

times going. The political elite here live in a world where the struggle of working Americans is just a human interest story that you read about right along with the gossip page.

But it is time for this town to take some responsibility. It is time for the governing class to admit that the policies it has pursued for decades on trade, on immigration, and on finance have helped to drive working people to this crisis. And it is time to acknowledge that a crisis for working America is a crisis for all of America. It is not enough for wealthy people in Silicon Valley to do well. By the way, those people don't need any more advocates in this city. They have lots of them already. It is working people who need advocates here, and it is working families who need a voice.

You know, working folks don't ask for much. They work hard. They love their families, they love God, they love the place where they live, and they want the opportunity to build a home there and a way of life that is prosperous and that is secure and that is meaningful and that they can pass on to their children. That is not too much to ask. In the America of the 21st century, that is not too much to expect. It is not too much to stand for and to fight for because it is the working people of this country who built this Nation. They are the ones who keep it going now, and they are the ones where this country's strength is found. It is the working people of this country—their future and their families—who are going to define the future of our country.

I would just say that this is what we should be debating. This challenge is what we should be confronting. This crisis is what we should be looking to and addressing because this is what is going to define our time.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. JONES. Mr. President, I have to admit that I haven't had a heck of a lot of sleep the last few nights, and I don't think anyone has. If anyone has rested well the last few nights, it is because they are either not paying attention or they are here for the wrong reason.

We are in some troubled times. Events of the past 2 weeks have been nothing short of stunning. They have been stunning in the speed in which they have unfolded. They have been stunning and disturbing in the allegations that have been made regarding the conduct of the President of the United States. These are allegations that go to the heart of national security and allegations that go to the heart of whether or not the President is upholding his oath to the Constitution of the United States or abusing the power of the Presidency.

We have to remember in this body, and we have to remind our colleagues, we have to remind the media, and we have to remind the public that we are

just now beginning this process. The facts have not come out. We are just now beginning to see facts and determining what happened over the course of this past summer—where things were, what happened, what was said, and who said it. We have to determine the allegations and whether or not they have merit based on the facts that come out, not just reports in the media or even the allegations in a complaint. I am a lawyer. Allegations in a complaint are just simply allegations made, but they have to be proven.

The reason I rise today is that already we are seeing this becoming political. People are going to their political corners. The partisan tribalism is taking over already, and that is unfortunate. It is a sad commentary when a process that is so rooted in the Constitution of the United States—something so fundamental to our democracy—is almost immediately cast in political terms. My colleague and friend, Senator SASSE from Nebraska, used the term “partisan tribalism” in today's world that is “insta-certain.” No matter what you see, no matter what you read, it doesn't matter because you are going to take a side, and when we take sides, the American public immediately take sides and no one listens to the facts.

We are called as Senators, we are called as Members of the House, and we are called as Members of this body to a much higher duty than that—a much higher duty. Our duty is to carefully analyze and review the facts—facts, not mere allegations; facts, not reports or leaks; facts, not what some political talking head on the television says their opinion might be. Our duty is so much higher than that.

We have seen already some of what appear to be very disturbing facts. We have seen a summary of a telephone call between the President of the United States and the President of Ukraine. Ukraine is a country dependent on countries like the United States. The balance of power between the United States and Ukraine is not balanced at all. We have so much more power, and in the summary of that call, the President of the United States noted that to the President of Ukraine. He said, essentially: You are dependent on us. No one else helps you, but you can count on the United States of America. And, by the way, I need a favor. I need you to do me a personal political favor.

In that conversation, he talked about not only having his personal lawyer but also utilizing the Attorney General of the United States to help benefit them politically. Those are initially the facts, and they are very disturbing. For anyone to say that they are not is shirking their responsibility to their constituents, to the public, to the Constitution, and to the very oath that we took when we came into this body.

But again, it is but one piece of a puzzle. We have now also seen the contents of the so-called whistleblower

complaint. “Whistleblower” is a term of art. A whistleblower is just simply somebody who has come forward, but they are given the name whistleblower because they are given legal protections. These people who come forward are concerned citizens of the United States. It is a concerned citizen of the United States who saw something happening that disturbed him so much that he felt compelled to bring it to someone's attention. They are documented fairly well, but again, these facts have not come out. They are just statements in an allegation in a complaint that have to be determined.

I have been asked over and over by the media in the last 2 days: Do you support the House doing this? Do you support impeachment? Do you support this or that?

My comment is always the same: I want to know the facts. It doesn't matter to me what the House of Representatives, in their prerogative, calls their processes. I want to know the facts. The American people deserve to know the facts. This body deserves to know the facts, whether or not anything comes over from the House of Representatives. We deserve to know whether or not the President is abusing his office. We deserve to know whether or not he is placing our national security at risk because, remember, Ukraine is under threat from Russia every day. Every day they are looking over their shoulder. Every day they are looking over their shoulder. That puts us at risk, as well. We have to make sure that we are deliberate, that we move forward with a process that is deliberate. We owe it to the American people to be deliberate, to be somber, to be making sure that we know the facts before we make our judgments.

It doesn't matter what side of the aisle you are on. This is not a Republican process. This is not a Democratic process. And for God's sake, it is not a socialist agenda. That is about the dumbest thing that I have heard people say over the last two days. Good Lord, we are talking about a process that is rooted in the Constitution of the United States. It is rooted in the Constitution of the United States for a purpose—part of the checks and balances that seem to be going out the window these days in our society and in our government and here in Washington, DC. This is an American agenda to make sure that we know the facts and that we understand those facts so people who are around here watching this today know and can be secure in the fact that their Congress is doing their job, that the President is doing his job, that the courts are doing their job.

This is not the time to circle the wagons around the President, but, likewise, it is not the time to make a judgment already that this President should be removed from office or even for articles of impeachment voted on by the House. This is not the time to do that. We are beginning a process

that we have to take our time on. I say that knowing that when we say “take our time,” we just need to be deliberate, but we need to move. This is not something that needs to drag on. This is not something through which the American public needs to be dragged over the course of too long a period of time. This can be determined.

If you look at that whistleblower complaint that was filed, this is something that should easily be able to be done in a relatively short period of time if the administration will cooperate and if we get that instead of the stonewalling that we have seen in the past.

Cooperate with us. Do your job. Do your duty and let us do ours. That is all that we ask. That is all that anybody should ever ask of anyone in this body or anyone in the House of Representatives. Let us do our job.

We are about to leave this place for a couple of weeks. The House is leaving, though they may still do a little work. We are going to be leaving for 2 weeks. We are going back home to our States. We are going to be talking to the media. We are going to be talking to constituents. I guarantee you that when I go back to Alabama, a lot of people will have already made up their minds. When I go to a townhall or whatever, they will have made up their minds without any facts. They make up their mind based on the media.

My friends in the media need to pay attention too. Don't ask me whether or not this is going to affect my election in 2020. Don't ask me if it is going to affect Joe Biden or Donald Trump, or ask me if it is going to affect the Presidential race. Ask me about what is going to happen to the Constitution and what is going to happen to the rule of law. Let's talk about the seriousness of what we have and not the politics of it, for goodness' sake.

But every time I turn around, when I walk out of these doors, the first thing they are going to ask me is this: How do you think this is going to affect your race?

That is not my job. That is not my oath. That is not my duty. If we put our fingers to the political winds with everything we do in this body, we may as well not be here. We should not be able to live with ourselves. Unfortunately, I think so many people do that. I am hoping that in this day, in this time, in these troubled waters we are about to embark on, people will see that higher calling and that they will once again return to that time and that place when this Senate was a deliberative body and not a knee-jerk reaction to a particular program or nomination or whatever that comes before it. We will return to the days of yesterday where we actually deliberate and we talk amongst ourselves and we have a civil discussion about the important issues that we are faced with. I remember those days. I was here. I was sitting back there as a Senate staffer, watching those great debates and watching

people change their minds on the floor of the Senate because of the debate that someone gave and someone persuaded him. We don't have those any more. Look around right now. We are all gone, except those people around here listening to me, and I have staff here. But we don't have those debates any more. We don't have those deliberations any more. We are going to have to now. We are going to have to because the Republic depends on it. The fate of this country will depend on it. We are so divided in this country right now. We are living in what Arthur Brooks has called that “culture of contempt,” where we don't necessarily just disagree with each other. We hold each other in contempt if we disagree with each other.

We have to change that, folks. We have to get back. We have to change that. We have to make sure people understand their roles and their duties. We have to make sure that for this country to progress and for this country to survive, we have to work together.

We have to be one America. We can't be so divided. That is exactly what our enemies have been trying to do to us for centuries. For two centuries or more, they have wanted to divide us, and they came close during the Civil War. They are going to come close now if we are not careful. If we don't stop folks on both sides of the aisle from continuing to pull us into our corners but rather start pulling people back to where we can have these discussions, we will be in trouble.

As we go forward and as we go into this recess, I hope all of my colleagues will remember their oaths. I hope people will remember what they said when they stood right over there and the Vice President of the United States asked them to raise their right hands and say: “I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic.”

We took an oath to support the Constitution. We didn't take an oath to support the President of the United States. We didn't take an oath to support the Republican Party. We didn't take an oath to support the Democratic Party. We took an oath to defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic. That is an important part that our Framers put in the Constitution, “foreign and domestic.”

We said we would take this obligation freely without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion. We cannot evade. We took an oath not to evade while we were here—that is not what we do—and to well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which we entered.

Our duties to this office are to be fair, to be impartial, and to be deliberative, not political. Our duties to this office are to our constituents and to do the very best we can to make sure we analyze whatever is in front of

us because history will judge us. It will determine whether or not we acted with courage and conviction or whether we just simply tested the political winds as some people are already doing.

Often in my talks around the country and in some even here, I like to quote one of my favorite characters from literature, Atticus Finch. Atticus Finch gave an impassioned closing argument to a jury he knew was not likely to give him the verdict he sought. He laid out a case in defense of Tom Robinson, a Black man who was accused of raping a White woman. In that defense, he went through the facts. Everybody who has ever read the book and everybody who has ever watched the movie knows Tom Robinson was innocent, but Atticus Finch knew that the likelihood of the jury's finding that man innocent was slim and none.

At the end of that closing argument, he talked about the solemn duty, the solemn obligation, that the jurors had to the system. He talked about the justice system and the courts and the jurors being the great levelers of society, where the pauper and the rich man were the same in the eyes of the law. He talked about the duty they had to fairly and impartially judge the facts.

Just before he sat down—and you could see it and feel it, and if you were to read the book, you could feel that Atticus knew what was going to happen—he looked that jury in the eye and said: “[Gentlemen], in the name of God, do your duty.”

Ladies and gentlemen and colleagues, in the name of God, we have to do our duty. We have to do our duty. We have to make sure we fulfill our oaths and not be concerned about how many votes it might get us or how many votes we might lose. Whether we know the outcome or not, whether we get pressure from Assad or not, whether or not there are millions of dollars spent on TV and in radio so as to tell us to vote a certain way, we have to fulfill that solemn obligation. In the name of God, we should do our duty and nothing less.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following nominations: Executive Calendar Nos. 446, 447, 448, and 449.

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

The clerk will report the nominations en bloc.