

That is not who the President of the United States should be embracing.

He has repeatedly praised Rodrigo Duterte of the Philippines. This is the same leader who independent press, civil society groups, foreign governments, and international organizations have all confirmed is engaged in the extrajudicial killing of his own citizens—work that President Trump praised as doing an “unbelievable job on the drug problem.”

Mr. Duterte himself, as a former mayor, has admitted to murdering people. That Mr. Trump would laud Mr. Duterte for his barbaric atrocities is outrageous and is another indication that instead of standing up for America's values, President Trump continues to endorse leaders around the world who violate the very principles that America's Founding Fathers enshrined in our Constitution.

I mention our Founding Fathers not in passing, but as we recently celebrated our Independence Day on July 4, I quote from the Declaration of Independence, which set our Nation on a path with the ideal that we hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights; and that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

So I was particularly troubled that within days of July 4, the Trump administration, through Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, unveiled what he referred to as a Commission on Unalienable Rights. In his announcement, Secretary Pompeo called this new Commission “one of the most profound reexaminations of the unalienable rights in the world since the 1948 Universal Declaration.”

I, along with many colleagues in the U.S. Congress, fear that this Commission, whose purpose it is to advise the Secretary of State based on the principles of natural law and natural rights, will undermine or curtail State Department advocacy in critical human rights arenas, including women's health as well as LGBT rights.

For 243 years, with all of her imperfections, America has been a beacon for peoples around the world. Those who have embraced natural law have not been welcoming. They peddle in hate and division. The ACLU notes that references to “natural law and natural rights” are code words often used to undermine the rights of women and the LGBT community. This is just the latest in a string of attacks on women and the LGBT community by this administration. If the President and the Secretary of State want to build on protecting human rights, they will work within the framework that the United States helped to establish, not question the definition or universality of human rights.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. President, on immigration, during his first days in office, the President began his administration by sign-

ing an Executive order that attempts to impose travel bans on Muslims and to ban refugees. He signed an Executive order that greatly expanded the number of people who were subject to detention and deportation, and practically speaking, he eliminated the focus on the most dangerous, violent criminals in our communities.

The President has tried to deny sanctuary and asylum to those refugees who legally seek protection in our country as they flee violence and persecution in their homelands.

He rescinded protections for the Dreamers and those with temporary protective status, which cast a cloud of uncertainty over the futures of these individuals and their families. It basically put an expiration date on their backs.

In our communities, I think we all know that the Dreamers and those with temporary protected status now have a fear as to whether their futures will be here in the United States. They have been here for a long time, and as we all know, they are part of our communities. The American values of empathy and compassion seemingly no longer find a champion in the White House.

VOTING RIGHTS

Mr. President, on voting rights, the Trump administration has rolled back the clock by creating a so-called Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity—designed to suppress the vote—under the guise of trying to prove the problem of nonexistent voter fraud.

The Justice Department changed its position and supported the use of voter ID laws. It backtracked from its earlier position that such laws were intentionally racially discriminatory and designed to suppress minority votes. One of the principles of a democratic state is to get the maximum participation in elections.

The Department of Justice has tried to make it easier for States to purge voters from their rolls, as well as to make it easier for States to make voting changes that could disenfranchise minority voters without there being the proper Federal review or oversight.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Mr. President, on criminal justice, the Department of Justice has aggressively rolled back its use of consent decrees, like the one put in place in Baltimore under the Obama administration after Freddie Gray died in police custody.

It is interesting. Since that episode, we have had Members of Congress, along with city officials, ask the Federal Government to do a pattern-or-practice investigation on what led to the consent order because we knew we had a problem in Baltimore's policing.

The Baltimore consent decree is a perfect example of a joint local-Federal partnership that will help overhaul the police department and provide long-overdue constitutional policing to the citizens of Baltimore.

This Federal civil rights role is critically important—especially after a series of officer-involved shootings of African-American residents—as we try to rebuild trust between the police and the communities they serve.

In terms of free press, President Trump has consistently attacked the free press, notwithstanding the First Amendment's protections, and particularly has labeled critical news stories as “fake news” in an effort to undermine any critical coverage of his administration. He has shown callous disregard for protecting journalists and the free press both at home and abroad.

As Thomas Jefferson famously wrote, “The basis of our governments being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right; and were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter.”

In terms of LGBTQ rights, the Trump administration has consistently argued that businesses and government contractors have a right to discriminate against customers based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. He has nominated judges who want to turn back the clock on equality and force transgender individuals from the ranks of our military.

Our Nation and form of government are founded on “We the People of the United States.” Yet this President is doing all he can to lessen the power and squelch the voices of perceived opposition.

As we approach the second anniversary of the deadly protests in Charlottesville, VA, I will never forget how President Trump used his bully pulpit to further divide our Nation by equating those who espoused White supremacy with those who were protesting against such White supremacist views.

Let us remember the great civil rights leaders in our history who have struggled to help our Nation form a more perfect union, establish justice, and secure the blessings of liberty, as promised by our Constitution. The deadly violence that occurred nearly 2 years ago must never be permitted to happen again.

I strongly condemn all acts of intolerance and remain certain that the moral arc of history, although long, bends toward justice. What is good and just in America is stronger than hate and will prevail.

The Trump administration's attack on women's healthcare is unconscionable. Women's rights are human rights.

The President has taken action to undermine the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, the ACA, finalized administrative rules that allow discriminatory practices to domestic and global family planning providers, as well as women seeking reproductive healthcare.

One of the first actions President Trump took in office was to impose an expansion of the global gag rule, which

forces global health providers eligible for U.S. assistance to choose between receiving U.S. funds and providing comprehensive healthcare and family planning services to their patients. What a horrible choice. You need the money, but you have to provide the services.

Trump's global gag rule restricts virtually all global health assistance provided by the U.S. Federal Government, including from the Department of State, USAID, and the Department of Defense, impacting \$8.8 billion in financial support for global health programs. Where is the U.S. leadership on global health? The rule has eliminated access to contraceptive services and supplies for almost 26 million women and girls around the world. This hurt women in conflict zones and rural areas, as well as refugees, women with disabilities, and indigenous women.

President Trump has also imposed the domestic gag rule, which restricts physicians from providing complete information to patients about their healthcare options and providing appropriate referrals for care.

The new rule guts title X, the Nation's only Federal grant program dedicated solely to providing individuals with comprehensive family and related preventive health services.

Women make up more than half the population of this Nation. It is outrageous that President Trump continuously implements policies that discriminate against women's healthcare. We cannot allow women to be treated this way here in the United States or anywhere around the world.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." This has been the American ideal and a guiding principle for our Nation since our founding. All men and women are created equal. Each one of us on this Earth deserves freedom, respect, and dignity.

For generations, the United States has stood as the sentinel, defending these universal rights. I would think Republicans and Democrats alike agree with that statement. The outlier is President Trump. This President has done everything in his power within the borders of our Nation and overseas to diminish human rights and disregard the rule of law. He continues to embrace dictators, opening the doors of the Oval Office to men who deserve prosecution more than a welcome embrace by the leader of the free world.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to uphold their oath to defend and protect the Constitution of the United States and to work together to restore America's role as the defender of universal human rights.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BRAUN). The Senator from Ohio.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MOON LANDING

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I am here on the floor this afternoon to talk

about a landmark moment in human history that occurred 50 years ago next week—the Apollo 11 mission that landed the first person on the Moon.

Today, 50 years after that incredible feat, we sometimes take for granted that we explored the Moon. But think for a moment about the generations of men and women from the beginning of time until July 20, 1969, who looked up at the Moon's pale light in wonder at what secrets and insights may lay on its surface. Think about the countless paintings and poems depicting the Moon as an unchanging and unknowable presence in the sky. Think about how, after hundreds of thousands of years of such mystery and reverence, we actually went there.

On July 20, 1969, the world watched in breathless awe as grainy footage came in from the Moon landing. It was beamed in from the lunar surface 239,000 miles away to millions of TV screens all around the globe. As a 13-year-old teenager, I saw two figures clad in bulky spacesuits bounce across the screen against the stark black-and-white landscape.

As anyone who witnessed it can remember and tell you about, there was a great sense of pride as Americans—Americans who broke the earthly bonds that had tethered our ancestors for eons, to set foot on the surface of a body we only saw in the distant night sky. I also felt pride as our pristine American flag was unfurled and planted on the Moon's surface, forever marking our country's trailblazing spirit. I felt pride in being from Ohio, as my fellow Buckeye, Neil Armstrong, was the very first man to step onto the Moon, continuing our legacy in the State of Ohio as a pioneer in flight and in aerospace.

In 2003, actually, Congress officially designated Ohio the "Birthplace of Flight" due to the Wright brothers. They were born and raised in Dayton, OH, and it was in their bicycle shop that they dreamed up and researched the first fixed-wing aircraft anywhere. But for such a lofty title, Ohio has played an even greater role in the story of mankind's progress in the skies and beyond—even beyond the Wright brothers. In fact, one of my predecessors in this seat here in the Senate was John Glenn, the first American to orbit the Earth. In all, two dozen astronauts to date are natives of Ohio—more than any other State—and I am proud to say that many more call it home today.

Our legacy of flight in Ohio continues today. In Dayton, OH, we have the National Air Force Museum, which houses more than 300 historic aircraft. Wright-Patterson Air Force Base—one of the largest in the country—trains not only our pilots in our Air Force, but those of our allies all around the world.

Just last month, I had the honor of announcing, with Neil Armstrong's widow, Carol Armstrong, that the Smithsonian will be bringing a special exhibit on the Apollo 11 mission entitled "Destination Moon" to Cincinnati's own Museum Center.

On that day in 1969, Neil Armstrong became all of our heroes, and it was at a time when our country was deeply divided over the war in Vietnam and other social and cultural issues. At a time when we were yearning for heroes, Neil Armstrong inspired us and brought us together as a country.

I have one story I would like to share that I thought about while walking over this afternoon. It is about how Neil Armstrong inspired a particularly important group of Americans.

In 2011, the year before Neil Armstrong died, he came here to the U.S. Capitol at my request to join my wife Jane and me at our swearing-in ceremony. I was elected in 2010, and the swearing-in was early in 2011. As we walked into the Capitol, we looked up on the left and saw a mural, and it is a mural that is still down on the first floor of this Capitol on the Senate side, and it is of Neil Armstrong on the face of the Moon. I pointed it out to Neil and his wife Carol—his wonderful wife Carol who was with us. Neil's comment was, that is interesting. The 30 or 40 people who were with us walking into the Capitol that day—they didn't think it was interesting; they thought it was amazing.

I later found out that Neil Armstrong was the only American living to have a mural painted of him in the U.S. Capitol.

That night at dinner, one of my other friends, Col. Tom Moe, came to me and asked if he could speak with Neil Armstrong and whether I would introduce him to Neil. I said: Of course.

Col. Tom Moe is a hero in his own right, an Air Force pilot who was shot down over North Vietnam. He spent many years in the prison called the Hanoi Hilton with our former colleague John McCain—a true hero.

When we went over to see Neil Armstrong, Col. Tom Moe shared a story with him. He said that the prison guards in the North Vietnamese prison were intent upon telling the prisoners that America was falling apart, that there were protests on the streets, which was true, that the country was deeply divided, and that America was going backward. He said in particular they didn't want the prisoners to know that America had accomplished what President Jack Kennedy had laid out as an ambitious vow, which was to go to the Moon by the end of the decade. They had kept that from them. Then one day, the prison guards somehow let a letter go to one of the prisoners from his mom, and that letter included a postage stamp, of course. Guess what was on the postage stamp. A photograph of Neil Armstrong stepping onto the Moon.

Colonel Moe told Neil Armstrong that it was incredibly inspiring. It lifted the spirits of all the prisoners. Immediately they went to the pipes and they tapped out what had happened, which was the way they communicated with one another in the Hanoi Hilton. Through the pipes and the tapping, he

said you could just feel the momentum building and the morale improve.

Neil Armstrong was not a very emotional guy, but when he heard that story, he became very emotional, as did Colonel Moe.

That is just one more example of where Neil Armstrong inspired all of us—in this case, a group of Americans who richly deserved and badly needed that inspiration.

Over the years, my family and I have come to know the Armstrong family. Carol Armstrong is still in Cincinnati, a dear friend. We were his neighbors in Cincinnati.

As we have shared stories in the lead-in to the 50th anniversary of the Moon landing, I have been reminded of how extraordinary it was that this towering figure had truly been such a modest, unassuming man despite all the notoriety.

In my view, how he handled the spotlight into which he was thrust said as much about Neil Armstrong as the time he spent on the Moon a half century ago. He was a true hero, but even before he blazed trails through the cosmos, Neil was already contributing to Ohio's rich legacy of pushing the boundaries of flight. He had already served his Nation with bravery and skill on Gemini 8. As a test pilot pushing the envelope, he had strapped himself into terrifying-looking contraptions with gigantic flame-belching engines tied onto huge fuel tanks.

Before he was a test pilot, he distinguished himself through his service to his country as a naval aviator—among other things, flying 78 combat missions over the Korean Peninsula. In one such mission, in fact, he was forced to eject from his plane into enemy territory, holding out long enough, thank God, for the U.S. Marines to locate him and escort him to safety.

For all of these accomplishments, this son of Ohio received the highest honors a grateful nation could bestow: the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Congressional Gold Medal, and the Congressional Space Medal of Honor.

God smiled upon Neil Armstrong throughout his extraordinary life. Neil returned the favor by living his life with honor and dignity.

In 2012, Neil returned to the heavens above, this time venturing into the Kingdom of Heaven. I had the honor of being among those who delivered the eulogy at his funeral. Then, as today, I remembered him as a hero and as a friend. He was a humble Midwesterner and a proud Ohioan who believed that the honor of serving his country and meeting great challenges in his own stoic way was all the reward he deserved. He was a refreshing counterweight to the celebrity culture we too often embrace today.

The Apollo mission was many things to many people. To the world, it was mankind's greatest journey to date, a daring sojourn to the crown jewels in the night sky. For Americans, it was an affirmation of America's

exceptionalism, that we could beat the Soviets and respond to their Sputnik Program by following through on President Kennedy's bold vow to land a man on the Moon by the end of the 1960s.

For me, and for thousands of other young boys and girls across Ohio, it was simply the next act in our State's leadership in aviation, done with that quintessential Midwestern resolve and humility.

As Neil once so eloquently said, "The important achievement of Apollo was demonstrating that humanity is not forever chained to this planet and our visions go rather further than that, and our opportunities are unlimited."

Fifty years on, as we look ahead to chart our next voyage to the stars, let us always remember the bravery and patriotism and the humility of Neil, also of his other astronauts—Michael Collins, Buzz Aldrin—and the thousands of men and women who supported them on Earth, and the many courageous astronauts who preceded and followed them. Let the Apollo 11 mission be an example of what our great country can do when we come together to achieve the seemingly impossible.

Let us commit to come together into the future, into the distant horizons. Like the Apollo 11 exhibit exhibiting American leadership and benefiting all of mankind, there is more for us to do. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for votes Nos. 202 and 203. Had I been present, I would have voted nay on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Peter C. Wright to be Assistant Administrator, Office of Solid Waste, Environmental Protection Agency. I would have also voted nay on confirmation of the Wright nomination.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING MARIAN SPENCER

• Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a great Ohioan and transformational civil rights leader, Marian Spencer. Born in Gallipolis, OH, as the granddaughter of a slave,

Spencer honored her grandfather by dedicating her life to fighting for a more equal and inclusive country. Spencer became a member of the NAACP at the young age of 13 and is best known for leading the fight to integrate Coney Island and its swimming pools in the 1950s.

After graduating from high school, Spencer attended the University of Cincinnati, where she made Cincinnati her adopted home and campaigned to integrate the university's Whites-only college prom. From there, she chaired the education committee of her local NAACP branch and helped raise \$30,000 to desegregate Cincinnati Public Schools, before becoming the chapter's first female president in 1981.

Spencer believed in the power of activism as a means of social change, and her efforts led her to becoming the first African-American woman elected to Cincinnati City Council. Spencer gave a voice to the disenfranchised and underrepresented, and she will be remembered as trailblazer for civil rights, women's rights, LGBTQ rights, and the environment.

We lost Marian Spencer this July, but her legacy will live on for generations. Her leadership and progressive ideas had a profound effect on our city, our State, and our Nation, and her work will remain a source of great pride for Ohioans. I am proud to honor Marian Spencer for her contributions to making our country a little freer and a little more just.●

TRIBUTE TO MIKE AND TARI CONROY

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, this week I rise to recognize Mike and Tari Conroy for their impact on Ravalli County and the surrounding areas. Through their work as bluegrass musicians, the Conroys have brought delight to the hearts of their Montanan listeners.

The Conroys' devotion to bluegrass extends beyond their respective playing of the banjo, guitar, and other traditional bluegrass instruments. The events the Conroys take part in, such as celebrating the birthday of a 90-year-old U.S. Army veteran or the closing of an essential Missoula landmark, represent the very best of Montana. It is no surprise that Mr. Conroy is the president of the Montana Bluegrass Association.

Additionally, the Conroys have worked tirelessly to share their love of bluegrass music with their fellow Montanans by organizing the annual Hardtimes Bluegrass Festival, which takes place just south of Hamilton, MT. This festival brings numerous bluegrass bands from the Northwestern United States to perform in Montana. Despite the financial and logistical hurdles, the Conroys are committed to sharing their passion with their fellow Montanans. As the festival enters its 11th year, it has truly become a cultural staple of the Bitterroot.