyists who do their bidding, always, as I said, weaken rules meant to protect the people, the voters whom we were elected to serve, and now working people in Ohio and around the country pay the price.

The Nation now knows East Palestine, a tight-knit community in Columbiana County, OH, about 5,000 people, in a county of about 100,000 people. You can almost, from East Palestine, see the Pennsylvania-Ohio border. So Senator CASEY has been very involved with this, too, with me, as has Senator VANCE, the freshman Republican Member from Ohio.

East Palestine is in Columbiana County. A few decades ago but in my lifetime, Columbiana County manufactured more than 80 percent of the cookware, of the ceramics in this country—plates and glasses and all those kinds of things. Eighty percent was made in that county, that one little county in Ohio.

When I was there—I have been there a number of times; I am going back next Tuesday—in Columbiana County, I talked to the sheriff my last visit

there. He said the last pottery closed just 2 or 3 years ago. So they once made 80 percent of all the cookware. Now, they essentially make zero.

We have seen in my State, time after time, in my hometown of Mansfield, OH—when I was in junior high at Johnny Appleseed Junior High, and that was really its name—I went to school with the sons and daughters of electrical workers at Westinghouse, auto-workers at General Motors, steel-workers at Empire Detroit, machinists at Tappan stove, the sons and daughters of electricians and carpenters and sheet metal workers and plumbers and pipefitters and laborers and operating engineers.

Those jobs essentially disappeared because this Congress and, Mr. President, down the hall in the House of Representatives—this Senate and this House of Representatives, aided and abetted by Presidents from George Bush, Sr., through Clinton, through George Bush, Jr., through Obama, through Trump—every one of those Presidents sold us out, sold our manufacturing workers out, because corporations lobbied Congress for trade agreements that made it easier for them to shut down production in Mansfield, OH, and Toledo, OH, and Lima, OH, and Defiance, OH, and Youngstown and East Palestine and move overseas so they could get cheap labor. That is what happened.

At the same time our corporate executives sold us out, our country built up China—China manufacturing, China industry—so that now China's military is a threat to us, all because of corporate greed and all because of this Wall Street business model.

So back to East Palestine. It is the kind of place that is too often forgotten or exploited or both by corporate America. Now, these Ohioans, because of this train running off the tracks because the \$10-million-a-year CEO of Norfolk Southern decided over the last 10 years—their management—they cut 38 percent—more than a third of their workforce they laid off. When you lay off a third of your workforce and you are a railroad, what do you think happens? Of course they compromised on safety. Of course they didn't have enough workers inspecting track. Of course they weren't able to really detect ahead of time what happens with those wheel bearings.

Believe it or not—and I almost can't believe this, but I have heard it enough times, I know it is true—the railroads want to be able, under the law, to have one operator on their trains. Now, these railroads are 200 cars, often. We had another rail derailment in Springfield, OH, since East Palestine—more than 200 cars. They want to have only one operator.

So you are going to have one engineer, one human being run a train with 200 cars that is 2 or 2-1/5 or 3 miles long. That is all driven by corporate greed. It is driven by "Let's lay off workers so we can report to Wall

Street that our stock price went up, and then, as the CEO, when I do stock buybacks, I get more money."

Here is what happened. We know that when the train ran off the track in East Palestine, it spewed these chemicals into the air. We know about this. It makes citizens wonder: Is the water safe to drink? Is the air safe to breathe? Will the kids get sick? What happens to the value of my home? These are generally modest, older homes in a town that has been hit hard—all because of a train derailment caused by a corporate culture of cutting corners.

Let me tell you a story, Mr. President. When I was in East Palestine, not last time but the time before—as I said, I am going again early next week. When I was last there, a woman in town who owns a small cattle farm 4 miles from town—she sells half a beef of cattle, half a beef every—every year or two, a number of local clients and a number of local friends buy her beef.

She said to me: You know, since this derailment, I am starting to get calls from my friends saying, "Is it safe to eat this beef? Is it safe to eat this now?"

She says: I don't know what to tell them.

Authorities don't know what to tell them, but you can bet those buyers are going to go somewhere else to buy this beef. They are not going to take the chance. So it is one thing after another.

Again, Norfolk Southern chose to invest its massive profits in making its executives and shareholders wealthier. The company, as I said, followed the Wall Street business model and boosted its stock price by eliminating its workforce and cutting corners on safety.

So Senator VANCE and I—a Republican from Ohio and I, a Democrat from Ohio—have come together to introduce our Railway Safety Act to make trains safer as they go through communities like East Palestine. We are working with Senator CANTWELL, the chair of the Commerce Committee, to move this legislation forward quickly.

We know the train companies, the railroads, are already swooping in to lobby our colleagues to say: Oh, this is Big Government. You don't want these rules. You don't want these regulations.

They want to have one engineer per train. They don't want to tell the State of Ohio when they bring hazardous material in. They don't want to pay for training hazmat workers, firefighters.

In East Palestine, 1 fire chief is paid; 22 firefighters, 23 firefighters are volunteers. They don't have the training and they don't have the equipment to fight these kinds of hazardous material fires.

So the railroads continue to fight against the rules. They have, unfortunately, too many people in this body who say: I am against government regulations. I don't trust government.

Well, you shouldn't trust the railroads, for sure.

So, Mr. President, that is what has happened in East Palestine, OH, when a company has that kind of influence over workers, over communities, over Congress, and over the regulators in Washington.

It is the same story with Silicon Valley Bank. Let's scroll back a little. For as long as we have had big banks, they have had too much power in town. That is how we got the financial crisis of 2008 that wiped out worker savings and permanently set back an entire generation of young Americans. But, of course, Wall Street didn't change its ways from 15 years ago. Wall Street banks spent the ensuing years lobbying to roll back the safeguards Congress passed in the wake of the banking crisis of 15 years ago.

The now-defunct Silicon Valley Bank spent hundreds of thousands of dollars pushing for exemptions for banks like theirs. In fact, the CEO—I believe his name is Greg Becker—of Silicon Valley Bank was here lobbying for weaker rules, saying: My bank is safe. I don't need any rules or regulations.

Well, it kind of didn't work that way. He talked about the "low-risk profile of our activities and business model"—the "low-risk profile of our activities and business model." "Low-risk profile" is what he said. We know, actually, it had nothing to do with that. We know what he wanted. He wanted to maximize profit, risk be damned. And look what happened: The paychecks of thousands of Ohioans and people from New Jersey and California and all were at stake last weekend because of the Silicon Valley executives, because of their greed, because of their arrogance, and because of their incompetence.

When we let executives in big corporations run the economy, workers and their families always, always pay the price. Whether it is the greed of Silicon Valley executives, whether it is the greed of Norfolk Southern, whether it is the greed of the big drug companies or the greed of Big Oil or the incompetence of Norfolk Southern or the Silicon Valley or Big Pharma or Big Oil—all of that.

There is a pretty simple question at stake in everything we do in these jobs. It is, whose side are you on? Do you stand with corporate lobbyists, or do you stand with communities like East Palestine? Do you stand with the Silicon Valley venture capitalists, or do you stand with small businesses? Do you stand with Wall Street, or do you stand with workers?

It is the same fight over and over. We know we need to respond to this latest in a long line of financial industry failures. We know we need to respond to this long line of abuses by the railroads in terms of safety.

I hope my colleagues will put partisanship aside, as Senator VANCE and I are doing on rail safety, to stand with the people whom we serve.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Ohio.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that 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.

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

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

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

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Washington, DC.

Hon. ROBERT MENENDEZ,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 23-02, concerning the Navy's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Australia for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$895 million. We will issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale upon delivery of this letter to your office.

Sincerely,

MIKE MILLER
(For James A. Hursch, Director).

Enclosures

TRANSMITTAL NO. 23-02

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended.

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Australia.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment * \$526 million.
Other \$369 million.
Total \$895 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Up to two hundred (200) Tomahawk Block V All Up Rounds (AUR)(RGM-109E).

Up to twenty (20) Tomahawk Block IV All Up Rounds (AUR)(RGM-109E).

Non-MDE: Also included is support for all three segments of Australia's Tomahawk

Weapon System (TWS) to include the All Up Round (AUR), the Tactical Tomahawk Weapon Control System (TTWCS) and the Theater Mission Planning Center (TMPC). The support consists of unscheduled missile maintenance; spares; procurement; training; in-service support; software; hardware; communication equipment; operational flight test; engineering and technical expertise to maintain the TWS capability; and other related elements of logistical and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Navy (AT-P-LGJ).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: None.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: March 16, 2023.

* As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Australia—Tomahawk Weapon System

The Government of Australia has requested to buy up to two hundred (200) Tomahawk Block V All Up Rounds (AUR) (RGM-109E); and up to twenty (20) Tomahawk Block IV All Up Rounds (AUR) (RGM-109E). Also included is support for all three segments of Australia's Tomahawk Weapon System (TWS) to include the All Up Round (AUR), the Tactical Tomahawk Weapon Control System (TTWCS) and the Theater Mission Planning Center (TMPC). The support consists of unscheduled missile maintenance; spares; procurement; training; in-service support; software; hardware; communication equipment; operational flight test; engineering and technical expertise to maintain the TWS capability; and other related elements of logistical and program support. The estimated total cost is \$895 million.

This proposed sale will support the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States. Australia is one of our most important allies in the Western Pacific. The strategic location of this political and economic power contributes significantly to ensuring peace and economic stability in the region. It is vital to the U.S. national interest to assist our ally in developing and maintaining a strong and ready self-defense capability.

The proposed sale will improve Australia's capability to interoperate with U.S. maritime forces and other allied forces as well as its ability to contribute to missions of mutual interest. By deploying the Tomahawk Weapon System, Australia will contribute to global readiness and enhance the capability of U.S. Forces operating alongside them globally. Australia will use the enhanced capability as a deterrent to regional threats and to strengthen its homeland defense. Australia will have no difficulty absorbing this equipment into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime U.S. contractor will be Raytheon Missiles and Defense, Tucson, AZ. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will require multiple trips by U.S. Government representatives and contractor personnel to visit Australia on a temporary basis over the life of the case to support delivery and integration of items and to provide supply support management, inventory control, and equipment familiarization. Visits will also include program and technical reviews.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 23-02

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The Block IV/V All Up Round (AUR) consists of the RGM-109E Tomahawk cruise missile assembled in a canister for surface launch. Tomahawk Block IV/V capabilities include, increased system flexibility, improved system response times, improved lethality against an increased target set, improved accuracy, improved Anti-Jam GPS Receiver (AGR) with Selective Availability Anti-Spoofing Module (SAASM) capability, enhanced availability due to a 15-year maintenance interval and two-way communications between missile and Strike/Missile Controllers via Ultra High Frequency (UHF) Satellite Communications (SATCOM). The two-way communication capability, provided by the Satellite Data Link Terminal (SDLT) enables Mission Planners and the Strike/Missile Controller to issue in-flight missile re-targeting commands, receive in-flight missile Health & Status (H&S) transmissions, obtain Battle Damage Indication (BDI) data and obtain single-frame Battle Damage Indication Imagery (BDII) using the onboard camera that is part of the Digital Scene Matching Area Correlator (DSMAC) Sensor Assembly (DSA).

2. The highest level of classification of defense articles, components, and services included in this potential sale is SECRET.

3. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures that might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

4. A determination has been made that Australia can provide substantially the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

5. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to Australia.

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