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Senate

The Senate met at 12 noon and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Father, strong to save, whose arm has bound the restless wave, we honor Your Name. Forgive us our sins and deliver us from evil. We thank You for food, drink, clothing, friends, and family.

Today, give our lawmakers faith to meet every challenge, courage to live by Your precepts, and humility to serve others in these grand and critical times. May a high sense of patriotism reinforce the commitment of our Senators to integrity, as they remember their accountability to You.

And, Lord, we thank You for the life and contributions of Matthew Pollard, who worked on the Intelligence Committee.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

The Senator from Mississippi.

NOMINATION OF MIKE POMPEO

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I rise in strong support of the nomination of Mike Pompeo, our current CIA Director, to be the next Secretary of

State. I must say, I watched with interest the proceedings the day before yesterday in the Foreign Relations Committee. The debate was interesting on both sides. I appreciate the fact that accommodations were made so Mike Pompeo's nomination could be presented to the full Senate with a positive vote.

I am disappointed that so many of my Democratic colleagues have stated they will oppose this nomination. I heed the admonition of one of the Members of the Democratic Party at the confirmation vote before the committee when this Member asked that Senators not question the motives of anyone who takes a position one way or the other with regard to the nomination of Mr. Pompeo. I will heed that admonition and not question the motivation of any Senator who votes either yes or no on this nomination.

I will simply observe this: Mike Pompeo is a highly qualified nominee, a distinguished former Member of the House of Representatives. He served with accomplishment and great dignity and ability as Director of the CIA. He graduated first in his class from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and went on to graduate with distinction at the Harvard Law School and served as editor-in-chief of the Harvard Law Review.

This is a man of great intellect, a man of great ability and great accomplishment. Without impugning the motives of anyone who would vote no, I simply observe they will be voting against a highly accomplished and qualified nominee.

When the shoe was on the other foot during the Obama administration, I—along with almost a unanimous majority of Members of my caucus—voted yes, in favor of the confirmation of Hillary Clinton to be Secretary of State. I voted yes—again, a virtually unanimous vote on both sides of the aisle—for the nomination of our colleague John Kerry to be the successor to Hillary Clinton as Secretary of State.

I will simply note to my doubting friends, who are standing on their rights on the other side of the aisle, that the overwhelming weight of public opinion from the news media has come down on the side of Mr. Pompeo. The Wall Street Journal headline says we need a Secretary of State and that Mike Pompeo should be confirmed. The Chicago Tribune, in an editorial, states why the Senate should confirm Mike Pompeo. The Washington Post headline on the editorial page proclaims: "Confirm Mike Pompeo." The New York Daily News says: "Confirm Mike Pompeo: President Trump Needs a Secretary of State."

I will add, this country needs a Secretary of State. The cause of international diplomacy needs a Secretary of State. The cause of human rights around the world needs a Secretary of State.

USA Today: "Confirm Mike Pompeo to Fill the Void at State."

I will not question the motives of any of my colleagues, my friends whom I respect. I will only say, things are surely different around the U.S. Senate nowadays than they were previously, when we rose up almost unanimously and confirmed John Kerry and Hillary Clinton and stood for the proposition that a President of the United States is entitled to his or her team and that person needed strong support.

I only say that at a moment when our country needs to send a strong message of resolve to our allies and to the entire international community, we need to send a strong signal of unity; that the vote we may take later this week in confirming Mike Pompeo might send a signal of excessive partisanship and division, I regret that.

We are going to have a great Secretary of State at the end of this process. I think this, unfortunately, narrow vote will come and go and perhaps not be the standard we operate under in future times. I will only say that for those colleagues who are still looking

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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