

on Judge Curiel's ethnicity are racist. This is precisely the type of failure that gave rise to Donald Trump in the first place.

Senator MCCONNELL and all congressional leaders have never taken a stand against Trump's vile rhetoric. That is because the hate emanating from Trump's mouth reflects the Republican Party's agenda in the U.S. Senate for the last 7½ years—the agenda Senator MCCONNELL himself promoted. For years Senator MCCONNELL and other Republican leaders embraced the darkest elements within their party. The Republican Party made anti-woman, anti-Latino, anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant, and anti-Obama policies the norm. Trump is the logical conclusion of what Republican leaders have been saying and doing for the past 7½ years.

By refusing to denounce Trump's attack on a Federal judge for the racism it clearly connotes, it shows Senator MCCONNELL is the poster boy for Republicans' spinelessness that allowed Donald Trump to be the Republican nominee for President of the United States. I have made this argument for months. I am not the only one making it now. Now, even some Republicans are joining me. The conservative blog "RedState" railed against Senator MCCONNELL's refusal to condemn Trump's racist attacks.

The conservative blog "RedState" said this: "[Senator MCCONNELL] fell back to the last coward's refuge: we have to support Trump because he won the primary."

The junior Senator from Nebraska, Mr. SASSE, a Republican, is willing to say what Senator MCCONNELL will not. What he is saying today and he tweeted was: "Public Service Announcement: Saying someone can't do a specific job because of his or her race is the literal definition of 'racism.'"

Newt Gingrich, former Republican Speaker of the House, called Trump's comments "inexcusable." There are others. But for his part, Senator MCCONNELL is doubling down on Trump. The Republican leader is waging a nonstop campaign to persuade any Republicans who have doubts about supporting Trump to drop their complaints and fall in line. The Republican leader even went so far—listen to this—as to compare Donald Trump as comparable to President Dwight Eisenhower, to GEN Dwight Eisenhower.

Donald Trump is a failed businessman who bilked millions of Americans out of their hard-earned money. No wonder he will not release his tax returns. Trump doesn't deserve to be mentioned in the same breath as President Eisenhower, who led the Allied forces in World War II and, among other things, integrated America's schools. Comparing Eisenhower to Trump? Give us a break.

Donald Trump is the converse of all for which leaders such as Eisenhower, Lincoln, Roosevelt, and Ronald Reagan stood. They stood for equality, fairness, and decency. Trump and McCon-

nell obviously do not. Donald Trump stands for hatred and stands for division. Senator MCCONNELL also defended Trump's temperament, reassuring everyone that as President, Donald Trump "would be fine." That is what he said. That is a quote.

The Republican leader also extolled Trump's intelligence. Senator MCCONNELL even claimed the Republican Party is "at an all-time high," with Trump at its helm. That is how the Republican leader spent last week. He wasn't fighting for resources to stop the spread of Zika. He was leading the cheers as he stumped for Trump.

Senator MCCONNELL was doing zero for the 100,000 poisoned residents of Flint, MI. Senator MCCONNELL was doing zero to fund our Nation's response to the opioid epidemic. It is terrible. The Republican leader was too busy being a trumpet for Trump, and now that he has firmly entrenched himself in Trump's corner, I can't help but wonder just how far Senator MCCONNELL's support extends. For example, were Donald's Trump's comments about Judge Curiel racist, as the Senator from Nebraska said? Senator MCCONNELL wouldn't answer that question yesterday. He had numerous opportunities to do it. So I will give him another opportunity today.

There are other questions the Republican leader needs to answer. Does he believe a Federal judge should be disqualified because of his Mexican heritage? Does he believe these attacks are acceptable for a man who wants to be President of our great country? Does he agree judges should face a religious test?

Senator MCCONNELL said last week: "We know that Donald Trump will make the right kind of Supreme Court appointments." After Donald Trump's latest attacks on the judiciary, does he truly believe Trump is the right man to pick nominees to our Nation's highest Court?

The Republican leader defended Trump's temperament, saying he "would be fine" as President. I ask the Senator from Kentucky, is it fine when Donald Trump calls women pigs and dogs? Is it fine when Trump calls immigrants rapists and murderers? Is it fine that his party's Presidential candidate urges violence at rallies? These are not rhetorical questions.

The Republican leader has so fully embraced Donald Trump that we are all unclear as to where Trump's platform ends and the Senate Republicans' begins. If Republicans think a man who believes in religious and ethnic tests for Federal judges is fit to be President of the United States, they must explain why this is acceptable. The Nation has a right to know how far Senate Republicans' support of Donald Trump extends, and that starts with the Republican leader because now there doesn't appear to be any daylight between Donald Trump and Senator MCCONNELL.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 4 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). Without objection, it is so ordered.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 3011

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I understand there is a bill at the desk that is due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3011) to improve the accountability, efficiency, transparency, and overall effectiveness of the Federal Government.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to further proceedings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

TEXAS FLOODING

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, anybody who has been watching the national news—and particularly the weather—knows we have been having some serious flooding back home in Texas. Tragically, we lost nine soldiers from Fort Hood in a very unfortunate drowning incident as part of that flooding. These soldiers were in the midst of a training mission when their vehicle got stuck in a flooded creek. I know I speak for a lot of people when I say my prayers and condolences are with the Fort Hood family and the families of these lost soldiers.

I know from experience that the Fort Hood community is a resilient one and, unfortunately, has seen more than its fair share of tragedy in recent years. But I also know the community there in Killeen, along with the entire State and Nation, will continue to offer support for our men and women in uniform, and particularly for those who have lost loved ones and those who are recovering in the days ahead.

Amidst the sad news, I have been continually thankful for the hard work

and dedication of our first responders, who have devoted their lives to saving others. It is at times like these, when they rise to the occasion, that I am particularly grateful for their service.

As you might expect, my staff and I are in close contact with local officials across the State of Texas in the more than 30 counties where Governor Abbott has declared a disaster. We will be working with the Governor as they prepare to assess the damage on the ground and determine what sort of Federal resources are necessary to help people rebuild. Should Governor Abbott request a formal Federal declaration of disaster for the affected counties, I intend to do everything I can to help get such a request granted and to make sure these Texans have what they need to recover as quickly as possible.

MEMORIAL DAY, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL, AND FOREIGN POLICY

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, on a happier note, during this last week, we had the occasion to celebrate Memorial Day, a day of remembrance. I know many of us had a chance to spend time with true American heroes—the veterans, the Active-Duty military members and their families—to remember the fallen on Memorial Day.

I had a particularly delightful occasion this Memorial Day to spend time with about 115 high school graduates from across Texas as part of a sendoff ceremony as they prepare to head to our Nation's military academies. We have been doing this every year for 10 years. As I always tell people: If you are a little down, if you are in a bad mood or feeling a little depressed, all you need to do is be around these wonderful young men and women who are really mature beyond their years and who aspire not only to attend our Nation's service academies but to be the next generation of military leaders. They truly are the best and the brightest.

It was also great to provide an occasion for these young people and their families to be there and hear from inspirational leaders such as COL Bruce Crandall, a Medal of Honor winner from the Vietnam war.

So in remembering this last week the service of so many people in defense of our Nation and these young people who I just mentioned on Memorial Day and our academy sendoff, it is appropriate that we return to the Senate this week to finish the national defense authorization bill, legislation that will provide our military men and women with the resources they need in order to protect and defend our country.

This is an absolutely critical piece of legislation and one that Congress has passed each year for some 50 years-plus. If anyone doubts that, all they need to do is ask Chairman MCCAIN because he will remind us every chance he gets that this is must-pass-every-

year legislation and something that has become a tradition—a good tradition—for the Senate.

This bill was passed out of the Armed Services Committee with overwhelming bipartisan support. Not a single Democrat voted against the legislation, and before Memorial Day, the Senate voted unanimously to move this legislation forward—98 yes and 0 no votes.

Despite this being a clear bipartisan priority, we have been stuck and mired down for no real reason, frankly, because of objections from the other side of the aisle. The minority leader has chosen to use every tactic and every tool available to him to slow this down. Frankly, this is not acceptable. The Defense authorization bill provides critical resources to our military. It will give our men and women in uniform a modest pay raise and support critical training and equipment modernization efforts. And it ensures that future generations of military leaders have the support they need.

I don't know what happened at Fort Hood when these nine soldiers drowned, but I hope it doesn't have anything to do with their lack of adequate training under these circumstances. What we need to do as part of our duty in the Senate is to get our work done and to pass the Defense authorization bill so there is not even a suspicion or hint of lack of adequate training or preparation by our military members that leads to tragedy.

At a time when we face instability at every turn and our military is confronting evolving and constant threats, political posturing is not appropriate. In fact, it is dangerous. Unfortunately, this is a product of misguided foreign policy choices made by this administration over the last 8 years. It has put our country and our military at greater risk. Our enemies have become emboldened and our allies' confidence has been shaken.

Instead of recognizing the growing threats our military men and women face every day, the President tries to diminish them, calling ISIS the "JV team." This is a terrorist group that continues its reign of violence across Iraq and Syria and continues to grow in strength across North Africa.

Words matter. When President Obama and former Secretary of State, Secretary Clinton, refused to attribute terrorism to radical Islam, it sent a message. And when the Obama administration and its allies ignore the reality of the enemy we are facing, our men and women in uniform are at greater risk of not having the full resources they need in order to defend U.S. interests at home and abroad.

A few weeks ago, I had the chance to visit with U.S. soldiers in the Middle East and to get a good glimpse of the reality on the ground that the administration seems to be lacking. I heard firsthand about the threats they face every day from ISIS-affiliated groups. That danger is growing, not receding.

There is no doubt in my mind that this growing ISIS presence correlates with gaps in our foreign policy under the Obama administration. This is particularly clear in Libya, where the Obama administration's failure in 2011 left a gaping hole of power—another failed state in the Middle East, which, as we have seen before, becomes a power vacuum that attracts foreign fighters and other people who want to use that to leap into Europe and commit acts of terror, either there or in the United States.

After Secretary Clinton pushed to remove Muammar Qadhafi, she prematurely heralded this intervention as her signature achievement as Secretary of State. This is something President Obama now admits was a mistake. She calls it her signature achievement as Secretary of State.

Yet the vacuum created by the United States' retreating in the region has only led to more chaos, and the ISIS fighters and recruiters have quickly filled the space, as I said a moment ago. The Financial Times even called it "a mess no one should think will be resolved by the current UN-backed peace process." This chaos doesn't just give terrorism a foothold; it provides a strategic launch point for terrorist attacks, directly across the Mediterranean from Europe.

In 2011, when the Obama administration, lacking any coherent, long-term strategy, decided to lead from behind in Libya, I strongly opposed that decision. While I can't say the same for others I have served with in the Senate, I have been proud to vote against premature troop withdrawals from volatile regions, as in Iraq, following the surge, which the chairman of the Armed Services Committee and so many others said was our one last chance in Iraq. To see us now fighting even as trainers and advisers in places such as Fallujah and Ramadi and other places where we have lost young lives to liberate—to see those now squandered by a premature exit from Iraq due to the administration's failure to get a security Status of Forces Agreement is just heartbreaking.

We know so many did oppose the surge, including then-candidate Obama, but the fact is, it paid off. Now we see all too clearly the consequences of precipitous withdrawal—the squandering of hard-earned progress achieved by the surge.

Of course, Secretary Clinton defended President Obama's decision to remove U.S. troops before the region could be stabilized. In fact, when asked about the potential threat of civil war in Iraq by exiting too early, Secretary Clinton simply said, "Well, let's find out." Well, we found out, after all. Foreign policy isn't something we just find out about or make up as we go along. It requires thoughtful planning and purposeful, intentional action.

Of course, Syria is another case study of what can happen when the White House refuses to act decisively