

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant bill clerk read the nomination of Thomas P. Barber, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Florida.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Thomas P. Barber, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Florida.

Mitch McConnell, Bill Cassidy, David Perdue, John Thune, Roy Blunt, Thom Tillis, Roger F. Wicker, Johnny Isakson, Mike Braun, Mike Rounds, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, John Boozman, Marco Rubio, Kevin Cramer, James E. Risch, Pat Roberts.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 49.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant bill clerk read the nomination of Jean-Paul Boulee, of Georgia, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Jean-Paul Boulee, of Georgia, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia.

Mitch McConnell, John Barrasso, Mike Rounds, Pat Roberts, Richard Burr,

John Cornyn, Johnny Isakson, Ben Sasse, Thom Tillis, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Michael B. Enzi, John Kennedy, Shelley Moore Capito, John Boozman, Steve Daines, Mike Crapo, Lindsey Graham.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 193.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant bill clerk read the nomination of David Stilwell, of Hawaii, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (East Asian and Pacific Affairs).

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of David Stilwell, of Hawaii, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (East Asian and Pacific Affairs).

Mitch McConnell, Thom Tillis, Mike Crapo, John Hoeven, Johnny Isakson, John Thune, Shelley Moore Capito, John Boozman, Mike Rounds, Pat Roberts, James E. Risch, Richard Burr, John Barrasso, Roy Blunt, David Perdue, John Cornyn, Tom Cotton.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 217.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant bill clerk read the nomination of Edward F. Crawford,

of Ohio, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Ireland.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Edward F. Crawford, of Ohio, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Ireland.

Mitch McConnell, David Perdue, John Thune, Roy Blunt, Thom Tillis, Roger F. Wicker, Marco Rubio, James E. Risch, Bill Cassidy, Mike Rounds, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, Johnny Isakson, John Boozman, Kevin Cramer, Mike Braun, Pat Roberts.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I want to talk a little bit about what we will be talking about around the country and around the world tomorrow. Tomorrow is the 75th anniversary of D-Day. There aren't a lot of days known in history around the world by just one letter, but June 6, 1944, is known that way. It is the greatest amphibious battlefield landing ever and probably the single greatest military operation in history. It was done to liberate people in Europe from one of the most savage regimes that ever existed.

At 15 minutes past midnight, 18,000 paratroopers began to step out of their planes high above Normandy, France, going in behind what would be the landing the next day. Below them, there were about 200,000 people streaming toward the Continent on almost 7,000 ships, with about 1 million others to follow after that landing was made on D-Day.

A journalist who wrote about the battle noted that by 4:30 that morning, the Stars and Stripes flew for the first time over a town liberated by Americans in France in World War II.

So a lot happened from midnight to 4:30, but a lot more was going to happen that day. Americans led the operation, but there were also troops from Britain, from Poland, from Norway, from Canada, and even French troops returning to help free their own country were there. They were told that when you land in Normandy, you will have only one friend: God. I am sure there was lots of praying going on that day.

It became known in literature and on film as "The Longest Day," and it gave the Allies the threshold they needed to free the Continent from the crush of the Third Reich. There was clearly chaos—that many people doing that many things in that many different ways. There were missteps, and there was bad luck, but in the end, there was an unimaginable amount of courage and sacrifice and just simple providence in what happened that day.

When one landing group was landed in the wrong place, a place they weren't supposed to land, the commanding general, Theodore Roosevelt, who was the son of the former President Theodore Roosevelt, told one of his officers just to keep on bringing the men ashore. He said: "We are going to start the war from right here." It is not where they intended to be, but it is where they were, and in their view and General Roosevelt's view that day, where we are is where we are going to start; there is no going back now. They didn't go back.

One of the men who joined the fight that day—and there were millions who would eventually—with hundreds of thousands that day was Ralph Goldsticker from the Marine Corps Reserve.

He had signed up for the Army Aviation Cadet Corps right after Pearl Harbor. He said, when talking about this later, that his parents were scared silly when they found out he had signed up immediately to become a flyer in what would become World War II.

He flew 35 missions as a bombardier flying in a B-17 Flying Fortress, including two missions on D-Day. His first mission that day was to help take out the big German guns that guarded the beach where British troops were landing. He remembers the skies being so thick with airplanes that he had to fly from southern England all the way back to Scotland just to get in line to head to France.

Later that afternoon, he flew a second mission to attack German reinforcements who were headed to the beaches. Ralph was awarded the French Legion of Honor medal in recognition of his service.

You know, he was just one of thousands of Missourians from the lowest private to General Omar Bradley, who was commanding the American troops who were part of that mission, and many of them would never return.

We just had a series of votes a little earlier than we would normally have in the week because 17 or so of our colleagues are going to be part of the D-Day celebration on this 75th anniversary. I had an opportunity myself to be in Normandy a few years ago. We were in Normandy at the Normandy American Cemetery, where there were 7,000 graves out in front of us.

On what was a private trip, not a government trip, we were fortunate to have a good guide who understood the war and the cemetery. He took us through the cemetery, and then he

took us over and sat us down on the stone wall with the English Channel to our backs and those 7,000 graves out in front of us. As we sat there at that spot, he flipped open his computer and on his computer he had some video of General Eisenhower and Walter Cronkite sitting exactly on that same spot on June 6, 1964, the 20th anniversary of D-Day.

General Eisenhower, of course, gave the orders in spite of weather and other things, hoping it would work out as it was supposed to. As for what happened on D-Day and what happened later, he said to Walter Cronkite something like this: You know, Walter, my son John graduated from West Point on D-Day. Many times over the last 20 years I thought about him and his wife and the family they have and the opportunities they have had, and I thought about these young men—Eisenhower said, looking at those graves—and I thought about these young men and what they didn't get to do because of what they were asked to do.

That, by the way, was the same commanding general who had that famous note in his wallet that day, stating that he would take full responsibility for what happened if it didn't go well. That was the kind of leader he was.

I mentioned that there were 18,000 paratroopers. He was told that 70 percent of those paratroopers would not survive the day. There is a statue here in the Rotunda of this building that is based on a photo of Eisenhower the day before D-Day, surrounded by those young paratroopers. They were 18, 19, and 20, and maybe even a few younger than 18 surrounding him. They had been told that he wouldn't want to talk to them, but when he got there, it was obvious that he was there to see them. That statue in the Rotunda shows Eisenhower making a gesture. Nobody knew for years what that particular hand gesture was, but it turns out that he was talking to a young man from Idaho, and he was talking about fly fishing. So that gesture of Eisenhower in this building, if you are in this building looking at that statue, is Eisenhower the day before D-Day, talking to a young man about fly fishing. Again, he had been told that 70 percent of those paratroopers would not survive the day because of what he and others were asking them to do.

The numbers weren't that bad, but they turned out to be plenty bad. The Germans had released water in an area behind Normandy in an unexpected way. So many of those paratroopers who expected to land on the ground instead went into flooded lands and drowned. Other things happened that couldn't have been planned for and weren't planned for, but they were there to do that job.

The fighting that first day, D-Day, paved the way for more men to come ashore. It began the long push from France into Germany and, for them, into history. I think there will be slightly more than a dozen D-Day sur-

vivors at that 75th anniversary. You don't have to do the math very long to know that if you were in the military on D-Day, you would be in your nineties today, and they are going to be there with our colleagues and others celebrating what they did and what they were willing to do.

One observer wrote on D-Day: There never had been a dawn like this one—700 ships, 200,000 people ready to land and establish the beginning of the end of World War II. So on D-Day, we remember again the sacrifice of those thousands of soldiers, sailors, and airmen. We honor their courage and devotion to the cause of liberty. We serve them by continuing to remain strong and preparing to fight for freedom everywhere. That means doing all we can for the men and women who defend us today. It means we carry the legacy of the generations that fought 75 years ago on D-Day and every other war where Americans fought and died.

They deserve our gratitude today and every day. We need to continue to understand the importance of our alliances and our willingness to stand for freedom. D-Day is a great day and this is a great, great week to be reminded of that.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I appreciate the remembrances of D-Day from Senator BLUNT, the distinguished senior Senator from Missouri.

It is always memorable attending D-Day events. The first one I went to—and you just spoke of the distinguished Kansan, Dwight Eisenhower—was with Robert Dole for the 40th anniversary. President Reagan asked the two of us to represent him in Italy when we first landed, while President Reagan went to Normandy. Subsequently, I went with a delegation with President Clinton and then with President George W. Bush, and, lastly, with President Obama. I found the experience overwhelming each time.

Last year—it was actually on my birthday—DICK SHELBY and I were there and laid a wreath in Normandy. Nobody can walk by there—first, seeing all the graves and realizing that they are only some of the remains—and then walking to the cliffs and looking down, and not wonder how anybody could have had the courage to face such withering fire. For some who survived, it seemed like the enemy was using a paint brush and just wiping people out. You would see them falling all around.

A well-respected doctor from our home town in Montpelier had never talked about it. On the 50th anniversary we asked him if he would join us there. He is not a wealthy man. He treated a lot of the poor Italian immigrants for nothing. My mother was a first generation Italian American, and she always talked with him. She and my father and others raised money for him to go, and after that for the first time he could talk about it.

He came back and talked about it. He was a medic and a little guy. He went off the boat with all of his gear and just sank. He would have drowned, but somebody pulled him up and brought him to the shore. He turned to say thank you, and the man who rescued him was shot dead.

He refused to leave the beach. He just treated one person after another, and his story is not unusual. So many did that. So I thank my friend from Missouri for what he said.

CUBA SANCTIONS

Mr. President, there are foreign policies that are thoughtful, that reflect lessons learned from history, and that advance our national interests. Let me talk about others.

I have been here for a lot of years. I was fortunate to come here at the time of President Ford and have known and seen every President since. I have seen some dumb policies by administrations over the years, both by Republicans and Democrats. I want to speak briefly about one of them because it is not just dumb. It is an embarrassment. It is going to hurt a lot of Americans. It is going to hurt a lot of good people in Cuba, and there is no denying that.

I refer to the decision announced by the Treasury Department yesterday to severely restrict travel by Americans to Cuba. Why? Because Cuba supports Nicolas Maduro.

The administration has reinstated the failed policy of the Cold War restrictions on the right of every American citizen to travel to Cuba, even though the overwhelming majority of Americans, Republicans and Democrats alike, opposes such restrictions. It means cruise ships will stop sailing there. Educational and cultural exchanges will shut down. Sports teams will stay home. School trips will end. Trade missions will end. American farmers who could export products to Cuba are going to be shut out as well as other American companies.

I have to ask: What kind of government thinks it has a right to tell its citizens where they can travel and where they can spend their own money? Ironically, not the Cuban Government, despite its repressive policies. Cubans can travel to the United States if we grant them a visa.

Russia is kleptocracy with nuclear weapons pointed at us, that invades its neighbors, supports President Assad and Nicolas Maduro, interferes with our elections, and opposes the United States at every turn in the U.N. Security Council. But Americans can travel to Russia without restriction, just as Russians can travel here.

Iran has brutally repressive government, but it does not have laws and regulations to prevent its citizens from traveling to the United States or Americans from traveling there.

Nicaragua is led by a corrupt dictator, but Nicaraguans can travel to any country that will accept them, and Americans are free to travel there.

In fact, Americans can travel anywhere in the world without restriction,

except to North Korea and now Cuba, whose people could not be more welcoming of Americans.

How do I know this? Because unlike the people in the White House and the Treasury Department who have never ever been to Cuba, I have been there. My wife Marcelle has been there. Our granddaughter Sophia has been there.

This administration's policy is being guided by a couple of hard-liners in the National Security Council who have never set foot in Cuba but are on a crusade to pressure the Cuban Government to change its policies. After 50 years of trying and failing to get Cuba to change its policies, they continue to believe that one way to do that is by preventing Americans who believe in democracy from traveling to Cuba and spending their own money there.

Of all the paternalistic, anachronistic, and hypocritical policies, that is beneath the world's oldest democracy. We tried it for 50 years, from the time I was in college. It failed. In fact, it backfired. As we blocked access to Cuba, the Cuban authorities solidified their control.

This will backfire, too. If past experience is any guide, it will cause them to intensify their support for Maduro.

We all want Maduro gone, but are we so blinded by arrogance, ideology and stupidity that we are destined to keep repeating our mistakes?

If this policy makes sense for Cuba, why not for other repressive governments whose policies we disagree with, like China? They have imprisoned a million of their Uyghur citizens. Their military is deeply involved in the economy. Yet millions of Americans go to China without restriction.

Egypt has destroyed what fragile democratic institutions existed there. They have locked up thousands of political opponents, as well as American citizens. Yet President Trump calls President al Sisi a great friend—a man who locks up Americans, locks up people who disagree with him.

Saudi Arabia commits war crimes in Yemen, they treat women as property, and they murdered Jamal Khashoggi and other dissidents. The Crown Prince, who we know was involved in the murder of Mr. Khashoggi, is apparently untouchable, and our President and Secretary of State seem to prefer it that way. But Americans can still travel to Saudi Arabia without reservation.

These regulations are an insult to every American. They are a disgrace to a free society. Since when is it the role of the Federal Government to say where Americans can travel and spend their own money, absent some threat to national security or their own health and safety, neither of which exists in Cuba?

It is not going to hurt the leaders in Cuba. They are not going to submit to bullying. If anything, it will harden their attitude toward the United States.

I know who it will hurt. It will hurt the people who most deserve our help—

the Cuban families who own small businesses, who rent out rooms in their apartments, who own their own taxis and restaurants. Artisans and musicians. People who otherwise subsist on meager government salaries and rations and benefit enormously when Americans visit Cuba.

Marcelle and I have met with many of these people—young people especially—who have Airbnb, who have started their own small businesses. They work extremely hard within a system stacked against them, and they need American customers. The White House just slammed the door on them.

Of course we disagree with the Cuban Government. On many things we strongly disagree. But we disagree with many governments over Venezuela and other issues. Does that give the Treasury Department the right to tell Americans they can't travel there?

What if the Treasury Department imposed such restrictions on travel by Members of Congress? What if they said “after today, Members of Congress can no longer travel to China or Russia”. There is not a single Senator, Republican or Democrat, who would stand for that. What hypocrisy.

Freedom to travel is a right. It is fundamental. It is part of who we are as Americans. We travel. We explore. We meet people. We share our values. We build relationships with people we agree with and disagree with. Are we willing to stand by and let the right of private Americans to travel be trampled this way?

I will have more to say about this self-defeatist policy when I introduce the bipartisan Freedom for Americans to Travel to Cuba Act.

I urge all Senators to not let the same old, worn out, Cold War, isolationist, fearmongering, failed arguments about Cuba stand in the way of common sense.

I see one of my very good friends on the floor, the Senator from Ohio.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAMER). The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I thank my friend and colleague and one-time President pro tempore of this body, Senator LEAHY.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY

Mr. President, I am here on the floor today to talk about D-Day, to talk about how we would remember the 75th anniversary tomorrow of a turning point in World War II: June 6, 1944, the invasion of Normandy.

Historian Douglas Brinkley has written that D-Day was both the single most important in the 20th century and one of the bloodiest and most tragic, too, in terms of loss of life.

On D-Day, our fleets set forth from the rocky shores of Britain to reach the fog-shrouded beaches of Normandy. On board the thousands of ships and planes were our fathers and grandfathers and great-grandfathers—some no older than 18 years old—who would bravely venture ashore in a show of determination and duty. There were