

When Israel was thrust into war for its survival—not of its own choosing—Joe Biden publicly questioned Israel's actions. He delayed critical arms shipments and damaged one of our most vital alliances. President Biden should know that U.S. support for Israel is a valuable deterrent. This undermining of the U.S.-Israel relationship would never take place under President Trump. He understood that peace through strength and our alliance with Israel is unshakeable; it is not a conditional agreement.

Finally, as we stand here today, there is still a large-scale ground war in Europe perpetrated by Russia and Vladimir Putin. When Donald Trump assumes office, the war will be entering its third year, with an appalling toll in lives and suffering. More than 1 million Ukrainians and Russians have been either killed or wounded.

Most recently, Putin has ramped up arms production, used a new ballistic missile capability, and deployed—incredibly, in my view—North Korean troops for his offensive maneuvers.

Donald Trump represents the off-ramp that the world needs, because looking to current American leadership, it is no wonder this conflict has escalated. This bloody war—especially with Iran and North Korea as Russian partners—is a stark reminder of what happens when America is perceived as weak.

President Biden's foreign policy missteps, such as lifting sanctions on the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline, emboldened Vladimir Putin. And his suggestion that a "minor incursion" into Ukraine would receive a muted response—well, that certainly did not deter this catastrophic invasion.

Then the Biden administration failed to push the whole of Europe to invest adequately in its own military and industrial capacity.

For those of us who support military assistance for Ukraine, this administration has made it unnecessarily difficult for them to actually win this war. By slow-walking payments and stalling authorities—many of which they eventually agreed to, sometimes years later—the Biden administration failed to give full support to a sovereign nation who was unlawfully invaded.

Donald Trump understands that Nord Stream 2 was a threat, and he sanctioned it. Donald Trump understood and understands that sticks work as well as carrots to boost Europe's defense spending and munitions production. He used that leverage, and we saw their investments go up.

President Trump and his Cabinet will get to work on day one to push our NATO allies to meet their commitments and bring peace to the European continent where they live.

The bottom line is this: There is a mess, and there is a mess to be cleaned up by the incoming President. America may not be at war, but this instability certainly threatens our national peace

and prosperity. I would go even further and say that it really weighs heavily on the American public.

To put it simply, failing to deter conflict makes it more likely that some of our young Americans, young West Virginians, will one day have to fight, and that again underscores the philosophy and the underpinnings that weakness can be very dangerous. My State of West Virginia is very proud that our West Virginians disproportionately, throughout our history, have answered the call to serve, but their service is not something that we take for granted.

I believe that President Trump and his team are ready to get back to the peace-through-strength philosophy. They will restore our deterrence—the deterrence that ensures we don't have to send our men and women into harm's way. Deterrence is much cheaper in many, many ways—many different ways—than war. The good news is, we don't have to wait long because January is coming, and that will be the time when we get to work.

Congress must take up the NDAA immediately—it has been floundering; the leader has refused to bring it up for at least 6 months—so that we can then put our critical national defense policies in place as this next administration takes office—something that we should have done, as I said, many months earlier.

As for the Executive, I am confident President-elect Trump has the record and resolve to clean up the mess, and I look forward to working with my colleagues and the President to secure our country's rightful, respected, and pre-eminent role on the world stage.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

FOREIGN POLICY

Mr. YOUNG. Madam President, if you conduct a quick survey of global events over the past 4 years, it is impossible—impossible—to argue that the world is more secure today than it was when the Biden administration began.

Events began to spiral downward in the summer of 2021 when the Taliban retook control of Afghanistan. The Biden administration's botched withdrawal cost the lives of 13—13—brave, patriotic American servicemembers. It left American citizens behind, and it left Afghans desperately clinging to the sides of aircraft departing Kabul.

We shouldn't forget this. It conveyed a message of American weakness to the world, a message that was heard loud and clear in places like Moscow, Tehran, and Beijing.

Just 6 months after the debacle in Afghanistan, Russian tanks rolled across the Ukrainian border. Vladimir Putin launched the largest conflict in Europe since World War II. The United States has stood with the Ukrainian people rhetorically. We provided some critical assistance to ensure Ukraine did not lose against the Russian onslaught.

But I have to say, it has not put Ukrainians in a position to win. The Biden administration has too often slow-walked deliveries of weapons or they have imposed other restrictions on the Ukrainian forces. This foot-dragging, this obstructionism, this bureaucratic lethargy, this timidity has undermined our ability to convincingly deter Putin's ambitions or deter a broadening conflict.

So here we are today. The war drags on with no strategy and no defined end goal for American support of Ukraine. Of course, the American people are understandably exasperated by this development. Meanwhile, additional conflicts developed in other regions, as if that wasn't enough.

Determined to revive the Iran nuclear deal, the Biden administration repeated the mistakes of the Obama years. They loosened sanctions on the Iranian regime, and the results predictably have been nothing short of disastrous.

On October 7, 2023, Hamas, the Iran-backed terror group controlling Gaza, carried out the worst attacks against the Jewish people since the Holocaust. Iran-backed Hezbollah has attacked Israel from the north and forced the evacuation of Israeli civilians.

And in recent months, President Biden has sadly undone much of the good will he initially created when he stood with Israel after October 7. In the process, President Biden has caved to misguided or hostile voices from within his own administration who demand that Israel defend itself with one arm tied behind its back.

For 4 years, the Biden team has failed to formulate a strategy for restoring deterrence and stopping Iran's campaign of terror and chaos, leaving our ally Israel and the entire Middle East less safe and rolling back the diplomatic progress of the Abraham Accords of the Trump years.

Across the Pacific, the Chinese Communist Party continues to build up its military, threaten Taiwan, wage economic warfare against our businesses and our supply chains, pursue economic coercion against American partners and allies, and undermine security and stability in the broader Indo-Pacific.

Other than that, things are placid.

We saw these developments play out most visibly when China launched a surveillance balloon over North America last year. It traveled over the United States. Here again, President Biden failed to provide answers to the American people about that situation or to restore deterrence so that the Chinese Communist Party understands it cannot spy on our schools, on our military bases, on our homes, on our farms, on the American people. Today, our strategic competition with China continues on as it must, with the CCP's global power and influence largely unchecked over the past 4 years.

Whether it be in Afghanistan, the Middle East, or the Indo-Pacific, the

world that President Biden is leaving behind—there are no two ways about it; let's not be mealy-mouthed—it is a world full of chaos. A band of malevolent nations—China, Russia, North Korea, Iran, Venezuela, and others—that band is redrawing borders, threatening neighbors, stealing intellectual property, sowing chaos, and threatening the global stability. Unchecked, their aggression emboldens other foes of freedom, and it triggers evermore destabilizing conflicts.

So what is to be done? I know there is a natural tendency to withdraw from the world, to give up on our leadership responsibilities, to give up even on what I would characterize as our own security interests. And, understandably, right now there is a natural impulse to withdraw, certainly, from our global leadership role. It all just seems so daunting right now.

We have domestic problems, of course, but we cannot ignore the costs of such a divestment, costs which are manifesting themselves at this very moment. Abandoning our allies and partners will empower and embolden authoritarian powers, such as China, Russia and Iran and others around the world.

Leadership comes with a price. It also comes with rewards, as we have learned throughout our history.

I look forward to working with President Trump and the many talented members of his incoming administration to reverse years—years—of disastrous policies, to restore deterrence against tyrants everywhere. We must be smart. We must be economizing in our global engagement, and I believe President Trump and the team he is building understand that.

We must continue to rebuild our defense industrial base across the country. Restoring our military readiness from artillery and submarines to semiconductors is critical—not promoting war but instead deterring conflict and furthering America's global interests, many as they are.

We must continue to persuade our allies to increase real investment in their own defense. The American people can do a lot, but we can't do it all. Our partnerships with European and Indo-Pacific nations must remain firm, but our allies also must understand that we can't bear the burden of defending the entire globe alone. We need to use our diplomatic leverage, maintain a strong military, and stand with our allies and partners.

A final piece is economic innovation here at home, something I have been working a lot on in my capacity as the U.S. Senator for Indiana. At a time of technological transformation, the United States cannot just be resilient; no, we must continue to lead. All of these pieces are critical to American foreign policy as we move forward. It is time to turn the page on the last 4 years, time to restore deterrence, and time to get back to peace through strength.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. RICKETTS. Madam President, I have always said that keeping people safe is one of the most fundamental roles the government plays: keeping people safe.

For 4 years, the Biden-Harris administration has failed at this most fundamental mandate the government has. About a month ago, the American people delivered a message that they were no longer going to stand for a government that was failing to keep them safe. The Biden-Harris appeasement-first foreign policy strategy has made America weaker and less safe. The world that the Biden administration is leaving is a more dangerous place today than it was 4 years ago when they took over.

Weakness and appeasement have defined the current administration, starting with their disastrous pullout of Afghanistan. That pullout in Afghanistan cost American lives, including a Nebraskan, Marine Cpl Daegan Page. We also left behind Americans, unbelievably, and we also left behind our Afghan security partners—abandoned them—in addition to the billions of dollars of American equipment, through this poorly executed debacle.

Since then, we have seen foreign policy fumbles and flip-flops that have left our allies questioning our commitment and, worse yet, has the bad guys—Russia, China, Iran, North Korea—questioning our resolve.

The most disturbing example of this is Iran. Under the Trump administration, they knew that the way to deal with a dictator—like we had in Ali Khamenei in Iran—is through strength and imposing sanctions.

The sanctions the Trump administration imposed took Iran's foreign reserves down from \$122.5 billion to less than \$14 billion dollars. And what did that mean? Well, that meant that they couldn't fund the terrorism around the world that they have been doing for the last 4 years.

When you cut off their money supply, they couldn't give it to Hamas or Hezbollah, and so those terrorist organizations were going broke. They didn't have the resources to be able to fund that terrorist group. And then came along Joe Biden.

Joe Biden and his administration relaxed the sanctions on Iran through a naive policy that, somehow, if we just give them enough money, they are going to be nice to us. But that is not the way it works with dictators.

It enabled Iran to generate \$100 billion in oil money, and that has consequences. It was because of this appeasement-first policy and giving money to Iran that Hamas had the ability to attack our ally Israel on October 7; and how Hezbollah has since attacked Israel, as well; how the Houthis have been able to shoot at ships in the Red Sea. Iranian proxies—like Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Houthis—have been emboldened by

Biden's appeasement-first policy. This is what is causing the chaos we are seeing right now in the Middle East.

And while these attacks may seem far away, we must remember that Iran not only chants "Death to Israel"; they chant "Death to America."

Over 40 Americans were killed on October 7. Three American servicemembers were killed by Iranian proxy drone attacks in January. The Houthis continue to shoot at American ships in the Red Sea. Islamic terrorists have crossed our open border. And for crying out loud, Iran is trying to kill President Trump. And what has the Biden administration done? Nothing. Absolutely nothing. There has been no price for Iran to pay for all of this.

Our adversaries, they see this and understand the weakness. The Chinese Communist Party has been emboldened. They have repeatedly violated our sovereignty. Spy balloons have been allowed to travel across our country, spying on our sensitive military installations. We have seen the espionage operations set up in New York City. And fentanyl has been killing Americans across our country. And while it may be coming across the southern border, the precursors are being made in China.

We have also seen what Vladimir Putin has done when Russia invaded Ukraine.

Our freedoms, our way of life depend on peace. And how do we maintain peace? We maintain peace through strength. That is what the American people chose a month ago when they elected President Donald Trump.

Under President Trump's first administration, we saw the dismantling of the ISIS caliphate and historic peace deals in the Middle East—the Middle East's first peace agreement in 26 years. And, by the way, that should have been cause for a Nobel Prize to be awarded to President Trump, but the Nobel Prize committee didn't see it that way. They couldn't bring themselves to acknowledge the great work that President Trump did.

By returning President Trump to the White House, the American people are sending a clear message: There is a new sheriff in town.

The Biden-Harris age of appeasement is ending. The resurgence of American strength is about to begin, and I am excited to see what the future holds.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ROSEN). The Senator from Wyoming.

NDA

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I spent Thanksgiving in the Middle East with 400 members of our Wyoming National Guard. These heroes come from, actually, 40 different hometowns all across the Cowboy State—small towns, our larger towns, east, west, north, south. I spend every Thanksgiving with deployed Wyoming troops. I go to thank them—to thank them for all they are doing to keep all of us safe and free.

Most Americans celebrate Thanksgiving surrounded by their loved ones.