OMNIBUS AND NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Madam President, now on the omni and the NDAA, as we approach the end of the year, two of the most important priorities the Senate must focus on are passing a yearlong omnibus and approving a bipartisan Defense appropriations bill.

We have a lot of work left to do on both fronts, but so far, I am encouraged by the goodwill coming from both sides. While Democrats and Republicans disagree on the details of the omnibus, there is little debate that a CR would be terrible news for our troops and for American security.

Yesterday, I attended a classified briefing on the latest developments in the war in Ukraine. Without getting into any of the details disclosed there, it was obvious, sitting in the room, that much of Ukraine's success is thanks to the emergency military and economic aid provided by the United States. Ten months into this war, there is no question, in my judgment, that helping our Ukrainian friends has been the right thing to do.

But the fighting in Eastern Europe is sadly far from over. Putin's human rights atrocities continue. He is a vicious and brutal dictator. News reports come in daily of mass graves, civilian casualties. Entire cities—men, women, children—civilians, being killed and maimed and entire cities being reduced to rubble. Yet even now, the brave and strong people of Ukraine have endured and fought back. They know what Russian aggression is. They remember it from the days of the 1930s when Stalin sought to starve a huge number of Ukrainians to death.

The United States must stay the course helping our friends in need. And by the way, this is not just a matter of standing with Ukraine; it is a matter of American security because, deep down, Putin is nothing more than a violent bully who will endanger our own democracy if his influence is allowed to expand, and he will not stop at Ukraine if he succeeds there.

The single worst thing we can do right now is give Putin any signal that we are wavering in our commitment to help Ukraine. That is precisely what a CR would signal, and we cannot afford to go down that treacherous road. So I hope both sides will work together. We are making good progress. Paper is now being exchanged back and forth. We are not there yet. We have got a ways to go, but we have got to keep working until we get an omnibus done, for the sake of our national security.

Meanwhile, at the same time, both parties must cooperate on passing a bipartisan national defense act, as we have done now for more than six decades. Just as we need to hold the line against Putin and his belligerence, we also have to stand firm against encroachments and aggression from the Chinese Communist Party.

A few months ago, the Senate took a major step in that direction by passing the CHIPS and Science Act, which will boost domestic chip manufacturing and help sever our dependence on foreign-made semiconductors. But just because we passed CHIPS and Science doesn't mean the job is done. We need to build on our accomplishments by adding even more protections in the NDAA so we can continue reducing U.S. reliance on risky, Chinese-made microchips.

So, last month, I joined with Senator CORNYN, my colleague from Texas, to introduce an amendment to the NDAA that would prohibit the U.S. Government from doing business with companies that rely on certain Chinese chipmakers that the Pentagon has labeled ''Chinese military contractors.'' This amendment would address a very big problem: Too many American companies with Federal contracts are purchasing chips made by Chinese makers with well-known ties to the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese Government. You don't need to be a national security expert to see how this dependence on Chinese chips presents a serious risk to Americans' cyber security, to our privacy, to our defense.

The previous administration—one of the few areas they went forward on that I agreed with—got rid of Huawei because it gave the Chinese Government and the Chinese Communist Party too much influence. Well, the same thing will happen with these chipmakers, these Chinese military contractor chipmakers, if they are allowed to continue to infuse their chips in our own equipment.

Now, our amendment would remedy this with a simple proposition: If American businesses want to do business with the Federal Government, they shouldn't be allowed to turn around and then do business with risky Chinese chipmakers. We certainly need and give ample time for American companies to adjust and get American-made chips or non-Chinese-made chips, non-Chinese-military-contractor-made chips, but it must be done. This is national security, once again, as well as economic security and the idea of keeping America No. 1, which we took a big step forward on with the CHIPS Act, but there is more that has to be done.

So this proposal is one of many sound proposals that I hope to see included in the NDAA. I am, of course, fighting for a whole bunch of other things. On this issue, I thank Senator CORNYN for working with me on the amendment, and very soon the Senate hopefully will take quick action to send a defense authorization bill to the President's desk.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

THE JUDICIARY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, it has been one of the big, unfortunate ironies of the past several years: Many of the same individuals and institutions on the political left that have spent the years 2017 through 2020 yelling about the importance of norms and institutions have themselves not hesitated to undermine our institutions when they are unhappy with a given outcome.

Just as an example, the newly elected incoming leader of the House Democrats is a past election denier who baselessly said the 2016 election was ''illegitimate'' and suggested that we had a ''fake'' President. He has also mounted reckless attacks on our independent judiciary and said that Justices he didn't like have ''zero legitimacy.''

Unfortunately, when it comes to attacking our independent judiciary, the Democrats' new leader isn't an outlier; he is a representative sample. In the last few years, we have seen my counterpart, the Senate Democratic leader, threaten sitting Justices by name over on the Supreme Court steps; we have seen President Biden and Attorney General Garland refuse to enforce Federal law and put a stop to illegal harassment campaigns at the homes of Justices; and we have seen coordinated efforts by Democrats and the media to use smear campaigns to personally punish Justices whose legal reasoning they don't like.

The latest target has been Justice Alito, whose great offense was overruling a deeply flawed precedent that prominent liberal legal scholars, including even the late Justice Ginsburg herself, long acknowledged was badly written and poorly reasoned.

I am confident the smear campaigns and baseless fishing expeditions will keep groping around, and I am just as confident that Justices Alito, Thomas, and the entire Court will continue to ignore the noise and the smears and practice judicial independence.

We also see growing evidence that the attacks on members of the legal profession who dare to upset the activist left are actually not limited to judges and other public officials. Private citizens are not safe. Earlier this week, a longtime female partner at a major law firm explained in an op-ed how she was forced out of the firm after she dared—dared—to enter into a ''safe space for women'' and share her own personal views on the Dobbs ruling. As she tells it, simply being a woman who agreed with the five-Justice majority of the Supreme Court was a fireable offense. Some of her colleagues claimed that merely hearing her express a dissenting view caused them to ''[lose] their ability to breathe.''

This past summer, two wildly successful appellate litigators, including a former U.S. Solicitor General, were