

from Barbara Bush about what I had said about her son, George W. Bush.

Not many of us think how difficult it must be to be the spouse of a President of the United States with all that one goes through, but think how much harder it must also be to be the mother of a President of the United States and the mother of another distinguished son who was Governor of a large State and who ran for President of the United States. Barbara Bush was the anchor of her family, and a very successful and remarkable family it was.

I was Education Secretary for President Bush in 1991 when the National Literacy Act was enacted. Let's use Barbara's own words to define the event. She wrote in her memoir, "I must say I got more credit than I deserve."

I don't agree with that, but she continued:

I heard that George was going to give the pen to me, but before he could, Senator Simon spoke up and said, "That pen ought to go to Barbara." I donated it to the George Bush Presidential Library Center. In the end, however it's not pens and pictures that count; it's the National Literacy Act that really counts. It was the first piece of legislation—and to date, the only one—ever enacted specifically for literacy with the goal of ensuring that every American adult acquires the basic literacy skills necessary to achieve the greatest possible satisfaction professionally and personally. But even more than that, the act seeks to strengthen our nation by giving us more productive workers and informed citizens.

In his biography of President George H.W. Bush, John Meacham wrote of a "generational controversy," in his words, that Barbara Bush endured in May of 1990. She was invited to Wellesley College to speak at graduation and receive an honorary degree, but she was being criticized by Wellesley's young women, as President Bush put in his own diary—these are President Bush's words—"because she hasn't made it on her own—she's where she is because she's her husband's wife. What's wrong with the fact that she's a good mother," President Bush wrote in his diary, "a good wife, great volunteer, great leader for literacy and other fine causes? Nothing. But to listen to these elitist kids there is."

Meacham writes:

Mrs. Bush invited [Mrs.] Gorbachev along with her to Wellesley. There, [she] confronted the issues of work versus family and the role of women head-on, delivering a well-received commencement address.

She put the audience at ease early on by saying: One day, I am sure that someone in this audience will grow up to become a spouse of the President of the United States, and I wish him well.

Meacham continues:

"Maybe we should adjust faster, maybe we should adjust slower," she told the graduates. "But whatever the era, whatever the times, one thing will never change: Fathers and mothers, if you have children—they must come first. You must read to your children, and you must hug your children, and you must love your children. Your success as a family, our success as a society depends

not on what happens in the White House, but on what happens inside your house."

Barbara Bush said that to the Wellesley graduates in 1990.

The country is expressing to the Bush family, as I am trying to today, our great respect for Barbara Bush's life.

President Bush, George H.W. Bush, has sent a response to those of us who sent our condolences, and I would like to close with the President's own words about his wife Barbara. This is what George H.W. Bush said:

I always knew Barbara was the most beloved woman in the world, and in fact I used to tease her that I had a complex about that fact. But the truth is the outpouring of love and friendship being directed at The Enforcer is lifting us all up. We have faith she is in heaven, and we know life will go on—as she would have it. So cross the Bushes off your worry list.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. I ask for the yeas and nays on the pending nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Muniz nomination?

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. McCAIN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 55, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 79 Ex.]

YEAS—55

Alexander	Gardner	Nelson
Barrasso	Graham	Paul
Blunt	Grassley	Perdue
Boozman	Hatch	Portman
Burr	Heitkamp	Risch
Capito	Heller	Roberts
Cassidy	Hoever	Rounds
Collins	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Corker	Inhofe	Sasse
Cornyn	Isakson	Scott
Cotton	Johnson	Shelby
Crapo	Jones	Sullivan
Cruz	Kennedy	Thune
Daines	Lankford	Tillis
Donnelly	Lee	Toomey
Enzi	Manchin	Wicker
Ernst	McConnell	Young
Fischer	Moran	
Flake	Murkowski	

NAYS—43

Baldwin	Cortez Masto	Klobuchar
Bennet	Durbin	Leahy
Blumenthal	Feinstein	Markey
Booker	Gillibrand	McCaskill
Brown	Harris	Menendez
Cantwell	Hassan	Merkley
Cardin	Heinrich	Murphy
Carper	Hirono	Murray
Casey	Kaine	Peters
Coons	King	Reed

Sanders	Stabenow	Warren
Schatz	Tester	Whitehouse
Schumer	Udall	Wyden
Shaheen	Van Hollen	
Smith	Warner	

NOT VOTING—2

Duckworth

McCain

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

NOMINATION OF MIKE POMPEO

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, over the past 24 hours we have learned of a high-level meeting between Director Pompeo—Mike Pompeo, the President's nominee to become Secretary of State—and Kim Jong Un, the leader—the tyrant leader—of North Korea, who has threatened to use nuclear weapons not only against our allies but against the United States and has a growing capability in his efforts to do just that.

We have also seen incredible partisan obstruction threatened on his nomination. The absurd levels of partisanship in this Chamber are a stain on our institution. We see it at every level of nominations, from ambassadorships to commissions to boards. Now we see it at the level of the Secretary of State, a position that will be instrumental in denuclearizing the North Korean regime.

Director Pompeo had his confirmation hearing last week before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. We now know that his testimony at this committee hearing took place after he had visited Kim Jong Un, and in this committee hearing, he made it very clear that our goal remains the complete and verifiable irreversible denuclearization. That is the stated goal, confirmed by Director Pompeo: the complete and verifiable irreversible denuclearization of North Korea. Yet we now have people threatening to stop this nomination at a critical time when we face a nuclear threat that is the greatest this country has seen since the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Our colleagues on the other side of the aisle would decide to deny this country its top State Department diplomat.

Let me describe what some of our colleagues have said who have claimed now that they are going to vote against Mike Pompeo for Secretary of State but who, just a few months back, voted to confirm Mike Pompeo. One of my colleagues who is voting against Director Pompeo for Secretary of State has admitted that Director Pompeo has been a "solid manager" of the CIA, saying:

I voted for him to head the CIA and don't wish I had that vote back. I think he has a background in intel and has been a solid manager there.

Another colleague, who tried to criticize Director Pompeo's diversity policies at the CIA, was met with this response from Director Pompeo, who explained at the hearing that those types of complaints decreased under his leadership. Mike Pompeo stated: "The number of—we call them 'no fear complaints'—the statutory requirement decreased from 2016 to 2017 by 40 percent."

Director Pompeo further explained: "I'm proud of the record . . . the work that my team has done on this."

So concerns about diversity policies was refuted at the committee hearing.

Another Senator seems worried that Mike Pompeo is conducting diplomacy and said: "Pompeo is the wrong person to be engaging in diplomacy."

The nominee to be Secretary of State is the wrong person to be conducting diplomacy? Perhaps we need somebody working at the Department of Transportation. Maybe that is the person they want to conduct diplomacy. Building interstates—maybe that is who they think should be conducting diplomacy. I would rather have somebody who has been nominated to be Secretary of State to be conducting diplomacy—somebody who has an outstanding background in the military, somebody who stood in Europe during the height of the Cold War, standing on the iron wall.

This is a time when we ought to be doing everything we can to confirm a Secretary of State—somebody who has had meetings already with Kim Jong Un, who has an understanding of what has to happen to achieve what Kim Jong Un has said—denuclearization—to achieve what is the goal of this country, the stated goal that is already enshrined in law: complete and verifiable irreversible denuclearization.

To simply oppose his nomination for partisan purposes is wrong. We have seen it time and again. What we have is a simple partisan effort to derail the top diplomat, who is already engaged in top-level negotiations about denuclearization with the most significant threat this country has seen since the Cuban Missile Crisis. This country deserves better. Certainly this institution can do better.

We have somebody in Mike Pompeo with a solid background, an understanding of diplomacy and, clearly, the intelligence background through his time at the CIA, and now he would be denied this opportunity simply because of his political affiliation.

This country deserves better.

I urge my colleagues to stop this absurd obstruction and confirm Mike Pompeo, and let's get to work achieving what could be lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula. That time is now, and I urge my colleagues to take the opportunity for peace.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—COAST GUARD AUTHORIZATION LEGISLATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the Senate routinely reauthorizes the Coast Guard, much like the Defense act. It shouldn't be a terribly partisan issue. It never has been. We all deeply respect the work of the Coast Guard and recognize the heroism of the men and women who serve in that capacity.

But, unfortunately, the Republican majority slipped a poison pill rider into this otherwise noncontroversial bill that would repeal part of the Clean Water Act. That is why the Coast Guard reauthorization bill failed today.

The rider would prohibit the EPA and the States from regulating pollution and invasive species from the ballast water of large vessels. Instead, it would let the Coast Guard set regulations—an agency that doesn't have the environmental expertise of the EPA. This is a massive change to the Clean Water Act.

The Clean Water Act has worked well for decades because the States drive innovation and enforcement in partnership with the EPA. Under this law, States would no longer be able to do that. The idea of States' rights goes out the window.

I have visited many different parts of my State, in Upstate New York, where invasive species have long plagued communities, or parts of Long Island, where toxic chemicals and algae plague the bays and beaches. They hurt our clamming industry severely. They hurt businesses, they hurt tourism, and they hurt fishing as well—you name it.

We believe the rider will cost many States tens of billions of dollars in lost economic activity. Let me repeat that. Many States will lose tens of billions of dollars in economic activity because of this rider.

Let me also say this about small recreational fishermen—and New York State is third in the number of recreational pleasure boats. No one is proposing to hurt the little guy. That is why Democrats are ready to permanently exempt them from vessel discharge requirements.

Finally, let me make a point about progress and regular order. The vessel discharge provisions in this bill violate the regular order of the Senate. This is a matter under the jurisdiction of the Environment and Public Works Committee, not the Commerce Committee. There was no consultation with the EPW minority on this provision. There were no hearings. Instead, the Commerce Committee inserted these provisions into the Coast Guard reauthorization bill over the objection of many Democrats.

So I will be offering shortly to pass a clean Coast Guard reauthorization bill by unanimous consent. It includes a permanent exemption from discharge

requirements for small recreational fishermen. Democrats are ready to pass this Coast Guard bill as is, without the poison pill environmental rider.

Mr. President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment at the desk to the McConnell motion to concur with amendment No. 2232 be called up and made in order; that the amendment be agreed to; that the motion to concur with amendment No. 2232, as amended, be agreed to; and that the motion to refer and all other amendments be withdrawn.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, there is no objection to the Senate considering an amendment to strike the VIDA language. We have offered our colleagues the opportunity to vote on this amendment all week, and if the Senate needs to speak on the question of whether to include the VIDA language in the Coast Guard bill, I would welcome that debate and a fair up-or-down vote. There are many supporters of this language from both sides of the aisle, and I am confident the amendment would be defeated.

I would ask the Senator to revise his request: That the Senate resume consideration of the Coast Guard legislation; that the amendment to strike the VIDA provision be made pending and the Senate vote on the amendment prior to a vote on the motion to concur with further amendment.

So would the Senator be willing to modify?

Mr. SCHUMER. I will not.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the original request?

Mr. MCCONNELL. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The majority leader.

COAST GUARD AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today Senate Democrats have filibustered legislation to reauthorize funding for our Coast Guard.

In a dangerous world, the brave men and women of the Coast Guard are always ready for the call, whether it be to interdict drugs, to secure our ports, or to conduct daring maritime rescues. They deserve our support. They don't deserve a filibuster for the sake of political posturing. So let's have a little plain talk about why the bill failed.

Democrats filibustered this legislation because it contains an eminently sensible, bipartisan provision to streamline regulations for the mariners and vessel operators who drive America's maritime economy. It would cut back on duplicative rules and overlapping enforcement and provide a uniform standard that protects the environment and commerce alike.

If this sounds like a commonsense, bipartisan measure, that is because that is exactly what it is. This legislation has been favorably reported by the Commerce Committee six times—six