

opposition to Director Pompeo's nomination to be our next Secretary of State.

This position is too important. The stakes are too high to let this nominee slide by without full consideration of what it would mean for Director Pompeo to be our Nation's top diplomat—the person whose every word and action broadcasts America's values to the rest of the world.

Some of my opposition concerns Director Pompeo's harsh views on matters of war and peace, and his blatantly false accusations regarding members of the Muslim community. Some of my opposition surrounds my deep concern about Director Pompeo's ability to stand strong against President Trump's erratic and uninformed foreign policy positions.

But what I wanted to take a few minutes this afternoon to do is to express my serious concern about what Director Pompeo's ideological, extreme positions on women's rights and reproductive freedom would mean for women across the world.

Our Nation has an important role to uphold as a global champion of women's rights. We need a Secretary of State who will be a strong advocate and continue our legacy of leadership in fighting for women's health and reproductive freedom and the rights of women and girls around the world. Instead, I am afraid Director Pompeo would undo much of that legacy and undermine much of the global progress we have made.

An advocate for women doesn't repeatedly support the global gag rule, which keeps funding from clinics and programs that provide women important medical care. Director Pompeo did.

An advocate for women doesn't vote to defund the United Nations Population Fund, which provides family planning services for women around the world who live in poverty. Director Pompeo did.

When it comes to fighting for the survivors of rape and against those who would use rape as a tool of war, it is clear we should stand by survivors, fight for them, and work to make sure they have access to the medical care they need. However, Director Pompeo has said he would prevent women who have been raped from access to abortions. That is an unacceptably cruel response to women and war survivors, and it is one of the many clear indicators that Director Pompeo is an unacceptable choice to serve as Secretary of State.

The Secretary of State is always a critically important position, but it takes on even more important meaning in 2018. The President not only needs good counsel in navigating our complex global relationships, but he also desperately needs someone who can tell him when he is wrong and who can stand up to him and be a check on this President's worse impulses.

Throughout his nomination process, Director Pompeo failed to convince me

that he is that person. So I will be voting no on his nomination to be Secretary of State. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

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

ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF FRANCE

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I don't know if the Presiding Officer was able to be present in the House of Representatives earlier today when the President of France, Emmanuel Macron, spoke to us about a variety of things, including the Paris accords, the Iran deal, the long history we have between their country and our country; the fact that the American Revolution and the French Revolution were really contemporaneous. We share the birth of democracy in our country and, to an extent, in their country at roughly the same time.

Those who have studied American history know that one of the ways we won our freedom and independence from the tyranny of that British throne was with the support of the French. We have not always agreed with one another in the years since then, but mostly we have. The bond between their Nation and our Nation continues to be strong, not just between our leaders but also between our people.

We are fortunate to have a number of French tourists who come to our country. From time to time, some of us are fortunate to go to that part of the world and to visit them, to know them as human beings. The bond between our countries is a benefit for both them and for us, and, I think, for the world.

I have never come to the floor to start reading someone else's speech, but I am really tempted to read some parts of what President Emmanuel Macron said today. I speak a little bit of French. I spoke to him briefly in French before he gave his remarks. His English is a lot better than my French. I want to mention a couple of things that he said and add some comments of my own.

He talked a bit about the Paris Agreement, and he talked about climate change. These were his words, and I think they are worth repeating and reflecting on.

He said:

I believe in building a better future for our children which requires offering them a planet that is still habitable in 25 years. Some people think that securing current industries and their jobs is more urgent than transforming our economies to meet the global challenge of climate change.

He went on to say:

I hear these concerns, but we must find a smooth transition to a low-carbon economy.

Because what is the meaning of our life, really, if we work and live destroying our planet while sacrificing the future of our children?

President Macron then said:

What is the meaning of our life if our conscious decision is to reduce the opportunities for our children or for our grandchildren? By polluting the oceans, not mitigating carbon dioxide emissions, and destroying our biodiversity, we're killing our planet.

He went on to say:

Let us face it. There is no planet B.

I turned to my colleague sitting next to me and I said, I am going to steal that line: There is no planet B.

He is right.

I like to say this is the only planet we have, and it is going to be the only one we ever have in our lifetime, and probably the lifetime of anybody around this planet.

Then President Macron went on to say:

On this issue, it may happen that we have disagreements between the United States and France. It may happen. Like in all families. But that's, for me, a short-term disagreement. In the long run, we will have to face the same realities, and we're citizens of this same planet, so we will have to face it. We have to work together with business leaders and local communities. Let us work together in order to make our planet great again—

Isn't that terrific? "Let's work together to make our planet great again"—not just to make America great again; not just to make France great again but to make our planet great again—

and create new jobs and new opportunities. While safeguarding our earth.

He concluded this part of his speech by saying:

And I'm sure, one day, the United States will come back and join the Paris Agreement. And I'm sure we can work together to fulfill, with you, the ambitions of the global compact on the environment.

I had the opportunity last week to speak at the University of Delaware to a couple hundred graduate students. It is an annual gathering that they have and they were nice enough to invite me to come and talk to them about leadership. One of the things I mentioned is that leaders are aspirational. We appeal to people's better angels. Leaders unite, not divide. Leaders build bridges, not walls.

I thought we were privileged today to hear that kind of leader. When I spoke to him in French, I wished him well. I wished him good luck, and I thanked him for joining us in the kind of message he brought to us.

I don't suspect he would have any reason to know this, but when people got up today and went to work in this country, 3 million people went to work in jobs that probably didn't exist 20, 30 years ago—3 million people. The jobs they went to work on are jobs where they are creating renewable energy, sustainable energy, clean energy, carbon-free energy, or they are going to work in jobs which conserve energy so we just use a whole lot less altogether. Think about that. Three million people

in this country went to work in those kinds of jobs. We are adding 75,000, 100,000 of those jobs every year.

I have always had a close relationship with the auto industry until about 6 or 7 years ago. We had a GM plant and a Chrysler plant in Delaware, with about 4,000 employees in each of them at one time. We lost them both at the bottom of the great recession. I have always, and even now, tried to work closely with the auto industry, even though they don't have the kind of presence today in Delaware they once did, but they have provided a lot of jobs. Part of the supply chain is in Delaware, Pennsylvania, and other places.

Sometimes people say we cannot have clean air, clean water, and a strong economy. I think that is a false choice. The President of France as much as said that today.

It was not a Frenchman, but it was Einstein who said that "in adversity lies opportunity." I think if we are smart about it and we look at climate change, global warming, sea level rise, and pollution of one kind or the other, there is actually great opportunity that each of those present to us. They present difficulties and challenges but also great opportunity.

I will never forget a couple of years ago what happened in a hearing in the Environment and Public Works Committee on the issue of mercury emissions from powerplants. We had, I think, four or five, maybe six witnesses. The first four or five witnesses said: We cannot reduce mercury emissions by 80 percent over the next decade. I think that is what they said. They said we cannot; it is just not possible for us to reduce mercury emissions.

Why do we want to reduce mercury? Because it is up in the air; it is carried by the winds, the rains; it ends up in the water; it ends up in fish; we eat fish. It is harmful especially for pregnant women. They give birth, in many cases, to children with brain damage. So we had this hearing, and the first four or five witnesses, all from coal-fired utilities, said: We can't do it. Eighty percent is not a reasonable target for mercury reduction.

The last witness was from a trade association whose members actually focus on developing technology to reduce harmful emissions of all kinds, including mercury emissions from powerplants. Our last witness said: I think we can not only meet that target of 80 percent reduction in 10 years, I think we can do better than that, and I think we can do it in less than 10 years. Do you know what? He was right. It turned out he was right. We ended up with a 90-percent reduction in mercury emissions, and that technology has been used in this country.

The nice thing about it is that technology—there are plenty of coal-fired plants around the world where they need to reduce mercury, and we are selling that technology all over the

world. So that is really one of the opportunities the President of France was talking about—looking at adversity and finding opportunities, including climate change and other kinds of pollution; pollution of our water, you name it.

Anyway, it was just a joy to hear him speak today. I was really impressed.

We have a bunch of pages sitting in here today. I don't know if they were able to hear the speech, but if you got to hear the speech today, raise your hands. I think it had to be uplifting for young people because he was focused very much on the future. He was not just looking back but focusing very much on young people. I liked that a lot.

One of the other things he spoke about was the Iran deal. For years and years, as some of my colleagues may recall, we suspected that Iran was secretly developing nuclear weapons. We didn't know for sure. We suspected the worst. In the last administration in this country, we went to work with a new leader in Iran to see if we might be able to better ensure that they are not going to develop nuclear weapons, and we provided safeguards and early detection systems so that if they do, we will know about it. In the meantime, we placed a lot of economic sanctions on Iran, trying to get them to give up what we thought was the development of nuclear weapons. They always said, "No, we are not doing that," but we didn't believe them.

At the end of the day, we looked at entering into this agreement between the United States and Iran and five other nations. Iran had to open themselves up to intrusive inspections. They had to be willing to give up some of the more modern centrifuges they had for developing highly enriched uranium. To the extent that they are willing to do that and continue to put up with intrusive inspections by the atomic energy agency, then we would gradually reduce and relax the economic sanctions.

The intrusive inspections have continued now for several years, and the agencies responsible for this say, so far, they are keeping their word. Does that mean they are always going to keep their word? Not necessarily. Does that mean we should be less resolute in watching what they are doing? No. We should be resolute and hold their feet to the fire. But to the extent that they are keeping their word, I think the idea of lifting our sanctions—along with other countries as part of these accords and joint agreement—is good, not only for Iran but also for us.

We have this agreement because we felt it was important for inspectors to have a window into that country to see what they are doing. We have that. So far, it seems to be working.

Our President now says that in a couple weeks he would like to close out of the Iran deal. If we do that, my fear is they will simply go back to a secret program to develop nuclear weapons.

That will encourage the Saudis to do the same and maybe lay a precursor or put us in motion to have a nuclear arms race in that part of the world. Sunni versus Shia, Saudis versus Iran—that is not a competition that will end well.

I am not going to read everything President Macron said today about the Iran deal, but a fair amount is worth repeating. I will do that, and then add some comments of my own:

As for Iran, our objective is clear: Iran should never possess any nuclear weapons. Not now, not in 5 years, not in 10 years. Never.

"Never" is a long time.

But this policy should never lead us to war in the Middle East. We must ensure stability, and respect sovereignty of the nations, including that one of Iran, which represents a great civilization.

Let us not replicate past mistakes in the region. Let us not be naive on one side. Let us not create new walls ourselves on the other side.

There is an existing framework—called the JCPOA—to control the nuclear activity of Iran. We signed it at the initiative of the United States. We signed it, both the United States and France. That is why we cannot say we should just get rid of it like that. But it is true to say that this agreement may not address all concerns, very important concerns. This is true. But we should not abandon it without having something substantial, more substantial, instead. That is my position. That is why France will not leave the JCPOA, because we signed it.

Your President and your country will have to take, in the current days and weeks, [its own] responsibilities regarding this issue.

What I want to do, and what we decided together with your President, is that we can work on a more comprehensive deal addressing all these concerns. That is why we have to work on this more comprehensive deal based—as discussed with President Trump yesterday—on four pillars.

And then President Macron went on to talk about those four pillars.

[No. 1] the substance of the existing agreement, especially if you decide to leave it, [No. 2] the post-2025 period, in order to be sure we will never have any nuclear activity for Iran, [No. 3] the containment of military influence of the Iranian regime in the region, and [No. 4] the monitoring of ballistic activity.

The Iranians have a penchant for firing and testing ballistic missiles. They say that it is not offensive; it is defensive. But one would wonder about that. Questioning minds way wonder.

I think these four pillars, the ones I addressed before the General Assembly of the United Nations last September, are the ones which cover the legitimate fears of the United States and our allies in the region.

I think we have to start working now on these four pillars to build this new, comprehensive [deal] and to be sure that, whatever the decision of the United States will be, we will not leave the floor to the absence of rules.

We will not leave the floor to these conflicts of power in the Middle East, we will not . . . [increase] tensions and potential war.

That is my position, and I think we can work together to build this comprehensive deal for the whole region, for our people, because I think it fairly addresses our concerns. That is my position.

I have heard several Presidents speak to joint sessions of Congress over the years; I have heard any number of leaders from other nations speak before joint meetings of Congress in the years I have been privileged to serve here. I don't know that I have seen a warmer and more enthusiastic welcome than the one we witnessed today for the President of our close ally, our friends, the French. I hope the standing ovations he repeatedly received reflect not just the emotion of the moment but reflect the belief that he may be on to something here.

One of my colleagues whom I was sitting next to during President Macron's remarks said that the President of France was delivering an elegant rebuke to our President, and he was so skillful in doing it, it was hard to tell that was what he was doing. Maybe that is true. But I think he might be on to something. He didn't just come up with it today. This is something that President Macron has been talking about for days, weeks, months—at least since last fall.

I hope our President, with whom he had a chance to spend some time, might say: Let's drill down on that. I think you might be on to something.

Meanwhile, I don't know what others have been saying about former Secretary of State Tillerson, but I thought he was an unlikely person to be Secretary of State. He had been the leader of Exxon, knew the world, and knew the world's leaders. It was unusual to have someone with that pedigree to be our Secretary of State. He exceeded expectations, at least for me. I think he was fired by the President a couple of months ago through Twitter, and that was it—no ceremony, no handshake, no thank-you for taking on a tough job and doing his best.

I would say to Rex Tillerson: Thank you for your willingness to give it a shot, for taking on a tough job in a tough administration. We may not agree with everything he said or thought, but he took on a tough job, and we are grateful for that.

The question is, Who is going to succeed him. I have asked to meet with the President's nominee. They have not been able to find time to do that, which I think is unfortunate.

If we had had the time to meet, I would have wanted to talk with him about a number of issues. One of those would be the Iran nuclear deal and how he feels about it. I would like to hear his thoughts on what President Macron suggested today as a possible alternative follow-on to the JCPOA. But I am not going to have the opportunity to do that.

I was reminded recently of something John Kennedy once said. I hope I have this right: America should never negotiate out of fear, but we should never fear negotiating. Think about that. Our country should never negotiate out of fear, but we shouldn't be afraid to negotiate.

I think President Macron may have given us an opening here, and the open-

ing is to come up with something that could be even more effective than the JCPOA. If we are smart, the door has been opened and we will walk through it instead of walking backward.

While we prepare to vote, maybe tomorrow, on the nominee to be our next Secretary of State, one of my disappointments is not having had a chance to—not negotiate with him but to share with him what President Macron had to say, to try to get his take on that and, if he were Secretary of State, how he might pursue this opening. Unfortunately, that is not going to happen.

I notice my neighbor from across the border in Pennsylvania has risen to address the Senate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). The Senator from Pennsylvania.

TAX REFORM

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, it is a pleasure to follow my friend and neighbor to the south and east from the great State of Delaware.

Yesterday, the Senate Finance Committee had a hearing on tax reform. I had a chance to introduce one of the witnesses, a fellow named David Cranston from Robinson Township in Western Pennsylvania.

David is the president of Cranston Material Handling Equipment Corp. It is a third-generation small business founded in 1957 by David's grandfather. Today, David leads that company—a company he has worked at since 1983. So for 35 years he has been there. Today he leads a team of seven full-time employees and two part-time employees, truly a small family-owned business.

Cranston Material sells and installs material handling and storage equipment to manufacturing companies, including very large manufacturing companies, and their products and services help these manufacturers to store and lift products in the storage process—items like cabinets, containers, conveyors, cranes, and dock equipment.

As I know the Presiding Officer understands very well, it is small businesses like this that really make up the backbone of our economy and the backbone of our communities.

What is it that David Cranston had to share with us as a witness before our committee? He shared the story of how our tax reform from late last year is already working and helping his small business.

How is that happening? Well, in a variety of ways. The two most direct ways are, No. 1, Cranston Material is organized as a subchapter S corporation. That is a long way of saying they are not taxed at the level of the corporation itself but, rather, the income that is earned by the business flows through to the owners of the business and is then taxed on the individual returns of the owners.

How has our tax reform helped the owners of this business? We built into

the Tax Code an automatic 20 percent discount on the amount of their income that is taxed. So 20 percent of their income from this business is not taxed at all. That is true for all small businesses in America. The 80 percent that is taxed is taxed at lower rates.

The total tax burden for these small businesses is much lower than it used to be. Why is that important? It is important for a lot of reasons. David Cranston told us that this is how they are able to accumulate capital. This is how his business is better able to accumulate the capital that he describes as the lifeblood of his small business. It is, in fact, capital that allows these small businesses like Cranston to take advantage of new growth opportunities. Specifically, he shared with us an example. The tax savings that he is already enjoying have helped him expand into a new product line this year—a product line that he did not carry before, couldn't afford to, but now he can. In order to launch this product line, he needed to purchase new equipment, invest in employee training, and build a new website—all of which are well understood.

He also touched on something else, another way in which our tax reform is helping his business; that is, the business optimism that he is seeing, which is encouraging his customers—primarily larger companies—to increase their own capital spending. That includes, in some cases, the purchasing of his products. As Mr. Cranston put it, the tax reform is “spurring business investment and therefore has set the stage for economic growth for years to come.”

This increased investment activity that is helping workers and businesses and small businesses and our economy is exactly what we envisioned, exactly what we had hoped for, and exactly what we designed our tax reform to accomplish.

I have to say, the story that David Cranston told us at the Senate Finance Committee yesterday is not an isolated story. It is completely consistent with stories I have heard all across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania from small businesses; that is, tax reform is working. It is working for them.

Businesses are, in fact, increasing their investments, exactly as we predicted they would if we lowered the after-tax cost of making those investments. For example, just last month, the March 2018 research report by Morgan Stanley—they surveyed their clients—concluded that its capital expenditure plans index—it is an index they keep track of that monitors the amount of capital being put to work in America, being spent on new equipment—according to them, in March, just last month, it reached an alltime high. Their characterization: “Strength in our index indicates continued momentum in equipment investment through the second quarter of 2018.” It is already happening, and they believe it is likely to continue.