

We know what is happening as a result of the Democrats devoting 100 percent of their time and energy to reversing the results of the 2016 election by impeaching President Trump. Their constituents sitting at home are wondering what it is they are actually going to be able to accomplish.

When we have elections, ordinarily candidates run for office and say: If you elect me, I will do this, this, and this. The House Democrats have given up on that. Forget their campaign promises. Forget what they told their voters in the 2018 election. They are all in on the impeachment and removal of the President. The rest of that stuff is just talk—at least that is how it appears.

There are a lot of important things we can and should be doing in Washington as opposed to this political side show. We have had many productive hearings and efforts on such important items as trying to reduce mass violence, which is something we are all concerned about, how to bring down costs and increase choice when it comes to our healthcare system, how to improve trade so we can sell the things we grow and make in America to markets around the world, and how we can continue this incredible trend line when it comes to our economy, where unemployment is at historically low levels and particularly African-American and Hispanic unemployment is at historically the lowest level in recorded history. Forget all of that. House Democrats are full steam ahead on impeachment, which will make it virtually impossible for us to pass productive, bipartisan legislation. It will make it virtually impossible for them to keep the promises they themselves made to their constituents when they ran for election in 2018, and that is a crying shame.

This is the final point I want to make. We are 13 months—13 months—from a general election. President Trump will be on the ballot. These folks, who apparently have never gotten over their loss in 2016, will have a chance to cast their votes again. So will the American people. We will be able to take a look at the Democratic nominee, along with President Trump, the Republican nominee, and we will be able to vote 13 months from now. But, to me, it says the Democrats are not particularly optimistic about the outcome of the 2020 election, given that choice, because they are not going to wait for the election to occur; they want to divide the country, they want to paralyze Congress, and they want to impeach President Trump 13 months before the election.

I hope cooler heads will prevail. Democrats should work with us to pass bipartisan legislation that will actually make our country better off rather than pursuing this purely political agenda of impeachment.

I think it is disgraceful the way the House Democrats have chosen to pursue this clandestine impeachment

process rather than focus on what is best for the American people. Let the voters cast their ballots 13 months from now rather than put our country through this divisive and ultimately futile effort to impeach and remove President Trump.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

CONGRATULATING THE ST. LOUIS BLUES

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I want to talk about a very different topic, and that is the Stanley Cup. Yesterday at the White House, the St. Louis Blues were warmly welcomed by the President in a ceremony celebrating their Stanley Cup victory. On June 12, the Blues made history when they defeated the Boston Bruins in game 7 of the Stanley Cup Final.

It was hard to imagine at the beginning of this season that the Blues could have done this. They were the lowest ranked team in the National Hockey League. I think there was a time in the month of January when the odds that the Blues would win the Stanley Cup were 150 to 1. I am not particularly a betting man, but knowing what I know now, we wouldn't have had to put much money on that bet to have won a significant amount of money. As it turned out, however, as you and I know in what we do here and what we have done in our lives, the odds are not really what count; what counts is how you play the season. Just like we often say in politics, candidates matter. In hockey, in sports, the players matter. How they come together as a team matters. Whether or not that team really becomes a team matters, and this one did.

It was a season for the Blues that was filled with record-breaking achievements. Jordan Binnington became the first and only rookie goalie to win 16 games in the Stanley Cup playoffs. Ryan O'Reilly set a franchise record with 23 points in the playoffs and was named the postseason most valuable player. Game 7 of the Stanley Cup Final was the most watched NHL game in 36 years.

For the first time in franchise history, the Blues brought the Stanley Cup trophy to Missouri to celebrate their achievement as the best sports fans in Missouri stepped out. Five hundred thousand people were there when the Stanley Cup parade was in St. Louis for the first time. Five hundred thousand people—in several States represented on the floor, that would be everybody in the State. Five hundred thousand is a pretty big crowd anywhere, as it was in St. Louis that day.

Today, the Stanley Cup trophy will be on display on Capitol Hill so that Blues fans in the area can get a chance to see this legendary trophy in person. The Stanley Cup has already traveled all over the world since the Blues won the Stanley Cup. Ryan O'Reilly brought the Cup to Ontario to share it with his 99-year-old grandmother, who is probably one of the oldest people to

see the Stanley Cup. But for sure the youngest baby to be put in the Stanley Cup—the record was broken when the trophy was brought to a mother and her newborn child at Mercy Hospital in St. Louis, the baby barely born, right there in the Stanley Cup, setting the new Stanley Cup “youngest baby in the Cup” record.

We will never forget the image of Laila Anderson. Laila, a young girl battling a life-threatening disease, in many ways became the No. 1 fan of the team. Laila, by the way, was at the White House in the Rose Garden yesterday, and she was called up to stand by the President and the Stanley Cup, with the team surrounding both of them. The night they won, she was on the ice with the players celebrating as the Stanley Cup was passed around at the end of game 7.

The day after the Blues received their championship rings, two players visited Laila to personally deliver her very own ring. I saw those rings yesterday, and they are just about as big as Laila's hand. They were big rings. Her name was inscribed on the diamond-studded championship ring that was given to her, which also included the words “Play Gloria,” which became the theme song, fight song, inspirational song for the Blues at the end of the season.

Blues fans have plenty to be excited about this season. The majority of the names of the players that are now etched on the Stanley Cup are back this year. The roster is even better with the addition of defenseman Justin Faulk.

We are also proud to say that St. Louis will host the 2020 NHL All-Star Game in January. That game, of course, brings together the most talented players in professional hockey. I know St. Louis is ready to welcome them, and we will all be excited to further solidify St. Louis's place as one of the great sports cities in America.

It has been a great year for Blues fans, and I hope the team will once again have the opportunity to visit the White House next year. This will be the first year of many years where those of us in the Missouri delegation will get to host the Stanley Cup in the Capitol.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the House of Representatives continues to investigate the circumstances of the President's interaction with Ukrainian President Zelensky and whether he used the power of his office to pressure

a foreign leader to intervene in an American election on his behalf. The facts that are already in the public domain are so deeply troubling and must be taken very seriously. I know that our colleagues in the House of Representatives did not run for office to begin an impeachment inquiry, but this task was thrust upon them by the President's alleged conduct and the demands of the Constitution of our Republic.

Here in the Senate, our job is even more austere. We are assigned the power not only to examine the evidence but to render judgment. We all have a solemn duty to follow the facts impartially and let ourselves be governed by reason, rather than by passion or by politics. That role means that we have a responsibility to behave impartially, in a nonpartisan manner from the outset. As my friend Leader MCCONNELL said during the 1998 impeachment debate, "it's been my view that I don't, as a potential juror, if it's serious enough to warrant a potential impeachment proceeding, I don't think I ought to pre-judge the case."

Yet already a few of my Senate Republican colleagues seem determined to turn this serious inquiry into another partisan exercise. My friend the Republican leader, here on the floor yesterday, made the sadly predictable attack of calling the work of the majority in the House partisan. Another of my colleagues, Senator GRAHAM, said he was trying to organize a letter of Senate Republicans promising they would not vote to convict the President before the House even completes its inquiry—before any articles of impeachment are even drafted, let alone voted on, before a scrap of evidence was considered in the Senate trial, if it comes to that. Senator GRAHAM seems to be advocating "Alice in Wonderland" justice—first the verdict, then the trial. I hope he will rethink that.

Over the State work period, the Republican leader ran an advertisement in which he declared: "The way that impeachment stops is a Senate majority with me as majority leader." That is a far cry from what he said in 1998: "not prejudging the case."

We are several steps away from a potential trial in the Senate. The House continues to do its work diligently, even handedly, with only the facts in mind. So I remind my Republican colleagues in this Chamber that committing today to vote not guilty is contrary to their oath to do impartial justice. That is their oath. Instead of prejudging, I remind my Republican colleagues in this body that you have a responsibility to put country over party. Our national security, the rule of law, and our democracy are at stake.

TURKEY AND SYRIA

Mr. President, we are witnessing in realtime the collapse of American foreign policy in the Middle East. Five years of hard fighting in Syria to first destabilize and then to degrade ISIS has potentially been undone in one

phone call. The President's abrupt decision to withdraw U.S. forces has abandoned the field to our enemies—ISIS, Iran, Putin, and Bashar al-Assad—and it has put our friends in danger, including two of the closest friends we have in the Middle East, the Syrian Kurds and Israel.

I want to be very clear. The President's decision poses a threat to our national security here in the United States. By green-lighting President Erdogan's operation and abandoning the Syrian Kurds to face the onslaught on their own, the President has made an already fragile situation in northern Syria more dangerous and handed a "get out of jail free" card to potentially more than 10,000 ISIS fighters. ISIS has threatened the United States and our allies repeatedly, taken Americans hostages and executed them, and will undoubtedly continue to threaten our security if they experience a resurgence.

We New Yorkers know best, unfortunately, how a small group of fanatics half a world away can do incredible damage and kill thousands of Americans here on our soil. Now, with ISIS prisoners escaping, unfortunately, the chances of that are increasing, not just according to me but to an expert like General Mattis.

Make no mistake. The President's incompetence has put American lives in danger. Today, the House of Representatives will consider a resolution that condemns the President's decision and demands that he reverse course. It should pass with bipartisan support and should be the first order of business for us here in the Senate—the first order of business. Sanctions against Erdogan are fine and good. President Erdogan should be punished for his military adventurism and his aggression, but sanctions alone are insufficient, and they are particularly insufficient in regard to ISIS. Sanctions will not put ISIS fighters back on the run or back in their cells. They will not stop Iran and Putin's growing influence in the region, nor will they undo America's betrayal of our partners and allies. Sanctions can be an effective tool, but they are not the only tool, especially when the crisis in this case is of the President's own making. The simplest and most effective remedy would be for the President to admit his mistake and correct course.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. President, earlier this summer, both Houses of Congress and the White House arrived at a budget agreement that gave us a blueprint for funding the government, but in September, Republicans unilaterally walked away from our agreement and proposed taking \$12 billion from domestic programs—including Head Start, HHS, and even the Pentagon—to fund the President's border wall. This is a nonstarter. There aren't enough votes in the Chamber to pass it.

As we look to get the appropriations back on track, I was disappointed that

Senate Republicans let the entire State work period pass without responding to Democratic offers. Instead of spending that time negotiating with House Democrats on allocations, Senate Republicans have sat on their hands, and now we are back in session this week at the same impasse. Republicans are insisting on the same thing they unsuccessfully shut down the government for last year: \$12 billion for a border wall that President Trump promised Mexico would pay for.

If Senate Republicans don't wake up and resume good-faith negotiations with Democrats, I fear we are headed down the same road.

PENSIONS

Mr. President, for decades, millions of Americans labored in construction and mining and truck driving and other industries with the promise of a secure retirement when they reached old age through their pension. But through no fault of their own, forces like a financial crisis, a dwindling labor force, and inaction on the part of the Federal Government, their pension plans are now at risk of becoming insolvent within a decade. This is an immediate problem. It is going to destroy the security of millions of retirees—people who worked all their lives. They put a little bit of money away that they could have spent when they needed it, but they put it in for their retirement hoping that the day they retire they wouldn't become rich, but at least they could live decently. Now that may be vanished—vanished. Congress has the power to stop this problem dead in its tracks. Just 2 months ago, the House passed the Butch Lewis Act, which would provide immediate relief to "critical and declining" pension plans so we can keep our promise to our workers. Leader MCCONNELL and Senate Republicans, once again, inexplicably, have refused to take action on this bipartisan legislation. Senate Republicans blocked us from even debating it last night. So in a short time, I will join my colleagues, including Senators BROWN, STABENOW, MANCHIN, MURRAY, and WYDEN to demand that Leader MCCONNELL allow us a vote on legislation to protect these millions of workers and secure the retirements they have earned.

President Trump often claims to be looking out for the American worker, but his policies set them further and further adrift. This one is notorious. Retirement, a decent retirement, is part of the American dream and part of the American way. Here is a chance for President Trump to actually defend American workers instead of hurting them.

If President Trump is truly the champion of the American worker, he will prevail on our Republican colleagues to start working with Democrats to make sure—make sure—we protect the pensions that millions of families rely on for their security and have paid for.

I yield the floor.