

# [***Illegal Migrant Charged In Nursing Student Murder; Laken Riley's Murder Fuels Political Firestorm; Biden Blames Trump, GOP For Border Crisis; Biden Passes Buck To Congress On Migrant Crisis; Migrant Crime Sparks Concerns Among Big City Mayors; Biden Faces Criticism As Border Crisis Persists; Willis' Fate Unclear As Judge Deliberates Removal; SCOTUS Will Take Up Trump's Immunity Claim; Haley's Long Shot Bid Fuels Endgame Speculation; Haley Warns Voters Against Trump Becoming Nominee; The State Of The 2024 Presidential Race; President Biden Signs Short-Term Spending Bill; Interview With Rep. French Hill (R-AR); The Fight To Fix US National Debt; Putin Warns West Against Sending Troops In Ukraine; GOP Infighting As Posture Toward Russia Shifts***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BG8-1G11-F072-X223-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

MARK LEVIN, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: It's time to stop your chest beating and patting yourselves on the head about how righteous you are.

We need your help and we need to defeat Biden and everything he and his party stand for.

I'll see you next time on "Life, Liberty & Levin."

TREY GOWDY, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: Good evening and thank you for joining us. I'm Trey Gowdy and it is SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

Laken Riley wanted to be a nurse. You can tell a lot about someone by how they choose to spend this gift called life. She wanted to spend hers taking care of the sick and the injured and those who needed some kindness perhaps on the doorstep of death. That takes a special kind of person.

As a nurse, Laken would have faced down disease and viruses and infection. She would have risked her health or life to take care of the sick. She would have no doubt persevered through those threats and dangers. She just could not survive a simple jog around a lake in Athens, Georgia.

She was murdered by an illegal alien with no regard for her life or for your laws, and right on cue, Democrats reject calls for her death to mean anything.

Democrat Katie Porter wants to be a US senator, she just doesn't want the murder of Laken Riley to change anything.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

REP. KATIE PORTER (D-CA): I think the important thing to focus on is any one instance shouldn't shape our overall immigration policy, which has so many different facets, including economic choices about what workers to allow in and how to create prosperity in America.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GOWDY: And liberalism isn't confined to just California.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

MAYOR KELLY GIRTZ, ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY, GEORGIA: I understand in the wake of a great tragedy like this, we are all deeply hurt and everybody expresses their hurt differently.

PROTESTER: Who voted to make Athens-Clarke County a sanctuary city, sir? Who? What's their name?

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GOWDY: What they're telling you is don't let this murder change a thing. God forbid we learn or make improvements after a murder and it is not just liberal politicians. A CNN writer warned us not to let Laken Riley be "exploited" in his words. Hey, CNN, she's dead. Exploitation is the least of her concerns right now.

What this CNN writer really doesn't want is for you to be motivated. What Katie Porter really doesn't want is for you to do exactly what she and the left have been doing for decades.

The death penalty was not enough for the murder of James Byrd, Jr. in Texas in 1998, the left wanted hate crime laws enacted. Simply putting his killers to death would not suffice.

And life in prison wasn't enough for the murder of Matthew Shepard in Wyoming. The left wanted to use his murder to change the law.

And a murder charge wasn't enough in the killing of George Floyd in 2020, the left encouraged months of violence and arson and rioting. Some called for defunding the police.

The left has no trouble politicizing some murders to advance their social causes, but God forbid you do so. God forbid the death of a nursing student in Georgia be more than just a murder. God forbid her death leads to real change.

Katie Porter says one incident should not shape policy except when it suits her.

So how many murdered nursing students would be enough? How many dead Americans at the hands of those here illegally would be enough to take action?

So whether you're a Black man in Texas or a gay man in Wyoming, whether you're being arrested in Minnesota or jogging in Athens, Georgia, you should be free and safe and alive. So do not lecture us on using a single crime, a single murder to change the system because the left has been doing it for decades.

We are headed into the season of change where we get to weigh in, we get to vote, we get to ask the questions. So if one dead nursing student killed by an illegal alien who never should have been released into this country and should have been deported long ago is not enough to fix the border and end sanctuary cities, then you tell us what is. You give us a number.

How many caskets would be enough for you to change?

Joining us now is the former director of National Intelligence and former federal prosecutor, John Lee Ratcliffe.

So Director, Katie Porter says let's not overreact to a deported illegal alien killing a nursing student who was just out for a run. I have a feeling most Americans definitely think we should react to this. So what do you think?

JOHN RATCLIFFE, FORMER DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE: I think most Americans are right and I think the polls show that it's not just the economy anymore as they consider an upcoming election. It shows that most Americans care about what's happening at the border. They care about immigration and they care about crime in this country and that really does underscore why Congresswoman Katie Porter's comments are so out of touch and so tone deaf.

Trey, you and I have come to expect hypocrisy from the left. You mentioned the George Floyd case. So, I looked at Katie Porter's social media posts and her tweets during that and I stopped after the first dozen that showed her hypocrisy, that showed she was saying exactly the opposite then as to what she is saying now.

Then, she was saying that that one instance should, actually must dictate our law enforcement policies regarding funding and standards. And so you know, but beyond her hypocrisy, Trey, she is just wrong on the facts here.

Laken Riley is not one instance. Laken Riley is the latest instance. The week before, we saw New York police officers being savagely beaten by illegal aliens in this country, and before that, we saw gangs of illegal aliens on motorbikes dragging innocent Americans through subways as they committed crimes against them.

You know, I think we're all troubled when we see someone like Katie Porter, someone with such a warped morally bankrupt value serving in Congress. I guess the good news is, she is apparently even too out of touch for liberal Democrats in in California because it appears she is going to lose a primary in two days, and hopefully be out of elected office altogether later this year.

But at the end, we're still left with a very tragic and undeniable conclusion that Katie Porter and Democrats and Joe Biden and his administration for the last three years have shown that they care more about open borders than they care about murdered Americans.

GOWDY: You mentioned Joe Biden, let's listen to him and I'll ask you a question on the other side.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOE BIDEN, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: It's time to act. It's long past time to act.

Get more agents, more officers, more judges, more equipment in order to secure our border.

Here is what I would say to Mr. Trump: Instead of playing ***politics*** with this issue, instead of telling members of Congress to block this legislation, join me or I'll join you in telling the Congress to pass this bipartisan border security bill.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GOWDY: He has had three years and it is Congress' fault or Donald Trump's fault. But he says it ain't my fault. What do you say?

RATCLIFFE: Well, it's hard to listen to that. It's just so dishonest and disingenuous. But at the same time, I'm past getting angry at Joe Biden. I mean, it's almost like elder abuse to go after him.

I mean, his own Justice Department accepted every word of a special counsel report that said that he is not mentally competent to be held legally responsible for his criminal actions. So I don't even know if he knows what his policies have been for the last three years, but I know that his handlers do. I know that his Cabinet secretaries do. I know that his DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas knows that nine months into the Biden administration, he went on TV and bragged about the fact that without Congress, Joe Biden, by signing 90 executive orders had rescinded almost all of Donald Trump's policies at the border and on immigration.

So you know, I think that that reflects just how poorly this administration has addressed this.

Trey, as DNI during the transition, I shared with the Biden team our intelligence about how remain-in-Mexico and the cooperation of the Mexican government at Donald Trump's request had taken -- had secured our border and had taking illegal crossings down to an average of 1,000 per day for the entire year of 2020.

As you know, Trey, we now have a 900 percent increase in that. We now have 10,000 illegals on average coming through on certain days in this country. And as a result, the entire country is suffering as a result of that. And unfortunately, you know, great Americans like Laken Riley are being killed as a direct result of those policies.

He didn't need Congress to change all of that and you know, we don't need Congress to fix this problem. We need a strong American president that we don't have right now.

GOWDY: That's a great thing about democracies, there is always another election and we've got one coming up in just a few months.

John Lee Ratcliffe, from the great state of Texas, former director of National Intelligence, former federal prosecutor, thank you so much for joining us on a Sunday night.

RATCLIFFE: Great to see you.

GOWDY: The border has become a bipartisan outrage. Even Democrats like New York City's Mayor Eric Adams are changing their tunes on immigration and sanctuary city status.

Joining us now is former NYPD inspector attorney and Fox News contributor, Paul Mauro. Welcome back, Paul.

Sometimes a case impacts the collective conscience of a country and the murder of a young woman simply out for a jog might well do it, but Laken Riley is not the first person killed by someone here unlawfully and it doesn't seem to motivate change.

PAUL MAURO, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CONTRIBUTOR: No, it doesn't, although I would argue that this one seems to be something of a watershed.

You know, we're hitting a stage where it's just so undeniable that we have a real problem. And you know, obviously, the overlay is that we're in an election year.

But what you put your finger on here is the duplicitous response that we're getting from many of our leaders. Here in New York, for instance, Eric Adams, at the same time, now that he is saying that we need to take a look at this sanctuary status, not two weeks ago, he was just talking about the fact that he wants to use migrants to fill jobs as lifeguards at the city's pools and beaches.

And that by definition, is going to put potential gang members from Venezuela's Tren De Aragua that we've heard so much about in contact with teenagers on a daily basis, what could go wrong?

Governor Hochul, our governor here in New York is talking about filling 10,000 positions at the state level with migrants about whom we know nothing and she has even talked about putting them on the SUNY campuses and working in kitchens.

Well, let's remember that the accused, Jose Ibarra in the Laken Riley case, his brother, who is here illegally had committed crimes, and was working on a campus kitchen.

So the pitfalls here are really glaring and I think we've hit a point where they're undeniable.

GOWDY: You know, Paul, sanctuary city is just another way of saying it's a crime free zone. And if you couple that with Soros prosecutors and couple that with prosecutors who target people, but not crimes, I mean, we have the makings of a broken criminal justice system, maybe that will motivate people come November.

MAURO: I think it very well could. I mean, the polling shows that immigration has become the number one issue in the election, and yet to date, the president has not been able to bring himself to say Laken Riley's name.

You know, you put your finger on the perfect storm that we're hitting here in many of our blue cities where the Soros prosecutors and the lack of enforcement is coming together with this migrant influx and we are seeing all of these crimes and some of them caught on video and so they've gone viral.

And to go beyond simply the most apparent facts, I feel like what we should be looking at is some sort of federal mechanism to prohibit this sanctuary status, whether it's declared or not, because Athens is working that wiggle room, because they're saying, well, we weren't a sanctuary city.

But at the same time, we don't notify the federal government. Well, that's sanctuary city. And if you show a pattern and practice of not notifying the federal government, when somebody who is de facto illegal has been picked up on a crime has hit probable cause they're here illegally, well, they're not sure require a notification to ICE.

And if you don't do that, well, then you're not getting any federal money. And as you and I both know, the federal government funds a great deal of police operations at the local and state level in this country and that's a mechanism that's been shown to work.

So if the federal government is serious here, in either administration, there are fixes that can work at the ground level and that's what needs to be looked at, because locally, the progressives just hold sway in many of our cities and they just don't want to hear it.

GOWDY: You know, Paul, I recently heard you on another show, because I always watch you, I always enjoy hearing from you and you have a unique perspective.

You were talking about Venezuelan gangs, and that should alarm everyone. It alarmed me. I'm very hard to alarm, but it alarmed me.

Take us take us to the break warning us of this Venezuelan gang issue.

MAURO: So Tren De Aragua is very well organized, and as you and I both know, anybody who has ever done an OC case, or a RICO case, you know, organization is a great force multiplier. They punch beyond the borders of Venezuela. Now, they're strong in Ecuador and other places that Tren ship migrants here, and we're seeing them emerge here as a real force.

And there is a reason why Bloomberg News not exactly, you know, part of the vast right wing conspiracy is reporting, Venezuela's homicide rate is at a 22-year low. And even Bloomberg puts it down to the migrant influx into this country, just as Cuba did in 1980 as part of the Mariel boatlift, Maduro very clearly seems to be emptying out his gangsters into our country and the fact that it's a prison gang is no accident.

And I think these crimes are going to be with us for a while until we come up with some sort of solution. But very clearly Maduro doesn't want them back and that's why he has suspended the repatriation flights.

GOWDY: Paul Mauro, we are lucky to have someone with your unique background to advise us on matters involving our justice system. Thank you for joining us on Sunday night. We'll see you soon.

MAURO: Thank you, Congressman.

GOWDY: Coming up, Fani Willis will soon learn her fate two weeks. A Georgia judge says within two weeks we'll know whether Fani Willis is off the case.

Meanwhile, the US Supreme Court takes up presidential immunity. Will Scharf is an attorney for Donald Trump and a candidate for AG in Missouri and he's next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

GOWDY: Welcome back to SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

Final arguments were made and now, a Georgia judge will decide whether the conduct of Fani Willis and Nathan Wade warrants disqualification, but it may be more than simply who prosecutes the Trump case in Georgi, were lawyers who appeared before the grand jury legally empowered to do so? Will this case be dismissed or tried or something in between?

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court will consider Trump's presidential immunity claim even as they also mold a ballot access case. It seemed clear from the oral argument, Trump will be back on the ballot in Colorado, but the immunity case is seemingly much more challenging for him.

Joining us now is Trump attorney and Missouri AG candidate, Will Scharf. Welcome Will, thank you so much for being here.

Defense counsel, it sounded to me like did a good job of showing a relationship between Willis and Wade and impeaching their credibility, but is it enough to get them booted from the case?

WILL SCHARF, TRUMP ATTORNEY: I think the misconduct that we've seen from Fani Willis and her lover/prosecutor Nathan Wade, really shows how corrupt that case has been from the start.

We're certainly hopeful that that case will be dismissed. At the very least I think Judge McAfee was certainly strongly considering dismissing both Fani Willis and Nathan Wade from that case based on an appearance of impropriety, at least an appearance of impropriety.

So all in all, I think it was a very, very good day in court for President Trump's team down there led by Steve Sadow.

GOWDY: All right, so you're a highly skilled lawyer. I was a mediocre one, but a lot of our listeners are not lawyers. I heard two different things. I heard an involuntary recusal of the prosecutors, but also a potential dismissal of the indictment.

So I'll give you three options. This is a trial timing issue, and they've got to go get brand new prosecutors, or the indictment itself is in danger. Third option being nothing happens, but I don't think that's a realistic one.

SCHARF: Yes, look, I think if Wade and Willis are disqualified, bringing in new prosecutors could result in any number of possibilities. The new prosecutors might look at the case, decide that it should never have been brought in the first place, which is what we believe, and just move for its dismissal.

The judge could also find that their actions have so deeply corrupted the case that it should be dismissed from the bench. One way or the other, though, I think it is highly, highly unlikely that that Georgia case moves to trial before the November 2024 election.

So in terms of its relevance to this campaign of election interference being waged against President Trump, I think it's certainly been a good day, a good week, a good series of events for our team.

GOWDY: All right, let's move to another case. Tough facts make for challenging arguments. We've all been there before. You get dealt a bad hand of facts, and you do the best you can with them.

I want to understand the president's argument. Is the argument that a president who conspires to kill a political opponent must be impeached and convicted by the Senate before he or she can be indicted and tried in criminal court, or what exactly is the argument?

SCHARF: Well, that's not really the argument, Trey. If a president just killed his political opponent, that would be a private act and we're not saying that he would be immune from prosecution for acts like that after he leaves office.

What we're talking about is official acts, acts that fall within the outer perimeter of a president's responsibilities as president. And for those acts, we believe that a president should have criminal immunity, the same way that the courts have consistently held that he has civil immunity.

In this case, in this DC prosecution, what President Trump is being prosecuted for is acts that fall within the core of his Article II duties. Things like asking the Department of Justice to investigate election fraud, communicating with members of Congress about the same, communicating with state officials about election fraud in the 2020 election.

These are all presidential acts and for acts like that, we believe that a president would first have to be impeached and convicted by the House and Senate before he could then be prosecuted. That's the constitutional design. That's how our system is set up and we think that Jack Smith, the special counsel and his team are running roughshod over core constitutional principles in their haste to get Trump.

GOWDY: All right, I've got to ask you one quick legal question. I can't afford you for more than one block. I can't afford your rate. So I've got one more. What happens legally if he's tried and convicted after he's elected, but before he's sworn in?

SCHARF: Well, we don't think that's going to happen, Trey. If that were to be the case, he would still be able to take office as president. The president has, you know, he is a constitutional officer. There's ample case law on the idea that the other branches of government cannot interfere with the president's ability to exercise his responsibilities under Article II.

But again, we just think that's highly, highly unlikely. President Trump hasn't done anything wrong here. I think that case is falling apart as we speak. And we think it's likely that the Supreme Court rules for us on presidential immunity and we also think that the Supreme Court is likely to throw out half that indictment after hearing Fisher, which is a case on -- a January 6th related case later this spring.

So all in all, that prosecution, I don't think it holds any water at all. And I think the events that you just described are highly unlikely to come to pass.

GOWDY: Will Scharf loaning us his legal expertise. Thank you for joining us on a Sunday night. Look forward to having you back.

SCHARF: Thanks a lot, Trey. I really appreciate it.

GOWDY: Coming up, what makes people stay in races they seemingly cannot win. Bill McGurn is on "The Wall Street Journal" editorial board and Kaylee McGee White works for "The Washington Examiner" and they're going to try and help us understand Nikki Haley's decision to stay in this race.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

ASHLEY STROHMIER, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CORRESPONDENT: Welcome to "Fox News Live" I am Ashley Strohmier in New York.

Former South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley reining victorious tonight in Washington, DC's Republican primary. She took 63 percent of the GOP vote to for President Trump's 33 percent. It is Haley's first primary win getting her 19 more delegates.

Her campaign hopes it will spark momentum ahead of this week's Super Tuesday contest. That is when Republicans in more than a dozen states will cast their vote for who they want is their party's nominee. More than a third of the delegates are at stake.

And here is a live look at Cape Canaveral, Florida where there's a cautious optimism ahead of tonight's NASA and SpaceX rocket launch. It was rescheduled for tonight after bad weather scrubbed last night's attempt.

Conditions are about 75 percent favorable. Of course, we're going to carry the launch live next hour right here on the Fox News Channel.

I'm Ashley Strohmier. Now back to SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA. For all of your headlines log on to FoxNews.com.

GOWDY: Welcome back to SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

There is a difference between losing and failing and quitting, but there is also a time and a season for all things including knowing when to withdraw.

Nikki Haley lost Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina, and Nevada, Michigan -- the list keeps growing. Few, if any see a path to victory, but she is young. She has a promising future. So when is the right time to say this is not my time?

Bill McGurn is a former speechwriter for George W. Bush and a member of "The Wall Street Journal" Editorial Board. Kaylee McGhee White writes for "The Washington Examiner."

Welcome to you both.

Bill, people buy lottery tickets. Somebody had to ask Halle Berry to go to the prom, which took -- chances to that one weren't great either. People take one and a million chances all the time.

WILLIAM MCGURN, FOX BUSINESS NETWORK CONTRIBUTOR: Right.

GOWDY: But Nikki is spending millions and maybe jeopardizing her political future, isn't she?

MCGURN: I don't know. Look at Bernie Sanders. He is where he is today only because he hung in.

Look, people can hang in as long as they want. There's no rule about when to get out. A lot of it is dictated by whether their backers will continue to fund the drive that looks hopeless.

I think is pretty clear that it is Donald Trump. I think the same is true with Biden. He is not going to be on the ticket. He is not going to come the normal political process by another rival. It didn't come in the debates. It didn't -- it is not coming in the primaries. But there's so many minefields with the legal issues or something could happen, that maybe she banks on an open convention, where she's not guaranteed, but she could say I stayed in the race.

GOWDY: Kaylee, let's listen to Governor Haley together and then I'm going to ask you a question on the other side.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

NIKKI HALEY (R), 2024 PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: If Republicans really want to get this back on track, we've got to acknowledge that maybe it's him, maybe Donald Trump is the reason we keep losing.

(CHEERING AND APPLAUSE)

HALEY: We can't be a country in disarray in a world on fire and go through four more years of chaos.

If Donald Trump is the nominee, we will lose. It is that simple.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GOWDY: Many Haley supporters claim they will not support Donald Trump in November just as his supporters say they will not support her, so then what? I mean, are there enough GOP voters to spare a bunch and still win?

KAYLEE MCGHEE WHITE, "WASHINGTON EXAMINER" DEPUTY EDITOR OF RESTORING AMERICA: Well, quite frankly, I don't think that Haley's voters not supporting Trump will have any effect on him because most of her supporters are Democrats and Independents who lean Democratic in the first place. And I think the problem with Nikki Haley's campaign right now is that she's a candidate who doesn't really know what it is she's running for.

She knows at this point that she can't win the GOP nomination the correct way. She is losing in every single state even in Super Tuesday among the states that have semi open or open contests, and she can't win the White House.

I mean, it sounds to me as if she's sort of transitioning into an independent or third-party bid. And I recognize that she is trying to appeal to a specific kind of voter who are dissatisfied with the options of Trump and Biden, but the fact is that those voters make up a very small part of the electorate, and certainly not enough to give her the White House if she were to stage an independent bid.

GOWDY: Bill, I am not a political scientist. I'm an expert on college sports more than I am ***politics***, but anecdotally, I do know people who are lifelong Republicans. They are not Independents. They are not Democrats who switched over to vote.

And right now, they would not support Donald Trump if he were the nominee. And part of it, I think, is not the message, just the manner in which he messages things.

I mean, winners tell joke, loser say deal. I mean, why is President Trump continuing to use the phrase bird brain and talk about clothing? Why not just ignore her? You're going to win, just ignore her.

MCGURN: Yes, I don't know. I mean, I think a lot of even Trump supporters wish he wouldn't indulge in that language.

Look, Nikki Haley also has policy disagreements with Donald Trump on important issues -- Ukraine, on trade, and so forth. America's membership and multilateral organization. In a normal year, Republicans had hard fought nominations before. In a normal year, Nikki Haley would lose, endorse Donald Trump. He might even pick her for vice president.

I don't think that's going to happen. The animosity has been so big, the personal attacks so strong, I think that's unlikely. But they would kind of bring different strengths.

Trump is very popular within a large chunk of the Republican Party. Nikki Haley, obviously has pull with Independents and Democrats and we'll need some of them for Trump to win in November.

So the normal thing would be for them to come together much like George HW Bush and Ronald Reagan. But I don't think this is normal times. I will say I also don't get the sense that Nikki Haley is going to go the route of Liz Cheney. I do think she's going to try to stay Republican. She said that all along, so it'll be interesting to see.

GOWDY: Okay, well, let me ask you, Bill mentioned vice president, I don't think it is going to be Nikki Haley, who do you think is going to be and does it matter?

WHITE: I think it does matter. I mean, usually you tap a vice president based on certain demographics that you're trying to tap into, certain issues that you want to capitalize on, or certain states that you want to make the most out of. Trump has sort of floated around a few names already.

My opinion is that he would be best served by choosing a woman as his vice president. We know that Trump really struggles among the suburban women demographic. That demographic is going to be key in swing states, like my home state of Michigan, which he lost to Biden last time, and Pennsylvania and these other states.

So if you were to choose someone like I actually agree, Nikki Haley might be a pragmatic choice for that reason, or someone like Sarah Huckabee Sanders, to bring this coalition together. That could be a winning ticket.

GOWDY: Well, I guess the bad news is that would rule out my friend, Tim Scott. I think he does not pass either. He is suburban and he's not a woman, but we shall see.

Thank you both for joining us on a Sunday night. I have a feeling we'll have this conversation many times between now and November.

MCGURN: Thanks, Trey.

WHITE: Thank you.

GOWDY: Up next, the government has avoided a shutdown for the moment, but is there more drama to come from Capitol Hill? Congressman French Hill tells us next on SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

GOWDY: Welcome back to SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

The House avoided a partial shutdown keeping federal agencies open for now, but you'll never guess what happened in the process. Republicans are not happy with each other.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

REP. CHIP ROY (R-TX): We're going to continue to spend moneys at the Nancy Pelosi spending level of an Omnibus Bill that Republicans roundly opposed.

REP. ANDY BIGGS (R-AZ): This body does not use what the founders gave us as the ultimate tool and that is the purse strings.

REP. MATT GAETZ (R-FL): Watching House Republicans is like watching a football team whose best play is the punt and the block.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GOWDY: Joining us now this House Financial Services Committee vice chair, Congressman French Hill from the great state of Arkansas.

You know, Congressman, I thought everything was supposed to be better and fixed when those eight including some of whom knew we just heard from got together with Democrats and ran off Kevin McCarthy.

REP. FRENCH HILL (R-AR): Hey, Trey, great to be with you.

Well, you would think it would be perfect now because those very people that were complaining last week, many of them were the ones that prohibited us from getting all of our spending work done last fall when we had the Fiscal Responsibility Act that improved federal policy for conservatives and cut spending over the next 10 years. But that's not the case, so here we find ourselves at the beginning of the year still trying to solve this puzzle of FY 24. It's really ridiculous.

But hopefully now we're on the right track, everybody is on the same page to support the Fiscal Responsibility Act spending levels, the spending cuts I might add, and get that done before March 22nd.

GOWDY: You know, Congressman, you've been good enough to come on before and we've had this conversation, but it bears repeating. Our nation does have a staggering debt, which is unsustainable, that much is true. But most Republicans have no interest in addressing what drives the deficit and the debt, which is mandatory spending, including the three that we just heard from including some prominent Republican presidential candidates.

So if they're not ever going to talk about what drives the debt, and all they talk about is discretionary spending, how will this ever gets fixed?

HILL: Well, it is really misleading to our voters on both sides of the aisle. You know, I desperately want both political parties to get back to competing on having the lowest deficit.

In fact, trying to balance the budget, we're not going to do that by beating each other up over how much money is spent on National Public Radio. We've got to address the long-term fiscal reforms necessary to make social security and the other benefit programs that are tied to demographics, make those sustainable for the next generation and by putting them on that sustainable path for the future, we will have a much better fiscal outlook for the US and we can still fight every year about spending levels.

But look, Trey, we need to get back to where both Democrats and all the Republicans believe that the smallest deficits and going to balanced budgets, that's the right course.

GOWDY: All right, we are in an election year. So my question for you, Congressman, I guess is what now? Some Republicans are in districts where shutdowns will not hurt them at all. But spending ranks like eighth on the list of things on the minds of voters heading into November. So how politically does a shutdown, the threat of a shutdown, a partial shutdown, how does that help the GOP keep a majority come November?

HILL: A shutdown is of zero help to the Republicans running for public office this year. Absolutely zero. We've seen that in the past. It's because the Democrats control the Senate and the Democrats control the White House. There is no leverage in our tiny majority of House Republicans in the People's House to achieve anything by shutting the government down.

Our best objective is to do what we promised last year, which was to cut spending, cut regulations, rollback some of Joe Biden's priorities and improve the regulatory system by implementing, taking a win on the Fiscal Responsibility Act that was negotiated by Kevin McCarthy with President Biden next year. Implementing that is the best strategy we have in this political year of 2024, and then let's win the House. Let's win the Senate. Let's win the presidency and demonstrate that we can do even more on cutting spending and reforming those huge demographically tied mandatory spending programs.

GOWDY: Congressman French Hill from the great state of Arkansas, reminding us to set reasonable expectations and reminding us again, the cost of losing those two Georgia Senate races that were eminently winnable years ago.

Thank you, Congressman, good to see you. See you soon.

HILL: Great to be with you, Trey.

GOWDY: Coming up, is American technology winding up IN Russian weapons and if so how? Former CIA station chief and Fox News contributor, Dan Hoffman explains after the break only on SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

GOWDY: Welcome back to SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA.

Vladimir Putin is warning the US and NATO of a possible nuclear conflict if troops are sent to fight for Ukraine. Putin's comments came during his annual address to the Russian people before Russia's presidential election.

Putin added he'll be stationing additional soldiers near the borders with Finland and Sweden to new NATO members.

The Biden administration has been clear about keeping US troops out of this conflict.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ADM. JOHN KIRBY (RET), COORDINATOR FOR STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS AT THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL: We will let President Macron speak for his military and what he is or is not willing to do with his troops. The president has been clear. He does not support US troops involved in this conflict in Ukraine.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GOWDY: But Biden has been far less clear on what exactly the mission is in Eastern Europe. This, as there is a growing wing within the GOP that is not just anti-war, but anti-Ukraine and seemingly pro-Russia. So what is the US mission? And how far will the US go to stop Russia? And will Ukraine have to cede territory as part of a negotiated settlement?

Dan Hoffman is an expert on Russia and a former CIA agent. Welcome back, Dan.

That Many, many do not believe Biden has made the case for helping Ukraine, but they believe the case can be made. So I'm going to let you do it. If you believe it, is defeating Vladimir Putin in America's best interest and why?

DAN HOFFMAN, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CONTRIBUTOR: Yes, it is in America's best interests and it's important to frame this war and this administration has done it very ineffectively. You know, they've said that we would continue to support Ukraine as long as it takes and that sounds to a lot of folks, especially on the Republican side, like the Biden administration is pursuing another forever war and that's really not what's going on.

Ukraine is winning. For every day that Vladimir Putin fails to take Kyiv, that's a win for Ukraine. Finland and Sweden, NATO members also a win for Ukraine, over 300,000 casualties for the Russian Army, which has been cut down to size. That's a win for Ukraine, for Europe and for NATO.

We're talking about less than five percent of the DoD budget with a huge return on investment in stopping Vladimir Putin at the point of attack, the United States enjoys over a trillion dollars' worth of trade with Europe that would be at risk if we didn't stand up for what's right and support Ukraine.

My grandparents' generation fought in the Second World War, they learned that if you evacuate from -- or you don't fight for Danzig, you're going to evacuate from Dunkirk. We need to stand up for what's right. And I wish the president would get behind his bully pulpit and make the case more effectively to the American people.

I think that a majority of the American people, we've seen from polls, as well as in the Congress support continuing to provide Ukraine with assistance. The money that's going to Ukraine is to replenish US stocks, most of those military -- most of the military equipment is produced in red states and we need this for our defense industrial base.

I can only imagine what President Reagan would be saying right now. You know, when I was in college, President Reagan was talking about peace through strength. And I think we could use a bit of that rhetoric right now.

GOWDY: You know, Dan, I want to ask you about President Reagan because it used to be that a strong military, you support your allies you support -- even if they're not part of NATO. So, where is this not just -- I mean, it is not just an anti-war or an anti-endless war, there is a pro-Russia wing within the GOP. They belittle President Zelenskyy and yet they give a platform to someone like Vladimir Putin who kills his political enemies and imprisons Americans. So where did that come from?

HOFFMAN: Well, listen, Vladimir Putin is at war with democracy. He likes to frame the conflict as he did during his speech on Friday, which I listened to in its entirety in Russian, as if the West is threatening Russia militarily. That couldn't be farther from the truth.

What scares Putin is liberty and freedom and democracy, everything that we hold near and dear, everything that's enshrined in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

I'm not so sure that the GOP has a pro-Putin wing. God forbid that they do. But it's over to the Democrats to make the right case and it is good for Republicans who don't believe that, who believe we should support Ukraine, let them make the case as well and make it more forcefully.

The other point I would make, Trey, is that we're kind of split in this country 50/50 in the Senate and in the House and across our land.

Neither party can govern with a maximalist agenda. There's got to be a lot of compromises and not let the perfect be the enemy of the good when it comes to shoring up our own border and supporting Ukraine and Taiwan in their time of need and Israel as well.

If we pursue a maximalist agenda, we don't get anything done and our national security suffers greatly.

GOWDY: You want to run for Congress? They could certainly use your wisdom and your perspective. In the meantime, thank you for your service to our country. We look forward to having you back on. I don't think this war is ending anytime soon. So we'll see you soon, Dan. Thank you for your service.

HOFFMAN: All right, sir.

GOWDY: Thank you for spending part of your Sunday night with us. Hope you have a great week ahead. Until next week, you can find us online at Gowdy America or on "The Trey Gowdy Podcast."

Good night from South Carolina.

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