

proceed to H.R. 6644, postclosure; further, that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for weekly conference meetings; finally, that all time during recess, adjournment, and leader remarks count postclosure on the motion to proceed to H.R. 6644.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order following the remarks of Senators CRUZ, BALDWIN, VAN HOLLEN, DUCKWORTH, and WELCH.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

TEXAS INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, today, Texans celebrate 190 years of independence. On March 2, 1836, Texans fought bravely for liberty and for independence from Mexico. Many heroes, including William Barret Travis, James Bowie, and Davy Crockett, laid down their lives for the future of the Lone Star State.

It is a longstanding tradition on Texas Independence Day to read aloud the words of Colonel William Barret Travis, the leader of the besieged forces at the Alamo. His call for reinforcements reminds us of the bravery, resilience, and fortitude of those who fought and died for liberty. And today, I would like to take a moment to read his letter:

To the people of Texas & All Americans in the World:

Fellow citizens & compatriots—I am besieged, by a thousand or more of the Mexicans under Santa Anna—I have sustained a continual Bombardment & cannonade for 24 hours & have not lost a man.

The enemy has demanded a surrender at discretion, otherwise, the garrison are to be put to the sword, if the fort is taken—I have answered the demand with a cannon shot, & our flag still waves proudly from the walls. I shall never surrender or retreat.

Then, I call on you in the name of Liberty, of patriotism & everything dear to the American character, to come to our aid, with all dispatch—The enemy is receiving reinforcements daily & will no doubt increase to three or four thousand in four or five days.

If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible & die like a soldier who never forgets what is due to his own honor & that of his country.

Victory or Death.

Signed, William Barret Travis.

Texans are known for their resilience, work ethic, courage, and patriotism—qualities forged in sacrifice, sealed in blood, and handed down by the very man who gave everything for Texas independence.

I would also like to note that Texas' founding father, the George Washington of Texas, Sam Houston, was born on March 2, 1793, and he later led the Texans to victory at the Battle of

San Jacinto. He left behind an extraordinary legacy of leadership and sacrifice.

I will close with words of wisdom that Sam Houston shared:

Govern wisely and as little as possible.

Today, as we remember the Alamo and the birth of the Republic of Texas, our own independent nation for 9 glorious years, we remember the tremendous bravery of men past, and we renew a promise for the future: a promise to defend liberty, a promise to stand firm in the face of adversity, and a promise that the spirit of victory or death will always live on in the Lone Star State.

To every Texan, I wish you a proud and happy Texas Independence Day. God bless you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

WAR POWERS RESOLUTION

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I rise today in support of Senator KAINE's War Powers Resolution to halt Donald Trump's unjustified, illegal, regime-change war against Iran.

We have a lawless President who is shredding our Constitution and attacking our democracy right here at home. And that same lawlessness and recklessness has pervaded our foreign and national security policy, now putting American troops in harm's way in Donald Trump's war of choice.

Let's not forget, colleagues, what Donald Trump and JD VANCE promised the American people. Think back to all the times that they looked the American people in the eye and said they would not drag America into another war, especially another war in the Middle East. They said it over and over. They called themselves the "pro-peace" ticket.

Vice President VANCE wrote a Wall Street Journal op-ed in 2023 making the case for Trump's 2024 Presidential candidacy. The headline of his op-ed: "Trump's Best Foreign Policy? Not starting Any Wars." That is what JD VANCE promised would come from a Trump-Vance White House.

The Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard sold "No War with Iran" shirts in 2020. Four years later, she declared:

A vote for Donald Trump is a vote to end wars, not start them.

That is our current Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard.

Donald Trump even calls himself now "the peacemaker" and on election night in 2024, he said:

I'm not going to start wars, I'm going to stop wars.

That was Donald Trump at the end of his campaign repeating what he had said throughout his Presidential campaign. Well, they broke their promises. They lied directly to the American people.

President Trump has already ordered more military strikes against more

countries than any President in the modern era, including against countries that have never been targeted by the U.S. military. And now, Trump has launched an all-out illegal regime-change war of choice against Iran.

Let's be clear: This is not a war to make us safer. What the President has done is to make the world less safe for Americans, and he has chosen to put American servicemen and women at risk for a war that he said he would never start; that he promised he would never start.

As of today, we have lost six brave American servicemembers to this war. I pray for them and their families. They should still be with us today. In response to their deaths, President Trump said just yesterday that "sadly, there will likely be more. . . . That's the way it is."

That is how Donald Trump responds to American troops killed in this war of choice that he started. He said:

That's [just] the way it is.

Really, colleagues? We should not send our sons and daughters to fight and die. We should not spend billions of dollars of taxpayer money for a war that is not in our interests and has no end in sight. No one—no one—in the Trump administration, including the President, has made a credible argument why it is in America's interest to start a war against Iran. They haven't because there isn't.

Donald Trump and his administration have spent the last 48 hours telling different reporters and news agencies a whole host of different objectives and a whole set of different timelines. One claim that has been thoroughly debunked was that Iran was going to strike America first. That is a lie. It is a proven lie.

So now, Secretary of State Marco Rubio is spinning another version of this. He said we had to strike Iran first because Israel launched an attack on Iran. And here is his twisted logic. Israel was going to strike Iran, and, of course, we knew nothing about that, but we knew that if Israel struck Iran, that Iran would strike us, so we had to strike Iran first.

The deception is deep, and it is sickening. This administration lied to the American people during the campaign before they were in office, and they are lying now.

Another objective that has been cited was to end Iran's nuclear weapons capability. But we know that Iran does not have a nuclear weapons capability. That is also a lie. And, of course, we know that President Trump told the country that American and Israeli strikes last year had completely obliterated the Iranian nuclear weapons program. Remember that? And, of course, this is the President who in his first term, ripped up the agreement between the United States and Iran to prevent Iran from attaining nuclear weapons.

We also know from the Omani intermediaries, including the Foreign Ministry of Oman, that Iran was willing to

put much tighter restraints on any future possible nuclear enrichment programs. But apparently, the Trump administration had already decided to go to war.

Another reason we heard from members of the administration—they are constantly shifting rationales—has been Iran's ballistic missile program. But Iran has zero missiles that can reach the United States. Not even close. None.

So in yet another interview, Donald Trump said the aim is "freedom for the Iranian people." In other words, regime change—regime change—the regime change he promised he would never undertake if he became President.

Colleagues, we all know, every one of us, that the Iranian Government is a terrible regime, brutal to its own people, dangerous to the region. But we also learned from history that bombs don't turn dictatorships into democracies. And already, the Israeli and American strikes on Iran have produced mass civilian casualties. We have already seen reports of hospitals being bombed. In one strike alone, at least 175 civilians were killed at an elementary school, most of them schoolgirls, which has the hallmarks of a war crime.

These killings should not be a surprise, especially when Secretary Hegseth said this morning that the operation would have "no stupid rules of engagement." That is what the Secretary of Defense said—anything goes.

This is not a way to bring solidarity and support from the Iranian people. When we and the Israelis take out a country's leadership, we have no idea what will emerge next. In fact, back in 1953, the United States and the United Kingdom backed a coup against a democratically elected leader in Iran that enabled the Shah of Iran to consolidate power in the country. Some people thought that served American interests at the time. Instead, it became one of the primary drivers of the Iranian Revolution of 1979 and the creation of the Islamic Republic and its ideology.

So beware what you ask for. Indeed, according to public reports, the CIA assessed that the most likely scenario if the Supreme Leader were killed was that more radical elements of the IRGC would take power in Iran.

This does not advance America's interests in the region or the world. It will not make us safer. It will make the world less safe for America.

And is it now the policy of the United States to go to war against every regime we hate? Colleagues, that is going to cost a lot of American lives and treasure. And that is presumably why Trump and VANCE had previously been opposed to regime change and wars of choice.

So beware what we ask for when we open up Pandora's box. Have we not learned the lessons of Iraq? The Iraq war cost the lives of 8,000 American soldiers and contractors. It cost tril-

lions of dollars in taxpayer money. The war upended the region, killed hundreds of thousands of Iraqi civilians, and helped spawn ISIS. It was the worst U.S. foreign policy blunder in a generation.

The big winner from the war in Iraq? Iran. Iran was the big winner.

So now Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu says this war against Iran is something he has "yearned to do for 40 years." Well, he got the war he wanted from Donald Trump. But there is a reason past Presidents have not started wars against Iran, and that is because they have refused to risk American lives and open Pandora's box for a regime change war when they had no idea how it would end.

This war is rapidly turning into a conflict that we feared—a widespread, escalatory regional war with no end in sight. Iran has retaliated to U.S. and Israeli attacks by attacking U.S. assets and bases in every Arab country in the Persian Gulf, as well as targets in Israel, resulting in a further loss of lives. This includes drones and missile strikes on civilian infrastructure throughout the region. And just last night, Hezbollah joined the fray, launching missiles into Israel, prompting airstrikes from Israel into Beirut and across Lebanon.

This is not "America First," and we have no idea where it is going. What we do know is that the Framers of our Constitution never envisioned this to be allowed under our system of government. It is why the Framers, in our Constitution, gave Congress the power to declare war. They didn't want to give that power to one person. They didn't want to give that power to somebody like Donald Trump, who has said publicly that the only thing constraining his power is "my own morality, my own mind." That is what Donald Trump has said.

Colleagues in the Senate, you must understand that that is not what the Constitution requires. The Constitution requires Congress to act to declare war. So it is more important than ever that Congress stand up for the Constitution and that Congress insist that the President cannot continue these hostilities without approval from Congress. He shouldn't have started them without the approval of Congress.

So the resolution before us asks a simple question: Do you support the Constitution of the United States and the role it gives to the U.S. Congress—that role to declare war?

Do you believe that we, the people's elected representatives in the House and Senate, should have a voice in whether American lives—and specifically the lives of the members of our Nation's Armed Forces—are put at grave risk?

Do you believe that this regime change war of choice that Donald Trump promised he would never launch serves American interests or makes our Nation safer?

The American people do not want this war, and the Constitution entrusts

the power to declare war with the U.S. Congress. Let's not surrender that responsibility.

I urge my colleagues to support the War Powers Resolution and vote yes.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

WAR POWERS RESOLUTION

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I rise today in strong support of my colleague from Virginia Senator KAINE's resolution prohibiting the United States from continuing this illegal war in Iran.

I want to start with the basic premise that I think we can all agree on: We are here to represent the people of our States and their desires. Wisconsinites have been unequivocal that they do not want another foreign war. I agree with them, and for a while, it seemed Donald Trump did too. The President promised not to get into more foreign wars, but the President broke that promise and has gone all in on war with Iran. The consequences are dire. Six American servicemembers are now dead. My heart absolutely breaks for their parents, their siblings, their children, their spouses, and their communities. Thousands of Americans in uniform who are stationed in the region are at risk because of the President's reckless and illegal war.

And what does the President have to say? He says that it is likely more Americans are going to die. He said that is just the way it is. He said that. The President's callous response shows his disregard for the men and women he is supposed to lead.

Our Constitution is crystal clear: If our country is going to war, Congress needs to vote on it.

In 2002, Congress debated the war in Iraq, and I opposed it. I believed the Bush administration dangerously underestimated the potential consequences and did not have a clear path forward after the initial military operation. I was right. As a result, thousands of brave service men and women died, taxpayers paid billions of dollars, and we got ourselves into a yearslong war in the Middle East.

I have the same concerns today. I fully agree that Iran's regime is a dangerous and murderous one and can't be allowed to obtain a nuclear weapon, but how we deal with them and keep America safe matters. Diplomacy—the hard work of peacefully negotiating—is the answer, not war. That is exactly why I supported the 2015 deal that kept Iran from getting a nuclear weapon, but President Trump ripped that deal up and allowed Iran's nuclear program to flourish.

Wisconsinites see exactly what this President is doing, and they do not support it. They want President Trump to live up to his promises and to address their kitchen-table issues and concerns, not pull our country into another foreign war.