

we went ahead and confirmed them with 94 votes on the floor.

For the last 15 months, he has served our Nation as the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. I think everyone knows how he has run that Agency, and I think everyone knows the culture that he has built there. Right now, the State Department has a terrible culture. The morale is terrible. As my friend the ranking member mentioned, a lot of positions have not been filled, but they also feel like they have not had a leader in some time who has really stood behind them and raised them up in order to leverage our diplomatic efforts around the world. I believe this particular nominee will be excellently suited for that. He has demonstrated that at the CIA.

I strongly support his nomination. With that, I look forward to the vote. I look forward to his serving our Nation. I don't know of a person in the United States of America who could have more current knowledge about what is happening around the world in his current role. As we know, he has already met with the North Koreans. We have known for some time that the CIA has been our contact, our back channel, with the North Koreans. He is the perfect person to come in at this time and lead those efforts diplomatically.

I yield the floor.

I also yield back any remaining time.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The assistant bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Mike Pompeo, of Kansas, to be Secretary of State.

Mitch McConnell, Orrin G. Hatch, Todd Young, John Cornyn, Bill Cassidy, John Boozman, Deb Fischer, David Perdue, James Lankford, Roger F. Wicker, John Thune, Tom Cotton, Mike Rounds, Roy Blunt, James M. Inhofe, Thom Tillis, Bob Corker.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Mike Pompeo, of Kansas, to be Secretary of State, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

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

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 57, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 83 Ex.]

YEAS—57

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

NAYS—42

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Reed
Bennet	Harris	Sanders
Blumenthal	Hassan	Schatz
Booker	Heinrich	Schumer
Brown	Hirono	Shaheen
Cantwell	Kaine	Smith
Cardin	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Carper	Leahy	Tester
Casey	Markey	Udall
Coons	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warren
Durbin	Murray	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Peters	Wyden

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Baldwin	Gillibrand	Reed
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Brown	Hirono	Shaheen
Cantwell	Kaine	Smith
Cardin	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Carper	Leahy	Tester
Casey	Markey	Udall
Coons	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warren
Durbin	Murray	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Peters	Wyden

NOT VOTING—1

McCain

The nomination was confirmed.

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

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Richard Grenell, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Federal Republic of Germany.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, the cloture motion with respect to the Grenell nomination be withdrawn; that the time until 1:45 p.m. be equally divided in the usual form; and that upon the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; further, that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Under the previous order, the time until 1:45 p.m. will be equally divided in the usual form.

The majority whip.

CONFIRMATION OF MIKE POMPEO

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, we have just voted to confirm Mike Pompeo to be the next Secretary of State for the United States—an essential member of the President's Cabinet.

There has been a tradition of sorts in this deliberative body to give some deference to the President on his pick for chief diplomat, recognizing that foreign governments view the chief diplomat or Secretary of State as being the personal representative of the President himself, the thought being that whoever wins the election deserves the ability to assemble their own team and build a Cabinet with top brass whom he respects and can work

[Rollcall Vote No. 84 Ex.]

YEAS—57

Alexander	Gardner	Moran
Barrasso	Graham	Murkowski
Blunt	Grassley	Nelson
Boozman	Hatch	Paul
Burr	Heitkamp	Perdue
Capito	Heller	Portman
Cassidy	Hoeven	Risch
Collins	Hyde-Smith	Roberts
Corker	Inhofe	Rounds
Cornyn	Isakson	Rubio
Cotton	Johnson	Sasse
Crapo	Jones	Scott
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Flake	McConnell	Young

well with. That is how the system has worked. The party that lost the election accepted Cabinet nominees—absent some glaring or egregious reason not to—and agreed to leave ongoing political battles for another day.

This is not just some ancient history, by the way. In fact, this week I have discussed at length many modern-day instances of it. For example, Condoleezza Rice passed with 85 votes. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton passed with 94 votes. Secretary Colin Powell sailed through the process, needing only a voice vote—not even a rollcall vote—to be confirmed.

All of these men and women were confirmed because all of them had the qualifications to do the job, and so does Mike Pompeo. It is absolutely clear that he has both the credentials and the character required to be a successful Secretary of State. I won't recite all the lines of his stellar résumé because you have heard them before, and we have just confirmed him.

The point is simply that the man has what it takes for the job. That is why the “no” votes by our Democratic colleagues rang so hollow. All of their statements have been lacking in any real, substantive critique. It is clear that their “no” vote is primarily a way to lash out at President Trump because anybody President Trump chooses, they instinctively and reflexively oppose. It was disappointing, but in today's environment, it is not all that surprising.

Their obstruction was not only a sad break from the tradition that I mentioned a moment ago but was also a sorry continuation of the hyperpartisanship that they have been engaging in with so many of the President's Cabinet nominees since he took office. Not long ago, Mike Pompeo was one of the exceptions. Fourteen Democrats and one Independent supported his confirmation as CIA Director. Yet now, 1 year later, after his unblemished service as CIA Director, only three are voicing their support for him. Nothing has changed about the man, about Mike Pompeo himself, but everything has changed about the way Democrats view their responsibility in this Chamber, not just to their constituents but to the Senate as a whole. What has changed is their disdain for the President himself. It has grown, and they have decided to take it out on his nominees, which is unfair, of course, but it is also unwise. Any frustration they have is all the more reason why they should support a man like Mike Pompeo, who throughout his career has shown his capacity to exercise good judgment. He is no mere lackey or political shill—anyone would tell you that—and his experiences speak for themselves in that regard.

The worst part of this whole debacle is that those who have suffered the most while we get our act together are the American people. They are aware—more so, maybe, than some of us—of what is happening across the world:

threats posed by Russia, China, and North Korea, the unravelling of Syria. They are right to wonder why in the world the Senate would dawdle and politicize the confirmation of a well-qualified person and leave the rest of the world in doubt as to who is going to be representing us as our diplomat in chief. The American people understand how precarious our situation is in North Korea, which Admiral Harris of the U.S. Pacific Command has called “the greatest threat we face.” This is not a time for partisanship, for hyperpartisanship, or for voting reflexively against everybody the President has proposed as a nominee.

The next Secretary of State will play a vital role in the negotiations with North Korea. In fact, as we now know, Mike Pompeo has already taken the initial steps, laying the groundwork and the foundation for what we all hope will be a successful negotiation on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

Those are some of the reasons I strongly supported Mike Pompeo's nomination to lead the State Department, and I hope our colleagues will somehow find a way to overcome this reflexive opposition to everything the President has proposed and their hyperpartisan response every time the President proposes either a nominee or some policy provision.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

DARK MONEY

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, if I told you that a cabal of wealthy elites and special interests were spinning a web of deceit to lie to the American people and to rig the levers of power in their favor, you would think I was talking about the plot of some movie, some TV show, or some novel. But, as Senator WHITEHOUSE and several of our colleagues have come to the floor to demonstrate this past week, this isn't about the plot of a movie; this is real life that it is happening here right now, and it is important that we as Americans and we as Members of the Senate face it squarely and understand how this manipulation is being designed to take our “we the people” Constitution and turn it on its head—turn it into a government of, by, and for the powerful rather than of, by, and for the people.

Today, I am going to share with you a little bit of information about one piece of this web of deceit, and that is the Heritage Foundation. It is a well-known name here in Washington after decades of engaging in a mission of formulating and promoting rightwing public policies. People hear “Heritage Foundation,” and they know what it is.

As Jane Mayer writes in her book “Dark Money,” it was created to be “purposefully political, priding itself on creating, selling, and injecting conservative ideas into the American mainstream.” Well, that is a more complicated way of saying that it was created to be an advocate for the fossil

fuel industry and to mislead Americans in every possible way in order for them to continue their deeply damaging and polluting ways. Ms. Mayer goes on to describe the organization as a “political weapon” disguised as a think tank, and that pretty much sums it up.

One of the organization's founders, Paul Weyrich, once said about solidifying power for the biggest corporations and wealthiest Americans:

I don't want everybody to vote. . . . As a matter of fact, our leverage in the elections quite candidly goes up as the voting populace goes down.”

Thus there is this intense support to engage in voter suppression. If you are a red-blooded American, you believe in the vision of voter empowerment, not voter suppression. So that says a lot about what this organization is all about. It is not we the people, it is not voters empowerment but rigging this Nation and this process for the powerful and the privileged.

The papers, reports, and journals that come from the Heritage Foundation work to muddy the water on established science. I did find it interesting that every now and then they promote an idea that actually makes some sense. Back in 1989 they promoted, in a publication entitled ‘Ensuring Affordable Healthcare for all Americans,’ a plan to establish a marketplace with tax credits to enable people to be able to help buy policies. This was the foundation for RomneyCare in Massachusetts, and it became the foundation then for the Affordable Care Act.

In fact, back then, long before the Affordable Care Act came along, people like House Speaker Newt Gingrich, whenever he talked about the possibility of improving government healthcare, he talked about the Heritage Foundation's plan for a marketplace, but the moment an administration came along that happened to be a Democratic administration that took that idea seriously, the Heritage Foundation immediately abandoned it, which goes to my point that they are engaged directly in the game of politics on behalf of the Koch brothers' cabal and sabotaging, in a partisan and political way, the blue team at any possible moment.

In one brief, Heritage explained away their change of heart saying: “Analysts once supported a limited and qualified insurance mandate” but now believed it was “bad public policy” because the mandate came from the Heritage Foundation.

In 2012, Stuart Butler, the Heritage Foundation researcher who authored the original publication calling for an individual mandate, wrote an op-ed saying he had changed his mind, and he titled it, “Don't blame Heritage for ‘ObamaCare’ mandate.”

Well, why not? They put the idea forward. It actually was a key principle of insurance marketplaces, otherwise you created an insurance death cycle. So they put the idea forward. They promoted the marketplace. They said this