

seems more likely than not based upon the reporting, but we have to know for sure, one way or the other: Did the President intentionally interfere with an ongoing FBI investigation?

No. 2, are any such efforts to interfere ongoing?

If the answer to the first question is yes—and we don't know for certain if it is question yes, but if it is yes—if there was intentional interference with the investigation by the President, the second question would be, Are there any such efforts to interfere that are ongoing?

No. 3, do they extend—meaning this potential alleged interference—past the FBI inquiry, to the investigations in the Senate and the House of Representatives? I think that is a question that is rather urgent as well.

Will this attempt to interfere, or alleged attempt to interfere, carry over into other investigations?

In essence now, we have three inquiries. One is the House Intelligence Committee, the other is the Senate Intelligence Committee, and the third would be Special Counsel Mueller's investigation. They are all critically important.

I would hope that we could add a fourth to that, which would be an independent commission, like the 9/11 Commission, where we came to definitive conclusions with regard to what happened on 9/11. Then, added to those conclusions, there were a series of recommendations so that we could prevent another 9/11. The same could be said here—that we want to make sure we get answers to these questions, have conclusions made, have accountability with regard to those conclusions, but then have a series of recommendations about how to prevent Russian interference or the interference of any foreign adversary in our election ever again.

Director Comey himself warned about the danger of undue influence on FBI investigations in an exchange during a May 3 Senate Judiciary Committee hearing. In this case, it was Senator HIRONO, a Democratic Senator from Hawaii, who asked if the Attorney General or senior Justice Department officials had ever ordered the FBI to halt an investigation.

Interestingly, here is what Director Comey replied to that question: "Not in my experience," meaning not in his experience does he know of an instance where the Justice Department officials interfered with an FBI investigation.

I will read it again.

Not in my experience. Because it would be a big deal to tell the FBI to stop doing something.

Then, he continues on, and it picks up with this:

[W]ithout an appropriate purpose. . . . a situation where we were told to stop something for a political reason, that would be a very big deal. It's not happened in my experience.

That is the now former FBI Director saying that there is no precedence for

the idea that the Justice Department would ask the FBI to take an action, which would be interference.

Director Comey was talking about the Department of Justice in this case—actions by the Department of Justice to interfere with an FBI investigation. In retrospect, perhaps a better question would have been whether the political interference he thought would be a "very big deal" might have been coming directly from the Oval Office. It is essential that we get to the bottom of this—a number of these questions.

An issue of this importance requires that the full investigative power of the Federal Government be brought to bear. The House and Senate Intel Committees are doing their investigation, as I said. The FBI investigation continues as well, despite concerns about independence in the wake of Director Comey's firing.

I hope, and I expect, that the next FBI Director will be someone who will be as independent, as capable, and as committed as Director Mueller is as the new special counsel.

We know there are dedicated professionals running these investigations. It has long been my belief that these extraordinary circumstances demand even more. I have been repeating for some time that we need a greater level of independence to insulate this critically important investigation from any suspicion of partisan interference. That is why I have been calling—for many weeks now, since early March—for a special counsel. I am glad the Justice Department now agrees with me.

Suffice it to say that we have a lot more work to do. Ultimately, this will be the work of everyone here, even if you are not a member of the Intel Committee or any other committee that is doing work that is directly relevant to this because, ultimately, the Congress has to take actions to get to the bottom of these questions but also be part of the process, at least, of imposing accountability and, also, especially the Congress is going to have to play a major role—the leading role—in making sure we put in place policies and procedures and laws that prevent this from ever happening again.

I hope the administration will join us in taking every step necessary to get to the bottom of these questions and to insist and to ensure that this never happens again to any American election. That is not just a goal, that has to be a guarantee as a result of this process. If the administration is not committed to that, I am not sure what they are committed to.

To take lightly or to ignore a problem that is this great and this serious, to undermine our democracy is, I think, to put at risk the very foundation of our Nation as a nation of laws and not of men, a nation that is committed to the rule of law.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill 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 consider the nomination of John Sullivan to be Deputy Secretary of State.

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

The clerk will report the nomination. The bill clerk read the nomination of John J. Sullivan, of Maryland, to be Deputy Secretary of State.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The 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 John J. Sullivan, of Maryland, to be Deputy Secretary of State.

Mitch McConnell, Cory Gardner, Tom Cotton, Roy Blunt, Jeff Flake, John Cornyn, John Barrasso, Ron Johnson, James E. Risch, Joni Ernst, John Thune, Mike Rounds, Orrin G. Hatch, Bob Corker, David Perdue, John Hoeven, James M. Inhofe.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the cloture motion be waived.

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

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume consideration of the Branstad nomination.

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

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein up to 10 minutes each.

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

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

#### VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. Kaine. Mr. President, for purposes of today's votes, I want to announce that had I voted on Thursday,

May 18, 2017, I would have voted no on confirmation of Rachel Brand to be Associate Attorney General, and I would have voted yea on the motion to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar No. 55, the nomination of Terry Branstad, of Iowa, to be Ambassador to China.●

#### NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, during this week, National Police Week, I honor all those who serve to keep us safe. I honor three Maryland officers who lost their lives in the line of duty in 2016. Corporal Jack Colson of Prince George's County Police Department, Senior Deputy Patrick Dailey, and Deputy First Class Mark Logsdon, both of Harford County Sheriff's office, all dedicated their lives to making Maryland safe. We thank them for their sacrifice, and we thank their families, friends, and fellow officers. They will never be forgotten, and they deserve to be honored not just this week, but every day.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### IDAHO ANNE FRANK HUMAN RIGHTS MEMORIAL

● Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today I wish to commend Idahoans and specifically the Boise community for coming together so quickly to fight hate speech and related vandalism.

Kindness, support, and respect run deep in Idaho. The response to the recent vandalism of the Idaho Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial in Boise, ID, is the most recent example of the depth of compassion in Idahoans. Since the recent vandalism, considerable resources have poured in to repair and enhance the memorial. Rather than responding with anger and hate, Idaho is moving forward with a positive spirit of renewal and inclusiveness. Dan Prinzing, executive director of the Wassmuth Center for Human Rights that built the memorial with support from the Carr Foundation and others and now partners with Boise Parks and Recreation to maintain the memorial, said, "An act of hate by an individual is not us, the community's response to the act is what defines who we are and the values we share. Now what does that do for us? It emboldens the message of the Memorial and reinforces that our work is not done."

The Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial was dedicated to the public 15 years ago to offer a place for visitors to consider and reflect on human rights and inspire engagement with others about the issue. The memorial is a beautiful and thought-provoking resource, which includes a statue of Anne Frank, quotes and excerpts of her writings, as well as a wall of inspiring quotes. The love and care, including the support of Idaho students and their families, that went into this memorial's creation is prevailing upon its

restoration and contributing to ongoing human rights discussions. Among the many quotes highlighted at the memorial is the following from Mother Teresa, "Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless."

I commend all those who are coming together to counter the acts of hateful vandalism with kindness that will continue to echo through our communities and Nation.●

#### TRIBUTE TO PAMELA ROSSETTI

● Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, today I wish to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing and congratulating Ms. Pamela Rossetti on her 35 years of remarkable service as a fifth and sixth-grade teacher at Lincoln Street School in the Exeter, NH, School District. Throughout her career, Ms. Rossetti has gone above and beyond to meet the needs of her students, as well as her larger school community, by serving as an adviser on a number of committees and taking a leadership role in special projects throughout her tenure. The State of New Hampshire owes her a debt of gratitude for her service.

Ms. Rossetti graduated with her B.A. from Notre Dame College in Manchester, NH, in 1981. She later received her masters of education from Leslie College in Cambridge, MA, with a concentration in integrated teaching through the arts. She was hired by the Exeter School District in 1982 as a sixth-grade teacher. After 2 years, she began teaching in the fifth grade, where she has taught for 33 years.

Throughout her career, Ms. Rossetti has received accolades for her service. In 1983, she received a commendation from New Hampshire's Governor John H. Sununu in recognition of her work with a colleague to create an American citizenship course. She has been a member of both the science and social studies committees for the Exeter School District and served on a number of Lincoln Street School committees, including the arts and health committees. She has also been a mentor teacher and a trainer for the school district's Intel Teach to the Future Program, which focuses on integrating technology into curriculum.

Ms. Rossetti has touched many lives in the Exeter School District, including my son Ben's. Ben experiences disabilities that leave him unable to communicate verbally. Ms. Rossetti was Ben's fifth-grade classroom teacher, and, shortly after the school year, she called me to tell me how smart Ben was. While my family had always thought that Ben was smart and funny, it was incredibly reassuring to know that an objective—and caring—educator thought so as well. She went on to tell me how she had assessed Ben's understanding of sophisticated content material.

Ms. Rossetti's observation impressed me because, in a classroom of students where Ben received support from a spe-

cial education team, Ms. Rossetti still took the time to get to know him and every one of her students as individuals. Because of her ability to do this, Ms. Rossetti has been able to customize her approach to her students and foster their growth and development. Many of Ms. Rossetti's students have been impacted by this level of support and have stayed in contact with her through the years.

The Exeter School District and all of New Hampshire have benefitted greatly from Ms. Rossetti's devotion and service. On behalf of my colleagues and the U.S. Congress, I thank Ms. Pamela Rossetti for her unrelenting commitment to support every one of her students, as well as the entire school community, through her 35 years as a teacher, and I wish her the very best in her retirement.●

#### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Ridgway, one of his secretaries.

#### EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

In executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

#### MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:02 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, without amendment:

S. 419. An act to require adequate reporting on the Public Safety Officers' Benefits program, and for other purposes.

S. 583. An act to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to authorize COPS grantees to use grant funds to hire veterans as career law enforcement officers, and for other purposes.

At 11:46 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it request the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 194. An act to ensure the effective processing of mail by Federal agencies, and for other purposes.

H.R. 195. An act to amend title 44, United States Code, to restrict the distribution of free printed copies of the Federal Register to Members of Congress and other officers and employees of the United States, and for other purposes.

H.R. 653. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to protect unpaid interns in the Federal Government from workplace harassment and discrimination, and for other purposes.

H.R. 672. An act to require continued and enhanced annual reporting to Congress in