

they want and only what they want. It is their way or no way. That is not treating others as they wish to be treated. This is an attitude of saying: I know better than you and my way is going to be the only way. That is not how we govern this country. That is not how we honor and respect other people's points of view that may be different from ours.

I do not wish to hold up the Senator from Maine, but I wanted to follow up on the conversation I had through the Chair 2 days ago. All of these high-minded, highfalutin ideas of all of us getting together and treating each other as we wish to be treated and hammering out this policy—lo and behold, maybe everything I am saying doesn't have a thing to do with this by virtue of an investigative piece having been done by the New York Times over the weekend. I wish to read the first three paragraphs of this investigative piece. It is entitled: "A Federal Budget Crisis Months in the Planning" by Sheryl Gay Stolberg and Mike McIntire.

Shortly after President Obama started his second term, a loose-knit coalition of conservative activists led by former Attorney General Edwin Meese III gathered in the capital to plot strategy. Their push to repeal Mr. Obama's health care law was going nowhere, and they desperately needed a new plan.

Out of that session, held one morning in a location the members insist on keeping secret, came a little-noticed "blueprint to defunding Obamacare" signed by Mr. Meese and leaders of more than three dozen conservative groups.

It articulated a take-no-prisoners legislative strategy that has long percolated in conservative circles: that Republicans could derail the health care overhaul if conservative lawmakers were willing to push fellow Republicans—including their cautious leaders—into cutting off financing for the entire federal government.

This is only the first three paragraphs. If that is true, then all of these high-minded ideas of the Golden Rule and treating each other with respect and working out your differences is all out the window.

If that is true—and it looks as if it is by virtue of what we see going on down in the other end of this Capitol Building, a small group of people are not going to do anything to open the government unless they get their way to defund the Affordable Care Act, the health care reform act—I would suggest that if that is the case, then the people who are suffering should sit up and take notice of what is happening to their government.

We have heard examples over and over. Senator BROWN and I were just talking about the 97 percent of people who are laid off in NASA. Then what do we do with all of the civilian workforce in NASA? Think of what this is doing to all of the contractors who work for NASA.

We have heard also the statistic out here that over 70 percent of the intelligence community has been furloughed. We have heard that Head Start, the federally funded program to get children ready to start the public

schools, kindergarten and first grade, is shutting down.

We know last week, when we were in the middle of this shutdown, there was a storm brewing in the Gulf of Mexico. Thank the good Lord it fizzled out, but at one point it was expected to turn into a Category 1 hurricane hitting the gulf coast. Had that happened, FEMA had been laid off—although they reached back and started the National Guard, *et cetera*. Thank you to Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel for finding an unintended consequence in the law that was passed to pay the U.S. military while the government is shut down because he found a little hook in there.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 2 additional minutes.

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

Mr. NELSON. He found a hook in there so he could then extend that to most of the civilian workforce, including some of the National Guard, but we didn't know that.

In my State of Florida, 156 employees were getting the notices just in the National Guard on Friday. There were already 1,000 military technicians that had been furloughed in the National Guard, and we had an inbound storm.

What about the programs in our State to help veterans find jobs? If we are not done with this shutdown at the end of October, that is gone. What about the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, a part of the State government. Ten percent of their funds are Federal funds. What about the Florida Department of Agriculture? Over 6 percent of their workforce is federally funded.

What about—and we have heard this in the Senate—Women, Infants, and Children? A society is supposed to take care of its very old and its very young. This is why we have programs for Women, Infants, and Children. Yet the supplemental nutrition program for women, for nursing mothers, for children up to the age of 5, for breast-feeding support, for nutrition education, and for health checkups is gone.

I could go on and on. Others have said it more articulately than I. This is ridiculous. This shouldn't go on. As the drumbeat of the crescendo continues, it will grow louder as we march toward October 17, when the debt ceiling has to be raised so we don't go into default.

It is a sad day.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Kaine). The assistant majority leader.

STIRLING AND ELLIS NOMINATIONS

Mr. DURBIN. I rise to speak in support of two individuals whose nominations will be voted on at 5 p.m. We haven't set any records in the Senate in the last 5 weeks for productivity. We passed one major piece of legislation, which the Senator from Oregon brought before us relative to the issue

of our helium reserve. It was great work. It is one of the few bipartisan actions we have accomplished in 5 weeks, maybe the only bipartisan one. At 5 p.m. we have a chance to improve our record.

These are two nominees for Federal district court judges in Illinois that I commend to the Members of the Senate.

I wish to say at the outset it isn't only this Senator on this side of the aisle making this recommendation. Senator MARK KIRK and I worked on a bipartisan basis to come up with these nominees and get them approved by our nomination committees. They are then approved by us, by the White House, by the Judiciary Committee, and brought to the floor.

Since Senator KIRK has been elected, we have done this in lockstep, together every step of the way. By tradition, the President's party Senator, in this case myself, has three appointments. Senator KIRK has the fourth, but each of us has the veto power over the other's choices.

We have a working relationship and a good one. Senator KIRK has endorsed these two nominees: Colin Bruce, who has been nominated to serve in the Central District of Illinois, and Sara Ellis, nominated to serve in the Northern District of Illinois. They have the experience, qualifications, and integrity to be excellent Federal judges. Both appeared before the Senate Judiciary Committee for a hearing on June 19, and both were reported out of the committee by a unanimous voice vote.

I would like briefly to discuss their backgrounds and qualifications.

Colin Bruce has been nominated to fill the judicial vacancy that opened in Urbana when Judge Michael McCuskey took senior status. Michael McCuskey is also one of my appointments, an outstanding Federal judge. I am sorry he is going into senior status, but he felt, and I did too, that Colin Bruce would be an excellent replacement to succeed him in that position.

Mr. Bruce has worked in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Central District of Illinois since 1989. He currently serves as the first assistant U.S. attorney, a position he has held since 2010.

Colin Bruce applied for the position of U.S. attorney. He didn't get it. But the man who did, the man I selected, Jim Lewis, hired him as his first assistant. So it was a few months ago that Jim Lewis, the U.S. District Attorney, came by my office with Colin Bruce. We talked about a number of things, and he said: Incidentally, I don't know what I would do without Colin Bruce. He is such an extraordinary first assistant. When he finished his presentation, I said: Jim, would you stick around for a minute; Colin, go outside, if you would. I said: Jim, I have an opening for a judgeship, and I know Colin is a person who would fill that

bill. He has already gone through all the vetting. He would be an extraordinary judge, but you would lose him as your first assistant. He said: I can't stand in his way. I couldn't think of a better choice to be a judge in this district.

Colin Bruce was born in Urbana, IL. He got his undergraduate and law degrees from the University of Illinois and went straight to the U.S. Attorney's Office out of law school. He has handled criminal, civil cases, and bankruptcy and tort claims filed against the government. He then shifted to prosecuting complex criminal matters, drug fraud and cyber crime cases. In 2007, he was appointed branch chief of the Urbana division of the U.S. Attorney's Office, and in 2010 he was named first assistant U.S. attorney, which is the No. 2 position, as I mentioned.

In his current capacity, he oversees the day-to-day operations of the U.S. Attorney's Office, supervises all the Federal criminal investigations, prosecutions, and appeals in the district, as well as civil defensive and affirmative litigation in the district in which the United States is a party.

He has received numerous recognitions, including certifications of appreciation from the Justice Department, the FBI, and the DEA, as well as awards from the Illinois State Police and the Metropolitan Enforcement Group and Task Force.

He has a record of giving back to the Urbana community through his association with charities, such as the Central Illinois Chapter of the American Red Cross and Imagine No Malaria, a charity that purchases mosquito nets for families in Africa.

He is an outstanding nominee for the Federal bench, and has a great family whom he brought to the hearing. I certainly urge my colleagues to join Senator KIRK and me in supporting his nomination.

The second nominee is Sara Ellis. She has been nominated for a Chicago-based judgeship that was formerly occupied by the distinguished Judge Joan Gottschall. Ms. Ellis currently works at the prestigious law firm of Schiff Hardin in Chicago, where her practice involves white-collar criminal matters, complex civil litigation, and corporate counseling.

She was born in Ontario, Canada, to parents who had emigrated from Jamaica. She moved to the United States and became a citizen at the age of 15. Her undergraduate degree is from Indiana University and her law degree is from the Loyola University Chicago School of Law.

After law school, Ms. Ellis joined the Federal Defender Program in Chicago, where she served for 6 years as a staff attorney. In this capacity she represented indigent criminal defendants in all aspects of criminal litigation, preliminary hearings, trials, sentencing hearings, and appeals. She then worked in private practice for several

years before joining the City of Chicago Department of Law in 2004, where she served as assistant corporation counsel for 4 years, primarily handling section 1983 cases.

In 2008, Ms. Ellis joined Schiff Hardin, where she handles criminal and civil matters. She has served as an adjunct professor at Loyola University Chicago School of Law, teaching Federal criminal practice and legal writing.

She has a distinguished record of pro bono work and community service. Among her endeavors she has taught reading and legal skills to children living in juvenile detention and she has provided legal advice and guidance to the Warren Park Youth Baseball League.

She is also actively involved with St. Gertrude Catholic Parish in Chicago and is on the board of the parish school, Northside Catholic Academy.

Ms. Ellis is an excellent nominee for a Federal judge. She too is a person with great family and children backing her up, and I am happy Senator KIRK and I can commend her as well to the Senate for this nomination.

I hope my colleagues will join me in voting to confirm these two nominees who have bipartisan support and will be outstanding Federal judges.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, before he leaves the floor, I want to thank the Senator from Illinois for his kind words, and I certainly support the appointments, and I am glad we were able to get that legislation passed on a bipartisan basis to help American industry.

On Friday last, it was thrilling to read the United States is now No. 1 in the world when it comes to energy production—not Saudi Arabia, not Russia, but our country. It was a particular source of such satisfaction because, after all these years of the American people hearing about how we are dependent on foreign sources of energy, at the top of our papers Friday last the energy experts said the red, white, and blue was at the top in terms of energy production.

This good news story about the energy boom is, obviously, as the Presiding Officer knows, absolutely essential to creating more high-skilled, high-wage jobs. I saw it, along with my colleague, when I was in his State, and we see it all across the country. This energy boom, for example, has been key to triggering a manufacturing renaissance—the lower cost of natural gas in particular being a magnet to bringing companies that had gone overseas back to the United States again and employing our workers with good-paying jobs. It has been key to the falling imports of foreign oil. Of course, wind and solar farms are adding tremen-

dously to the power mix. In our part of the country, Shepherds Flat in eastern Oregon is our country's biggest wind farm, and we are especially proud of it.

The current senseless government shutdown is putting this good news story at risk. When it comes to causing problems, unfortunately, this shutdown has something for everybody. If you care about oil and natural gas development, Federal agencies now cannot approve drilling permits either on Federal land or offshore. If you care about renewable energy, wind and wave energy permitting is now at a standstill. It is at a standstill because of the shutdown. Environmental reviews for solar farms on Federal land have stopped. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has canceled a meeting about implementing two hydropower bills that passed this Congress on overwhelming votes.

In my part of the country we are especially proud of this legislation. Hydropower is responsible. It is actually the biggest source of clean power in the United States. Industry estimates it could generate perhaps as much as 60,000 megawatts of additional clean power. These hydropower bills—there were two of them—were the first stand-alone energy bills to become law since 2009. Now they languish because of the shutdown.

All of these developments—the developments I have described with respect to natural gas development, solar and wind energy, the hydropower laws that passed overwhelmingly in both the Senate and the House—are now, in effect, languishing. What it means is less new energy, fewer new jobs, and less revenue—less revenue that we are going to need in both the public and the private sector.

I might also add this shutdown harms the important safety work that needs to be done by blocking work that is going to speed up the response to oil spills and accidents offshore. Of particular concern to me, and I know to so many others in the Senate—I see my colleague from Alaska is here—are the people who get hammered, who get hit hardest by these consequences who live in our rural communities, the ones who depend upon producing energy, timber, and recreation. They are the ones who feel the biggest hit from the shutdown.

I am going to talk about what this means in terms of recreation and hunting and fishing. The hunting season starts at different times in different parts of the country, but between recreation and hunting and fishing we are talking about something in the vicinity of \$646 billion a year which goes just to the recreation sector, and another \$140-billion-plus in terms of hunting. I am going to describe the consequences there, but we are talking about policies with enormous impact for our rural communities.

I mentioned the thrilling news of last Friday, about how we were tops in terms of energy production, but I got some additional news that wasn't exactly thrilling last Friday when I was