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Senate

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, May 2, 2019.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable THOM TILLIS, a Senator from the State of North Carolina, to perform the duties of the Chair.

CHUCK GRASSLEY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. TILLIS thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

S.J. RES. 7

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, in March, the Senate narrowly passed a resolution that would have misused the War Powers Act and actually hampered efforts to bring the conflict in Yemen to a close. Fortunately, the President vetoed it.

So today, Members will have a second chance to send the right message to our partners in the region, to important humanitarian missions, and to eradicating al-Qaida from the Arabian Peninsula. I urge my colleagues to vote to uphold the President's veto.

The resolution before us starts from false premises. We are not parties to the civil war in Yemen. We are no longer providing even air-to-air refueling.

More important, the resolution would make it actually more difficult to prevent the loss of innocent lives. This resolution would require U.S. advisers to cease training and intelligence sharing operations that help pilots avoid civilian casualties. And it would dry up U.S. noncombat support to the weakened, U.N.-recognized government in Yemen.

The resolution would also create serious new problems for the U.N.-led dip-

lomatic mission that is doing all it can to negotiate an end to the bloodshed.

Abandoning our Yemeni, Emirati, and Saudi partners just as diplomatic efforts are starting to make progress is hardly the way to give them the confidence to take the hard diplomatic steps that are necessary.

An abrupt withdrawal of U.S. support for the coalition would be good news for Iran, for the Houthi rebels they support, and, of course, al-Qaida, as well.

I share many of my colleagues' serious concerns about aspects of Saudi Arabia's behavior, but the best way for us to encourage better behavior from our partners is to remain involved with Saudi Arabia and the UAE, not push them into the arms of Russia and China.

The War Powers Act is a blunt tool, and not at all the right vehicle to productively or diplomatically express concern about the behavior of close partners of the United States.

The Senate passed a more nuanced resolution in December of last year, and it has many other tools to register concern and disapproval. If Senators want to play a productive role in this conflict, I would encourage them to meet with Saudi, Emirati, and Yemeni officials, to travel to the region, and to hold hearings on this important matter.

But for all the reasons I have laid out, this particular resolution is a particularly bad idea. I urge each of my colleagues to join me in setting it aside and upholding the President's veto.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, a few weeks ago, a majority of the Senate took a modest step to revise some of our institutional traditions and process the President's nominees for lower level positions in a more fair and expeditious manner. At the time, our Democratic colleagues protested angrily. They had gladly supported a

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable THOM TILLIS, a Senator from the State of North Carolina.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Gracious God, You have blessed us beyond our deserving, making our Nation a land of liberty. On this National Day of Prayer, remind us that the effectual, fervent prayers of the righteous avail much.

Lord, transform our national leaders into people of diligence, integrity, and prayer. May they claim Your promise in 2 Chronicles 7:14, that if they humble themselves, pray, repent, and seek You earnestly, You will hear their prayers, forgive their sins, and heal our land. Help our Senators to continue to seek You in prayer so that they may learn how to embrace the unfolding of Your loving providence.

Sovereign Lord, hear our prayer, for we place our trust in You.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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