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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal Lord, the giver of grace, in these turbulent and tempestuous times when we do not know what a day may bring, You continue to be sovereign. Morning after morning, we continue to receive Your new mercies.

Lord, sustain our lawmakers with Your unfailing love that is as high as the heavens. May our Senators know that, in everything, You continue to work for the good of those who love You and who are called according to Your purpose for them. Pour out upon our legislators the riches of Your mercy so that they may stay steadfast in faith.

Eternal God, hear us as we pray. We need stronger hearts, greater faith, and clearer perception.

We pray in Your mighty Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore 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.

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

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 1 minute as in morning business.

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

FEDERALIST 26

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, there is a story that we often hear about in high school and government classes

where George Washington is said to have told Jefferson that the Senate was created to “cool” House legislation as a saucer is used to cool hot tea.

Whether that is historically accurate or not, it is a good summation of the role of the U.S. Senate. Now I am going to quote from Federalist 62 what Madison said. He could have made this quote a little easier to understand, but here it is anyway: “The necessity of a senate is not less indicated by the propensity of all single and numerous assemblies to yield to the impulse of sudden and violent passions, and to be seduced by factious leaders into intemperate and pernicious resolutions.”

That is the end of Madison’s quote, Federalist 62.

Now, considering Madison’s admonition, it should be no surprise to anyone whatsoever that the Senate passes fewer bills than the House and always has. But how come those who parrot the partisan talking points that the Senate is a legislative graveyard don’t also talk about the over 200 Senate bills on Speaker PELOSI’s desk?

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

IRAN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I had planned to discuss the corrosive political games that the Speaker of the House continues to play with the solemn issue of Presidential impeachment, but the deadly serious events of yesterday evening threw those political squabbles into the starkest possible relief.

I was troubled but not surprised by reports that Iran fired ballistic missiles at U.S. forces in Iraq last night. As I have warned, the threat posed by Iraq has been growing for years, and

this threat will continue even beyond the death of Tehran’s master terrorist, Soleimani.

We must remain vigilant in the face of serious threats posed by Tehran. Apparently, these strikes did not kill or wound Americans, but they demonstrate the significant progress Iran has made over the last decade in building a large, long-range, and accurate ballistic missile force. Many of us have long cited the absence of any constraint on Iran’s sophisticated missile program as one of the primary shortcomings of the Obama Iran deal, and this strike stands as a reminder to the world of this growing threat.

We rightly talk a lot in this Chamber about American interests, but last night was another stark reminder that Iran and its proxies have been a cancer on Iraq’s sovereignty and Iraq’s politics for some time.

Tehran has long shown disregard for Iraqi lives. Just in the last few weeks, its militia proxies have slaughtered innocent Iraqi protesters, and it has launched ballistic missiles at its territory. The millions of Iraqis who have been taking to the streets for months to protest have understood this perfectly well.

I spoke to the President last night. I am grateful for his patience and prudence as he and his Cabinet deliberate on how to respond appropriately to the latest Iranian provocation. As a superpower, we have the capacity to exercise restraint and to respond at a time and place of our choosing, if need be. I believe the President wants to avoid conflict or needless loss of life but is rightly prepared to protect American lives and interests. I hope Iran’s leaders do not miscalculate by questioning our collective will and launching further attacks. For our part, I certainly hope our own congressional deliberations do not give Tehran a reason to question our national will.

Top officials will provide a classified briefing to Senators today. As I have

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



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