

There is an acronym used in Gaza: WCNSF, wounded child with no surviving family. According to media reports, an estimated 17,000 Palestinian children fall under that category: wounded child with no surviving family. And another 2 million Palestinians have been displaced by the effort to rid the world of Hamas.

When I meet with my Palestinian and Muslim constituents in Georgia, members of our human family, I also hear them wonder: Does anybody other than us understand? Do they see what we see? Do they hear what we hear? Can they feel what we feel? Does anybody care?

The staggering loss of Palestinian lives should deeply trouble all of us, but equally concerning is the serious humanitarian catastrophe that is unfolding in Gaza before our very eyes. Earlier this week, the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said during a briefing that about one quarter of the population in Gaza—576,000 people—are “one step away from famine” and facing a “grave situation.” Diseases like hepatitis A and digestive illnesses are spreading rapidly in overcrowded, makeshift camps, and this is made worse by a lack of access to clean water or sanitation systems.

Families right now are huddled in makeshift tents and other shelters, exposed to the winter elements, with everything they can carry on their backs. The medical system in Gaza has collapsed, with only a handful of hospitals still partially functioning.

On average, reportedly, more than 10 children have lost one or both of their legs every day since October 7, with many of those amputations performed without anesthesia. Pregnant women in Gaza have experienced a 300-percent increase in miscarriages.

And, most recently, the Netanyahu administration has once again ordered displaced Palestinians—women, children, seniors, regular civilians already pushed out of their homes by war—to evacuate territory they were told would be safe after fleeing previous offensives by the IDF in northern Gaza.

If Mr. Netanyahu advances military operations into Rafah, the question is: Where are these people supposed to go? What will be the human consequences?

World-class epidemiologists tell us that with an escalation of the war into Rafah, as many as 85,000 Palestinians could die from injuries and disease over the next 6 months—85,000 on top of the already mounting death toll. I submit that such a move would be unconscionable and morally indefensible.

But what do we do about Hamas, a terrorist organization bent on Israel's destruction? Let me be clear: Israel would be better off, the Palestinian people would be better off, the world would be better off without Hamas. But Hamas is more than a terrorist organization. It is an ideology. It is a mindset. It is a way of thinking that sits in a place deeper than the tunnels beneath Gaza. And if the legacy of

Hamas's violence on October 7 becomes continuing and escalating indiscriminate violence in turn, then the destructive ideology of Hamas will have won the day.

We must not let them win. We must be careful not to create, through indiscriminate killing, that which we seek to destroy. We must find a more excellent way. With a tough mind and a tender heart, we must find that way that leads to peace.

We are at an inflection point, a place where two ways meet, and time is running out. I call upon Israel and Hamas to come to a negotiated cease-fire, with the immediate release of hostages and opening of humanitarian corridors so that food, medicine, water, and other supplies can be delivered to the people of Gaza with the fierce urgency that the situation demands. I am heartened by the quiet, steady work of the Biden administration and our regional partners in this effort, and I urge that it continue in earnest.

Furthermore, we must reaffirm our unwavering commitment to a two-state solution. The people of Israel deserve to live in peace and security alongside their neighbors. I agree with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who said that “Israel's right to exist as a state in security is incontestable. The whole world,” he said, “must see that Israel must exist and has the right to exist.”

The dignity of self-determination is among the values he was seeking to uphold. Israelis deserve it. So do Palestinians. Two peoples, two states, living alongside one another in freedom and in peace—that must remain our North Star.

And if we would be true to our values, we must call to task any politician who would reject that right to self-determination, especially if that rejection comes while, at the same time, one is engaged in massive and indiscriminate bombing of the very same people.

From the ugly and dangerous specter of it all, the world cannot and must not turn away. With the Muslim holy days of Ramadan around the corner and the Jewish Passover shortly thereafter, we are at an inflection point, a place where two traumatized peoples meet. As a Black man who stands in Dr. King's pulpit, I know a little something about trauma. I know that while our trauma informs us, it must never define us. We are more than what has happened to us. We have within our capacity the strength to write a new story.

We must pursue peace, seek justice, embrace mercy, and struggle for human dignity with all of our might. The children on each side and all of our children are counting on us to do no less. I would wonder what we would actually do if we truly believed that all of the children are our children. As a parent with small children, I wonder what would each side do if they could look into the eyes of the children on the other side and see in those chil-

dren's eyes what they see when they look into the eyes of their own.

Perhaps this is what the prophet Isaiah was getting at when he put forth his extraordinary vision, and I lift it up.

The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.

Honestly, I never quite understood what Isaiah meant. It seems too idyllic and other-worldly even for the preacher. But perhaps the prophet is saying something much more practical than we think.

To be sure, peacemaking is not easy work at all, by any stretch of the imagination. But perhaps when we allow our children and our love for our children, our concern for their future, and our children's inextricable connection to all other children to lead us—when we allow the children to lead us—we will find ourselves on the path that leads to peace.

So, tonight, I pray for a world where Israeli mothers and fathers and Palestinian mothers and fathers can put their children to bed in peace, say their bedtime prayers, and awaken to a world where they are finally safe.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 8:08 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, February 29, 2024, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COL. TODD D. MILLER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. DAVID W. KELLEY

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. RONNIE D. ANDERSON, JR.

COL. BRYAN L. BABICH

COL. JEREMY A. BARTEL

COL. JAMES T. BLEJSKI, JR.

COL. W. M. BOCHAT

COL. ROBERT G. BORN

COL. KIRK E. BRINKER

COL. ROBERT S. BROWN

COL. KEVIN S. CHANEY

COL. KENNETH C. COLE

COL. KEVIN L. COTMAN

COL. JOHNATON L. DAWBER

COL. DAVID P. ELSER

COL. JOSEPH M. EWERS

COL. EUGENE J. FERRIS

COL. RONALD L. FRANKLIN, JR.

COL. ROGELIO J. GARCIA

COL. PETER C. GLASS

COL. JOSEPH C. GOETZ II

COL. PHILLIP J. KINIERY III

COL. PAUL T. KRATTIGER
COL. JOHN P. KUNSTBECK
COL. MATTHEW J. LENNOX
COL. ROBERT J. MIKESH, JR.
COL. ZACHARY L. MILLER
COL. JIN H. PAK
COL. WILLIAM M. PARKER
COL. ALLEN J. PEPPER
COL. BRENDAN C. RAYMOND
COL. ADAM D. SMITH
COL. TERRY R. TILLIS
COL. GEORGE C. TURNER, JR.
COL. SHANE M. UPTON
COL. ERIC J. VANDENBOSCH
COL. JASON T. WILLIAMS
COL. KEVIN J. WILLIAMS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. CHARLES M. CAUSEY
COL. RODERICK F. LAUGHMAN
COL. URBI N. LEWIS

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate February 28, 2024:

THE JUDICIARY

MELISSA DAMIAN, OF FLORIDA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA.
JULIE SIMONE SNEED, OF FLORIDA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

APRILLE JOY ERICSSON, OF NEW YORK, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE.

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be admiral

ADM. SAMUEL J. PAPARO, JR.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. FRANK L. BRADFIELD III
BRIG. GEN. HOWARD T. CLARK III
BRIG. GEN. ROBERT W. CLAUDE
BRIG. GEN. MELISSA A. COBURN
BRIG. GEN. WILLIAM D. MURPHY
BRIG. GEN. DANA N. NELSON

BRIG. GEN. DAVID A. PIFFARERIO
BRIG. GEN. REGINA A. SABRIC
BRIG. GEN. MARK V. SLOMINSKI

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. JAMES D. BURK
COL. ANDREW L. LANDERS
COL. BILL A. SOLIZ
COL. YOLONDA R. SUMMONS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be brigadier general

COL. CRAIG M. HUNTER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be brigadier general

COL. MICHAEL K. MORENI

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. VIVEK KSHETRAPAL

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. CARLOS E. GORBEA

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. NICK I. BROWN
COL. SHANNON M. BROWN
COL. TAMARA L. CAMPBELL
COL. JAMES W. LIVELY
COL. SAMUEL L. MEYER
COL. MICHAEL R. NAKONIECZNY
COL. DOUGLAS C. SANDERS
COL. MATTHEW W. TRACY

IN THE AIR FORCE

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH SHELLEY L. ALDRICH AND ENDING WITH HEATH D. WRIGHT, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON OCTOBER 19, 2023.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH CARL P. BHEND AND ENDING WITH CHRISTOPHER M. WOLBERT,

WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON OCTOBER 19, 2023.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF MAURICIO DE CASTRO PRETELT, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JULIA M. BELL AND ENDING WITH RYAN K. ZARNOWSKI, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 8, 2024.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH CHERYLENE S. ABALOS AND ENDING WITH CHENG ZENG, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 8, 2024.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH DAVID Y. AHN AND ENDING WITH JOHN M. VANN, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 8, 2024.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ADAM H. ALTMAN AND ENDING WITH JASON M. ZHAO, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 8, 2024.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF HEIDI L. CLARK, TO BE COLONEL.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF CHRISTOPHER C. LAZIDIS, TO BE COLONEL.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF AGATHA C. GRAVES, TO BE MAJOR.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MARK D. JOHNSON AND ENDING WITH JOHN PAUL F. MINTZ, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 6, 2024.

IN THE ARMY

ARMY NOMINATION OF SARA V. TURINSKY, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ALAN L. ADKISSON AND ENDING WITH 002668953, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 25, 2024.

ARMY NOMINATION OF BRANDON D. HOWARD, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATION OF THOMAS P. GALLAGHER, JR., TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATION OF JEFFREY A. BANKS, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF JONATHAN C. YOUNG, TO BE MAJOR.

IN THE MARINE CORPS

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH SEAN P. DILLON AND ENDING WITH JOSHUA B. SIMPSON, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 8, 2024.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATION OF KENNETH J. SCHNEIDER, JR., TO BE MAJOR.

IN THE NAVY

NAVY NOMINATION OF ROCKFORD D. BURTON, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATION OF DONNY L. JAMES II, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.