

stability, and the ability to educate and raise their children in peace and prosperity. That is the message we should be promoting in North Korea.

I wish I could stand here and say that I am confident we can negotiate a deal with the North Koreans to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula. This may have been possible in the late 1990s under the Agreed Framework, but it will be very challenging now. The price of peace has risen dramatically since that time. Administration after administration kicked the can down the road, and now we are left with a North Korean regime that is very close to developing a nuclear-armed ICBM that can hit the United States and a North Korean leader who observed the fates of Saddam Hussein and Muammar Qadhafi and has decided that his regime will only survive if he has a nuclear weapon capable of hitting the United States.

We may need to be willing to accept a deal short of denuclearization that includes a verifiable freeze on the development and testing of nuclear weapons and missile programs. We will likely need to have some interim confidence-building agreements over a period of months or years short of this goal to build momentum. Obtaining the necessary agreements regarding verification and inspections will be the most challenging aspects of the deal and I worry may derail our best efforts at negotiation.

There will likely be discussion of reducing our military presence on the peninsula and curtailing our joint military exercises with the Republic of Korea. I believe we should not agree to any reduction of joint exercises in exchange for a freeze, but I do think we should carefully consider whether there should be a step down in military exercises on both sides to reduce tensions and build confidence.

Any agreement will need to contain strict prohibitions on proliferation and an international observation organization to ensure that North Korea is not selling its nuclear or missile technology to other countries or nonstate actors.

It is important that we all recognize that we are not faced with the binary options that many people are fond of promoting—denuclearization or war. There are diplomatic options short of denuclearization that we may be forced to consider. If diplomacy fails, our only alternative is not a kinetic one. There is the same option we chose when Russia and China became nuclear states—accept the risks and mitigate it through isolation, containment, and deterrence.

I would like to note that the costs associated with this path are very high but still likely less than the cost of

war. There is a significantly lower risk of the loss of life.

For example, we will need to invest even more heavily in our missile defense, and even after investing millions of dollars, we are left in a position where we won't have confidence that we can shoot down every single missile pointed at Washington, DC, or New York. That is where we were with the Soviet Union and still are with the Russians today.

We will also need to increase our funding for overhead intelligence to make sure we have the most accurate information, minute by minute, about developments within North Korea.

Additionally, we will need to maintain a strictly enforced sanctions regime for years to come, and we will need to work diligently to overcome the inevitable sanctions fatigue.

We will also need to invest even more heavily in our agencies that prosecute sanctions. We will need a nimble Treasury, State Department, and intelligence community that can identify and quickly target bad actors. The North Korean regime has proven itself quite able to engage in illegal and illicit activities as varied as cyber crime, arms sales, currency, counterfeiting, narcotics, and wildlife trafficking. Empowering our State, Treasury, and intelligence Departments to identify and target these illicit activities and schemes will be expensive, both in manpower and diplomatic negotiations with countries that stand to profit from these arrangements.

We will also need to work hard to prevent a nuclear arms race in the Asia-Pacific region. There are already elements in South Korea that are agitating for the return of tactical nuclear weapons. As North Korea's nuclear program grows more robust, these elements will only get stronger. Even nuclear-averse Japan may reconsider its position as it feels more pressure from its neighbor to the west. The risks of proliferation in Asia and the rest of the world are high. Let us remember that proliferation is not the solution, it is the problem.

We need to be clear-eyed about the threat we face from North Korea. Years of indecision have left us with a number of imperfect and expensive options. North Korea's aggressive behavior has led us to the brink of war. We are in a time of uncertain peace.

I would urge this administration and my colleagues to consider the costs of war that I have outlined and for all of us, Republicans and Democrats, to work toward a peaceful and diplomatic solution to this crisis now.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). The Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:39 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, October 31, 2017, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

IRVING DENNIS, OF OHIO, TO BE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, VICE BRADFORD RAYMOND HUTHER.

OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING RECLAMATION AND ENFORCEMENT

STEVEN GARDNER, OF KENTUCKY, TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING RECLAMATION AND ENFORCEMENT, VICE JOSEPH G. PIZARCHIK.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

M. LEE MCCLERNY, OF WASHINGTON, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF PARAGUAY.

CARLOS TRUJILLO, OF FLORIDA, TO BE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR.

PETER HENDRICK VROOMAN, OF NEW YORK, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

KENNETH L. MARCUS, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CIVIL RIGHTS, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, VICE CATHERINE ELIZABETH LHAMON.

THE JUDICIARY

CARMEN GUERRICAGOITIA MCLEAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSOCIATE JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FOR THE TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS, VICE GREGORY E. JACKSON, RETIRED.

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

ROBERT M. DUNCAN, OF KENTUCKY, TO BE A GOVERNOR OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 8, 2018, VICE THURGOOD MARSHALL, JR., TERM EXPIRED.

ROBERT M. DUNCAN, OF KENTUCKY, TO BE A GOVERNOR OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 8, 2025. (REAPPOINTMENT)

CALVIN R. TUCKER, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE A GOVERNOR OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 8, 2023, VICE CAROLYN L. GALLAGHER, TERM EXPIRED.

DAVID WILLIAMS, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE A GOVERNOR OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 8, 2019, VICE DENNIS J. TONER, TERM EXPIRED.

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. LISA M. FRANCHETTI

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate October 30, 2017:

THE JUDICIARY

TREVOR N. MCFADDEN, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.