

Well, many of us have serious and longstanding concerns that the administration does not know how to credibly change the calculus of America's adversaries. Autocrats don't care about disapproving looks from Western diplomats.

Don't believe me? Ask the mullahs in Tehran how worried they were about stern condemnations of their ongoing nuclear enrichment efforts.

We certainly don't have to wonder whether promises of sanction relief from Washington succeeded in convincing Nicolas Maduro to permit a free and fair election.

"Concern" is not a strategy. And speeches, for that matter, are not policy, especially when they are not backed by facts and by force.

Last week, President Biden tooted the horn of his own foreign policy and declared proudly that "the United States is not at war anywhere in the world." Well, that was news to America's servicemembers deployed in harm's way.

The very next day, Iran-backed terrorists attacked U.S. personnel in Iraq and in Syria again. For months, at his orders, U.S. Navy destroyers have expended more than \$1 billion in high-tech munitions to intercept the Houthis' Iran-made arsenal of missiles and drones in exchange for no measurable increase in deterrence.

It is well and good to insist America is not at war, but a growing list of authoritarians, rogues, and strongmen are at war with us. The President's failure to respond decisively to threats may have let him believe we are not at war, but the same failure has emboldened our adversaries.

Time and again, the Biden-Harris administration has limited support, agonized over perceived risks of escalation, and tried to micromanage the way our friends in Ukraine and Israel actually defend themselves. In Secretary Blinken's first public comment after Hezbollah's most recent strike, he insisted that "we don't want to see it spread." Well, neither did Israel on October 6, before Hamas spread murderous violence into peaceful kibbutzim, in violation of a cease-fire agreement. And neither does Israel now, as its military continues to focus on finishing the job against Hamas and building the pressure necessary to secure a stable peace.

There is simply no question Iran and its proxies are the instigators and aggressors in this conflict. They have planned and prepared this violence for years. And they will escalate, spread, and perpetuate it until it is no longer in their interests to do so.

If the so-called international community wants an end to the war in Gaza and chaos in the region, they can do more than issue statements expressing concern about escalation. It is past time for civilized countries to present Tehran with cold consequences, with heavy pressure on the leaders responsible for the campaign of death and de-

struction across the Middle East. Instead, Western leaders have repeatedly blamed the victim.

This is the message sent by Democrats who boycotted the joint address to Congress by the democratically elected Prime Minister of Israel. This is the message sent by their presumptive Presidential nominee who, instead of extending a hand of solidarity, pressured a friend and ally to cease military operations to defend itself.

This sort of pressure will please the American left, but restraining Israel also pleases the butchers in Tehran.

U.S. SUPREME COURT

Madam President, the Supreme Court is under attack. Prominent Democrats say it must do what they want and not what the laws and the Constitution require.

They have incited violence against the Court. We have had to put Justices under 24/7 police protection. Even so, a deranged young man is about to go on trial for trying to kill a Justice and his family while they slept in order to change the outcome of a case.

In polling last year, the Court was the branch of government with the highest level of trust from the public. But that hasn't stopped Democrats from devoting the last 8 years from an all-out campaign against the Court's legitimacy—and, ultimately, against its very existence. Radical liberals have called for Court packing.

Influential Members of this body, including the senior Senator from Rhode Island and the chairman of the Judiciary Committee have threatened ominously that:

Perhaps the Court can heal itself before the public demands it be "restructured."

The left wage daily warfare against the Justices, illegally picketing their neighborhoods with impunity, trying to harm their spouses' careers, and even spying on what kinds of flags they fly in their yards.

Today, the Biden-Harris administration, which desperately wants these radical votes, is once again jumping right into the fray. After talking to a Harvard Law extremist who had helped then-Senator Biden stage-manage the character assassination of Robert Bork almost 40 years ago, they decided the time has come to eliminate the Supreme Court as we know it.

In his op-ed, the President says he wants term limits on Justices, never mind what the Constitution says, never mind the advice-and-consent role of the Senate. President Biden and his leftist allies don't like the current composition of the Court, so they want to shred the Constitution to change it. He wants what he calls an "ethics code," but that already exists. What the President is actually proposing is a stealth process for people other than the Justices to decide cases. Again, Constitution be damned.

The fact is that President Biden himself came to office and stood up a Commission to investigate whether to change the Supreme Court. This morn-

ing, the President thanked this Commission for its "insightful analysis" that supposedly informed his reform proposals.

Never mind now—never mind—that this Commission, cochaired by one of his closest political confidants, didn't actually recommend that he do anything. On the contrary, it explained in detail the challenges posed by hare-brained ideas like term limits.

As one of the Members noted:

We ought to be really careful about tinkering with the Supreme Court because you just don't know what the consequences could be.

Why is the Biden-Harris administration so willing to put the crown jewel of our system of government—the independent judiciary—to the torch? Because it stands in their way.

Don't take my word for it. They are running ads about it. With pictures of the Justices on the screen, one commercial intones that the Supreme Court has made the President "above the law" because the former President "asked them to."

What happened to respecting court decisions? The Biden-Harris Justice Department took an extreme position in the prosecution of their electoral component, and they lost.

Rather than accepting that they lost, the Biden-Harris administration has responded with a full-scale attack on the Justices who ruled against them. This from the folks who love to remind us that "You can't only love your country when you win."

Perhaps the President and Vice President should take a good look in the mirror.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Illinois.

ISRAEL

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I want to make sure that the record is clear and unequivocal. The Vice President of the United States, Kamala Harris, met personally with Prime Minister Netanyahu. At that point, she said, with him and publicly, that our alliance with Israel is "unwavering." That was her exact quote, despite what you might have heard to the contrary.

Then she went on to say she believed that Israel had the right to exist and the right to defend itself, but how it does it makes a difference. That is a significant statement because what she is suggesting is our alliance has to reflect our values as well as our commitment to Israel.

I don't believe that is a radical statement. I agree with that statement. And I believe that to suggest otherwise is to mischaracterize what the Vice President said. I think she speaks for America. I hope she does. She speaks for me when she says those words. I thought her meeting with Netanyahu was historic, important, timely, and repeated the basic principles that guide our two nations.

U.S. SUPREME COURT

Madam President, on the second issue of the Supreme Court, the Republican leader of the Senate just characterized the Supreme Court as the "crown jewel" of American government. The "crown jewel," those are the words that he used.

Let me ask you if you think this reflects a crown jewel: When one Justice on the Supreme Court receives \$4 million in undisclosed gifts from billionaires, does that reflect the crown jewel of our Constitution and our government? I think not. No other Federal judge could get by with what Clarence Thomas did to receive millions of dollars' worth of travel and gifts and not report them publicly.

I don't accept that as routine. I think it is an aberration and reflects poorly on the Court and its integrity. It is time for change. President Biden is saying that today. I will study his detailed suggestion, but I certainly agree with him that the nine people serving on the U.S. Supreme Court should not be treated differently than any other Federal judges when it comes to transparency and accountability for their actions.

If the Court is going to have any credibility when it comes to its decisions, it must reflect that in its actions. Receiving and failing to report gifts of that magnitude is an embarrassment to the whole Nation. Republicans should get on board a bipartisan effort. We passed an ethics bill in the Senate Judiciary Committee. It was authored by Senator WHITEHOUSE of Rhode Island. It is pending on the calendar. It should be called this year; the sooner the better.

An ethics code on the Supreme Court that applies the same standards, laws, and procedures to the highest Court in the land as we require of every other Agency in government, including every other court.

VENEZUELA

Madam President, in 2018, I had the chance to visit Caracas, Venezuela, before they held their last Presidential election. I will never forget walking into one of the private hospitals in Caracas and seeing the shelves empty of basic medicines and hearing the stories of deprivation and political repression that led so many millions to flee that country.

I told President Maduro that if he ran a sham election, which he had scheduled, he would find the country even more isolated and the Venezuelan people enduring even more suffering. Unfortunately, that is the path he pursued, and we have seen the heartbreaking consequences—a failed state near economic collapse, millions of refugees in the region, and greater reliance on Cuba and Russia to suppress the Venezuelan public.

But yesterday's Presidential election in Venezuela offered a chance for change. It has been a perilous process, with the regime disqualifying opposition candidates and arresting key opposition supporters.

Yet, on Sunday, millions turned out to vote for a change. These are some photographs from the election experience.

You see people waiting in line, some up to six hours, for the chance to vote. Despite independent exit polls showing a wide margin for opposition candidate Edmundo Gonzalez, Maduro's regime has, once again, tried to claim a dubious victory absent ballot evidence.

Responsible nations in the region have understandably cast serious doubts on the regime's claims and called for a full and transparent counting of the ballots. I join in that request.

With evidence so far pointing to a decisive Gonzalez victory, he should be considered President-elect unless credible evidence is provided otherwise. The Maduro regime must not be allowed to steal an election or any more of the future from the Venezuelan people.

TRUMP RALLY SHOOTING

Madam President, for years this country has suffered from a uniquely American gun violence epidemic. On July 13, campaign rally attendees in Butler, PA, became the latest victims when a gunman attempted to assassinate former President Donald Trump.

During the gunman's heinous shooting spree, he killed an innocent firefighter and injured two other people. But this assassination attempt has exposed more than just the continued threat of gun violence in America, it has also revealed unacceptable security failures in the operations of the United States Secret Service.

Despite the implementation of a security plan to secure the rally site on July 13, the shooter involved was able to fly a drone outside of the security perimeter for 11 minutes. His suspicious activity was reported twice, and he was spotted on the roof of a building prior to taking his first shot. Yet his violent plan continued unimpeded, and he was able to fire eight shots before a Secret Service counter-sniper killed him.

The implications are terrifying, when a mere 2 days after the shooting, the Secret Service needed to secure the Republican National Convention in Milwaukee, and in less than a month, the Secret Service must secure the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, in our home State of Illinois.

Between now and November 5, Vice President HARRIS and former President Trump will hold countless political events with thousands of Americans across the country.

The Secret Service will need to secure all of these major events, but the Agency needs first to restore our trust in its ability to do so.

The Senate Judiciary Committee, which I chair, has jurisdiction over the Secret Service and the Federal Government investigation. I have worked closely with Senator GARY PETERS of Michigan, the chair of the Homeland Security Committee, to organize a

joint hearing tomorrow morning that will examine the security failures leading to the assassination attempt against former President Trump.

During this hearing, we will hear from Acting U.S. Secret Service Director Ronald Rowe about the security failures on July 13 and what the Secret Service is doing to rectify those issues.

We will also hear from the FBI Deputy Director Paul Abbate, who will provide an update on the FBI's investigation into the assassination attempt.

This hearing follows a briefing the Secret Service and the FBI provided to members of both committees last week.

There are many questions which the American public deserves answers to including:

Why was the shooter able to conduct reconnaissance at the fairgrounds on the morning of the rally?

How and when was he able to bring an assault rifle on the premises?

Why was the building from where the gunman shot excluded from the Secret Service security perimeter, despite being within range of the AR-15, the most popular rifle in America?

Why was the gunman able to conduct reconnaissance and move about freely, even after being identified as a suspicious person, without any intervention by local and Federal law enforcement until it was too late?

What organizational and on-the-ground changes has the Secret Service implemented since this occurred to ensure better security in the future?

Which of these changes were in place in time for the Republican National Convention?

And which are still in the process of being implemented for future events such as the Democratic National Convention?

The Presiding Officer and I share concerns about tens of thousands of people coming to our beloved city of Chicago. We want them to be safe every minute of every day. We want to make certain that the Agencies, State, local, and Federal law enforcement Agencies are doing the very best job.

They have disclosed to both of us their plans, and it looks good on paper. My question is, what did you learn about Pennsylvania that is now being applied to the original plan to keep Chicago safe?

I might also say the threat or promise of Governor Abbott to send thousands of migrants on buses into this convention center in the midst of all of the visitation that is taking place is irresponsible and mean-spirited.

These people—and I have spoken to many of them coming off of buses from Texas—they are given promises of jobs and accommodations and special treatment that just aren't realistic. They are doing what they can to protect their families, but they are doing it at the expense of the government and law enforcement in the region.

When we are having the responsibility of a national convention, we