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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 God, we are grateful that You continue to rule the universe. We acknowledge that though wrong seems so strong, Your purposes will be fulfilled.

Lord, we praise You for Your promise that, in everything, You continue to work for the good of those who love You.

Mighty God, let Your will be done. Bless our lawmakers, listen to their prayers, and guide them with Your truth. Quench their thirst for Your presence with Your abiding love. May they not forget the many times You have helped them in the past. We pray in Your gracious 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 (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). The Senator from Iowa.

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

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

### THE MIDDLE EAST

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, the signing of the Abraham Accords today at the White House represents a very historic breakthrough for peace in the Middle East. I am not saying that this accord alone will bring peace to that troubled region, but this is the

first tangible progress toward peace in that area in a quarter century.

I met Anwar Sadat at the time of the Camp David Accords in 1978, when he was present in the Ways and Means Committee room over in the House of Representatives, and I had an opportunity also to witness, at the White House, the handshake between Rabin and Arafat in 1993. Both events seemed to herald a new peace in the Middle East that, quite frankly, never materialized, and yet we still have peace between Israel and Egypt and between Israel and Jordan.

Israel has been a country for over 72 years. It is the only democracy in the region. It is a major economic, military, and political power, and, of course, it is our greatest ally in the Middle East. It is overdue for other states, then, and those states that are in that area especially to recognize Israel and pursue normal relations.

The outdated notion that recognition of Israel's existence should be withheld until somehow Israelis and Palestinians agree on the details of a two-state solution has not worked. The two-state solution hasn't made an agreement more likely, but it has prevented diplomatic interactions that could be a stabilizing force in an unstable region.

In a polarized time, today's historic accord between Israel and the UAE and Israel and Bahrain is good news that anyone can celebrate. We ought to give President Trump great credit for his leadership in this area. He has delivered in a lot of areas where both Republican and Democratic Presidents could not deliver in the past.

I yield the floor.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

### THE MIDDLE EAST

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, yesterday, I discussed a tide of good news flowing out of the Middle East. Peace agreements between Israel and the UAE and Israel and Bahrain will be documented at the White House later today. Even more Arab countries are reportedly considering following suit. The winds of change are blowing across the Middle East. Thanks, in large part, to the hard work of the Trump administration, they are blowing toward peace.

I also mentioned yesterday that not everyone is happy. Not everyone in the Middle East is living in the 21st century. Some are too vested in the old fights and enmities and are afraid to let them go. President Abbas, who is now in the 16th year of a 4-year term at the head of the Palestinian Authority, predictably, tried to dismiss the compromise as nonsense. But, as the Obama administration's Middle East expert Dennis Ross wrote a few days ago, continuing this failed approach would just guarantee Palestinians will be left behind while the rest of the Arab world builds a better future.

And then there is the theocratic basket case that is Iran. Last weekend, as if perfectly scripted to contrast with the hopeful news of optimism and peace coming from the Arab world, the mullahs reminded the whole world of their flagrant disdain for human dignity and basic human rights. They carried out a hurried execution in the face of international condemnation.

Navid Afkari, a 27-year-old Iranian wrestler arrested during a government protest in 2018, was tortured into confessing to the murder of a security guard. He was hanged on Saturday. According to his mother, who was barred from visiting her son before his execution, Navid and his two brothers arrested alongside him were forced to testify against one another. As they mourn their brother, these two young men themselves face decades in prison

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



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for standing up to the brutal injustices of the Iranian regime.

Stories like this are tragic, but they aren't shocking—not in a country where dissent and free expression are denied and not from rulers who regularly use both domestic and international terrorism. This regime has its fingerprints on destabilizing campaigns, assassinations, and violence against civilians in every single corner of the Middle East—from the shores of the Mediterranean to the Gulf of Aden.

The Obama-Biden administration's Iran deal, the JCPOA, did not improve any of this bad behavior. It ignored Iran's nonnuclear aggression. It let Tehran continue R&D on enriched uranium. If anything, Iran's behavior has only gotten worse, and that bad deal is still doing damage.

This year, it will sunset a prudent U.N. Security Council resolution that had kept Iran from buying conventional weapons. This summer, the U.N. Security Council, with the votes of Russia and China, refused to extend this 13-year-old embargo.

Returning to the JCPOA has become a sort of mantra for our political left here in the United States. But really, the reflex to oppose everything President Trump does can be a gift to our adversaries. Former Vice President Biden promises to rush back into a bad deal without securing any improvements. He proposes we would be able to renegotiate the bad deal from the inside of it after tossing away any leverage in advance.

There is one right way to deal with regimes like Iran—toughness and resolve. That is why President Trump successfully restored an important measure of deterrence when he removed Iran's top terrorist, Soleimani, from the battlefield forever.

Even though Tehran is weakened by sanctions, political unrest, and economic unease, they are also emboldened by our internal divisions and eager to exploit rifts among our allies. We know from publicly released intelligence that Iran seeks to interfere in our own politics. We know that Iranian-backed groups continue to threaten our forces in Iraq and Syria. We know that Iranian proxies like Hezbollah pose a growing threat to our ally Israel.

Unity, strength and resolve are the way to defend our security and our interests—not capitulation.

#### PROTESTS

Madam President, now, one final matter. For months now, it has been clear to basically every reasonable American that our country can and must hold two sets of true statements in our minds at the same time.

No. 1, our country has unfinished work to ensure that policing is fair to everyone and that Black Americans do not feel unfairly treated or targeted by law enforcement. And, No. 2, the vast majority of law enforcement officers

are heroes, and the toxicity, anger, and actual violence that far-left mobs have inflicted on police men and women across our country is simply beyond the pale.

The American people want racial justice, and we want good, strong policing to ensure equal protection of the laws. We understand there is no contradiction here—none whatsoever. Most people are outraged by the killings of Black Americans that have shocked our country.

Sunday marked 6 months since the death of Breonna Taylor in my hometown of Louisville, KY. Our people want answers. Our Nation wants answers. Most Americans also feel sick when they hear about events like what happened last weekend in Los Angeles. Two sheriff's deputies were ambushed and shot while they sat in their patrol car in Compton. And then far-left protesters tried to literally block—block—an entrance to the hospital chanting things like “kill the police” and “I hope they [effing] die.”

Fortunately, both deputies are out of surgery, but the hateful climate that creates these acts is still with us. One of our two political parties should do more to repudiate the underlying climate on their side.

To be clear, Democratic leaders, including Vice President Biden and our colleague like the junior Senator from California, spoke up quickly to condemn the actual shootings of these officers themselves. That was absolutely the right thing to do—no question. But what about the underlying climate? For months, the political left in this country has put all its might behind a false narrative that says disorder is acceptable, riots are free speech, and law enforcement is the real enemy of certain communities.

One prominent national newspaper, which found a straightforward op-ed from our colleague, Senator COTTON, to be more than they could bear, had no problem publishing a submission entitled, “Yes, We Mean Literally Abolish the Police.” No problem publishing that—“Yes, We Mean Literally Abolish the Police.”

When the Speaker of the House was asked to respond to rioters illegally toppling statues across the country, she blithely responded: “People will do what they will do.” That was about the topic of statues. From one liberal big city to another, we have seen mayors and local leaders who apparently find it easier to propose cutting police funding and criticize their men and women in uniform than to denounce out-of-control riots in their very own cities.

Just yesterday, with this Los Angeles story making headlines nationwide, the junior Senator from Massachusetts decided to criticize police officers on his Twitter feed and proposed a nationwide ban on nonlethal measures like tear gas and rubber bullets—a nationwide ban on nonlethal measures like tear gas and rubber bullets.

We are now at a point where some of our Democratic colleagues survey the

Nation, survey the way law enforcement officers are being treated, and decide the answer is to keep rhetorically throwing cops under the bus—throwing them under the bus—and try to ban their nonlethal means of self-defense while they are at it.

The American people don't have any trouble rejecting terrible racism and discrimination and rejecting lawlessness, violence, and anti-police prejudice with equal clarity and equal force. They deserve leaders who can do likewise.

#### 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 senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Mark C. Scarsi, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Central District of California.

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.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to finish my remarks before the vote begins.

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

#### CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, after the Senate Republicans spent 4 months dithering and delaying, last week, Leader McCONNELL pushed a partisan, emaciated COVID bill. It was so paltry and laden with poison pills that it was clearly designed to fail. And fail it did.

It is time for the Senate Republicans to wake up to the gravity of the crisis in our country and work with Democrats on a comprehensive bill that delivers real help to Americans.

Speaker PELOSI and I have already come down \$1 trillion from our initial