

News; International

Interview with U.S. Ambassador to NATO, Julianne Smith; Interview with Sen. Rick Scott (R-FL); Rep. Ro Khanna is Interviewed about Ukraine, Iran, India, Green Energy and Politics; Supreme Court Nomination Hearing; Justice Thomas' Wife's Texts

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JOHN ROBERTS, FOX NEWS ANCHOR: I'm John Roberts.

President Biden blasts Russian President Putin in a powerful speech, but it's an off-the-cuff remark that has captured the world's attention.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

JOE BIDEN, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: For God's sake, this man cannot remain in power.

ROBERTS (voice-over): The secretary of state saying this is about Putin's grip on Ukraine, not Russia.

ANTONY BLINKEN, SECRETARY OF STATE: We do not have a strategy of regime change.

ROBERTS: Now, the challenges ahead after a pep talk with U.S. troops and a show of force with NATO. The U.S. announcing new sanctions and help for refugees. But Ukraine says it needs more military aid.

We'll talk to the U.S. ambassador to NATO, Julianne Smith, about getting leaders on the same page, and concerns about Russia's long-term goals.

Plus, Senate Republicans position themselves to win back the majority in November with a focus on well-established battlegrounds. We'll discuss with Florida Senator Rick Scott, who is leading Republicans' efforts to flip the chamber.

While --

REP. ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ (D-NY): I do think the time for the administration is running out.

ROBERTS: Liberal Democrats in the House press the president to sidestep Senate standoffs and take executive action on everything from student debt to gas prices.

We'll ask Democratic Congressman Ro Khanna about the push from progressives.

Then --

JUDGE KETANJI BROWN JACKSON, SUPREME COURT NOMINEE: I do.

ROBERTS: After a marathon two days of questioning, Democrats aim to confirm the president's Supreme Court nominee by Easter. We'll ask our Sunday panel how the confirmation hearings have become one of Washington's most partisan traditions.

All, right now, on "FOX News Sunday."

(END VIDEOTAPE)

ROBERTS (on camera): And hello again from FOX News in Washington.

The president is back on U.S. soil this morning after a blistering speech in Europe where he slammed Russian President Vladimir Putin and gave a stark warning to stay out of NATO territory. The president also appeared to call for Putin's removal, but the White House walking that back this morning.

This comes after days of meetings with NATO allies on how to support Ukraine as Russia continues indiscriminate shelling one month into the invasion. In a moment, we'll discuss the president's speech with the U.S. Ambassador to NATO, Julianne Smith.

We begin, though, with team coverage, Mike Tobin live on the ground in Lviv, Ukraine. But first, Rich Edson live from the White House with reaction to Biden's harsh words -- Rich.

RICH EDSON, FOX NEWS CORRESPONDENT: John, a trip designed to coordinate more punishment for Vladimir Putin and help for Ukraine, but the White House is left clarifying President Biden's major pronouncement.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

BIDEN: It's Putin -- it's Vladimir Putin who is to blame, period.

EDSON (voice-over): In a major speech in Poland, at the doorstep of Russian aggression, President Biden verbally tore down Vladimir Putin, assailing him for his invasion of Ukraine. The president defended and encouraged the world's democracies and warned the Russian autocrat against moving on their premier defensive alliance.

BIDEN: Don't even think about moving on one single inch of NATO territory.

EDSON: The president's most powerful and lasting declaration in his address, that Putin cannot remain in power, needed a major clarification from an unnamed White House official.

Quote: The president's point was that Putin cannot be allowed to exercise power over his neighbors or the region. He was not discussing Putin's power in Russia or regime change. That follows confusion over the White House position on a response to potential chemical weapons use or the purpose of sanctions.

The speech ended a busy three days in Europe. During this time, the White House announced additional natural gas shipment to Europe, ending dependency on Russian oil and gas would take years.

The Ukraine government is pushing for more energy from around the world and more weapons from NATO.

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKY, UKRAINIAN PRESIDENT (through translator): All offers are on the table. Our needs are on the table. We need peace immediately. The answers are up to you.

EDSON: Ahead of his speech, the president met with European leaders, U.S. troops reinforcing NATO's eastern flank, and Ukrainian refugees. Millions have dispersed into neighboring countries.

The White House announced the U.S. will accept up to 100,000 refugees and pledged a billion dollars in humanitarian aid.

While meeting with refugees, the president also turned his attention to Vladimir Putin, calling him a butcher.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

EDSON (on camera): The president warned this battle will not be won in days or months and that we need to steel ourselves for the fight ahead -- John.

ROBERTS: Rich Edson at the White House for us this morning. Rich, thank you.

Now, let's turn to Mike Tobin. He is live in Lviv, Ukraine, with the latest on the ground.

Mike, the city of Lviv, which had largely been quiet, was changed yesterday. What happened?

MIKE TOBIN, FOX NEWS CORRESPONDENT: Well, about 4:30 p.m. local time, the air raid siren sounded with the wind direction, we didn't hear the air strikes downtown. We started learning about the strikes from our smartphones.

Shortly after that, we could see the big plume of smoke coming out of that fuel depot that had been hit. There was a subsequent strike in an industrial part of town. The regional governor said five people were injured and the Lviv mayor said this was Russia saying hello to President Biden, as you know, he was nearby in Poland.

ROBERTS: Mike, this all happened right about the same time as Russia had said, look, we pretty much achieved the goals that we wanted to achieve in the first part of this. Now we're going to focus on securing

the eastern part of Ukraine, the Donbas region. It was a little interesting to see them fire off missiles at the same time they said that.

TOBIN: It is interesting. You heard Russians say that the focus on the resources would go east, yet the air strikes came to the west.

Listen to Russian General Sergei Rudskoi.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

SERGEI RUDSKOI, RUSSIAN ARMY CHIEF (through translator): The main objectives of the first stage of the operation have generally been accomplished, which, emphasize once again, makes it possible to focus on the main efforts to achieve the main goal, liberation of Donbas.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

TOBIN: Now, the Donbas that he's talking about is that region just north and east of Mariupol, that is the region where Russian backed militias have been fighting the Ukrainians since 2014. It's also the region that Vladimir Putin said he wanted to liberate from the Nazis -- John.

ROBERTS: Mike, is there much change with a ground war has been concentrated?

TOBIN: Well, the siege of Mariupol continues and it continues at a real savage pace. The people in Mariupol, of all the things they have to worry about, they've got to worry about starvation now because it's been going on for that long. The fighting has really intensified in the east.

The town of Trostyanets, Ukrainians say they have reclaimed that town and that's going to give them access to some key highways and some resupply. As it relates to Kyiv, the battle lines haven't really moved that much. We don't see the Russians retreating. Rather we see the Russians digging into defensive positions -- John.

ROBERTS: All right. Mike Tobin reporting live from Lviv, we'll be hearing a lot more from Mike throughout the day. Mike, thank you.

Joining us now from Brussels is the U.S. ambassador to NATO, Julianne Smith.

Ambassador, welcome to "FOX News Sunday". Appreciate you taking the time today.

JULIANNE SMITH, U.S. AMBASSADOR TO NATO: Thank you.

ROBERTS: So, the president yesterday in Warsaw gave what by all accounts was a very tough speech, but it was some words at the end of the speech that he appeared to ad lib that really have been getting worldwide attention.

Let me just play those for you and get your reaction on the other side.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOE BIDEN, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: For God's sake, this man cannot remain in power.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

ROBERTS: So, he appeared to in that ad lib there, off-the-cuff remarks, articulate a policy of regime change toward Russia. Not only did he say it, but he said it in Poland.

In your estimation, is that helpful to the cause?

SMITH: Well, let me be clear and just state right off the bat that the U.S. does not have a policy of regime change towards Russia, but I think what we all agree on is that President Putin cannot be empowered to wage war. He has attacked Ukraine in a premeditated, unprovoked conflict, and is pursuing this relentless and brutal war in Ukraine, which we all want to see come to an end.

ROBERTS: I mean, that has been the stated policy that we are not looking for regime change in Russia but the gaffe was significant enough that later on in the day in a news conference in Jerusalem, the secretary of state felt it necessary to clarify the remarks.

Listen here.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ANTHONY BLINKEN, SECRETARY OF STATE: President Putin cannot be empowered to wage war or engage in aggression against Ukraine or anyone else. As you know, and as you've heard us say repeatedly, we do not have a strategy of regime change in Russia.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

ROBERTS: We don't have a strategy of regime change in Russia. But this would seem play right into Putin's hands. He can get -- go to his cronies. He can go to his oligarchs. He can go to his defense minister and say, see, I told you. They're out to get us here.

In the same way that the president seemingly gave Vladimir Putin a green light to maybe go in and have a small incursion into the eastern part of Ukraine, Putin will take a look at this and say, they're out to get me.

SMITH: Well, look, the president has spent the day standing, talking to Ukrainian refugees. He went to the national stadium in Warsaw and literally met with hundreds of Ukrainian refugees. He listened to their heroic stories about fleeing Ukraine in the wake of Russia's brutal aggression there, and it was a very moving day.

We don't want to see Putin continuing this war, full stop, in Ukraine, and that's why he came to Europe, he stopped in Brussels, and then went on to Poland to work closely with our allies on these unprecedented steps to apply pressure on Russia, and assist Ukraine in this moment.

ROBERTS: In a surprise address over the weekend is Zelenskyy again called on NATO to provide him with the weapons he believes he needs to win the war, including tanks, and again, he made an appeal for those MiGs. But the United States is refusing to give him the MiGs.

There's a whole lot more that NATO can do to help Ukraine win this conflict, not just hold the line against Russia, but the president appears to be timid about triggering Vladimir Putin into an escalation.

Is he right to think that? Or is there more latitude here to push Putin a little harder by maybe just giving those MiGs to Ukraine?

SMITH: Well, first of all, let me say that the NATO alliance and the United States bilaterally is in constant contact with President Zelenskyy and members of his cabinet. We are constantly in conversation with Ukrainians assessing what their defense needs are.

Since Joe Biden, President Biden, came into office in January of last year, the United States has provided \$2 billion of lethal assistance to Ukraine. Now, on your question about the MiGs, we have urged every ally in the alliance to come forward and share their ideas on what more we can do to support Ukraine through anti-air and anti-armor weapons and other ideas.

Poland came forward with the idea of offering the Soviet era jets. We looked at that, we had some questions about it, and at the end of the day, the United States believed that in this case, the delivery of those jets was untenable. We had a number of questions about the logistics of delivering those jets from Poland to Ukraine. We also had questions about the Ukrainian pilots that could potentially be flying those jets.

But this is an evolving set of circumstances. We are continually coming together with our allies and looking at what more we can do to get lethal assistance in the hands of the Ukrainian military.

ROBERTS: You say that the issue of the MiGs is mostly logistical, but here in the United States, the administration has said no, it's a question of escalation. And if I'm not mistaken, the original idea of Poland giving the MiGs to Ukraine was an American idea. It was only when the Poles said, "Look, we'll give them to you, then you can give them to Ukraine," that it became a problem.

SMITH: Well, my understanding is that the Ukrainians actually asked Poland. In fact, I believe that the Ukrainians are in regular contact, as they are with the United States, with individual NATO allies. They've spoken with most of the allies on NATO's eastern flank and even some that are not on NATO's eastern flank over towards the west.

ROBERTS: Yeah.

SMITH: Each ally is doing what it can to provide assistance in this moment and we will continue to work with allies on determining what's best and how we can assist them with, again, their air defense needs.

ROBERTS: There was a debate, Madam Ambassador, in the administration, as to exactly what sanctions were designed to do. We were told in the run-up to this invasion that sanctions were meant to deter Putin from ever going into Ukraine. But on the weekend, the president said that, no, sanctions were never meant to deter.

Let's listen to what the president said and listen to what his lieutenants said in the run-up to the invasion.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

BIDEN: Let's get something straight, you remember if you covered me from the very beginning, I did not say that, in fact, the sanctions would deter him. Sanctions never deter.

JAKE SULLIVAN, NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR: The president believes that sanctions are intended to deter.

KAMALA HARRIS, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: The purpose of the sanctions has always been, and continues to be a deterrence.

ANTONY BLINKEN, SECRETARY OF STATE: The purpose of the sanctions in the first instance is to try to deter Russia from going to war.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Sanctions are not an end to themselves, they serve a higher purpose. And that purpose is to deter and prevent.

JEN PSAKI, WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY: We do see them as having a deterrent impact.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

ROBERTS: So, Madam Ambassador, can you clear this up for us? Were they meant to deter or were they not meant to deter?

SMITH: So, look, before Russia went into Ukraine, we took a number of steps to outline the consequences that Russia would be facing if they opted for a war inside Ukraine. We laid out a sanctions package. We made it clear that we were in daily contact with our European allies to put together a package.

Now that Russia has gone into Ukraine, we've moved forward with those costs. They've been unprecedented. And if you look at any indicator for the Russian economy, whether you're looking at the value of the ruble or you're looking at their credit rating, or you're looking at these interest rates, those sanctions are having an impact right now on the Russian economy.

ROBERTS: But again, were they meant to deter or not?

SMITH: Well, look, before the war, obviously we were laying out the consequences in pretty explicit detail with the hope that President Putin would take an alternative course. We were trying in that moment to sharpen his choice. We were also, at that moment, moving U.S. force posture into Eastern Europe, also to help sharpen his choice.

Unfortunately, he opted for war, and now, he's feeling the consequences.

ROBERTS: One last quick question if I could in just the remaining time we have left here.

Russia appears to be recalibrating, saying that it's going to be focusing on consolidating its defense in Donetsk and Luhansk in the Donbas region. Is there an opportunity here to try to save the rest of Ukraine?

SMITH: Well, let's be clear, this war is not going as planned. The information we had indicated that the Russians wanted to go in and take Kyiv in just a few days. It's a month now into this war. They are in a defensive crouch outside of Kyiv.

They have announced that they're changing their tactics. We'll have to monitor the situation on the ground and see if that's actually the case.

But I think they are on their back foot here, and we've been so impressed with the fighting capability and spirit of the Ukraine forces and we have confidence that they're going to prevail.

ROBERTS: The Ukrainian forces certainly are the one remarkable thing about all of this.

Julianne Smith, the ambassador to NATO for the United States, thanks so much for your time today. Appreciate it.

SMITH: Thank you.

ROBERTS: Up next, Senator Rick Scott on the president's speech and the challenges ahead in Ukraine.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

ROBERTS: As the president's poll numbers sag and key races loom, Republicans eye a pathway to flip the House and regain control of the Senate.

Joining us now from Florida is the chair of the National Republican Senatorial Committee, Senator Rick Scott.

Senator, welcome back to "FOX News Sunday." It's good to see you.

SEN. RICK SCOTT (R-FL): It's nice seeing you, John.

I think we're going to have a great year. We've got great candidates running around the country. We've got some primaries.

The Democrats have primaries. In their primaries, I think Bernie Sanders type candidates are going to come out. The Biden agenda is very, very unpopular.

So, as long as we raise our money, as long as we, you know, focus on big, bold ideas, I think we're going to have a great November.

ROBERTS: But you do have a couple of issues, which I would get to in a second, but first of all, I just want to pivot back to Ukraine because the president made a lot of news yesterday. At the tail end of that speech that he gave in Warsaw when he seemed to go off script for a second and ad lib this. Listen here.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOE BIDEN, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: For God's sake, this man cannot remain in power.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

ROBERTS: That seemed to be a dramatic departure from the established American policy, where he appeared to be calling for regime change in Russia -- take out Vladimir Putin.

His secretary of state, Antony Blinken, had to promptly walk it back, saying, no, regime change is not something we're looking for here.

But did he play, do you think, right into Putin's hands who has been really trying to make this something between Russia and the United States, not just Europe?

SCOTT: Absolutely. I mean, what Biden needs to stop doing is stop talking and start acting. Stop telling Biden -- or Putin what he's going to do, start giving every resource you can to the Ukrainian people, rally NATO to do the same thing.

I don't get why the MiGs aren't there. We need more anti-aircraft, anti-ship, anti-tank equipment there.

Zelenskyy is telling us what he needs and he's telling us he doesn't have enough. Thank God Zelenskyy and Ukrainian people are willing to defend freedom, because -- I mean, if they don't, then, you know, where's Putin going to stop?

So Biden has got to get this -- he's got to start acting and getting these things done and start misspeaking -- stop misspeaking.

ROBERTS: But we do have an inkling of an idea of where Russia might stop when they articulated a new policy yesterday saying, we achieved our goals in the initial phase of this, now, we're going to concentrate on consolidating defense of Donetsk and Luhansk, the Donbas region. That would seem to be an indication that maybe they're giving up on the idea of trying to take over all of Ukraine.

Is now the time to give Ukraine the weapons it needs to win? Because we've never heard the president say, "We're going to help Ukraine win."

SCOTT: I know, it's hard to believe.

Absolutely. I mean, we have got to help Ukraine win. We got to push Putin back into Russia and then let the will of the Russian people decide what happens to Putin. I believe he ought to go to prison for war crimes.

But we have got to do everything. Don't act -- don't play to tie, you play to win. You give them every resource you can and you do it every second. You're thinking, every second, what else can we do to put Putin back on his heels and have him take his troops back into Russia?

That's what we should be doing every second. We have got to win this.

ROBERTS: Yeah. You and I have talked about this before on our program, "America Reports", and that is that the White House maybe never thought that we were going to be in this position, that, you know, three, four days, maybe a week, Putin would have taken over Ukraine, installed a puppet government there and we'd be dealing with that.

I don't think anybody thought that the Ukrainians were going to fight back with the heroic courage that they have.

You have been trying to do what you can to try to bring Russia to its knees. You got the Stop Putin Act, which would put Russian oil companies on the so-called entities (ph) list. It would put Congress, and not the president, in charge of whether or not United States does business with Russian oil companies.

Do you not trust the president to do it?

SCOTT: Well, he's been pretty weak. I mean, I mean, look, this should -- this should never have happen. If Biden would have done everything early, if he would send (ph) through all the resources, made sure that -- made sure that Zelenskyy had everything he needed, had all the anti-tank, anti- aircraft, anti-ship equipment that he needed, you know, hopefully, you know, Putin wouldn't -- Putin wouldn't have invaded.

That would have been -- you think of how many lives would have been saved in Ukraine. You look at those pictures of children dying just because Putin is such a thug, a murderous thug.

ROBERTS: All right. Let's switch to politics now because there's a lot that we've got to look forward to between now and November 8th. You recently put out an 11-point plan to rescue America. Two of the big points are, quote: All Americans should pay some income tax to have skin in the game, even if a small amount. Currently, over half of Americans pay no income tax.

It also says: All federal legislation sunsets in five years. If a law is worth keeping, Congress can pass it again.

So, that would raise taxes on half of Americans and potentially sunset programs like Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security.

Why would you propose something like that in an election year?

SCOTT: Sure. John, that's, of course, the Democrat talking points. It's --

(CROSSTALK)

ROBERTS: No, it's in the plan. It's in the plan.

SCOTT: Well, but here's -- but here's this thing about reality for a second.

(CROSSTALK)

ROBERTS: But, Senator, Senator, hang on, it's not Democratic to talking point. It's in the plan.

SCOTT: Also in the plan, it says we ought to, every year, talk about exactly how we're going to fix Medicare and Social Security.

Here's what's happening. No one that I know of wants to sunset Medicare or Social Security, but what we're doing is we don't even talk about it. Medicare goes bankrupt in four years. Social Security goes bankrupt in 12 years.

I think we ought to figure out how we preserve those programs. Every program that we care about, we ought to stop and take the time to preserve those programs.

I -- I mean, I just fought the postal bill because it put more responsibility on Medicare, and took it off the Postal Service and put Medicare in a worse position.

Now, let's go back -- let's talk about taxes for a second. I'll put my record up against anybody on tax cuts. I tax -- I cut taxes and fees 100 times as governor.

But here's what's unfair. We have people that don't -- that could go to work and have figured out how to have government pay their way. That's not right. They ought to have some skin in the game. I don't care if it's a dollar.

We ought to all be in this together.

I'm going to focus, continue to focus on reducing taxes. That's what I've done my whole life. But here's 11-step plan, go through it. Everybody's not going to agree with everything, 120 policy points.

Let's be bold. Go to RescueAmerica.com, give me your ideas or you can text "America" to 22044 -- give me your ideas. I want to -- I want to change this country.

The woke left controls everything. We've got to win and we've got to change the country.

ROBERTS: As you said, not every one agrees with it and one of the people that doesn't agree with it is Mitch McConnell. Here's what he said.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

SEN. MITCH MCCONNELL (R-KY): Let me tell you what would not be a part of our agenda. We will not have as part of our agenda a bill that raises taxes on half the American people and sunsets Social Security and Medicare within five years. That will not be part of the Republican Senate majority agenda.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

ROBERTS: Now, a few days after he said that, you penned a "Wall Street Journal" op-ed about your plan titled "Why I'm defying beltway cowardice".

Are you calling Mitch McConnell a coward?

SCOTT: What I'm saying is -- what I've -- I've been in D.C. for three years, right? I want to get something done. I went to D.C. to change this country.

Look at where we are now. The woke left controls, you know, the executive branch. They control a lot of our government. They control academia. They control Hollywood.

We -- look at -- we have an open border. We've decided we're not going to be energy independent. We've got to change this.

You don't change it without having a plan. I'm a business guy. When I -- when I was in business, I wrote a plan, I surround myself with people who implemented the plan. When I ran for governor, I had a plan.

We've got to have a plan for what we're going to do when we win. And we're going to win. We have great people, but let's have a plan.

That's why it said, go to Rescue America -- give me your ideas. If that -- if these ideas of mine aren't the best, let's come up with the best ideas out there.

ROBERTS: I think the majority of your colleagues want to focus on Joe Biden as oppose to coming up with a plan that they think that they can sell to American people about what the Republicans would do.

But, anyway, I want to move onto something else, and that's Ginni Thomas, the wife of Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas. She sent texts and emails to Mark Meadows, former chief of staff, after the election, as well as some numbers of Congress, urging them to do whatever they could to support President Trump's bid to overturn the 2020 election.

I mean, she is a conservative activist. She's entitled to her own opinion, but she's also the wife of a Supreme Court justice.

There are calls for Clarence Thomas to recuse himself from any future cases involving January 6th.

What do you say?

SCOTT: Well, first off, I admire and respect Clarence Thomas. I think he's been a great Supreme Court justice. And Clarence Thomas, in my opinion, will always do the right thing.

So I've not seen in my -- I've watched Clarence Thomas for years and I've always seen him do the right thing.

ROBERTS: Right. What's interesting is that Supreme Court justices are not bound by the same code of ethics that other federal judges are. Chris Murphy, your fellow senator, introduced legislation to change that last summer.

Would you support a change?

SCOTT: I haven't -- I haven't seen the legislation, but, you know, I tell you what, my experience with the Supreme Court is they're trying their best to interpret the laws and do the best they can. I don't agree with every thing they do, none of us would, but I think they're trying to do the best they can

ROBERTS: Senator Rick Scott of the great state of Florida, always a pleasure. Thank you for having us.

SCOTT: All right. See you, John. Bye-bye. Have a good day.

ROBERTS: Appreciate it. Thank you. You, too.

Coming up next, Congressman Ro Khanna on the midterm warnings from progressives to the White House.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

ROBERTS: Progressive Democrats are warning the White House that the party will see pain at the polls if they don't deliver on key policies, and are encouraging the president to make a run around the Senate.

Joining us now is Democratic Congressman Ro Khanna of California, author of the new book, "Dignity in a Digital Age: Making Tech Work for All of Us."

Congressman, welcome back to Fox News.

REP. RO KHANNA (D-CA): Thank you for having me.

ROBERTS: Good to have you here.

Let me get you to weigh in. I don't need to play the sound byte again because we've already heard it a couple of times, but let me get you to weigh in on what the president said, ad-libbed, at the end of that speech yesterday, because a lot of people did a double take. And it's headlines everywhere around the world right now that the president just called for regime change in Russia.

KHANNA: Well, John, let me be very clear, the United States policy is not regime change, it's a negotiated end to this war.

Now, look, when Putin, in Mariupol, is bombing theaters with 300 kids there, where there's a sign saying "children" and he's bombing that, any human being would express frustration. And the president was speaking from his heart. But it's not the U.S. policy to seek regime change.

ROBERTS: He has a habit or a propensity, I don't want to say it's a habit, he has a propensity to sometimes say the quiet part out loud. Like when he said, well, if it's a minor encourage, that's one thing. I'm sure that was a conversation that occurred in the situation room that he just blurted out loud.

And there are a lot of people in this world who would probably like to see Putin go because he's been bad news for an awfully long time. But when you're the president of the United States, you can't just say stuff like that.

KHANNA: The president, I think, is a straight shooter. He's deeply apathetic. I'm sure he is so frustrated with these scenes of children, women, being killed.

ROBERTS: I'm sure he is.

KHANNA: But I think the White House has been clear, they have been disciplined and they've said, we need a negotiated end to this war. That has to be with Putin as a settlement. It's not the policy of regime change. There's no support in the Democratic Congress for regime change. We've been the party against regime change for the past 20 years.

ROBERTS: But do you think that Putin is going to take this and try to use it to his advantage?

KHANNA: Putin takes anything and tries to use it to his advantage.

ROBERTS: Sure.

KHANNA: But let's see what we need to do. We need to make it as difficult for him. This -- look at what this president has done, because I heard Senator Scott earlier. We've provided the anti-tank's. We've provided the anti-aircraft. We've provided over \$2 billion of assistance. We have the most punishing sanctions. This present has rallied NATO.

Look, it's easy to Monday morning quarterback and say, oh, you could have done one more thing. But this president, by and large, has been tough and we're going to get Putin and negotiate to bring a cease-fire to the war.

ROBERTS: If it were up to you, would you give them the MiGs? Because Zelenskyy asked for them again on the weekend.

KHANNA: I would not have U.S. bases do that. Let's be clear what that means. It means U.S. service members are going to go up in those skies in Ukraine and be shot at by Russian planes. I know it's easy to come on Fox News or CNN and talk tough, but are you flying these planes? Are you going to answer to those families if American service members get killed? I don't want to put American service members at risk. If

Poland wants to supply those planes, fine. And I want those planes to get to Zelenskyy, but not at the cost of American lives.

ROBERTS: Let me ask you about the Iran nuclear deal because we've been hearing for weeks now that it's closed. But one of the potential provisions of this would be to allow Russia to buy excess enriched uranium from Iran. And I'm wondering, what sense does it make to allow a country that at every turn is threatened to use nuclear weapons for the first time since the Second World War, to give them access enriched uranium so that they can just hold that as a cudgel over the world?

KHANNA: That should not be part of the deal. I mean the deal hasn't been finalized, I would not support having a Russian exception given what's going on right now, to allow them to get Iranian oil. I mean I think we ought to have the world boycotting Russian oil. I've been clear actually on India, and I think India ought to be condemning Putin and India ought not to be getting oil from Russia or China. We ought to rally the world to isolate Putin.

ROBERTS: India is also getting weapons from Russia and they're concerned about the flow of weapons, which is why Modi seems to be trying to maintain close ties with Putin.

Should the U.S. get in the way of that and say, look, break your ties with Russia, you need some military equip meant, we'll give to you, or is that going to create a big rift with Pakistan?

KHANNA: Look, John, I've been the vice chair of the U.S. India Caucus and I -- first, India should condemn in the U.N. Putin for the blatant human rights violations.

Second, they need to realize, they have to pick sides. We, the United States, was with them when China invaded India. Putin wasn't there. And it's time for them to buy or weapons from the United States, not Russia. We've got to look at how we can facilitate that and make that easier. We need India as an ally ultimately to contain China.

ROBERTS: Let me swing to politics because inflation is raging, the Fed is raising interest rates. In California, the average price of gasoline is \$6 a gallon. Yet the president keeps talking about, we've got to move toward the green agenda, we've got to move toward the green agenda.

A green agenda is fine if you do it over the course of decades. Even if you gave everybody in the country an electric vehicle for free and you convert every home to electric heat, the grid wouldn't stand it. So you've got to update the grid as well.

I mean, is it a time to put a pause on the push toward the green agenda and say, look, for the meantime, we've got to pump more oil, we've got to help out our European allies, we've got to get prices down?

KHANNA: Well, we can do both. Let me say something common sense. Short time, increase production. Here's one way to do it. The federal government can buy back what we're using in the Strategic Petroleum Reserve and provide a floor price. That's a bipartisan proposal. Let's pass it.

Long-term, let's have a moonshot on clean technology. If John F. Kennedy said that we need to go to the moon to defeat the Soviet's, you want to defeat the petrol states of Russia, Iran, Venezuela, Saudi Arabia, let's have a moonshot on renewable energy. So let's have the short-term increase in production, longtime, a moonshot on renewable energy.

ROBERTS: So, in terms of the November election, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez said in recent days that she think that the Democratic Party is in trouble because of the president.

Listen to what she said.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

REP. ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEX (D-NY): This is really about the collapse in support among young people, among the Democratic base, feeling like they are not -- that they worked overtime to get this president elected and they aren't necessarily being seen.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

ROBERTS: Is she right?

KHANNA: The president has done an extraordinary job. We passed the American Rescue Plan. We've passed infrastructure.

Here's the biggest thing we ought to highlight. \$20 billion Intel is investing in Ohio. You talk about the revitalization of the Midwest, we're delivering. Let's pass the Chips Act (ph), get it to the president. Of course there are other things we ought to do. But this president has met the moment in very difficult circumstances.

ROBERTS: Americans might disagree with you. His approval ratings only 40 percent in the latest Reuters/IPSOS poll.

Before we go, I want to ask you a question about your book because the political discourse in this country has sunk to new lows. Everybody's yelling at each other. And much of the reason why they're yelling at each other is because of social media. Is social media ruining this country?

KHANNA: No, but social media needs to do better. Several things that they need to do better. They ought not to have incitement of violence. They ought not to discriminate against viewpoints, allow for free speech, and they ought to make sure that teenagers aren't getting manipulated in ways that are causing depression and suicide. So, absolutely, there need to be more smarter regulations on social media.

ROBERTS: Congressman Khanna, it's a pleasure to have you in. Thanks so much for making time today.

KHANNA: Thank you for giving me the chance.

ROBERTS: Hope to see you again soon on our program "AMERICAN REPORTS."

KHANNA: I'd love to.

ROBERTS: All right. Terrific. See you soon.

Coming up next, Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson is one step closer to becoming the first black woman on the Supreme Court. We'll bring in our Sunday panel to discuss her path to the nomination, and the outsized role that the current president has played in the process over the past four decades.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOE BIDEN, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (June 25, 1992): The confirmation process has been infected by the general meanness and nastiness that pervades our political process today.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

ROBERTS: Long before he was president, Joe Biden spent 17 years as chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee. That experience came full circle this week as his nominee to replace Justice Stephen Breyer, whose confirmation hearing he led back in 1994, faced her own.

Congressional correspondent Chad Pergram reports.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

SEN. DICK DURBIN (D-IL): Good morning, Judge Jackson.

JUDGE KETANJI BROWN JACKSON, SUPREME COURT NOMINEE: Good morning.

CHAD PERGRAM, FOX NEWS CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENT: Senators asked about gender.

SEN. MARSHA BLACKBURN (R-TN): Can you provide a definition for the word "woman"?

JACKSON: I can't.

BLACKBURN: You can't? Do you believe the meaning of --

JACKSON: I'm not a biologist.

PERGRAM: They asked about abortion.

SEN. LINDSEY GRAHAM (R-SC): Can an unborn child feel pain at 20 weeks in the birthing process.

JACKSON: Senator, I don't know.

SEN. TED CRUZ (R-TX): You can bang it as loud as you want.

PERGRAM: Jackson found herself in the middle of a verbal Senate crossfire.

DURBIN: There's no point in responding. He's going to interrupt you.

JACKSON: Thank you.

PERGRAM: Judiciary Committee Chairman Dick Durbin is responsible for piloting Jackson's nomination through the Senate shoals. But the man who picked Jackson enjoys an unprecedented vantage point about the course his nominee faces.

JOE BIDEN, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (1987): The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so hope you got?

ROBERT BORK, SUPREME COURT NOMINEE (1987): I do, Mr. Chairman.

PERGRAM: President Biden presided over hearings for six Supreme Court nominees in the 80s and 90s when he served in the Senate. Two of those hearings are legendary. The president tangled with President Reagan's nominee Robert Bork in 1987.

BIDEN: Well, the fact that it wasn't prosecuted did not mean that it wasn't a crime, does it?

BORK: Well, let me -- I have more to say about that, whether it was a crime or not.

PERGRAM: Bork later become one of only 11 Supreme Court nominees defeated on the Senate floor.

BIDEN: You know and I know what we're talking about.

PERGRAM: In 1991, President Biden presided over what many regard as the most noxious Supreme Court hearing in history.

JUSTICE CLARENCE THOMAS, SUPREME COURT: This is a circus. It's a national disgrace.

PERGRAM: Law Professor Anita Hill charged that Justice Clarence Thomas sexually harassed her. The hearings devolved into a vulgar spectacle.

BIDEN: Can you tell the committee what was the most embarrassing of all the incidences that you have alleged?

ANITA HILL: This discussion of -- of pornography involving these women with large breasts.

PERGRAM: Today, Democrats criticized GOP senators who may want to run for president for their aggressive tactics with Jackson. But it was the notoriety of Supreme Court confirmation hearings which propelled a senator from Delaware into the American political mainstream.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

ROBERTS: And Chad joins us now as part of our Sunday group, alongside Republican strategist Karl Rove, former State Department Spokeswoman Marie Harf, and Fox News correspondent Gillian Turner.

Welcome all.

Karl, let me start with you because you saw through a couple of these with Justice Roberts and Justice Alito. Mitt Romney has said that he believes that some of the attacks against Ketanji Brown Jackson were, quote, "off course." What do you say?

KARL ROVE, FORMER BUSH WHITE HOUSE ADVISER AND FOX NEWS CONTRIBUTOR: Well, I think that's probably right. I'm sort of with Andrew McCarthy on this whole thing about her decisions in -- in these cases involving child pornography. But, look, this is a mild hearing compared to what we've seen. She's going to be confirmed.

I thought one of the interesting things was when she -- at the beginning of this process she said, quote, I do not have a judicial philosophy. And, obviously, someone in this process said, you better have a better answer than that. And so she said, well, my philosophy is, I'm neutral, I listen to everybody, and I make a decision. That's a process, not a philosophy.

But she was -- she could have taken care of a lot of this if she had been -- had better answers to some of the simple questions.

What is a woman? A woman is somebody with 2x chromosomes, and that would have ended the discussion. And, instead, we had -- we had a little bit of back-and-forth on it.

But she's going to be confirmed. She's going to be reliably liberal. She's replacing a reliably liberal judge. And the question is, is she going to be the occasional person like Breyer was who breaks from liberal orthodoxy?

ROBERTS: Marie and I had that very conversation in the makeup room earlier.

MARIE HARF, FOX NEWS CONTRIBUTOR: Who is a woman?

ROBERTS: Yes, is the --

HARF: Thankfully, Karl has told us this morning, John.

ROBERTS: Yes, right. Well, that's good.

HARF: I'm so glad about that.

ROBERTS: If anybody knows, it's Karl.

HARF: Absolutely.

ROBERTS: Are there legitimate concerns, though, Marie, about some of her positions, like on sentencing, her connections to advocacy groups on the left?

HARF: Well, first we should note that she is the most popular Supreme Court nominee since John Roberts in 2005. The American people, especially women of color but sort of across-the-board note that this is a pretty historic pick. I think she answered those questions, many of which, John, were really designed to be played in GOP political ads in the midterms and in the next presidential cycle. They weren't really, I think, designed to get real information about -- from her about her judicial philosophy. No one thinks Judge Jackson defends child pornography, for example.

So, I think we heard a lot of information about her about her rulings in past cases, how she approaches her judicial processes, as Karl mentioned, and philosophy, and she will be confirmed, which will be a historic feat for the Supreme Court.

ROBERTS: We asked voters for their feelings about it in a Fox News poll and here's some interesting findings.

When asked if they would vote to confirm Ketanji Brown Jackson, 56 percent of people said they would, 50 percent of people said that they would confirm Justice Amy Coney Barrett, Judge Kavanaugh -- Justice Kavanaugh, 40 percent, March of 2017, Judge Gorsuch, 45 percent.

So, Gillian, she's got a higher rating than any of the previous three judges.

GILLIAN TURNER, FORMER NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL STAFF AND FOX NEWS

CORRESPONDENT: Yes, and I think with good reason she performed very well. I think, to be fair to the other side here, a lot of GOP senators got a lot of flak for focusing on gender, that question about what is a woman, race, can babies be racist, but these are core issues animating their voters. These are issues that are very important and poll after poll to the people that these senators are elected to represent. So I think some of the criticism from the left that simply shutting these issues inside a box calling -- you know, sort of trying to define them as a throw away cultural issue are way off base. And I'm surprised to see actually the degree to which these -- you know, Cruz, Rubio are being criticized for going down those paths. Of course they were, that's why she was well prepared to answer those questions because her side knew.

ROBERTS: Chad, when he -- when she was appointed to the D.C. Circuit, she got three Republican votes. It was Graham, Murkowski, and Collins, I don't think she's going to get Graham this time around.

CHAD PERGRAM, FOX NEWS CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENT: No, he's been pretty, you know, harsh about that, saying, you know, that he's raised some issues about her, said that he --

ROBERTS: So, how will the vote look?

PERGRAM: It's probably going to be, you know, close to 50/50. And again, as I always say, it's about the math. John Thune, the Republican whip, said there's probably no more than three Republican senators who might vote for her. But, again, you need to have all 50 Democratic senators there. And we're living in the time of Covid. They're trying to do this confirmation by about the seventh, eighth, or ninth of April. And, guess what, if you have senators who are out on the Democratic side and it is a partisan vote, Bob Casey tested positive last week. You had Ben Ray Lujan who was out for six weeks after suffering a stroke. You know, that could delay this. It will be about the math buried

ROBERTS: Yes.

All right, sticking with the Supreme Court but from a different angle, and this is the wife of the Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas sending texts and emails to Mark Meadows, other members of Congress in the wake of the 2020 election, urging them to do whatever they could to try to maintain President Trump as president. She wrote in one of them, and I think this was to Mark Meadows, help this great president stand firm, Mark. You are the leader with him who is standing for America's constitutional governance at the precipice. The majority knows Biden and the left is attempting the greatest heist of our history.

Karl, she's a conservative activist. She can say all these things. But she's also the wife of a Supreme Court justice. And what are the implications of that?

ROVE: Well, I'm not a lawyer, nor did I stay in a Holiday Inn Express last night. But it does strike me that this creates problems for Justice Thomas in cases involving January 6th and the question of the 2020 election. And he's going to have to face some serious questions about whether or not he recuses.

Full disclosure, I did -- I was reminded of this by a friend as this bubbled up last week. About a dozen years ago, Ginni Thomas had a meeting of her secret group and announced that they were going to have a crusade to erase me from politics. I don't know how that's going after about 12 years. I'm still here, I guess. But --

HARF: You're still here. (INAUDIBLE).

ROBERTS: Most of you is here, although we can only see you from the waist up.

PERGRAM: An aberration.

ROVE: Yes. Yes, exactly. Exactly.

PERGRAM: A hologram.

ROVE: But -- but -- but these were intemperate emails and they are going to create a problem if they -- these kind of cases come before the court.

ROBERTS: So, what do you think, does he need to recuse himself from any further January 6th cases?

HARF: Absolutely. And, look, we're not responsible for the actions of our spouses. They can have opinions. But this does -- has crossed a line. Many conservative legal advocates and analysts and lawyers -- Karl and I are not attorneys -- but have said the same thing, this has crossed a line and he should recuse himself.

ROBERTS: Right.

HARF: I don't think he will, but he should.

ROBERTS: Yes, as we pointed out early in the program, Supreme Court justices are not bound by the same code of ethics as other federal judges are. There is a move afoot, Senator Chris Murphy has introduced legislation to change that.

Does that need to change?

TURNER: I think here there's two issues and we've got to keep them separate. So there's Ginni Thomas and then there is her husband. And he will recuse or not recuse based on the legal counsel he gets.

When it comes to her, you might not like what she said, you might disagree with it, you might think it was appropriate or inappropriate, but it bears mentioning that she is a private citizen in all of this.

I also, John -- a lot of people are going to get mad at me but there is an element of sexism embedded in his criticism. Imagine if the gender roles were reversed here. Would we be blaming a husband for sort of masterminding his wife here? There's something about this --

ROBERTS: If it was Amy Coney Barrett, they just might.

TURNER: Well, maybe.

HARF: Or the Clintons, for example. I can think of examples of that too.

ROVE: Well, there's no -- been no intimation that, you know, that these were directed from Clarence Thomas.

ROBERTS: No.

ROVE: I mean she came up with these independently and sent them to -- to the -- so she's responsive for the content. The question is, is, how does this bear in the public perception of the court if a case comes forward in which these issues (INAUDIBLE).

ROBERTS: This -- is the legislation going to go anywhere? It's been languishing for nine months now.

PERGRAM: You know, so far it might -- this might give it, you know, kind of the spur that it needs if it is. Nancy Pelosi has talked about this saying maybe we need something universal for all the courts. But the thing to watch in the next couple of days, tomorrow night, the 1/6 committee meets. It's going to have a -- it's going to refer to the Department of Justice criminal contempt referrals, dealing for -- with Dan Scavino and also with Peter Navarro here.

I have seen the agenda for tomorrow night's meeting.

ROBERTS: Yes.

PERGRAM: This was Friday. This was not on the agenda. Now, whether or not this comes up -- and there's going to be a lot of pressure on members of that committee to go after Clarence Thomas and how they handle this. In fact, there was one message I was shown the other day that said that they were going to try to handle this with kid gloves. We'll see if that sticks with the Democrat Party.

ROBERTS: Yes. All right, we will see. They haven't subpoenaed her yet, but there's certainly talk of it.

One question I want to ask Marie before we go, if you are at the State Department and the president ad-libbed, we're going to have regime change in Russia, what would you have done?

HARF: Well, he didn't say exactly that, but --

ROBERTS: Well, he as much said that.

HARF: He told the truth, right, Putin is a butcher and he doesn't get to be leader of Russia who invades other countries. I have a feeling that are probably some people that are a little nervous about it this morning, but I would rather -- look, at the State Department I would rather have a president who calls out Putin, who takes him on, who is very aggressive and not someone who cow tows to him and does the opposite. So, look, you know, you heard -- you had Ambassador Smith on this morning answering for it.

ROBERTS: Yes.

HARF: I'm actually glad he called out Putin.

ROBERTS: Well, but ten seconds.

ROVE: Yes, well, the White House -- the White House had to take it back. The secretary of state took a back. It makes the president look like he's out of touch and not under control. And that's bad.

ROBERTS: Yes, and former National Security Council employee?

TURNER: Well, he also told American troops the day before that they were going to be sent to Ukraine, and then a few hours later told President Duda that the U.S. would accept an additional hundred thousand Ukrainian refugees --

ROBERTS: Yes.

TURNER: Both of which were false. To me, those were bigger problems.

ROBERTS: He also said he would respond to a chemical weapons attack and kind. No.

Thank you, panel. We will see you again next Sunday.

Up next, a final word on the week ahead and how you can help the people of Ukraine.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

ROBERTS: And that will wrap it up for this edition on FOX NEWS SUNDAY. A quick programming note. Watch a Fox Nation special, "Who is Zelenskyy," tonight at 10:00 Eastern on the Fox News Channel. Brian Kilmeade investigates the Ukrainian leader's rise to power.

And for those who would like to help the people of Ukraine, you can join Fox and our support of the Red Cross efforts in that country and surrounding countries as well. Donate now by scanning the QR code on your screen. Hurry up, it will be up there for a few more seconds.

I will see you for "AMERICA REPORTS" along with Sandra Smith tomorrow and every weekday at 1:00 Eastern on the Fox News Channel.

I'm John Roberts. Have a great week. Thank you for joining us and we will see you again next FOX NEWS SUNDAY.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

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