

continue this war. It has already cost us the lives of 14 American servicemembers and hundreds have been wounded.

An American Tomahawk missile strike killed more than 140 Iranians in Minab, most of them children. And even months later, questions about that attack remain unanswered.

Thousands of other civilians have been killed and injured across Iran. Thousands more have been killed in Lebanon, and 30 civilians have been killed in Israel.

All these lives lost, and for what—for what? We are now negotiating arrangements to restore conditions that existed before this war even began, like reopening the Strait of Hormuz, which, of course, was open the day before this war started.

It has been a strategic disaster, and the economic consequences have been felt by every American. According to Moody's Analytics, this war has already cost American consumers and taxpayers about \$132 billion. Gas prices have surged, and Americans have spent tens of billions more dollars at the pump than they would have otherwise.

Fertilizer prices have increased dramatically contributing to higher food costs. We just saw inflation jump to the highest level in more than 3 years.

The World Bank even downgraded its global economic growth forecast to just 2.5 percent, the lowest it has been since the pandemic. And the Pentagon—the Pentagon—tells us it is preparing to request \$80 billion in supplemental funding to cover the costs associated with this conflict, a number we expect to be much higher at the end of the day.

Now, as I mentioned, President Trump had promised that he was going to stop wars. He promised he was going to lower costs. Instead, he has spent billions of taxpayer dollars on a reckless war of choice while driving up prices here at home.

Now, if President Trump and our Republican colleagues had had their priorities straight, they would have invested these moneys on behalf of the American people. You could use them to bring down healthcare costs. You could use them to bring down child costs.

If you take even a conservative number of \$50 billion for what the war has cost already—and it is much higher than that—but \$50 billion, you could erase the medical debt for every American who was pushed into medical debt because they couldn't afford their healthcare.

So these are the choices the Trump administration made, and this administration prioritized the war instead of making life more affordable for American families.

Since the President launched this war without congressional authorization, many Members of our body continue to abdicate their constitutional responsibilities with respect to matters of war and peace, probably the most

solemn responsibilities given to the Congress in the Constitution.

That is why several of my colleagues and I have repeatedly introduced and called up these War Powers Resolutions—to continue to urge this body to execute our constitutional responsibilities.

Now, today, we have before us another opportunity. The House has already acted by passing this concurrent resolution directing the President to remove U.S. forces from hostilities against Iran, because while this ceasefire represents progress, it remains tenuous. We all know that. In fact, President Trump yet again threatened to bomb Iran this weekend, contrary to the very first line in the first clause of the MOU that says Iran and the United States "will refrain from the threat or use of force against each other." And American troops remain deployed throughout the region. The risks are still present, and the prospect of further escalation remains very real, particularly in Lebanon, where Prime Minister Netanyahu continues to agitate for more war despite the MOU clearly indicating a halt to the war on all fronts, including Lebanon.

In recent days, I am sure my colleagues have seen that U.S. intelligence Agencies have warned the Trump administration that Prime Minister Netanyahu is likely to try to undermine the President's efforts to reach a lasting peace deal with Iran in order to ensure his own political survival in upcoming elections in Israel.

Israel's National Security Minister Ben-Gvir also said in a social media post a few days after the MOU was signed:

All of Lebanon must burn.

He is not just any member; he is a member of the government, the Netanyahu coalition.

And that sort of rhetoric is not new. In March of this year, Israel Defense Minister Yisrael Katz said that "all homes in Lebanese villages near the border will be destroyed—in accordance with the Rafah . . . model in Gaza." Well, Rafah is a city in southern Gaza near the Egyptian border that was turned into rubble during the war in Gaza, and now you have the Israeli Defense Minister saying that is the plan for southern Lebanon.

Indeed, the Netanyahu government's warmongering has been so blatant that even President Trump and Vice President VANCE are publicly admonishing the extremist Israeli Government and their blatant attempts to undermine diplomatic efforts to permanently end this war.

This agreement is a bow to reality—the terrible reality that many of us predicted would unfold if we started this illegal war in the first place. The war was a blunder. We should recognize that. And America is worse off than before we started. There is no good way to end a bad war, and we should end it.

Those pushing to abandon this agreement owe the American people an an-

swer to a simple question: What is your alternative? What comes next? More lives lost? More money wasted with no path forward? Because that is the only alternative they are offering.

I want peace to prevail, and I hope this MOU becomes the foundation of a broader diplomatic settlement. But I also hope, colleagues, we will learn something from this needless tragedy. The calls for military adventurism, the promises of quick victory, the fantasies of regime change under the circumstances that were deployed, and the endless effort to undermine diplomacy led us directly to this disaster, and we should not repeat those mistakes. We should take a stand today and end this war, and we should finally start putting the interests of the American people ahead of costly and unnecessary conflicts.

I urge my colleagues to vote yes on this War Powers Resolution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

IRAN

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, today, I rise in opposition to Donald Trump's illegal war in Iran.

I come to ask a simple question: What has this war gotten us?

Here is what we do know: It has tragically cost the lives of 13 servicemembers. It has caused hundreds of others to be injured. It has cost taxpayers tens upon tens of billions of dollars. It has cost the average American more than \$250 more at the pump on average. It has cost farmers nearly 50 percent more on fertilizer.

This war has been a disaster, and the American people agree. When the war began, it was the most unpopular war in U.S. history and has only gotten more unpopular as it has gone on. The President clearly gets that, so he has released a 2½-page bullet-point memorandum of understanding that he claims will be the panacea to end the war.

Look, ending the war is absolutely a good thing, but with this alleged deal, there are a few major catches.

For starters, this flimsy memorandum of understanding agreement has not and will not actually end the war.

This is a plan to make a plan later. And what the Trump administration is learning in real time is that a final deal—like the Obama-era deal—on Iran takes hard work.

Secondly, this short-term deal has been broken already.

Lastly, if it were to be followed to a tee, it would be an embarrassing fold to the Iranians and a loser for the American people.

We would green-light \$300 billion to go to this hard-line Iranian regime. We would lift sanctions on this regime and let it freely sell oil, allowing them to make billions more.

We would show that Iran can control the Strait of Hormuz and our global

economy whenever it wants. And what do we get? Not much—no freedom for the Iranian people who were protesting a brutal regime mere months ago; no end to Iran's nuclear capabilities.

So I, again, ask: What has this war of choice gotten us? This war has been bad for the American people, and now this off-ramp is bad for the American people.

Congress had the opportunity to end this war months ago, and we should have done just that to avoid this exact scenario.

My Republican colleagues refused, but that does not mean it is too late. It is clear as day that we cannot trust this President to be left to his own devices. We need to use the power we have to end this war and head down the path of real diplomacy. Let's take it.

I urge my colleagues to vote yes on this concurrent resolution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ARMSTRONG). The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I believe there is an order that we recess at 12:30, and I ask I be allowed to finish my remarks before we recess.

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

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, colleagues, over the last year and a half, our President Donald Trump has turned the White House into a 24-7 corruption operation. This is a national crisis, and we should start acting like it.

The President's goal is to engage in so much corruption, so much self-enrichment—to hand out so many favors to his friends, his family, and his political allies—that it just becomes the pitter-patter of rain. It is normal. It is constant. It is never-ending.

Trump's bet is that if there is a new story of corruption, of self-dealing every few days, that the press will stop covering it or the public will just stop paying attention. To an extent he is, tragically, succeeding.

But he is also betting that the public will just come to the conclusion that this is normal because all of our politics are this corrupt, that every Senator, that every previous President is this corrupt. That is not true.

While I disagree with my Senate Republican colleagues' decision to largely remain silent in the face of this misconduct, it is true that not a single Senator on either side of the aisle engages in the behavior that our President does.

Senators—Republicans and Democrats—do not trade our votes for cash or for political contributions. We don't run side hustles like crypto companies. Senators don't give contracts to their kids just because we can.

And no President in the history of this country has done what Donald Trump has done. No President has done

5 percent of the self-dealing that Donald Trump has done in the last year and a half.

This moment is exceptional. It is a one-of-one moment. And if it becomes normal—if people stop being outraged at what he is doing to enrich himself—then I fear there is no going back. The White House will just become a place to get rich.

So I think it is time to pull back and see the full picture, to not view this as just one isolated scandal after another—every single one popping up each week or every few days—but to understand the full scope of this illegality.

Last year, I came to the floor to document the first 100 days of Donald Trump's mind-blowing corruption. Since then, especially in 2026, the pace of his misconduct has quickened dramatically.

And so I am here on the floor today—and I am going to spend more than a few minutes doing this—laying out what has happened since I gave that last speech. This is the story of 500 days of corruption.

And I am going to start on April 7, 2025. This is when the current Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche issues a memo ordering the termination of several Biden-era DOJ investigations into crypto companies.

Now, here is the problem. The then-Deputy Attorney General is a major investor in crypto companies, and he works for a President who is a major player in the crypto industry. But the DOJ just drops these investigations, signals that the Department of Justice is no longer going to hold crypto companies accountable. But Blanche owns major investments in crypto stocks. The President is one of the biggest players in the industry.

Blanche doesn't actually stop there. He eliminates the entire enforcement team at DOJ dedicated to rooting out crypto-related fraud and money laundering schemes. This is a crypto investor, who works for a President who owns crypto companies, shutting down the unit at DOJ that holds this industry accountable.

Let's move to 3 weeks later on April 30. Later in the month, a curious announcement from the Department of Agriculture: They are reversing a rule that would require poultry companies to limit salmonella bacteria levels in their product. This is essentially a rule to make it less likely that people will get salmonella poisoning. It sounds like a strange rule to eliminate.

We come to find out that one of the biggest donors to Donald Trump's inauguration was a poultry company called Pilgrim's Pride. They made a donation to Trump's inauguration that was bigger than practically any other company—bigger than Amazon, Meta, or Exxon—\$5 million. And after they made the donation, they asked for one thing: the reversal of the salmonella rule. And they got it.

This is pay-for-play. You make a donation to the President or the Presi-

dent's political operation, you ask for a favor, and you get it. And we will see, as we wind through these 500 days, this happens over and over again.

In May 2025, the pardon racket starts. Every member of the Senate should be outraged at this. You all know what is happening. The President is pardoning people based on their ability to pay either him and his political operation or pay people who are close to the President.

On May 27, Donald Trump pardons a man called Paul Walczak. This is a really bad guy. He stole millions of dollars from the nurses and healthcare aides at the nursing home he owned, and he used the cash that he stole from his employees to buy a \$2 million yacht.

He got convicted. He went to jail for fraud. But his mother paid \$1 million to buy a face-to-face meeting with Donald Trump. And 3 weeks after that paid audience, her son was given a full and unconditional pardon that went so far as to relieve him of any duty to pay back the \$4.4 million that he stole from his employees. This is a new pay-for-pardons scheme that begins in May.

In June of 2025, it is revealed that top administration officials are cashing in on government contracts that benefit their own investment portfolio. Stephen Miller is more than just the architect of the administration's hard-line immigration policies. He has a personal financial stake in them.

For instance, Miller owns up to \$250,000 in Palantir stock. And just a month before Miller's holdings became public, ICE announced that it was awarding a \$30 million contract to—you guessed it—Palantir to provide real-time surveillance information to ICE officers.

And you will be shocked to hear this: There was no competitive bidding process for that contract. And you will hear this over and over again. Competitive bidding basically doesn't exist.

If the President or somebody close to the President wants a contract directed to a friend or to a company in which they invest, Miller—overseeing ICE—ICE gives a no-bid contract to Palantir. The investors in Palantir, which include Stephen Miller, get rich.

Let's move to September of 2025. In September, we start to learn the danger of Donald Trump's crypto corruption. I covered this in the first 100 days of corruption. This is maybe the most corrupt thing that Trump is doing.

He and his family own a crypto company that issues several cryptocurrencies. There is no disclosure on who is buying those coins. The President promotes them. He invites people to official events, who purchase the coins.

On September 18, though, we come to find out that Trump made \$57 million selling crypto tokens to entities associated with the regimes in North Korea, Iran, and Russia; extraordinary investments being made by entities that are tied in with North Korea, Iran, and Russia into Trump's crypto companies.