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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

God of our destiny, You have watched over us from generation to generation. May our lawmakers trust Your faithfulness during this challenging season of our Nation's history. Lord, inspire them to recall how You have sustained this land we love in prosperity and adversity, in peace and in war. Give our Senators the wisdom to believe that they can trust Your constancy and greatness as they cling to Your promise to never leave or forsake them. Believing in Your power, help us all to face fresh challenges with total confidence in You.

And, Lord, we pray for the health and safety of all as communities begin the process of reopening businesses.

We pray in Your mighty Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 3 minutes as in morning business.

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

CHINA AND THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I am deeply concerned about reports that China began hoarding medical

supplies in early January while working to prevent the World Health Organization from sounding the alarm about the virus pandemic.

By analyzing international trade data, the Department of Homeland Security assessed that the Chinese Government intentionally concealed the severity of COVID-19 from the world in early January in order to stockpile medical supplies. Furthermore, the Chinese Communist Party Government tried to hide its actions by denying there were any export restrictions. They even tried to obscure and delay its trade data so it wouldn't get caught.

These acts are outrageous.

Even worse, the CIA and foreign intelligence agencies have found evidence that China threatened the World Health Organization to stop cooperating on efforts to combat COVID-19 if the organization declared a global health emergency early on. So it was declared, and, hence, there was valuable time lost in fighting the virus.

This is simply unacceptable behavior. The Chinese Communist Party ought to be held accountable for the countless lives that have been lost around the globe due to its nontransparent, aggressive, inhumane behavior.

The World Health Organization is composed of many honorable and dedicated medical professionals who believe in the WHO's mission. If any of them were privy to what was going on by the Chinese Communist Party, he ought to step forward and shine light on any misdeeds by the organization's leadership.

Whistleblowers are necessary to prevent corruption within any institution, which is why I have a longstanding reputation of protecting whistleblowers. The world deserves to know what the World Health Organization's leaders knew and when they knew it. The evidence is quickly becoming crystal clear—that China is responsible for tremendous suffering worldwide through

its lies and active coverup. Telling the truth about the Chinese Communist Party does not, as some have suggested, have any bearing on how we analyze our domestic response.

We should learn from democratic countries that have been successful in containing outbreaks, like Taiwan and South Korea. However, in going forward, everyone around the world should have his eyes open about the true nature of the Chinese regime.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, the coronavirus pandemic continues to challenge our Nation, and the Senate is here working for the American people.

Our committees have called in experts like Dr. Fauci and leaders like Chairman Powell to discuss the CARES Act and the path toward reopening. We are tracking the effects of the largest rescue package ever and are considering next steps, like strong legal protections so that doctors, small businesses, schoolteachers, and universities do not face a second epidemic of frivolous lawsuits.

The Senate is also staying on top of other threats that predated COVID-19—the meddling of Putin's Russia, the brutal Chinese Communist Party, rogue states like Iran and North Korea, foreign terrorists such as ISIS.

Two weeks ago, we overwhelmingly confirmed an impressive leader for the National Counterintelligence and Security Center, whom Acting DNI Grenell has announced will play a central role in briefing candidates and campaigns on foreign threats against our elections.

Today, our colleagues on the Intelligence Committee, now led by Acting

• This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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Chairman RUBIO, will report out the President's nominee to be the next Director of National Intelligence, and, last week, we reauthorized essential tools that our intelligence community needs to defend our homeland, track our enemies, and protect Americans.

But we didn't stop there.

Over the last several years, we have been painfully reminded that our Nation and our liberties are not only threatened from without. The fabric of our country is also hurt when tools and capabilities that are meant to keep us safe are abused in ways that are, at best, reckless, sloppy, and unaccountable—or, worse, polluted by political bias.

In 2016, the FBI embarked on a counterintelligence investigation against Donald Trump's campaign for the Presidency. Federal law enforcement used taxpayer money to scrutinize a political campaign in the middle of a democratic election. You would have thought such a radical step must have sprung from an air-tight justification. Certainly, you would think the outgoing Obama administration should only have used the awesome power of the Federal Government to pry into their political rivals if they had had a slam-dunk basis for doing so, but that is not what they had.

In one instance, the FBI got permission to surveil a Trump associate by telling half-truths, blurring evidence, and citing sketchy sources like a dossier of partisan opposition research that had been funded by the Hillary Clinton campaign and the DNC.

Here is how even the New York Times explained the recent findings of the Justice Department's inspector general: "The FBI had cherry-picked and misstated evidence about the Trump adviser . . . when seeking permission to wiretap him."

That was from the New York Times.

So an American citizen's campaign for the American Presidency was treated like a hostile foreign power by our own law enforcement, in part, because the Democratic-led executive branch manipulated documents, hid contrary evidence, and made a DNC-funded dossier a launch pad for an investigation. The inspector general counted seven significant inaccuracies and omissions. Here is his report:

We identified multiple instances in which factual assertions relied upon in the [FBI's] FISA application were inaccurate, incomplete, or unsupported by appropriate documentation based upon information the FBI had in its possession at the time the application was filed.

Did you catch that last part? It was based upon information the FBI had in its possession at the time the application was filed. So we are either talking about gross incompetence or intentional bias. Does any Senator think it is acceptable for any Federal warrant application to include seven significant inaccuracies and omissions? But this wasn't just a run-of-the-mill warrant; it was a FISA warrant to snoop on a Presidential campaign.

This is just one of the realities that President Trump's Democratic critics spent years calling conspiracy theories or inventions of the President's mind. Yet here it is in black and white from exactly the kind of independent inspector general the Democrats rushed to embrace when convenient.

Sadly, this was no isolated incident. Just recently, Attorney General Barr has had to take the incredible step of unwinding the DOJ prosecution of another former Trump adviser because the government's case against him was unfair and distorted as well.

It was largely on the basis of these proceedings that the Democrats and the media spent years being fixated on wild theories of Russian collusion, but upon investigation, the Mueller investigation—remember that one?—it is those wild allegations that collapsed along with the credibility of several of these investigations that helped to create the cloud of suspicion in the first place.

In the words of our distinguished Attorney General:

The proper investigative and prosecutorial standards of the Department of Justice were abused. . . . We saw two different standards of justice emerge, one that applied to President Trump and his associates and the other that applied to everybody else. We can't allow this ever to happen again.

That is from the Attorney General.

Oh, and by the way, as if this debacle needed even more shocking behavior, I understand a Federal judge may try to continue prosecuting one of these cases even though the prosecution itself wants to drop it. The judge has taken it upon himself to go browsing for other hostile parties. Obviously, that subverts our constitutional order in which the executive alone decides whether to prosecute cases.

So, look, no matter what some Washington Democrats may try to claim, you are not crazy or a conspiracy theorist if you see a pattern of institutional unfairness toward this President. You would have to be blind not to see one.

All of this is why the Senate passed important FISA reforms in last week's bill—to help bring accountability and transparency into that flawed process—and we aren't nearly finished.

As soon as possible, the full Senate will vote on Mr. RATCLIFFE's nomination. The President will have a Senate-confirmed DNI who can pursue the vital national security work of our tireless intelligence community while he can also ensure that the IC stays out of politics and out of the papers.

Just yesterday, Chairman GRAHAM announced the Committee on the Judiciary will vote on a serious new set of subpoenas so the Senate can hear directly from key players like James Comey, Andrew McCabe, Loretta Lynch, and many others to continue getting to the bottom of this. Let me say that again. The Senate Republicans are taking steps to issue subpoenas to a wide variety of Obama administration officials who have some

relationship to the abuses I have just laid out. The American people deserve answers about how such abuses could happen, and we intend to get those answers.

I have been a strong supporter of law enforcement and the intelligence community during my career. The American people sleep safer because dedicated people are protecting our country and bringing our foes to justice. It is precisely because I support these missions that I feel so strongly this malpractice cannot be tolerated and must never be repeated.

TRIBUTE TO MIKE DiSILVESTRO

Mr. MCCONNELL. Now, Madam President, on another matter, it is my honor to help bid farewell to a distinguished staff leader, who has himself handled sensitive security matters with great care and dedication.

For more than 30 years, this body has functioned more safely and smoothly because Mike DiSilvestro was on the clock as Director of the Office of Senate Security. Mike D.'s job is tough to describe. That is partially because long tenured all-stars like Mike have a way of carving out their own niche, but it is mostly because his work is literally classified. Mike has been in charge of the Office of Senate Security almost as long as I have been in the Senate.

He came on board as Acting Director in 1987. He took over a brandnew office with incredibly important and sensitive functions. The details are not for public consumption, but let's say there were two main missions.

First, Mike has managed, modernized, and expanded the secure facilities and systems that provide classified information in the Capitol to Senators and committees as we govern the country. He has simultaneously been a diplomatic liaison to the executive branch and has advocated for the Senate's prerogative, and he has been a skillful manager of people and logistics, who has made sure our secrets stay secret once they arrive here.

Second, Mike has been one of our top leaders on the security of the Senate itself. He helps to plan for contingencies and guard every facet of our institution, its people, and its systems from outside actors with bad intentions.

These are tall orders—even for a fellow graduate of the University of Louisville. Consider how much has changed in the 37 years since Mike first came to the Senate and in the 32 years he has held this job: major wars, terrorist strikes on the homeland, anthrax in the Hart Building, countless technological advances that have made his task radically more complex. Imagine guarding some of the Nation's most closely held secrets, planning for possible attacks on the institution, and still being unanimously described by your colleagues as calm, cool, and even-keeled.

Mike is no cheap people pleaser. His duties don't permit it. When you see