

views on Executive power, we have to be on alert.

When that nominee, Mr. Barr, can't adequately explain why, out of the blue—out of the blue—he sent a memo to the White House in order to criticize the special counsel investigation, absolve the President of questions about obstruction of justice, and make a case for less accountability with this President, we ought to be on alert.

When Mr. Barr writes that President Trump has “complete authority to start or stop a law enforcement proceeding,” we ought to be on alert.

Mr. Barr’s memo makes no sense unless it was an audition for this job, and that is absolutely not how any President should select an Attorney General.

When we know that, if confirmed, Mr. Barr would be in charge of the special counsel investigation and would decide what, if anything, the public gets to know about the findings on Russia’s 2016 election meddling, we ought to be on alert.

Someone who has written such an obviously flawed analysis of the investigation should not be put in charge of overseeing the investigation. That is just common sense.

People across this country sent us here to Congress not to shield the President from the law but to help restore integrity and independence to the Federal Government and to provide a check on the Executive branch, as outlined in the Constitution. And the idea that any Member of this Senate would support an Attorney General nominee who has openly and unequivocally advocated for less accountability when it comes to President Trump—that is just wrong, and the American people will not stand for it.

So to any of my colleagues who plan to support this nomination, I have a message: Seize this opportunity while you can to make it very clear to Mr. Barr and the Trump administration that you believe the American people deserve to know for sure that the findings on Russia’s 2016 election meddling will be made public in order to get them the answers they deserve and that any attempt to cover up or hinder or otherwise muddy the waters around the Mueller investigation would be a serious disservice to the people we represent and will only lead to the further erosion of trust in our institution and our ability to work on their behalf.

The President is not above the law—not in the White House, not in New York, not anywhere. So Mr. Barr may be the Attorney General this President wants—someone to shield him from serious questions about abuse of power, someone who believes the President should be able to do more or less whatever he or she wants—but Mr. Barr is certainly not, in my opinion, the Attorney General this country needs, which is someone who will stand up for the rights of everyone else.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

THE GREEN NEW DEAL

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I came here this afternoon to give my customary weekly climate speech urging that it is time to wake up here, and I was planning to speak about a legal brief that a number of scientists, led by Robert Brulle and Naomi Oreskes, filed in the Ninth Circuit detailing the long history of the oil industry knowing about climate change, doing its own research to confirm what it knows about climate change, telling the public something they knew was false, and yet taking what they knew to be true and using it in their own internal planning. But something even better than that came up, so I come here to react to the—well, for starters, the Wall Street Journal editorial calling for a vote on the Green New Deal.

Let’s go back a bit as to what the Wall Street Journal editorial page has been up to for the last, say, 20 years on climate change.

The Wall Street Journal editorial page has been a mouthpiece for the fossil fuel industry’s climate denial. The messages of the fossil fuel industry are echoed and amplified through the Wall Street Journal editorial page. All the way up until 2011, if I recall correctly, they were simply denying that this was a problem. They constantly behave like what I would call the one-eyed accountant—looking only at the costs of responding to climate change, never the costs of climate change.

On this subject, for those who may be interested, I would actually like to incorporate by reference two previous climate speeches I gave on this completely bogus effort that has been maintained by the Wall Street Journal editorial page. The first was my speech of April 19, 2016, and then I went back at them again on July 24, 2018. They have been making it up for a very long time, and sure enough, up comes this latest in which just yesterday, February 12, they said: Let’s have a vote in Congress on the Green New Deal as soon as possible. Then they went on with a lot of their usual one-eyed accountant stuff, never looking at the costs of climate change, only looking at the costs of preventing those harms, and they concluded: “Let’s not hesitate. Take the Green New Deal resolution and put it to a vote forthwith.”

Along the way, they went into some of their usual canards about renewables, saying that “solar costs remain about 20 percent higher than natural gas while offshore wind is two-thirds more expensive” without subsidies—well, unless you look at the subsidy for fossil fuel, which of course they don’t, and the subsidy for fossil fuel has been quantified by the International Monetary Fund at \$700 billion per year—\$700 billion per year in the United States—propping up the fossil fuel industry. By contrast, the little tiny tax adjustments that we get for solar and wind, which the fossil fuel industry is always pushing back against, are nothing. There is a monster of a subsidy in the

energy space, and it is the fossil fuel subsidy, but will the dear old Wall Street Journal editorial page ever admit that? Not a chance.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD at the end of my remarks.

That came out in the Wall Street Journal that morning. Then Leader McCONNELL went out here to the Ohio Clock for his midday press conference, and guess what he said:

I’ve noted with great interest the Green New Deal, and we’re going to be voting on that in the Senate. That’ll give everybody an opportunity to go on record and see how they feel about the Green New Deal.

I am in the habit of pointing out here how the string-pulling takes place and how the fossil fuel industry directs certain things and the mouthpieces say certain things and then we behave certain ways, but this may be the land speed record for a response. The Wall Street Journal says it wants a congressional vote, and that very day the vote gets announced. It is almost funny, if the topic weren’t so serious.

The whole idea that this is the Republican response to climate change is really classic. It is really classic. Since the Citizens United decision, which powered up the fossil fuel industry to have real bullying dominance in Congress—at least over the Republican Party—no Senator here today has been on any bill to meaningfully reduce carbon dioxide emissions. It is never a topic. Nobody wants to talk about it. It is like the unwelcome, embarrassing guest at the dinner party: Oh, my gosh. Climate change. No, we can’t possibly talk about that.

Never mind that NASA—which, by the way, RIP, Opportunity. The Opportunity has been driving around on the surface of Mars for 15 years, sending back information to us about that planet. NASA scientists built that thing, sent it to Mars, landed it safely on Mars, and has been driving it around for 15 years. My God, what a project that was. What a brilliant thing. So when NASA scientists say, “Oh, and by the way, climate change is serious. You ought to listen,” and we don’t, that behavior is hard to explain. When we are listening to the flacks of the fossil fuel industry and not the scientists of NASA—and, by the way, 13 or 14 Federal Agencies in the latest report that came out under the Trump administration—we are way past there being any serious factual or scientific dispute here. There are just political demands by the industry with the biggest conflict of interest ever that we can’t bring this up.

For pretty much 10 years, since Citizens United, nobody has brought up a serious piece of legislation to limit carbon dioxide emissions on the Republican side. Not one. Zero. Now, the majority leader is going to break this streak and bring up the first carbon-related bill. It is actually not a real bill. It is a resolution, but he is going to bring it up with the intention of voting

against it. I kid you not. The majority leader has announced the intention of bringing up a resolution with the intention of voting against it. Who does that and why? Who had that brainstorm and where?

We will never understand this until we understand better how the anonymous dark money stuff flows around Washington. We need to clean that up. We need to pass the DISCLOSE Act. We need to make sure people know who is behind spending, who is behind advertising. We have to do all of that, but in the meantime, you do get these amazing moments in which the Wall Street Journal says—the editorial page, by the way. I think their correspondents, their reporters, are totally legitimate, and they do terrific work. It is the editorial page that is the problem child here.

So the Wall Street Journal editorial page says we need to have a vote on the Green New Deal. It takes less than a day for the majority leader to say we are going to have a vote on the Green New Deal, and he is calling up the first piece of climate legislation they have ever called up in the majority here, and they are calling it up to vote against it.

Isn't it finally time to have a real conversation about this? Isn't it finally time for there to be a Republican proposal? It has been nearly 10 years since Citizens United. I get it. The fossil fuel industry has enormous sway, but there comes a time when you even have to tell the biggest influencers in Congress that your day is over. It is time for us to treat with the facts and to work in a bipartisan fashion and to do what the people sent us here to do, which is to legislate.

So where is the Republican proposal? Where is the Republican plan? There isn't one. Nothing. Nada. Zip. Nihil. Nitchevo. They are going to call this up. They are going to call this up for a vote. I can hardly wait for this discussion. Bring it on, please.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Wall Street Journal, Feb. 11, 2019]

VOTE ON THE GREEN NEW DEAL

(By The Editorial Board)

Every Member of Congress should step up and be counted.

Democrats rolled out their Green New Deal last week, and by all means let's have a national debate and then a vote in Congress—as soon as possible. Here in one package is what the political left really means when it says Americans need to do something urgently about climate change, so let's see who has the courage of those convictions.

Thanks to the resolution introduced last week by New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Massachusetts Sen. Ed Markey, there's already official language. While it's nonbinding, the 14 pages give a clear sense of direction and magnitude in calling for a "10-year national mobilization" to exorcise carbon from the U.S. economy.

President Obama's Clean Power Plan looks modest by comparison. The 10-year Green New Deal calls for generating 100% of power from renewables and removing greenhouse

gas emissions from manufacturing and transportation to the extent these goals are "technologically feasible." Hint: They're not.

The plan also calls for "upgrading all existing buildings in the United States and building new buildings to achieve maximal energy efficiency, water efficiency, safety, affordability, comfort and durability, including through electrification." That's all existing buildings, comrade.

Millions of jobs would have to be destroyed en route to this brave new green world, but not to worry. The resolution says the government would also guarantee "a job with a family-sustaining wage, adequate family and medical leave, paid vacations, and retirement security to all people of the United States." Good that they're starting small.

Sorry to mention unhappy reality, but renewable sources currently make up only 17% of U.S. electric-power generation despite enormous federal and state subsidies. Wind and solar energy have become more competitive over the last decade as costs have plunged. But without subsidies, solar costs remain about 20% higher than natural gas while offshore wind is two-thirds more expensive. The bigger problem is solar and wind don't provide reliable power, so backup plants that burn fossil fuels are required to run on stand-by.

Germany has been gracious enough to show what can go wrong. Despite aggressive emissions goals, Germany's carbon emissions have been flat for most of the last decade as the country had to fall back on coal to balance off-shore wind generation. Last year Germany derived 29% of its power from wind and solar, but 38% from coal.

Meantime, taxes and rising power-generation costs have made Germany's electric rates the highest in Europe, slamming small manufacturers and consumers.

"The drag on competitiveness is particularly severe for small and middle-sized firms," Eric Schweitzer, President of Germany's Chambers of Commerce, told Bloomberg News last year. German manufacturing has become less competitive due to soaring energy costs. Electric and natural gas prices in Germany are two to three times higher than in the U.S.

By contrast, the U.S. is having a modest manufacturing renaissance as shale drilling has created a cheap source of lower-carbon energy. Natural-gas prices have plunged by half over the last decade as production has increased 50%, mostly in the Marcellus and Utica formations in Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia. Carbon emissions from power generation have fallen by 30% since 2005, mostly due to the substitution of coal with natural gas.

Meantime, oil production in Texas's Permian and North Dakota's Bakken shale deposits has soared 80%. Demand for drills, pipelines and other mining equipment has also boosted U.S. growth.

The Green New Deal means that all of this carbon energy and all of these jobs would have to be purged—at least in the U.S. China would suffer no such limits on its fossil-fuel production. Conservatives have long suspected that progressives want to use climate change to justify a government takeover of the free-market economy, but we never thought they'd be this candid about it.

Yet, remarkably, the Green New Deal has been met with hosannas from liberal interest groups and in Congress. It already has 67 co-sponsors in the House and the support of 11 Democrats in the Senate including presidential candidates Kamala Harris, Cory Booker, Elizabeth Warren and Amy Klobuchar.

So let's not hesitate. Take the Green New Deal resolution and put it to a vote forth-with on the House and Senate floor.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I also ask unanimous consent that I be able to address the Senate as if in morning business.

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

PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN AND ALZHEIMER'S

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I wish to speak this afternoon in recognition of our late President, Ronald Reagan. I want to speak also about his wife Nancy, and I want to highlight their honest and passionate work to educate Americans about the real effects of Alzheimer's.

Last Wednesday, February 6, would have been President Reagan's 108th birthday, and we paused then to reflect not only on the life and legacy of President Ronald Reagan, but we also remember the way he carried himself, the vision he set for our country, and the direction he steered our Nation.

Years after he left the White House, the President and Nancy Reagan continued their public service to our Nation with grace and class, and that was true even as President Reagan was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.

In November of 1994, President Reagan wrote a handwritten letter to Americans announcing this diagnosis that ultimately took his life.

I read lots of biographies, I read lots of history, and this past week I finished a book, "Reagan: An American Journey," written by Bob Spitz. The story of his circumstance with Alzheimer's captured my attention.

The book quotes President Reagan telling his daughter, Patti: "I have this condition . . . I keep forgetting things."

The doctors finally put a name to it. On November 4, 1994, a doctor from the Mayo Clinic informed Nancy Reagan that, having had an adequate chance to observe the president, the diagnosis was conclusive: he had Alzheimer's.

According to Fred Ryan, a staff member for the President and Mrs. Reagan, "She was quite upset, emotional." She spoke at length later that evening: "So we're going to tell him tomorrow," she said, "and I'd like you to be there."

The next morning, a Saturday, they gathered in the library, a small, comfortable room at the front of the house where the Reagans typically received guests. The president seemed puzzled when the doctor and Ryan arrived. "Honey, come over here and sit down," Nancy said, directing him to a couch opposite the two men. "The doctor has something he wants to talk about."

The doctor didn't beat around the bush. "We think you have Alzheimer's," he told Reagan.