

But 1 week ago, the Gray Lady finally met her match. Vladimir Putin? No problem. Iranian propaganda? Sure. But nothing could have prepared them for 800 words from the junior Senator from Arkansas.

Senator COTTON wrote an op-ed explaining a position which one survey found 58 percent of Americans agreed with. He argued that leadership in several cities had proven they either couldn't or wouldn't stop the riots, so President Trump should use Federal troops to secure the peace, as several Presidents have in our history. His view was controversial, no question, but there is also no question it was a legitimate view for a Senator to express.

Looting and arson were crippling cities nightly. Some local authorities seemed to be functionally sacrificing their cities' small businesses to appease the mob. In Chicago, we have since learned, even Democratic aldermen were literally crying and pleading with their Democratic mayor to do something, they said. So a U.S. Senator wrote about it.

Immediately, his idea was met with strong criticism. Now, that ought to be par for the course. In a free and open society, speech begets speech. Arguments beget counterarguments. We discuss and debate as fellow citizens. But that is not quite what happened. Instead of trying to win the argument, the far left tried to end the discussion.

By now, we all know the routine. We have seen this movie before. Rather than actually rebut speech, the far left tried to silence the speaker with a mixture of misrepresentations, sanctimonious moralizing, and bizarre, emotional word salads that nobody else could have standing to question. This silencing tactic has escaped from the ivory tower and is spreading throughout American life. This sounds like Mad Libs mixture between a therapy session and a university's H.R. department.

So, sure enough, instead of attempting to defeat Senator COTTON's ideas, the left set out to ban him from polite society. Some New York Times employees flooded social media to claim their bosses have risked reporters' physical safety with the Senator's scary words. Outside leftists blasted the paper for airing the argument. The Times itself began lying about what Senator COTTON had said. The paper's own Twitter account has claimed he had called for a crackdown on peaceful protests, when he specifically distinguished them from violent rioters.

One of the Times' own opinion writers devoted her own column the next day to calling his view "fascist" and proclaiming him outside "the bounds of legitimate debate."

Remember, this is a sitting Senator discussing a proposition that had the majority of support from the American people, discussing a power that Congress gave to Presidents 213 years ago and which Presidents in the past have exercised.

Oh, but the facts couldn't hold a candle to the hurt feelings. The New York Times erred grievously by making people confront a different viewpoint. They had hurt their feelings by making them confront a different viewpoint. They had to atone. So when the dust settled, a top opinion editor was gone. His deputy was reassigned. The piece was pulled out of the print edition, and a wandering multiparagraph apology now precedes it online. We are talking the New York Times. I understand the new editor has made it clear that staff should notify her immediately if any published opinion makes them uncomfortable—if any published opinion makes them uncomfortable?

One of our Nation's most storied newspapers just had its intellectual independence challenged by an angry mob, and they folded like a house of cards. A jury of people on Twitter indicted them as accessories to a thought crime, and instead of telling them to go take a hike, the paper pleaded guilty and begged for mercy. Their readers' comfortable bubble was re-inflated. Their safe space was safe again.

Now, our colleague from Arkansas has a unique job. The far left cannot write angry emails to a university president or a publisher to get him fired. He cannot be silenced by professions of outrage or the use of magic words like "problematic." His only bosses are his constituents.

This broader, leftwing obsession with banning heretics from the public square will be poison for this country if it persists. Our Republic can survive a pandemic, it can survive civil unrest, but ideas and deliberation are our very foundation. America cannot be America if civil disagreement becomes a contradiction in terms.

The liberal tradition in this country used to pride itself on being broad-minded, but we have spent years watching major universities slowly exchange debate for uniformity and rigor for psychological comfort. Now, we see the free press repeating that error.

Let's hope we look back on this as a silly anomaly and not a sad turning point for our democracy.

THE GREAT AMERICAN OUTDOORS ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, now on to an entirely different matter. Thanks to the bipartisan leadership of colleagues like Senators DAINES, GARDNER, PORTMAN, ALEXANDER, MANCHIN, and WARNER, we are attending to legislation that will shape the future of the great American outdoors for the better.

It is fitting that the legislation before us comes with support of such a broad bipartisan coalition because our national parks, forests, and other public lands are treasured in every State of our Union by the hunters and anglers who look forward to the morning stillness of the Black Hills and the Big

South Fork of the Cumberland, by the hikers who camp and plot weekend escapes in Shenandoah and Joshua Tree, by the school groups and researchers who connect with history at Gettysburg and Mesa Verde.

Every year, hundreds of millions of our people—our fellow Americans and visitors from around the world—share the gift of our Nation's public lands. Even more Americans in surrounding communities benefit from the jobs and the prosperity that are supported by tourism and recreation.

This country's public lands comprise a tremendously diverse array of landscapes, wildlife, historic sites, and natural resources. They are spread out across 419 parks, 568 refuges, and hundreds of millions of acres of managed space.

They didn't pop up overnight. It has taken more than a century of dedicated work to designate, acquire, and maintain the public lands Americans enjoy today. It is the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which this legislation will give permanent support, that makes them accessible for generations to come.

Today, more than 5 million Americans rely directly on outdoor recreation for their livelihood. They contribute to \$778 billion in economic activity. In recent years, their industry's growth has outpaced an economy that was red-hot in its own right. A bright future for our public lands is a bright future for our Nation, and a predictable, consistent support provided by the LWCF will play a critical role in these efforts.

Take my home State of Kentucky, for example. For years, I have been proud to advocate for LWCF funding to conserve some of the Bluegrass's precious wilderness and historic sites. Back in 1996, Kentucky was the only State without a national wildlife refuge, and it was my legislation that helped secure the creation of one at Clarks River.

Last year, additional legislation I authored helped create another sanctuary for wildlife and recreation at the confluence of the Green and Ohio Rivers. Already, the Fish and Wildlife Service has marked the Green River Wildlife Refuge as the LWCF's top funding priority for the coming year. The dedicated resources in this legislation would be instrumental in the growth of Kentucky's newest national treasure, along with other areas like Clarks River.

As the LWCF drives the preservation of more national wetlands, forests, and battlefield space in Kentucky, I suspect every one of my colleagues is equally proud of similar efforts in their own States. This bill advances a noble cause that has added benefit of being a sound investment.

According to one recent analysis, every dollar spent through the Land and Water Conservation Fund turns out \$4 in economic benefit. Every \$1 million directed toward the LWCF in

turn supports as many as 30 American jobs.

So I am extremely proud to be a co-sponsor of the Great American Outdoors Act, I am proud of the work our colleagues have put in to get it this far, and I look forward to seeing it passed.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

TAXPAYER FIRST ACT OF 2019— MOTION TO PROCEED—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 1957, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 75, H.R. 1957, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modernize and improve the Internal Revenue Service, and for other purposes.

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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. 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.

JUSTICE IN POLICING ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, yesterday at the Fountain of Praise Church in Houston, TX, a funeral service was held in honor of the life of George Floyd, whose death has moved hundreds of thousands of people across America and around the world to peacefully march against police violence. Today, his brother Philonise Floyd will testify in front of the House Judiciary Committee.

It is hard to imagine the courage it takes, so soon after the tragic, awful, and brutal loss of a family member, to not only grieve in the national spotlight but to turn that pain into action. There have been many reasons for Americans to be shocked and outraged, angry and frustrated with the injustice they have seen in their country, but the entire Floyd family has given the Nation reason to hope.

Now, Democrats in the House and Senate have proposed legislation that

would directly respond to the issues of racial bias and excessive force in our police departments. The Justice in Policing Act would ban the use of choke holds, limit the transfer of military equipment to local departments, make it easier to hold police misconduct accountable, and institute a whole lot of reforms to help prevent that misconduct in the first place. It is a comprehensive proposal, and many of the experts on racism, discrimination, and inequality in police departments have had large input into the bill.

We need action on the Justice in Policing Act as soon as possible, and we Democrats in the Senate will work like hell to make it happen. The moment calls for bold and broad-scale change. We need wholesale reform, not piecemeal reform. We cannot approach this debate by cherry-picking one or two reforms and calling the job complete. It is my worry that is what our Republican colleagues intend to do. We need a strong bill. The Justice in Policing Act is where we should begin.

The Senate is a collaborative institution, at least by design, but there is one person alone who decides what legislation reaches the floor, and that is Leader MCCONNELL. For 2 weeks I have asked him to commit to a debate and a vote on a police reform bill by July 4—an open debate and certainly an ability to vote on the Justice in Policing Act. I still have not received an answer.

Is it too much to ask that, as hundreds of thousands, if not millions, are in the streets, when the vast majority of Americans think we need reform, that the leader spend some floor time here so we can debate this issue and maybe move forward for the first time in a long time? I don't think so. But our leader is silent, missing in action, as he is on so many different major issues that face America.

After House and Senate Democrats released the draft legislation on Monday, yesterday, Senate Republicans announced they would put together “a working group” to prepare their own set of proposals. Working groups are all fine and well, but it is critical that we pursue comprehensive reform, not seek the lowest common denominator, and it is critical that we get a real commitment to consider strong legislation on the floor.

Unfortunately, in the aftermath of other recent moments of national strife, particularly the mass shootings, President Trump, Leader MCCONNELL, and Senate Republicans make the right noises—let's study it; let's consider it—but never follow through.

Leader MCCONNELL once promised that a debate on expanding background checks would be “front and center” on the Senate floor after shootings in Dayton and El Paso. “What we can't do is fail to pass something,” he said. Yet there was no debate on expanding background checks, and the Republican majority in the Senate did exactly what Leader MCCONNELL said that it could not—it failed to pass anything on gun safety.

So while I welcome ideas from our Republican colleagues, we need a hard and fast commitment from the Republican leader to put real, broad-scale police reform on the Senate floor before July 4.

Americans, please, be watching the Senate. Watch the leader. Watch the Republicans.

Is this going to be another situation just like with gun control, just like with background checks, where they talked a good game, tried to let the issue fade away, and did nothing? The Nation—the Nation—will not let this issue fade away, I assure my Republican friends.

CORONAVIRUS

There is another major crisis in the country at the moment as well. COVID-19 continues to kill and infect Americans. Case numbers are rising in Western States—Arizona, New Mexico, California, and Oregon. The massive disruption to economic activity initially left more than 40 million—40 million—Americans without work.

This week it became official: The United States has been in recession—the first one in many years—since February.

In truth, the issues of racial justice and COVID-19 are not unrelated. The COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately kills Black Americans. Communities of color have less access to quality healthcare, greater food insecurity, greater percentages of poverty, and a disproportionate number of our frontline essential workers—41.2 percent—are African American and Latino. Yet you are starting to hear my friends on the other side strum sunny chords because one jobs report wasn't quite as awful as it might have been, awful as it was.

The President made a revolting comment that the recent jobs report was a great day for George Floyd and equality, even though it showed African-American unemployment continuing to rise. What a horrible comment.

Everyone is rooting for our country to return to normal as quickly and as safely as possible and for our economy to rebound with similar speed, but unemployment sits at 13 percent—higher than any point since the great recession—and the President and my Republican colleagues are ready to declare victory.

After saying that another COVID relief bill was likely in June, Leader MCCONNELL has told the Republican caucus not to expect another relief bill until late July at the earliest—late July at the earliest, as millions are out of work, millions risk being removed from their homes, millions can't feed their families.

Racial justice, civil rights, a global pandemic, an economic disaster—this is truly a time of historic challenge, and Leader MCCONNELL and the Senate Republicans are missing in action. No