

the amount of debt we are imposing on ourselves, our kids, and our grandkids. That debt will come due more quickly than we think. The consequences could be dire.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

GUANTANAMO BAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, for weeks, Republicans in Congress have been saying what Democrats are finally beginning to acknowledge: that the administration has no plan for closing Guantanamo and that closing this secure facility without a safe alternative is irresponsible, dangerous, and, frankly, unacceptable.

Over the years, Guantanamo has housed some of the most hardened terrorists ever captured alive, and many of those who remain are the worst of the worst. Some have already killed innocent Americans, and many are outspoken about their desire to kill more Americans. These men are exactly where they belong: locked up in a safe and secure prison and isolated from the American people where they can do no harm.

America has not been attacked at home since 9/11 because of the hard work of our Armed Forces, dedicated intelligence officials, the men and women at the Department of Homeland Security, and State and local law enforcement officials. But another reason we have not been attacked is because some of those most likely to do so are locked up down at Guantanamo. These inmates are not spectators. They are the enemy. They are the plotters, the planners, the funders, the ones who pull the trigger.

The administration says our country would be safer if Guantanamo is closed and its inmates are transferred overseas or onto U.S. soil. If people knew who was down there, I think they would disagree.

One of the men who is locked away safely at Guantanamo is Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, the man who actually organized the 9/11 attacks. We captured him while he was planning followup attacks to 9/11, including a plot to destroy a west coast skyscraper. If we had not captured Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, he may very well have succeeded in carrying out the same kind of attack on the west coast that he carried out on the east coast. This is a man who boasts about using his "blessed right hand" to decapitate the American journalist Daniel Pearl. And he is unrepentant. Earlier this year, Khalid Shaikh Mohammed joined a

number of detainees at Guantanamo in declaring themselves "terrorists to the bone" and proclaiming September 11, 2001, as a "blessed" day.

Another inmate who still declares himself a "terrorist to the bone" is Ali Abd al-Aziz Ali, who served as a key lieutenant for KSM on several plots against the United States and the United Kingdom, including the 9/11 attacks. During what he described as the "blessed 11 September operation," Ali transferred money to U.S.-based operatives and served as a sort of travel agent for some of the hijackers. This man is responsible for the deaths of thousands of Americans.

Another terrorist at Guantanamo who is responsible for the deaths of Americans is Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri, who masterminded the attack on the USS Cole which killed 17 U.S. sailors in 2000. When he was arrested, Nashiri was planning new terrorist attacks, including a plot to crash an airplane into a Western naval vessel and a plan targeting a U.S. housing compound in Riyadh in Saudi Arabia.

These are just three of the men locked up safely and securely on an island miles from the United States in a facility that even the administration acknowledges to be humane and well run. Americans want these men kept out of our neighborhoods and off the battlefield, and Guantanamo guarantees that. Closing this facility by an arbitrary deadline without an alternative is irresponsible and it is dangerous. It is unacceptable to the American people and unacceptable to an increasing number of lawmakers on both sides of the aisle.

The Attorney General has said that when it comes to Guantanamo, his chief concern is the safety of the American people. Yet, at the moment, the safest option is clearly the one we are exercising. If safety is our top concern, then the administration will rethink its arbitrary deadline for closing Guantanamo until it presents us with an equally safe alternative.

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, this week we commemorate National Police Week, recognizing the service and sacrifice of the men and women across America in law enforcement. We especially honor those peace officers who have been tragically killed in the line of duty while protecting our communities and safeguarding our democracy.

Over 25 years ago, I served as a county executive in Jefferson County, KY, which includes my hometown of Louisville. I got to work with the county's police force and witnessed up close their dedication and their professionalism. In Jefferson County, we pioneered new techniques for tracking down abducted children that met with much success—enough success that other jurisdictions adopted these techniques, eventually leading to Congressional establishment of the National

Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

Decades later, peace officers in Louisville are still proud to protect and serve, even with their lives in the balance. And those we have lost are not forgotten. I was moved to read in my hometown paper recently an article about a memorial ceremony in Louisville coinciding with National Police Week. Fellow officers and family members of fallen officers gathered to remember them and thank them for their service. Police forces across Kentucky reverently marked National Police Week as well. At a service in Richmond, Gov. Steve Beshear watched 120 police cadets march at the State Law Enforcement Officers Memorial, while flags were presented to family members of those lost in the performance of their duties. This Friday in Covington, officers will honor their fallen brothers at the northern Kentucky law enforcement memorial.

This Senate has the deepest admiration and respect for police officers in every community in the Nation. We recognize their work is both an honorable job and a dangerous one. They bravely risk their lives for ours, and America is grateful.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the full articles about the recent ceremonies in both Louisville and Richmond.

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

[From the Louisville Courier-Journal, May 8, 2009]

FALLEN POLICE OFFICERS HONORED AT JEFFERSON SQUARE SERVICE: COURAGE, COMMITMENT TO DUTY ARE HONORED

(By Jessie Halladay)

Sue Wells' eyes filled with tears as she stood next to a wreath she helped lay at the law enforcement memorial in Jefferson Square yesterday.

Her husband, Forest Hills Police Chief Randy Wells, was killed in October 2007 while working an off-duty traffic detail.

Yesterday, Wells joined other family members and friends of officers killed in the line of duty to remember and pay their respects during a service at Jefferson Square downtown.

"It's wonderful that they remember," Wells said. "It's very heartwarming, but it's heart-wrenching too."

Members of the city's fraternal order of police lodges for several agencies helped plan the event, for which the University of Louisville police union was host.

"When their duty called, they laid down their life for their community, for us," U of L Officer Russell Fuller said during the ceremony. "We will not let their actions fade into history."

Memorials of this type mean a lot to those families left behind, said Jennifer Thacker, who spoke during the service. Thacker's husband, Brandon, was shot in April 1998 while working as an investigator for the Kentucky Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control. Thacker now serves as national president of the group Concerns of Police Survivors, or COPS.

She spoke to those attending about the value of always being a member of the law enforcement family.