

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.

Some of our friends on the other side who are very critical of our tax reform were very critical of the idea that business should benefit from this. They didn't want business to benefit from this at all. I have to point out the multiple ways they are wrong in their analysis.

First of all, when businesses—especially small businesses but all kinds of businesses—benefit from a lower tax regime, much of that benefit flows right to workers. We have seen that in a very direct fashion. In fact, over 500 known, large companies—big enough that their press releases get picked up and noticed—have given employees bonuses, pay raises, increased contributions to their pension plans, or some combination. There are now millions of American workers who work for these 500-plus companies who have directly benefited personally, in their pockets, because of the tax reform. I think this is fantastic, and it has been immediate. It is already happening.

Over the long term, I think there is an even bigger benefit that will be accruing to American workers as a result of our tax reform, and that is the medium-, long-term upward pressure on wages for the people who work for a living to earn those wages. Why do I say that? The fact is, the more capital that gets spent, the more productive workers are able to become, and the more they are able to earn.

Let me give an example that I like. If you go to any construction site when they are at the stage of doing the site development—when they are moving the dirt and maybe they are digging a hole for the foundation—at that stage of the process, you very typically will see somebody operating a backhoe. There is a guy operating a backhoe. He is digging the hole for the foundation. You will very often see somebody with a shovel. He is doing the tidy-up work around the edges. The guy with the shovel is working very hard. He is probably working up more of a sweat. He probably goes home with his muscles and his back aching more than the guy operating the backhoe. But who do you think gets paid more? It is not a close call; the guy operating the backhoe is always paid more. There is one reason for that. The reason is that he has a more advanced set of skills. Because he has those skills and because he has a major piece of equipment to operate, he is much more productive than any human being can ever be with a shovel. The more productive worker is able to earn more.

That is why I am so excited about a reform that encourages businesses to invest in capital. It is already making workers more productive, and that means they are going to earn more income. But it doesn't stop there. All of that capital expenditure, whether it is with David Cranston's company or whether it is a backhoe—when companies want to buy that, someone has to build it. There is more demand for workers to build more of this equip-

ment that is getting put to use. Then after it is built and it is purchased by the business that can afford it now because of tax reform, somebody has to operate it. There is still more demand for workers.

So what happens in an economy when you are close to full employment—the unemployment rate is around 4 percent, which is unusually low for the American economy—and you introduce a significant new demand for workers—well, I would say there are two things that happen. You create opportunities for people who left the workforce to return, and you put upward pressure on wages because all the businesses have to compete for whatever workers are available.

So we have the direct benefit that people have seen in the form of lower withholdings and more take-home pay. We have the direct benefit that workers have seen when the companies they work for have decided to give them a raise or a bonus because they can better afford it. And we have this indirect benefit that might very well be the biggest of them all, as workers become more productive because they get to use the equipment that is put to work when their companies invest the capital that we have made more available to them.

I am very bullish, as apparently the respondents to the Morgan Stanley survey were, and I am grateful to David Cranston for telling his story about how much his small business is already benefiting from our tax reform.

Mr. President, I would like to make a completely unrelated point, and that is, I would like to mention that I had an opportunity to have a long conversation today with CIA Director Mike Pompeo, to discuss his vision for his role as Secretary of State, should he be confirmed, and his vision for America's role in the world, the leadership role we have historically played and how he sees that going forward. I will tell you, I was extremely impressed. He is a very thoughtful, very knowledgeable, wise individual. I think he will give great counsel to our President. I think he will be an outstanding diplomat. I think the fact that he comes from the intelligence community will inform his judgment in a very constructive way. I think we are all very, very fortunate that Mike Pompeo is willing to serve in this capacity. I am looking forward to his confirmation later this week.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I come to the floor to speak on the pending nomination of Mike Pompeo to be the Secretary of State. As a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, I opposed the nomination in committee, and I will oppose it on the floor.

I have said publicly that this was not an open-and-shut case for me. Frankly, I would submit that I have probably voted for more of the President's nomi-

nees who have come before the Senate than have many of my colleagues. I do believe in giving a substantial amount of deference to the President in the choices that he makes of those who are to serve him in his administration. There have been a number of applicants for Cabinet posts whom I have supported even though I have had grave misgivings about the policies that they were going to be articulating and that they were going to be carrying out.

I also believe Director Pompeo when he talks about the morale crisis at the Department of State and his sincere desire to try to remedy that and address it. There was a morale crisis at the Department of State after Secretary Tillerson waged an assault on diplomats in his trying to push out as many as he could for over a year, changing work requirements to make it harder for people to live in very difficult places around the world and continuing a hiring freeze well past the point at which it was justified. There are a lot of people who serve in this country here in Washington and abroad who need to be told that their work is valuable again, and I believe Mike Pompeo when he talks about the need to try to engage in that morale-building project.

I think there are check marks on the side of the ledger that would argue for Mike Pompeo's confirmation, but I am going to vote no because, unfortunately, I think there are far more check marks on the other side of the ledger.

I want to talk today about the issue of qualifications. I don't argue with the fact that our choices, as those in the Senate, when it comes to those who are picked for the Cabinet, shouldn't really be about policy differences. Sometimes the policy differences will be so serious that Members of the President's opposing party may have to cast a "no" vote. By and large, I do think that we should be evaluating candidates based on their qualifications and based on whether their views are at least between the 20-yard lines, within the mainstream conversation about the portfolio of issues that they are going to undertake to oversee.

So I want to talk today about my belief that Director Pompeo is not qualified to be our next Secretary of State. I think that is the appropriate conversation for us to be having, and I want to talk about it through the prism of three qualifications that I would argue any Secretary of State has to meet.

One is that a Secretary of State who is going to be advising the President on matters of war and peace and on questions of military operations overseas has to believe in his heart or in her heart in the Constitution—in the separation of powers between the executive and the legislative branches—when it comes to war-making.

The second is that a Secretary of State has to believe in the value of diplomacy. The Secretary of State is in

the national security cabinet in order to represent diplomatic pathways out of very complicated, vexing, and dangerous problems around the globe. You need a Secretary of State who truly believes that diplomacy can be a viable path out of very complicated problems.

Third, you need a Secretary of State who is free of prejudice or who is free of a substantial association with prejudice. This is our Nation's chief diplomat, who is going to be representing the United States all over the world, who is going to try to build bridges between our country and those countries with different cultures, different faiths, different backgrounds, and different ways of viewing the world.

On these three tests, I don't believe that Director Pompeo measures up. Let me talk about each one of them very briefly.

The first is this belief in the separation of powers. If we aren't standing up for article I powers, no one else will. The Founding Fathers were very clear that when it came to military engagement outside of the United States, it was the Congress and only the Congress that had the ability to declare war. Now, admittedly, war is a much fuzzier concept today than it was when armies were marching against each other in open fields and when neat, tidy peace treaties were wrapping up those hostilities. So I will grant my colleagues that declarations of war are a little bit harder today when the enemies never seem to go away and the definition of "hostilities" is a little different than it used to be.

Yet, at the hearing, I asked a series of questions of Director Pompeo, whose answers did not leave me with any confidence that he understood that there still must be some places in which only the Congress can declare hostilities. Now, I don't believe the President has the ability to take military action against the Syrian regime without having the authorization of Congress. Apparently, there are members of the President's Cabinet who believe the same thing. Media reports suggest that Secretary Mattis counseled the President to go to Congress first before attacking the Syrian regime.

So I queried Director Pompeo about this topic. I asked him whether there was any attack that had been launched against the United States from the Syrian regime. His answer was no.

I asked him whether there was any threat of imminent attack from the Syrian regime against the United States. His answer was no.

I then asked him what the authorization was that allowed the President to take this action. His answer was "article II authority," which is kind of a blanket answer for anybody in an administration who doesn't have an answer.

I submit that the Obama administration occasionally relied on article II authority as well, but I tried to give Director Pompeo a way out of that overly broad answer.

I asked: Would you identify for me one limiting factor on this broad claim of article II authority. He could not. He could not articulate one definable, articulated restraint on article II military authority before the Foreign Relations Committee.

It speaks to what, I think, is a belief inside this administration, which is now being buoyed by people like Director Pompeo and John Bolton, that the President has virtually unlimited authority to begin military operations overseas. If you can attack the Syrian regime without having any authorization from Congress, then why couldn't the President launch a military attack against North Korea without going to Congress in the way that John Bolton had recommended in some of his writings before joining the administration?

If a Secretary of State is not prepared to argue that the Constitution requires that authority and cannot even articulate a single restraint on a seemingly limitless power under article II to launch attacks overseas without going to Congress, then who is making that argument?

I think a Secretary of State has to have an understanding of the limits of executive power overseas. I don't think Director Pompeo has that belief. Otherwise, he would have answered very differently the questions that he was given in his confirmation hearing.

Secondly, I believe that a baseline qualification to be the Secretary of State, to be the Nation's chief diplomat, is to believe in the fundamental power of diplomacy. Over and over, primarily when he was a Congressman, Director Pompeo showed us that he didn't think much of American diplomatic power. He opposed the JCPOA, which is, of course, a mainstream opinion within the Republican Party, but he did so because he thought that military action would involve just a few thousand sorties—American planes flying over Iran, bombing the country into submission. I think that is a pretty naive, uneducated view of how a war with Iran would go down, but it demonstrates an enthusiasm for military options ahead of diplomatic options, the kind that may be better suited for the Department of Defense than for the Department of State.

He has further cheered on this President as he has pulled out of the Paris climate accords, as he has attacked multilateral alliances that the United States has long been a part of. This is a candidate for Secretary of State who has a long history of critiquing and criticizing diplomatic paths to solving complicated problems around the world.

I want a cheerleader for diplomacy at the Department of State. We have been missing that for the last 1½ years with Secretary Tillerson. It doesn't seem we are going to remedy that. I think a qualification for Secretary of State is to be a cheerleader for diplomacy. That has not been the reputation or the record of Mike Pompeo.

Lastly, I think you need to be free of prejudice or free of substantial association with prejudice, and the reason for this qualification is self-evident. This is the member of the administration who is going to be most often overseas meeting with leaders that come from very different backgrounds, who believe different things than Americans do, who practice different religions than the majority of Americans do, who have different traditions than the majority of Americans do. So one has to have a respect, right? One has to have a love of other people who come from different faiths and different traditions if you are going to take this job.

This may be the blackest mark on Director Pompeo's record because there is a vast network all across this country that engages in a kind of Islamophobia, a hatred and bigotry toward the Muslim faith that is completely un-American but is also deeply antithetical to American national security interests because if we really want to make this country safe, then we have to be building constant active bridges to Muslim communities in the United States and to our Muslim partners around the world. When you trade in Islamophobia, a fear of Muslims, you are adding bulletin board material to recruiters who want to write a story about how America is at war with the East, how America is at war with the Islamic faith.

For much of his congressional career, Mike Pompeo was deeply intertwined with this network of anti-Muslim organizations. There is a really interesting study that I hope some of you will take a look at that details this network of organizations. They have fairly innocuous-sounding names, like the American Islamic Forum for Democracy, the Middle East Forum, the Investigative Project on Terrorism, Jihad Watch, ACT for America, the Center for Security Policy, the Society of Americans for National Existence. Those sound like things I might be for, but if you really take a look at what they do, they preach intolerance. They try to tell Americans that all Muslims are out to get them and that we are better off if we just shelter ourselves from people of the Muslim faith. That makes us less safe, and it morally weakens us as a nation. It is not coincidental that all of these groups sprang up or began to receive substantial funding after Barack Obama became President of the United States. It wasn't coincidental that as Donald Trump was going on cable news casting doubt on whether the President of the United States was really an American citizen or whether he was a secret Kenyan citizen planted in the United States that all of these organizations started to take root. They gained legitimacy because American political leaders associated themselves with their cause because they were able to lure Members of Congress like Mike Pompeo into their web.

Mike Pompeo went on these radio shows that traded in these conspiracy

theories about Muslims. He allowed for his name and his office to be associated with their causes. At one point, he actually accepted an award from a group called ACT for America, which is arguably the largest anti-Muslim group in America. They gave him an award saying that "Representative Mike Pompeo has been a steadfast ally of ours since the day he was elected to Congress." This is an organization that the Anti-Defamation League and the Southern Poverty Law Center classify as a hate group. Their founder said practicing Muslims "cannot be loyal citizens of the United States."

Let me say that again. The founder of the group that gave Mike Pompeo an award for being a steadfast ally of their cause said that practicing Muslims cannot be loyal citizens of the United States. These anti-Muslim groups became stronger, became more deeply intertwined into the mainstream because they have allies like Mike Pompeo. It wasn't a coincidence when a Presidential candidate stood up and said: If you elect me, I will ban all Muslims from the United States, that he wasn't laughed off the debate stage. He wasn't laughed off the debate stage because this conspiracy of Islamophobia had penetrated the mainstream because of its access to people like the nominee to be Secretary of State. That is disqualifying to me. That is not about Mike Pompeo's views. It is not about my differences with the policies he is going to espouse as a Secretary of State. That speaks to his qualifications.

This is one of the most important debates we are going to have. These are exceptional times for both Republicans and Democrats, dealing with an administration that conducts itself very differently from others. When it comes down to it, I don't think that by casting a "no" vote I am violating the traditions of this body, which have admittedly given deference to the President in some of these choices for Cabinet positions.

I don't think Mike Pompeo really understands the importance of the separation of powers between the Congress and the Executive when it comes to war-making. I don't think this is a Secretary of State who is going to walk into the room when big decisions are being made on foreign policy and argue the diplomacy portfolio. By virtue of his longstanding association with groups that argued values antithetical to a diverse America, arguing that Muslims have no place in this country, I don't think he passes the test when it comes to a Secretary of State who doesn't have an association with prejudice. That would disqualify him from being an effective advocate for us in parts of the world that practice faiths different than ours. So, for those reasons, I am going to be voting no on Mike Pompeo's nomination. At the same time, as I said at the outset, I acknowledge there are arguments for his nomination, and I will hope my fears

are unfounded. I will hope that he, if he gets confirmation from this body—which it looks like he will—is an advocate for diplomacy, that he understands the proper role of Congress, and that he represents all Americans when he serves us overseas. I certainly hope that to be the case. I hope I am wrong about my reservations, but I will still cast a "no" vote when his nomination comes before the Congress.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, as with many of my colleagues here today, I stand before you to voice my deep concern over the nomination of Mike Pompeo to be our next Secretary of State.

President Trump has tweeted about Senate Democrats that it is "hard to believe obstructionists may vote against Mike Pompeo for Secretary of State." Others have accused Democrats of playing politics, pointing to past Secretary of State confirmation votes that have faced less opposition in the Foreign Relations Committee and on the Senate floor, but this inference that we simply should rubberstamp Secretary of State nominees is misplaced.

Like all of my colleagues, I take my article II advice and consent responsibility very seriously, so I would like to state why I oppose Mr. Pompeo's nomination to be Secretary of State.

My opposition is not about politics. It really isn't about policy either. While I disagree vehemently with many of Mr. Pompeo's positions on issues such as human rights, climate change, and the Iran nuclear deal, these differences alone are not enough to disqualify him or any nominee, for that matter. Fundamentally, my opposition to Mr. Pompeo's nomination is about whether he can credibly fulfill his duties as our Nation's chief diplomat. Can he effectively and faithfully advocate for American diplomacy at home and abroad?

In this regard, as one of my esteemed colleagues said while introducing Mr. Pompeo before the Foreign Relations Committee, "Your background does matter."

So this is what concerns me about Mr. Pompeo's past. Mr. Pompeo was OK characterizing an Indian-American political opponent as "just another 'turban topper' we don't need in Congress or any political office that deals with the U.S. Constitution, Christianity and the United States of America." With a viewpoint like that, how can he credibly represent the millions of Indian Americans in the United States? Equally important, how can the United States be viewed credibly by India's 1.3 billion people, the world's largest democracy and a critical American partner in promoting American values and ideals in Asia in the face of a rising and ever more aggressive China? Sadly, that display of intolerance wasn't Mr. Pompeo's only past offense.

Mr. Pompeo has suggested homosexuality is "perversion," an insinuation Mr. Pompeo ever so cleverly did not address when questioned by my colleague Senator BOOKER. At the CIA, he also canceled a Pride Month event which featured a discussion on the importance of diversity and an appearance by the parents of Matthew Shepard, a young man beaten, tortured, and left to die in Wyoming on account of his sexual orientation. How can the United States stand with the LGBTQ people of Chechnya who have been the victims of violence simply because of whom they love if our Nation's top diplomat has disparaged who they are?

The offenses continue. Following the horrific Patriots Day marathon in Boston, Mr. Pompeo falsely alleged that American Muslim leaders were "potentially complicit" in violent acts for failing to speak out. Under my questioning at the confirmation hearings, he refused to apologize for these comments. Why was I concerned? It happened in Boston. Why was I concerned? Because the Muslim leaders in Boston had spoken out against that attack on our Nation on Patriots Day, on marathon day in Boston.

Mr. Pompeo has said he disagrees with the characterization of his comment, but there is nothing to characterize on the floor of the House of Representatives. His comments disparaging Muslim leaders are part of the public record.

How can Mr. Pompeo effectively represent America to Muslim leaders around the world who are just as interested as we are in preventing religiously motivated violence?

Mr. Pompeo now claims these statements were meant to demonstrate that tackling extremism requires those who are the most credible voices to take an unambiguous stand against violence. Well, as the Secretary of State, Mr. Pompeo would be considered our most credible diplomatic voice around the world. How could Muslim nations ever feel respected when our top diplomat has voiced such unambiguous hate?

Mr. Pompeo cowrote an article on migrants that blamed Sweden's "radical" immigration policy on "political correctness." America must be a leader in finding pathways to protect Syrians, Afghans, and Iraqis fleeing the death and destruction of war, in sheltering the Rohingya seeking shelter from oppression in Burma, and in addressing the countless other refugee crises roiling the globe and threatening our collective security. That is not political correctness; that is our moral responsibility.

America is a nation built by immigrants and refugees. Some 40 percent of Fortune 500 companies were founded by immigrants or the children of immigrants. Google, Tesla, Yahoo, Intel, and eBay are all companies that were founded by immigrants. Given these past statements, could Mr. Pompeo truly represent the interests of a nation made up of and built by immigrants? I do not believe that he can.

In the fight against violent extremism, there is no more divisive issue that erodes our ability to effectively cooperate with other governments than the use of torture. Mr. Pompeo has said that he won't rule out bringing back the abhorrent practice of waterboarding. A man who has said that those who carried out such actions were "not torturers, they are patriots" will not be able to credibly convey to governments with histories of human rights abuses that these actions are reprehensible with any semblance of moral authority.

Today, French President Emmanuel Macron addressed Congress and urged us to rejoin the international community in the commitment to combating climate change. He rightfully said that there is no planet B. But Mr. Pompeo characterized the Paris negotiations as an "elitist effort to reduce the power of the United States economy," when, in fact, it was a historic effort by almost every country in the world to tackle a global challenge that will be an existential threat to every single person on the planet.

I believe in American ingenuity, American enterprise, and American leadership. I believe America must lead the world in solutions to this generational challenge. But how can we expect Mr. Pompeo to lead the Department of State in bringing greater peace, security, and prosperity to the American people through international engagement if he does not believe in U.S. leadership, if he does not believe that the United States is necessary for solving global problems, especially global warming?

Mr. Pompeo has too much to apologize for, too many statements to retract or explain, and too many controversial positions to defend.

Of most concern are Mr. Pompeo's past statements suggesting that he values military force over diplomacy even when diplomacy is a real option.

While negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program were underway, he argued that military strikes on Iran were preferable to diplomacy and that "it is under 2,000 sorties to destroy the Iranian nuclear capacity. This is not an insurmountable task for the coalition forces."

Just a few weeks ago, under my questioning during his confirmation hearing, he did not rule out a military solution in North Korea, which would be disastrous for the 230,000 Americans who live on the Korean Peninsula. There is no military solution to the North Korean nuclear threat. Only through sustained diplomacy and economic pressure, in close coordination with our allies, will we be able to negotiate peaceful denuclearization of North Korea.

America's top diplomat should embody the best of America's values and diplomatic traditions, not attack people's race, defend torture, promote division, ignore human rights, propose military force as the primary solution

to our problems around the world, or reject solutions to the climate change that is threatening our planet.

The President can choose his own Cabinet, yes, but the Senate must advise and consent. No one wants to see the United States without a top diplomat, especially at such an important time in world affairs, but having a Secretary of State who has so thoroughly disqualified himself from credibly doing the job is no better.

Yes, I see and respect the former soldier and Member of Congress, the strong intellect who graduated first in his West Point class and edited the Harvard Law Review, but I also see and hear Mr. Pompeo's past comments and his more recent comments and positions that many who support him are conveniently choosing to disregard. But we cannot do that.

So I advise President Trump to choose a Secretary of State who embodies the best of America's values and diplomatic traditions and communicates them to the rest of the world, and I do not consent to the nomination of Mr. Pompeo, who is not the person for this important task.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, at a time when we are facing serious international challenges, from Russian meddling, to North Korean sabre-rattling, to an increasingly assertive China, it is very essential that the President have a qualified Secretary of State whom he trusts to be on the job.

Mike Pompeo unquestionably understands the international challenges we face and is more than capable of being a very effective Secretary of State. When I talk to our allies, they are anxious to see him on the job.

Unfortunately, some on the other side of the aisle are now claiming that he is not suited for the post of Secretary of State because of positions he took as a Member of Congress or his holding to traditional Christian teachings, as if a person's religion ought to have something to say about their being in public office or public service. Others have spoken about that, and I don't have a whole lot more to add on that point. I would note the irony, though, that many of the Senators who are most likely to vote against Cabinet nominees are also rumored to have Presidential ambitions. They should ask themselves if they truly want to live with the precedent they are setting.

You don't have to like the President personally or support the President's policies, but as an American, it is in all of our interests to have a fully functioning executive branch, especially when it comes to foreign policy.

If a mainstream Republican former Member of Congress is deemed unacceptable because of his beliefs, how should mainstream Republicans vote when faced with future nominees who do not share the beliefs that Repub-

licans hold? Should Republicans just willy-nilly vote against any future nominee who does not share our political or religious views?

That said, I would like to focus on other attributes of Director Pompeo's which some have criticized but which I see as assets.

By all accounts, this nominee's tenure at the CIA has been a success. However, some Senators who supported him then are now arguing that he should not be Secretary of State because he is not diplomatic enough.

First, let's dismiss the more radical talking points about his being a warmonger. The theory is that President Trump is liable to start a war at any moment, so we need to force him, as President, to have Cabinet officials surrounding him who will counteract his impulses. We could have a hypothetical debate about whether, if the American people elect a warmonger as President, he should be allowed to appoint a warmonger Cabinet, but suffice it to say that I don't think that label applies to Mike Pompeo or Donald Trump, and I view such accusations as simply cheap partisan talking points.

On the other hand, it is fair to say that Mike Pompeo doesn't always couch his words in diplomatic niceties. He doesn't mince words about the threats that we face. And his time at the CIA has surely enhanced his strategic thinking. That is good, and that is exactly what we need at the State Department. We need less diplomatic double-talk and more clear-eyed, strategic thinking about international threats.

Real diplomacy isn't always about sweet talk. Sometimes it requires taking a firm stand, and to be effective, it should be part of a strategic vision that incorporates all the elements of statecraft. For instance, I hope we have finally discarded once and for all the diplomatic impulse to make unilateral concessions to President Putin in hopes they will be reciprocated, as exemplified by the Obama-Clinton reset. We all know it didn't really reset. If you understand Russian history and Russian political culture, you know that Russians, especially from a KGB pedigree, are likely to see this as a sign of weakness to be exploited. Diplomatic overtures to the Russians without a corresponding demonstration of strength are simply an invitation to further aggression and misbehavior.

I think we are finally arriving at a bipartisan consensus that Russia is a major geopolitical foe. Mike Pompeo has made clear that he has no doubts about the threat from Russia. He understands the need to push back and push back hard against Russia's attempt to dominate its neighbors and sow discord in the West. The threat from Russia will need a strategic plan that integrates all the elements of statecraft, including government-to-government diplomacy alongside military deterrence, intelligence and counterintelligence, cyber security, and

public diplomacy, just to name a few, and there are a lot of others.

Another area where some clear-eyed strategic thinking is even more crucial is our approach to the People's Republic of China. So I just stated: Consider China a bigger threat than Russia. I just returned from a trip to China with several colleagues at the beginning of this month. It was an eye-opener. We hear a lot about how China is embracing capitalism and becoming more and more like us. Just don't believe it. The Chinese Communist Party has modified its economic policy to allow for economic growth, but it still serves the interests of the state, not the interests of the people. It is not a free market, clearly, because they admit that their economic system is what they would call authoritative capitalism, aka mercantilism.

I visited with government officials at the national and local level, Chinese and American businesses, and American diplomats. The Chinese officials and the Chinese businesses had their talking points down almost too well. However, the impression that I took away from the visit is that the Chinese Government will do anything—legal or illegal, moral or immoral, ethical or unethical—to get ahead of the United States, and when they get ahead, to stay ahead.

China coined the term “peaceful rise” to describe its drive to become a great power, which is designed to sound very benign. In fact, China later changed this slogan “peaceful rise” to “peaceful development” out of concern that the word “rise” sounds threatening. Just to be clear, I am not threatened by Chinese economic growth.

The development of a truly peaceful, free market democracy, no matter how large, would not be threatening because democracies generally do not threaten each other, and free enterprise is mutually beneficial. The fact that so many Chinese people have been lifted out of poverty and into the middle class is a good news story for humanity. It is also good for the United States. The more Chinese people who can afford to buy our pork and soybeans, our John Deere tractors, and our advanced manufacturing, the better for Iowa and our national economy.

Free trade on a level playing field enriches both participants. Unfortunately, China is not interested in a level playing field. It seeks dominance economically, militarily, and politically. Confucius said: “Heaven does not have two suns and the people do not have two kings.” By the same token, the Chinese leadership does not think there is room for two great powers in the world.

China seeks the advantage of trade with the United States but not mutually beneficial free trade in the spirit of the WTO. Despite having a middle class that is bigger than ours in the United States in absolute numbers, China still claims to need special pref-

erences extended to developing countries. China erects nontariff barriers in ways that just very barely skirt triggering WTO compliance in violation of the spirit of the level playing field the WTO seeks to create.

The Chinese military is 60 percent larger than the U.S. military, and its efforts to claim exclusive control over the South China Sea, in violation of international law by creating artificial islands, reveals an expansionist impulse. You can't hide those islands. You know it implies dominance.

However, the threat from China is not mainly military. The influential ancient Chinese military strategist Sun Tzu focused on the role of deception over combat. He famously said: “To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill.”

Now, get this. The problem we face is, we are being treated like an enemy to be subdued without realizing it. I say all of this not to be an alarmist but to point out that China sees itself in a long-term strategic struggle with the United States. We don't need to overreact to this fact, but we do need to be aware and to apply some clear-eyed strategic thinking of our own. In that respect, Mike Pompeo's unique background seems perfectly aligned with the task ahead to develop a strategic foreign policy toward China incorporating all the elements of statecraft.

Because I have mentioned aspects of Chinese culture to illuminate the strategic thinking on the part of the People's Republic of China, I don't want to give the impression that this is a clash of civilizations. On the contrary, it is not traditional Chinese culture that is the problem; it is the unreconstructed Leninist nature of the state system that is the problem.

It is sometimes claimed that Chinese culture is not compatible with democracy, but that is hogwash. The proof to the contrary is the Republic of China on Taiwan. Taiwan is a fully functioning, prosperous democracy with the same Chinese culture and traditions.

This same democracy is what mainland China could have also if it is able to shed its one-party dictatorship, and I hope it will shed that someday.

In the meantime, we need leaders in our government who see China clearly and have the ability to think strategically. Mike Pompeo seems to me to be just that kind of a person, so I am happy to support his confirmation as Secretary of State.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Thank you.

Mr. President, as the Senate considers the nomination of Mike Pompeo

to be Secretary of State, we have to ask ourselves many questions. Among them are these: Will Mr. Pompeo offer the kind of independent judgment that is necessary to help restrain President Trump's worst impulses, or will he be somebody who becomes a “yes” man to the President of the United States? Will Mr. Pompeo continue in his past attitude, which reflects a “shoot first, ask questions later” approach to foreign policy? And can somebody like Mr. Pompeo, who has made very divisive, polarizing, and, in fact, hateful remarks here in the United States be able to reflect American values abroad?

I regret to conclude that I do not think Mr. Pompeo can pass these tests, and I will oppose his nomination for Secretary of State.

We all know that our country is facing formidable challenges. Armed conflicts are raging in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia, creating refugee crises across borders. Russia's campaign to undermine Western democracies continues at pace and has sharpened divisions in our society. It has bolstered populous movements at home and abroad, and we have seen terrorist networks continue to expand their reach into information space. Changes in our climate have resulted in drought, natural disaster, and famine, and as the President of France reminded a joint session of Congress today, there is no planet B.

Of the many crises we are confronting, at least one of them is entirely of President Trump's own making, and that is the potential unraveling of the Iran nuclear agreement. Let me say that I agree with all of those who believe that we should never allow Iran to have a nuclear weapon. That is exactly why it is so important to keep that agreement in place.

In just a few weeks, President Trump will make a decision. He will decide whether to waive the nuclear-related sanctions on Iran in order to keep the Iran agreement intact or whether to blow up that agreement.

As the President of France reminded us today, that agreement was forged with our European allies, Russia and China, and yet it has cut off Iran's pathways to nuclear bombs, it has imposed very tough constraints on their nuclear program, and it has subjected Iran to the most comprehensive inspection and monitoring regime ever negotiated—an inspection regime that would disappear if we backed out of that agreement, leaving us blind to exactly what the Iranians were doing with respect to their nuclear program.

Our State Department, our Defense Department, and our intelligence community have all assessed time and again that Iran is in compliance with the nuclear agreement. Secretary of Defense Mattis testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee just last fall that the Iran deal was in the national security interest of the United States. Despite that consensus even

among the President's current team, the President is talking about recklessly shredding the agreement.

As President Macron of France warned us today, such a move would be very reckless and it would be reckless to replace what we have today without having something to substitute for it.

Mr. Pompeo has weighed in on this issue over the years. It is not only that he has been a fierce opponent of the Iran deal, but he has proposed military strikes against Iran. In 2014, he said that it would take "under 2,000 sorties to destroy the Iranian nuclear capacity. This is not an insurmountable task for the coalition forces."

That is a dangerous illusion—the notion that there would be absolutely no response to an American attack on Iran's nuclear facilities.

Iran, of course, is right next door to Iraq, where the United States spent an ill-fated number of years, at a great loss of lives both to Americans and Iraqis and at great cost to the public. To just talk offhand about bombing Iran as the solution is not the kind of sentiment or mindset that we want in the Secretary of State for the United States of America.

The idea that he somehow had a conversion to diplomacy is difficult to believe, given the testimony that he has provided and the statements that he has made.

We also know that we are at an inflection point when it comes to the situation in North Korea. In a span of just a few months, President Trump has veered from taunting Kim Jong Un over Twitter to recently calling him "very honorable." We are all rooting for diplomacy to succeed in North Korea, but we all know that the opening rounds are, in fact, the easiest legs, and that reaching a credible and lasting accord with North Korea will take significant time, hard bargaining, and the support of our partners and allies in the region.

When it comes to Russia, President Trump's affection for President Putin continues unabated. Two weeks ago, he rejected the sanctions on Russian companies found to be assisting Syria's chemical weapons program, contradicting his own U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. Then, he earlier congratulated Putin on winning the election—an election that we all know was a sham election and that the outcome was never in doubt. It was marred by ballot stuffing and forced voting, and it was hardly what you would call a fair and free election.

When it comes to Russia, despite appeals from Republicans and Democrats in this body and in other parts of the country, the President has decided not to take action to address the threat of Russian cyber attacks in our upcoming elections. In fact, Admiral Rogers, the former head of the U.S. Cyber Command, testified just in February that President Trump had not directed him to confront Russian cyber operations at their source.

So while Mr. Pompeo has said that Russia will meddle again in our midterm elections, he has been much quieter and softer since his nomination was presented by the President with respect to President Trump's soft approach to Russia and Putin.

It is also a fact that our next Secretary of State will be responsible for managing tens of thousands of Foreign Service officers, civil servants, and locally employed staff of the State Department at our embassies and consulates overseas.

We all know that at the State Department today, we are witnessing historically low morale. In his budget, President Trump has tried to gut the State Department of its personnel and resources, issuing two budgets in a row that cut the State Department's budget by over 30 percent. You cannot conduct the diplomacy of the greatest country on Earth with two hands tied behind your back. Yet I heard nothing from Mr. Pompeo about challenging the President with respect to the deep cuts to the State Department and the resources that he will have available to him to conduct American diplomacy.

There is also the very long history of really awful remarks that Mike Pompeo has made toward various minority groups here in the United States, including Muslims and the LGBT community. You have to wonder how somebody who has made these comments is going to be able to oversee a State Department that has patriotic Americans who are Muslim Americans, who are LGBT, and who come from other minority groups. How do you lead an agency when you have made those kinds of comments about people in your workforce? And how do you represent American values overseas when you have disregarded those important values here at home?

Mr. Pompeo has said that Muslims "abhor Christians." He has said that all Muslim leaders were "potentially complicit" in acts of terrorism. He has made other statements and has not condemned statements made by groups that were supporting him.

We have heard today from the President of France, Mr. Macron, a speech that uplifted the best of American values and French values. It was a speech that could have been given by earlier American Presidents, Republican or Democrat. He called upon America, France, the NATO allies, and other freedom-loving democracies and countries that respect the rule of law to seize the mantle of leadership.

He said:

We can actively contribute together to building the 21st-century world order for our people, for all people. The United States and Europe have a historical role in this respect, because it is the only way to defend what we believe in, to promote our universal values, to express strongly that human rights, the rights of minorities, and shared liberty are the true answer to the disorders of the world.

He warned against using anger and fear to divide us. He said:

We are living in a time of anger and fear because of the global threats, but these feel-

ings did not build anything. You can play with fear and anger for a time, but they do not construct anything.

What we have heard from President Trump is exactly the stirring of anger and division that the President of France warned about in his talk today to the Congress. It is those fears that President Trump has sought to exploit rather than to rise above and to lead.

As I look at the record of Mr. Pompeo and as I listen to the statements he has made, including many repulsive statements about different groups within the United States, I have to conclude that he does not reflect the great tradition in American foreign policy of standing up for those universal values that the President of France talked about today. It is a sad moment in our history when it requires a President from France to remind us of those universal values.

France has been a leader in the world, but the United States has been the chief organizer of the post-World War II era. And our friends in France, in England, in Germany, and other allies not just in Europe but around the world have stood with us. Yet, in this administration, we see a full retreat from that kind of American leadership around the world.

I regret to conclude that, looking at Mr. Pompeo's record and statements, he is part of the retreat and not part of the leadership that we need in the 21st century. So I ask my colleagues to oppose this nomination. We can do better. We need to remind every Member of this body that the United States has always stood up for those values that are in our Declaration of Independence and in our Constitution, and we need to uphold those values in the conduct of our foreign policy.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

DARK MONEY

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise today to join my colleagues and to associate myself with their remarks on the critically important issue of unlimited and unaccountable money in our political system. I would like to thank my colleague from Rhode Island, Senator SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, for organizing this speaking series and for being a national leader on the issue of campaign finance reform.

While my colleagues make important points about how our rigged campaign finance system can and does serve as a channel for anonymous billionaires and special interests to exert undue influence across our political system, I would like to focus my remarks on a related issue: how our broken campaign finance system also threatens our national security.

There is no serious dispute that malign foreign actors like Russia are working to subvert our democratic processes and sow chaos in our political system. As we have seen, their strategies depend not on direct conventional attacks upon our Nation, but an