

With so many vital U.S. national security interests at stake in the region—including the safety and effectiveness of our troops fighting ISIS—this leadership vacuum risks outcomes that serve only Russia's interests, not our own.

While President Trump may believe that Russian hegemony in the Middle East and Russian partnership with Iran is not a cause for concern, I am deeply alarmed that we are on the road to a series of outcomes in Syria that will be as catastrophic in human terms as they will be strategically ruinous for U.S. interests and values for years to come.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF ALLENTOWN JCC

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I congratulate the board of directors of the Jewish Community Center, or JCC, in Allentown, PA as they celebrate their 100th anniversary. Community leaders and JCC members will gather on October 4 through 6 to celebrate and honor this remarkable institution in the Lehigh Valley.

For 100 years, the JCC of Allentown has served as the beating heart of the Lehigh Valley Jewish community. Through its early childhood and after-school programs, sports, wellness, and cultural activities, the JCC enriches the lives of generations of Lehigh Valley families of all backgrounds and heritage.

Many JCC members are first introduced to the JCC community in preschool. Eventually, they are old enough to attend a JCC summer camp, where they may learn to swim, play basketball, cook, or act in theatre. As adults, these members may take their own children to a community Seder, attend the Jewish Film Festival, or practice a healthy lifestyle of weekly gym sessions. Eventually, many members will participate in the Friendship Circle and Silver Sneakers programs at the JCC.

If you take a drive through Allentown's historic downtown area, it is difficult to miss a building called Alliance Hall on the corner of 6th and Chew Streets. Today, the building is occupied by the Allentown Health Bureau. A century ago, however, the 19th century Victorian mansion standing at this location served as the first Allentown JCC.

In 1918, the leaders of the Allentown Jewish community—among them successful local entrepreneurs, high-skilled professionals, and survivors of pogroms overseas—were searching for ways to support younger Jewish immigrants as they integrated into American society and aspired to fulfill the opportunities offered by the American dream. They purchased the Victorian mansion, turning it into a focal point for the Jewish community and especially its youth.

The facility was so popular that, within a decade, it was clear the JCC

would need more space. David Levy, Allentown's first Jewish architect, graciously donated his services to design a new, larger building on the same site. That building would be called Alliance Hall, and from 1928 to 1954, it reliably served the JCC's ever-expanding membership. The JCC flourished and inevitably had to relocate, one last time, to where it resides today at 22nd and Tilghman Streets in Allentown's West End neighborhood.

Most importantly, since 1918, the JCC of Allentown has been the place where all community members feel welcomed, engaged, and part of the JCC family. Today it serves over 2,000 members, and I am honored to congratulate them on the 100th anniversary of the JCC's establishment.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO THE REV. DR. GRAINGER BROWNING, JR., AND THE REV. DR. JO ANN BROWNING

• Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, this Sunday, I will have the honor and pleasure of attending services at Ebenezer African Methodist Episcopal, AME, Church in Fort Washington, MD to celebrate the 35th anniversary of service to this wonderful church by my dear friends, the Reverend Dr. Grainger Browning, Jr., and his wife, the Reverend Dr. Jo Ann Browning.

Ebenezer AME Church's beginning is similar to the origin of many other AME churches. In 1856, 13 Black members left Mt. Zion Methodist Episcopal Church in Georgetown because of discrimination and segregation. They erected a new church at 2727 O Street, NW, not far from Mt. Zion. They named it "Ebenezer", meaning "stone of help," a reference to I Samuel 7:12. The congregation worshiped in the historic Georgetown location for well over one century. By 1983, however, many Black families had left Georgetown. Church membership fell to fewer than 30 people, with a Sunday offering of only \$200 per week.

With the vision, leadership, and support of Bishop John Hurst Adams—the presiding prelate, Second Episcopal District at that time—the Reverend Howard C. Wright as pastor, Dr. Joseph C. McKinney as the African Methodist Church treasurer, and the Washington Conference Board of Trustees, 17 faithful members moved to Fort Washington, MD, and the church in Georgetown was sold.

One month following the move to a 500-seat sanctuary with a \$3,500 monthly mortgage note and a \$300 weekly offering, the Reverend Dr. Grainger and Reverend Dr. Jo Ann Browning were called to serve the Ebenezer family. The congregation soon outgrew the building and began holding worship services at the Friendly High School auditorium in 1986. In 1994, having outgrown the 1,500-seat auditorium at "Friendly Ebenezer," members carried

their faith pilgrimage to "Ebenezer the Beautiful," a 2,600-seat sanctuary on 33 acres of land. Many people call the current church "The Miracle on Allentown Road."

The Reverend Dr. Grainger Browning, Jr., is the senior pastor of Ebenezer AME Church. He is a 1974 graduate of Hampton University in Hampton, VA, where he earned a bachelor of science degree in history and education and was a member of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity. He was awarded a master of divinity degree in 1982 from Howard University Divinity School, where he was awarded the Benjamin E. Mays Theological Fellowship. He received doctor of divinity degrees from Payne Theological Seminary in Wilberforce, OH and from the AME University in Monrovia, Liberia. Before Pastor Browning was called into ministry, he was a high school educator with the Newton Massachusetts Public School System, serving as department chairperson in social science. While he was living in the Boston area, Pastor Browning was also vice president of the Boston NAACP from 1982 to 1983.

In addition to his pastoral duties, Pastor Browning has ministered extensively throughout the African continent, including Senegal, Gambia, Lesotho, Zambia, South Africa, Liberia, and Egypt. He currently serves as a member of the board of trustees for both Wilberforce University—after serving as vice chairman from 2002 to 2006—and Payne Theological Seminary. Pastor Browning is also a member of the board of directors of the Rainbow/People United to Save Humanity, PUSH, Coalition. In that capacity, he has traveled on several delegations with the Reverend Jesse Jackson, Sr., to Israel, Palestine, Sudan, Libya, Lebanon, Syria, and Ghana, meeting with the heads of state in each one of these countries.

Pastor Browning is married to the Reverend Dr. Jo Ann Browning, copastor of Ebenezer AME Church. She graduated from Boston University in 1976 with a bachelor of science degree in Communications. She received a master of divinity degree in 1986 and a doctorate of ministry from Howard University School of Divinity in 1991. While at Howard, she was a recipient of the Benjamin E. Mays and the Pew Fellowships.

Pastor Browning immediately began assisting her husband and was hired as assistant minister in 1985. She originally served as assistant pastor. In 1998, Bishop Vinton R. Anderson, then presiding prelate of the Second Episcopal District, made the unprecedented appointment assigning the Reverend Dr. Jo Ann Browning as copastor of Ebenezer. Since 2005, Bishop Adam J. Richardson has continued this groundbreaking appointment.

In addition to her pastoral responsibilities, Pastor Browning has preached, taught, and facilitated workshops throughout the United States, Haiti, Bermuda, Barbados, Germany,

Israel, and South Africa. She is a widely recognized community leader and has received numerous awards and accolades. In July 2002, for instance, Pastor Browning was inducted as an honorary member into Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. In 2006, she received an honorary doctor of divinity degree from AME University in Monrovia, Liberia. In 2007, she was honored to preach Spelman College's Baccalaureate Ceremony, where she served on the Spelman College Sisters Chapel Wisdom Center Executive Board. In 2016, she became a member of the board of trustees at Wesley Theological Seminary, and in 2017, she accepted the request to serve on the Board of RISE TOGETHER: The National Mentorship Network for Women of Color in Ministry, WOCIM.

Pastor Browning has also organized and convened over 30 annual women's spiritual retreats, attracting thousands of participants from throughout the United States and around the world. She self-published her first book, "Our Savior, Our Sisters, Ourselves. Biblical Teachings & Reflections on Women's Relationships," in 2006. The book provides teachings that explore the realities of being a Black woman, wife, mother, and minister. It is designed to empower and bless women as they continue on their own journeys of faith. Her second book, "Faithful, Focused and Fearless: Lessons to Fortify Your Future," was released June 2009.

The Brownings are the proud parents of Grainger Browning III, a 2008 graduate of Morehouse College, and Candace Davis, a 2008 graduate of Hampton University and current graduate student at Howard University. They are the proud grandparents of Grainger Browning IV and Kaylah Browning and Imani Davis.

The story of Ebenezer AME Church is much like the Parable of the Mustard Seed. When Grainger and Jo Ann Browning arrived at Ebenezer AME in 1983, the church had a membership of 17 people and an annual budget of \$12,000. Under the Brownings' inspired leadership, the membership now exceeds 8,000 people, and the church has an annual budget of \$10 million. Ebenezer AME Church has over 100 different ministries dedicated to serving the spiritual, educational, political, social, economic, health, and recreational needs of the community. For nearly 30 years, the Ebenezer AME Church family has donated nearly \$2 million in scholarships to high school graduates and returning college students. Ever mindful of the multitude of spiritual and physical needs, Ebenezer AME Church's future plans include the development of a school, family life center, and senior citizen complex. The Brownings and Ebenezer AME Church continue to strive to be a source of help and inspiration within the walls of the church and throughout the community.

I am proud to celebrate the Brownings' 35th anniversary at Ebenezer

AME Church this Sunday. I call upon all of my Senate colleagues to join me in congratulating the Reverend Dr. Grainger Browning, Jr., and his wife, the Reverend Dr. Jo Ann Browning, for their extraordinary leadership and dedicated service to their parishioners, the surrounding community, and all of humankind.●

REMEMBERING AUBREY MCGINNIS

● Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life of Aubrey McGinnis.

Aubrey was born on December 26, 1960, and passed away on Saturday, March 18, 2017.

Aubrey joined the U.S. Army in 1981, serving the Illinois Army National Guard for 22 years and retiring as a chief warrant officer 4 pilot.

During his service, Aubrey graduated from the Illinois Institute of Technology, where he earned a bachelor's of science degree in electrical engineering in 1986. After working for a few years at Amoco, he earned an additional degree in aviation technology at Vincennes University on a Tuskegee Airman Scholarship. Aubrey then pursued his lifelong passion to fly commercially with, first, Comair, Inc., and later with United Airlines as an airline pilot.

As a loving husband to Ericka McGinnis and devoted father, Aubrey enjoyed being a provider and spiritual guide to his beautiful family.

Aubrey was a dear friend to many, and he left a profound mark on the lives of all those he loved and met. He was a quiet voice of reason and wisdom, and I am proud to stand here today and honor his legacy.●

TRIBUTE TO LOUISE ABERCROMBIE

● Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Louise Abercrombie, a woman who has worked diligently serving the people of Oklahoma through her journalism career for 50 years.

Louise began her career with the Ponca City News, gathering city briefs, walking almost 30 blocks a day. This hard work eventually led her to cover obituaries and religion and then the chamber of commerce beat and politics.

Louise covered all aspects of community news in her career, becoming widely known for her accurate reporting and keen research skills. She has interviewed six Oklahoma Governors, covered five Presidents, many international leaders, and several Members of Congress. I personally had the privilege of working with her when she covered a countless number of my fly-ins over the years.

I want to thank Louise Abercrombie on her years of service and wish her well in her retirement. Well done, Louise.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Ridgway, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2017, the Secretary of the Senate, on September 13, 2018, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled bill:

S. 994. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide for the protection of community centers with religious affiliation, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2017, the Secretary of the Senate, on September 14, 2018, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled bills:

H.R. 589. An act to establish Department of Energy policy for science and energy research and development programs, and reform National Laboratory management and technology transfer programs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1109. An act to amend section 203 of the Federal Power Act.

H.R. 5895. An act making consolidated appropriations for Energy and Water Development, the Legislative Branch, Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:25 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, without amendment:

S. 97. An act to enable civilian research and development of advanced nuclear energy technologies by private and public institutions, to expand theoretical and practical knowledge of nuclear physics, chemistry, and materials science, and for other purposes.

S. 2946. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to clarify the meaning of the terms "act of war" and "blocked asset", and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bill, with amendments, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate: