

that is now before the Judiciary Committee. We are told that tomorrow there will be testimony from both the judge and Dr. Ford, but I think the evidence that is on the record so far and the new allegations that are just breaking news at this hour continue to reinforce my belief—and this was my belief a week ago, it was my belief a number of days ago, and it is still my belief today—that these allegations warrant an FBI investigation.

This would not be a new endeavor for the FBI. They do this routinely for nominees from the Supreme Court all the way down. They, of course, did an investigation into the judge's background for the purposes of this confirmation. An investigation of these new allegations would simply be an update to the background check. It would be the completion of the background check. That is why this is not a month-long or even weeks-long investigation that could transpire. I would hope—and there is still time to do this either today or even while the Judiciary Committee is hearing testimony tomorrow—that there would, in fact, be an investigation that might last a few days. We can certainly take the time to do that. When you are talking about the confirmation of a Justice on the most important Court in the country and probably the most powerful Court in the world, I am sure we could take a few more days to complete a background check investigation.

There are inscriptions on the Finance Building in Harrisburg—a building I worked in for a decade—that talk about issues like public service and what our government should be about. I think one of them applies to this circumstance, about whether there should be an investigation that would simply complete the background check on Judge Kavanaugh, which I think is necessary and reasonable and appropriate. Here is what was inscribed in the 1930s on this government building in our State capital: "Open to every inspection; secure from every suspicion." I think those few words encapsulate what we are talking about here.

I would hope that anyone—including Judge Kavanaugh but anyone who supports his nomination and confirmation to the Supreme Court—would want to have these allegations fully reviewed. I know the Senate Judiciary Committee has staff on both sides who do investigations. That is appropriate as well, but I think we have reached a point where there is such a divide here that it is hard to be confident about the fact that staffs on both sides could do a thorough investigation and cooperate to such a degree that it would be the equivalent of an FBI background check.

I think it is important that there be an independent investigation or, as I said before, and I will say it again, the completion of a background check—not a new investigation but really an update of the existing background check. I would think that anyone would want

that to be completed either prior to or even during the testimony tomorrow—it may provide a foundation for additional testimony by additional witnesses—to make sure we have reviewed every part of these allegations. I think that is fair to the judge. It is also fair to the confirmation process and, of course, fair to those who are making very troubling allegations.

If the Senate Judiciary Committee, in its review of his nomination, would be open to an investigation, I think that would reduce the likelihood, as the saying goes, that there would be suspicion. If that happened, I think the Senate Judiciary Committee and the Senate itself would be secure from every suspicion because there was a background check completed and a full investigation.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, moments ago, another serious allegation of sexual misconduct against Judge Kavanaugh was made public in a sworn affidavit. There are now multiple, credible, serious, and corroborated allegations against Judge Kavanaugh made under the penalty of perjury.

The new affidavit by Mrs. Swetnick calls out for a thorough, impartial, detailed investigation done by our FBI professionals, as do the allegations made by other women. Yet, currently, there is only a single hearing—tomorrow, with no witnesses other than Dr. Ford and Judge Kavanaugh—before a scheduled committee vote and a potential final Senate floor vote soon thereafter. That is not right. There is no need for such a rush. These women deserve to be heard in a fair way, and their claims must be properly investigated. Republicans need to immediately suspend the proceedings related to Judge Kavanaugh's nomination, and the President must order the FBI to reopen the background check investigation.

I strongly believe Judge Kavanaugh should withdraw from consideration, and the President should withdraw his nomination if Kavanaugh will not do it voluntarily. If he will not, at the very least, the hearing and vote should be postponed while the FBI investigates all of these serious and very troubling allegations.

If our Republican colleagues rush to proceed without an investigation, it would be a travesty for the honor of the Supreme Court and the honor of our country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). The Senator from Nevada.

LAS VEGAS MASS SHOOTING

Mr. HELLER. Madam President, while it has been nearly a year since a madman's actions devastated Las Vegas, the shock and pain related to October 1 still remains today.

Fifty-eight innocent people lost their lives. Over 800 people were injured, and many of them continue to face a long road to physical and emotional recovery. Know that you are not alone on that road—we support you and we are praying for you.

Our community is still grieving, and it will never be the same, but hatred and fear will not win that night. That is because even though one man's horrific actions exposed humanity at its worst, what followed were countless stories of true heroism and humanity at its very best.

Las Vegas showed the world what it meant to be Vegas Strong, and I had the honor of experiencing it firsthand in the eyes and voices of those who survived and those who were eager to help others. On that tragic night, so many ordinary Nevadans made the choice to be extraordinary. Let me give you a couple examples.

They stayed on the field to help the wounded as shots continued to rain down. They took their shirts off their backs, used their belts as tourniquets, applied pressure to help stop a stranger from bleeding to death. Some made stretchers on the spot using the festival barriers. Some used their trucks and vehicles to transport the wounded to the hospital. For example, Taylor Winston, a marine and Iraq war veteran, managed to escape the gunfire. He helped several people over the fence when they took cover. Then he found an abandoned vehicle, turned it into a makeshift ambulance. After rushing multiple people to the hospital, he turned around and went back. He ultimately drove around 30 injured people to the hospital.

That night, police officers also covered concertgoers, shielded them from gunfire, and directed them to safety. Firefighters, paramedics, ambulance drivers, who had never encountered anything as horrific as that carnage of October 1, plunged into danger to save lives without hesitation, even though they were defenseless, because that is what they do.

That week I had the privilege of meeting a Las Vegas police officer, Sergeant Jonathan Riddle. He was stationed a block from the shooting scene doing traffic control. After shots were fired from Mandalay Bay, he took off sprinting toward the hotel, even though everyone else was running away from it.

Dozens of Metro police officers, including Officer Tyler Peterson, who was on his second day of the job, did the exact same thing. They rushed toward the firestorm to help in any way they could and of course to save lives.

When I visited the local hospitals, I was struck by the stories doctors and nurses shared about concertgoers who

responded bravely and admirably; stories about people who reacted to cowardly violence, stood in the face of danger to protect a neighbor, a friend, a family member, or someone they had never met.

A doctor at UMC put it best when he said, the patients showed exemplary courage. He told me he spoke to all the patients in the trauma room. Some of them were strangers who accompanied the person who sustained injuries while shielding them from bullets. He told me many of the patients in the emergency room that night said to the doctors: That person is more seriously injured than I am. Take care of them first. Come back to me later.

When I visited UMC, I had the opportunity to meet with one of the respiratory therapists who attended the concert. She showed me her phone, which had been shattered by a bullet that night. Plastic had torn through her hand, and it was embedded in her skin. What did she do? She pulled the shards out of her hand, bandaged it herself, rushed to the hospital to try to help people who she said needed more help than she did.

I am so grateful for the staff at our hospitals whose skill, whose composure and dedication saved one life after another. I am also grateful for the work of our law enforcement and our first responders on the scene. Each unit took an all-hands-on-deck approach, and everyone functioned as one team.

Instead of being frozen by the after-shock of crippling grief, Nevada mobilized and true leaders emerged. My friend Sheriff Joe Lombardo, who heads the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, is one of them, but many of the heroes who emerged in the wake of this tragedy didn't have a badge. Instead, they were teachers, waiters, security guards, and construction workers who assumed the responsibility to protect others.

Take the story of Jack Beaton, a man whose final act on Earth was draping himself over his wife to protect her from deadly bullets or John, a cab driver, who accelerated toward the screams and chaos and drove nearly a dozen people to safety.

Everyone banded together. Local organizations and businesses throughout the State and country stepped up to help. Las Vegas Convention Center's South Hall was dedicated to family reunification and support services. Airlines answered the call to provide free flights to families of victims. Hotels and casinos across Las Vegas offered free rooms. Lines of people eager to give blood twisted around Las Vegas. Some even waited in line more than 7 hours just because they wanted to help in any way they could. Just a few hours after the injured concertgoers flooded the hospitals in Las Vegas, the Red Cross encouraged volunteer blood donations. In a statement, the Red Cross said, "Last night, tragedy illustrates that it's the blood already on the shelves that helps during an emergency."

My wife Lynne and I joined the masses of Nevadans who donated blood in Las Vegas last October, and on Monday, this October 1, on this day each year going forward, we will donate blood in recognition of this anniversary. Members of my staff who want to give blood have committed to doing the same.

While it may be just a small gesture, it is an important one because when the city of Las Vegas needed help, patients needed blood, the Red Cross was able to step in because the inventory was there.

When I returned to Washington, DC, from Las Vegas last October, I immediately began pursuing every available option to provide relief for victims and their families, as well as assistance for local law enforcement and emergency responders. From pressing the Attorney General to make funding available for victims and their families and securing funding to cover Nevada's law enforcement overtime costs relating to the response to the shooting, to leading a bipartisan resolution recognizing the innocent lives which were lost, working with Senator CORTEZ MASTO to ask health insurers and our airlines to do whatever they could to help victims, I worked with this Congress and this White House to deliver resources to Nevada to try to help in any way we could.

To help Las Vegas prevent future attacks, I also spoke with the President on Air Force One on our way out of Nevada last October about the critical role of Federal funding to protect a city that welcomes over 40 million people annually.

As a direct result, the criteria used to determine funding that is allocated to high-threat urban areas for terrorism was updated, and this year Las Vegas received nearly double the amount of Federal funding compared to last year. I will never stop working to see that Nevada has the resources it needs to keep our communities safe.

As President Donald Trump said, this attack was an act of pure evil, and unity cannot be shattered by evil. He also said the bonds between the people of the United States cannot be broken by violence, and I agree with him. We are all still in this together, and together we will continue moving down the long road of recovery by honoring the memory of those lost and by holding on to the sense of compassion and community that emerged.

I, like many others, could not only feel the strong sense of family, faith, and strength in the wake of October 1, I saw it firsthand. The immeasurable pain, the suffering and devastation inflicted by one man elicited a profound, innate, and immediate human response from a city of people who stood side by side during its darkest hour to protect a friend or a stranger they had never met.

Ronald Reagan once said: "Those who say that we are in a time when there are no heroes, they just don't know where to look."

On October 1 and in the days that followed, the world witnessed a Las Vegas that they may have not known—a place that has been further defined by the heroes among us, the ones who sprang into action that night. That was truly the identity of Las Vegas. Las Vegas is resilient, and together we will continue to be Vegas Strong.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mr. FLAKE. Madam President, I rise today to say a few words about the two human beings who will be providing extraordinarily important testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee tomorrow, Dr. Christine Blasey Ford and Judge Brett Kavanaugh, who will testify in that order.

Two human beings—it feels a bit odd in this political setting to specify their humanity, but we need to. I admit it feels strange to have to do that, but we in this political culture, in this city, and in this building, even in this Chamber, seem to sometimes forget that before this woman and this man are anything else, they are human beings.

We sometimes seem intent on stripping people of their humanity so that we might more easily denigrate or defame them or put them through the grinder that our politics requires. We seem sometimes even to enjoy it.

For the past 2 weeks we certainly have seen that happen to both of these human beings, for whatever reason—because we think that we are right and they are wrong, because we think our ideological struggle is more important than their humanity, because we are so practiced in dehumanizing people that we have also dehumanized ourselves.

Whatever else they are or have become to us, whatever grotesque caricature we have made of them or ourselves, before we are Democrats or Republicans and before we are even Americans, we are human beings. As President Kennedy said:

We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future. And we are all mortal.

These witnesses who will testify in a very important hearing tomorrow, these unwitting combatants in an undeclared war—these people are not props for us to make our political points, nor are they to be "demolished like Anita Hill" as was said on conservative media the other night, nor is one of them a "proven sex criminal" as has been circulating on the left side of the internet. These are human beings with families and children—people who love them and people whom they love and live for—and each is suffering through a very ugly process that we have created.

I will not review the unseemly process that brought us to this point because that is for another time, and, in any case, it didn't start with this particular nomination. But here we are.

There was an earlier case, 27 years ago, from which you might have thought we would have learned something, but the past couple of weeks