

Republicans are hellbent on playing chicken with our national security.

Jeh Johnson said yesterday he would have to furlough as many as 30,000 people if the Republicans decided to do a continuing resolution, which would be at last year's numbers. It would prevent the Department of Homeland Security from funding any new grants. These are grants that help our country, grants for dogs sniffing out all kinds of bad things. These grants fund counter-terrorism task force units. A very big one is waiting to be established in Arizona.

In Las Vegas we have an urban area security initiative. We have 50 million people who come to Las Vegas each year. We need help to make sure local agencies can respond where they have to.

Why are we concerned about these grants? We are concerned because it is what helps local government be ready for these attacks when and if they come.

But the Republicans have come to the conclusion that they are far more afraid of these people—some of whom were here last week—the DREAMers. They dreamed of having a country they could relate to. They came to America as babies. It was the only country they even knew. It was a country where they saluted the flag for many years, and President Obama gave them respectability.

A woman who was here and I talked about last week is a young woman from Las Vegas. Her name is Blanca Gamez. She is a wonderful, wonderful woman. She has two degrees, and she is going to law school next year. She works, and she pays taxes. But it appears that the Republicans are more afraid of her than they are of ISIS—these people who behead people and they burn people in cages.

We cannot allow this to go on the way it is headed. These grants help local firefighters. The DHS directives target criminals instead of families. Republicans, I guess, want us to target these families rather than criminals.

Why are Republicans putting our country at risk?

This isn't some liberal cabal that is talking about this. Let's take, for example, one of the most conservative publications in America, the Wall Street Journal. They wrote a featured opinion piece today about Republican Members of Congress.

The Wall Street Journal says the Republicans' reckless strategy is doomed to fail. Even the very conservative editors of that newspaper said today that Republicans' reckless scheme is destined for—what is in their words—“a spectacular crack-up.” These are a few things of what they say in the article.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the February 9, 2015, opinion article from the Wall Street Journal entitled: “Can the GOP Change?”

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

[From the Wall Street Journal Editorial, Feb. 8, 2015]

CAN THE GOP CHANGE?

The immigration defeat reveals a larger problem in Congress.

Republicans in Congress are off to a less than flying start after a month in power, dividing their own conference more than Democrats. Take the response to President Obama's immigration order, which seems headed for failure if not a more spectacular crack-up.

That decree last November awarded work permits and de facto legal status to millions of undocumented aliens and dismayed members of both parties, whatever their immigration views. A Congressional resolution to vindicate the rule of law and the Constitution's limits on executive power was defensible, and even necessary, but this message has long ago been lost in translation.

The Republican leadership funded the rest of the government in December's budget deal but isolated the Department of Homeland Security that enforces immigration law. DHS funding runs out this month, and the GOP has now marched itself into another box canyon.

The specific White House abuse was claiming prosecutorial discretion to exempt whole classes of aliens from deportation, dumping the historical norm of case-by-case scrutiny. A GOP sniper shot at this legal overreach would have forced Democrats to go on record, picked up a few supporters, and perhaps even imposed some accountability on Mr. Obama.

But that wasn't enough for immigration restrictionists, who wanted a larger brawl, and they browbeat GOP leaders into adding needless policy amendments. The House reached back to rescind Mr. Obama's enforcement memos from 2011 that instructed Homeland Security to prioritize deportations of illegals with criminal backgrounds. That is legitimate prosecutorial discretion, and in opposing it Republicans are undermining their crime-fighting credentials.

The House even adopted a provision to roll back Mr. Obama's 2012 order deferring deportation for young adults brought to the U.S. illegally as children by their parents—the so-called dreamers. The GOP lost 26 of its own Members on that one, passing it with only 218 votes.

The overall \$40 billion DHS spending bill passed with these riders, 236-191, but with 10 Republicans joining all but two Democrats in opposition. This lack of GOP unity reduced the chances that Senate Democrats would feel any political pressure to go along.

And, lo, on Thursday the House bill failed for the third time to gain the 60 votes needed to overcome the third Democratic filibuster in three days. Swing-state Democrats like Indiana's Joe Donnelly and North Dakota's Heidi Heitkamp aren't worried because they have more than enough material to portray Republicans as the immigration extremists.

Whatever their view of Mr. Obama's order, why would Democrats vote to deport people who were brought here as kids through no fault of their own? Mr. Obama issued a veto threat to legislation that will never get to his desk, and he must be delighted that Republicans are fighting with each other rather than with him.

Restrictionists like Sens. Ted Cruz and Jeff Sessions are offering their familiar advice to fight harder and hold firm against “executive amnesty,” but as usual their strategy for victory is nowhere to be found. So Republicans are now heading toward the same cul de sac that they did on the ObamaCare government shutdown.

If Homeland Security funding lapses on Feb. 27, the agency will be pushed into a par-

tial shutdown even as the terrorist threat is at the forefront of public attention with the Charlie Hebdo and Islamic State murders. Imagine if the Transportation Security Administration, a unit of DHS, fails to intercept an Islamic State agent en route to Detroit.

So Republicans are facing what is likely to be another embarrassing political retreat and more intra-party recriminations. The GOP's restrictionist wing will blame the leadership for a failure they share responsibility for, and the rest of America will wonder anew about the gang that couldn't shoot straight.

The restrictionist caucus can protest all it wants, but it can't change 54 Senate votes into 60 without persuading some Democrats. It's time to find another strategy. Our advice on immigration is to promote discrete bills that solve specific problems such as green cards for math-science-tech graduates, more H-1B visas, a guest-worker program for agriculture, targeted enforcement and legal status for the dreamers. Democrats would be hard-pressed to oppose them and it would put the onus back on Mr. Obama. But if that's too much for the GOP, then move on from immigration to something else.

It's not too soon to say that the fate of the GOP majority is on the line. Precious weeks are wasting, and the combination of weak House leadership and a rump minority unwilling to compromise is playing into Democratic hands. This is no way to run a Congressional majority, and the only winners of GOP dysfunction will be Mr. Obama, Nancy Pelosi and Hillary Clinton.

Mr. REID. I will read parts of the article:

If Homeland Security funding lapses on Feb. 27, the agency will be pushed into a partial shutdown even as the terrorist threat is at the forefront of public attention with the Charlie Hebdo and Islamic State murders. Imagine if the Transportation Security Administration, a unit of DHS, fails to intercept an Islamic State agent en route to Detroit.

So Republicans are facing what is likely to be another embarrassing political retreat and more intra-party recriminations. The GOP's restrictionist wing will blame the leadership for a failure they share responsibility for, and the rest of America will wonder anew about the gang that couldn't shoot straight.

This is about as serious as anything could be. We need to fund this agency which is so vitally important to our country. We need to pass a clean bill—the bipartisan bill that Speaker BOEHNER and the majority leader agreed to in November—and give the American people the protection they deserve. Anything less is not good, is a disaster for our country, and really is very, very bad to protect our homeland.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with the time equally divided until 5 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, last Wednesday, President Obama made a statement that is troubling to me. I think those of us who believe in Executive leadership and honest leadership, where leaders talk directly to the people about the serious problems we face, have to be troubled by this trend with this administration. Sometimes it makes me fear for the future of the Republic. He accused Republicans of “defunding the very operations that are involved in making sure we’ve got strong border security.” He said Republicans are blocking funding of that. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The House of Representatives—the Republican House—has passed a bill with \$40 billion, funding fully, as basically the President requested, all the agencies in the Department of Homeland Security. It has one little catch to it; it bars the President from taking money from the Department of Homeland Security that is supposed to be used to enforce the law and using that to grant amnesty and to undermine the law. The House bill is not in any way undermining the security of the United States of America, the ability for Homeland Security to protect us from terrorists. In fact, it strengthens that ability because it keeps the money there and uses it for those purposes, whereas right now the President is spending over \$100 million to create a structure across the river that would hire 1,000 new people in Homeland Security to process amnesty applications for people who violated the law and to give them the right to have earned income tax credit benefits, a Social Security card, the ability to take any job in the American economy that maybe an unemployed American would like to have or a recent immigrant with a green card would like to have. No, this person who entered the country now unlawfully gets to take that job under this policy. Congress did not fund that. But it funded the laws of the agency. The President, as he said himself 20 times, had no power to do this.

So what is happening now in the Senate, colleagues? Our Democratic colleagues now unanimously, it appears, are blocking even moving to the bill that funds Homeland Security. So I ask, with all sincerity, how can it be said that the Republicans are failing to fund the operations making sure we have strong border security? How can that be made a statement by the President of the United States?

I think we need to keep talking about that. We should not allow these modern-age politicians to go to the American people with false stories about what is happening. The Democratic Members of this Senate are systematically blocking the bill we would like to see come to the floor that fully funds Homeland Security. They have been given the right, as Senator MCCONNELL has repeatedly stated—which Senator REID never did—they have been given the right to offer any amendments they would like that are relevant and germane to the bill. So I would say this is a most serious thing with me, and I believe the American people need to understand it.

The House bill will not deny a single penny of funding for legitimate lawful operations of Homeland Security. It will be spent on enforcing the law, enforcing the Immigration and Nationality Act that was actually passed by Congress.

What the President is attempting to do is to create and execute a law Congress rejected. He asked the House to pass this law and the House said, no, they did not agree with this policy and rejected it. So he is executing it anyway.

Senate Republicans have attempted to move the bill to the floor three times, and each time it has been blocked by our Democratic colleagues because the bill does not fund the President’s unlawful Executive amnesty that he admitted 20 separate times he did not have the power to do.

Congress, colleagues, is supposed to spend the taxpayers’ money wisely. Congress should not fund any program, no matter how much the President wants it, that they believe is bad policy. More importantly, more clearly, no Senator should vote to fund a Presidential policy that violates the law, that violates the Constitution, that distorts the relationship between the Congress, which makes laws, and the President, who is supposed to execute only the laws Congress makes. So that is where we are at this point.

The President is not entitled to spend taxpayer money to implement a system of immigration that Congress has rejected. An article in yesterday’s Washington Times is further indication of where we are in this world of politics. It was reported that the Department of Homeland Security is spending taxpayer money to set up hotlines for illegal immigrants to call in to with any complaints they may have about immigration law enforcement officers if they think the officers have violated their “rights” under President Obama’s Executive amnesty—not violating their rights under law—but the President has told them this and sent out this message to the stakeholder groups.

Now who are the stakeholder groups? I suppose they are the activist groups. That is how they refer to them: stakeholders. So they send out this message: If you are not happy with the way the

Federal agency is executing my policy but indeed those agencies are attempting to enforce the law as written, then you have a “right” to call in to this hotline, and I will get on them, and I will see that they do it.

So how do the officers feel about this? National Border Patrol Council vice president Shawn Moran said this in a response. First, let me tell you, the Border Patrol officers in the USCIS—the Citizenship and Immigration Services officers—have opposed the President’s Executive amnesty. Their association has laid out how it will make the problem worse, it will increase the risk of terrorist attacks, and otherwise further degrade the integrity of our legal system. They have been clear about this. We ought to listen to them. They enforce that law repeatedly. That is their duty. They have opposed bills that they think may look good on the surface but once they have read them and found out the bill will not work effectively, they speak out against that, which is very helpful, and I am glad they do.

Well, this is what Mr. Moran said:

Instead of supporting our agents, this administration had decided it is more important to find new ways to solicit complaints and invite ridicule against them.

The American people have to know that the Obama administration’s dereliction of duty relating to our immigration system did not begin with this recent decree. From the day he took office, the President has relentlessly and systematically, colleagues, friends, the American people, dismantled immigration enforcement. It is far more serious than you would imagine.

My office has compiled a 49-page baseline timeline of nearly 200 specific entries and events that occurred since 2009 detailing how the law of the United States has been undermined by directives and orders from the President of the United States. It is step by step. This one person alone, the President, has acted against the will of the American people and undermined the law in America.

Just briefly, I will mention the first event that came to my mind. When he took office in early 2009, I believe in the State of Washington, the officers, doing their duty, enforcing the law that says a business cannot hire somebody unlawfully in America, investigated a business in Washington, discovered quite a number of people unlawfully in America, and were to commence action against the business for violating plain law that is still on the books and has not been repealed. And what happened? Immediately, the President intervened. He told them: No. Do not do this. And he told the activist groups—the La Razas and the other activist groups that were engaged in pushing him on this issue—essentially, he told them: Look, I am going to honor the promise I made to you during the campaign—that is the way I would interpret it—not to allow this kind of lawful activity to happen in the future.