

the Senator from Delaware for expressing all of our concern about Russian interference in the 2016 election. It is absolutely clear they did, and the President has said as much on a number of occasions.

Now, I agree, in Helsinki he was less than clear about that, but he came back and said that he misspoke and reaffirmed his earlier position that, yes, the Russian Government had attempted to interfere in the election, although nobody disputes the fact that they were unsuccessful in changing a single vote or affecting the outcome. Ironically, the very same investigation which has made clear that the Russians did attempt to disrupt the election has also made clear there is no evidence of collusion that anybody has uncovered to date.

My concern with this resolution is that it is purely a symbolic act, and what we need to do is not just offer symbolic resolutions on the floor. We need to do the hard work Senators have to do through regular order. In other words, our committees that have jurisdiction over these issues ought to be permitted to call the witnesses and ask the hard questions and develop the record before we go on record as to a resolution like this.

I would point out that the indictments that were referred to, apparently, according to published reports, Rod Rosenstein, the Deputy Attorney General, asked the President before Helsinki if he should withhold the announcement of those indictments or go ahead and release them before the summit. The President said: No, go ahead.

Anybody who read the 29 pages of the indictment, issued at the request of Robert Mueller by a grand jury in the District of Columbia, knows there is chapter and verse of how Russians attempted to interfere with the election. It is a good and important read. The President knew that before he went to Helsinki. That gives me some confidence that he did, indeed, misspeak, especially in light of his subsequent affirmations of Russian interference in the election.

I happen to be privileged to sit on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. We have been conducting a bipartisan investigation of the Russian matter for the entire time the President has been in office for the last year and a half. We already issued some preliminary reports. The way to do our work is through bipartisan committee work—have the witnesses come and testify, ask them hard questions, and render our judgment.

I know Secretary Pompeo is coming before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee sometime next week. He ought to be asked hard questions. I am confident he will respond to those questions. That is how we get the information we need.

Let me just say that I think we should consider sanctions—not some sort of sense-of-the-Senate resolutions that have no sting or no impact, cer-

tainly no deterrent effect on what we all want, which is to discourage Russian involvement in our 2018 elections. That is why the majority leader today asked the chairman of the Banking and Foreign Relations Committee to hold hearings and recommend additional measures that could respond to or deter Russian malign behavior. We ought to do our work through our committees of jurisdiction.

When we rush to judgment and do resolutions like this, we can inadvertently make mistakes. Let me point out one that is in this resolution. There is a reference to Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act, which passed the Senate 98 to 2, to deter and punish election interference by the Russian Federation. There is a provision in the current conference committee on the Defense authorization that would issue a waiver of that act to our partner India. If we want to encourage countries like India to come partner with the United States of America—the world's largest democracy and the world's oldest democracy—then we ought encourage that movement toward us and away from the Russian Federation. I worry there is no reference in here to the waiver provision in the Defense authorization conference committee that India has asked for and that Secretary Mattis has requested Congress grant.

All I am asking for is a little bit of caution in the rush to issue a resolution. No. 1, I don't think we acknowledge the full picture, but we also don't commit our work to the committees that have jurisdiction over these matters to do it carefully, thoughtfully, and in a bipartisan way so we come up to the best solution to the problem.

I think this is the wrong way to go about it. I think our committees ought to continue to do their work—Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, the Armed Services Committee, the Foreign Relations Committee, and the Banking Committee. We ought to come up with the right kind of bipartisan answer, which I think could well include sanctions against the Russian Federation to deter them from meddling in our 2018 elections and beyond. I am confident they will continue until we stop them from doing so.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). Objection is heard.

The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. Madam President, I think it is regrettable this was objected to. We will bring it back. The majority leader said this is just a symbolic vote. It is. Symbolism is important.

Obviously, we have underlying sanctions we ought to fully implement. If there are waivers needed, there is already a waiver process in the NDAA authorization. I support those waivers with regard to India. This does not affect that. This says, in a symbolic way, that we in the Senate don't buy Vladimir Putin's rejection or his denial of election interference.

That was put in question this week, whether our government believes that or not. We in the Senate should stand and say: We don't believe it. We know the intelligence is right. We stand behind our intelligence community. We need to say that in the Senate.

Yes, it is symbolic and symbolism is important. Our agencies of government need to know that we stand behind them. That is what this is about.

I hope we will pass this. I note, regretfully, that there has been an objection to it, but we will bring it back. I believe this should pass, and I believe it ultimately will pass.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding Senate rule XXII, postcloture time on the Bounds nomination expire at 1:45 p.m. today; 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. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. RES. 584

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that following disposition of the Bounds nomination, the Senate resume legislative session and proceed to the immediate consideration of a Schumer resolution that is at the desk; further, that the Senate immediately vote on the resolution; that if agreed to, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

S. RES. 583

Mr. COONS. Madam President, I join my colleague from Arizona in briefly remarking on my regret that our resolution was not adopted today.

It does call for the full implementation of mandatory sanctions as discussed at some length. It does not call for the reckless implementation of mandatory sanctions.

There is a significant range of sanctions already provided for in this law, adopted 98 to 2 by this body, that have not yet been adopted. I recognize that this resolution, standing strong behind the Department of Justice, the intelligence community, and its ongoing investigation is, as was referenced, a symbolic act, but there are moments when symbolism and standing together are important.

I look forward to continuing to work closely with my colleague and friend from Arizona to ensure that this resolution is adopted, that the American people and the men and women of our Federal law enforcement agencies and our intelligence community understand that this body strongly supports them and their work and sees clearly the ongoing and continuing threat to

our democracy posed by President Putin and Putin's Russia.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, first, before I talk about the resolution Senators MENENDEZ, SCHATZ, and I have authored that will be voted on at 1:45 p.m., I would like to say a few words about the work the Senators from Delaware and Arizona did and my severe disappointment that there was objection from the Republican leadership.

The bottom line is very simple. President Trump has put our country in a foreign policy crisis. President Trump has weakened the security of this country. A resolution is the minimum we can do. We should be acting.

The idea that we cannot even pass a resolution in this body because of the objection on the other side, when this was done in a bipartisan, careful way by the Senators from Arizona and Delaware, shows something very bad. Our colleagues on the other side of the aisle are so cowered by a President that they cannot stand up for national security. They cannot stand up to Vladimir Putin, just as the President seems not to be able to.

I have one more point. From what I am told, one of the major objections from the other side was that Congress wished the contemporaneous notes from that secret 2-hour meeting be made available. That is key.

What are they hiding? What are they afraid of? The American people have a right to know what went on in that meeting, particularly when President Putin gets up and talks about some agreements that it seems not even our high-ranking officials in the State and Defense Departments and intelligence agencies know about. This is amazing.

We have come to a really low moment in this body when a bipartisan resolution that is rather modest and limited—I had talked to the Senator from Delaware. He knows I wanted much more in this resolution, but in an effort to get something done, we limited it.

In my view—the view of most Americans—the notes should be made available. The translator should be made available. The translator wasn't specifically referred to in this resolution, but when they talked about relevant people coming, my view—and I believe the view of the Senator from Delaware—was that would include the translator. I am not sure if it was the view of the Senator from Arizona. It doesn't matter. We are not even passing this resolution.

I have to say, this was a moment for bipartisanship. This was a moment for America pulling together. This was a moment, when the President doesn't served the country well, that Americans of all parties, all ideologies come together and fill that void and undo the misdeeds that occurred in Helsinki.

Unfortunately, because of weakness, fear—my guess is, if you looked inside

the hearts and minds of every Member on the other side, all but maybe one or two would feel this is the right resolution, but they are afraid. Fear will not get us anywhere. Letting a bully push us around, meaning President Putin, as he pushed President Trump around, will not serve this country well. It is a sad moment that this resolution was rejected.

S. RES. 584

Madam President, before I yield to my good friend, the hard-working and very able ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee, I want to talk about our resolution which we are going to vote on. Lord knows what would happen if we couldn't have even gotten a vote on that.

The idea that an American ambassador, who served us so well, should be brought before Putin and his minions to be questioned, when there is no charge against him, no issue against him—it is not like the 12 Russians who are indicted for trying to interfere with our elections. It is not even an analogy. There is not an evenness. President Trump amazingly called this an "incredible offer." Our President is saying that one of our Ambassadors being hauled before an authoritarian regime that twists the truth, that lies at will, that even seems to kill people they want to with poison in other countries is an incredible offer?

Well, this resolution is a fine resolution. It will pass. It doesn't undo what just happened. It doesn't make up for the fact that our colleagues are afraid to take real action, even a resolution that posits action in terms of the major misdeeds at Helsinki. At the very least, we are protecting the integrity of the men and women who serve us, because if today it is the Ambassador, tomorrow it could be somebody in the military or somebody in the intelligence agencies or elsewhere.

This resolution is very clear. What it says is, when President Trump called Putin's offer an "incredible offer," he was incredibly wrong. No President can put one of our fine servants at risk who has worked hard, in this case, for the diplomatic corps. This resolution is a bare minimum of what we should be doing here. I am glad it will be on the floor, and I suspect it will pass—hopefully, unanimously.

I yield to my colleague from New Jersey.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I am very pleased to join with the distinguished Democratic leader in co-authoring this resolution.

S. RES. 583

Madam President, before I speak to it, I do want to speak to the Flake-Coons resolution.

Certainly, I would have supported it; although, I believe it is the minimum of what this body should be expressing after what we saw in Helsinki. This is a moment for bipartisanship and for patriotism because what I saw in Hel-

sinki speaks to the opposite of standing up to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States.

In the majority whip's objection to the resolution coming to a vote, I find it interesting that, among other things, he was talking about our having more sanctions against Russia, which I will speak to shortly. We are in the midst of developing a new, strong package of sanctions as it relates to Russia. So I embrace and welcome him to that effort if he seeks to actually see real sanctions against Russia.

We have sanctions. There are sanctions that passed by 98 to 2 in this institution and that passed overwhelmingly in the House of Representatives, which forced the President to sign it as a result of there having been overwhelming votes. These were sanctions that were largely mandatory but have not been fulfilled. So we could start off by having a robust engagement of the existing sanctions.

I am not quite sure how we start being tough on Russia. One of the elements of those sanctions was to go after Russia's sales of defense weapons. Yet here we are, and we are already looking for waivers. There is a difference between a country that, maybe, has a long history of buying Russian military equipment, but the S-400—a new anti-defense system—is a new version. That is not a legacy issue. I am not sure how we are going to tell one country it can buy the S-400 but tell another country it can't. It doesn't work. That is how sanctions begin to crumble at the end of the day. Yet I welcome the response that we should be having new sanctions.

S. RES. 584

Madam President, as it relates to this resolution, it is outrageous that the White House would not instantaneously and firmly dismiss a proposition that Russian prosecutors question a former U.S. Ambassador. Again and again, we have seen President Trump take Vladimir Putin's word. It is unconscionable that this White House would give anything other than a full-throated defense of America's Foreign Service, like Ambassador Mike McFaul, who has served our country with honor and distinction.

The reason Putin doesn't like Mike McFaul is that as our U.S. Ambassador, he stood up for democracy and human rights in Russia; he stood up to the Russian regime; and he promoted American values and ideals. He spoke truth to power inside Russia. That is why Putin wants him. Congress shouldn't have to tell America's President to stand up for America's public servants and its diplomatic corps, but apparently we have to.

President Trump has repeatedly dismissed Russia's attack in 2016 and shrugs off the threat it poses today, despite all of our intelligence agencies and the Director of National Intelligence, just days ago, saying there are red blinking lights about Russia's continual engagement and interference in