

of the United States—a moral authority that this country has taken generations to build, that helps us bring a light to the world and helps us economically in every other way, as the world has always looked up to America and our ideals.

Unfortunately, that moral authority is declining under President Trump's leadership—and declining rapidly. It may have reached the low point yesterday when President Trump, in tweet after tweet, offered a very poor representation of the United States to the world. More than that, President Trump's "foreign policy by tweet" is doing serious damage to the country. While we have serious issues to address abroad, President Trump seems happy with macho boasts and belligerent threats that get us nowhere. If any one of us were in a classroom with someone who behaved as President Trump has, we would ostracize them; we would straighten them out. We don't hear a peep from the vast majority of our Republican colleagues about this, many of whom are hawks.

We have serious issues to address abroad. President Trump's "foreign policy by tweet" will not advance our standing in the world. It will not reassure our allies or other nations that it is better to work with us than against us. What it will do—what it has already done, unfortunately, is unsettle our allies and embolden our adversaries. What it will do is cede leadership in the world to China, which is eagerly awaiting every opportunity to drive a wedge between our country and other countries around the world. Without a steady and reliable hand at the helm, our allies may be uncertain that they can continue to trust the United States to honor our commitments and maintain a steady course.

China and Russia are rushing to fill the void left by an unsteady United States. President Xi of China aspired to this position of being a world leader in his new year's speech when he said that China, not the United States, would be the "keeper of the international order" in 2018. If President Trump continues snubbing our allies, recklessly threatening other nations, and showing leadership on the world stage that can only be described as puerile, the world may look to Beijing, not Washington, for international leadership.

Again, I repeat: Where are our friends, the Republican hawks, who have been so concerned about America's leadership in the world, who have decried the fact that President Obama did not do enough for that leadership? If he were here, my dear friend, Senator JOHN MCCAIN, would typically stand up and speak about this, and hopefully he will be back soon to do so. But for the rest of my Republican friends, I would say with sincerity—not with partisanship, but out of love for the country and the leadership we have shown for decades and decades—that our Republican friends should, please,

tell the President: Stop tweeting; start leading.

We are almost through a calendar year of the Trump Presidency. President Trump can no longer be given the benefit of the doubt that comes with learning one of the toughest jobs in the world. My Republican colleagues should not be given a pass by the American people if they fail to speak out or take action against this behavior. Their silence, unfortunately—I have to say, I feel this sincerely—is complicity in the degradation of the Presidency and the power of this country.

The American people expect our President to represent the United States with dignity and strength. That is not what we saw yesterday. It is time we all start speaking out against it.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader.

#### LETTER OF RESIGNATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the letter of resignation from Lieutenant Governor SMITH to Governor Dayton be printed in the RECORD.

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

STATE OF MINNESOTA,  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR TINA SMITH,  
*Saint Paul, MN, December 28, 2017.*

HON. MARK DAYTON,  
*State Capitol,  
Saint Paul, MN.*

DEAR GOVERNOR DAYTON: Effective 11:59 p.m. January 2, 2018, I hereby resign the Office of Lieutenant Governor of the State of Minnesota. It has been an honor and privilege to serve the people of Minnesota.

Sincerely,

TINA SMITH,  
*Lt. Governor.*

Mr. SCHUMER. I yield the floor.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Illinois.

#### FUNDING THE GOVERNMENT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, it has been less than 2 weeks since we convened in the Senate, and those of us who have returned to the floor of the Senate may not notice any change, but there is a significant change. If you take a close look, one desk has moved from that side of the aisle to this side

of the aisle. There are currently 49 Democratic Senators after the swearing in of our colleague, Senator DOUG JONES of Alabama. Now it is 49 to 51. It is almost as close a break as you can expect or even anticipate in a deliberative body.

It is an indication of more than just the acquisition of one additional Democratic Senator. We are moving closer and closer to parity, closer and closer to one another, and, I hope, closer and closer in solving problems. I think that was a message of the Alabama election; among other things, the American people want to see us work together. They have given us 49 and the Republicans 51. I think they expect that to be a signal that we should finally sit down and do something to solve the problems facing our great Nation. I feel that as I go home—of course, I run into my loyal Democratic friends who have their own political views, but the vast majority of people say: Can't you work together and solve something? Can't you do something for this Nation? I believe we can, and this month we must.

You see, on January 19 there is a deadline looming. It is only a couple of weeks away. On January 19, we have to make some very momentous, historic decisions about the rest of this year and beyond. One of those is where we will spend the taxpayers' dollars. How much will we spend on the defense of our Nation? How much will we spend on other agencies, which, I would add, also defend our Nation? That has to be decided by 60 votes. Do the math. As whip on the Democratic side, I have said that I learned basically all I needed to know about this job in the first grade. I learned how to count to 60.

On January 19, we need at least 60 Senators to agree on the spending program for this country moving forward, not just the Department of Defense but the Department of Homeland Security, the FBI, the Department of State, and so many other critically important agencies.

The second thing we need to do is long overdue. The fiscal year, the operative fiscal year for the Federal Government starts on October 1. We are a long way from October 1, 2017. We still don't have a budget. We still have not brought the appropriations bills to the floor of the Senate for consideration.

I am not going to be partisan about this. We failed as Democrats in bringing those appropriations to the floor in a timely manner as well. We have to do something about this process, but we certainly have to face the reality that we are steaming through this fiscal year without a budget. We have taken last year's budget and continued to live by last year's budget. Reflect, for a moment, if you did the same thing for your family. If you were determined to spend in January of 2018 exactly what you spent in 2017, you would think to yourself: That makes no sense. The utility bills are different. I may have a different mortgage payment. A lot of