

I look forward to confirming Judge Brasher to his next post this afternoon.

WAR POWERS RESOLUTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, on another matter, this week, we expect the Senate will take up a War Powers Resolution by the junior Senator from Virginia that would severely limit the U.S. military's operational flexibility to defend itself against threats posed by Iran. I will strongly oppose our colleague's effort and urge the Senate to defeat it.

First, let's discuss what prompted this: the President's successful decision to remove Soleimani from the battlefield last month. This limited yet decisive precision strike eliminated the terrorist mastermind who had been responsible for more American military casualties than anyone else alive.

This was not some reckless act. It was a calculated and limited response to a significant, growing threat of attack against U.S. personnel in Iraq by an emboldened adversary. Years ago, Soleimani had concluded America was a paper tiger whose people he could kill with relative impunity. It was a strike designed to stop an escalation cycle we all knew was underway and to restore deterrence and reduce the risk of war.

Yet, when Soleimani's record of brutality was brought to an end, some Washington Democrats immediately suggested President Trump was leading us into World War III. While the Middle East masses rejoiced at the death of a principal architect of Iran's campaign of terror, the Washington elites fretted.

Yet, thus far, it appears the Soleimani strike has, indeed, had the intended effect. As I observed back in January, "We appear to have restored a measure of deterrence in the Middle East. So let's not screw it up." Well, I am afraid that is just what our colleague's resolution would do. Just as we have successfully sent Iran the strong signal of our strength and resolve, a blunt and clumsy War Powers Resolution would tie our own hands.

With China's and Russia's watching, is it really a good idea to suggest that we are willing to let a meddling power like Iran push us around? This self-flagellation and self-limitation would be tantamount to snatching defeat from the jaws of victory.

For 8 years, President Obama and Senate Democrats, like my friend the Democratic leader himself, frequently said that, when it comes to Iran, we should never take the military option off the table. Yet, now that someone else is in the Oval Office, they seem to want to remove all options from the table. Lest we forget, the fact is that we are not conducting ongoing hostilities with Iran. This was a one-off operation to disrupt and deter planned attacks—not a campaign, not a conflict, not a war.

This discrete and limited exercise of American power pales in comparison to

the ways in which past Presidents of both parties have routinely used Presidential authorities to utilize our military might without their having the prior consent of Congress—President Clinton in Kosovo, President Obama in Libya, and so on.

Do most of my distinguished Democratic colleagues really agree with several of their party's leading Presidential candidates who have suggested President Trump made a mistake by taking this sort of Executive action to eliminate this brutal terrorist?

Do my colleagues really agree with the prominent voices on their side who have proposed to exit the Middle East altogether rather than to continue to work to support our local partners and defend our national security and national interests in this critical region?

I have been trying to have this broader debate for more than a year now. I have repeatedly sought to give my Democratic colleagues the opportunity to go on record about their actual, big-picture strategic vision for the Middle East.

Are they willing to support a continued military presence in Syria? in Iraq? Do they believe we can magically support our partners, like the Kurds, without having a military presence; that we can counter Iranian and Russian influence if we are nowhere to be found in the region? Do they believe Israel will be safer in a region without American influence?

Ill-conceived potshots at Presidential authorities—in the wake of a strike that succeeded—by using the blunt instrument of a War Powers Resolution is no substitute at all for answering these broader questions.

I will oppose my colleague's resolution tomorrow, and I encourage our colleagues to do likewise.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 5687

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I understand there is a bill at the desk that is due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The leader is correct.

The clerk will read the title of the bill for the second time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 5687) making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes.

Mr. MCCONNELL. In order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I would object to further proceedings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

ELECTION SECURITY

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, the 2020 primary elections are ongoing. The national election is only 9 months away. If there is anything we can say for certain about our elections at this point, it is that foreign entities—Putin, China, perhaps others—are already implementing their schemes to undermine the public confidence and the integrity of those elections and to bend social media in favor of their chosen outcome. FBI Director Wray, former DNI Coats—virtually every member of our national security and intelligence community has warned us of this danger.

As we have heard over the past weeks, the threat of foreign interference in our election dates back to the founding days of the country. George Washington warned that foreign interference is one of the most baneful foes of republican government. Adams wrote that as long as elections happen, the danger of foreign influence recurs.

The warnings of our Founders hold a new and startling relevance today. The current President of the United States, far from having the same fears about foreign interference as our Founders, has been very public about his openness to foreign assistance and manipulation in support of his election. If a foreign power had dirt on one of his opponents, the President said, "I think I'd want to hear it." At different times, the President has invited Russia, Ukraine, and China to investigate his political opponents.

Of course the President was just impeached over this issue, and the Senate just concluded a trial in which it appeared a bipartisan majority of Senators broadly accepted the fact that the President leveraged hundreds of millions of dollars of military assistance to Ukraine to compel its government to investigate one of his political rivals.

The trial of President Trump exposed in great detail the President's willingness to accept foreign help in the elections. It also revealed just how little Senate Republicans were willing to do about it. Senate Republicans wouldn't even fairly examine the charges against the President by allowing witnesses and documents in his trial.

The end of the President's impeachment trial does not mean that the end of the issue of election security is somehow over—far from it. We now have even a greater need to safeguard our elections than we had before.

The President tried to cheat in our elections, and the Senate majority of