It survives today only because men and women of conscience—Democrats and Republicans—refused to cooperate with the former President.

As it became apparent that he could not contort the bureaucracy to nullify the election, and it wasn't working in the courts either, Donald Trump turned to a weapon—a desperate weapon—seldom used in American history: political violence.

On December 19, 2020, Trump tweeted: ''Big protest in DC on January 6. Be there. WILL BE WILD!''

That was one of the several tweets he sent out summoning his followers to Washington.

On January 5, 2021, a year ago today, Steve Bannon, once one of Trump's chief strategists, then discarded, then embraced—I can't keep track—he is now back in the Trump fold. He used his podcast on that day, a year ago today, to telegraph the chaos that was going to erupt the next day.

Steve Bannon told his listeners: ''We're going into something that's never happened before in American history,'' he said that a year ago, ''It's not going to happen like you think it's going to happen. Okay, it's going to be quite extraordinarily different.''

Bannon said: ''All I can say is strap in. . . . It's all converging, and now we're on the point of attack tomorrow.''

That is a quote from Steve Bannon, a year ago today, about January 6, 2021. I don't have to remind anyone what happened that day. Many of us lived it. Some may try to downplay it or deny it was any threat. They know better. They know the truth.

If you were sitting in this Chamber, with Vice President Pence sitting in your chair, preparing to count the electoral vote to determine the President of the United States, and you noted the Vice President's staff come roaring through that door, reach up and grab him by the arms, and pull him off the podium where you are now sitting—people were dumbstruck. They couldn't imagine what was going on here for a moment. And then to have a member of the Capitol Police come before us and stand where you are seated and to announce that this was going to be the safe room in the Capitol—they were going to start bringing staff members in to line the backs of the floor here because this was a safe place to be, and we should just sit tight and be quiet.

Well, then we started hearing the roar outside, as the mob was descending on this building. And within 10 minutes, another member of the Capitol Police stood where you are sitting right now and said: Evacuate the Chamber as quickly as possible. Leave through these doors in an orderly fashion.

That was the reality of life in the Capitol and the business of the Senate when the mob—the Trump mob—descended on January 6. We saw what happened. Many of us left and had to follow it by videos that were taken and photos later of people who were assaulted. When it was all over, five people died, and 140 members of law enforcement were assaulted and victimized and physically attacked.

Those who dismiss it or don't want to talk about it on the floor have to accept the reality; the reality was there was death and violence against law enforcement officials that day. And the notion that somehow all of these people carrying Trump signs and banners were actually Democrats—what were they thinking? To believe that for a moment is to be totally deluded when it comes to the truth.

So what has happened since? The largest criminal prosecution in the history of the United States has ensued. All of those videotapes that were taken by the participants and others in the course of this insurrectionist mob have been used to establish evidence to bring criminal charges against more than 700 individuals, some of whom are already serving time in prison for what they did that day, and it is not over. It is anticipated that another 300 will be charged, some with even more serious crimes.

This was no minor incident or, as a Republican Congressman from Georgia said, ''just tourists visiting the Capitol.'' No, it was a deadly moment. People died as a result of what happened that day. People have been changed forever as a result of what happened that day. It was for real.

Today, the windows and furniture that were shattered by the rioters have been replaced. The National Guard members have gone home. Thank goodness the security fence around the Capitol is finally down, but there are many invisible scars from January 6. Five police officers who battled the mob died. More than 140 were wounded.

And the Big Lie of the stolen election that Trump used to summon his mob continues to metastasize. Over the last year, Republican lawmakers across the country have used this Big Lie as a pretext to pass laws to make it more difficult for Americans to vote.

The Republican leader came to the floor and said 94 percent of the people who voted in the last Presidential election said it was easy. Well, I am sure that is true. It was the largest turnout since 1900.

But what has happened in almost 20 states since then? Those State legislatures controlled by the Republican Party have tried to make it more difficult in the next election for the same people to vote. That is a fact.

And Americans now distrust our elections. More now believe that political violence is acceptable, and that has to change. Our democracy cannot endure with these cancers spreading.

Abraham Lincoln called American democracy ''the last best hope on Earth.'' This last year has taught us that it may be the last best hope, but it is fragile. Our generation—every generation—has to be willing to fight to protect it. For the sake of our forbearers, who gave us this democracy, and for our children and grandchildren, who will inherit its future, I am begging my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to condemn what happened in this Chamber on January 6, 2021, and to make it clear, once and for all, on a bipartisan basis that we stand together, united, for this democracy to succeed.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

Mr. THUNE. I ask unanimous consent that I be able to complete my remarks before the vote gets underway.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection.

FILIBUSTER

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I had hoped we had put the idea of changing the Senate filibuster rule to bed when two Members of the Democratic Party in the Senate pledged to oppose any attempt to abolish the filibuster, but, unfortunately, the Democrat leader has revived this idea and has said that he plans to hold a vote on changing the filibuster rule on or before January 17.

Democrats have offered a lot of bad ideas over the past year—a lot of bad ideas. But it is possible that abolishing the filibuster is by far the worst. Abolishing the filibuster would mean fundamentally changing the character of the Senate and removing one of the most significant protections for minority rights in our system of government.

Our Founders recognized that it wasn't just Kings who could be tyrants. They knew majorities could be tyrants, too, and that a majority, if unchecked, could trample the rights of the minority.

And so the Founders combined majority rule with both representation and constitutional protections for the minority. They established safeguards, checks and balances throughout our government, to keep the government in check and ensure that the rights of the minority were protected. And one of those safeguards was the U.S. Senate.

In the House of Representatives, majority rule is emphasized, and the Founders could have left it at that. They could have stuck with a single legislative body. But they didn't. Why? Because they were worried about the possibility of tyrannical majorities in the House endangering the rights of the minority.

The author of Federalist 62 notes:

> A senate, as a second branch of the legislative assembly, distinct from and dividing the power with, a first, must be in all cases a salutary check on the government. It doubles the security to the people, by requiring the concurrence of two distinct bodies in schemes of usurpation or perfidy. . . .
>
> Secondly. The necessity of a senate is not less indicated by the propensity of all single and numerous assemblies, to yield to the impulse of sudden and violent passions, and to be seduced by factious leaders, into intemperate and pernicious resolutions.

That is from the author of Federalist 62.

So the Founders created the Senate as a check on the House of Representatives. They made the Senate smaller

and Senators' terms of office longer, with the intention of creating a more stable, more thoughtful, and more deliberative legislative body to check ill-considered or intemperate legislation in attempts to curtail minority rights.

As time has gone on, the legislative filibuster has become perhaps the key way the Senate protects minority rights. The filibuster ensures that the minority party and the Americans it represents has a voice in the Senate. It forces compromise. It forces bipartisanship. It encourages a greater level of stability and predictability.

Even in the rare case when a majority party has a filibuster-proof majority in the Senate, the filibuster still forces the majority party to take into account the views of its more moderate or middle-of-the-road Members, thus ensuring that more Americans are represented in legislation.

Removing the filibuster would erase this protection and allow the majority, including an incredibly narrow or merely technical majority, as Democrats have right now, to trample minority rights.

In the words of one former Senator, ''We should make no mistake. . . . It is a fundamental power grab by the majority party. . . . Folks who want to see this change want to eliminate one of the procedural mechanisms designed for the express purpose for guaranteeing individual rights, and they also have a consequence, and would undermine the protections of a minority point of view in the heat of majority excess.''

That is former Senator, now President, Joe Biden, one of the many Democrats who has opposed abolishing the filibuster, because, of course, Democrats were singing a different tune on the filibuster just a couple of years ago.

When President Trump urged Republican Senators to abolish the legislative filibuster—and, I would add, dozens of times—Democrats were strongly opposed. In 2017, 32 Democrat Senators, including now-Vice President HARRIS and a majority of the current Democrat caucus, signed a letter urging that the legislative filibuster be preserved, and Republicans agreed and refused to abolish the legislative filibuster despite the former President's repeated urging.

It is not because we didn't have a lot of legislation that we wanted to pass; we did. And we knew that abolishing the filibuster would make it a whole lot easier to advance our agenda, but we also knew that the Senate wasn't designed to let a slim majority of Senators push through whatever agenda it wanted and that abolishing the legislative filibuster would quickly come back to haunt us when we were in the minority again. And so we resisted our own President's urging and preserved—preserved—the legislative filibuster.

Now, however, many Democrats, who not only supported but actively—actively and repeatedly—used the filibuster during the previous administration to block major coronavirus relief legislation and police reform legislation, have apparently decided that rules protecting the minority should only apply when Democrats are in the minority.

Apparently, Democrat minorities deserve representation, but Republican minorities do not.

It is a particularly outrageous position when you consider the fact that, right now, Democrats have nothing more than a technical majority in the Senate. The Senate is currently divided 50–50. The only reason Democrats have a deciding vote in the Senate is because the Vice President is a Democrat. That is hardly the kind of majority that should make Democrats feel free to steamroll minority rights.

And let me put aside the question of minority rights and Democrats' hypocrisy on this issue for just a moment.

I want to talk about two things: One, my Democrat colleagues should be very sure that abolishing or amending the filibuster will come back to haunt them. That is simply the way of things. They only have to look back at Democrats' decision to abolish the filibuster for judicial nominations.

I think I can speak for most of my Democrat colleagues when I say that it came back to haunt them and probably sooner than they expected. More than one Democrat, faced with President Trump's judicial nominees and his Supreme Court appointments, openly regretted their party having abolished the judicial filibuster. I would urge my Democrat colleagues to remember that.

And I would urge them to remember that if they regret having abolished the judicial filibuster, they are likely to regret abolishing the legislative filibuster even more.

I would also urge them to remember that they barely have a majority now, and that even the strongest majorities eventually end up back in the minority. Sooner or later, abolishing or amending the legislative filibuster will come back to haunt them.

I get that my Democrat colleagues want to accomplish big things. Well, I would just like to remind them that it is possible to accomplish big things in a bipartisan fashion. I know, because we did it at the Commerce Committee when I was the committee chair, but it does require a real willingness to compromise and an acceptance of the fact that the Senate is not designed to let a narrow majority unilaterally impose its will.

Finally, I urge my Democrat colleagues to think about what abolishing the filibuster would mean for ordinary Americans. Of course, it would mean decreased representation for any Americans whose party was a minority, but it would also mean highly unstable government policy and a resulting lack of confidence in government as well as a sharp increase in partisanship, which, I venture to say, is not what we need around here right now.

In his discussion of the importance of the Senate as a stabilizing body, the author of Federalist 62 notes that ''a continual change even of good measures is inconsistent with every rule of prudence, and every prospect of success. . . . In the first place, it forfeits the respect and confidence of other nations, and all the advantages connected with national character. . . . The internal effects of a mutable policy are still more calamitous. It poisons the blessing of liberty itself. It will be of little avail to the people that the laws are made by men of their own choice, if the laws be so voluminous that they cannot be read, or so incoherent that they cannot be understood; if they be repealed or revised before they are promulgated, or undergo such incessant changes that no man, who knows what the law is to-day, can guess what it will be to-morrow. Law is defined to be a rule of action; but how can that be a rule, which is little known, and less fixed?''

Abolish the filibuster, and we will end up in exactly the situation the author of Federalist 62 feared—with an inconsistent and ever-changing set of laws.

An all-Democrat government will quickly push through whatever measures it judges to be the best, and an all-Republican government, when it takes power, will do the same.

And again, neither party should be so arrogant as to think that the opposing party will never again gain control of government. The government was in unified Republican hands just 3 years ago; today, it is narrowly in Democrat hands, and it will continue to shift.

Abolish the filibuster, and policy will shift sharply with it: social policy on abortion, religious freedom, and other issues; regulatory policy; tax policy; foreign policy, and the list goes on.

In short, to quote Federalist 62, the laws would ''undergo such incessant changes that no man, who knows what the law is to-day, can guess what it will be to-morrow.''

And such incessant changes of national policy would unquestionably heighten partisanship in this country.

As the laws became more extreme, the tension between Republicans and Democrats, conservatives and liberals, would only heighten—here in Congress, yes, but, most importantly, throughout the country among ordinary Americans.

Our government would no longer be perceived as government of the people and for the people. It would now be perceived as government of and for Democrat Americans or Republican Americans, depending on the party in power.

Democrats may think that some of the bills that they are advancing will serve the American people.

Well, something else that will serve the American people is moderation and predictability in our government, and that is something that we will lose if we turn the Senate into the House of Representatives and abolish protection for minority rights.

When Republicans were repeatedly faced with the prospect of abolishing the legislative filibuster during the previous administration, we said no, not because there wasn't important legislation we wanted to pass but because we knew that the best thing for our country and for our future representation in the Senate was to preserve this essential protection for the minority.

I urge my Democratic colleagues to think of their future and our country and make the same decision.

I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The senior assistant legislative 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 Executive Calendar No. 327, Anne A. Witkowsky, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Conflict and Stabilization Operations).

Robert Menendez, Patrick J. Leahy, Patty Murray, Maria Cantwell, Sheldon Whitehouse, Brian Schatz, Debbie Stabenow, Catherine Cortez Masto, Christopher A. Coons, Ron Wyden, Margaret Wood Hassan, Edward J. Markey, Benjamin L. Cardin, Richard J. Durbin, Tina Smith, Elizabeth Warren, Angus S. King, Jr.

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 Anne A. Witkowsky, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Conflict and Stabilization Operations), shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA), are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. HAWLEY), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Missouri (Mr. HAWLEY) would have voted ''nay.''

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 62, nays 24, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 1 Ex.]

YEAS—62

Baldwin	Grassley	Rosen
Bennet	Hassan	Rounds
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Schatz
Blunt	Hickenlooper	Schumer
Booker	Hirono	Shaheen
Brown	Hoeven	Smith
Burr	Kaine	Stabenow
Cantwell	Kelly	Sullivan
Capito	King	Tester
Carper	Klobuchar	Thune
Casey	Leahy	Tillis
Collins	Luján	Toomey
Coons	Manchin	Van Hollen
Cornyn	Markey	Warner
Cortez Masto	McConnell	Warnock
Cramer	Merkley	Warren
Crapo	Murphy	Whitehouse
Duckworth	Padilla	Wicker
Durbin	Peters	Wyden
Fischer	Reed	Young
Gillibrand	Romney	

NAYS—24

Barrasso	Ernst	Marshall
Blackburn	Hagerty	Moran
Boozman	Hyde-Smith	Paul
Braun	Johnson	Sasse
Cassidy	Kennedy	Scott (FL)
Cotton	Lankford	Scott (SC)
Cruz	Lee	Shelby
Daines	Lummis	Tuberville

NOT VOTING—14

Cardin	Menendez	Risch
Feinstein	Murkowski	Rubio
Graham	Murray	Sanders
Hawley	Ossoff	Sinema
Inhofe	Portman	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The yeas are 62, the nays are 24.

The motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Nevada.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Ms. ROSEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following my remarks, the Senate recess until 2 p.m. and the postcloture time on the Witkowsky nomination expire at 2:15 p.m.

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

TRIBUTE TO HARRY REID

Ms. ROSEN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the life and memory of former Senate Majority Leader Harry Mason Reid. To some in this Chamber, Senator Reid was a colleague, a mentor, a friend. To me and to so many Nevadans, he was also a source of inspiration and pride. His life, coming from the humblest of beginnings, is the definition of the American dream.

During his decades of public service, from the State assembly to the Lieutenant Governor's Office, to chairing the Nevada Gaming Commission, he became the most powerful leader in Congress. This former boxer from a tiny town called Searchlight always put Nevada first.

Senator Reid served five terms in this very Chamber, and what he accomplished during those decades here, particularly as majority leader, is remarkable. Senator Reid stopped Yucca Mountain. He made sure Nevada would not become the Nation's nuclear waste dump. He is the reason we passed the Affordable Care Act into law, providing quality, affordable healthcare to tens of millions of Americans. He did more than anyone to rescue Nevada's economy from the depths of the great recession. He passed crucial Wall Street reform to hold the big banks accountable for that economic crisis and prevent a future one. He established Nevada's first national park, Great Basin National Park. He saved Social Security from being privatized. He was a fearless champion for bold action to stop climate change, and he was a tireless fighter for comprehensive immigration reform and the Dream Act.

Because Senator Reid celebrated our State's diversity and recognized its importance, Nevada is an early State, the first in the West when it comes to choosing each party's nominee for the White House. No matter the issue, if it impacted Nevada, you can be sure Senator Reid would do anything to deliver for our State. He was a voice for all Nevadans, and if you ever went to an event for Senator Reid, he would remind you by making sure ''Home Means Nevada''—that is our State song—was sung in honor of our beloved State.

This is how he got things done. He was blunt. He was direct. He was a real straight shooter. He didn't mince words. When he identified a problem, he would work relentlessly to find a solution. As so many of us here know, you could try as hard as you wanted to, but you could never leave the conversation or hang up the phone before he did. He said what he needed to and was on to his next piece of work.

I want to share the best advice Senator Reid gave to me. He said this: Take every call. Listen to every person, whether you agree with them or not, and then tell them when you are with them and tell them when you are not. Be open and honest in your conversations.

These are words I try to live by here every day. They were things Senator Reid was respected for.

Senator Reid also knew that the constituent services, the work we do with our teams, literally saves lives and directly helps families, and it touches so many people. It is the most important and personal work we do and, through that work, can often become the foundation for legislation at the Federal level.

When I was thinking about whether or not to run for the Senate, Senator Reid invited me and my husband Larry over to his home to talk to him about making that decision. Well, in Senator Reid's style, instead of taking the lead to tell us what to do and give us advice, he actually asked his wife Landra to talk to us about her experience.

Well, anyone who has met Landra Reid knows what an incredible woman she is. Senator Reid was a family man, and he adored her and their children, of course, grandchildren, and I believe even great-grandchildren so very much. As my friend Brian Greenspun wrote the other day in the Las Vegas Sun, ''To Harry Reid the greatest accomplishment he had was his family.''

Anyway, in Senator Reid's living room, Landra told me and my husband