

NOT VOTING—3

Heitkamp Nelson Rubio

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 50, the nays are 47. The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Eric S. Dreiband, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

CALLING FOR THE RELEASE OF PASTOR ANDREW BRUNSON

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I am here for what I hope will be the last time to talk about a subject I have come to the floor and discussed virtually every week we have been here since I went and visited a man who has been in a Turkish prison since October 7, 2016.

His name is Andrew Brunson. He is a Presbyterian minister from North Carolina who, in 2016, under emergency orders in Turkey, President Erdogan ended up ordering the arrest of a number of people, many of whom I think were probably involved in the illegal coup attempt.

To the extent that evidence demonstrates they were, they should be held accountable for their actions, but, unfortunately, thousands of people—journalists, people of faith, and a number of other people who were in the wrong place at the wrong time, like a NASA scientist who already spent 2½ years in prison—were also arrested. They were also put in prison.

In the case of Pastor Brunson, he spent almost 17 months in a Turkish prison, in a cell designed for 8 people that had 21 people in it. None of the others were even English-speaking. Then, about 17 months into it, he had an indictment against him. It was about a 70-page document. It is a document I have read. Quite honestly, I don't think a first-year law student or a magistrate anywhere would consider the allegations in this indictment as worthy of any prosecution—certainly not enough to keep somebody in our U.S. justice system in prison overnight, let alone now 734 days.

The 2-year anniversary was just on Sunday. I called Pastor Brunson Sunday morning to speak with him, to see how he is doing and how his wife Noreen is doing. Noreen has been in the country the whole time because she is afraid that if she leaves the country, they will not let her come back.

After the last hearing, the Turkish officials allowed Pastor Brunson to be placed under house arrest. He can't leave his house. He has an electric monitor, but the fact is, he is still incarcerated. He is still worried about the very real possibility that he could be convicted for up to 35 years in prison.

The reason I hope this is the last speech I have to give is, tomorrow is

what many of us believe may be the last time that he is in a courtroom. I hope President Erdogan and their justice system find justice for Pastor Brunson. What that justice looks like to me, regardless of whatever conclusion the Turkish courts draw—innocence or guilt—is that they simply complete the judicial process in Turkey and return Pastor Brunson and his wife Noreen back to the United States, most likely back to Western North Carolina.

I visited Pastor Brunson in a Turkish prison about 6 months ago, after I heard he was concerned that once the indictment was issued against him, the American people would read that indictment and just forget about him. It was important for me to go to Turkey, to go to that Turkish prison just outside of Izmir, Turkey—one of the major cities in Turkey—and look him eye to eye and say: I will never forget you.

Since that meeting, and after that meeting in prison, we had some 70 Members of the U.S. Senate from both sides of the aisle sign on to a letter to send a very clear message to Pastor Brunson that we are not going to forget him and also a very clear message to Turkey that there will be a consequence if we have a miscarriage of justice in this case.

I went back to the Turkish courtroom almost 2 months after I met him in prison, and I saw firsthand how the Turkish justice system works. It is not like ours, which is largely devoid of any political influence or what I view as completely devoid of political influence. The President can't call a judge and tell them to put their thumb on the scale of justice here in the United States, but sometimes it looks that way in Turkey.

I am asking President Erdogan, the Turkish judiciary, the Foreign Ministers, and the others I have spoken with over the past several months: Please, let's have justice for Pastor Brunson. Regardless of what the outcome is tomorrow in the courts, get him home. I hope that happens tomorrow or early next week.

If, on the other hand, his hearing is continued again or he is found guilty and is likely to be sentenced to 35 years, I will have to take a different tack—a tack very similar to what we took in putting a provision in the National Defense Authorization Act, really questioning our long-term relationship with Turkey in terms of sharing technology with the Joint Strike Fighter. When we went through that process, we identified a number of other measures where I believe we can get strong support in the House and Senate that would take our relationship with Turkey in the wrong direction.

I want Turkey to be a strong NATO ally. I want Turkey to be a strong trading partner. I want the Turkish people to have a vibrant economy, but at the end of the day, I will have to be motivated to convince the Members of Con-

gress and the President, who has been very helpful to this point, and Secretary of State Pompeo that absent a just outcome for Pastor Brunson, we will have to take a look at how we can continue to fight for justice. I sincerely hope I will never have to go down that path.

Over the next 24 hours, Pastor Brunson is scheduled to be in a courtroom—within about the next 16 hours. I hope the American people will keep him in their prayers. I hope the Turkish people and the Turkish leadership will do the right thing—and the right thing is having Pastor Brunson and Noreen come home.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all postcloture time on the Dreiband nomination expire at 2 p.m. today and that the Senate vote on confirmation of the Dreiband nomination with no intervening action or debate; further, that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

GUARDIANS OF DEMOCRACY

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, there are no more consequential words spoken than those spoken by the President of the United States.

The words of a President reverberate around the world like no other world leader's, and as attentive as Americans are to what our President says, the rest of the world is probably paying even closer attention, as it is often their fate that hangs in the balance when our President speaks.

Americans can ignore certain utterances from the President. The rest of the world often has no such luxury.

Another audience for Presidential utterances is the despot, the strongman, the authoritarian, and the dictator. From this President, that horrible focus group has received a great deal of sustenance.

In fact, the oppressors of the world have taken to parroting some of their favorite lines from the White House. Anything critical of their regimes has become "fake news," and the press is the "enemy of the people," just to name two of our President's greatest hits.

As I mentioned in this Chamber in January of this year, a State official in Myanmar recently said:

There is no such thing as Rohingya. It is fake news.

He was, of course, referring to the persecuted ethnic group.

In February of last year, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad brushed off an Amnesty International report that some 13,000 people had been murdered in his military prisons by saying:

You can forge anything these days. We are living in a fake news era.

In the Philippines, President Rodrigo Duterte has complained of being “demonized” by “fake news.” Last year, according to a news report, with our President “laughing by his side,” Duterte called reporters “spies.”

In July 2017, Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro complained to the Russian propaganda outlet that the world media had “spread lots of false versions, lots of lies” about his country, adding: “This is what we call ‘fake news’ today, isn’t it?” And on and on. This feedback loop is appalling.

We are in an era where the authoritarian impulse is reasserting itself to challenge free people and free societies everywhere. We cannot give convenient language to authoritarians, language that is used against their own people.

Now, with the apparent brutal murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, some of the real enemies of the people and enemies of freedom seem to have taken license to eliminate a man their regime viewed as a threat.

We need to know exactly what happened in that Saudi consulate in Turkey earlier this month. Put bluntly, we cannot do business with the Saudi Government if they directed or were complicit in the murder of Jamal Khashoggi. We in this body had best be very careful about who the enemies of the people are and who they are not.

The free press is the guardian of democracy and the enemy of tyrants, and the man or woman who speaks from behind the Presidential Seal needs to remind the country and the world of this truism again and again, as long as the world will listen.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

RECOGNIZING ARKANSAS BLACK HALL OF FAME
INDUCTEES

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the Arkansas Black Hall of Fame Class of 2019 inductees and celebrate their contributions to our State, country, and literally the world.

Founded in 1992 by Charles Stewart and Patricia Goodwin to recognize the gifts of African Americans with Arkansas roots, the first induction ceremony in 1993 honored six individuals, including acclaimed poet, author, and activist Maya Angelou and civil rights advocate and Little Rock Nine mentor Daisy Bates.

We are probably all familiar with Arkansas’ role in the movement for public integration. The African-American students who were threatened and intimidated by fellow classmates and community members as they tried to enter Little Rock Central High School quickly became icons of the civil rights movement because of their courage in the face of overwhelming adversity.

These nine students, known as the Little Rock Nine, were inducted into the Arkansas Black Hall of Fame in 2007. They, along with other individ-

uals who are members of the Arkansas Black Hall of Fame, represent diverse areas of advocacy, interest, and expertise. More than 150 people are part of this select group because of their contributions to American culture and Arkansas history.

This year, six individuals will join this distinguished group when they are inducted on Saturday, October 27, 2018. I want to take a moment to recognize the inductees and their accomplishments.

Kevin Cole is a renowned mixed-media visual artist from Pine Bluff, AR. He graduated from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff with a degree in art education and continued his education, earning advanced degrees from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Northern Illinois University.

His artwork often reflects the history of racial violence and social issues. When he was 18 years old, after Cole expressed his reluctance to vote, his grandfather told him the story of African Americans who were lynched by their neckties on their way to vote. That knowledge has inspired his artwork. He is well known for his abstract “necktie” pieces that reflect on the painful past while also, very importantly, looking toward a hopeful future.

Cole is an award-winning artist whose work has been displayed in galleries literally all over the world, including the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Brent Jennings is a native of Little Rock. He is an accomplished actor and educator. In the sixth grade, he was encouraged by a teacher who was directing his school’s annual vaudeville-style review to become an actor.

He took acting classes at the Arkansas Art Center, where he was the first African-American actor to land the lead role in a children’s theater production. He pursued an acting career that took him to New York and Boston before moving to Los Angeles.

While a student at Emerson College, he was recognized for his acting and directing, earning the Carol Burnett Award and the New England Theater Award.

He has acted alongside Academy Award-winning actors and those who have claimed the spotlight of Hollywood. You may have seen him most recently in AMC’s “Lodge 49.” In addition, he shared his passion for acting as an adjunct faculty member at the American Academy of Dramatics.

LTG Aundre Piggee is a native of Stamps, AR. He graduated from the University of Arkansas Pine Bluff. As a student, he served in ROTC and chose to pursue a career in the military. He says he mentors his soldiers as his UAPB instructors mentored him.

He has proudly served in uniform for 37 years. His military career has taken him literally all over the world, where he has commanded thousands of sol-

diers, as well as worked to equip missions in Syria and Afghanistan.

Today he serves at the Pentagon as the Deputy Chief of Staff in the U.S. Army, overseeing logistics. He is an individual I have really enjoyed getting to know and working with, and he is certainly somebody we can be very, very proud of.

Darrell Walker’s name is synonymous with Arkansas basketball. He played at the University of Arkansas—Fort Smith before transferring to play for the Razorbacks for three seasons. He helped the team reach the Sweet 16 in 1981 and 1983. He ranks 18th all-time on the Razorback’s scoring list.

Following a successful collegiate career, he was drafted 12th overall by the New York Knicks and was named to the 1984 NBA All-Rookie Team. He played in the NBA for 10 years, including winning a championship with the Chicago Bulls in 1993.

Walker has continued his involvement in basketball as a coach for college teams and in the NBA. Earlier this year, he became head coach of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock men’s basketball team.

Mary Louise Williams is an education advocate and political activist. She spent 42 years as an educator, 30 of those years as an administrator and music teacher in the Little Rock School District. She has spent her life actively involved in the community as a volunteer on numerous boards and commissions and as an elected official, sometimes as the only woman or only African American.

She was the first African-American chairperson of the Pulaski County Election Commission, the first African-American chairperson of the Pulaski County Democratic Committee, and the first African-American woman from Arkansas to serve on the National Association of County Officials Board.

She has mentored numerous Arkansans through her civic involvement and earned many awards for her commitment to the community. She was recently recognized by the Women’s Foundation of Arkansas as the recipient of the 2018 Brownie Ledbetter Civic Engagement Award for her service and her activism. At 90 years of age, she continues to be active in the community.

Florence Price will be posthumously inducted into the Arkansas Black Hall of Fame. She grew up in Little Rock, where she learned to love music at a young age. Her mother taught her piano, and she became an accomplished musician as a youth. By the time she graduated high school, Price was a published composer. She pursued her passion for music as a student at the New England Conservatory of Music.

In 1932, she won the Wanamaker Prize for her “Symphony in E minor.” The next year, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra performed that piece, making Price the first African-American woman to have a composition played by a major orchestra.