

months and months and several deadly accidents to persuade Senate Democrats to stop obstructing a fully qualified nominee to lead the Federal Railroad Administration.

Or take the example of district court judges. With only one exception, we have had to file cloture on every single district court nominee. It doesn't matter if every Democrat on the Judiciary Committee supported the nominee. It doesn't matter if every Democrat in the whole Senate supports the nominee. No matter what, our colleagues across the aisle are insisting on obstruction, for no apparent reason.

Here are some of the final vote totals for these district judges: 96 to 1; 98 to 0; 97 to 3; 95 to 0; 96 to 0; 98 to 0, once again; 100 to 0.

Back in January, it took more than a week of the Senate's time to confirm four district court judges, and not one Senator voted no on any of them—a whole week to do four district judges, and not one Senator voted no on any of them.

Our problem is not the qualified personnel before us. Our problem is that nearly half of the Senate has decided that resisting for the sake of resistance is more politically advantageous than doing right by this institution or by our constituents. This, regrettably, is where we are: Democrats chewing up hours of Senate time on nominees that literally no Senator opposes.

I understand that my friends on the other side have a number of disagreements with the President. That tends to happen in politics, but that is no excuse at all for this historic obstruction of noncontroversial nominees. It is bad for the Senate. It is unfair to the American people.

That is why I support Senator LANKFORD's efforts to enact the very same rules change—the very same rules change—that a large and bipartisan majority agreed to back in 2013, when the Democrats were in the majority here in the Senate. It would empower the Senate to process nominations more quickly while preserving ample opportunity for debate. It is precisely the rules change that my friend the Democratic leader supported back in 2013. I joined in that bipartisan effort, along with a number of my fellow Republicans. It passed 78 to 16—78 to 16. The White House may have changed hands, but the last time I checked, fair is still fair, and common sense is still common sense.

So Senator LANKFORD is giving my Democratic colleagues their very own chance to show that principled convictions matter more than political convenience. I am proud to back his proposal. I am glad to see the Rules Committee advance it to the floor yesterday. There is no reason why every Senator shouldn't be able to join us.

Otherwise, until our Democratic colleagues put aside their historic obstruction, Republicans continue to do our duty and process the President's nominations, one way or the other. Let

me repeat that. We are processing these nominations, one way or the other.

After Mike Pompeo, I filed cloture on Ric Grenell's nomination to serve as Ambassador to Germany. We will vote on this confirmation later this afternoon.

So why don't we turn over a new leaf together and start rebuilding the comity and customs that ought to define our work here.

Just yesterday, the Rules Committee held a very productive meeting that took a step in that direction. Colleagues from both sides of the aisle took a serious look at what we can do as a body to more efficiently fulfill our responsibilities in the appropriations process. That follows on a productive meeting I had with the Democratic leader, the Appropriations chairman, and the ranking member a few days ago.

So I am hopeful about the prospects of moving forward together. We need to keep this momentum going and extend it—not just to appropriations but to nominations. This Congress has already made great progress implementing a pro-growth, pro-opportunity agenda for the middle-class, including historic tax relief for families and small businesses, but there is a lot more to do.

That is how the Senate should be spending our time—exchanging ideas and fighting for the American public.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Mike Pompeo, of Kansas, to be Secretary of State.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 12 noon will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to complete my remarks on the floor.

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

CONFIRMATION PROCESS

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, there is no excuse for the delays in the con-

firmation process except sheer partisanship. It amounts to an ongoing partial government shutdown, and it definitely hurts the American people. Such obstruction is not worthy of the Senate, and the resulting judicial vacancies do great harm to the judicial system.

These are not my words but the words of the Senator from Vermont, Mr. LEAHY, when he chaired the Judiciary Committee in 2014. Judicial vacancies today are 60 percent higher than when he expressed those concerns back then. Vacancies are 52 percent higher than what he said was a “disaster for our Nation's overburdened courts.”

The Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts labels some judicial vacancies as judicial emergencies because of their duration and impact on case-loads. On March 12, 2012, the Senator from Illinois, Mr. DURBIN, said that 35 judicial emergency vacancies would cause the administration of justice to suffer at every level. Today, there are 72 judicial emergency vacancies, more than twice as many as Senator DURBIN warned about.

To be fair, I have to say that the left-wing groups that are such faithful allies of Senate Democrats are no better. In July 2012, for example, the Alliance for Justice proclaimed that 76 vacancies demonstrated “an overall and ongoing vacancy crisis in the federal courts.” Today, vacancies are 88 percent higher than the crisis level, and all we hear from the Alliance for Justice are calls to oppose and obstruct even more. Judicial vacancies today are 74 percent higher than when the Brennan Center for Justice said the Senate was not meeting its obligation to the American people.

If high judicial vacancies harm the judicial system and prevent Americans from seeking justice, why aren't Democrats and their leftwing allies leading the effort to confirm judicial nominees today? If Democrats once said that 79 vacancies constitutes a crisis, why are they silent about 143 vacancies today?

Today we face the highest judicial vacancy total since June of 1991, after Congress had created dozens of new judgeships. It is crystal clear why this dire situation confronts us today. The process for appointing Federal judges, after all, has only three steps: nomination by the President, consideration by the Senate Judiciary Committee, and a decision by the full Senate.

The first step in the judicial appointment process is Presidential nominations. President Trump has made more judicial nominations than his predecessors of both parties at this point, so he is not the problem—as you can see from that chart.

The second step is consideration by the Judiciary Committee. Chairman CHUCK GRASSLEY has held a hearing on 75 of those nominations—more than under previous Presidents, so the Judiciary Committee is not the problem.

That leaves the third step right here on the Senate floor. Even though President Trump is ahead of the nomination

pace, and the Judiciary Committee is ahead of the hearing pace, the Senate's confirmation pace is half what it was at this point for the past five Presidents.

March 20, I spoke here about some of the below-the-radar obstruction tactics Democrats are using to make this part of the process as time-consuming and cumbersome as possible. Let me offer a brief review. Democrats once complained about U.S. district court nominees being reported from the Judiciary Committee on a party-line vote. That is happening at a rate of more than four times as great today.

Democrats once criticized the failure to cooperate in scheduling floor votes for judicial nominees. So far, Democrats have forced the Senate to take separate votes to end debate, called a cloture vote, on 96 percent—96 percent—of President Trump's judicial nominees. The Senate has been forced to take 16 times as many cloture votes on President Trump's judicial nominees as under the last 12 Presidents combined at this point. You heard me right. The Senate has been forced to take 16 times as many cloture votes on judicial nominees as under the last 12 Presidents combined at this point. That is every President since the cloture rule was first applied to nominations in 1949.

In 2014, with a Democratic President, Democrats said that every time the minority refuses to cooperate in scheduling confirmation votes, every time the majority leader is forced to initiate the cloture process, the Senate is forced to take up scarce floor time, when we know these nominees will be confirmed. Today, Democrats are using that and other tactics on a scale this body has never seen before.

Democrats once objected to voting against confirming U.S. district court nominees who were supported by their own two Senators. At this point, President Obama's confirmed district court nominees had received a total of zero negative votes—zero. President Trump's district court nominees have received 73 negative votes—73. Think about that. Think about the unfairness of it.

Each of these, and more besides, is a tactic that Democrats once condemned but are today pushing to record levels of obstruction. Even more important than seeing where we are and how we got here is understanding why the Democrats and their leftwing allies are working so hard to prevent President Trump from appointing judges.

I have served in this body and on the Judiciary Committee for nearly 42 years. I have participated in the confirmation of half of all article III judges who have ever served in this country, from the beginning. In all that time, the conflict over judicial appointments has never been over judicial nominees; it has always been over judicial power. The vacancy crisis we face today is a consequence of the broader, ongoing conflict over the kind of judge America needs on the bench.

America's Founders gave us a system of government that includes a judiciary with a role defined by three important principles. First, as Founder James Wilson put it, the people are masters of the government. Second, the Constitution is the primary way that the people set rules for government. Third, among those rules is the separation of powers into three coequal but different branches.

Judges acting consistent with these principles, what I have called impartial judges, fit the design of our system of government and the liberty it makes possible. Judges who depart from those principles, what I have called political judges, are at odds with that design and undermine our liberty. President Trump is committed to appointing impartial judges, while those working so hard to obstruct his his nominees favor political judges.

President Obama led the way in the quest for a political judiciary. First, as a Senator evaluating judicial nominees and then as a President choosing them, he said judges decide cases based on their empathy, their vision of how the world works, their core concerns, and their deeply held beliefs. If judges make decisions on their personal views, then it is no wonder the Democrats want so badly to know a judicial nominee's personal views.

I will never forget the confirmation hearing for Chief Justice John Roberts in 2005. Democrats pressed him to commit, in advance and under oath, to particular results in different categories of cases. They asked repeatedly: Whose side will you be on? Political judges take sides, even before cases come before them, because their main objective is to ensure that the favored side wins and that the preferred political interest is served.

We see this in plain view today. Democrats observe a judicial nominee's personal views, or his legal views on behalf of a client, and insist that those views will dictate his judicial views. This is why many Democrats will oppose any nominee who has conservative personal beliefs or who has advocated for conservative clients. To them, there is no difference between politics and law.

Democrats oppose judicial nominees because of their personal views, even when the American Bar Association—which has never been accused of being conservative—gives those nominees its highest rating. The appeals court nominee confirmed this week, for example, received that rating only after the ABA considered, in its words, his “compassion, decisiveness, open-mindedness, courtesy, patience, freedom from bias, and commitment to equal justice under the law.”

In their heart of hearts, those who favor political judges have no problem with judicial minds being closed or biased so long as that leads to results they like. They seek politically correct results by any judicial means.

That judiciary is very different from the one contemplated by the Founders

of this great country. That judiciary is very different from the one described by the oath of judicial office, by which a judge commits to do justice without respect to identities or interests. That judiciary is very different from the one that makes our liberty possible.

The liberty we enjoy is by design, not by accident. That design requires judges with a limited and defined role. Impartial judges support the liberty our system of government was designed to provide while political judges undermine it. Impartial judges take the law as it is and apply it fairly to decide cases, leaving decisions about what the law should be to the American people and their elected representatives. Political judges take decisions about what the law should be away from the American people, manipulating the meaning of statutes and the Constitution to follow their own views and their own agenda.

The conflict over judicial appointments is, and will remain, a conflict over judicial power and, therefore, a conflict over the system of government crafted by America's Founders. Remember the three principles I mentioned earlier. Impartial judges allow the American people to remain the masters of government; political judges become the masters of the people. Impartial judges follow the rules the American people put in the Constitution; political judges change the meaning of those rules to suit their own ends. Impartial judges respect the separation of powers while political judges breach it.

The unprecedented obstruction of judicial nominees today is a tool in the campaign for an increasingly politicized judiciary. The rhetoric of that campaign is all about desirable objectives, all about good intentions. I close with the words of Daniel Webster, who represented two different States in the House and represented Massachusetts in the Senate before serving as Secretary of State under three different presidents. He said:

Good intentions will always be pleaded for every assumption of authority. It is hardly too strong to say that the Constitution was made to guard the people against the dangers of good intentions. There are men in all ages who mean to govern well, but they mean to govern. They promise to be good masters, but they mean to be masters.

That is Daniel Webster. Let me repeat that again because Webster is one of the greatest people who ever served in this government.

Good intentions will always be pleaded for every assumption of authority. It is hardly too strong to say that the Constitution was made to guard the people against the dangers of good intentions. There are men in all ages who mean to govern well, but they mean to govern. They promise to be good masters, but they mean to be masters.

America needs impartial judges so that the American people can be the masters of government and so that liberty can thrive.

Let me go over that quote again from Daniel Webster. I will end with this.

Daniel Webster said:

Good intentions will always be pleaded for every assumption of authority. It is hardly too strong to say that the Constitution was made to guard the people against the dangers of good intentions. There are men in all ages who mean to govern well, but they mean to govern. They promise to be good masters, but they mean to be masters.

Some of those Founding Fathers really knew what they were talking about, and Webster was certainly one of them in many respects.

All I can say is that we have a chance to work together to do what is right and in the best interest of the American people. I intend to see that we do that, and I hope we can because this country is worth it. Our system of government is the best this world has ever seen, and I want to see it continue to be.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

If no one yields time, the time will be charged equally.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

SPECIAL COUNSEL LEGISLATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I watched the President on TV this morning, and like most Americans, so many Americans, I was aghast. The President seems to live in an alternative reality. He says things that are patently false, and he thinks that just by saying them, they become true. With the number of 180-degree turns—direct contradictions to what he has said before—the name-calling, and blaming, if you watched the President this morning and the way he acted, it was so unbecoming of a President, unbecoming of a democracy.

We believe in truth. People may have different value systems, but to just make up things as he goes along and to, without blinking an eye, contradict things that he said that were exactly the opposite a few hours, a few days, a few weeks ago is not who any President of any party of any ideology should be.

What the President said this morning was embarrassing to America, to democracy, and to any American who prizes truth.

One of the things the President said this morning was that he has decided not to be involved in the Russia probe but may change his mind. That is why it is so good this morning that the Judiciary Committee is marking up bipartisan legislation that will protect Special Counsel Mueller from political interference.

From the very beginning, Special Counsel Mueller's investigation has been about following the facts of how a

foreign, hostile power interfered with our free and fair elections—the wellspring of our democracy. That investigation must be allowed to proceed safely from the President's heavy hand. The President can't make this go away by name-calling. He can't dispute facts. He can't dispute the fact that Russia's interfering in our election is very dangerous and must be investigated no matter where it leads.

It is so abundantly clear from the President's remarks this morning and from so many other things he has said that he has little regard for the rule of law. He seems to have this view that the purpose of the Justice Department is to protect his interests and persecute his enemies. That is not a democracy. The purpose of the Justice Department is to defend the rule of law, and no man or woman is above the law. It is not, simply, to go after his friends. He is angry when the Justice Department does something he doesn't like even though it is following the law. Again, that is not the hallmark of our democracy.

I am so proud of our Judiciary Committee and Chairman GRASSLEY in their rising to the occasion—proposing and hopefully passing legislation that says we will protect the rule of law and that we will protect our democracy by not allowing the President to fire the special counsel at will because he simply doesn't like the results he comes up with.

Again, the Judiciary Committee, this morning, makes us proud. It rises to the occasion to tell the President that he cannot tamper with the very wellsprings of our democracy and that he will pay a bipartisan price if he does.

I particularly praise Chairman GRASSLEY. We have worked together on many things, and we have had our differences on many things, but this morning he is rising to the occasion. History regards such moments very favorably. I hope we will get a large vote this morning.

APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS

Madam President, while we are speaking about bipartisanship, there is another bit of good news. There are two shoots of bipartisanship springing up today—the Judiciary Committee's action on preventing the President from firing Mueller and an agreement between Senator SHELBY, Leader MCCONNELL, and me to try to begin moving appropriations bills the way we used to—in a bipartisan way.

We had a very good meeting yesterday in which we laid out the parameters of how to do this. We talked about not letting extraneous amendments disrupt the process. We talked about doing our job the way it used to be done—doing all of the appropriations bills this year and doing them in a bipartisan way, having the chairs and ranking members of the subcommittees work together to craft a bill that both sides can be happy with even though neither side will be happy with everything in it.

I hope that it moves forward. I pledge to the Members of this body and to the American people that I am committed to making that process move forward in a fair, bipartisan way and to trying to restore some of the semblance of bipartisanship that we used to have in this place and bring it back to actual action and reality, not just verbiage.

VA SECRETARY NOMINATION

Madam President, we just received word that the President's nominee to be the next Secretary of the VA has withdrawn his nomination. The allegations swirling around the nomination of Dr. Jackson were troubling and raised lots of questions, but the real blame here falls on the administration for once again being sloppy and careless in the vetting process. Dr. Jackson didn't go through a careful vetting. Some of these things might have been discovered beforehand, and he wouldn't have had to go through the process he went through.

The Veterans' Affairs Committee did the right thing. They didn't seek to go after Jackson; people came to them. When people come to them—particularly military folks—with serious and troubling allegations, they have an obligation to investigate. I salute Chairman ISAKSON and Ranking Member TESTER for pursuing those allegations.

Dr. Jackson went through a maelstrom, and he should tell his patient, I guess, the President, that he, the President, caused this problem by not properly vetting, by making these decisions on the fly, by making sure they don't count.

Our obligation above all is not to any one individual but to the millions of veterans in America. They deserve a department that treats them well. They deserve the best healthcare, and we need someone to run the VA who is up to the job.

I hope the President learns his lesson. I hope the next nominee is thoroughly vetted before he or she is sent to the Congress. Most of all, I hope our veterans can get the kind of leader they deserve.

HEALTHCARE

Madam President, finally, on another matter—healthcare—next week, health insurance companies will begin to announce their initial proposed rates for 2019 in each State across the country. When they do, every American should remember that President Trump and congressional Republicans have spent the last 1½ years trying to sabotage our healthcare system in a way that would increase costs and decrease access to quality healthcare.

It is true that last summer the Senate Republican effort to repeal our current healthcare system and gut Medicaid—an effort that would have left tens of millions uninsured and raised costs on millions more—ended, thankfully for the American people, in failure.

Despite that legislative failure, President Trump, his administration, and congressional Republicans have

committed several other acts of sabotage—raising premiums and hurting healthcare—all, it seems to me, for a political vendetta.

For a long time, the President refused to guarantee that the administration will honor the cost-sharing program, which reduces premiums and out-of-pocket expenses for low-income Americans. He eventually canceled payments for that program, causing major uncertainty and confusion in the markets.

Then, Republicans repealed the healthcare coverage requirement as a part of their tax bill and put nothing in its place. The CBO projects that repealing the coverage requirement could cause rates to increase by as much as 10 percent and result in millions more people without insurance. So if you can't get insurance, Mr. or Mrs. American, or if your premiums are going up, you know who caused it—the President and congressional Republicans by sabotaging the law that a majority of Americans want to see stay on the books.

Making things worse, earlier this week, the comment period ended for a proposed Trump administration rule that is perhaps the most radical sabotage of our healthcare system yet—a rule that would expand the availability of junk insurance plans. These junk insurance plans would force higher premiums on people with preexisting conditions, impose an age tax on older Americans, and once again could subject Americans to the devastating effects of medical bankruptcy, which too many people go through now. Many plans might not cover essential services, such as prescription drugs, maternity care, and mental health services.

Each of these actions taken by President Trump and Republicans in Congress will raise costs and reduce access. We are truly living under TrumpCare today, with no effort by the President or congressional Republicans to make it better.

Unfortunately, starting next week, the American people could well see the devastating consequences of 1½ years of healthcare sabotage reflected in the 2019 rates.

NATIONAL MEMORIAL FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

Finally, Madam President, I would like to add a word about an event taking place today in Montgomery, AL. Today in Montgomery, the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, dedicated to the legacy of enslaved Black people, victims of lynching, and African Americans who have been victimized by White supremacy, will open its doors.

I read about the new memorial in the newspaper. It was touching. It was moving. So many innocent people were lynched for no reason—walking behind a White woman, other kinds of things like that. Having read and watched the accounts about the memorial, it will be a harrowing experience. Much like the Holocaust Museum in Washington, DC, it forces visitors to confront the

human toll of racism, America's original sin. And it allows each county to get a replica of a list on a block—sort of like a tombstone—of who was lynched. So maybe those counties can look into their souls, too, and do better, as we all can, at trying to eliminate racism.

America's original sin is racism and the vast and terrible numbers of African Americans who were brutally murdered for simply being Black. This museum forces us, as Martin Luther King did, to look into the mirror and see what the country has done wrong and move to correct it.

I truly salute all the folks who put this wonderful, wonderful museum together.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

THE APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS

Mr. ROBERTS. Madam President, I would like to make a very short comment with regard to the distinguished minority leader's remarks this morning.

In the midst of his remarks, Mr. SCHUMER mentioned something that I think is terribly important. Yesterday, the Rules Committee—and the distinguished Senator used to be the chairman of the Rules Committee. I think I was ranking member at that particular time. He spoke of an agreement to move appropriations bills. I want to thank him for that, and also Senator DURBIN, who indicated that as of yesterday.

We did reach an agreement in a bipartisan way to do something about filing cloture 86 times and other things going on and reducing that time period. We will get to that.

The breakthrough could be an agreement that Mr. SCHUMER has agreed to with regard to appropriations bills. If we can do that, we might be able to get back to the regular order that both of us experienced when we first came to the Senate. Many Members here have not experienced that.

Mr. SCHUMER. The majority, I think.

Mr. ROBERTS. Yes. Consequently, I want to thank you for that. And I know Senator SHELBY is eager to do the 12 appropriations bills, and I know Senator DURBIN is as well. I think that one statement in the midst of your comments, sir, is terribly important, and I want people to be aware of it, and I thank you.

Mr. SCHUMER. Thank you. I appreciate very much the remarks of my friend from Kansas. I hope these sprouts of bipartisanship can grow into mighty oaks.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I take this time because I know that shortly we are going to be voting on Mr. Pompeo's nomination as Secretary of State, and I want to explain to my colleagues why I cannot support his nomination.

As I said in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee during his nomination hearing, I appreciate Mr. Pompeo's public service throughout his career—his service in the military and his service in Congress and as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. I also appreciate the fact that he is willing to serve our Nation in this most important post as Secretary of State.

In the United States, we urgently need a confirmed Secretary of State, but it is our responsibility in the U.S. Senate to advise and consent on the President's nominations and to act as an independent branch of government.

I must state that we are in this urgent need because of Mr. Trump's abrupt dismissal of our former Secretary of State in the midst of many international challenges. In my view, though, Mr. Pompeo is not the right person. I reached that conclusion by his actions and his rhetoric.

If Mr. Pompeo is confirmed, he will be the top diplomat for the United States. He must be an independent voice in the White House. I have questions as to whether he will be that independent voice. He needs to engage our allies. That is how our diplomacy works. He has to be the loudest voice for diplomacy in our national security, in the use of our tools, and the military needs to be a matter of last resort.

I was reminded of this challenge for America when President Macron addressed the joint session of Congress yesterday. President Macron pointed out that the United States established multinational world order in the aftermath of World War II, which is embodied in the transatlantic partnership, and we, the United States, must lead in order to preserve that national security blanket. So it is incumbent upon the Secretary of State to work with our allies—particularly our European allies but all of our allies.

As just one example, when I look at Mr. Pompeo's record in regard to the nuclear agreement with Iran, during that discussion as to whether we would have diplomacy, it was Mr. Pompeo who said that the solution rests with 2,000 sorties to destroy the Iran nuclear capacity. That is not diplomacy. That is not leading with diplomacy. Now he is espousing that, if necessary, we should pull out of the agreement if we can't change it, even though Iran is in compliance with the agreement. That is not diplomacy, and that is certainly not working with our European allies.

Yesterday, we heard President Macron assert that it is critically important that that agreement move forward if Iran is in compliance. Yes, we can build on it, but to walk away from it would be wrong.

Another example that gives me great concern is Mr. Pompeo's position in regard to the Paris climate talks. I know we all have different views about climate and what our individual policy should be in order to deal with the realities of climate change, but one thing should be clear: that we want to be in

the discussions with the international community.

In regard to Iran, Mr. Pompeo would isolate us from our European allies, but in regard to withdrawing from the Paris climate talks, he would isolate America from every other nation in the world. We would be the only nation not a part of that discussion. Let me remind my colleagues that the commitments made in Paris are only enforceable by us. There is no international enforcement mechanism.

Words matter. A top diplomat needs to engage a very diverse global community. Mr. Pompeo's words unfortunately make it very challenging for him to be able to have the confidence of the international community.

He associated American Muslims with terrorism by stating that their perceived silence in condemning attacks "has made these Islamic leaders across America potentially complicit." I know that after each of the horrible terrorist activities we have seen in America, Muslim leaders in Maryland and Muslim leaders around the world have stood up and said that they condemn in the strongest possible terms those terrorist acts.

That should have no space. Unfortunately, those types of comments give space to those who are promoting a form of nationalism that allows for hate-mongering, and that cannot be tolerated in our country.

The LGBTQ community is rightly concerned. I go to Mr. Pompeo citing verbatim the following passage from a sermon castrating members of the LGBTQ community.

America has worshipped other gods and called it multiculturalism. We have endorsed perversion and called it an alternative lifestyle.

That type of language should have no place for someone who wants to be the top diplomat of America.

So I have come to the conclusion, based upon the necessity of the Secretary of State to engage the national community, to provide leadership and the use of diplomacy, that based upon those—my priorities, policy priorities, not politics or partisanship—that I cannot support Mr. Pompeo for Secretary of State.

I want to conclude with this. I have had the chance to lead the Democrats on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I have been a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee my entire 12 years in this institution. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee and its leaders have had a long tradition of bipartisanship, of recognizing the independent role of the legislative branch and the critical role played by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and we are always stronger when we act in unity.

That is a tradition of our committee. I want to just point out that I don't question anyone's motives on how they vote on the nominee for the Secretary of State, but I have great confidence that we in the Senate Foreign Rela-

tions Committee will continue the great tradition we have established as an independent voice and as a voice that tries to work in unity in the best interest of our Nation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Madam President, it was an honor for me to speak in front of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee this month in support of my Kansas friend and colleague, Mike Pompeo, as the President's nominee for Secretary of State. I come to the floor to urge all of my colleagues, despite the previous remarks, to vote in favor of this uniquely qualified nominee in such a vital role in our administration's Cabinet.

The point I would like to make, as we go into the very important topics we have to discuss on an international basis, is that we need Mike Pompeo, and we need him now.

As our Nation's most senior diplomat, Mike, I know, will be forthright, will be forceful and thoughtful and, yes, he will be diplomatic. He will give the President and the Congress very candid counsel. He is a man of his word.

Now, I say all of this because I think I, at least, have the credentials to know Mike and to know who he is and what he is about because I have known him for more than a decade, first as a friend and a business leader, then as a congressional colleague, and most recently as a leader of our intelligence community. We had some long talks before he accepted that offer by the President, and I thought he was very well suited.

Mike will represent American ideals and values backed by the strength of leadership of the free world—yes, the free world and the allies that have been referred to by my colleagues across the aisle. The point is, whenever there is a void, the world pays a price. That is why we need Mike, and that is why we need him now.

I am going to again urge all of my colleagues—all of those who voted in support of his intelligence post last year and those who now have the opportunity to support this extremely qualified candidate—to vote yes and to send our senior diplomat to work on the many challenges that face our Nation.

NOMINATIONS AND THE APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS

Madam President, now, let me talk a little bit about bipartisanship and what I have stated with regard to my friend and colleague, the minority leader. I have encouraging news. We met yesterday in the Rules Committee and voted to reduce postcloture debate from 30 hours to 8 hours for certain nominations. I am not sure we have the 60 votes to pass that, but it is something at least we are moving toward with regard to the problem of having 86 cloture votes and delaying the time; that is, 3 months, by the way, with re-

gard to time lost that we could have been working on other issues.

We still have to consider this change to the rules on the Senate floor, but in the course of our debate, the minority whip, Senator DURBIN, who is an appropriator par excellence, has supported Chairman SHELBY's commitment to do all 12 appropriations bills—how long, how long, how long has it been since we have done appropriations bills and voted on amendments on appropriations bills?

The leadership has apparently decided to recommend that we actually return to being a Senate voting on amendments. Many Senators, as I said earlier, do not even know what it is like to serve in a functioning Senate. They hardly know what it is like to operate under regular order, where bills are referred to committee, amended, brought to the floor, debated, amended, and then passed when appropriations bills were on time. Goodness knows we need to get back to that.

Members of the Appropriations Committee, without this agreement—prior to this agreement—were standing on the sidelines, wounded cardinals, if you will, with a shrinking slice of the discretionary pie. So thank you to the minority whip and thank you to the leadership on both sides for our efforts to get back to regular order.

Now you can take one step further and vote for Mike Pompeo, a qualified and honorable candidate to serve as Secretary of State. Most of the statements I have heard—I have not paid too much attention to the colloquy on the floor or the statements on the floor—but people who have reservations have a "while I" speech: while I understand his qualifications, while I understand he has a great background, first in his class at West Point, and while I, and while I, and while I.

Then, there is the catch: But then, on the other hand, I have some concerns. Most of the concerns are in regard to whether Mike Pompeo can be diplomatic. I know him. He can be forceful—sometimes he can be a little stubborn, but he can be forceful. He is well qualified for the job and, yes, he can be diplomatic.

So I hope we can take this step toward a bipartisan Senate and take one further vote and vote for Mike Pompeo, who is certainly qualified. I say that because the cloth of comity in this Senate is pretty threadbare. We have a situation where we need to return to a sense of comity and at least some bipartisanship. Certainly, it would be also to set aside personal and partisan concerns and vote for Mr. Pompeo.

As I said again, we have a void right now. We have a good man to be Secretary of State. I urge my colleagues to vote yes, and let's put a few threads back into the cloth of comity in the Senate and recommit to being the world's greatest deliberative body.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Madam President, I rise to express my strong opposition to President Trump's nomination of Mike Pompeo to be the next Secretary of State. There are many reasons to oppose this nomination, but the main reason for me is pretty straightforward. Mike Pompeo is completely unfit to serve as America's chief diplomat.

During his time as a public servant, Mike Pompeo has embraced a variety of views that betray America's values. Whether it is his support for interrogation techniques that amount to torture, his preference for war over diplomatic solutions, or his hateful, blatantly discriminatory views about Muslim and LGBTQ Americans, Mike Pompeo's confirmation would degrade America's diplomacy and erode our moral standing on the world stage.

Let's start with his evolving position on torture. In 2014, then-Congressman Pompeo praised the interrogators who used torture as "patriots" and "heroes," but when seeking confirmation to become CIA Director, Mr. Pompeo suddenly said he would "always comply with the law" prohibiting torture.

When asked if he would comply with a request from the President to use torture, he said he couldn't "imagine being asked to do so." Never mind that as a candidate Donald Trump boasted about his desire to bring back waterboarding and "a hell of a lot worse." In his later written answers, Mr. Pompeo suggested he could support bringing back waterboarding and other torture techniques if he thought they were necessary.

So, first, Mike Pompeo was for torture, but when he wanted to be CIA Director, he miraculously changed his position. Now he thinks the United States should reserve the right to torture people in the future. This position undermines our core values as Americans, and that alone should disqualify him from being America's Secretary of State, but there is more.

Mike Pompeo's hawkish views could quite literally lead us into another war. Just look at his views on Iran. The Iranian Government is a bad actor, no doubt about it. That is why the Iran nuclear deal was so important. It is easier to counter Iran's bad behavior if it has no nuclear weapons than it would be to keep Iran in check if it could threaten the region and threaten the world with a nuclear bomb.

The deal with Iran imposed strong limits and intrusive inspections on Iran's nuclear program so it cannot develop a nuclear weapon, and our intelligence community tells us it is working. That is very important to the security of our allies and the security of the whole world.

The Iran nuclear deal is a negotiated solution designed to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons, and it was accomplished without resorting to military action. The deal is the product of putting diplomacy first. That is good for the security of the United

States, good for our allies, and good for the world.

Mike Pompeo doesn't seem to understand that. He has called the Iran nuclear deal a "surrender," and he has said the United States should walk away. Pompeo has even publicly contemplated regime change. How can we expect countries to trust America's word when our chief diplomat believes we have the right to break our word and violate international agreements at any moment?

Think for a minute about what it would mean for negotiating any deal with North Korea about their nuclear weapons if Mr. Pompeo is in charge. He said we can tear up our agreement with Iran, even though they have followed through on their part, just because Mr. Trump and Mr. Pompeo have decided they don't like it. Who would negotiate with a United States that has so little respect for the standing of its promises? I cannot in good faith vote in favor of Mr. Pompeo for the reasons I have outlined, but there is another reason I cannot vote for him, one that is deeply personal to me.

Shortly after the Boston Marathon attack, then-Congressman Pompeo accused Muslim leaders of being silent about the bombing and even said they were potentially complicit in the attack. After the marathon bombings, all of Boston grieved together, including our Muslim leaders. Our Muslim communities helped Massachusetts emerge stronger and more united. To suggest otherwise is insulting to the Boston Marathon bombing victims and to our Muslim American brothers and sisters. When he was shown to be wrong, Mike Pompeo refused to apologize. His comments were ignorant, offensive, and just plain wrong. They certainly aren't the words of someone who is fit to be America's chief diplomat.

But there is more. Mike Pompeo's longstanding attacks on the LGBTQ community also make him unfit to serve as Secretary of State. He supported legislation in Congress to allow States not to recognize equal marriage, and he relied on financial contributions from hateful groups like the Family Research Council. His public record paints a deeply disturbing world view.

The risk posed by this nomination is magnified because Mike Pompeo would be teaming up with John Bolton, President Trump's new National Security Advisor. John Bolton has never met a war he didn't like, and Mike Pompeo supported Bolton's disastrous Iraq War. Together, Mike Pompeo and John Bolton will fan the flames of war in President Trump's foreign policy because they both embrace military solutions first.

I hope that, if confirmed, Mr. Pompeo will take real steps to prioritize diplomacy, to improve morale at the State Department, and to fill key diplomatic positions that have been vacant for far too long. But at a time when we are facing enormous global challenges, the State Department needs a leader who

will put diplomacy first to solve problems and to protect our national security. Mike Pompeo is not that leader. I strongly urge my colleagues to vote against his nomination.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If no one yields time, the time will be charged equally.

The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Madam President, I rise to oppose the nomination of CIA Director Mike Pompeo to be the Secretary of State.

I voted against confirming Mike Pompeo to be the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency because he lacked the experience and the qualifications for the position. His time at the CIA has done nothing to ensure me that he now has the capabilities to lead the State Department.

As a Member of the House of Representatives, Mike Pompeo made repeated discriminatory remarks about Muslim Americans. He has argued that the Muslim American leaders have a "special obligation" to denounce terrorist attacks, and he has falsely claimed that they have failed to do that. I am proud to represent dynamic Muslim and Arab-American communities in Michigan. I have seen that these patriotic communities are often the first to denounce senseless acts of violence that pervert the Islamic faith.

Mike Pompeo also has close ties to a group that is a Southern Poverty Law Center "designated hate group" because of its anti-Muslim rhetoric and conspiracy theories. I seriously question the judgment of an elected official who would work with such a group, and I do not believe it shows the type of character required in an individual who is nominated to be our country's top diplomat. How can someone with this attitude work effectively with our allies and partners in the Middle East? I don't think he can.

Mr. Pompeo has also supported bringing back waterboarding and other torture measures that do nothing to keep America safe and go against our Nation's core values. We now have a President who has said that he believes that torture "absolutely" works.

We can do better than this. America is better than this. I voted to ban the use of waterboarding and other so-called enhanced interrogation measures because they do not work, and in fact, they violate basic human rights, undermine our Nation's counterterrorism missions, and place our own servicemembers at risk.

Confirming a Secretary of State that has condoned torture is just another step in our Nation's current retreat from being what President Ronald Reagan called "a shining city on the hill."

I am concerned that Mike Pompeo will also continue the United States' retreat from a leadership role in addressing climate change—an existential moral and economic issue that will impact our planet for generations to come. Director Pompeo has criticized the Paris climate agreement and has

made statements that contradict the overwhelming scientific events on climate change.

Our Nation faces serious global challenges: Russian aggression, North Korea's nuclear weapons program, instability in the Middle East, and China's ongoing efforts to expand their power and influence. The world is looking to the United States for leadership. This is a time when skill and experienced diplomacy is essential to advance our interests and our values on the world stage. I do not believe that Director Pompeo has the necessary experience, diplomatic skills, and values required to be the Secretary of State. I will oppose his nomination this afternoon.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

NOMINATION OF RICHARD GRENELL

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, in addition to the nomination of the Secretary of State, later today we are considering the nomination of Richard Grenell to be our Ambassador to Germany. I opposed Mr. Grenell's nomination in committee, and I will again oppose his nomination today.

If confirmed, Mr. Grenell will assume the post at a time of strain in the bilateral relationship since the election of President Trump, who has disagreed with German Chancellor Angela Merkel on several key issues.

Germany is one of our most critical partners and a key ally in upholding the post-World War II order responsible for securing peace and prosperity. Germany is a key NATO ally, serving with distinction and sacrifice in Afghanistan. Germany also serves on the frontlines of Europe against an aggressive Russia that is actively seeking to destabilize German democracy in the same way it does American democracy. Germany showed great humanity in accepting so many migrants when that crisis escalated in 2015.

This is a close ally for our security but, more importantly, an ally in championing the values we hold dear as a country. It would have been my hope and desire that for such an important ally as Germany, the President would have put forth a serious, credible, experienced diplomat who could strengthen our relationship with Germany. Instead, President Trump nominated Mr. Grenell.

In a few moments, I will read things that Mr. Grenell has tweeted in the past and that he continues to tweet, even as his nomination has been pending before this body. I do not savor having to read you these tweets because, frankly, I don't think they are suitable to have to say on the floor of the Senate.

But since the majority and the President have prioritized this nominee and the vote will occur a little later, the American people deserve to know exactly who the Trump administration wants to represent the United States to our great friend and ally Germany. So I will read a selection of Mr. Grenell's tweets for the RECORD:

"Did you notice that while Michelle Obama is working out on the Biggest Loser, she is sweating on the East Room's carpet?"

Rachel Maddow should "take a breath and put on a necklace."

He said this about Callista Gingrich: "Callista stands there like she is wife #1."

He said in another quote: "Do you think Callista's hair snaps on?"

This is just a selection—just a selection. I chose not to read some that I consider the most insulting out of respect for this body.

These are not the words of a child or a teenager who does not understand the power of words; these are the words of a grown adult who had previously been a public face of the Bush administration for 8 years. Mr. Grenell's derogatory comments about women are simply unacceptable for anyone to make in public, let alone a diplomat.

I would go further. Not only do these tweets show bad judgment, they show us who Mr. Grenell really is and how comfortable he is publicly contributing his own brand of toxic political discourse. Will he do such things if he is confirmed and goes to Germany? Will he insult via his Twitter account the female Chancellor of Germany? I don't know. I hope not.

In the committee process of considering his nomination, Mr. Grenell was asked about these tweets and other comments he has made. Do you know what he said? He assured us that he understood there was a difference between being a private citizen and being a public figure and that he would never say or tweet such things as a public figure. So imagine our surprise when Mr. Grenell started tweeting again after he had been voted out of the committee. Astonishingly, he retweeted a WikiLeaks tweet which included documents stolen by Russian intelligence.

Madam President, the other nominee before us today, CIA Director Mike Pompeo, has called WikiLeaks "a non-state hostile intelligence service." That is what CIA Director Mike Pompeo called WikiLeaks—"a non-state hostile intelligence service." He went on to say about WikiLeaks that it will "take down America any way they can and find any willing partner to achieve that end."

Imagine that. Amidst all the controversy about the connection between WikiLeaks and Russia and their interference in our 2016 election and while under consideration for an ambassadorship by this body, Mr. Grenell feels perfectly comfortable tweeting out emails stolen by Russian intelligence to interfere in our democratic process—basically, in essence, as Mike Pompeo describes, doing the work of Russian intelligence.

These are not the actions of a person with anything close to good judgment. These are not the actions of a diplomat. I urge my colleagues to reject sending Mr. Grenell to Germany as a U.N. Ambassador.

With that, I yield the floor.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I did not vote for Rex Tillerson to be Secretary of State. Although Mr. Tillerson was a successful corporate executive, I did not believe that heading the world's largest oil company was the right resume for the Nation's top diplomat. Mr. Tillerson is a man of substantial intellect who wanted to do the right thing, but his record as Secretary of State speaks for itself. He did not do well, and the country, the State Department, and its employees—including some of our most experienced diplomats who felt they were no longer relevant—paid a substantial price.

For that reason, it is imperative that the next Secretary of State has the qualities and professional track record to restore the preeminent role that the Department has traditionally played in U.S. foreign policy.

It is also for that reason that today I intend to vote against the nomination of CIA Director Mike Pompeo to be Secretary of State.

By all accounts, Mr. Pompeo, like Mr. Tillerson, is a man of substantial intellect, and my conversations with him have seemed to confirm that. As we have learned, that alone is not enough to qualify one for a job that should be filled by someone who has proven that he or she understands and is skilled in the art of diplomacy and whose beliefs are consistent with fundamental American values. As the country's top diplomat, the Secretary of State should be a vocal and persuasive advocate for diplomacy to avoid conflict and crises. Unfortunately, I believe Mr. Pompeo's record falls far short.

Mike Pompeo has made no secret of his strong support for President Trump, whose saber rattling, provocations, and so-called America First policies would more accurately be described as "America Alone." The President has called for drastic cuts in the State Department's budget and personnel that would sharply diminish its role in diplomacy and development. He would weaken international organizations and alliances that serve our interests and undermine U.S. global leadership at a time when China and our other competitors are seeking every opportunity to expand their global reach. Unlike Secretary of Defense Mattis who, in response to the White House's proposed cuts, has been a strong advocate for the State Department's mission and budget, I am not aware that Mr. Pompeo ever publicly expressed a view either way until his confirmation hearing.

Mr. Pompeo supported the invasion of Iraq, and he has defended the use of torture, two of the most profoundly misguided foreign policy decisions since the Vietnam war. As far as I know, it was not until this week, when his nomination was in jeopardy, that he said the Iraq war that he had long defended was a mistake, a mistake that claimed the lives of thousands of

American soldiers and sowed chaos in the Middle East. The fact that he has insisted that waterboarding is not torture and, by implication, acceptable should by itself be disqualifying for the job of Secretary of State.

He has supported keeping open the Guantanamo detention facility, arguing that detainees “should stay right where they are” and that the facility “is the right place for [detainees] from both a security and legal perspective.” That is as wrong as it is disturbing. The indefinite detention without trial of detainees at Guantanamo contradicts our most basic principles of justice, degrades our international standing, and harms our national security. Mr. Pompeo’s position is particularly troubling, given the President’s expressed intent to send new prisoners to Guantanamo for the first time in more than a decade.

Mr. Pompeo has opposed what he called the “disastrous” Iran nuclear agreement, and he appears to favor withdrawing from it despite the International Atomic Energy Agency’s determination that Iran is in compliance and support for the agreement from a wide spectrum of diplomatic, scientific, and national security experts. As far as I am aware, he has offered no realistic alternative, and the consequence would be to isolate the United States from our closest allies and to risk Iran restarting its centrifuges and quickly obtaining a nuclear weapon.

During the negotiations to halt Iran’s nuclear program, Mr. Pompeo supported military strikes against Iran’s nuclear facilities, reportedly arguing that it would take “under 2,000 sorties to destroy the Iranian nuclear capacity,” which he described as “not an insurmountable task for the coalition forces.” It might not be insurmountable, except for the fact that it would be the end of the coalition since few, if any, of our partners would join us. Beyond that, the unilateral use of preemptive military force on that scale in a volatile region in which Russia has its own security interests could ignite a regional war with far-reaching, possibly catastrophic, consequences.

While the world’s scientists overwhelmingly warn of the long-term dangers of climate change, Mr. Pompeo is an unabashed climate change sceptic. He has said that the Paris Climate Agreement, which is supported by practically every country including China, amounted to “bowing down to radical environmentalists.” That is extremist rhetoric about what many believe to be the most serious challenge facing our planet, a challenge that can only be met through diplomacy, and it belies a disturbing intolerance for opposing views.

Mr. Pompeo has accused American Muslim leaders of being “potentially complicit” in acts of terrorism that they do not specifically condemn. He has said that Muslims “abhor Christians” and that they “will continue to press against us until we make sure

that we pray and stand and fight and make sure that we know that Jesus Christ is our savior and is truly the only solution for our world.” It would be hard to think of a more effective way to alienate the Muslim community, without whose help we cannot effectively counter violent extremism.

As a Member of Congress, Mr. Pompeo cosponsored legislation to ban all refugee admissions, regardless of country of origin, even though people seeking safety are already subjected to a rigorous vetting process. It should alarm each of us that the nominee to oversee the bureau charged with protecting refugees, migrants, and other vulnerable people uprooted by conflict—a tradition we take pride in—would take such a crass, ideological approach to our country’s refugee admissions policies.

Mr. Pompeo has suggested that the Federal Government should collect records of American citizens’ communications, without warrants and in bulk, and combine them with “publicly available financial and lifestyle information into a comprehensive, searchable database.” Think about that, at a time when the public is already outraged by Facebook’s and Cambridge Analytica’s misuse of personal data.

As a Member of Congress, Mr. Pompeo criticized President Obama for going to Cuba, accusing him of making “unilateral concessions.” It is true that the restoration of diplomatic relations with Cuba—which was overwhelmingly supported by the people of both countries—did not include an agreement by the Cuban Government to hold free and fair elections, nor to stop persecuting opponents of the government. No one who knows Cuba expected that. But if free and fair elections and respect for human rights are Mr. Pompeo’s prerequisite for having an embassy and an ambassador in a foreign country, we will need to close a lot more embassies than the one in Havana.

We could begin with our embassies in China and Russia, Saudi Arabia and Egypt would be next, then Jordan and Morocco, Honduras, Vietnam—the list goes on. The fact is we need embassies staffed with qualified personnel, including in countries whose governments we disagree with, so our diplomats can work to protect our interests and the interests of Americans who travel, study, work, or serve there. That is diplomacy 101.

Mr. Pompeo opposes LGBT rights and has no record of defending civil society activists and independent journalists who risk their lives speaking out against corruption and abuses of human rights by foreign security forces, particularly in countries we consider friends or allies. He has also worked against women’s reproductive rights, including cosponsoring radical legislation that would make abortion illegal nationwide, even in cases of rape. He voted to defund Planned Parenthood and for the “global gag rule,”

which prevents foreign nongovernmental organizations from receiving U.S. funds if they use their own money to provide safe abortions or even information about abortion services in their country.

I take no pleasure in opposing Mr. Pompeo’s nomination. I wish I could vote for him, as I am the ranking member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on the Department of State and Foreign Operations. I strongly support the State Department, its mission, its personnel, and its programs. I have consistently defended its budget when others here or in the White House sought to cut it.

I am pleased that Mr. Pompeo has said he wants to fill the vacant senior leadership positions at the State Department and that he recognizes that the United States has a duty to “lead the calls for democracy, prosperity, and human rights around the world.” But his record in Congress and his staunchly ideological views raise grave concerns about the policy direction he would give to those senior leaders. Given his record and beliefs, there is little reason to believe that he will be an effective or consistent defender of democracy and human rights abroad, particularly in the face of President Trump’s abandonment of those values and principles.

In many other respects, Mr. Pompeo’s testimony before the Foreign Relations Committee had all the characteristics of a “confirmation conversion,” when he contradicted many of his previous statements and positions. As Senator MENENDEZ asked, Which Pompeo are we voting for? The job of Secretary of State is too important, especially with Donald Trump in the Oval Office, to roll the dice and discount everything Mr. Pompeo has said in the past.

If Mr. Pompeo is confirmed, as it appears he will be, I will make every effort to work with him to advance our foreign policy and national security interests, as I did with Secretary Tillerson after opposing his nomination, but given the impulsive and reckless statements and actions of this President and the upheaval at the State Department during the past year, we need a Secretary with the necessary temperament, values, and long-standing commitment to diplomacy and development. I hope he proves me wrong, but today I do not believe we have that in this nominee.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, I rise today in opposition to the nomination of Mike Pompeo to be our next Secretary of State.

After considering his testimony before the Foreign Relations Committee, his work as Director of the CIA, and his record as a Congressman, I believe he doesn’t possess the skillset necessary to be our country’s top diplomat.

The Secretary of State must be well-versed in the art of diplomacy. They must possess a deft touch necessary to

operate on the world stage. Unfortunately, Mr. Pompeo's record and his rhetoric show how ill matched he is for this position.

Above all, I fear that he would only reinforce President Trump's worst impulses to lash out at our adversaries rather than pursue dogged diplomacy. This is particularly concerning when it comes to Iran. The Iran nuclear agreement is the strongest nonproliferation agreement ever negotiated. It blocks Iran from ever obtaining a nuclear weapon, protecting our security and the security of our partners in the region. By all reports, it appears President Trump is set on walking away from the Iran nuclear agreement next month, even though Iran continues to abide by its strict terms.

If confirmed, I don't believe Mr. Pompeo would even try to walk the President back from that foolish decision. Instead, he would most likely feed the President's desire to leave, not because of its merits, but simply because it was negotiated by President Obama.

To be clear, if the United States abandons the agreement, we will do so on our own. Our international partners—including the United Kingdom, France and Germany—have said they will remain in the agreement so long as Iran complies with it. To date, the IAEA inspectors and our own intelligence community have all said that Iran remains in full compliance. When the nuclear agreement was signed, Iran was less than a year away from acquiring a nuclear weapon.

Today, all of Iran's paths to a weapon—the plutonium, uranium and covert—are blocked. The fact that today Iran cannot obtain a nuclear bomb is in spite of Mr. Pompeo's efforts.

During the negotiations leading up to the agreement, then-Congressman Pompeo not only called for the United States to abandon diplomatic efforts, he encouraged us to attack Iran. He said, "It is under 2,000 sorties to destroy the Iranian nuclear capacity. This is not an insurmountable task for the coalition forces."

During his recent confirmation hearing, he was unable to source that claim or name which other nations would have joined our coalition. That is an especially perplexing position since our strongest allies were all negotiating alongside the United States at the time.

After the nuclear agreement came into effect, Mr. Pompeo continued his campaign by sending the Supreme Leader a highly provocative letter. He taunted Tehran, asking for a visa to inspect Iran's nuclear facilities, monitor their elections, and receive a briefing on their ballistic missile programs. His publicity stunt only served to further inflame tensions between our countries.

Finally, shortly after our elections and the day before he was nominated to be the Director of the CIA, he tweeted: "I look forward to rolling back this disastrous deal with the

world's largest state sponsor of terrorism."

When asked about his position during his confirmation hearing, Mr. Pompeo instead simply discounted the real and dangerous possibility that Iran would restart its nuclear weapons program if we abandon the agreement. I see no reason to believe his misinformed views have changed in the past year.

As troubling as Mr. Pompeo's hostile view toward Iran is, I am equally concerned by his divisive remarks about minority groups within the United States. Following the Boston Marathon bombings, Mr. Pompeo falsely suggested Muslim Americans were complicit in the attacks. The following year, he characterized U.S. counterterrorism efforts as a struggle between Islam and Christianity.

After the Supreme Court's landmark ruling legalizing same-sex marriage, Mr. Pompeo said the court's opinion was a "shocking abuse of power" that "flies in the face of . . . our Constitution." He has also claimed that the "ideal" family has a father and mother, a shockingly outdated view of families here in the United States and around the world.

Finally, the State Department plays a leading role in providing family planning assistance abroad. Under Mr. Pompeo, I fear the State Department will retreat from providing this vital assistance.

As a Member of the House, Mr. Pompeo repeatedly cosponsored legislation to limit a woman's right to choose. Specifically, he supported bills to make abortion illegal nationwide, even in the case of rape.

He also repeatedly supported the "global gag rule," known as the Mexico City policy, which restricts U.S. funds to any foreign health clinic that provides abortion services, even if it is legal in that country.

All too often, rape is considered a weapon of war. Our global health programming should not be restricted in a manner that ignores this ugly reality.

The Secretary of State is charged with representing America's values to the world and must be committed to exhausting all means of diplomacy to avoid conflict. I don't believe Mr. Pompeo can do that and shouldn't be confirmed as Secretary of State.

Therefore, I will vote no, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. REED. Madam President, I would like to address the nomination of Director Pompeo to be the next Secretary of State. I intend to vote against this nomination, and I would like to explain how I reached this conclusion.

This was a difficult decision. I supported Director Pompeo's nomination to be Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. Director Pompeo is a talented individual who has spent his life in public service, but the job of Secretary of State requires different skill sets and experiences than that of Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

As such, the Senate has a constitutional responsibility to review Director Pompeo's qualifications anew with respect to this specific nomination. As I indicated, the role of the Secretary of State is significantly different from that of the CIA Director. The question before us is whether Director Pompeo has the right background, judgment, and independence to faithfully execute the duties of America's top diplomat. Using those criteria, I have to oppose this nomination.

One of the first tasks for the next Secretary of State will be to rebuild the capabilities and morale of the Department of State. Over the last year and a half, the Department has struggled with widespread vacancies, drastic proposed budget cuts, a Foreign Service treated with contempt by the White House, and a failed reorganization effort under Secretary Tillerson. The result has been the hemorrhaging of decades of foreign policy expertise, the demoralization of those who continue to serve at State, and the marginalization of diplomacy as an instrument of national power.

I question whether Director Pompeo is right for the task of reversing the damage wrought at the State Department. During his time in the House, then-Congressman Pompeo was a staunch supporter of Tea Party proposals to slash the very State Department programs that are critical for advancing our foreign policy and national security interests. During his confirmation hearing earlier this month, Director Pompeo declared his commitment to end the "demoralizing" vacancies at the State Department and strengthen the diplomatic corps. Even if Director Pompeo has had a late conversion on the road to his nomination for Secretary of State, it is not clear whether he will be any more successful than Secretary Tillerson was in gaining White House approval for his desired candidates for senior positions or convincing this President to listen to the advice of our experts at Foggy Bottom.

My deeper concern is whether Director Pompeo is the right choice to carry out the Secretary of State's role as the lead advocate for diplomacy as a means of advancing our national interests.

The need for effective diplomacy to solve our most pressing security challenges has never been greater. Today's national security threats are complex, including the reemergence of near-peer competitors Russia and China who seek to undermine the rules-based international order, regional challenges from rogue regimes in North Korea and Iran, and the continuing threat from violent extremist groups that seek to exploit ungoverned spaces to spread their destructive ideologies. Such challenges to our national security require a comprehensive strategy that coordinates military and nonmilitary tools of national power.

I am concerned that President Trump's bellicose rhetoric and budgetary priorities indicate a predisposition for choosing military action over diplomatic solutions. Since September 11, we have asked our men and women in uniform to go above and beyond in addressing security and stability challenges globally, and they have responded magnificently. As we face expanding threats below the level of armed conflict and insecurity arising from regional destabilization, we need an increased focus on nonmilitary tools and diplomacy to prevent or mitigate these challenges. The next Secretary of State needs to be an effective counterpart for Defense Secretary Mattis in finding diplomatic solutions to the complex crises we face in Syria, the Middle East, North Africa, the South China Sea, and North Korea.

Based on his record, I am not convinced that Director Pompeo will serve as the strong voice for diplomacy that our military and our country need to counter these pressing threats. Time and again, Director Pompeo has chosen to reject negotiations and call for the use of force. His track record calls into question his ability to be an effective advocate for diplomatic solutions that are in U.S. national interests.

With regard to the nuclear deal with Iran, known as the joint comprehensive plan of action, or JCPOA, Director Pompeo has called for "rolling back" this multilateral agreement that was carefully negotiated alongside the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Russia, and China. Director Pompeo's opposition to the Iran nuclear deal runs counter to views of Defense Secretary Mattis and most senior military leadership. As a congressman, Director Pompeo sought to undermine negotiations with Iran and advocated for military airstrikes to destroy its nuclear program. During his confirmation hearing, Director Pompeo indicated that he would not push back against President Trump's reckless impulse to withdraw from the JCPOA in mid-May, saying instead that he would "recommend to the President that we do our level best to work with our allies to achieve a better outcome and a better deal." This response is in spite of the fact that, by all accounts, the JCPOA is working as intended and Iran is verifiably meeting its commitments under the deal.

Withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal would also have a profoundly harmful effect on our nuclear negotiations with North Korea. North Korea has little reason to engage with us in a serious dialogue if it suspects that we may later withdraw unilaterally from any agreement without cause. During the Trump administration, the risk of conflict with North Korea has increased to unprecedented levels, and the diplomatic preparations over the coming weeks will be critical to the success of President Trump's upcoming summit with the North Korean leader. However, should that summit fail to

produce meaningful constraints on North Korea's nuclear ambitions, I am concerned that the administration will use this failure as a pretext for pivoting to a preemptive strike against North Korea, and I am not confident that Director Pompeo will be effective in urging restraint by President Trump in opposing military action while seeking to redouble efforts to find a negotiated solution.

Perhaps the most difficult role of any Secretary of State is being an independent voice willing to say no to the President. I recognize that some say that one of Director Pompeo's highest qualifications for Secretary of State is his close relationship with the President because foreign leaders will know that, when Director Pompeo speaks, he has the backing of President Trump. Director Pompeo's alleged "rapport" with President Trump raises concerns that he will only tell the President what the President wants to hear and will not provide objective, nuanced policy recommendations based on U.S. foreign policy interests. I believe we are already seeing this dynamic with respect to the JCPOA.

Unfortunately, we have seen this scenario before. Early in the George W. Bush administration, the President surrounded himself with like-minded advisers who were predisposed to distorting the intelligence on Iraq, and, as a result, they failed to present nuanced policy options on the march to war against Saddam Hussein. I am concerned that we will find, in hindsight, that Director Pompeo's closeness to President Trump will prove less an asset and more a shared blind spot that will lead to simplistic policy recommendations, an unwillingness to stand up to the President when he is wrong, and an indulgence of the President's impulsive preference for strategy-free displays of military force.

The President needs a top diplomat who will provide independent foreign policy recommendations, will press to exhaust all possible diplomatic avenues for the safety of our military and citizens, and will boldly represent our core American values. While I believe that Director Pompeo is an honorable and decent man, who has provided life-long service to our country, he is not the right nominee for Secretary of State at this time. As such, I will oppose Director Pompeo's nomination for Secretary of State.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I rise today to discuss the nomination of Mike Pompeo for Secretary of State.

After closely reviewing Mr. Pompeo's record and past statements, I have concluded that he is not the right person to serve as Secretary of State. While I respect him and will work closely with him, I cannot support his nomination.

The world continues to look to America for our leadership on diplomacy and bringing our allies together. That includes upholding international agreements, such as the Paris accord, which Mr. Pompeo has opposed. It also in-

cludes respect for people of different ethnic and religious backgrounds, and Mr. Pompeo's past statements about Muslims and immigrants greatly concern me.

While I voted in favor of confirming Mr. Pompeo to be the Director of the CIA and thank him for his service, Secretary of State is a different job with different responsibilities.

Thank you.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, I rise in support of the President's nomination of Director Mike Pompeo to serve as Secretary of State.

Director Pompeo has a very long record of public service which has prepared him for this very important position. Let's start at the beginning.

Director Pompeo was top of his class at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, and he served honorably in the U.S. Army. He is also a graduate of Harvard Law School. In Congress, Director Pompeo was a leader on issues of national security and foreign relations. Finally, and most recently, as Director of the CIA, Director Pompeo has been a successful leader of the world's best intelligence professionals who work to resolve some of our Nation's most sensitive and difficult problems.

I have heard on the floor of the Senate recently a number of my colleagues who have called into question whether he should serve as our Nation's top diplomat. He has served in the military. He has served as Director of the CIA. What I want to do is go back to the time he spent at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

I wish to remind the body that in the military, we serve in many missions, but one of them does include diplomacy. As the Presiding Officer understands, as military members—whether a marine or a soldier—oftentimes during conflicts you stand shoulder-to-shoulder with members of other countries. You must have an understanding of the cultural effects and the cultural differences between our nations, and you work to resolve problems. Whether with the indigenous population or whether it is within the military ranks, we serve as diplomats.

At West Point, I know Director Pompeo learned this lesson very well. Many of us—whether you go through a military academy or whether you are going through a Reserve Officer Training Corps Program at a university like I did at Iowa State—you learn about what we call the instruments of national power. Those instruments of national power are called DIME. It is an acronym, D-I-M-E.

D stands for diplomacy. We learn that, again, as members of the military and as officers in our Nation's military—so diplomacy. The I is information. The M, of course, is military and military action. The E stands for economic action, such as sanctions.

Within the realm of diplomacy, we are taught and we work with Ambassadors, and we work through Embassies. We are taught about the realm of negotiations and treaties and various policies that affect different nations around the globe. We are engaging in international forums. Again, working in the defense space, of course, we have many opportunities to engage with leaders from other countries. Diplomacy—it is the very basis of the instruments of national power that we all learn.

I know Director Pompeo, in his capacity—whether serving at the CIA or going back many years to when he served in the U.S. Army, quite admirably, or back at the Academy when he was first taught those instruments of national power, or DIME, that he is well-versed in working with many nations in very difficult circumstances. Again, Director Pompeo has a very long record of public service.

Director Pompeo also has had very strong relationships, and he values those relationships. His relationship with Secretary of Defense Mattis will prove invaluable as he works to ensure peace through strength. Additionally, I am confident he will inspire and lead the men and women of our State Department to achieve results for our Nation, and those results will be centered around diplomacy.

Director Pompeo understands the threats we face as a nation every day. During a time when the threats against the United States continue to grow around the globe, it is important—important—for President Trump to have his full diplomatic and national security team in place. We must do this. Diplomacy. Diplomacy.

Director Pompeo is also the right person to serve as our top diplomat. He will rise to meet the challenges and foster the relationships we need around the world to keep our Nation free, secure, and prosperous. Again, I go back to the instruments of national power: D-I-M-E. The first is always diplomacy. Director Pompeo understands, and I am glad that we as a body will be taking up his confirmation vote today.

I urge my colleagues to support this eminently qualified man as our next Secretary of State.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

REMEMBERING MATTHEW POLLARD

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, it is with great sadness that I rise to note the

passing of, and acknowledgement of, the service of a valued member of the Intelligence Committee staff. On the evening of April 23, while attending a conference on behalf of the committee, Matthew Pollard lost his life to a heart attack. He was 52 years old. Matt is survived by his mother, three older sisters, and a young son Bradley, who was the cherished one.

Matt served honorably in the Army as an intelligence officer and twice deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, from 2003 to 2004, and Operation Enduring Freedom, from 2009 to 2010.

Matt was smart. He was really smart. He held a master's degree in strategic intelligence and mechanical engineering and was close to completing his third master's degree.

Matt had one of those jobs, like many who serve on my committee, that you can't talk about very much. That silence did not accurately reflect the value he brought to the Intelligence Committee. He filled a critical role. He was the majority staff member responsible for conducting oversight over the Nation's overhead architecture. In layman's terms, he knew satellites. Matt knew a lot about satellites. He knew about what they were capable of and what they weren't capable of. He knew what they cost and, perhaps more importantly, what they should not have cost.

Matt also had the unique ability to explain the unexplainable, which, as many here know, is a rare skill. Matt had a mind and an eye for detail, both technical and budgetary. He prided himself in finding ways to cut the costs of those fantastically expensive programs.

On our committee, he had a discerning eye for calling out contractors when he saw deficiencies. Matt was good-natured with his colleagues in industry. He was tough, but those same colleagues loved him. Matt would half smile, half frown at a presentation, and you could see contractors lower their heads and shuffle their feet a little bit because they knew Matt was right. He was universally respected and liked by all who encountered him, whether they sat on the same side of the table or whether they were on the other side. When Matt passed away on Monday, word literally spread around the country in a matter of hours. His loss is devastating to many, including the committee, the members, and the staff.

Matt actually served twice on the staff of the Intelligence Committee. He began his first tour with us in March of 2002. That first tour lasted 11 years. Matt couldn't stay away from the Senate for long, though, and he gave in to tremendous pressure from the Appropriations Committee to join them, which he did in April of 2014.

Matt's drive to serve was strong. When I became chairman in January of 2015, I had one objective: persuading him to rejoin the Intelligence Committee, and it was one of my top priorities.

I am eternally grateful that I was able to lure him away from the appropriators and know, without a doubt, he was one of the strongest members of the Intelligence Committee staff.

Matt studied. Matt inquired. He never backed down from a debate. Matt spoke his mind and spoke truth to power, and he did it often without bias. We loved him for all of it, and we will sorely miss Matt.

However, more importantly than the values he brought to the committee, to the U.S. Senate, and to the Intelligence Committee was how Matt conducted himself as a person and as a father. Matt loved his son Bradley. That is probably what I will remember most about Matt. Bradley was Matt's world—Boy Scouts, campouts, soccer games. If Bradley was involved, Matt was there. He was a great dad.

We weren't surprised when we heard that Matt recently misjudged the forecast. Despite wearing only a T-shirt and shorts in 40-degree temperatures and whipping winds, he cheered loudly as Bradley played his first soccer game. This is one small example of his devotion to Bradley, whom he proudly referred to as "my boy."

Bradley, I want to say thank you for sharing your father with us. We will forever be grateful.

Given Matt's hours and portfolio, he, like many of the staff, often worked on the weekends, and Bradley was a regular presence in the committee, on those weekends, in the committee space. He often could be found playing board games with kids of other staffers who were also working weekends and similarly engaged in finding a work-life balance.

Matt's devotion and generosity extended beyond Bradley. He was also known, on occasion, to lead many adventures around the Capitol. He would take him through the complex with small herds of children in tow so their parents could actually get some work done. Kids would come back full of stories with "guess what we did" to their parents.

We at the committee, and our sister committee on the House, will miss having the benefit of his wisdom and his experience. So, too, will those in the intelligence community who worked with Matt, to include the senior leadership at some of the most important agencies.

While the American people may have never known Matt by name, hopefully, this statement will give you some insight into his character and, more importantly, the contributions he made to our Nation's security. We will miss his expertise, his infectious sense of humor and, most importantly, his friendship.

Mr. President, before I yield, I would like to turn to Senator BLUNT.

Mr. BLUNT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I certainly agree with and really understand and appreciate all the comments the chairman just made about

Matt Pollard. He was the person I worked most closely with in the intel community. He served his country his whole adult life. He loved his country. He loved his work. He understood the importance of protecting, advancing, and defending who we are.

The chairman pointed out his real dedication to his son. Often, Matt would come over to my office for a topline indication of what we were going to be doing when we got to the Intel Committee. Since you really can't talk about that until you get to the Intel Committee, a sure way to get a good conversation going was to say: Tell me about that son of yours. He would have chapter and verse of what had happened in the last few days of the things he was doing with Brad.

He was really appreciated by his co-workers. I talked to the Chaplain yesterday. He went to see our Intel team moments after they found out about the loss of Matt Pollard, and the Chaplain was impressed by the emotional sense of loss this whole team felt.

He knew more about his area of expertise than anybody on our staff. We will miss that, but we will mostly miss him. We are grateful for his service, grateful for his dedication to his country and his son and the future of both his country and his family.

I yield back to the chairman.

Mr. BURR. I thank my colleague Senator BLUNT.

Mr. President, we are saddened, but we are blessed. We are saddened at the loss, and we are blessed that we participated in a small part of Matt Pollard's life on Earth.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, we are about to vote on cloture on the nomination for Secretary of State. I, once again, just to summarize, express my opposition to Mike Pompeo serving as this Nation's top diplomat.

As I said earlier this week in committee, I am genuinely disappointed to be casting a vote against the Secretary of State nominee. I believe the United States needs an effective leader on the global stage, but at the end of the day, as I considered Director Pompeo's nomination, including his hearing, his past statements, and recent revelations, I have lingering concerns, which I outlined in detail yesterday on the floor and will not go through in detail here again.

I do want to say, though, in listening to the remarks of some of my colleagues this week, I was struck by how easily some characterize legitimate concerns about a nominee as a purely partisan act. I was struck by suggestions that somehow Democrats obstructed this nomination.

Democrats on the Foreign Relations Committee agreed to every request of the chairman in the process of considering this nomination. We held hearings on the date the chairman requested. We held the business meeting

to vote on the nomination on the date the chairman requested. We sent the nomination to the floor. Yesterday, we had an opportunity to debate the nomination on the Senate floor, and today we will vote. That is not obstruction. That is a fair and appropriate process—agreed on in a cooperative manner.

Democrats have worked with Republicans in a constructive manner to confirm a wide range of nominations. We voted for the President's nominees for Cabinet members. Nikki Haley was confirmed as the U.N. Ambassador, 96 to 4; John Kelly was confirmed as the Secretary of Homeland Security, 88 to 11; and Deputy Secretary of State John Sullivan was confirmed, 94 to 6. This body confirmed Secretary of Defense Mattis by a vote of 98 to 1—98 to 1.

It seems Republicans complain about Democratic votes only when they don't get what they want. I would say it is the President who is politicizing many of these nominees by nominating people he must know cannot draw broad bipartisan support. There are many qualified candidates this President could have nominated for this critical position, whom I am sure my colleagues and I—as well as others—would have been happy to confirm.

Let me close by providing more actual facts. In the Senate Foreign Relations Committee alone, we have sent 86 nominees to the Senate floor, and 77 of them have been confirmed, mostly through unanimous consent. It is the Trump administration that has failed to keep pace on nominations. Of the 172 Senate-confirmed positions at the State Department, our Embassies, and USAID, the Trump administration has not nominated anyone to fill 76 of those vacancies. They include ambassadorial vacancies left unfilled, which include critical countries of great strategic importance like South Korea, Egypt, Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, South Africa, and Turkey.

The committee had agreed to hold a nomination hearing for three nominees just this past week, when the administration asked that the hearing be indefinitely postponed. Let us not forget that Republican leadership can bring up any nominee on the floor at any time they choose. This suggestion that not supporting a nominee you believe is unqualified is a purely partisan act is ridiculous, based upon the facts. What is partisan is to hold up a qualified nominee for Justice to the Supreme Court, like Merrick Garland for 295 days, without a hearing or even a vote. So please save me the sanctimonious voices of this question of partisanship.

It is the article I right of this body to vet nominees and cast the vote they think is correct. I believe strongly that the Congress plays a vital role in the check and balance of any executive branch, and I believe that regardless of who is sitting in the White House. That is what article I is all about.

I close simply by saying, we will continue working to advance those nomi-

nees who are qualified. We will continue to work with the chairman, as we have, and we will support those nominees who truly are qualified. Even if we do not agree, we certainly want to be of support in the mission to make sure America is safe and secure.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I thank the ranking member for, as he mentioned, allowing this process to go forward and for our being able to vote on this nominee today. I think all of us are aware that there is a NATO summit where foreign ministers are going to be present. Our passing him out today will allow Director Pompeo, Secretary of State Pompeo, to be a participant in a meeting that needs to take place. So I thank him for his cooperation and, certainly, for his point of view.

Let me offer a different point of view, though, as it relates to this nominee.

I think he is one of the most outstanding nominees we could have for this position. I did not know him well when the process began. I knew he had done a very good job as the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. Yet I have to tell you that through the process of his going through the confirmation hearings and the conversations we have had and the meetings we have had, I think he is going to be exemplary. Let me just go through his resume briefly as I know people are here, ready to vote.

He graduated first in his class at West Point. He served our Nation in uniform and patrolled the Iron Curtain. It was there that he learned about diplomacy and the effect that diplomacy can have on the world. What I have found from those individuals who have worn the uniform, from those people we hold on a pedestal like our Presiding Officer, is that they respect diplomacy more than most anyone else because they know it is the thing that keeps our men and women from being in harm's way. I know this nominee believes strongly in the role of diplomacy and has seen it in action firsthand on the ground.

After serving in the military, he graduated from Harvard Law School, where he was the editor of the Harvard Law Review. He then founded his own company, acting as the CEO. He became the president of another company after that. So he has served in the private sector. He was elected four times in Kansas to represent the Fourth District in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Let me just say this. Sometimes people say things when they are in public office and when they are running campaigns, and I know something has been said about that. I will say we confirmed Secretary Kerry and Secretary Clinton by 94 votes, and I can assure you that during their campaigns, they may have said some things that Republicans didn't particularly care for. Yet

we went ahead and confirmed them with 94 votes on the floor.

For the last 15 months, he has served our Nation as the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. I think everyone knows how he has run that Agency, and I think everyone knows the culture that he has built there. Right now, the State Department has a terrible culture. The morale is terrible. As my friend the ranking member mentioned, a lot of positions have not been filled, but they also feel like they have not had a leader in some time who has really stood behind them and raised them up in order to leverage our diplomatic efforts around the world. I believe this particular nominee will be excellently suited for that. He has demonstrated that at the CIA.

I strongly support his nomination. With that, I look forward to the vote. I look forward to his serving our Nation. I don't know of a person in the United States of America who could have more current knowledge about what is happening around the world in his current role. As we know, he has already met with the North Koreans. We have known for some time that the CIA has been our contact, our back channel, with the North Koreans. He is the perfect person to come in at this time and lead those efforts diplomatically.

I yield the floor.

I also yield back any remaining time.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The assistant bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Mike Pompeo, of Kansas, to be Secretary of State.

Mitch McConnell, Orrin G. Hatch, Todd Young, John Cornyn, Bill Cassidy, John Boozman, Deb Fischer, David Perdue, James Lankford, Roger F. Wicker, John Thune, Tom Cotton, Mike Rounds, Roy Blunt, James M. Inhofe, Thom Tillis, Bob Corker.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Mike Pompeo, of Kansas, to be Secretary of State, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KENNEDY). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 57, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 83 Ex.]

YEAS—57

Alexander
Barrasso
Blunt
Boozman
Burr
Capito
Cassidy
Collins
Corker
Cornyn
Cotton
Crapo
Cruz
Daines
Donnelly
Enzi
Ernst
Fischer
Flake

Gardner
Graham
Grassley
Hatch
Heitkamp
Heller
Hoeven
Hyde-Smith
Inhofe
Isakson
Johnson
Jones
Kennedy
King
Lankford
Lee
Manchin
McCaskill
McConnell

Moran
Murkowski
Nelson
Paul
Perdue
Portman
Risch
Roberts
Rounds
Rubio
Sasse
Scott
Shelby
Sullivan
Thune
Tillis
Toomey
Wicker
Young

NAYS—42

Baldwin
Bennet
Blumenthal
Booker
Brown
Cantwell
Cardin
Carper
Casey
Coons
Cortez Masto
Duckworth
Durbin
Feinstein

Gillibrand
Harris
Hassan
Heinrich
Hirono
Kaine
Klobuchar
Leahy
Markey
Menendez
Merkley
Murphy
Murray
Peters

Reed
Sanders
Schatz
Schumer
Shaheen
Smith
Stabenow
Tester
Udall
Van Hollen
Warner
Warren
Whitehouse
Wyden

NOT VOTING—1

McCain

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 57, the nays are 42.

The motion is agreed to.

Under the previous order, all postcloture time is expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Pompeo nomination?

Mr. HATCH. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 57, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 84 Ex.]

YEAS—57

Alexander
Barrasso
Blunt
Boozman
Burr
Capito
Cassidy
Collins
Corker
Cornyn
Cotton
Crapo
Cruz
Daines
Donnelly
Enzi
Ernst
Fischer
Flake

Gardner
Graham
Grassley
Hatch
Heitkamp
Heller
Hoeven
Hyde-Smith
Inhofe
Isakson
Johnson
Jones
Kennedy
King
Lankford
Lee
Manchin
McCaskill
McConnell

Moran
Murkowski
Nelson
Paul
Perdue
Portman
Risch
Roberts
Rounds
Rubio
Sasse
Scott
Shelby
Sullivan
Thune
Tillis
Toomey
Wicker
Young

NAYS—42

Baldwin
Bennet
Blumenthal
Booker
Brown
Cantwell
Cardin
Carper
Casey
Coons
Cortez Masto
Duckworth
Durbin
Feinstein

Gillibrand
Harris
Hassan
Heinrich
Hirono
Kaine
Klobuchar
Leahy
Markey
Menendez
Merkley
Murphy
Murray
Peters

Reed
Sanders
Schatz
Schumer
Shaheen
Smith
Stabenow
Tester
Udall
Van Hollen
Warner
Warren
Whitehouse
Wyden

NOT VOTING—1

McCain

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Richard Grenell, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Federal Republic of Germany.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, the cloture motion with respect to the Grenell nomination be withdrawn; that the time until 1:45 p.m. be equally divided in the usual form; and that upon the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; further, that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Under the previous order, the time until 1:45 p.m. will be equally divided in the usual form.

The majority whip.

CONFIRMATION OF MIKE POMPEO

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, we have just voted to confirm Mike Pompeo to be the next Secretary of State for the United States—an essential member of the President's Cabinet.

There has been a tradition of sorts in this deliberative body to give some deference to the President on his pick for chief diplomat, recognizing that foreign governments view the chief diplomat or Secretary of State as being the personal representative of the President himself, the thought being that whoever wins the election deserves the ability to assemble their own team and build a Cabinet with top brass whom he respects and can work