

The memory of our colleague brings to mind Dr. King's own words. He famously said: "The arc of the moral universe is long, and it bends toward justice."

It would be a mistake to read those words and assume that he meant this bending is inevitable. Our society has only marched toward justice because great figures like Congressman JOHN LEWIS took it upon themselves to lead the way. The Nation mourns his passing, and we celebrate the life of this American hero.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, on an entirely different matter, it has been half a year since the deadly coronavirus began to spread from China throughout the world. Now, 3.7 million cases have been recorded on American soil. More than 140,000 lives have been lost.

Today, our Nation stands at a challenging crossroads. States and localities are trying to balance the need to reopen and foster economic recovery with the need to stay on offense against the virus.

Back in March, the American people began a period of historic disruption and heroic sacrifice in order to stunt the spread of the virus. Life as we have known it was simply put on ice. Daily routines were reinvented, not as a permanent solution but as a short-term emergency measure to save our healthcare system.

The American people stepped up. The sacrifices saved lives. Nowhere in the United States did hospitals suffer the fate of the medical system in places like Italy.

Our Nation met new kinds of American heroes: doctors and nurses, who worked double shifts, washed their hands raw, and endured physical separation from their loved ones so they could continue to treat ours; essential maintenance, delivery, and grocery store workers, who kept clocking in to keep families, communities, and entire industries supplied and functioning; teachers and parents, who tried their best to keep school in session for our Nation's children, from virtual classrooms and kitchen tables all across our country.

No generation before us had ever had to pull the emergency brake on national life in quite this way. This historic challenge required historic support so the Senate wrote and passed the largest rescue package in history.

The CARES Act puts financial assistance in the pockets of American families. It sent hundreds of billions of dollars so that employers could keep paying workers. It mobilized unprecedented resources for the medical response. Economists and experts across the spectrum agreed that the Senate's bold, bipartisan policies have made a tremendous difference these past months.

The question before the Senate this week is, Where are we now? Where are

we now? On the one hand, our healthcare fight against the virus itself is very obviously unfinished. New spikes in large and economically central States show that we are nowhere near out of the woods. At the same time, neither economics nor our Nation's sanity would sustain an indefinite total lockdown until there is a vaccine. So even as we continue to fight the healthcare battle, cautious reopenings will need to proceed in ways that are as smart, safe, and data-driven as possible.

This is the situation facing the Senate as we discuss and consider the possibility of another recovery package. It would neither be another multitrillion-dollar bridge loan to make up for a totally shutdown economy, nor an ordinary stimulus for a nation ready to get back to normal. The need now lies somewhere in between.

We need to continue supporting our healthcare system and harbor no delusion that this virus is behind us because it isn't, while also taking strategic steps to help laid-off American workers get rehired and American families get their kids back to school this fall.

That is why Senate Republicans will be putting forward a strong starting point for additional recovery legislation, hopefully, as soon as this week. It will take good-faith, bipartisan cooperation from our Democratic colleagues to actually make a law. That productive spirit is what got the CARES Act across the finish line unanimously, but last month, that spirit was absent. A political determination from our Democratic colleagues led them to block the JUSTICE Act and block the Senate from even turning to the subject of police reform, even as millions had taken to the streets demanding change.

So, for the sake of our Nation, if we want to continue helping the American people, the next several weeks will need to look a lot more like March and a lot less like June. Senate Republicans will put forward our proposal soon. I hope our Democratic colleagues will be ready to work together to get an outcome.

First, this week, the Senate will complete two other important pieces of the people's business. First, we will confirm the President's choice to head the Office of Management and Budget. Then we will finish and pass the National Defense Authorization Act for the 60th consecutive time.

As COVID-19 captured our Nation's attention, we knew our adversaries around the world would not ease up. We knew that those who seek to harm America, our interests, and our allies would use the commotion to show even more of their true colors, and, sure enough, the Russian military has flirted even closer to the boundaries of U.S. airspace. Iran has stepped up its meddling in regional conflicts. China has escalated both its international bullying and its domestic repression, such as in Hong Kong.

So I am particularly encouraged that Chairman INHOFE, Ranking Member REED, and our committee colleagues put forward a robust, bipartisan bill. It will invest in the training and technology that will keep our fighting forces on the cutting edge. It will strengthen our alliances and partnerships with shared systems for containing threats. It will honor our servicemembers and their families with pay raises and top-notch services they deserve here at home. That means new investments in 5G systems and hypersonic weapons, the establishment of European and Pacific defense initiatives for greater cooperation to check Russia and China, and improving military family housing, education, and healthcare.

This NDAA will build on the success of the last 3 years in rebuilding and modernizing the world's greatest fighting forces. It will continue to advance our new national defense strategy, putting aside the naive resets of the past administration and continuing to invest in strength instead.

I will be proud to vote to advance and pass the NDAA, and I hope all of our colleagues will join me.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 7120

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The leader is correct.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 7120) to hold law enforcement accountable for misconduct in court, improve transparency through data collection, and reform police training and policies.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, in order to place the bill on the calendar under provision of rule XIV, I object to further proceedings.

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

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.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Russell Vought, of Virginia, to be Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. 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 Democratic leader is recognized.

REMEMBERING JOHN LEWIS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on Friday, July 17, after six decades as one of our Nation's most preeminent civil rights leaders, Congressman JOHN LEWIS—the conscience of the Congress—passed away at the age of 80. His trials and tribulations and, ultimately, his triumphs are well known to all of us.

At the ripe old age of 25, he led thousands of marchers across a bridge in Alabama. They risked their lives for their constitutionally guaranteed right to vote and, in doing so, shook the conscience of a nation and hastened the demise of Jim Crow. On that fateful Sunday, battered and bruised, his head dizzy and bleeding from the policeman's rod, JOHN LEWIS found the courage and the strength to reach the other side of that bridge, and he never stopped marching.

From the Freedom Rides to Selma, from his leadership of the SNCC, to his four decades in Congress, JOHN LEWIS never stopped marching. His actions as a young man helped change the trajectory of a nation and brought about the Voting Rights Act, and then JOHN LEWIS went to Congress and renewed that law again and again. He sat in against segregation at lunch counters in the Jim Crow South and, over 40 years later, led another sit-in on the House floor against gun violence. He spoke out for marriage equality long before it was popular. He challenged those who walked the corridors of power and then trod those corridors himself to bring quality healthcare, fair wages, and social justice to Georgians and Americans everywhere.

It is one thing, inflamed with the passion of youth, to join in brave endeavors and challenge the status quo. It is a good thing. Yet it is even beyond that to sustain that activism and vision and efforts and, yes, that "good trouble" he talked about getting into over the steady and persistent dedication of a lifetime. That is who JOHN LEWIS was deep in his soul—a man on a mission, who forcefully but gently led us all to do more and to do better, who loved his country so much that he risked his life and then spent his life trying to change it.

We are an imperfect nation, for sure, but we have a tremendous ability to reinvent ourselves. The story of America

is one of constant renewal, but that renewal has never been preordained. It is because Americans have pushed and prodded, used their voices and their votes to force our country to change over time to move ever closer to our highest ideals.

In the story of America, there are certain heroes whose moral clarity has shone out like a beacon for others to follow—North Stars who have inspired their fellow Americans to join them in the glorious work of bending the moral arc of the universe toward justice. JOHN LEWIS was one of those special heroes. He paved the road, lit the path, and pointed the way toward other bridges for us to cross. It was not by always being the loudest voice or the most intemperate; he led by the moral force of his example. Whether he would admit it or not, he inspired millions.

At President Obama's inauguration, JOHN asked the new President to sign a commemorative photo of the event. President Obama simply wrote: "Because of you, JOHN."

I don't know how many people must have said that over the years—"because of you, JOHN"—and I could never guess at the number who didn't even know to say it but whose lives were forever altered, whose dignity and freedom was made whole because of you, JOHN.

As a new generation of young people lift up their voices to proclaim "Black lives matter" and to fight for the Justice in Policing Act, the memory and legacy of JOHN LEWIS lives on in each and every one of them.

There are very few people who have changed the world for the better. JOHN LEWIS is one of them. His life is a reminder of all that is the best in us and that we are all capable of doing that best.

As we mourn his loss, I would ask my fellow Americans, including my colleagues in this body, to take up his mission. Many of the old enemies JOHN faced down have not been vanquished. Racial disparities persist and gnaw at the fabric of our society, and so does the police violence that met a young JOHN LEWIS and thousands of law-abiding Americans on that bridge over 50 years ago. The bridge he crossed is still named for the Confederate officer, not for the man who led a righteous movement for equality. The law he nearly died for has been gutted by the Supreme Court. Congress has the power to restore it, but only one political party seems interested in doing so.

At the 50th anniversary of the march on Selma, Congressman LEWIS acknowledged that his mission was not yet complete. "There is still work left to be done," he said. "We must use this moment to recommit ourselves to finish the work." He told us to "get out there and push and pull until we redeem the soul of America."

As we confront our turbulent present—a pernicious disease, vast economic hardship and inequality, the ancient evil of racial injustice—the loss

of JOHN LEWIS feels even more devastating and leaves many searching for answers. But JOHN LEWIS has already pointed the way. "There is still work left to be done," he said. "Finish the work. Get out there and push and pull until we redeem the soul of America."

May he forever rest in peace.

CORONAVIRUS

On another matter, it is rare we gather at the start of a work session with so much to do in so little time. As we speak, our country faces the greatest public health crisis since 1918 and the greatest economic challenge since the Great Depression.

Earlier this year, COVID exploded through the Northeast and the Pacific Northwest before finally subsiding. The economic pain of those first few months—over 40 million newly unemployed—was incomprehensible. Now, States throughout the South and West are experiencing a similar surge in cases, hospitalizations, and, sadly, deaths, as the economic pain deepens.

While all of us have watched in horror as this crisis unfolds, Senate Democrats have repeatedly called for action on crucial issues like aid for State and local and Tribal governments, hazard pay for essential workers, funding for coronavirus testing and tracing, rental assistance, and support for our Nation's childcare and education systems.

Each time we sought to pass legislation on these issues, Senate Republicans blocked our attempts. Senate Republicans said that we should, in the words of Leader MCCONNELL, "hit the pause button." Our Republican friends said they wanted to "assess the conditions in the country" before providing any more relief.

Our House colleagues passed the Heroes Act over 60 days ago. It has been well over 3 months—3 long months—since we passed the CARES Act. And what has happened in those 3 months?

Three months ago, on April 20, the United States reported 775,000 total cases of COVID-19, with 42,000 deaths. Today, we have nearly 3.8 million confirmed cases and 140,000 deaths.

Just over 3 months ago, 30 million Americans had filed for unemployment claims. Today, that figure is nearly 50 million. More unemployment claims were filed in the last 17 weeks than in the entire 18-month stretch of the great recession.

Today, the State of Florida has more infections per week than China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Australia, and the European Union combined.

That is what has happened while Senate Republicans have been "assessing the conditions in the country." That is what has been happening while Senate Republicans have hit the "pause" button. And now we know the real reason for Republican inaction, why they have hit the "pause" button: They can't come to agreement among themselves. The Nation is raging in crisis, and the Republican Party has been paralyzed—stopping and blocking action that