

that Senator GRASSLEY is saying the same. They are both right. But there should be bipartisan outrage at the public attempts by the President and a Member of this body to expose the identity of a Federal whistleblower. You do not get to determine when our whistleblower laws apply or do not or whether you like what the whistleblower said or you do not. They are laws. This whistleblower, whose complaint was deemed “credible” and an “urgent matter” by a Trump appointee, is protected by these statutes. Every single Member of this body should stand up and say that it is wrong to disclose his or her identity.

Our rhetoric can sometimes be overheated, but I am appalled by these developments. There is no other word for it. We are in a moment of history when the Republicans, over only a few weeks, have shifted from saying that no laws were broken to saying that laws were broken, but it is not impeachable, to outright advocating that laws be broken.

Where is the internal gyroscope, the clock of decency and honor on the other side? They are twisting themselves in contradictory pretzels to defend this President who is going to bounds that we have rarely seen in this body with any party with any President.

I don’t understand what sort of effect President Trump has on people of integrity and some degree of strength, who just fold whenever he says something, twist their arguments, change their arguments, do 180-degree hairpins about their arguments, all because they are afraid of telling the truth to power, the truth to this President who never likes to hear it.

GUN LEGISLATION

Mr. President, on guns, on August 5, days after mass shootings in El Paso and Dayton, President Trump declared that “we cannot let those killed in El Paso, Texas, and Dayton, Ohio, die in vain.” He said, “Republicans and Democrats must come together and get strong background checks.”

Those were the words of President Trump. A few weeks later, Leader McCONNELL promised that a debate on background checks would be “front and center” in the Senate after the summer work period. These were Leader McCONNELL’s words. He said, “What we can’t do is fail to pass something,” he said.

Well, it has been 3 months since those statements. Leader McCONNELL’s Senate has not only failed to pass them, it has not even debated some of them. And then on Friday, the Washington Post released a story that all but confirms the worst fear of families torn apart by guns violence—the headline of the Washington Post: “Trump abandons proposing ideas to curb gun violence, after saying he would, following mass shootings.”

According to the Washington Post, the President has abandoned his brief flirtation with supporting expanded

background checks because his advisers believe it will hurt his chances of reelection, “a reversal from the summer when the President insisted he would offer policies to curb firearm deaths.”

Maybe it is not surprising with this President—it isn’t unfortunately; he goes back on his word day after day—but it is profoundly disappointing. Democrats, despite our skepticism, tried to work in good faith with our Republican colleagues to respond to the tragedies in El Paso and Dayton. Many of my colleagues, Senator MURPHY and Senator MANCHIN and others, worked with Republican Senators and ferried back and forth to the White House to find a proposal that could become law that would save American lives. We gave the White House every chance to get to “yes.”

But despite those efforts, Leader McCONNELL has not moved even one gun safety bill to the floor, and President Trump is opposing votes on any—any—potential compromise, just like on infrastructure, just like on immigration reform, just like on a myriad of other issues, President Trump would rather do nothing to help the American people because it would upset political allies like the NRA.

He will make bold and sometimes surprising promises in the heat of the moment. When there was a huge pressure to do something about background checks because of the shootings across the country, he said he would, but then this man who tries to portray himself as a tough guy backs off when lobbyists say he can’t do it. That doesn’t show strength. It shows weakness and shows a lack of candor and honesty to the American people. It shows he is using the American people for his own political purposes, which he does over and over again.

Only time will tell how many lives it will take before President Trump and the congressional Republicans come to their senses and work with us to finally do something about the epidemic of gun violence in America.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Now, climate—yesterday, the Trump administration formally sent a notice to the UN that the United States will withdraw from the Paris Agreement in 2020. In the long list of dangerous policy decisions that President Trump has advanced over the years, this ranks as one of the very, very worst.

Future generations will look back on this decision as a dramatic step backward in the fight to address climate change. Future generations would note this date and how it hurt our planet, our economy, and our national security in the decades that followed.

President Trump has been an enemy of climate science in ways that no other President has been. Before becoming President, he called climate change a hoax, and unfortunately, his Presidency has treated it like one. He has stuffed his administration to the brim with lobbyists for Big Oil and Big

Coal; he has crippled the Federal Government’s ability to research climate change. He rolled back emission standards and used fake science to under-report the effects of climate change.

Instead of protecting the interests of the people, President Trump has catered shamelessly to the interests of oil companies and corporate polluters. History will look harshly on President Trump’s failure to lead the United States through our planet’s climate crisis, and they will equally look on the Republican Senators who have just stood mute as he has done this.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the quorum call be rescinded.

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

TURKEY AND SYRIA

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about the U.S. relationship with Turkey and certain actions that the U.S. must consider in order to protect our national security interests and those of our true allies in the region.

Today, more than ever, we need strong allies and partners in Europe. As the Trump administration does nearly everything in its power to erode our alliances and denigrate our closest friends, we find increasingly emboldened regimes in Russia and China. The U.S. cannot stand up to them alone. Throughout the Cold War, our diplomats worked assiduously to build strong bonds with allies, knowing that having close partners was better than having enemies on the world stage.

Our strongest allies should be those in NATO, those that have made a treaty commitment to mutual defense, those who share our values, those who work in concert with us to face the threat from countries like Russia and Iran with common cause. Unfortunately, Turkey under Erdogan embodies none of those things. Today, I would like to lay out a fact pattern that so many of my colleagues have come to see in recent weeks, that Turkey under Erdogan should not, Turkey under Erdogan cannot be seen as an ally.

How many more times do we need to see Turkey betray the values upon which NATO was established? How many more times do we need to see President Erdogan visit Moscow, Sochi, or any other Russian city to kiss Putin’s ring? How many more journalists need to be locked up by Erdogan before we stop calling Turkey a democracy?

Enough is enough. Over my 27 years in the House and the Senate, I have followed developments in the Eastern Mediterranean quite closely. Turkey’s

invasion of Cyprus in 1974 was a shocking attempt to redraw borders in Europe in the wake of World War II. To this day, Turkey's invasion of northern Cyprus must be seen for what it is: an illegal occupation that must end. Turkey's action over those days in 1974 were not the actions of a democratic country. They were not the actions of a reliable ally. They were not the actions of a responsible actor on the world stage.

But the events of 1974 would only presage Turkey's aggressive posture in the eastern Mediterranean in the years to come. To this day, Turkey under Erdogan continues to aggressively bully international energy companies, including U.S. companies, and the Republic of Cyprus. Their sin? Conducting completely legitimate exploration in the Cypriot Exclusive Economic Zone. This is not territory under dispute or an issue for debate. Turkey's hostility towards these companies is the kind of gunboat diplomacy that belongs to eras past and has no place in today's world.

Examples abound where Turkey continues to operate in bad faith when it comes to Cyprus. It could abide by UN Security Council resolutions to transfer the fenced area of Varosha, Famagusta to the administration of the United Nations.

These calls to return this area to its original inhabitants, whom Turkey ejected during the 1974 invasion, have gone unheeded. Instead, several Turkish Ministers have recently visited and threatened to move forward with commercial development—a true affront to those forced from their land more than 40 years ago, as well as to the U.N. Security Council resolution.

In the eastern Mediterranean, for years Turkey has also aggressively violated the airspace of neighboring Greece, also a NATO ally. These dangerous maneuvers have threatened the lives and safety of Greek pilots, as well as civilians living on the islands below. Greece wants a good neighbor in Turkey and has sought to find common ground upon a constructive relationship. But with these airspace violations, Turkey has shown its true colors, and the international community must come to terms with this.

We have seen Turkey's belligerence abroad manifest itself even here in the United States. Who can forget when President Erdogan's bodyguards attacked U.S. citizens in a Washington park peacefully demonstrating, as is their constitutional right? And as momentum builds following the passage of the Armenian genocide resolution in the House of Representatives, Turkey and its lobbyists are working overtime to block it in the Senate because they know that if this resolution, which both I, Senator CRUZ, and bipartisan Members on both sides have sponsored, were to come to the floor for a vote, it would pass resoundingly and send a clarion message that recognizes the truth. The Armenian genocide happened, it was a monstrous act, and

those who deny it are complicit in a terrible lie. Genocide is genocide. The Senate should not bow to this pressure. It cannot bow to this pressure. Let's pass this resolution today.

Erdogan's behavior abroad has roots inside of Turkey, where the democratic process has significantly eroded and religious freedom is under sustained pressure. In particular, the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of the Greek Orthodox Church—and its community—faces dire consequences as the spiritual head of the world's second largest Christian church. His church properties have been confiscated, and President Erdogan restricts his religious freedom. This is wrong, and his All Holiness deserves our attention and our ongoing support. For those who speak about religious freedom in this Chamber—and I admire the many who have—as well as on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, this is also an issue of religious freedom.

Of course, Erdogan's repression of his own citizens does not stop with restricting religious freedom. Following its emergency decree after a failed coup attempt, Turkish authorities engaged in a draconian crackdown and roundup of citizens across the country. The U.N. reports that close to 160,000 people were arrested in an 18-month period, including over 100 women who were pregnant or had just given birth, often on grounds of nothing more than that they were associated with their husbands, many of whom were suspects on trumped-up charges.

As we examine Turkey's increasingly destructive role in the world, we must never turn a blind eye from those Turkish citizens who want a more democratic future for themselves and their families.

In July, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee passed my Eastern Mediterranean Security and Energy Partnership Act with a strong bipartisan vote. We are working for full passage in the Senate, and I understand the House Foreign Affairs Committee will mark up the legislation soon.

I traveled to Greece and Cyprus in the spring and told leaders in both places that this was not—not—an anti-Turkey bill and that we all wanted Turkey to be a constructive and democratic partner in the region. At the time, this vision seemed a long ways off, but now, given Erdogan's recent choices, it has become virtually impossible. Let's review events since my visit to the region in the spring of this year.

First, Erdogan took delivery of the S-400 air defense system from Russia. Let me repeat. Turkey, a supposed NATO ally, purchased an air defense system from NATO's main adversary—the reason that NATO largely came to be. This choice endangered the security of the United States and other NATO partners. The United States made a good offer of the Patriot missile system—an offer that would have maintained the security equilibrium in the

region and enabled Turkey to remain a NATO member in good standing. That offer was rejected.

The Trump administration did the right thing in removing Turkey from the F-35 program. It was clear to all involved that the S-400 could not be parked next to an F-35. After all, it is meant and it is intended to be able to shoot down an F-35—this from a NATO ally.

But the administration has fallen well short of its obligations under the law. Under the CAATSA law, which I helped write, the administration is required to sanction any entity that conducts a significant transaction with the Russian military or intelligence sectors. This provision of law is not permissive. It is not optional. Under no credible definition would the purchase of an S-400 Russian system not be considered significant. The administration is breaking the law by ignoring this provision and kowtowing to Ankara. According to U.S. law, Turkey must be sanctioned for the S-400 system, and it should happen today. Otherwise, it will send a global message that we are not serious about sanctioning significant transactions with the Russian military.

Some have said that such an approach is unwarranted and unwise lest we push Erdogan into Putin's arms. He is already there. He clearly is already there.

In a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing in Syria, I held up this poster, and I asked the Secretary of State: What is wrong with this picture? This picture of President Erdogan, President Putin, and President Rouhani of Iran says everything—says everything. They are two of our biggest foreign policy challengers. And who is there with them? Erdogan. I argued that we were ceding American leadership in Syria and the region to leaders and countries whose policies were intrinsically at odds with our own. Unfortunately, today we are seeing the terrible consequences of this abdication of leadership.

Erdogan's warm relationship with Putin should ring alarm bells across the NATO alliance, raising concerns about NATO's exposure at Incirlik and intelligence vulnerabilities with respect to the alliance's presence in Turkey. It raises concerns about how Erdogan and Putin may be working together to counter U.S. interests across the Middle East, in the Balkans, and around the world. NATO is an alliance of shared values. None of those values are respected—none of them—by the current occupant of the Kremlin or in Ankara.

Second, provided with a green light from the Trump administration, President Erdogan's invasion of Syria to attack our Kurdish partners is an unconscionable act of brutality that has caused death and untold suffering among our Kurdish friends and partners. Tens of thousands have fled the area, creating an even greater problem

of refugees in that war-torn region. The consequences of these actions by Turkey and its proxies will persist for years to come.

Turkey's incursion poses a direct threat to U.S. national security interests in the region, not the least of which is by facilitating Russian foreign policy ambitions in the region and opening the door for ISIS to reconstitute.

At its inception, Turkey did not take the threat of ISIS seriously enough, and in the early days, ISIS's ability to easily traverse the Turkish-Syrian border bolstered its ability to grow in strength and numbers. Turkey did nothing—nothing—to stop them, did nothing to stop foreign fighters going into Syria. While Turkey has legitimate security concerns from the PKK, its singular focus on extending this feat to the whole Kurdish population risks its ability to effectively confront other terrorist organizations, including ISIS and al-Qaeda.

There must be a full accounting by Turkey of these atrocities. That is why I am today introducing an expedited resolution of request for the Secretary of State to inform the Senate in 30 days of the extent of Turkey's human rights abuses in Syria. This resolution invokes statutory authority under the Foreign Assistance Act to require the Secretary of State to assess and report to Congress on Turkey's human rights abuses in Syria. This resolution calls for the administration to provide all available information concerning alleged violations of internationally recognized human rights by Turkey, its armed forces, and associated groups in Syria. It calls for a description of the steps the United States has taken to promote Turkey's respect of human rights in its Syria operations. The resolution also calls for a determination of whether Turkey's actions have resulted in the release of ISIS or other extremists inside of Syria.

I am also working closely with the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator RISCH, on the Promoting American National Security and Preventing the Resurgence of ISIS Act of 2019, which would impose targeted sanctions on Turkey for its actions in Syria. A similar bipartisan measure passed the House last week, and I urge the Senate to deliberate on the measure. Based on changing circumstances on the ground, we are updating the language to condition sanctions based on Turkey's actions. I hope it will be marked up in the coming days.

For years, the world held out hope that Turkey could be the bridge between east and west—a democratic, secular country that could be a democracy in Europe and a responsible actor on the world stage. I, for one, was always skeptical but certainly supported the sentiment. Today we are the furthest from that dream we have ever been. The most imprisoned journalists in the world—in the world—are not in

North Korea, Russia, or Iran; they languish in Turkish prisons. This doesn't happen in a democracy.

As international pressure mounted following Turkey's invasion of northern Syria, Erdogan threatened to unleash thousands of refugees onto the European Union's shores, a wave like we saw in 2015. These aren't the statements of a rational, responsible actor. Yet where is U.S. policy? The Trump administration was its normal erratic self in recent weeks as it flailed from sanctions on Turkey to claiming victory. The Kurds are the ones who emerged as the clear loser. Erdogan was eager to sign on to the Pence-Pompeo plan because it gave him all he wanted—full control of the Kurdish areas of Syria and carte blanche to wipe out swaths of the community.

In addition to claiming victory, President Trump now wants to invite Erdogan to Washington with open arms. Stunning. The photo of Trump and Erdogan in the Oval Office will not only be the nail in the coffin for any Kurdish aspirations to live in peace and security, it will also be the death knell for any credibility the United States hopes to maintain with any combat partners in the future.

President Trump, I urge you to cancel this invitation and side with the bipartisan consensus in the Senate and the House that Turkey, under Erdogan, is no friend to the United States. Do not ruin our reputation further by fawning over yet another authoritarian leader. You want to repair the damage that has been done? Show our commitment to our allies by inviting the Syrian Kurdish leadership to the Oval Office for a meeting on how we prevent a resurgence of ISIS. That is how you protect our interests. That is how you protect our national security.

It is time to challenge Erdogan to live up to NATO's values and to respect the international order. It is time to stop enabling Turkey to be a bad actor. It is time for the Senate to act.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRUZ). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:43 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. CAPITO).

EXECUTIVE SESSION—Continued

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the

Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of David Austin Tapp, of Kentucky, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years.

Tim Scott, Roger F. Wicker, John Thune, Mike Rounds, John Cornyn, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Mike Braun, Richard Burr, Thom Tillis, John Boozman, John Hoeven, David Perdue, Kevin Cramer, John Barrasso, Michael B. Enzi, Chuck Grassley, Mitch McConnell.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of David Austin Tapp, of Kentucky, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 83, nays 9, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 343 Ex.]

YEAS—83

Alexander	Ernst	Perdue
Baldwin	Feinstein	Peters
Barrasso	Fischer	Portman
Bennet	Gardner	Reed
Blackburn	Graham	Roberts
Blumenthal	Grassley	Romney
Blunt	Hassan	Rosen
Boozman	Hawley	Rounds
Braun	Heinrich	Rubio
Brown	Hooven	Scott (FL)
Cantwell	Hyde-Smith	Scott (SC)
Capito	Inhofe	Shaheen
Cardin	Johnson	Shelby
Carper	Jones	Sinema
Casey	Kaine	Smith
Cassidy	Kennedy	Sullivan
Collins	King	Tester
Coons	Lankford	Thune
Cornyn	Leahy	Tillis
Cortez Masto	Lee	Toomey
Cotton	Manchin	Udall
Cramer	McConnell	Van Hollen
Crapo	McSally	Warner
Cruz	Moran	Whitehouse
Daines	Murkowski	Wicker
Duckworth	Murphy	Wyden
Durbin	Murray	Young
Enzi	Paul	