



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 118th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 170

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, APRIL 30, 2024

No. 74

Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable PETER WELCH, a Senator from the State of Vermont.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, we exalt You, for You continue to rescue us. You have done for our Nation infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. Lord, You refuse to permit our enemies to triumph over us. You hear our cries for help, sustaining us with Your might.

Today, continue to use our lawmakers for Your glory. As they become aware of Your presence, may their lives experience the fulfillment and strength that You alone can give.

Help them to remember that You are still their refuge and strength, a very present help in the time of trouble. Send them forth to face this day armed with faith in You.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, April 30, 2024.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable PETER WELCH, a Senator from the State of Vermont, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WELCH thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Georgia N. Alexakis, of Illinois, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Majority leader is recognized.

PROTESTS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I would like to begin today by saying a few things about the protests at Columbia University.

Smashing windows with hammers and taking over university buildings is not free speech—it is lawlessness—and those who did it should promptly face the consequences that are not merely a slap on the wrist.

Free speech, discussion, and even strong disagreement are fundamental

American values, and campuses should be places where those values are cherished. Campuses cannot be places of learning and argument and discussion when protests veer into criminality, and those who commit such acts are doing nothing to convince others that their cause is just.

It is also unacceptable when Jewish students are targeted for being Jewish, when protests exhibit verbal abuse, systemic intimidation, or glorification of the murderous and hateful Hamas, or the violence of October 7.

As I said in my speech here on the floor last November and many times since: That is anti-Semitism. It is loathsome. It is unacceptable.

NORTH CAROLINA SHOOTING

Mr. President, now on another note—sad note—yesterday, in North Carolina, four law enforcement officers, including a deputy U.S. marshal, were killed in the deadliest attack against U.S. law enforcement in 8 years. Several other officers have been injured.

Today, the Senate mourns the loss of these dedicated public servants. We grieve with their families. And we must do more to prevent shootings like this that involve AR-style weapons. It is a tragic reminder that today too many dangerous assault rifles continue to plague too many of our communities, and Congress has a responsibility to get these weapons of war off our streets.

My heart goes out to all the families who have lost loved ones in this attack. And I thank all of our law enforcement officers who were on the scene working to keep the communities safe.

TRIBUTE TO BILL SAMUEL

Finally, Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to recognize Bill Samuel of the AFL-CIO, a man who has spent his career fighting for America's working men and women.

So many of us in this Chamber—on both sides of the aisle—have worked closely with Bill over the decades, and

• This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

S3069

we will certainly miss him as he steps down from his longtime post as director of government affairs for the AFL-CIO.

Ever since his early days in the labor movement, when he worked for the National Treasury Employees Union, the American Federation of Government Employees, and the United Mine Workers, Bill has been at the forefront of improving working conditions. He continued that fight while serving at the Department of Labor and on the staff of former Vice President Al Gore.

In 2001, after the AFL-CIO President, John Sweeney, hired Bill to lead his congressional efforts, Bill quickly got to work, organizing lobbying and grassroots efforts, communicating with Senators, Members of Congress, the administration, and AFL-CIO union members. Bill quickly gained the trust of members through his candor, his dedication, and his pragmatism. Through his partnership with the AFL-CIO's next president, Rich Trumka, Bill brought the labor movement's legislative efforts to new heights.

Bill was a tireless advocate, working closely with us on critically important issues such as the Employee Free Choice Act, the Affordable Care Act, the Border Security Care Act of 2013—man, our country would have been better off had that bill passed the House—the pensions bill, Chips, Infrastructure, the Inflation Reduction Act, and so much more.

We may not have won every battle, but we were always there fighting to improve the lives of working men and women.

I wish Bill the best as he moves on to new challenges, and I am comforted in knowing he will still be involved in the fight for progress.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

PROTESTS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, for months, the most elite corners of American higher education have made headlines for all the wrong reasons. Unfortunately, they are still finding new ways to embarrass themselves with vile, anti-Semitic radicalism, beginning, of course, with yet more alarming declarations like “Burn Tel Aviv to the ground,” “Freedom for Palestine means death to America,” “The 7th of October is going to be every day for you.”

The student radicals behind hateful chants like “from the river to the sea” have proven to be incoherently ecumenical. They have chanted “Long

Live Hamas”—a Sunni terrorist group—and waved flags supporting the Shia terrorist group, Hezbollah, and the secular Marxist-Leninist terrorist group, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

They have been joined on the picket lines by faculty members for whom radical anti-Semitism is merely an extension of their day jobs in post-modern indoctrination.

Last week, Columbia's encampment was even visited by a Member of Congress who accused some Jewish students of being “pro-genocide.”

It is unclear whether the student radicals or the shadowy groups organizing these disruptions are actual “fifth columns” for adversaries trying to corrode American society from within or just unwitting pawns. What is clear is that basic comprehension of history, theology, and geography is in very short supply in the Ivy League.

But so-called elite universities aren't just in the news for a well-documented decline in academic rigor. They are not drawing the Nation's attention just because another generation of students has decided to test the limits of the First Amendment with grotesque hate. No, no, they are in the news because weakness and inaction from campus leaders has allowed universities to become cauldrons of criminal chaos.

In recent days, an Orthodox Jewish student at Yale was assaulted by organized hate-mongers. At MIT, there is a so-called “liberated zone” of radicals occupying the very center of campus. At UCLA, aspiring commissars have blocked Jewish students from walking to class or even entering the library. Another California school is reporting millions of dollars in damages after radicals vandalized campus buildings.

And last night brought yet more evidence that administrators at Columbia have utterly—utterly—failed to bring order to their Manhattan campus. In the wee hours of the morning, the mob that has disrupted daily life from a tent encampment on the quad broke into a campus building with hammers and has barricaded itself inside.

Not long ago, Columbia's president was sensibly calling in the New York Police Department to disperse and arrest these disrupters. This was a responsible thing to do because the vast majority of students at Columbia want to go to class, study for exams, and lead productive lives. But, then, her resolve appeared to give out. A minority of radicals and their faculty allies have used continued threats and intimidation to maximize the disruption and extend the reach of an odious ideology. The administration caved. The campus is now closed. But law enforcement remain outside the gates, and it remains to be seen whether administrators' latest threats of expulsion will actually be carried out.

The situation at Columbia is so bad that a prominent rabbi urged Jewish students to leave campus out of fear for their physical safety. This is par-

ticularly discouraging at a university that for decades has been known as a welcoming home for Jewish students, even when the rest of the Ivy League systematically discriminated against them.

Yesterday, a member of Columbia's Jewish community filed a class action lawsuit against the university, alleging sustained harassment and incitement of violence against Jewish students. In the absence of leadership from administrators, the community has had to take protection of their basic rights on campus literally into their own hands.

Of course, today's campus radicals did not invent this brand of aggressive lawlessness. Here in the United States, they trace their roots back to the 1960s. Other countries, too, have had their own infamous histories of student intimidation and violence—most notoriously, the student Nazis of Weimar Germany.

Education never has anything to do with it. It is about dangerous, radical politics. But just as the roots of this hate are not a mystery, neither is the way forward for college administrators.

Leaders at Columbia might do well to note the approach of the administration over at Princeton, which has upheld clear prohibitions on activity like forming encampments and responded swiftly and severely to an attempt last night to occupy a campus building.

They might also take a cue from our former colleague Ben Sasse. Thus far, radicals at the University of Florida have largely heeded his prohibition against unlawful disruptions because they know he means it. And, last night, those who failed to obey repeated warnings from campus police were promptly arrested. As an official statement put it, “The University of Florida is not a daycare, and we do not treat protesters like children—they knew the rules, they broke the rules, and they'll face the consequences.”

It is not enough for administrators to lament campus disorder. Strongly worded warnings only carry weight when they are backed up by action. The hateful ideas pouring out of campus encampments are not new to America's universities. The world's oldest form of hate has been alive and well in higher education for quite some time now. From the vile “boycott, divest, and sanction” movement that began over a decade ago to the establishment of outfits like the Rutgers Center for Security, Race and Rights, the forces of bigotry have been on the move.

And those forces have powerful friends. President Biden's nominee for the Third Circuit, Adeel Mangi, has long been a patron of the Rutgers center. In fact, as new evidence indicates, he has played a much more active and enthusiastic role than he described to our colleagues on the Judiciary Committee.

Apparently, every progressive organization in the country is furious—furious—that my colleagues and I have