

the disturbing details of which are continuing to come to light every day. Our action on that subject is not finished.

Thanks to leadership from Senator RUBIO, we passed legislation to continue ratcheting up the pressure on the Chinese Communist Party. In this case, our bill will shed new light and impose new consequences for the egregious abuses against the Uyghur people and other Muslim minorities. We also confirmed well-qualified nominees to important roles at the National Counterintelligence and Security Center, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

In other words, we have done more for the American people in 2 weeks on this side of the Capitol than the House of Representatives has done in the last 2 months. In the two months that the House Democrats have spent away from their duty stations, they have seemingly given themselves just one assignment—to draft an enormous political messaging bill and brand it as coronavirus relief.

Yet, even on this basis, they have failed. The 1,800-page doorstop that Speaker PELOSI dropped last week was appropriately greeted as the legislative equivalent of a standup comedy. There were tax hikes on small businesses in the midst of a small business crisis, and there were targeted tax cuts for the wealthiest people in the bluest States. There were two separate taxpayer-funded studies on diversity and inclusion in the market for marijuana. In sum, it was a \$3 trillion wish list slapped together in a clumsy effort to never let a good crisis go to waste—serious work here in the Senate and partisanship pointlessness over in the House.

The Senate will stay on course and continue our serious work at this serious time. Tomorrow morning, our colleagues on the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs will hear from Secretary Mnuchin and Fed Chairman Powell on the latest status of the CARES Act implementation efforts. The Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee will meet this week to consider the nomination of Brian Miller to serve as Special Inspector General for the pandemic recovery programs. The Special Committee on Aging will be examining the challenges facing American seniors during this pandemic as both the virus itself and the social distancing measures take a heavy toll on older Americans. Of course, we will continue to uphold our responsibilities beyond the scope of COVID-19. We will consider more nominations to the Federal Election Commission and to the Federal bench.

Tomorrow, our colleagues on the Intelligence Committee will vote on reporting the nomination of JOHN RATCLIFFE to serve as Director of National Intelligence. This role is essential for monitoring and countering

evolving threats from Russia to China, to terrorist groups, and for ensuring the intelligence community's important work is not tainted by partisan bias or political weaponization.

We have a busy week ahead of us. This pandemic is not going to defeat itself; a careful reopening will not plan itself; and our Nation's other challenges are not about to politely step aside in the meantime. All kinds of American heroes across the country are tackling the coronavirus head on. We are going to do all we can to keep them safe and supported while they do.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Scott H. Rash, of Arizona, to be United States District Judge for the District of Arizona.

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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. 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 Democratic leader is recognized.

#### CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now, for the third week in a row, the Republican majority in the Senate has no COVID-related business on the agenda. For the third week in a row, Leader MCCONNELL has scheduled zero votes on legislation having to do with the crisis.

Senate Democrats have had to relentlessly pressure our Republican colleagues to secure even the most routine oversight hearings on the pandemic. If we had not pressured them, I doubt there would be any hearings at all, and they are few and far between. The hearings will be the only work we will have done in the Senate on COVID-19 in the entire month of May, and the Republican majority has had to be pressured into doing even those. There are now more than 35 million Americans out of work through no

fault of their own. Almost 1.5 million Americans are sick, and nearly 90,000 have died. Yet Senate Republicans have decided to take the month off from the coronavirus.

The American people may be wondering: What is the Republican-led Senate doing instead of addressing this urgent national crisis? What could be more pressing? What is the Republican Senate doing in the midst of the crisis?

Well, Leader MCCONNELL has scheduled five rightwing judges for the floor of the Senate, and the Republican chairman of the Homeland Security Committee will be holding a hearing designed to slander the family of the President's political opponent. Is the chairman of Homeland Security calling in FEMA to find out if our hospitals have enough PPE? No. He wants to echo Kremlin-backed conspiracy theories in order to go on a fishing expedition to smear Joe Biden's son.

We all know this is what the President focuses on instead of the COVID crisis, but must our Republican colleagues gamely follow such an absurd, diversionary, and untruthful agenda? I guess so. It is a shame.

Even more shameful, the company that the Senator from Wisconsin wants to issue a subpoena for is voluntarily cooperating and providing relevant documents to the committee. Did you hear that? They want to make a big show of subpoenaing, but the company says it will cooperate. It is a show. It is a sham. It has nothing to do with COVID and everything to do with Kremlin-backed rumors that they want to use to divert attention from the President's poor showing on COVID. The subpoena is just for show. It is not necessary because the company will cooperate. It is a way to kick up dirt for exclusively partisan purposes.

It would be bad enough if they were doing this when COVID-19 wasn't raging, but with COVID-19 raging, to spend time doing this instead of focusing on the way to get relief to people—unbelievable. It is a low point for that committee, a low point for the Senate.

This is what is on the Senate Republicans' agenda in the midst of historic unemployment and a national crisis: five rightwing judges and the exploitation—a show, mock hearing for partisan mudslinging. America is in crisis, and Senate Republicans are rearranging the Nation's deck chairs and trying to put them in a political assembly.

The Chairman of the Federal Reserve, Jay Powell, appointed by President Trump, said last week that we are looking at the worst recession since World War II. Yesterday, Mr. Powell warned that layoffs would continue for several months and that unemployment could reach 20 or even 25 percent. He said:

If we let people be out of work for long periods of time, if we let businesses fail unnecessarily, waves of them, there'll be longer term damage to the economy. The recovery will be slower. The good news is we can avoid that by providing more support now.

Mr. Powell went on to encourage policymakers to provide greater assistance to families and implement measures to keep workers in their homes. He also pointed out if State and local governments don't receive additional aid, they will be forced to lay off public employees and cut back on public services at the worst possible time.

Mr. Powell is spot-on, and tomorrow, in the Senate Banking Committee, my Republican colleagues will have a chance to hear this critical message straight from the horse's mouth, with Mr. Mnuchin and Mr. Powell set to testify only after Senate Democrats had to push and push and push for such a hearing. We asked for it 3 weeks ago. It should have happened 2 weeks ago because the country is calling out for action. Trump appointees are calling out for action. Governors across the country—Democratic and Republican Governors—are calling out for action. When will my Republican colleagues hear the message? After all, there is no shortage of action the Senate could take.

Millions of Americans are having difficulty receiving the expanded unemployment insurance benefits that Congress recently passed. Why aren't Senate Republicans holding a hearing on why millions of our citizens aren't getting the aid we intended to provide instead of these sham political show trial "gotcha" hearings?

Testing continues to be a major problem. A blockbuster report in the Washington Post last night says we are "far short of the [testing] number that most independent analysts say will be needed to avoid another wave of death and illness." The report described a concerning shortage of PPE, nasal swabs, and reagents in nursing homes and other frontline settings. The report outlined another problem: There is a startling lack of awareness in many communities about the need to get tested.

Why aren't Senate Republicans focusing on these issues? These are life-and-death issues. They relate to people's health and people's lives, and they relate to our economy getting well. Why isn't President Trump leading a nationwide push to increase testing capacity and frequency and awareness?

President Trump is so desperate to reopen the country as quickly as possible, but he refuses to roll up his sleeves and do the work that would allow us to do it safely. There is an anomaly here. He demands that people get back to work but doesn't do his work to make sure we have testing, to make sure there are guidelines, to make sure this works correctly so that we don't have a crisis a few months from now.

House Democrats have put together a major bill that would provide urgent and necessary relief to the American people. My colleagues on the Republican side don't have to like everything in it. They could easily say: Let's sit down and negotiate. Let's find some common ground.

Instead, Leader McCONNELL has said that Republicans have yet to feel "the urgency of acting immediately"—Herbert Hoover redux. Instead, his party is slowly preparing legislation to give legal immunity to big corporations that put workers in dangerous situations. Is that the No. 1 problem on every American's mind? Is that the No. 1 problem of people who are losing their jobs, people who have small businesses that are going bankrupt, people who can't feed their kids—protecting corporations from liability?

This Republican Party is so, so out of touch with America. It is so off-kilter, so in obeisance to the hard right that they can't even focus on a crisis when it is right before their eyes.

We are confronted with a period of prolonged economic misery for millions of American workers and families—Americans who, for the first time, are waiting in staggering lines at food banks, Americans who, for the first time, don't know if they will be able to keep a roof over their heads, put food on the table or pay the rent. How long will it take—how long? How much economic hardship—how much before Republicans feel the urgency to act?

#### STATE DEPARTMENT IG

Mr. President, on another matter, last Friday night, in the dark of night, President Trump fired the inspector general of the State Department, Mr. Steve Linick. Mr. Linick, according to reports, had been investigating the misuse of public resources by Secretary Pompeo and the Trump administration's arms sales to Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Linick is now the fifth—yes, the fifth—inspector general to be fired by President Trump from his or her post in the last few months. They all shared one thing in common. They had the audacity to do their jobs and speak the truth. They had the audacity to try and drain the swamp.

What is Donald Trump's reaction when he hears the truth? He fires the people who have spoken it. What kind of President is that?

During normal times it is bad enough, but during a crisis, it is more awful. The Inspector General of the Intelligence Committee delivered a whistleblower report to Congress as required by law. For this, it seems, he was fired.

It was through the work of the HHS inspector general the public learned the extent of the Trump administration's failure to provide hospitals and medical workers with testing, PPE, and necessary personnel in the early days of the pandemic. She has been fired too.

The inspector general for the Defense Department and the Transportation Department have been fired, as well, just as they were about to oversee parts of the administration's response to COVID.

Now it is Mr. Linick who was looking into potential wrongdoing at the State Department.

The inspectors general are the watchdogs for our Federal agencies, making

sure our government is working for the people. That is what they are there to do: Hold government accountable for waste and fraud and abuse. But if they actually do their jobs and say that the President is doing something wrong, he fires them.

The President can't handle the truth and will not tolerate oversight of his administration when truth speakers speak out. No other administration has come close to doing this. This President is so different, running almost a rogue administration that defies truth, that defies facts. Now five inspectors general have been fired all because they were doing their job, telling the truth, and trying to clean up the mess in Washington.

We know this about President Trump, but where the heck are my Republican colleagues in the Senate? My friends on the other side, especially the senior Senator from Iowa, have long defended and even sought to pass legislation to further empower inspectors general. Well, the President has just fired a parade of independent watchdogs and given no legitimate explanation for their dismissals.

Is a mild rebuke the most my Republican colleagues can muster—a tweet? Some concerned statements?

This is not the first time the President has fired an IG and failed to provide a sufficient explanation. So what are our Republican colleagues going to do about it? Nothing, it seems. Nothing. They are so afraid of President Trump. They so cling—almost to his ankles—that when they know he is doing wrong, when they know he is hiding the truth, they are afraid to say it. They shudder.

I have never seen anything like it: a President who is so out of control with his party so in line behind him, marching in lockstep. But when history looks back on this chapter, on President Trump's purge of independent watchdogs during a time of national crisis, it will not give credit to Senate Republicans who let the President off the hook with at most and only, at times, a polite slap on the wrist.

I yield the floor.

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

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

#### HEROES ACT

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to discuss the House Democrats' \$3 trillion spending spree.

The American people are at a point where they need a life preserver. Instead, Speaker PELOSI has just thrown them an anvil.

It is absurd. Her COVID-19 proposal is pricey, partisan, and it is a pipe dream. It is a bloated bonanza of all of