

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 21, 2018, at 2 p.m. to conduct a hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 21, 2018, at 9:30 a.m. to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWERS

The Subcommittee on Seapower of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 21, 2018, at 2:30 p.m. to conduct a hearing on the nomination of John L. Ryder, of Tennessee, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES

The Subcommittee on Strategic Forces of the Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 21, 2018, at 2:30 p.m. to conduct a hearing on the nomination of John L. Ryder, of Tennessee, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NEAR EAST, SOUTH ASIA, CENTRAL ASIA, AND COUNTERTERRORISM

The Subcommittee on Near East, South Asia, Central Asia, and Counterterrorism of the Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 21, 2018, at 2 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled "What's Next for Lebanon? Stability and Security Challenges".

COMMEMORATING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 438 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 438) commemorating the 150th anniversary of the University of California.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 438) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of March 19, 2018, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 22, 2018

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10:30 a.m., Thursday, March 22; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day. Finally, I ask that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senators GRASSLEY, DURBIN, LEE, and SASSE.

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

The Senator from Nebraska.

SIMPLE TRUTHS

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, yesterday at the White House, two terrible things happened, and it shouldn't be difficult to condemn both of these things at once.

First, at the podium in the White House press room, it was suggested that the U.S. Government is unsure if Putin's reelection was perhaps legitimate, free, and fair or that perhaps the United States is morally indifferent to the question of whether Putin's reelection was fair, free, and legitimate.

It was not fair or free or legitimate, and it matters.

The second horrible thing that happened yesterday is that the President's confidential briefing materials for his call with Vladimir Putin were anonymously leaked to the public. That should not happen. The President's congratulatory call was terribly ill-advised, but that doesn't change the fact that the leaking of the confidential briefing materials for his call was also wrong.

It shouldn't be difficult to say both of these things. They are both true. So we should be able to say both of them at once.

Our people are very divided right now. They are unclear about who we are and how we conceive of ourselves on the global stage. Our tribalism has run amok. If you listen to some of our cable news today—I haven't—I suspect that what you would find is that on certain networks there is only discussion of the leaking and no discussion of what a terrible abandonment of American foreign policy yesterday's failure to condemn Putin's phony sham reelection was. And on the other networks, I

imagine you are going to get exactly the opposite story, where the only thing that matters is how stupid this call was to Vladimir Putin, and nothing about the leaks. That isn't helpful for building a nation of 320 million people who know what we stand for together.

Here is what is true. A President's staff shouldn't leak. In cases of principle, you may need to resign. So resign. Do the right and honorable thing if you believe your conscience is compelled to do so, and resign your position and go out and publicly make a case for why a certain policy is failing. But that is a different thing than anonymously leaking the information that a President has—not just this President, but that any President has—to make his or her decisions, to deliberate with their staff, to plot their actions.

Leaks like this weaken us both at home, in terms of public trust in our institutions and our public servants, and they weaken us abroad, in terms of whether or not we have any coherence to who we are as a people and how we make our decisions.

Now, as to this decision to fail to condemn Putin's sham reelection, it is very foolhardy. Vladimir Putin is not a friend. Vladimir Putin is a despot. The President of the United States was wrong to congratulate him, and the White House Press Secretary was wrong to duck a simple question about whether or not Putin's reelection was free and fair.

It was not. The American people know that, the Russian people know that, and the world knows that. Yesterday, when the White House refused to speak directly and clearly about this matter, we were weakened as a nation, and a tyrant was strengthened.

Around the world, there are two great symbols of America from this city. The first is the dome of the Capitol, in which we stand. This building testifies to the strength of our self-government and to our belief in inherent human dignity, but the other symbol that comes from this city that is known around the world is the podium in the White House press room. Tucked into a small room and surrounded by members of a free press, it is simply the free world's biggest megaphone. It symbolizes Americans commitment to the universal dignity not just of 320 million people—the citizens of this country—but to 7.6 billion men, women, and children across the globe.

Speaking clearly about tyrants is one of the things that we do. It is not seeking monsters to destroy. For more than 200 years, the American people have clearly understood this. For more than 200 years, administrations of both parties have clearly understood this.

At times in the past, previous administrations have made mistakes. They have split hairs. They have smoothed edges. They have dodged. They have hedged. But what happened yesterday at the podium at the White House—the dodge on Putin—broke with the basic