

I wanted to clarify that because the misinformation that is coming out of the White House about what we currently have and what is in place is an insult. I wish they understood the vetting processes we have in place now for refugees; then maybe we could get back to really joining arms and trying to figure out what we can do for national security. One thing we need to do for national security is not give the back of our hand to the pilots and the other soldiers who are fighting shoulder to shoulder with us in Iraq against ISIS.

I yield the remainder of my hour of postclosure debate time under rule XXII to Senator SCHUMER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

The Senator from Iowa.

REMEMBERING SARAH ROOT

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, I rise today on the 1-year anniversary of the tragic death of a fellow Iowan, Sarah Root. On January 31, 2016—the very same day as her college graduation—Sarah was killed by an illegal immigrant named Edwin Mejia, who was allegedly drag racing with a blood alcohol level more than three times the legal limit. Sadly, despite requests by local law enforcement, ICE failed to detain Mejia. He then posted bond, was released, and now a year later remains a fugitive, denying Sarah's loved ones any sense of closure or Justice.

As a mother and grandmother, I cannot fathom the grief her family and friends continue to feel after such a devastating loss. Just 21 years old, Sarah was bright, gifted, full of life, and ready to take on the world. Having just graduated from Bellevue University with a 4.0 grade point average, she was dedicated to her community and wanted to pursue a career in criminal justice. Sarah had a remarkably bright future ahead of her, but her opportunity to make a mark on the world was tragically cut short 1 year ago today. Yet, even in death, she touched the lives of others, saving six different individuals through organ donation. Although nothing can bring Sarah back to her family, we can ensure that ICE never makes that same mistake again.

I was encouraged to see the Trump administration take action toward addressing this issue last week by implementing parts of Sarah's Law—legislation I introduced with my Iowa and Nebraska colleagues in honor of Sarah. I remain committed to continuing to work with my colleagues to fulfill the promise I made to Sarah's loving parents: that I will do everything I can to ensure that no other parents have to go through what the Root family has faced.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Ms. HARRIS. I yield my hour of postclosure debate time under rule XXII to Senator CARDIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

The Senator from Nevada.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I yield my hour of postclosure debate time under rule XXII to Senator CARDIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I yield my hour of postclosure debate time under rule XXII to Senator SCHUMER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

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

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

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise today as the Senate begins consideration of the nomination of Mr. Rex Tillerson to serve as the 69th Secretary of State of the United States of America. I thank Mr. Tillerson for his willingness to serve our Nation and for his participation in a lengthy, wide-ranging hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, where I have the honor of being the senior Democrat, the ranking Democrat on the committee.

Earlier today, I thanked Chairman CORKER for the courtesies he showed during the hearing process. However, as I stated yesterday, I remain concerned that Mr. Tillerson's demonstrated business orientation in his responses to questions during the confirmation hearing would prevent him from being a Secretary of State who forcefully promotes the values and ideals that have defined our country and our leading role in the world for more than 200 years. I, therefore, will not be supporting his nomination.

Given the events over the weekend, I believe it is important that I begin today's debate by painting a picture for the American people of the unstable, reckless foreign policy that Mr. Tillerson is going to be asked to carry out under President Trump. It is painfully obvious that when the President says "America first," the cumulative result of his vision would actually lead to America alone and America at risk.

From time to time, in our Nation's history, we have heard the calls of isolationism, but isolationism did not work then and it will not work now. It is an approach that our history has taught us, time and time again, undermines our interests, makes us vulnerable to those who wish us harm, betrays our values, and leaves us less secure and less prosperous.

America's leadership, rooted in our values, makes the world a better place for all, but the first 10 days of the Trump administration shows that the President is intent on compromising our values, abandoning our allies, and

using a sledgehammer instead of a scalpel to conduct the detailed, careful work of safeguarding our Nation. Some of his supporters chalk it up to inexperience. My own chairman has said on numerous occasions that he wishes the President had more flushed-out ideas on foreign policy space.

What the American people witnessed in the last 10 days goes beyond inexperience. There is a willful, dangerous campaign underway by forces in this administration to bend or potentially even break the law. More than ever, we need to reaffirm and adhere to the values that make our country so strong and so stable, the city on the hill that others look to for leadership.

In order to do that, we need leaders who will not shy away from our values, who will sound a certain trumpet for human rights, the rule of law, and bedrock American values.

Mr. Tillerson's timid equivocation on American values throughout his confirmation process, his trumpet's uncertain sound was alarming because he will be working for a President clearly willing to compromise America's values at every turn. There are many individuals who have served in both Republican and Democratic administrations who recognize this Executive order for what it is.

I have in my hand a letter from over 100 former Cabinet Secretaries, senior government officials, diplomats, military servicemembers, and intelligence community professionals who have served in the Bush and Obama administrations. The letter, to the heads of the Departments of Homeland Security, Justice, and State, expresses deep concern that the Executive order issued over the weekend jeopardizes tens of thousands of lives, has caused a crisis here in America, and will do long-term damage to our national security.

It strongly recommends the President rescind this order. I ask unanimous consent that this letter be printed in the RECORD. There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

January 30, 2017.

Hon. JOHN F. KELLY,
Secretary, Department of Homeland Security,
Washington, DC.

Hon. SALLY YATES,
Acting Attorney General,
Department of Justice,
Washington, DC.

Hon. THOMAS A. SHANNON,
Acting Secretary, Department of State,
Washington, DC.

SECRETARY KELLY, ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL YATES, ACTING SECRETARY SHANNON: As former cabinet Secretaries, senior government officials, diplomats, military service members and intelligence community professionals who have served in the Bush and Obama administrations, we, the undersigned, have worked for many years to make America strong and our homeland secure. Therefore, we are writing to you to express our deep concern with President Trump's recent Executive Order directed at the immigration system, refugees and visitors to this country. This Order not only jeopardizes tens of

thousands of lives, it has caused a crisis right here in America and will do long-term damage to our national security.

In the middle of the night, just as we were beginning our nation's commemoration of the Holocaust, dozens of refugees onboard flights to the United States and thousands of visitors were swept up in an Order of unprecedented scope, apparently with little to no oversight or input from national security professionals.

Individuals, who have passed through multiple rounds of robust security vetting, including just before their departure, were detained, some reportedly without access to lawyers, right here in U.S. airports. They include not only women and children whose lives have been upended by actual radical terrorists, but brave individuals who put their own lives on the line and worked side-by-side with our men and women in uniform in Iraq now fighting against ISIL. Now, because of actions taken by this White House, their lives have been disrupted and they may even be in greater danger if they are sent home. Many more thousands going through the process will now be left behind. More broadly, tens of thousands of other travelers, including dual citizens and, at one point, legal U.S. residents face deep uncertainty about whether they may even travel to the United States or risk leaving and being barred reentry.

Many of us have worked for years to keep America safe from terrorists. Many of us were on the job working for our country on 9/11 and need no reminder just how vital it is to destroy terrorist networks and bring partners to our side in that global effort. Simply put, this Order will harm our national security. Partner countries in Europe and the Middle East, on whom we rely for vital counterterrorism cooperation, are already objecting to this action and distancing themselves from the United States, shredding years of effort to bring them closer to us. Moreover, because the Order discriminates against Muslim travelers and immigrants, it has already sent exactly the wrong message to the Muslim community here at home and all over the world: that the U.S. government is at war with them based on their religion. We may even endanger Christian communities, by handing ISIL a recruiting tool and propaganda victory that spreads their horrific message that the United States is engaged in a religious war. We need to take every step we can to counter violent extremism, not to feed into it by fueling ISIL propaganda.

Perhaps the most tragic irony of this episode is that it is unnecessary. We do not need to turn America into a fortress to keep it secure. Since the 9/11 attacks, the United States has developed a rigorous system of security vetting, leveraging the full capabilities of the law enforcement and intelligence communities. This vetting is applied to travelers not once, but multiple times. Refugees receive even further scrutiny. In fact, successive administrations have worked to improve this vetting on a near continuous basis, through robust information sharing and data integration to identify potential terrorists. Since 9/11 not a single major terrorist attack has been perpetrated by travelers from the countries named in the Order.

The suddenness of this Order is also troubling. The fact that individuals cleared for admission were literally in the air as the Order went into effect speaks to the haste with which it was developed and implemented. We are concerned that this Order received little, if any scrutiny by the Departments of State, Justice, and Homeland Security or the Intelligence Community. Now that some of these individuals are here in the United States, and thousands of others

are stranded, our government's response has appeared disorganized and chaotic. As lawyers take steps to protect their clients who have been detained here or stranded at many other airports, the U.S. government will continue to face a flurry of legal challenges, which could have been avoided. Additionally, by banning travel by individuals cooperating against ISIL, we risk placing our military and diplomatic efforts at risk by sending a clear message to those citizens and all Muslims that the United States does not have their backs. Already, the international push-back has been immense, and threatens to jeopardize critical counterterrorism cooperation.

Fortunately, there is a way out of this self-made crisis. We know that your agencies did not create this situation and we particularly respect that many of you are working to mitigate its damage. Effective immediately, you can apply the discretion given to you under the President's Order to admit into the country the men, women and children who are currently still stranded in airports. The process for doing this is well known to the security professionals within your departments. We urge you to execute it. While it is good to see the withdrawal of the application of the Order to legal permanent residents of the United States, your Departments can immediately work to allow other classes of people into the country, and remove the discriminatory prioritization implicit within the Order. Most critically, we urge you to draw on the insight of the professionals in your departments to recommend that the President revisit and rescind this Order. Blanket bans of certain countries or classes of people is inhumane, unnecessary and counterproductive from a security standpoint, and beneath the dignity of our great nation.

Dr. Madeleine K. Albright, Former Secretary of State; Janet Napolitano, Former Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security; Susan Rice, Former National Security Advisor to the President of the United States; Dennis Blair, Former Director of National Intelligence, Admiral, USN, Retired; Michael Hayden, Former Director, Central Intelligence Agency; Samantha Power, Former United States Ambassador to the United Nations; Bill Richardson, Former Governor of New Mexico and United States Ambassador to the United Nations; Tony Blinken, Former Deputy Secretary of State; William Burns, Former Deputy Secretary of State; Bruce Andrews, Former Deputy Secretary of Commerce; Richard Clarke, Former National Coordinator for Security, Infrastructure Protection and Counterterrorism for the United States; Rudy DeLeon, Former Deputy Secretary of Defense.

Heather Higginbottom, Former Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources; Thomas Nides, Former Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources; James Steinberg, Former Deputy Secretary of State; Michael Morrell, Former Acting Director, Central Intelligence Agency; Matthew Olsen, Former Director of the National Counterterrorism Center; Rand Beers, Former Acting Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security; John B. Bellinger III, Former Legal Advisor to the Department of State.

Ambassador (ret.) Nicholas Burns, Former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs; Elliott Cohen, Former Counselor, Department of State; Michele Flournoy, Former Undersecretary of Defense for Policy; Marcel Lettre, Former Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence; James Miller, Former Undersecretary of Defense for Policy; Wendy Sherman, Former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs; Suzanne Spaulding, Former Undersecretary for Na-

tional Protection and Programs, Department of Homeland Security; Michael G. Vickers, Former Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence; Tara Sonenshine, Former Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs.

Clara Adams-Ender, Brigadier General, USA, Retired; Ricardo Aponte, Brigadier General, USAF, Retired; Alyssa Ayres, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia; Donna Barbisch, Major General, USA, Retired; Jamie Barnett, Rear Admiral, USN, Retired; Jeremy Bash, Former Chief of Staff, Department of Defense; Daniel Benjamin, Former Coordinator for Counterterrorism, Department of State; Charles Blanchard, Former General Counsel, United States Air Force; Janet Blanc, Former Deputy Special Representative to Afghanistan and Pakistan; Barbara Bodine, Former United States Ambassador to Yemen; Richard Boucher, Former Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs, Mike Breen, Retired United States Army Officer; John G. Castellaw, Lieutenant General, USMC, Retired; Wendy Chamberlin, Former United States Ambassador to Pakistan.

Derek Chollet, Former Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs; Christopher Cole, Rear Admiral, USN, Retired; Bathsheba Crocker, Former Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs; Abe Denmark, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asia; Paul Eaton, Major General, USA, Retired; Mari K. Eder, Major General, Retired, USA; Dwayne Edwards, Brigadier General, USA, Retired; Robert Einhorn, Former Assistant Secretary of State for Nonproliferation; Evelyn Farkas, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Russia, Ukraine, Eurasia; Gerald M. Feierstein, Former United States Ambassador to Yemen; Daniel Feldman, Former Special Representative to Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Jose W. Fernandez, Former Assistant Secretary of State for Economic, Energy, and Business Affairs; Jonathan Finer, Former Director of Policy Planning, Department of State; Robert Glace, Brigadier General, USA, Retired; Philip Gordon, Former Special Assistant to the President and White House Coordinator for the Middle East, North Africa, and the Persian Gulf Region; Kevin P. Green, Vice Admiral, USN, Retired; Caitlin Hayden, Former National Security Council Spokesperson; Richard S. Haddad, Major General, USAF, Retired; Gretchen Herbert, Rear Admiral, USN, Retired; Mark Hertling, Lieutenant General, USA, Retired; Christopher P. Hill, Former United States Ambassador to Iraq; David Irvine, Brigadier General, USA, Retired; Arlee D. Jameson, Lieutenant General, USAF, Retired; Deborah Jones, Former United States Ambassador to Libya; Colin Kahl, Former National Security Advisor to the Vice President of the United States; Claudia Kennedy, Lieutenant General, USA, Retired.

Gil Kerlikowske, Former Commissioner, United States Customs and Border Protection; Charles Kupchan, Former Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; Jonathan Lee, Former Deputy Chief of Staff, Department of Homeland Security; George Little, Former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs; Donald E. Loranger Jr., Major General, USAF, Retired; Kelly Magsamen, Former Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asian and Pacific Security Affairs; Randy Manner, Major General, USA, Retired; Thomas Malinowski, Former Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor; Brian McKeon, Former Acting Undersecretary of Defense for Policy.

Philip McNamara, Former Assistant Secretary for Partnerships and Engagement, Department of Homeland Security; John G. Morgan, Lieutenant General, USA, Retired; Suzanne Nossel, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Organizations Affairs; James C. O'Brien, Former Special Envoy for Hostage Recovery; Eric Olson, Major General, USA, Retired; Rick Olson, Former Special Representative to Afghanistan and Pakistan; W. Robert Pearson, Former United States Ambassador to Turkey; Glenn Phillips, Rear Admiral, USN, Retired; Gale Pollock, Major General, USA, Retired; Amy Pope, Former Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; Steve Pomper, Former Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs.

Michael Posner, Former Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor; Anne C. Richard, Former Assistant Secretary of State, Population, Refugees & Migration; Leon Rodriguez, Former Director, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services; Laura Rosenberger, Former Chief of Staff to the Deputy Secretary of State; Tommy Ross, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Security Cooperation; John M. Schuster, Brigadier General, USA, Retired; Eric Schwartz, Former Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees, and Migration; Stephen A. Seche, Former United States Ambassador to Yemen; Robert Silvers, Former Assistant Secretary for Cyber Policy, Department of Homeland Security; Vikram Singh, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for South and Southeast Asia; Elissa Slotkin, Former Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs; Jeffrey Smith, Former General Counsel, Central Intelligence Agency; Julianne "Julie" Smith, Former Deputy National Security Advisor to the Vice President of the United States; Michael Smith, Rear Admiral, USN, Retired.

Matthew Spence, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Middle East Policy; Andrew W. Steinfeld, Former Senior Foreign Policy Advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Seth M.M. Stodder, Former Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security for Border, Immigration & Trade Policy; Jake Sullivan, Former National Security Advisor to the Vice President of the United States; Loree Sutton, Brigadier General, USA, Retired; Antonio Taguba, Major General, USA, Retired; Jim Townsend, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for European and NATO Policy; David Wade, Former Chief of Staff, Department of State; George H. Walls, Brigadier General, USMC, Retired; William Wechsler, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Counterterrorism and Special Operations.

Catherine Wiesner, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration; Willie Williams, Lieutenant General, USMC, Retired; Johnnie E. Wilson, General, USA, Retired; Tamara Cofman Wittes, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State; Moira Whelan, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs; Jon Brook Wolfsthal, Former Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; Lee Wolosky, Former Special Envoy for Guantanamo Closure; Stephen N. Xenakis, M.D., Brigadier General, USA, Retired.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Tillerson needs to answer whether he supports Mr. Trump's decision this weekend to ban Muslims, to keep green card holders out of the country, and state his view on the chaos that ensued from the terrible implementation of this terrible

policy. We asked Mr. Tillerson during the confirmation hearing whether he supported a Muslim ban. He would not give us a clear answer, and he did not speak out against an unconstitutional Muslim ban.

Just today, I have sent a letter, as the ranking Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, to Mr. Tillerson asking his specific views on the President's Executive order, what impacts that will have on America's credibility, what impact that will have on America's ability to work with our strategic partners around the world. I hope he will respond to us so we know his views on the President's Executive order before we are called upon to vote on his nomination.

I ask unanimous consent that a copy of that letter be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

UNITED STATES SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC, January 31, 2017.

Mr. REX TILLERSON,
CEO, Exxon Mobil Corporation,
Irving, TX.

DEAR MR. TILLERSON: As the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the full Senate consider your nomination to serve as Secretary of State, I write to seek your views about the Executive Order, "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States," signed by President Trump on January 27, 2017. I am concerned that the text of the Executive Order and its haphazard implementation over the weekend run counter to our American values and the U.S. Constitution, as well as our national security and economic interests.

Do you support the Executive Order's indefinite denial of entry to Syrian refugees and the 120-day suspension of the entire U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program, which impacts 20,000 refugees and will, in practice, grind all refugee processing to a halt for many months?

Do you agree with President Trump's assertion that our country should give preference to Christians seeking to obtain visas or admission to the U.S.? If so, do you think this action is consistent with our nation's bedrock principles of liberty and religious freedom?

What process would you support to identify an individual's religion prior to receiving a visa, admission, or other immigration benefit?

In your view, what message does barring individuals that have served our military in Iraq send to our partners abroad? Does that policy harm our national security and bilateral relationships?

Given this order's deliberate targeting of certain countries and disproportionate impact on Muslims, what will be the implications for our relationships with foreign countries that are predominantly Muslim? Do you think this order give fodder to ISIL's recruitment efforts in framing the U.S. war against terrorism as really a war on Islam?

I urge you to be forthright and thorough in your answers. Many thanks for your cooperation on this matter.

Sincerely,

BENJAMIN L. CARDIN,
United States Senator.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, it remains to be seen whether Mr. Tillerson has the moral compass necessary to

counsel the President toward a coherent U.S. foreign policy that advances our national security and embraces our values and ideals or if he will be another yes-man, enabling the risky, chaotic whims of a demagogue President, who is leading us on a march of folly.

The American people deserve to know because if the last 10 days are any indication, the Trump administration is on a track to be the most dangerous and divisive in history. Nothing so painfully illustrates that point as Friday's Executive order banning refugees and certain Muslim immigrants from entering the United States. As a citizen of this great Nation, I am deeply offended by and ashamed of the President's Executive actions.

When the news of this developed over the weekend, I happened to be attending a family wedding in the Miami area, a city rich in its immigrant character and its welcoming nature to people of many faiths and backgrounds.

Miami was also the city where one of the most shameful episodes in our history transpired, where in 1993, the *St. Louis*, filled with Jewish refugees trying to flee the horrors of Nazi Germany waited for days, seeing the lights of the city ashore, seeking shelter and refuge. Shamefully, we turned the *St. Louis* away and condemned many of its passengers to death in the Holocaust.

We say never again. Yet fear and uncertainty was palatable this weekend in Miami and across the country. I have heard from constituents who were temporarily detained and arrested or whose loved ones had scheduled legal travel to the United States but were unsure if they should board their planes for fear of being arrested or turned around once they arrived.

I am aware of students studying legally here in the United States who suddenly found their entire future in jeopardy because of their nationality. Maryland is proud to host world-class universities like Johns Hopkins and the University of Maryland, colleges that are enriched by the contributions and perspectives of foreign citizens.

Permanent legal residents who endured a lengthy process to acquire their green card and make the United States their home were suddenly unsure if they belonged. I was particularly troubled when two Iraqi citizens, who have played critical roles in supporting America's forces in Iraq, and were traveling on valid visas, were denied entry into New York. What do they get for helping our brave men and women with translation and security services? A big ugly "Not Welcome" sign at JFK Airport. Adding insult to injury, their immediate families were already here in the United States.

The cumulative effect of this Executive order is enough to make your stomach churn because what President Trump tried to do was legalize discrimination based on religion and nationality. As President Trump said, giving preference to Christians is going to be OK. As Trump adviser Rudy

Giuliani said, this is a way to legalize a Muslim ban.

So I was relieved when Federal judge Ann Donnelly issued a stay on Saturday evening to stop the madness, at least temporarily. Other judges around the Nation acted accordingly as well, affirming certain rights of green card holders and legal permanent residents, but too many innocent people remain in limbo. My staff's communications with Cabinet agencies over the weekend were extremely troubling. The left hand did not know what the right hand was doing in the Trump administration. In the zeal to play politics and inflame the fears of Americans who feel threatened, the White House revealed how little they knew or cared about governing.

It was reported that Secretary Kelly did not have a proper opportunity to view the Executive order before it was issued, a sobering lesson I hope Mr. Tillerson has paid close attention to. The Department of Homeland Security has now belatedly begun to engage on issuing guidance, but I fear the damage has been done.

Clearly, the Department of Justice was not part of developing the Executive order, as Acting Attorney General Sally Yates said, boldly, that she was not convinced that the Executive order was lawful. As a result, President Trump fired her—the Monday night massacre. Our voice must be loud and clear. Mr. Trump, this is our country, a country that stands for the highest principles, supported by the rule of law.

If Ms. Yates' firing is any indication as to how President Trump will handle different views, our Democratic institutions of checks and balances will indeed be challenged. The White House Press Secretary, Sean Spicer, said that foreign service officers using the dissent channel to express their views on the immigration Executive order should "either get with the program or they can go."

The dissent channel was set up during the Vietnam war as a way for foreign service officers and civil servants to raise concerns with upper management about the direction of U.S. foreign policy without fear of retribution. It is for "consideration of responsible, dissenting and alternative views on substantive foreign policy issues that cannot be communicated in a full and timely manner through regular operating channels or procedures."

This process for the use of dissent channels was codified in the Foreign Affairs Manual in 1971, which dictates that dissent cables are sent to the Departments' policy planning directors who distribute them to the Secretary of State and other top officials who must respond within 30 to 60 days. There are typically about four or five each year. Freedom from reprisal from dissent user channels is strictly enforced, but the President's Press Secretary said they can go.

What type of free discussion do we want to have in this country? Where

are the checks and balances? Where is the willingness to listen to different views?

The President also put a 4-month freeze in place on all refugees entering the United States, singling out refugees from certain Muslim-majority countries for extra screening, failing to acknowledge or speak about the thorough 18- to 24-month screening process that refugees from dangerous countries, such as Iraq and Syria, already endure before they come to our Nation. We have the toughest screening now. I am not sure what the President is talking about when he says additional screening. We already have the toughest screening. They already go through the United Nations. They are already interviewed. Their background is checked.

Moving forward, the number of refugees entering the United States will fall by 50 percent. It is clear that the President of the United States has a fundamental misunderstanding of America's leading role on refugee resettlement. Today, I will meet with King Abdallah of Jordan, a nation that has accepted 650,000 Syrian refugees. And President Trump is holding our program to accept approximately 10,000 Syrian refugees, placing it on hold.

Jordan is one of America's global partners in fighting extremism. It will be interesting to see the reactions we get from our partners.

If we close our doors to refugees, we will not only close our doors to U.S. humanitarian values but also severely damage America's global credibility on universal values.

The United States is a nation of immigrants and refugees from all and no faiths. We learned from our mistake with the *St. Louis*, and we are the Nation that received refugees from the Holocaust after the Second World War. We are the Nation that opened our doors to hundreds of thousands of citizens fleeing conflicts and political oppression in El Salvador, Cuba, Vietnam, and Cambodia.

The United States must continue to lead by example, but President Trump's cruel Executive order on immigrants and refugees undermines our core values and traditions, threatens our national security, and demonstrates a complete lack of understanding of our strict vetting process—the most thorough in the world. It is a dangerous and shortsighted policy that erodes our moral leadership and harms our national security as well as our alliances and partnerships worldwide.

This is not the kind of America that Americans deserve.

Also over the weekend, President Trump spoke with Russian President Vladimir Putin. There has been perhaps no other issue that has so pitted President Trump against the interests of the United States than Russia. Reflexively, the President will not utter basic truths about Mr. Putin's Russia, such as these: The annexation of Crimea, Ukraine, is illegal; they com-

mitted war crimes in Syria; and they sought to create doubt about and potentially influence the election that saw him elected President, as our intelligence community has now overwhelmingly confirmed.

There is no more fundamental interest that we have as Americans than our democracy. Let's be clear: Just as with Pearl Harbor or September 11, in this past election, the United States was attacked by a foreign power. President Trump does not even seem to care that we were attacked or, worse, does not seem to believe that we need to stand up and defend our democracy and our form of government. I find that unfathomable.

The phone calls this weekend came against the backdrop of President Trump and his aides floating the idea of lifting our current sanctions on Russia. So Russia has invaded Ukraine, has committed war crimes in Syria, has attacked our free democratic system, and we are talking about easing sanctions on Russia? It is such a miscarriage of justice and accountability that they do not understand or won't acknowledge the gravity of what Russia seeks to do here in our country and around the world.

It is, therefore, incumbent on Congress to act. I am pleased to have bipartisan support for my effort to impose additional sanctions on Russia as well as require the President to seek congressional approval before he rolls back current sanctions. Sanction relief can only come when Russia has changed its behavior, and I see no indication that that will come any time soon.

The unclassified reports released by the intelligence community earlier this month says that Russia's intelligence tried to access multiple State or local election boards. They also confirmed that Russia has researched U.S. electoral procedures and related technology and equipment, though they were clear in their assessment that there was no evidence at this time that Russia interfered in the actual vote tabulation.

An America that becomes passive or willfully blind to a resurgent Russia is not the kind of America that the American people deserve, and it is imperative that the administration understand this and act accordingly. What the American people don't need is the White House focusing on a trial balloon last week that fell like a lead ball.

Some in the administration thought it would be a good idea to bring back the notorious black sites—secret prisons—from a decade ago, where our intelligence picked up foreign nationals suspected of terrorism connections, hid them, and, in some cases, tortured them or allowed the prison's host country to torture them.

Perhaps nothing did more harm to our credibility and boost terrorist recruitment during the early years of the Iraq war than the dangerous, amoral

practice of rendition, secret detention, and interrogation by torture. We cannot go back to those practices if we value maintaining the perception and the reality of the United States of America as a beacon of justice, law, and human rights for the world.

Make no mistake, this approach, like the immigration Executive order, endangers American citizens and personnel abroad and is a boon to ISIS and like-minded groups. It validates their propaganda, aids their recruitment and incitement of homegrown terrorism in the United States and the West, and encourages attacks against America abroad. General Mattis gets it; why can't the President?

President Trump must never let this Executive order see the light of day. This is not the kind of America that the American people deserve.

Let me turn now to our relationship with our neighbors, our most important international relationships.

Since entering the political arena 18 months ago, candidate Trump was consistent in his treatment of Mexican immigrants and refugees, referring to them on day one of his Presidential campaign as drug users, criminals, and rapists.

So Mr. Tillerson's job was shaping up to be difficult enough. It got even harder last week. In the last 5 days, President Trump has insulted the Mexican President and people with his Executive orders on border wall construction and the treatment of immigrants and refugees at our border, as well as stoked fear throughout sanctuary and welcoming cities in the United States that resources could be cut and innocent people could be apprehended, breaking up and devastating families.

The President's new Secretary of Homeland Security said pointedly that a wall will not work, and Mr. Trump missed a real opportunity at the outset of his Presidency to advance both comprehensive immigration reform and border security, which go hand in hand.

We did that a few years ago. That is what the President should have come in with and used his Presidency to pass comprehensive immigration reform, as we did. Instead, he wants to build a wall.

Turning away legitimate asylum seekers at the border or requiring mandatory detention of families and children will do nothing to make America safer. Such cruel actions will inevitably bring harm and potential death to survivors of violence and torture, including many women and children, while undermining America's values and damaging our relationships with our allies.

Why the President would deliberately pick a fight with the President of Mexico is truly puzzling.

Not to be outdone after being embarrassed by the President of Mexico's cancellation of his visit to Washington, the President doubled down and had the audacity to suggest that the cost of constructing a border wall should be

passed on to the hardworking American families, not once but twice. The first is by inserting it in the budget. That is taxpayer dollars paying to build a wall that won't work. The second is through a tax on Mexican imports which will, in turn, be paid for by American consumers. All the while, he continues to blow smoke and say that we will continue to find a way for Mexico to ultimately pay for this dream wall.

It won't happen. This is not the kind of America that the American people deserve.

Lastly, I want to point out that, in his third day of office, just one day after the 44th anniversary of the landmark *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision, President Trump reinstated the controversial global gag rule that would cut off U.S. family planning funding to any nonprofit group overseas that provides any information about abortion in their health care services for women and families in need.

In other words, this is not about U.S. money supporting abortion services. It is about working with organizations.

Now, Republican Presidents routinely reinstate this harmful rule, but President Trump's global gag order is even more extreme. It massively expands his already harmful policy to threaten all U.S. foreign aid assistance to nonprofit groups engaged in health in the developing world. That will significantly increase the jeopardy of cutting off U.S. funding to international health efforts.

We are talking about millions of more women and families. Without funding these organizations, we will not be able to provide HIV prevention, care and treatment services to those in need, provide integrated maternal health care with contraceptive services, or counsel women on the potential risk of Zika infection, among many other activities. This is very counterproductive to U.S. goals and interests.

This is not the kind of America the American people deserve. The American people deserve leadership that will make them safer and more secure, that will increase our prosperity, and that will advance our values and serve as an example to the world. That America, Mr. President, is also an America that can lead the world and that the world will want to work with.

The state of world affairs has been precarious for some time now. Almost single-handedly, President Trump is inflaming previously simmering situations, while creating new problems where they previously did not exist.

World leaders are chastising us. Innocent people are looking at us in fear. Terrorists are gearing up to use Trump's hate-mongering in their recruitment and anti-American propaganda. We will be less safe, not safer. He will be putting Americans at risk here at home and those traveling abroad.

As we do debate Mr. Tillerson's nomination, we cannot lose sight of the fact

that he will be carrying out the foreign policy of the most dangerous, unstable, thin-skinned, and inexperienced President we have seen on foreign policy issues and other issues.

Is he up to the job? Will he be a voice of reason and stability when times call for reason and stability? Will he resist the forces of war that so easily call out, rather than engage in the hard but necessary work of diplomacy and negotiation?

These are critical questions that we must ask and seek answers to as we debate and vote on the most important official in the President's Cabinet.

It is clear to me that, unfortunately, Mr. Tillerson will not be that voice of stability, reason, and diplomatic experience that the United States so desperately needs at this time of uncertainty and instability.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

PATIENT FREEDOM ACT

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, the big debate right now, as we all know in our country, is this: How do we repeal and replace ObamaCare?

It is pretty clear that the American people want something done. They voted, ever since the bill was passed, for those who opposed ObamaCare and had a desire to both repeal and replace, culminating in the election of President Trump.

Now, I and SUSAN COLLINS, as well as others, have introduced something called the Patient Freedom Act, which is our attempt to replace ObamaCare. But what I want to emphasize here is the bill's emphasis upon federalism. The key feature is that we take power from Washington, DC, and give it back to patients and back to State capitols.

We think that we find plenty of examples where Washington has done that, allowing States to be the laboratories of democracy. It has worked out well for all.

First, let's look at the parameters that President Trump has laid out. President Trump says he wants to repeal the Affordable Care Act but replace it with something which covers everyone, takes care of preexisting conditions, does not have mandates, and lowers cost. Those are the marching orders, as far as I am concerned. With the Patient Freedom Act, we attempt to achieve President Trump's goals.

Now, how do we do that? Under our bill, Congress would pass legislation this year which next year would give States one of three options.

The Patient Freedom Act has something we call the better choice. That would be one option that States could choose. But really, a State would have the choice to say nothing: We don't want anything from the Federal Government. Good-bye. Get out of here. That is one option the State has, and the last option the State has is to stay with the status quo—or the Affordable Care Act.