

life, to not have something meaningful come out of this war would be doubly tragic.

History will look back on what we do here. Are we prepared together to have the courage to make an all-out push to bring about peace once and for all, to bring to this conflict what Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., called the “fierce urgency of now” to end the cycles of tragedy and pain?

I have always said that when horrific things happen, some turn inwards and let their grief consume them, while others light a candle and turn their grief into power. They are able to see hope in the darkness.

In Scripture, we read about how God created the world from an infinite void, that out of the greatest darkness can come the greatest light. I hope and pray that from the brutal slaying of Israelis by Hamas and the harrowing civilian toll in Gaza, that a two-state solution where Jews and Palestinians can live in peace will prevail.

I know I am not alone in this prayer. There are right now Palestinians in Gaza, some of whom are still pulling dead family members from the rubble, who are defying Hamas and their murderous ideology and calling for a pathway to peace. There are right now some families of the victims of October 7 in Israel who have been calling for peace, asking their government to transcend this cycle of bloodshed and revenge. If they can find in their hearts a path to peace, then surely we can also.

From the ashes, may we light the candles that lead to a better future for all.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LUJÁN). The Republican leader is recognized.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the Jewish State of Israel deserves an ally that acts like one. The people of Israel, at home and in captivity, deserve America's support; and Israel's unity government and security cabinet deserve the deference befitting a sovereign democratic country.

The primary obstacles to peace in Israel's region are genocidal terrorists, like Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad, who slaughter innocent people and corrupt leaders of the Palestinian Authority, who have repeatedly—repeatedly—rejected peace deals from multiple Israeli Governments.

And foreign observers who cannot keep these clear distinctions straight ought to refrain from weighing in. It is grotesque and hypocritical for Americans who hyperventilate about foreign interference in our own democracy to call for the removal of a democratically elected leader of Israel. This is unprecedented. We should not treat fellow democracies this way at all.

Things that upset leftwing activists are not a Prime Minister's policies; they are Israel's policies. Make no mistake, the Democratic Party doesn't

have an anti-Bibi problem; it has an anti-Israel problem. Israel is not a colony of America whose leaders serve at the pleasure of the party in power in Washington. Only Israel's citizens should have a say in who runs their government. This is the very definition of democracy and sovereignty. Either we respect their decisions or we disrespect their democracy.

UKRAINE

Now, Mr. President, on another entirely different matter, this week, Vladimir Putin himself responded to reports of weakening Western resolve to stand with Ukraine and of ammunition shortages on the frontlines.

Here is what Putin had to say:

It would be ridiculous for us to start negotiating with Ukraine just because it's running out of ammunition.

The chilling reality here is abundantly clear: Withholding critical weapons has not helped manage Putin's escalation—it has only emboldened him.

The administration that hesitated and wrung its hands through the early days of Russian escalation actually emboldened Putin, and it ought to be a lesson to those who insist—without firm footing in its strategy or logic—that withholding lethal assistance would somehow hasten an acceptable negotiated settlement to the conflict.

I have said too many times to count that America's adversaries only speak the language of power. But our colleagues don't have to take my word for it. Just take it straight from the dictator's mouth. Vladimir Putin is not playing for a tie. He is not headed for the negotiating table. He will not stop at Ukraine. He has told us, and he has shown us many times.

Whether or not you are willing to take the architect of the neo-Soviet Empire at his word, the facts remain the same: Equipping Ukraine for battlefield success is the surest way to help our friends resolve this war from a position of strength.

Backing Ukraine as it degrades our common adversary's military also strengthens America's interests, and investing in our own military and our own defense industrial capacity at the same time just makes common sense. It is time for the House to take up the Senate-passed national security supplemental and finish the job.

(The remarks of Mr. MCCONNELL pertaining to the introduction of S.J. Res. 65 are printed in today's RECORD under “Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.”)

NATIONWIDE INJUNCTIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on another matter, I would like to speak briefly on a practice in our Nation's courts that has confounded administrations of both parties with increasing frequency over the past decade. It is the issuance of nationwide injunctions.

Time after time, district judges will respond to a case challenging a Federal law by preventing its application not

just to the parties before them or within their jurisdictions but nationwide.

During the last administration, Attorneys General Sessions and Barr issued policy and litigation guidance on the issue to try and pare it back. Senator COTTON introduced a bill to eliminate the practice by statute; and Chairman GRAHAM was eager to move the Cotton bill, but Senate Democrats were not. In fact, their star witness in support of nationwide injunctions is now a Federal judge in the District of Columbia.

Rather than working with Republicans to eliminate a practice that gores the oxen of both parties, it turns out our colleagues prefer to preserve it just for themselves.

Now that nationwide injunctions are being used against the Biden administration, liberal allies in the academy and in the media have started to “target single judge divisions,” where they think conservative plaintiffs are likely to get favorable ratings from sympathetic judges.

The Democratic leader even wrote to the Judicial Conference demanding action against the scourge of judges who don't rule in favor of the Biden administration. In other words, he urged the Conference to keep the injunctions and just restrict the access to conservative judges.

It seems the Judicial Conference took the bait. On Tuesday, they instructed district courts to assign all cases seeking to invalidate State or Federal law randomly across the district in which they were brought. This will have no practical effect in the venues favored by liberal activists, but Democrats are salivating at the possibility of shutting down access to justice in the venues favored by conservatives.

What will this do in practice? It means the young woman challenging Texas abortion laws in Austin can now be forced, for no good reason, to have her case heard in El Paso. A veteran defending his Second Amendment rights in Youngstown can be sent to Toledo to have his day in court. In Kentucky, a coal miner challenging labor regulations in London could find his case handed to a judge in Covington—all to prevent so-called judge shopping.

But didn't Chief Justice Roberts say, “There are not Obama judges or Trump judges”? What exactly is the problem that demands such a drastic solution?

Here is what this policy won't do: It won't solve the issues caused by nationwide injunctions. If Democrats are right about the practical effects of this policy, any remaining incentive they have to work with Republicans on this issue will vanish—“Nationwide injunctions for me, but not for thee.”

Needless to say, if Republicans see a Federal judiciary that is using its procedural independence to wade into political disputes, any incentive we may have to defend the procedural independence will vanish as well.

This was an unforced error by the Judicial Conference. I hope they will reconsider, and I hope district courts throughout the country will instead weigh what is best for their jurisdictions, not half-baked “guidance” that just does Washington Democrats’ bidding.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

(The remarks of Mr. DURBIN pertaining to the submission of S. 3961 are printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

Mr. DURBIN. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

PRESIDENT BIDEN’S BUDGET

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, President Biden released his budget on Monday, and, predictably, it was filled with the same old, tired, tax-and-spending proposals—so much spending and so many taxes.

All told, the President’s budget raises taxes by a staggering \$5 trillion. You heard that right—\$5 trillion. His corporate tax hike and capital gains tax proposals would both raise rates higher than those in communist China.

Many small businesses would see a hefty tax hike under the President’s proposal, and most Americans would see an income tax hike, as his budget would allow current income tax rates to expire after 2025—so much for the President’s commitment to not raising taxes for anyone making under \$400,000.

Something President Biden and Democrats never seem to understand is that raising taxes has consequences. The corporate tax hike that President Biden would like you to believe will be borne by CEOs and CFOs—in fact, that tax hike would hit working Americans hard.

Studies have shown that workers bear a huge percentage of the burden of corporate income taxes. Impacts aren’t just limited to workers employed by corporations. Corporate tax hikes can hit all Americans in the form of higher prices for goods and services.

Or take President Biden’s proposed tax hike on gas and oil, which would be on top—on top—of the energy tax hikes he has already imposed. Taxing energy can drive up the cost of Americans’ energy bills and make it more expensive every time Americans have to fill up their cars—not exactly a desirable outcome when Americans have already seen huge increases in energy prices under President Biden.

As I said, all of those tax hikes are accompanied by a lot of new spending proposals as President Biden continues his mission to increase the size—and the intrusiveness—of the Federal Government. His budget includes massive new spending programs and big increases for government departments and Agencies like the IRS.

Yet even as the President uses budget gimmicks and accounting tricks to blow through the nondefense spending cap for 2025, he makes no attempt to use any of his budgeting sleight of

hand to address the serious readiness problems facing our military.

The President spent ample time in his State of the Union Address talking about the dangerous world in which we live, and he is right. Yet his budget makes little attempt to ensure that our military is equipped to meet that dangerous world. We have military services well below their recruitment targets. We are behind on shipbuilding and ship maintenance. There is a persistent pilot shortage. In a number of cases, we have too few mission-capable aircraft. And we are not doing an adequate job of maintaining the kind of supply we need of munitions. Yet President Biden is happy to blow through the nondefense spending cap but can’t find an extra dollar in his budget for our military. It says a lot about the President’s priorities.

It is also worth noting that the President’s budget makes absolutely no attempt to ensure that Social Security is protected for current and future retirees. With Social Security on track to run out of money to pay full benefits in 2033, you would think that the President would be focused on safeguarding this program rather than creating new government programs that have to be funded. But, clearly, you would be wrong.

This year, the interest on our national debt is projected to cost more than any government expenditure except Social Security. Let me just repeat that. This year, the interest on our national debt is projected to cost more than any government expenditure except Social Security. That is just the interest on our debt. When the interest alone on your national debt is the second highest line item in your budget, you know you are on an unsustainable fiscal path. And it is the height of fiscal irresponsibility for the President to be proposing massive new government programs when we are going into debt just to afford the ones we already have.

I could go on. I could talk about the President’s request for \$8 billion to hire an additional 50,000 Americans for his Climate Corps, like so-called “climate resilience workers,” or I could talk about the President’s attempt to force American taxpayers to pay for abortions or the eye-wateringly large funding increase the President wants for the IRS.

But I will stop here. And I hope—I hope—my colleagues will agree that, for the sake of the American people, the President’s budget should be dead on arrival here in the Congress.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 7511

Mr. BUDD. Mr. President, there have been more than 9 million illegal alien border crossings on President Biden’s watch. At the same time, there has been a 57-percent decrease in arrests of criminal illegal aliens and a 67-percent decrease in deportation of criminal aliens.

This complete lack of enforcement of existing law has caused unimaginable human suffering across our country. One such tragedy occurred last month in Athens, GA. An illegal alien from Venezuela brutally murdered 22-year-old nursing student Laken Riley on the campus of the University of Georgia. What makes this story all the more devastating was that the killer could have been stopped but wasn’t.

So how on Earth was this tragedy even allowed to take place? Well, here is the timeline. The killer illegally entered the United States in September of 2022 in El Paso, TX. He was caught, but then he was paroled into the country. He then made his way to New York City, where he was arrested for child endangerment in 2023, but then he was released. He then fled to Georgia, where he committed several petty crimes like theft and shoplifting. He was not detained by ICE. Then came the tragedy of February 22, where he preyed on an innocent young woman jogging around a university campus.

This was allowed to take place because of the open border policies of President Biden. It took place because executive Agencies are given discretion to determine what crimes trigger a detainer to be issued to take an illegal alien into custody. The “discretion loophole” has got to be closed. And that is why we are here today: to make sure these tragedies never happen again.

In Laken’s honor, Senator KATIE BRITT of Alabama and I have teamed up to introduce the Laken Riley Act. This bill would require ICE to issue detainers and take into custody illegal aliens who commit crimes like theft and shoplifting. The legislation also empowers state attorneys general to sue the Secretary of Homeland Security for taking actions on immigration that harm their States or their citizens.

The bottom line: If this bill were in place before February 22, Laken Riley would be alive today.

The House of Representatives passed this bill last week in a bipartisan—again, a bipartisan—vote of 251 to 70, including 37 Democrats. In a time of division and polarization, the Laken Riley Act brought both sides together.

It is our hope that we can learn from this horrific situation and make some positive change. So let’s pass the Laken Riley Act today.

Mr. President, I would like to yield to my colleague from Indiana.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. BRAUN. Mr. President, on February 22, a 22-year-old nursing student