

there is common ground among people who have different views on the Second Amendment.

In this session of Congress that we are wrapping, we overwhelmingly enacted legislation to improve NICS, the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, which is used to prevent the sale of firearms to people who should not have firearms. Now think about that. We all agree firearms should not be sold to criminals and the dangerously mentally ill. I have never heard any colleague in this body suggest that firearms should be sold to violent criminals or dangerously mentally ill people. No. We all agree, as does our entire society, that these are people who shouldn't have firearms. So we have a NICS system that is designed, when it works well, to identify people who should not be able to have firearms because they are convicted criminals or dangerously mentally ill, or both, and we in this body recently passed legislation to improve the effectiveness of that NICS system.

Since we all accept the premise of the NICS system, and we have in fact enacted legislation to improve the effectiveness of the NICS system, shouldn't we also agree to close the remaining loopholes in the background check in this NICS system?

One measure that I think ought to be a consensus measure, and I know has bipartisan support, is that using the NICS system, we should cover all commercial sales of firearms with a background check. This is just a common-sense measure that is entirely consistent and compatible with the Second Amendment.

The Constitution guarantees the rights of law-abiding people to own firearms, but there is no such right for violent criminals and those who are dangerously mentally ill. I am not the only one who believes that. None other than the very pro-Second Amendment Justice Antonin Scalia wrote that it is completely compatible with the Second Amendment to have regulations like a background check.

Senator JOE MANCHIN and I have introduced bipartisan legislation that would address this loophole, that would expand background checks. It is pretty simple. It simply says that all commercial sales of firearms, including those sales at gun shows and over the internet, need to be subject to criminal and mental background checks. If you pass the background check, you get to buy your gun, but if you fail the background check, then you are exactly the kind of person we have all agreed shouldn't be able to get a gun. This is just common sense. By the way, he and I built into this legislation a number of provisions to allow law-abiding gun owners to more fully exercise their Second Amendment rights.

So I hope my colleagues will join me in working to advance this common-sense, bipartisan measure to keep our communities a little bit safer. I have never suggested that this would end

mass shootings in America—that would be absurd—but it might make it a little more difficult for someone who doesn't belong owning a firearm to obtain one.

I know in our country many people feel a deep sense of division. We saw it after the shooting at the Tree of Life. We see it sometimes in the debates here, including over gun safety, but this isn't the first time or even the worst time we have been divided.

Interestingly, Pittsburgh's Tree of Life Synagogue was founded in 1864 during the Civil War. When I was in Pittsburgh following the tragedy, the day after the attack, I attended a beautiful memorial service just a few miles from the Tree of Life Synagogue. The service was at the Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Hall. At that ceremony, Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, Jews, people from every walk of life were represented. People from the Greater Pittsburgh area united to support their Jewish neighbors.

It was fitting to gather at the Soldiers & Sailors Memorial. This memorial was founded by veterans of the Civil War in Allegheny County to honor the sacrifice and valor of those who were willing to die to save our country during that war. The very first soldier from Allegheny County to die in the Civil War was a married salesman in his early thirties from Pittsburgh. He died at the Battle of Williamsburg on May 5, 1862. His name was Jacob Brunn. He was Jewish. That didn't matter to Pittsburgh. The entire city turned out for his funeral, the entire city. As one historian put it, "the city put religious and political differences aside to honor the man who was first to fall."

I hope the Senate can also put aside some of our political differences and do something sensible. It is our duty, and it would be a fitting act of remembrance for victims of mass shootings—at the Tree of Life, Thousand Oaks, Sandy Hook, and all the others whose deaths from gun violence have scarred our country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2644

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 393, S. 2644. I further ask that the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed, and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The majority leader.

Mr. McCONNELL. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

SPECIAL COUNSEL INDEPENDENCE AND INTEGRITY ACT

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I rise to speak in defense of Special Counsel

Robert Mueller and to defend the vital role he has played since May of last year in yet another act of service to his country in what has been a lifetime of distinguished service.

For his trouble, Mr. Mueller has been accused repeatedly and without basis in fact of conducting a "witch hunt" in the course of his current investigation by none other than the President of the United States. So I would like to take this opportunity to say a few words about what Special Counsel Mueller and his team have been investigating and why, as the point of this vital investigation seems to have been purposely confused and maligned by the White House in a rather alarming way.

My colleague from Delaware, Senator COONS, and I have made the unanimous consent request to bring this to the floor, but it has been objected to already.

This bill is designed to do one thing: protect the integrity of the special counsel's investigation and spare it of any influence or interference from the executive branch, including from those who may themselves be subjects of the investigation.

The findings of Mr. Mueller's investigation are of utmost importance to the security of this country and to the well-being of our democratic institutions as well. In America, as we all know, no one is above the law. Our doctrine of separation of powers and the independence of the judicial system is what sets us apart from lawless countries, and Presidents do not get to determine who gets investigated and who and what does not.

For the record and for history, this special counsel was appointed to thoroughly investigate the attacks on our electoral system by elements of the Russian Government during the lead up to our 2016 general election. How such an investigation can be a cause of controversy is beyond me. Surely, we all recognize it is essential to understand this new form of foreign aggression so that we might better defend America against such attacks in the future; right?

One would think there would be unanimous national resolve to get to the bottom of such aggression from an enemy or foreign power, especially a foreign power with whom we spent much of the second half of the 20th century locked in a global ideological struggle, especially when in their renewed aggression toward us, they have targeted the institution we have and they don't—free and fair elections.

Vladimir Putin knows he could not defeat us on the battlefield, and he knows the ideas at the center of his former empire were soulless and bankrupt. He wants to rob us of what makes the United States superior to his autocracy. His goal is to turn us against ourselves and, in doing so, to try to destroy our democracy.

This is a matter of grave national importance. This is not a moment for our national leadership to be weak or

irresolute or compromised in any way. Some of us in Washington have seemed strangely incurious about just what the Russian malefactors did to America in 2016 at the direction of Vladimir Putin.

Our President has been so incurious that at times over the past 2 years he has been eager to accept Putin's denials at face value. In fact, our executive branch has generally been in such a state of denial about the attacks on our democracy that the White House has not been aggressive at all in defending against future attacks.

I defy any of us to name a threat so grave to which the government of the United States—that we, all of us, including this Senate—has responded so lackadaisically. Why is that? With the firing of the Attorney General and, in my view, the improper installation of an Acting Attorney General who has not been subject to confirmation by this body, the President now has this investigation in his sights, and we all know it.

My purpose here is not to divine the President's motives in his seeming determination to sow doubt about and curtail Mr. Mueller's investigation. If, as the President says, there was no involvement by anyone in his campaign with the Russian malefactors, then this investigation—properly conducted—will discover and document that.

Mr. Mueller has already brought dozens of indictments against Russian nationalists. It is in the national security interest of the United States to fully understand what they did to us in 2016. If the President doesn't understand this, we must. If he doesn't prioritize that, we will.

We—all of us—talk much in this place about the defense of “all that we hold dear.” Those are the words we speak—“all that we hold dear.” What do we actually mean when we say those words? Speaking personally, I can't think of values held more dear than the independence of our judicial system and an electoral system free of malign influence, either foreign or domestic. When I think of the things we must hold dear, those things are right at the top of the list. It is our sworn oath to keep it that way.

On one further note on this unanimous consent request that has just failed today, Senator COONS and I are prepared to make it again and again until there is a vote on this vital bipartisan legislation on the Senate floor. I have informed the majority leader that I will not vote to advance any of the 21 judicial nominees pending in the Judiciary Committee or vote to confirm the 32 judges awaiting confirmation on the Senate floor until S. 2644 is brought to the full Senate for a vote.

Mr. President, I yield to the Senator from Delaware.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, first, I want to thank my colleague and my

friend, Mr. FLAKE, the Senator from Arizona, for joining me today in calling for action on a balanced bipartisan bill to uphold the rule of law, to avoid a constitutional crisis, and to secure the ongoing position of Special Counsel Robert Mueller, as he moves to complete his investigation.

This is a critical moment. Just a week ago today, President Trump forced the resignation of his Attorney General, Jeff Sessions, and effectively stripped Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein of his authority to supervise the ongoing investigation by Robert Mueller—an investigation which, I will remind you, just the same day he forced Attorney General Sessions' resignation, the President attacked publicly as a hoax and a witch hunt.

Let's take a step back to remember the bigger picture here. Robert Mueller—a career Federal law enforcement leader, a decorated combat veteran, a lifelong Republican—is leading an investigation into a foreign adversary's attack on our last election.

This isn't about relitigating that election. It isn't about partisan politics. It is about protecting our democracy. As my colleague Senator FLAKE said, it is about protecting what defines us as a democracy. Yet our President is now in a position easily to interfere with or even end the Mueller investigation. Compounding that threat is the person who has been appointed as the Acting Attorney General, Matthew Whitaker.

I have separate concerns about Mr. Whitaker's novel legal theories well outside the mainstream, about whether his experience makes him an appropriate person to be Acting Attorney General, whether his appointment is consistent with the Constitution and Federal law, but I will leave those concerns for another day. At the moment, I think Mr. Whitaker's comments about the Mueller investigation made a year ago make him a clear and present danger to the independence of the special counsel.

In an editorial last year, Mr. Whitaker argued that Mueller is “dangerously close to crossing” a redline, following reports saying he was looking into the President's finances. He said that without any examination of the facts or evidence. He said that if the investigation goes too far, then—and he openly pondered ways—an Attorney General could reduce special counsel Mueller's budget “so low that his investigation grinds almost to a halt.”

For these reasons and others, I think Mr. Whitaker should recuse himself from overseeing the Mueller investigation, and we cannot wait for that action. We have asked our colleagues today to take a simple yet critical step to protect the special counsel and future special counsels in future administrations by supporting the bipartisan Special Counsel Independence and Integrity Act. This is a bill crafted by Senator GRAHAM, Senator BOOKER, my-

self, Senator TILLIS—a bipartisan bill that, with the support of Senator FLAKE and the Chairman, Senator GRASSLEY, passed the Judiciary Committee in April by a strong bipartisan margin of 14 to 7. We had a hearing. We had a markup. We had a vote. It is ready for committee action.

While I appreciate repeated assurances by the majority leader and many other Senators of the other party that it is not needed because they are confident the President will take no inappropriate action to interfere with the ongoing investigation, why would we not take this simple preventive measure? Given the President's repeated actions, given his repeated statements about the Mueller investigation, why pose this risk when a simple vote on the floor of the Senate could move this toward enactment?

Let me be clear about what the bill does. It says that if the special counsel is removed, counsel has the opportunity to challenge the removal in court. A panel of three Federal judges would have 2 weeks to hear and determine whether the removal was based on good cause. If the panel doesn't find good cause, the counsel would be reinstated. It preserves staffing, documents, and materials of the investigation while that matter is pending for that brief period.

The bottom line is this. The special counsel legislation we are urging today protects the integrity of this special counsel and future special counsels, something that Members of this body of both parties have repeatedly and publicly said we value. It strengthens the rule of law. It strengthens the principle that no one is above the law, and it ensures that we are not back on this floor trying to unravel an emerging constitutional crisis should the President precipitously act or should Matthew Whitaker precipitously act to impede Special Counsel Mueller's ongoing investigation.

Let me close today by asking my colleagues who are listening to consider the fundamental principles that form the basis of our democracy—free and fair elections, respect for the rule of law, strong independent institutions that deliver justice impartially and transparently.

It is because of these principles, enshrined in our founding documents, that the United States has grown from a fledgling experiment—at that time on the very fringes of world civilization—to a strong, vibrant, and inclusive nation that is a beacon for the world and the most sustained and greatest democracy in the history of the world.

We cannot take these principles and we cannot take the institutions of our democracy for granted. They don't protect themselves. Every now and then, when founding principles are threatened, we have to demand elected officials put aside disagreements and come together to defend them. This is one such moment.

I am grateful to my colleague from Arizona for his statement and his leadership today. I am confident that if given the opportunity to come for a vote, this bill would get at least 60 votes, having spoken to colleagues on both sides of the aisle yesterday and today. I am puzzled as to why there are leaders in this body who continue to have great confidence given the President's statements and actions.

I think the time for action has long since passed. We should have taken that action today. I will continue to work tirelessly with my colleague from Arizona until we secure passage of this bill.

With that, I yield the floor to my colleague and cosponsor, the Senator from New Jersey.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, first of all, I want to give gratitude to both of the Senators who spoke before me, my friend Senator COONS and my friend Senator JEFF FLAKE. I want to especially thank JEFF FLAKE for his willingness not just to lead with words but to make a commitment on the Senate floor that he will not be voting on judicial appointments until this is brought to a vote.

Senator FLAKE and Senator COONS have said pretty much all of what I was going to say. Perhaps just very succinctly and very candidly, I want to reiterate this moment we are in and the gravity of the moment we are in. This bill is not a partisan piece of legislation. It comes from a bipartisan effort. It started many months ago, when Senator GRAHAM and I started talking and Senator TILLIS and Senator COONS started talking many months ago, not just for this moment in history but also understanding that we have a flaw in our system that does not have an appropriate check and balance on a Presidential power that can put them in a position where they are not subject to the laws of our land.

This Special Counsel and Independence Integrity Act came from a bipartisan effort to try to make sure that we have appropriate checks and balances to prevent a constitutional crisis. It is actually a forward-thinking bill, understanding that we should not be reactive in the cause of our democracy but proactive in preventing and securing the great Nation and our laws and our rules that we all cherish.

We see a bipartisan bill worked on, crafted, compromised, brought to committee, be voted out of committee, and languish now without a vote, and I agree with Senator COONS that it would get more than 60 votes and would provide a reasonable check and balance. This is a bill that is important for history, but the urgency of this moment Senator COONS has already gone over.

We now have the firing of Jeff Sessions, and Jeff Sessions was said to be fired by a President who literally said: "I would not have hired you if I thought you were going to recuse your-

self." He was replaced with a person—and Senator COONS has read the quotes—who talked about this investigation and what he would like to do. He called it a witch hunt, and he compromised himself now in the position he is in. The idea that the integrity of this investigation and the idea that the urgency of this investigation will continue under his leadership are in question. That is why this bill is necessary.

More than that, we are a nation that has been, is, and will be under attack. All of our intelligence agencies have a consensus on the conclusion that our democracy is under attack.

We need to understand what happened, what is happening, how to prevent it from happening again, and hold those people accountable.

This investigation has led to numerous guilty pleas. This investigation has led to numerous indictments, and it should be able to run its course without interference.

So I will conclude by saying that there is urgency in our country to uphold an ideal and a principle that no one, not a Congress person, not a Senator, not a mayor, not a Governor, not the President of the United States—not one in this country is above the law.

There is ample evidence of this body taking reasonable, measured, bipartisan actions to make sure we have the balanced government that was designed and intended by our Founders. This is a reasonable, modest check and balance on Presidential power to ensure that no one, including the President of the United States, is above the law.

I am deeply grateful for Senator COONS, Senator TILLIS, Senator GRAHAM, and especially for the leadership shown right now by Senator FLAKE in this important moment to avoid a constitutional crisis.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I want to thank the Senator from Delaware, Mr. COONS, and the Senator from New Jersey, Mr. BOOKER, for doing this together with us to make sure that we have this bipartisan piece of legislation here on the Senate floor.

It is not unremarkable to have such a bipartisan piece of legislation pass out of the Judiciary Committee. We don't have very many bipartisan pieces of legislation coming out of the Senate Judiciary Committee, but this one was—by a vote of 14 to 7, including the chairman of the committee.

There is no reason it shouldn't be brought to the floor. It was passed out of the Judiciary Committee on April 26.

I should note that the Judiciary Committee has been busy sending things to the floor during the intervening time. In fact, since April 26, when this bill passed the Judiciary Committee, we have sent 49 nominations through to the floor that we have voted on and confirmed here on the

floor. Since that time, the floor actually has voted on 50. There was one that was already in the queue.

So on the floor, since this bill passed the Judiciary Committee, we have voted on 50 confirmations of the President's nominees. Many of these nominees were blue-slipped in Democratic States; some, in Republican. We have been able to move on all of them. There is no reason we shouldn't move on this vital piece of legislation to protect the special counsel.

When the leader said in April that there was no move on the special counsel, nobody was being fired, nothing to worry about here—if that was the case then, that certainly is not the case now. Since then, the Attorney General has been fired, and the oversight for this investigation, which sat with the Deputy Attorney General, has been wrested from him and turned over to someone who has not received Senate confirmation, someone who has expressed open hostility to the Mueller investigation. Does that not ring alarm bells around here? If that doesn't, what will? Why are we so sanguine about this? This would provoke a constitutional crisis. Yet, when we have the opportunity to pass legislation to protect the special counsel, which received a bipartisan vote in the Judiciary Committee, we fail to bring it up on the Senate floor. Why?

Why do we do this to protect a man, seemingly, who is so incurious about what Russia did during the 2016 elections? Why do we do that?

Do we have no more institutional pride here? Don't we more jealously guard our prerogative as Senators than to simply let this go? What will it take?

I am prepared—and I know that the Senator from Delaware is, as well—to bring this up again. We will bring it up again until we can get a vote on the Senate floor.

I hope in the next few days and in the coming weeks that the public will rise up and say that this needs to be done. A bipartisan piece of legislation that has passed the Judiciary Committee ought to be brought to the Senate floor for a vote. We are not saying that it has to pass, although we think it will; for sure it will. It has overwhelming support. We are just saying: Bring it to a vote; bring it to a vote. Until we do, the 21 nominations that are in the Judiciary Committee waiting for a vote there will not receive a vote, nor will I give my vote to the 32 nominations that are sitting here on the Senate floor.

This is important. This should be a priority. I thank the Presiding Officer, and I thank the Senator from Delaware, and I will yield to him.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I will just conclude by saying that I could not agree more with the comments of the Senator from Arizona, my friend and colleague.

There come moments when we should step up and defend the prerogatives and

the role of this body. This is one of them. I understand it may annoy, it may displease the President for there to be a speed bump put in the way of interference with the special counsel. But this isn't just about the current special counsel; this is about taking Department of Justice regulations and making them statute. This is about providing a small modicum of protection for the groundless removal of a special counsel.

This is something that, as my colleague has said, deserves prompt attention on the floor. We have a few weeks between now and the end of this Congress, time when we could be taking up and confirming nominees, time when we could be taking up and moving other pieces of legislation, but you have heard a very clear position by my colleague that we won't be moving forward nominees in the Judiciary Committee, and if just one more colleague joins him, we might well begin to prevent nominations from moving on the floor as well. To what end? Simply to get a vote on the floor. Simply to get an opportunity to be heard and for there to be a vote taken on this important piece of bipartisan legislation.

I am grateful to my colleague for his work on this and for his stand today, and I look forward to continuing to work tirelessly with him on it.

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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

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

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

#### REMEMBERING CLAIBORNE PELL

Mr. REED. Mr. President, next week will mark what would have been the 100th birthday of my predecessor, Senator Claiborne de Borda Pell, who was born on November 22, 1918. This year, appropriately enough, the date falls on Thanksgiving.

We lost Senator Pell nearly 9 years ago after a long struggle with Parkinson's disease, which robbed him of his mobility but not his spirit. He was sustained by the love of his wonderful family, especially his beloved wife, the late Nuala Pell.

A person who dedicated his life to selfless service to Rhode Island and the Nation, Senator Pell would not want a showy commemoration of his centenary. He was not one to seek the limelight. Moreover, for him, his birthday—November 22—became a somber day for remembrance and mourning the loss of his dear friend, President John F. Kennedy.

But at a time when differences seem more striking than our common cause and when there is a question of whether America's role in the world community should be guided solely by nar-

rowly defined self-interest or by our democratic ideals, it is helpful for us to recall the example and standard Senator Pell set—both his accomplishments and the civility he maintained throughout his career.

He was born into a family of great wealth and privilege, yet Claiborne Pell never exhibited a sense of entitlement. At a defining moment in the history of our country and a defining moment in his life, Claiborne Pell demonstrated that privilege and wealth was not a way to avoid the rigors of life. Rather, for him, they offered the opportunity and responsibility to meet the challenges of the times with vigor and wisdom and optimism.

As World War II approached, Claiborne Pell, with family connections, poor eyesight, and a high draft number, could have easily secured a sinecure, a safe posting to ride out the war. Instead, before Pearl Harbor, he decided on his own to enlist in the Coast Guard and eventually sailed the dangerous North Atlantic convoy runs. Significantly, Claiborne chose to enlist not as an officer but as a seaman so that he could get a chance at sea duty.

The complete lack of regard for status or pretense, which he showed in his World War II service, would continue to mark his public service and endear him to generations of Rhode Islanders. For 36 years, Claiborne Pell did not simply represent Rhode Island in the U.S. Senate; he represented the ideal of what a public servant should be.

He said that his motto or statement of purpose was to “translate ideas into action and help people.” And that is what he did. One hundred years after his birth and 58 years after his first election to the Senate, millions of Americans continued to be helped by his ideas translated into action.

He believed that government had a critical role in providing opportunity, particularly the opportunity for a good education for every American, and he knew that there were unbounded horizons for the initiative, invention, and innovation of these well-educated sons and daughters of America. Truly, they would continue and enhance the great endeavor that is America.

He authored the legislation that established the Basic Education Opportunity grant, now known as the Pell grant. Today, roughly 7.5 million students rely on Pell grants to help pay for college.

He wrote the legislation that created the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. To this day, these agencies support artistic, educational, and cultural programming in communities large and small across the Nation, fulfilling Senator Pell's commitment to strengthening and preserving our national cultural heritage for all Americans.

He led the effort to establish the Institute of Museum and Library Services, helping libraries and museums across the Nation transform their com-

munities through access to information and opportunities for lifelong learning. According to the Institute, people visited libraries over 1.3 billion times in 2015, and 55 million student groups visit museums each year.

The vision he articulated in the early 1960s for high-quality passenger rail service connecting the major population centers on the east coast into a megalopolis led to the creation of Amtrak and the Northeast Corridor. Decades later, it is interesting to see not only how much of his vision has been achieved but also how much of his vision is now reflected in ideas like Elon Musk's “hyperloop.”

Touched by the death of two members of his staff who were killed by drunk drivers, Senator Pell authored the first Federal anti-drunk driving bill in 1976—4 years before the founding of advocacy group MADD, Mothers Against Drunk Driving. Senator Pell's legislation became the model for Federal policy efforts to combat impaired driving by giving the States strong incentives to toughen their laws.

Senator Pell was also deeply committed to America's role in securing world peace. His notion of a powerful America leading the world—not standing apart from it—and his notion that our values, our system, and our commitment to human decency would prevail in the face of totalitarianism were wisdom of the ages. In his service on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, he espoused those views, seeking to remind us that our destiny would take us far beyond what simply a military operation or our economic power might because of our ideals and commitment to creating a world community.

Senator Pell's approach to legislating was unfailingly kind and civil. In his farewell speech to the Senate, he laid out his guiding rules. In his words: “First, never respond to an adversary in ad hominem terms.”

In his six campaigns for the U.S. Senate, Claiborne Pell never ran a negative ad or attacked his opponent personally. Rhode Islanders rewarded him with an average vote of more than 60 percent for each of his elections.

“Second, always let the other fellow have your way.”

For Senator Pell, winning an ally to achieve a legislative victory was more valuable than getting exclusive credit.

“Third, sometimes half a loaf can feed an army.”

He lived by those rules, but he feared that our politics and our media were pulling us in the opposite direction. That is why he used his farewell speech to urge us to stay true to a practice of politics worthy of our Democratic tradition, saying:

If I could have one wish for the future of our country in the new millennium, it would be that we not abandon the traditional norms of behavior that are the underpinning of our democratic system.

Comity and civility, transcending differences of party and ideology, have always