

Last year I traveled to Ukraine and Estonia, countries that are on the frontline of Russian aggression. They are genuinely concerned about President Trump's desire to embrace Russia. I heard firsthand how important the support and presence of the United States is to our allies in the Baltics.

In recent years, Russia's belligerence has only grown. Russia has conducted a cyber attack against Estonia, seized territory in Georgia, kidnapped an Estonian border guard, and illegally annexed Crimea. Russian military patrols have approached NATO member territory and have come recklessly close to U.S. military vessels. These irresponsible actions can have severe, dangerous consequences.

What should be most disturbing to any American is that last year Russia interfered with our election to undermine public faith in our democratic process. The intelligence community reported that Vladimir Putin himself ordered the interference—a significant escalation of Russian attempts to sow chaos in the West.

I recognize the President's right to choose his appointments to the Cabinet, but, as the Senate provides its advice and consent, there are still too many unanswered questions for me to support this nomination. We still have not seen President Trump's tax returns, breaking a 40-year tradition adhered to by nominees of both parties. This lack of transparency means that we don't know about the Trump family's possible past and current business ties to Russia. What message do we send to our allies if the Secretary of State and potentially even the President have a history of significant business dealings with a corrupt regime? How will this impact our moral authority as a country to take action against corruption worldwide?

The Secretary of State is the U.S. Ambassador to the world. It is essential that the Secretary is someone who can provide unquestioned leadership and represent American values. There must be no question that the Secretary of State is acting in the best interest of the United States and is willing to take strong action to advance our interests. He must put the American people first and not his former shareholders and friends in the Exxon boardroom.

I am concerned that Mr. Tillerson will prematurely lift the sanctions that have been put in place against Russia. Sanctions are not meant to be permanent, but they should never be removed until they have achieved their purpose.

When our Secretary of State looks at a map of the Baltic region, we need a statesman who sees allies that contribute to NATO, not a new opportunity for offshore drilling.

The Senate must ensure that we are a moderating voice and are approving moderating voices in the Trump administration.

I supported the nominations of Secretary Mattis to lead the Department

of Defense, Secretary Kelly to lead the Department of Homeland Security, and Ambassador Haley to serve as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, and I supported these individuals because I believe they will serve as a positive influence against the worst instincts and erratic tendencies of President Trump and his political advisers.

America must stand by its allies and serve as a shining example of democracy. I cannot support a Secretary of State nominee if there is any doubt as to whether they will be a strong, independent voice within the Trump administration. The events of the past week have made the need for such leadership abundantly clear. That is why I will vote against the nomination of Rex Tillerson for Secretary of State, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the Secretary of State nominee, as well as President Trump's recent Executive order on refugees. I believe we need a Secretary of State who will clearly stand up to Russian aggression. I am concerned about the nominee's past statements and his relationship with Russia, and I am not going to be voting for him. If he is confirmed, I hope we can work with him. Some of his newer statements have been positive on taking that on, as well as some of the many issues confronting our world.

The reason I am so focused on Russia is, first of all, we have a significant Ukrainian population in Minnesota. We are very proud of them. I was recently in Ukraine, Georgia, as well as Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia with Senators MCCAIN and GRAHAM. I saw firsthand the meaning of Russian aggression on a daily basis. In these countries, the cyber attack is not a new movie. They have seen it many times before. It is a rerun. In Estonia, in 2007, they had the audacity to move a bronze statue of a Russian fighter from a town square where there had been protests to a cemetery. What did they get for that? They got their Internet service shut down. That is what they do. In Lithuania, they decided something you could imagine happening in our own country. On the 25th anniversary of the celebration of the independence of their country, they invited, as an act of solidarity, the members of the Ukrainian Parliament—who are in exile in Kiev from Crimea, which has been illegally annexed by Russia. They invited them to meet with them and celebrate in Lithuania. What happened to them; again, cyber attacks on members of the Parliament.

This is not just about one political candidate. We saw in the last election in the United States—where now 17 intelligence agencies have collectively said there was an infringement—that there was an attempt to influence our elections in America. It is not just about one candidate. It is not just about one political party, as Senator RUBIO so eloquently noted. It is not even just about one country. It is an assault on democracies across the world.

I think we need to take this very seriously, not just from an intelligence standpoint but also from a foreign relations standpoint. That is why I introduced the bill, with Senators FEINSTEIN, CARDIN, LEAHY, and CARPER, to create an independent and nonpartisan commission to uncover all the facts. It is also why we have an expanded sanctions bill that is bipartisan, led by Senators MCCAIN and CARDIN.

What we do matters. I think you see that, not only with regard to our relations with those countries in the Baltics but also with what we have seen in just the past few days because of this Executive order. I hope that having a Secretary of State in place would help, as well as more involvement from other agencies so something like this will never happen again.

TRAVEL BAN

As a former prosecutor, I have long advocated for thorough vetting. I have supported strong national security measures. I believe the No. 1 purpose of government is to keep people safe, but I don't believe that is what this Executive order did. In fact, it created chaos. I am on the bill to reverse and rescind this order. I know they have taken some steps to respond to all of the problems we have seen in every State in this Nation, but what really happened was—with the stroke of a pen—the administration excluded entire populations from seeking refuge.

I do think it is a bit forgotten that it is not just the seven or so countries that were identified by the administration. The refugee program has been stopped all over the world, and on Sunday I met with, along with Senator FRANKEN, a number of our refugee populations. To give you some background, we have the biggest population of Somalis in the Nation in Minnesota. We are proud of our Somali population. We have the second biggest Hmong population. We have the biggest Liberian population. We have the biggest Oromo population. We have a number of people from Burma. These are all legal workers. They come over as refugees. They are legal when they come over. Many of them get green cards. Many of them go on to become citizens. We have people who are on work visas, people who are on student visas.

The faces I saw and the people I met, these were their stories: an engineer from 3M who doesn't think he can go back to visit his father; a former marine from one of the affected countries who doesn't believe his brother can

now come and visit him; two little girls in bright pink jackets who stood with us because they had waited for years for the arrival of their sister; the mother, a Somali woman within a refugee camp in Uganda was pregnant. She finally had gotten her papers to be able to come to America, get out of the refugee camp with her two children, but because she was pregnant when the papers came through, she wasn't able to apply for what would be her third child. The baby was born and she had a "Sophie's Choice." Was she going to stay in the refugee camp with the two older girls or was she going to bring them to safety in America, in Minnesota, with so many friends and relatives whom she knew, and then have to leave the baby behind?

She decided to leave the baby with friends at that refugee camp, and for 4 years she worked to get that baby to Minnesota. She got it done, and that baby was supposed to get on a plane and come to Minnesota this week, courtesy of Lutheran Social Services in Minnesota that had worked with the family. Right now, the latest news our office has had, that is not happening. Why? This 4-year-old is not a green card holder. This 4-year-old is a refugee, a refugee who is coming to finally be with her mom and her sisters. To explain to what looked like about an 8-year-old and a 10-year-old why this is happening is really—there are no words to explain why it is happening.

I truly appreciate it that some of our Republican colleagues joined the chorus to say the vetting rule had not been vetted. Many of them pointed to the implementation problems with this rule, and others, such as Senator MCCAIN and Senator GRAHAM, also talked about the fact that this was simply a self-inflicted wound in our fight against terrorism. We heard much of that.

I know, from my colleagues, what this means to moderates whom we are attempting to work with in these Muslim nations as well as our allies all across the world.

I leave you with this. This is about our economy. I remind our friends, and I know—I see Senator RUBIO here who understands the economic value of immigration—that over 70 of the Fortune 500 companies in America are led by immigrants, including in my State, 3M, Best Buy, Mosaic; that 25 percent of our U.S. Nobel laureates were born in other countries; that at one point I had the figure that 200 of our Fortune 500 companies were started by immigrants or kids of immigrants. That is our economy.

There is the moral argument, best reflected in the story I just told of those two little girls in their bright pink jackets in the middle of a Minnesota winter, but then there is also the security argument. So we plead with the administration to reverse this rule, to rescind it.

Certainly, we can work on more vetting measures. As we know, the refugee

vetting already takes 18 months, 2 years, 3 years, more work with biometrics, but there is no reason to do this on the backs of people who have followed the rules, who have followed the regulations and have done what is right and simply want to be part of our country or, in most cases, are already part of our country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, we are here in the Senate debating what I believe is the most important Cabinet position that the President has to nominate, the Secretary of State. It comes at an important point in American foreign policy history. There is so much uncertainty and debate about our role in the world these days. A lot of our allies have questions. Our adversaries are obviously watching very closely.

I hope that all of us—and I mean the Executive Branch to the Congress—recognize that as people around the world are watching what is happening on television, they see an America that is deeply divided and fractured right now. I think this needs to be a moment of restraint, both in action and in words. As we work through our differences, these vibrant debates are important to our system of government.

It is one of the reasons that led me to ultimately support the nomination of Mr. Tillerson. I believe that despite some of the concerns that I had and have about his answers to some of my questions, it is vitally important for this country to have a Secretary of State in place at this moment.

I have never had any doubts about Mr. Tillerson's qualifications, his intellect, his background. I have had some concerns about his answers to some very important questions, at least important questions to me, and what I hope will be important questions for a lot of Americans. That is what I wanted to come to the floor and speak about in conjunction with this nomination, and that is the issue of human rights.

To me, human rights is critical both to our national identity, but it is also important to our national Security. In America today, we have, as we have done now for the past few centuries, contentious debates all the time about policies and about what kind of country we want to be. If you have watched the proceedings on the Senate floor or in committee over the last few days, you have seen a lot of that.

Even as we debate these things among ourselves, and even as the American political rhetoric has become so incredibly heated—and we will have more to say about that in the weeks to come—I don't know of any other time where we have gotten to the point that when we disagree with people, we don't just disagree with them, we question their motives and their character.

In fact, it is almost automatic today in American political discourse. You don't just disagree with someone; you immediately jump to why they are a

bad person. In the months and weeks to come, I will have examples about why that is a bad idea. But as we are having those contentious debates, I hope that we never take for granted, sometimes as I think we do, that we live in a place where losing an election, losing a vote, losing on an issue, does not mean you end up in jail or disappear or are executed because that is the kind of stuff that happens in other places all over the world, even now, in the 17th year of the 21st century.

As we have seen in recent weeks, this political dissent is part of our way of life. It has come to define our country. We protect it in our Constitution. It has made us an example to the rest of the world. I was reminded of this just a couple of months ago, right here in Washington, DC. After our most recent election, I had to a chance to visit with my opponent, Congressman Patrick Murphy of Florida.

When I was finished with that meeting, I walked into another meeting. That other meeting was with a Cuban dissident. He is an opponent of the Castro regime, an individual who risks his life in the pursuit of freedom, an individual who does not just get bad blog posts or a bad article or a bad editorial or a nasty campaign ad run against him. No, this is an individual who routinely gets thrown into jail, and he has the scars to prove the beatings he has taken from the Cuban state police over the last few years.

I was a little bit late to this meeting. I apologized to him. I explained that I had just been in a meeting with my opposing candidate, the man I had just ran against in the election. I could see the look on his face. It kind of struck him. He immediately, I believe, appreciated what that represented. He said—and I am paraphrasing: That is what we want for our country too.

This is the essence of what has been America's example to the world, the essence of how our principles and our values have inspired others to seek their own God-given rights and how we have a moral duty to support—in our words, in our foreign policy, and in our actions—those aspirations of people all over the world.

In a way, dictators and tyrants have never had it worse than they do today because we live in this high-tech information age. We often get to see the images of repression within minutes of it happening, if not in real time. We can monitor it; we can catalog the status of human rights in every city, in every country, on every continent.

But as Americans, we are called to do much more than observe and record these atrocities for history. With this knowledge, it is our duty to act and to do what we can to support the people demanding their rights. We must hold those who are violating their rights accountable. I believe this is more important than ever because of the totalitarian resurgence underway in many parts of the world as democracy in every continent is under attack.

Even as I stand here now before you, there are political prisoners on this planet. They languish in Chinese prisons. Political dissidents and journalists are being silenced and targeted for murder in Russia. Those who seek democracy in Syria are being massacred. The United States has a unique responsibility to highlight, to expose, and to combat these grave human rights abuses around the world.

Historically, we have been a compassionate country that has welcomed people seeking refuge from repression and atrocities. That is why I understand. I understand the concerns about refugees from certain failed states or governments who sponsor terror, places where very often it is difficult if not impossible to verify the identities of people seeking to come to the United States.

I say this to people all the time. When you talk about changes in policies, there is a legitimate argument and a credible argument to be made that there are people we cannot allow into the United States, not because we don't have compassion for their plight but because we have no way of knowing who they are. You can't just call 1-800-Syria and get background information about the individuals who are trying to enter the United States. We know for a fact that there are terrorist groups around the world that have commandeered passport-making machinery and are producing passports that are real in every way, except for the identity of the person in the picture.

So I do believe that we need to have very careful and rigorous screening, more than ever before, of all people entering the United States but especially those who are coming from areas that we know do not have reliable background information available to us.

But at the same time, I cannot help, and I think we should not help, but to be worried about the impact of a 120-day moratorium on every single refugee from anywhere on the planet, refugees from places like the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ukraine, Colombia, El Salvador, Vietnam, Burma, and, of course, Cuba, just to name a few places. These are among the most vulnerable people on the planet, living often in the most difficult and dangerous circumstances imaginable.

I remind everyone: This is a moratorium; it is not a permanent policy. I understand that there are provisions available for waivers, and I find that to be promising.

But I also want to everyone to understand that 120 days, for someone who is trying to get out of a place where they might be killed, may be 1 day too many for some of them. I hope that that does not turn out to be the case. That is why I urge the administration, that is why I urge soon-to-be Secretary Tillerson, to exercise great caution in making sure that dissidents and others are not being turned away.

By the way, I am pleased to see that the administration is heeding some of

these calls already, early this week. We must understand that when tyrants and dictators oppress their people, we are all paying a price. It is happening all over the world. Vladimir Putin continues to institute Draconian laws targeting the freedom of expression and assembly.

Earlier this year, my office and I highlighted the case of human rights activist Ildar Dadin, who was the first person imprisoned under Russia's new criminal provision that bars any form of public dissent.

In China, rights lawyers are tortured. Labor activists are arrested. Tibetan Buddhist nuns are expelled from their homes, and churches are being demolished. Just earlier today, I met the wives of two Chinese rights advocates, who both pleaded for the United States to champion their husbands' cases in the hope that they can see their husbands again.

In Iran, dissent, freedom of expression, and freedom of press is non-existent, heavily restricted. Many continue to be jailed for simply exercising their fundamental human rights. The Government of Iran targets religious minorities, often jailing Christian pastors and those who gather to worship together in private homes. In Syria, one of the worst humanitarian catastrophes in modern history, the Assad regime, with the assistance of Vladimir Putin and the Iranian Government and military, is committing war crimes against innocent women, children, men, and civilians in Aleppo and beyond.

In Iraq, we have seen ancient Christian and Yazidi communities on the verge of extinction, all because of ISIS.

In Venezuela, the Maduro regime continues to imprison political opponents while the country descends further and further into economic chaos and has now become on the verge of a total humanitarian catastrophe in the Western Hemisphere. In one of the richest countries on the planet, we are at the point of people literally starving to death.

Saudi Arabia is an ally of the United States on many key geopolitical issues, and we will have to continue working with them on those shared causes. But they also remain one of the most censored countries in the world. The government has intensified its repression of activists and journalists. In Saudi Arabia, women remain under the male guardianship system. They are banned from even driving.

Globally, assaults against press freedom around the world are a major problem because, ultimately, the cause and champions of human rights need information to expose abuses and call for reforms. Without independent journalists, without information, tyrants and dictatorships can get away with so much more.

According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, in 2016, 48 journalists were killed and 259 journalists were jailed worldwide. In 2016, Turkey, a

NATO member, again, an important geopolitical alliance of the United States, but, sadly, they became the leading jailer of journalists on the planet, following a widespread crackdown on the press.

The abuses and threats to human rights around the world are many. We could be here all night trying to break Senator Strom Thurmond's filibuster record, going country by country, case by case, and it still would not be enough time to do justice to all of the heroic figures around the world. But it is my hope that more of my colleagues will join me in doing so over time because it is important. Our voices here in the Senate give people all over the world confidence and motivation to stay the course.

As famed Soviet dissident Natan Sharansky has said of himself and fellow prisoners of conscience in the Soviet Union: "We never could survive even one day in the Soviet Union if our struggle was not the struggle of the free world."

In essence, what he is saying is that these tyrants and these dictators, when they jail these people, the first thing they tell them is that no one even remembers you anymore. No one talks about you anymore. You have been abandoned.

Today, I want to highlight one particular human rights case as part of the weekly social media campaign my office has been doing for the last couple of years called Expression NOT Oppression.

Here you see a picture of a gentleman named Dr. Eduardo Cardet of Cuba. He is a medical doctor and the national coordinator of the Christian Liberation Movement, a group which advocates for democracy and freedom.

Cardet assumed the role of national coordinator after the suspicious death of Castro critic Oswaldo Paya Sardinias. After allegedly stating in an interview that Fidel Castro was hated by the Cuban people—that is what he said—he was savagely beaten in front of his two young children and wife by Cuban state security on November 30 of last year. He has been in jail ever since.

He has been charged—get this. He has been charged with challenging authority. He faces a 3- to 5-year prison sentence. Let me repeat that. He is officially charged with challenging authority. That is a crime in Cuba. His father has written to Pope Francis begging for his intervention. By the way, this is a reminder that even though Fidel Castro is dead, his authoritarian system still lives on.

Dr. Cardet's persecution and the overall increase in repression in Cuba over the past 2 years is a reminder that the policy of rewarding the Castro regime, under the guise of engagement, with cash and concessions has not worked and must be strategically reversed here in the coming months.

So I come here today in the hope that our President and our State Department and especially Mr. Tillerson,

in whom I am entrusting my vote for confirmation, and all Members of Congress, for that matter, will add their voices in solidarity with Dr. Cardet, with all the Cuban people yearning to be free, and with those around the world who look to our Nation—to America—for leadership and often for nothing more than for us to lend our voice to their cause.

As we move forward here with our Nation's work, we must continue to highlight these cases and to raise awareness of them. We must never forget that there are people all over the world who are challenging authority because they want a better life for themselves and their families. They should be able to challenge authority peacefully and then go home to their families, not be thrown in jail, tortured, or killed.

Today I ask all to pray for those who are victims of their own government. I pray for the release of prisoners of conscience and their families, and I pray that our own country at this moment of extraordinary division on so many key issues can reaffirm its founding principles in calling for the sacred right of every man, woman, and child to be free.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today the Senate is considering the nomination of Rex Tillerson to be Secretary of State. Mr. Tillerson is an intelligent, hard-working, and successful businessman. He is also, in my view, the wrong choice to be our Nation's top diplomat.

To effectively confront the many challenges our country faces in an increasingly globalized and volatile world, we need a Secretary of State who, with credibility and conviction, can clearly and effectively articulate our interests and values and who has experience advocating for them abroad.

We need someone who will work with the international community to combat climate change, bring to justice war criminals like Bashar al-Assad, and stand up to corrupt, abusive regimes that violate international humanitarian law and territorial integrity as Russia has done in Syria and Ukraine.

We need someone who will advocate for fundamental human rights and democratic values when they are threatened by friend or foe.

I am unconvinced that Mr. Tillerson is that person.

As an accomplished businessman, Mr. Tillerson's lone qualification for Secretary of State seems to be his success in tirelessly circumnavigating the globe to negotiate oil deals. There is no doubt he has helped ExxonMobil expand its business and made a lot of money doing so. But contrary to the view being promoted by the Trump administration, running a for-profit business is fundamentally different from running a large Federal agency.

As the CEO of ExxonMobil, Mr. Tillerson worked closely with corrupt autocrats like Vladimir Putin who were actively undermining U.S. inter-

ests and acting in ways that were counter to our values. In doing so, Mr. Tillerson served his shareholders, but he disregarded the national interests of the United States.

Unlike some in this body, I believe we should have relations with governments we disagree with. But I also believe that, in doing so, we must act in accordance with our principles and values. And I don't believe that being the CEO of one of this country's wealthiest companies entitles you to ignore those values for the sake of making money.

Mr. Tillerson's confirmation hearing provided him the opportunity to reconcile his track record of a lifetime in the oil business with the responsibilities he would have as Secretary of State.

In his testimony, he stated that "American leadership requires moral clarity." I agree. But he was challenged by Senators RUBIO, MURPHY, and others who observed that despite this statement, Mr. Tillerson was unwilling to label the relentless bombardment and destruction of Aleppo by Russian forces as a war crime or the extrajudicial killings of thousands of civilians in the Philippines as a blatant violation of human rights, to cite only two examples of well-documented cases of atrocities he refused to recognize as such.

I worry that Mr. Tillerson will too often be inclined to subjugate fundamental human rights to what he perceives as overriding economic or security concerns. There is nothing in the record to suggest that he recognizes that the protection of human rights is itself a national security imperative or that he would differ from the President on these issues that have become even more important since January 20.

We also have no idea what Mr. Tillerson thinks about the President's misguided, discriminatory, and probably illegal decision to ban entry to the United States of all citizens of Syria and half a dozen other Muslim countries because he has been conspicuously silent, even though the State Department will have a key role in enforcing it. Our diplomats posted overseas will bear the brunt of the retaliatory actions by outraged governments in countries targeted by this arbitrary and self-defeating Executive order.

Nor do we know what he thinks of the President's draft Executive order that signals a drastic reduction in our support for and influence in the United Nations. Will the President consult with Mr. Tillerson before issuing that order? Does Mr. Tillerson think it is a smart way to protect our interests and reassure our allies? We don't know.

ExxonMobil, while Mr. Tillerson was CEO, lobbied to overturn section 1504 of the Dodd-Frank legislation which is designed to stop the illicit flow of revenues from oil and gas extraction to corrupt governments. Senator Lugar, who played a key role in that bipartisan legislation, said at the time that stop-

ping such corruption is a national security and economic priority for the United States. Does Mr. Tillerson think that shrouding in secrecy corruption involving hundreds of billions of dollars by governments who steal from their own impoverished people is in our national interest? We don't know because he doesn't say.

My other abiding concern with this nominee is that we are being asked to confirm the head of the world's largest oil company to be the country's top diplomat, at a time when I believe the most challenging issue we and the world face is climate change resulting from the combustion of fossil fuels.

Uniting the world to combat climate change will not be possible without unprecedented U.S. leadership. Leadership requires credibility, and on this issue, Mr. Tillerson has next to none. He has devoted his professional career—and become a billionaire in the process—to extracting and selling as much oil as possible. If, at his confirmation hearing, Mr. Tillerson had said that he recognizes the causal connection between burning fossil fuels and climate change, that he understands the grave threat it poses, and that he is determined to use the position of Secretary of State to build on the record of the Obama administration to combat climate change, I might feel differently. But he said nothing remotely like that.

To the contrary, when asked at his confirmation hearing if ExxonMobil concealed what it knew about climate change while funding outside groups that raised doubts about the science, Mr. Tillerson said he was "in no position to speak" for the company, even though he had been the CEO until only a few days before. When asked whether he lacked the knowledge to answer or was refusing to do so, he replied "A little of both." That should concern each of us.

Based on his professional record and his responses at the hearing, I do not believe Mr. Tillerson is the right person to be representing the United States in negotiations to reduce carbon emissions, one of the defining issues of our time.

I was also disappointed by Mr. Tillerson's responses to a number of other questions submitted for the record, including regarding U.S. policy toward Cuba and the right of Americans to travel there. By simply repeating the Republican talking points that he would act consistent with the Helms-Burton Act, he appeared to embrace a law that has failed to achieve any of its objectives and has prevented Americans from traveling freely to Cuba or U.S. companies from doing business there.

Does Mr. Tillerson believe that Cuba, an impoverished island of 11 million people who overwhelmingly have a positive opinion of the United States, should remain the country with the most U.S. sanctions of any in the world? He didn't say.

I hope that, if confirmed, Mr. Tillerson will evaluate our policy toward Cuba objectively and in a manner that favors diplomatic engagement—as the overwhelming majority of Cubans and Americans want—over isolation.

I understand that nominees are often unwilling to take hard positions or unable to discuss in detail at this early stage all of the issues they will be required to manage in their new job. But we should expect a nominee for Secretary of State to be willing and able to recognize and condemn horrific violations of human rights and to speak out against actions by foreign governments and our own that are obviously inconsistent with our interests and values.

President Obama did not achieve every foreign policy goal he set out to achieve, nor did I always agree with President Obama's or Secretary of State Kerry's priorities. But we worked together, and with our international partners, we made notable progress over the past 8 years on human rights, climate change, reducing poverty, and many other issues—progress we must continue to build on. With nationalism and isolationism on the rise and democracy and fundamental freedoms under threat, we need a Secretary of State who has demonstrated a track record and commitment to more than economic enrichment.

If Mr. Tillerson is confirmed, which I expect he will be, I will continue my longstanding support for the funding to enable the State Department to carry out its vital mission to protect and promote U.S. interests and values abroad. When he and I agree, I will support him. When we disagree, I will be vocal in my opposition as I was during the Obama administration.

I hope Mr. Tillerson will also be a strong advocate for the State Department's budget and personnel, including by protecting the integrity of the Disent Channel to ensure that alternative views on important policy decisions can be expressed and considered without fear of retribution. Even the best policies in the world are worth little more than the paper they are printed on without the funds and the people to implement them.

We should always remember that the face of the United States is its people. Leadership is possible only through the hard work of the diplomats serving around the world to promote our values, defend our interests, and engage constructively with friends and adversaries. Their service, dedication, and expertise are the reason we are able to effectively confront an increasingly dangerous world. Our success at home is inextricably linked to their success abroad. That is why, just as we support the men and women of our military, so should we recognize and support the diplomats at the Department of State.

The State Department's indispensable role, made possible by its outstanding workforce, is recognized by the many widely respected senior U.S.

Armed Forces officials, current and retired, who have repeatedly called for increased funding for diplomacy and development. They know better than anyone that preventing wars is far less costly than fighting them and that wars rarely if ever turn out the way one predicts, as the past 50 years painfully illustrate.

Regardless of whatever differences of opinion we may have, I hope Mr. Tillerson will consult regularly with Republicans and Democrats, as has been the custom with past successful Secretaries of State of both parties. I have been here a long time, and I would be the first to say that we have had outstanding top diplomats from both parties. I put James Baker in that category, and I sincerely hope that Mr. Tillerson proves me wrong and joins their ranks. We all want what is best for the American people and the Nation, and we are stronger when we work together and with other nations to find a common way forward.

HONORING OFFICER DAVID FAHEY

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, the city of Cleveland lost a committed public servant last week, Officer David Fahey. Officer Fahey dedicated his career to protecting our community and was tragically killed in the line of duty in a senseless hit-and-run.

A Navy veteran, Officer Fahey followed in the footsteps of his mother and his stepfather, both retired Cleveland police officers, and his brother Chris, an officer who joined the force in 2013.

At a memorial last week, his brother said that Officer Fahey "loved this neighborhood; he loved working for this neighborhood and he loved this city, and he loved working for this city."

And our city has given his family an outpouring of support.

A crowd of some 200 people gathered outside the First District police headquarters for a vigil.

Fellow officers from the Cleveland Police Academy's 133rd graduating class came out to honor their classmate's memory. They prayed together, calling him their brother, their friend, and their angel.

That spirit of community represents the best in our city that Officer Fahey loved and served.

Connie and I extend our deepest sympathies to Officer Fahey's family and fellow officers. We pray that this outpouring of support and comradeship brings them comfort during this difficult time.

We join our fellow Clevelanders in thanking David Fahey for his service to our community.

TRIBUTE TO JAMES D. WISE

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor a great man, a colleague, and my friend: Jamie Wise.

It was nearly 10 years ago that Jamie joined Team Montana. The passionate Representative ROSA DELAULO had toughened him up and groomed him for success in the world's most delibera-

tive body. As a newly elected Senator ranked 100 in seniority, one of the first decisions I made was to hire Jamie.

Some may say it is tough to break into Team Montana. We are few but proud, an independent but tight-knit family, a little unpolished, but persistent and most often underestimated. Jamie fit right in.

With his sharp wit and dry sense of humor, he quickly became a Montanan. Hailing from his adoptive hometown of Great Falls, it was a natural fit for him to tackle my veterans, defense, and homeland security portfolios. And tackle it he did.

He wrote my first bill that was signed into law to more fairly reimburse veterans who are traveling to and from their doctors' appointments. It may seem like a simple thing, but it has been life changing for veterans all across this Nation who cannot afford a tank of gas but are facing debilitating medical conditions and need to see their doctor. This bill would set the stage for Jamie's long and incredible career in my office.

Jamie's dedication to Montana has taken him down into the silo of an intercontinental ballistic missile, from the embassy in Yemen, to the Port of Wild Horse on the border of Canada. Needless to say, his legislative chops are unmatched on the Hill. His ability to look 1 inch ahead while also calculating the roadblocks 100 miles away is a skill that can't be taught. It is instinctual.

Jamie worked hard, long hours and rose through the ranks from legislative assistant to legislative director and ultimately chief of staff. It was common to find Jamie sitting in his office into the wee hours of the night plowing through appropriations bills, making sure Montana got its fair shake. Those long hours produced real results for families and small businesses across the State. You can see Jamie's fingerprints on hundreds of letters, thousands of press releases, and the careers of dozens of young, aspiring staffers.

James D. Wise has left his mark on this world, and I can't wait to see what he takes on next.

So today, I wish to thank Jamie on behalf of this Nation, 1 million Montanans, and one grateful Senator.

STATE OF THE UNION ESSAY CONTEST FINALISTS

● Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask to have printed in the RECORD some of the finalist essays written by Vermont high school students as part of the seventh annual State of the Union essay contest conducted by my office.

The material follows:

ZOE HOULIHAN, NORTH COUNTRY UNION HIGH SCHOOL FRESHMAN (FINALIST)

When you think of America, do you think of McDonald's, big cities, high-tech phones and computers, or do you think about violence, fear, and hatred amongst people? Although America seems like a great place full of opportunities and freedom, it is quite the opposite if you are not a white, straight, cisgendered male. There are many problems in America that need to be fixed.

Racism has been ongoing for hundreds of years. Blacks, Hispanics and many other