

Fifth Avenue, no one can ignore the Constitution. No matter if you are a Mar-a-Lago worker pulling double shifts or the President of the United States, no one is above the law.

Look, I believe there are certain solemn, urgent times when our military must be called upon to defend us. There are certain moments when the threat in question is significant and imminent, instances when military force is the most effective tool at hand and that using it is necessary to protect America and her interests. The thing is, from what little information Trump has shared publicly so far, this is not one of those times.

But if the administration thinks I am wrong, then the floor is theirs. We are only a 20-minute walk from the White House. It is not that hard to find us here. We are the building with the big dome on top. If they actually believe that this war is justified, then they need to come to Congress and do their jobs, explaining their case and giving the American people a say through their elected representatives.

They need to respect the American people enough to actually tell them why they are being forced to bear the costs of this conflict, both in dollars and cents and daughter and sons.

The White House needs to respect our servicemembers enough to prove why war with Iran is worth turning more moms and dads into Gold Star parents. They need to prove that they have thought this through enough, then they can tell us what an end state in Iran would look like.

Then, when their case has been made, when Congress' debate is done, we, in this Chamber, must vote. It is our duty; it is our burden; it is the least we can do for those willing to sacrifice everything to safeguard our democracy.

But if the Trump administration refuses to do that, if they refuse to adhere to the first article of our Constitution, well then it begs the question: What are they hiding?

This week, we will vote on Senator KAINE's War Powers Resolution, and I am well aware that many of my colleagues are claiming to have a difficult time deciding how to vote. To them, let me say this: We ask a lot of tough things of our troops and military families. Serving in a combat zone is hard. Hugging your husband or your wife, your father or your daughter, for the last time before they deploy, not knowing if you will ever see them again, that is hard. The least we can do here in return is ensure that we Senators take our duties as seriously as our military men and women do theirs.

So to my Republican colleagues: Please, think about the fact that Trump cared so little about your beliefs on this matter that he willfully, illegally circumvented our Chamber entirely, preferring to sow chaos and fear, leaving Americans in a lurch and their elected representatives in the dark, choosing to start an unlawful war rather than simply ask for your exper-

tise for your constitutionally mandated vote.

And think about that Trump still has not been able to tell us of an imminent threat to American interests that would have actually required military action anywhere near this scale. And then after reflecting on all of that, all I am asking is that you vote for what you know is right.

Moving forward, I will come back to the Chamber every afternoon, if necessary, to remind the Nation of the hard lessons learned the last time a President rashly sent our sons and daughters into another unjustified war in the Middle East, trying to ensure that this time we do right by our troops, trying to ensure that this time we actually fully, soberly consider the consequences of Washington's decisions on those who serve and their families.

God bless each and every one of our troops in harm's way right now.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORENO). The Senator from Vermont.

WAR POWERS RESOLUTION

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, we must act. The President has made a decision unilaterally without consultation of Congress to start yet another war in the Middle East. It is a reckless decision that is very detrimental to the well-being of our country and very threatening to the Constitution.

There are three issues that are absolutely essential to consider by this Congress. First of all, No. 1, America does not want this war. And I trust the American people. The reason America does not want this war is they have seen it before. They saw it in Iraq where the justification was weapons of mass destruction. They saw it in Afghanistan where the justification was getting rid of the Taliban. They saw it in Libya where the justification was getting rid of Qadhafi.

In each case—Saddam, Qadhafi, the Taliban—yes, they were evil people doing bad things—but what was a lie to the American people, and they saw, was that there were no weapons of mass destruction. The Taliban is now back in power after 20 years of war, and the chaos that was sown in Libya lives with us to this day.

America understands that it is easy for a President to assert he wants to go to war. He is the Commander in Chief. He can do it, as he has done in this case, by bypassing Congress. But what the American people have seen is that it is easy to start a war, but the consequences and the costs are not avoidable, and they have been very damaging to the well-being of the people of this country; they have been very damaging to our prosperity; and, of course, they have caused immense loss of life of our wonderful soldiers and men and women in uniform. The American people get it.

No. 2, we cannot, under our Constitution, go to war on the basis of a deci-

sion by one man. The whole point in our Constitution of vesting war-making authority in the Congress was because our Founders saw how Kings abused their powers to go to war, how an autocrat abuses his power to unilaterally decide to go to war.

A quote from Abraham Lincoln:

The provision of the Constitution [that is, our Constitution] giving the war-making powers to Congress, was dictated . . . by the following reasons . . . Kings had always been involving and impoverishing their people in wars, pretending generally, if not always, that the good of the people was the object. This, our Convention understood [Lincoln said] to be the most oppressive of all Kingly oppression and they resolved to so frame the Constitution that no one man should hold the power of bringing this oppression upon us.

Yet, in fact, that is exactly what is happening now. One man—Donald Trump—unilaterally decided to start this war. It is the same person, by the way, with—who as candidate Trump decried, and quite rightly, the rush to war. He decried especially wars of regime change as total failures. He decried the \$7 trillion that was spent in Iraq and Afghanistan.

So now, we have a new situation where the President woke up one day, announced he is going to war, and abandoned his America First commitment. What is clear here is this war is not necessary. Iran, the Ayatollah, the regime is a threat. We have been containing that threat. There were negotiations about their nuclear capabilities that were making significant progress. Don't forget that this administration is the one that tore up the agreement in the Obama administration where we had eyes on exactly what was happening in the Iran nuclear program and there was compliance. And we have substituted it with bluster and now, ultimately, this war of choice.

This is a war that has been pushed hard by Prime Minister Netanyahu, who just before the war started was whispering in the ear of Donald Trump, and it is pretty clear that the President was persuaded by Netanyahu. The President should be more persuaded by the voices of the American people who have learned lessons of Iraq and Afghanistan and even going to back to Vietnam.

The third reason Americans don't want this war is they want us in this Congress, in this administration, to focus on the needs of Americans. We have a situation in Vermont now that is similar to what people face all over this country. Healthcare is something that is out of reach for everyday Americans. That is absolutely essential. And you, yourself, and I and others did our level best to try to extend tax credits to working families and farmers and small businesses who depended on them to be able to continue to have healthcare. With the One Big Beautiful Bill, 15 million people are losing Medicaid access.

What we are seeing is the acceleration of income inequality where people

who work hard, oftentimes two jobs, who don't have more time in their life to even work more, at the end of the month can't pay their bills. And isn't it time that we focus on meeting the needs of Americans? Basic things like healthcare, like affordable housing, like childcare, things that make a family secure, things that make a community strong.

There is absolutely no coherent rationale that the President has offered for the end game of this war against Iran. And there is absolutely no explanation from the President about why he has abandoned what he asserted was his longtime opposition to wars of regime change.

And this is the question for all of us in this Chamber who serve in the U.S. Senate and who have responsibilities under the Constitution, specifically article I: Will this U.S. Senate allow a single man to plunge this Nation into war when it is our constitutional responsibility to make a decision as to whether to send our men and women into combat? That is our responsibility and vote, as all of us will. We cannot avoid our responsibility to vote, to stand and to be counted.

Now, at the close, I want to say something that I know every single one of the Members of the Senate feels very strongly, and that is support for our men and women in uniform.

We have brave members of the Vermont Guard that are serving right now, and I speak of my concern for them, their well-being, and their families. But I express that same strong sensibility toward every family who has a servicemember serving in this conflict, and I say that to every servicemember in the conflict: We support you.

But, Mr. President, this is a wrong decision. You do not have the right to make this decision unilaterally.

And I say to my colleagues in the Congress: We must stand up and do our job and meet our responsibility. And that is why I am a strong supporter of Senator KAINE and Senator PAUL's War Powers Resolution.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:16 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, March 3, 2026, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

BRADFORD PENTONY WILSON, OF NEW JERSEY, TO BE ARCHIVIST OF THE UNITED STATES, VICE COLLEEN JOY SHOGAN.

THE JUDICIARY

SHERIA AKINS CLARKE, OF SOUTH CAROLINA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA, VICE ROBERT BRYAN HARWELL, RETIRED.

JEFFREY M. KUHLMAN, OF KANSAS, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF KANSAS, VICE ERIC F. MELGREN, RETIRED.

KATHLEEN S. LANE, OF MONTANA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF MONTANA, VICE SUSAN P. WATTERS, RETIRING.

ANTHONY W. MATTIVI, OF KANSAS, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF KANSAS, VICE DANIEL D. CRABTREE, RETIRED.

ANTHONY J. POWELL, OF KANSAS, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF KANSAS, VICE JULIE A. ROBINSON, RETIRED.

EVAN RIKHYE, OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS, TO BE JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS FOR A TERM OF TEN YEARS, VICE WILMA ANTOINETTE LEWIS, TERM EXPIRED.

JUSTIN D. SMITH, OF MISSOURI, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE EIGHTH CIRCUIT, VICE WILLIAM DUANE BENTON, RETIRING.

KARA MARIE WESTERCAMP, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A JUDGE OF THE UNITED STATES COURT OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE, VICE STEPHEN A. VADEN, RESIGNED.

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

JEFFREY BRODSKY, OF FLORIDA, TO BE A GOVERNOR OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 8, 2029, VICE WILLIAM ZOLLARS, TERM EXPIRED.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ADAM CASSADY, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE AMBASSADOR AT LARGE FOR CYBERSPACE AND DIGITAL POLICY, VICE NATHANIEL FICK, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

KAVEH FARZAD, OF MARYLAND, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF ENERGY (INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS), VICE ANDREW EILPERIN LIGHT, RESIGNED.

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

WILLIAM GALLO, OF FLORIDA, TO BE A GOVERNOR OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 8, 2030, VICE ANTON GEORGE HAJJAR, TERM EXPIRED.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

PRESTON WELLS GRIFFITH III, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE VIENNA OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR.

PRESTON WELLS GRIFFITH III, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR.

YEOKIM KIM, OF TEXAS, TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS, WITH THE RANK AND STATUS OF AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY.

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

JAMES O'NEILL, OF TEXAS, TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION FOR A TERM OF SIX YEARS, VICE SETHURAMAN PANCHANATHAN.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

KENNETH SORENSON, OF HAWAII, TO BE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE DISTRICT OF HAWAII FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE CLARE E. CONNORS, TERM EXPIRED.

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

ROBERT STEFFENS, OF TEXAS, TO BE A GOVERNOR OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 8, 2032, VICE ROBERT M. DUNCAN, TERM EXPIRED.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

JOHNSON TEEHEE II, OF OKLAHOMA, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF OKLAHOMA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE KERRY LEE PETTINGILL, TERM EXPIRED.