

President his team just for the sake of it. It is about the role of Congress and, frankly, the Cabinet to provide a check on a President who might go off the rails and undo the respect for the rule of law, the tradition of the rule of law, that we have had in this country for so long.

It is my view that the next Secretary of State, in this unique moment of history, with a President who seems to behave erratically and with little regard, oftentimes, for our Nation's history, a President who tests our constitutional order, must be willing to put country first and stand up for our most sacred and fundamental, foundational values—for the rule of law, for the idea that no person, not even the President, is above the rule of law.

Unfortunately, Mr. Pompeo, in these very difficult and troubled times, didn't meet that test as much as I wish he had. I don't doubt that the President could nominate someone with the right experience, the right values, and the right commitment to our core, national principles to earn my vote to be Secretary of State, but I do not believe Mr. Pompeo has those qualities so I will be voting no on his nomination.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

CALLING FOR THE RELEASE OF PASTOR ANDREW BRUNSON

Mr. TILLIS. Madam President, I have come here for the first time in what will be a weekly speech that I will give as long as we have somebody, in my opinion, who is improperly and unjustly being held in a Turkish prison.

As a matter of fact, this man, Pastor Andrew Brunson, has been in a Turkish prison for 565 days. He was arrested in October of 2016. He didn't even receive charges until about 2 months ago—so arrested, without charges—conspiracy to plot a coup attempt against President Erdogan and his regime in Turkey.

About a month ago—it was, maybe, about 2 months back, 3 months back—I heard from some people that Pastor Brunson was afraid that with his time in prison and the charges being levied against him, the American people were going to read the charges and forget about him and turn their backs. That is why I decided to travel to Turkey and meet with him in prison about a month ago. It was to let him know I had no intention of forgetting him and that I had every intention of making sure everybody understood what was going on with this case and why it should be a lesson to anybody who is thinking about traveling to Turkey today from the United States.

Before I start this, I have to talk a little bit about Turkey. It is a NATO ally. It is a country I led a delegation to when I was Speaker of the House in North Carolina. I spent almost 2 weeks there back about 6 years ago because I saw great opportunities for our State of North Carolina and the country of Turkey to build closer ties—closer eco-

nomic ties, closer cultural ties. I saw real opportunities to strengthen the relationship with a very important NATO ally. Yet now I am beginning to doubt whether what I saw in Turkey—at least the Turkey I visited 6 years ago—is the Turkey we are confronted with today.

Pastor Brunson, a gentleman from Black Mountain, NC, was part of a church up there at Montreat, which was the same church, a Presbyterian church, that Rev. Billy Graham was a part of. The injustice I see displayed to him makes me wonder if the people from the State of Iowa or from the State of North Carolina should go to that country until we understand whether American citizens can be treated justly there.

He has spent 565 days in a Turkish prison. For about 15 months, he was in a cell that was designed for eight people. It had 21 people in it. The others had been charged with terrorism and conspiracy to plot a coup. Pastor Brunson has been in Turkey for 20 years. All he is guilty of is of being a Christian and trying to bring a Christian message to those who want to hear it. He has a church in Izmir. It is a very small church. You can only seat about 120 people in it. They open it up, and they let anybody walk in off the street to hear what they are saying. They work with the police department to make sure they are secure and that they understand what they are saying. There was no nefarious purpose here except to have done his job for 20 years as a missionary in Turkey.

I am going to come back to this slide in a minute.

It is also important to understand timing. The coup occurred in 2016. Pastor Brunson and his wife Norine had actually traveled back to the United States. They were having a visit with family in North Carolina. President Erdogan and the Erdogan regime were rounding up tens of thousands of people and putting them in prison, even somebody loosely associated with the coup, and many who were not were being arrested. Pastor Brunson was in North Carolina at the time, but he and Norine went back to Turkey at a time when people were being rounded up. When he got back, they rounded him up.

Why on Earth would any reasonable person go back if he had been involved with it and had seen what had been happening in Turkey? That is just one data point. Now let's cover a few more.

First off, I have to bring this up. I have to say, after I went and visited Turkey for about 48 hours about a month ago, I went back last week. I, actually, spent 12 hours in a Turkish courthouse and listened to the charges against Pastor Brunson. It was remarkable. It was a three-judge panel. Imagine that they are sitting up at the dais, and next to them—unlike in our courts, where you have the defense and the prosecutor sitting on equal terms—their prosecutor is sitting up at the dais and is actually looking like a

fourth judge. In Turkey, you are, more or less, considered guilty until proven innocent. It truly was, in my opinion—look it up if you do not know what a kangaroo court is—a kangaroo court.

They have already decided they want to prosecute him, and they are trying to get some of the most specious, circumstantial arguments to convict him to 35 years. He is 50 years old. By the way, he has lost 50 pounds since he has been in prison. A sentence of 35 years is effectively a death sentence for the kinds of charges I will tell you a little bit about.

No. 1, it is very clear to me, after spending 12 hours in a courtroom, that the Turkish authorities believe that any religious organization is actually a part of a broader plot to undermine the Turkish Government and to promote terrorist activities. They actually view the Christian faiths, the Christian religions in the United States—the missionaries—as some sort of coordinated plot to undermine the country of Turkey. They view a missionary who risks life and limb to go into the Syrian countryside to help people who are trying to flee the carnage that is occurring in Syria—to give them food, water, and comfort—as being, in some way, someone who is perpetrating and being a coconspirator in a plot by the PKK, which is a terrorist organization that is focused on opposing Turkey. That is what missionaries are subjected to.

As a matter of fact, there was a part of the court proceedings during which they suggested the mere fact that Pastor Brunson, who is a Presbyterian, had Mormons enter his church—actually, it is just part of the services, and they are services that are wide open to anyone. Yet, because of the mere connection with the Mormons, who also do missionary work in Turkey and Syria, they were able to glue together, on a circumstantial basis, the idea that because they have actually talked to each other and the Mormons have also provided missions to the Kurdish region, they are a part of the PKK.

That is what we are talking about. That is why I am giving everyone a stern warning. If you are traveling to this country, I can't guarantee your safety based on the facts as they exist today. I am trying to get somebody out who is only guilty for actually being a Christian missionary in Turkey for 20 years.

I am not going to go into the details of this, but when you invest 12 hours in a courtroom, it is a really accelerated learning process. Let me give you an idea of some of the things they said because they observed this. We are not talking about any specific charge for something violent that occurred or something damaging that occurred. This is the level of evidence that was presented against Pastor Brunson.

There is a dish that is cooked over there. I don't know. I love Turkish food. I eat anything. Usually, when I go over there, I gain weight. It is good

food. Well, there was this communication between the daughter and the father about a good meal they had had. They suggested that communication—because it was of food that is, apparently, enjoyed by the Kurds—was a reason to suspect that somehow they were conspirators in the PKK plot. So I tell somebody who is traveling to Turkey, be careful what you eat and be careful what you like and don't put it on Facebook because you, too, could find yourself in a Turkish prison.

That is the level of argument they are using against this man who has been in prison for 565 days. I am not making this up. You could not create a movie plot that would be more egregious in terms of the way they have treated this man for 565 days.

After I went to the Turkish prison, Pastor Brunson and I spent about an hour and a half together. To the Turkish prison officials' credit, they gave me more time than they normally would. At about 59 minutes, they get you out of there, but they told me I could spend the time I wanted to. The discussion with Pastor Brunson was really heart-wrenching. The reason it was heart-wrenching is he said: I just firmly believe that people are going to forget about me. I think Congress could read this 62-page bogus indictment and believe it is true.

I told Pastor Brunson that the only reason I was there was to look at him eye to eye and tell him Congress has his back. This is not going to go away until the Turkish people release Pastor Brunson. We did something here over the course of 2 weeks. I also told him, in that meeting, I was going to get Members of the Senate to sign on to a letter and was going to prove to him that the people in the Senate, on a bipartisan basis, agreed with my position that Pastor Brunson should be set free.

I know the Presiding Officer knows better than anybody that getting 66 Senators to sign on to a letter, if you spend 3 or 4 months doing it, is uncommon, but to get 66 Senators to come together and sign this letter in a couple of weeks is extraordinary. When they heard the argument, they knew they needed to be a part of the voice of the Senate. It is no coincidence that I wanted to get 60-plus votes. I wanted to send a very clear message that we are educating Members of the Senate, and we have the votes necessary to move forward with things I prefer not to do.

I prefer to be moving forward with legislation that strengthens the relationship with Turkey—our military alliances, our economic alliances—our broader relationship. Yet we also need to send a clear message that we will take other steps, if that is what is necessary, to get the attention of the Turkish administration and President Erdogan to do the right thing. I thank all my colleagues who signed the letter. Since we published it with 66, we have had others express interest, and I think that is very important.

Now what does President Erdogan say to that? He basically says that if

we are willing to trade with someone here in this country who he believes was involved in the plot, then he will give Pastor Brunson back to us.

We have an extradition treaty with Turkey. If Turkey goes through the proper processes that can prove the person he wants in this country should be extradited because he is guilty of laws broken in Turkey, great. But I find it objectionable to compare that pastor who is here or that religious leader who is here with a pastor who spent 20 years in Turkey doing nothing but missionary work.

When I was in Turkey, someone asked me: What do you think about the prisoner exchange? I think what has been offered is absurd. But I promise you this: If you know of a Turkish person—a Turkish national in a U.S. prison who was held for 17 months without charges and then was convicted on circumstantial evidence for 5 years, 10 years, or 35 years, count me in on getting them released without even a concept of trade because that would be a terrible miscarriage of justice.

Let me tell you, there is not somebody in a U.S. prison because there is no way that anybody in the United States would have been held overnight in jail for the charges I saw demonstrated in that courthouse just a week ago. So President Erdogan possibly doesn't know what I now know, having sat through 12 hours of court. I have to believe he is a fair person, and I have to believe that he is hearing from people in his administration who are not telling him what they are trying to do to this man in their Turkish judicial system. I am here, and I will be here every week to ask President Erdogan to invest the time that I have invested to know it is a miscarriage of justice that is going to hurt our relationship with Turkey on every level, and I will go from someone who is a strong advocate of our Turkish alliance to someone who maybe has to think twice about where this relationship goes from here.

This is the beginning of what I hope is a very short time of my coming to this floor and layering in additional facts every week until Pastor Brunson is released.

Again, I warn anyone who is going to Turkey to pay attention to what I have just said. Pay attention to the fact that I may not, as a U.S. Senator and the Presiding Officer, as a U.S. Senator from Iowa—we may not be able to guarantee your safety under the current emergency orders in Turkey. You may actually just find a group of friendly people with whom you take a picture and you proudly put it on Facebook because you are reaching out to people, you are traveling to countries, and you are trying to build friendships and relationships. But there may be some Turkish bureaucrat who sees that picture and sees a few Kurds in it, and suddenly you become a conspirator. You spend 565 days in a Turkish prison, and you have your Sen-

ator coming over there to take you out. That is what is going on in Turkey right now.

Pastor Brunson represents just one of several people in Turkey for whom we have to fight. A NASA scientist has been convicted and sentenced to 7½ years; he has served 1½ years. He was guilty of doing nothing more than going to visit his family in Turkey at roughly the time they started the coup attempt. Now he is in prison—an American citizen, a dual citizen, a Turkish-American, a NASA scientist imprisoned, implicated as being a part of our intelligence agency. I am not making this up.

I have invested the time in Turkey to follow the facts. I wouldn't pursue this if all I had were briefings from the State Department or the staff. I invested the time to go there, look at the pastor eye to eye, look at the judges eye to eye, and look at the prison guards eye to eye, and I am convinced this is a risk to every single American. Every single one of you should put yourself in Pastor Brunson's place and go from here and make sure people know what is going on there.

Pastor Brunson needs to know he has the backing of the U.S. Senate. He will have the backing of the House. My colleague MARK WALKER and the deputy whip PATRICK MCHENRY are working on a similar letter in the House, and we will continue to show that we are in shape, and we are ready to run this marathon. Hopefully, they are going to sprint to a just decision on May 7. That is his next court date. But if he doesn't, you can expect me to be here, and each and every time I am going to add some other cases for why we really have to rethink our relationship with Turkey until justice is done.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I rise today to express my opposition to Mike Pompeo serving as the Nation's top diplomat.

As I stated earlier this week in committee, I am generally disappointed to be casting a vote against a Secretary of State nominee. I believe the United States needs an effective leader on the global stage. But at the end of the day, as I considered Director Pompeo's nomination, including his hearing, his past statements, and recent revelations, I have lingering concerns along three broad themes. Mr. Pompeo failed to express any tangible diplomatic strategies for which he would advocate to advance American interests; he failed to be forthright with the committee; and, finally, I don't have a satisfactory answer to the question: Which Mike Pompeo am I asked to cast a vote on?

Unfortunately, during his nomination process, in which he had an opportunity to address all of these concerns, Director Pompeo offered contradictory statements and was less than forthcoming when pressed on a number of issues.

Given the opportunity to outline the strategies he would advocate with the administration to deal with the challenges of Russia, Iran, North Korea, China or Venezuela, to mention a few, he failed to exhibit the depth of knowledge or thoughtfulness about what those strategies would be. Granted, he is under the constraints of this administration, which has failed to offer a strategic vision for American diplomacy, a White House that has failed to effectively outline policies or strategies to achieve a series of ever-changing goals and objectives. But I expect our chief diplomat to have a vision for diplomacy.

A meeting is not a strategy. Air strikes are not a strategy. Unilaterally walking away from an international agreement is not a strategy.

Beyond his lack of strategies, I fear Mr. Pompeo was less than transparent through his confirmation process. Truthfulness and willingness to be forthcoming to the Foreign Relations Committee are essential in a Secretary of State nominee. But in his refusal to answer questions about the Russia investigation, in which he was interviewed—a critical issue before the committee—and in his failure to disclose any information about his trip to North Korea, which he could have disclosed even in a classified setting, although we got to learn about it through the press—both critical issues before the committee—he exhibited that he was more suited to the clandestine nature of the CIA Director than the transparency of a Secretary of State.

I don't expect a Cabinet Secretary to publicly disagree with the President; indeed, it is his or her duty to carry out the President's agenda. But as policies are being formulated, I remain skeptical of whether he will be forthcoming with Members of Congress, how he will approach complex issues, and what that means for our foreign policy.

This lack of forthrightness ultimately leaves me wondering whether he would be willing to push back against the President's worst instincts, whether he would be willing to say no to advance a different course or whether he would simply be a yes-man.

When the President blames Russia's aggressive behavior on Democrats—pretty amazing, on Democrats—will Director Pompeo remind him that Russia's aggressive behavior is caused by Russia and no one else? As our Nation's top diplomat, would Director Pompeo, as he said in his confirmation hearing, value diversity and demand every employee be “treated equally with dignity and respect”? Does he believe, as he said in his hearing, in “promoting America's ideals, values, and priorities,” including our collective identity as a nation of immigrants and refugees fleeing oppression who have made the United States a bastion of hope in the world? Or will we be represented by Congressman Pompeo, who voted against the Violence Against Women's

Act to deny support to victims of gender-based violence and who sponsored legislation to roll back marriage equality, or Congressman Pompeo, who, as recently as 2016, sponsored legislation to immediately halt refugee resettlement in the United States until ill-advised reforms were made? These concerns are beyond policy disagreements, which alone are not the basis for rejecting a nominee. Rather, this legislative history paints a troubling picture of how the United States and our diplomatic efforts will be conducted and received by our allies and adversaries alike.

Will the Department seek to roll back programs advancing women's access to healthcare and justice systems—programs that have significantly improved the lives not only of women all over the world but, by extension, improved stability, prosperity, and governance reforms? When we talk about promoting universal human rights in countries that seek to oppress people based on their sexual orientation, what will our Nation's top diplomat credibly say?

As we work with our allies who are absorbing literally millions of refugees from profoundly devastating crises all over the world and as families in my own State of New Jersey and throughout the country open their hearts and their homes, what will he credibly say as this administration slashes our own refugee program, once a crown jewel of our foreign policy, both in establishing our moral leadership and in supporting our partners globally?

On our own border, we simply cannot address the threat of drug traffickers or opioids without productive collaboration with Mexico. When the President wants to call Mexicans drug traffickers and rapists, as our Nation's top diplomat who, during his confirmation hearing, insisted his “record is exquisite with respect to treating people of every faith with the dignity they deserve,” would Mr. Pompeo advise the President not to call Mexicans drug traffickers and rapists or would the Pompeo who once called an Indian-American political opponent a “turban topper” prevail?

How would he explain this kind of rhetoric to people of myriad different faiths who wear turbans, whether they are millions of Sikhs, Punjabis, or Muslims in India—a critically important ally—or Orthodox Christians in the Horn of Africa or tribal leaders in Afghanistan with whom we are trying to build constructive relationships based on values of democracy and human rights?

What impact would his accusations that Muslim leaders in the United States are somehow “complicit” in devastating terrorist attacks have as he engages with Muslim leaders and citizens around the world? Nearly 2 billion people in the world adhere to the Muslim faith, many in countries with which we have relationships critical to protecting and promoting our national

security, with citizens who have suffered the most from brutal terrorism.

Similarly, part of the exceptionalism of the United States comes from the power of our diaspora communities, which serve as critical cultural and public diplomats to the rest of the world. How can someone who has made such derogatory and uninformed remarks conduct effective diplomacy?

As I have said before, I believe it is imperative for the Secretary of State to be forthright, to be someone with whom the American people and our allies can invest faith and trust, someone who will unequivocally champion our values to assert our global leadership.

Our global leadership comes from our investment in diplomacy and development as our primary policy drivers abroad. Unfortunately, I don't believe that Director Pompeo is someone who will always prioritize diplomacy over conflict, particularly in the context of the aggressive foreign policy voices growing around him. I am particularly concerned by his past comments on regime change in North Korea and Iran. Look, I abhor both regimes, but our national security is a little different.

While he said during his confirmation hearing that war is “the last resort,” Mr. Pompeo's past statements calling for military action and regime change in Iran, for example, will surely follow him as we work with our allies to build on multinational agreements to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon. His offhand remarks about regime change in North Korea will be ever-present as we pursue negotiations to roll back North Korea's nuclear weapons program and seek dismantling.

With all of these concerns of mine, ultimately, I simply do not believe that Director Pompeo is someone who can genuinely represent all Americans and best promote American foreign policy interests. It is for these reasons, among others, that I will be voting against Director Pompeo. Let me be very clear. Despite what some of my other colleagues may believe or tell the press, this is not a vote in the name of political resistance to the President. I have voted for members of this President's Cabinet, from the Secretary of Defense, to the former Secretary of Homeland Security and now the President's Chief of Staff, to our Ambassador to the United Nations, to mention some.

I will never hesitate to agree with a sound policy or criticize a misguided one, regardless of which party is in the White House. I think history will certainly prove that and judge it to be true. I will always put patriotism and our national security interest over partisanship—always.

I also reject the notion that we should confirm a Secretary of State based on world events outside of our control, whether that be a NATO summit or a meeting with North Korea. Nobody forced the President to fire his former Secretary of State at the time

he did. And unless Kim Jong Un is unilaterally dictating the terms of our relations, we should wait until we have the appropriate people and dutiful preparation to achieve the success that we and the world need.

In closing, as we consider this nominee and the nominee for Germany who is also subject to cloture, let me be clear. Despite what the White House wants to claim, Democrats are not obstructing nominees through this body. The facts are simply not on their side. Of 172 positions at the State Department and USAID critical to advancing U.S. interests, the administration has failed to even nominate 77 of those positions, including 45 ambassadorial positions in critical countries, including South Korea, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan, to mention a few. I could go on and on.

Lest we all forget, Republicans control the votes on the Senate floor. Republican leadership can bring up any nominee, once they have passed the committee, at any time. That is their prerogative.

The Founders recognized that an effective democracy needs coequal branches of government to operate in a system of checks and balances. The President has the right to nominate whomever he wants, but the Congress has a responsibility to ensure that person is best suited for the job at hand—we have already seen challenges to some of these nominees in that process—and in the case of our Secretary of State, one who will prioritize diplomacy instead of war and promote fundamental values.

If and when he is confirmed, as someone who has served on both the House and the Senate committees tasked with overseeing foreign policy administration, I am more than willing to work alongside the nominee to provide advice and input as he and the President seek to advance American interests and values on the global stage. I will, of course, in my capacity as ranking member, work alongside him in pursuit of comprehensive and coherent strategies that promote American interests. Despite my misgivings, I will always have an open door and seek opportunities to advance our shared objectives. We stand ready and willing to take any and all actions in the interest of peace, security, and all Americans. That has always been my North Star, and it will always be.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. DAINES. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that following my remarks, the Senator from Ohio, Mr. BROWN, be allowed to make remarks for about 3 to 5 minutes.

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

Mr. DAINES. Madam President, I stand here today to urge the very swift confirmation of my good friend, my former colleague, the current Director of the CIA, Mike Pompeo, to serve as America's next Secretary of State.

Mike's résumé would put him at the top of any pile. Speaking as someone who has hired a lot of folks over 28 years in the private sector and now spending time in public service, his résumé shines, but let's talk about his record of results.

I just returned from a trip to China. I was with four other U.S. Senators. We visited China, South Korea. In fact, while in South Korea, we went to the DMZ. I met the Premier of China while I was in Beijing. In fact, the same week that I met the Premier of China, Kim Jong Un met with President Xi in Beijing. We spent time with the Prime Minister of South Korea, as well as time with many other leaders. Their feedback was very clear. Perhaps this is the untold story we are not hearing in the United States, in the media, and it is this: The administration's resolve and their diplomacy is what has brought Kim Jong Un to the negotiating table.

The administration is moving forward toward a denuclearized North Korea, and Mike Pompeo has played a critical role in those efforts. As Secretary of State, Mike would continue to defend and represent American interests abroad, protecting our national security and making the world a safer place.

Mike has not just excelled, he has been the best at everything he has put his mind to over the course of his life. He was first in his class at West Point, a graduate of Harvard Law School, editor of the Harvard Law Review. He served our country in the military. He ran businesses before serving in the U.S. Congress, which is where my path crossed Mike Pompeo's, as we served as colleagues in the U.S. Congress. Mike has the résumé, the character, and the record of results to make him an exceptionally qualified leader for this job.

As we wait here in limbo without a Secretary of State, lives are on the line, our national security is on the line, and our freedom is on the line. I urge my colleagues across the aisle, please stop putting politics before America's national interests. For heaven's sake, this body passed Hillary Clinton through as Secretary of State with 94 votes. I urge them to make the best decision for our country and their constituents back home and join me in confirming Mike Pompeo as our next Secretary of State.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I thank the Senator from Montana for the unanimous consent request.

CFPB ACTING DIRECTOR MULVANEY

This morning, the New York Times reported that Mick Mulvaney, the head of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau—that is the Bureau that saved \$12 billion for 29 million American consumers who have been wronged, cheated, misled, deceived by banks and other financial service actors. Again, that is \$12 billion and 29 million consumers helped by the Consumer Financial Pro-

tection Bureau. Think about that for a second.

This morning, the New York Times reported that Mick Mulvaney, the head of that Bureau—the organization that looks out for or at least used to look out for American bank customers—made a speech to 1,300 bankers yesterday, and he told the banking industry to step up their lobbying efforts.

So you have a government official who took an oath to represent the American public to the best of his ability and to carry out his job to the best of his ability at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, and he is going in front of bankers and telling them to step up their lobbying efforts to weaken the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

The Times reported this, and there is a recording of this, so this isn't—as probably Mr. Mulvaney might suggest or the President will suggest—this isn't fake news. There is a real recording. He told banking industry executives on Tuesday that they should press lawmakers hard to pursue their agenda, and he revealed that, as a Congressman, he would meet with lobbyists only if they had contributed to his campaign.

Here is what the Director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau said. He was a Member of Congress—a far-right, tea party, Republican Member of Congress who took a lot of bank contributions, I would add, but I will put that aside for a minute—until he became the head of the Office of Management and Budget and then of the Bureau. He said: "We had a hierarchy in my office in Congress." That is when he served down the hall here at the other end of the Capitol in the U.S. Congress. "We had a hierarchy in my office in Congress," he told 1,300 bankers and lending industry officials at the American bankers conference in Washington. He said:

We had a hierarchy in my office in Congress. If you're a lobbyist who never gave us money, I didn't talk to you. If you're a lobbyist who gave us money, I might talk to you.

I guess you can't call that bribery. I am not suggesting exactly that it is bribery. But you are saying: If you didn't give me money, I wouldn't talk to you, and if you gave me money, maybe I would talk to you.

Again, I am not a lawyer, and I don't think that is under the classification of bribery, but I think it is pretty awful. It is pretty awful when the guy who appointed you said he was going to clear the swamp. It is pretty awful when you have been elected by the people—in his case, of South Carolina—and you say: If you didn't give me money, I wouldn't talk to you, and if you gave me money, maybe I would talk to you. Can you believe that? This is a high-ranked, U.S. Government official who was confirmed by the U.S. Senate—at least for the first job at the Office of Management and Budget. Deciding who you will meet with based on campaign contributions is the kind of pay-to-play