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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

We lift our hearts toward Your throne, O God, and bless Your Holy Name. You are great and worthy of our praise and thanksgiving. You have given us this great Nation as a heritage, and we are depending on Your providence to sustain us.

Prosper the labors of our lawmakers as they put their trust in You. In Your loving kindness, bring them a productive harvest from the seeds they have planted and watered on good soil. Keep them from accepting the belief that it is not possible to get things done, as You remind them that all things are possible to those who believe. Though they walk in the midst of trouble, revive and refresh them.

We pray in Your great 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

FIGHTING TERRORISM

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, we learned yesterday that our allies in Jordan were victims of a terrorist attack. The vehicle-borne IED killed Jordanian soldiers and police officers. Although ISIL is not taking credit for

the attack, the tactics were certainly similar to those frequently employed by ISIL. Last week, the terrorist that ISIL called a soldier of the caliphate took 49 lives as he proudly proclaimed his allegiance to that group. Days later, the CIA Director delivered a sobering analysis of ISIL's strength and capabilities.

"[Our] efforts have not reduced the group's terrorism capability and global reach," he said. "[As] we have seen in Orlando, San Bernardino and elsewhere, ISIL is attempting to inspire attacks by sympathizers . . . [and it is] training and attempting to deploy operatives for further attacks."

These are the facts—facts that the Director of Central Intelligence did not deliver lightly.

They are certainly worrying.

They remind us that this vile, hate-filled terrorist group is going to keep bringing tragedies to our doorstep until it is defeated where it trains, operates, and prepares—places like Iraq and Syria.

So we have a choice.

We can focus on defeating ISIL or we can focus on partisan politics.

Some of our colleagues may think this is all some game. We have seen the ridiculous tweets and the bizarre one-liners about guns and terrorists. I believe this is a serious moment that calls for serious solutions.

So I would ask every Senator to consider this statement from one of our Democratic colleagues just last week: "Why have this job, one of the most powerful jobs in the world," he asked, "if we are not going to exercise it to try to protect Americans from harm?"

This is the point I am making. He may have meant these words in a different context, but the reality is this: We all know that the principal way to prevent more ISIL-inspired and ISIL-directed heartbreak is to actually defeat ISIL. It is not an easy task. It doesn't always make for snappy one-liners. Not only is it going to take

time, but it is going to take all of our efforts. But that is why our constituents sent us here.

Here is what we need from President Obama: Lead a serious campaign to defeat ISIL.

Here is what we need from each other: Work towards serious solutions to fight terror beyond our borders and serious counterterror tools to prevent attacks within our borders.

We will have opportunities to take positive steps forward as we resume consideration of the legislation before us.

This bill will give the FBI and law enforcement more resources to track down and defuse terrorist threats. Funding is only one piece of the larger puzzle, however. The FBI and law enforcement also need smart, targeted tools to help stop terrorist attacks before they happen in the first place.

We will have the opportunity to consider more good ideas this morning as part of the McCain amendment. One of these good ideas—ECTR reform—will allow law enforcement to connect the dots of terrorist communications in order to disrupt their plans. The inability to connect the dots has been one of the problems the FBI has had in identifying homegrown terrorists like the one in Orlando. The FBI Director calls this smart, targeted reform, "enormously helpful" and recently identified it as a top legislative priority. It will not allow for the collection of any content, nor will it infringe on civil liberties or civil rights. What it will do is give law enforcement a critical helping hand in the midst of ISIL's sophisticated Internet campaign to direct and inspire attacks right here in our communities. Given all we know about ISIL and its ability to radicalize people on the Internet, doesn't that just make good sense?

Here is another idea that makes sense: the McCain amendment's lone-wolf provision.

ISIL's spokesman recently issued a call for lone-wolf attacks against the

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West during Ramadan. Its followers heard the call last Sunday in Orlando, last Monday in France, and days later in Belgium—a near miss in what appears to be an ISIL-directed attack planning. We need to better address this threat of lone-wolf terrorists. That means providing law enforcement with the tools and the certainty necessary to do so. That is what the lone-wolf provision will provide. It is an idea that has passed Congress before. Now we can enact it into law on an enduring basis as a part of the McCain amendment. Unfortunately, threats from lone-wolf attacks are not going away. The legal authority to help prevent them should not go away, either.

Smart, targeted counterterrorism ideas like these were Republican priorities well before the terrorist attack in Orlando. They continue to be at the forefront of our efforts now. We also remain focused on doing what we can to help this President and the next one take down ISIL.

These kinds of ideas should be all of our priorities moving forward—for Republicans, for Democrats, and for the President of the United States.

We can spend our time redacting and reacting, or we can acknowledge the threats before us and work to prevent more ISIL-fueled atrocities.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PAUL). The Democratic leader is recognized.

ISIS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a 1-page document prepared by our ranking member on the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs at the conclusion of my statement.

Mr. President, my friend the Republican leader talks about President Obama not doing enough to fight ISIL. What we see in the RECORD is the document prepared by Senator CARPER that outlines the progress that has been made. Is it enough? Of course not, but it is pretty significant in our fight against ISIS or ISIL, whatever you want to call them.

I don't know what the Republican leader wants. Does he want another invasion of Iraq, ground troops? Does he want us to invade Syria? Those are the two countries he named. Our last invasion of Iraq didn't work out too well. We have had about 500,000 Iraqis killed. They are dead now as a result of that invasion.

The number in Syria is reaching about 300,000. Millions of them have been displaced because of that last invasion of Iraq. The whole Middle East is destabilized. Is that what the Republican leader wants? Does he want another invasion? Which country? Both of them? How many troops—100,000,

150,000? What does he want? Be more specific. What does he want done that isn't being done?

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

UPDATE ON PROGRESS MADE AGAINST ISIS

Since the height of ISIS's power, U.S. and coalition forces have recaptured 47 percent of the land ISIS once held in Iraq.

ISIS has also lost 20 percent of the land it once held in Syria.

Ramadi and Tikrit were key victories for the U.S. backed Iraqi forces.

Last Friday, Iraqi forces captured the city center of Fallujah and are now working to clear out the last few pockets of resistance in that key Anbar town.

As we speak, Kurdish, Iraqi and Syrian Democratic forces—backed by U.S. special forces—are making preparations to retake ISIS's key strongholds in Mosul and Raqqa.

We've killed 25,000 ISIS fighters and more than 120 key ISIS leaders.

We've cut ISIS funds by up to one-third.

We've drastically slowed the flow of foreign recruits from a high of about 2,000 a month in 2014 to 200 a month today.

The same goes for those young Americans who have sought to travel to join ISIS abroad. One year ago, about 10 Americans per month were leaving to join ISIS. Now that number is about one a month.

At home, the FBI is cracking down on recruits as well. Over the past two years, the FBI has arrested 88 individuals on ISIS related charges.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am encouraged by the dialogue on gun safety that is taking place in the Senate now. Democrats and Republicans are working together to find solutions to protect Americans from gun violence. The obvious first step is to keep guns and explosives out of the hands of suspected terrorists and criminals. That is why it is imperative that the Senate call up legislation to get a vote.

The amendment from the senior Senator from Maine has bipartisan support and, at the very least, is a step in the right direction. The State of Maine has a reputation for bipartisanship. I can remember when President Obama was first elected, when we did the American Recovery Act—the stimulus. We had 57 or 58 Democratic Senators. I needed help in order to get that passed. Where did I look first? The State of Maine, Senator COLLINS and Senator Snowe. They always came through. The reason we were able to pass the Recovery Act is because of the State of Maine's senatorial representation.

So it should be no surprise to anyone that the senior Senator from Maine is working on a bipartisan basis, and while her legislation at this stage, in my mind, is not perfect, it is a step in the right direction.

I am concerned with the Collins amendment for a number of reasons, and the Justice Department also has concerns. They are worried about provisions within the legislation. But as we speak, bipartisan discussions continue to resolve these matters.

But there is no question that the Senate should vote on legislation that

keeps guns away from suspected terrorists. So I appreciate the good work of Senator COLLINS.

Of course, it wouldn't be fair to talk about the State of Maine without talking about ANGUS KING—what a terrific Senator. The State of Maine should be so proud of this guy, as I know they are, based on his record as having been elected as Governor and other things in the State of Maine.

I know the National Rifle Association is whipping its followers into a frenzy about this legislation—the Collins bipartisan legislation. They are going crazy about it. That is disappointing but not surprising.

Almost every American agrees that suspected terrorists should not be able to purchase firearms and explosives. The Republican leader should ignore the desperate pleas from the NRA and bring Senator COLLINS' amendment to the floor for a vote.

ZIKA VIRUS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, on another subject, when we have voted on the Collins amendment, we must turn our attention to another critically important matter—addressing the Zika public health crisis.

The American people have been waiting since February for Republicans to respond in regard to this serious, serious threat from Zika caused by mosquito bites. For centuries, mosquitoes have been wreaking havoc on people, but never, ever in the past have there been any reports of mosquitoes carrying a virus or anything else that causes birth defects.

The American people have been waiting since February for Republicans to respond to the threat from Zika. It has been four months to the day since President Obama sent an emergency appropriations request to Congress for \$1.9 billion to fight Zika, and \$1.9 billion was the specific figure requested by researchers, public health experts, and doctors. There is even more needed now that 120 days have passed and have exposed even more dangers from Zika.

While this Republican Congress has done nothing to provide the necessary funding, the threat from Zika continues to grow larger every day.

According to the latest statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on how Zika is affecting the United States—listen to these numbers because they are stunning, and in a few days they will be changed even more. Nearly 2,200 Americans have been affected by the Zika virus, and 423 pregnant women have tested positive for the virus. Tragically, six pregnancies in Zika-infected women have already resulted in severe birth defects. Of these 423 pregnant women, how many more women are going to have babies born with these extreme challenges? It is awful what this virus does to a lot of babies.

In the past we have responded to public health emergencies with the urgency they deserve. When the Nation