

for our country. We will turn to legislation to strengthen the implementation of the Paycheck Protection Program for the workers and small businesses that are struggling to weather this storm. We will consider a bipartisan bill from Senators DAINES and GARDNER to safeguard America's abundant public lands. For the 60th consecutive year, we will also take up the National Defense Authorization Act to help guide the strategic and operational priorities of our Nation's Armed Forces in the face of evolving threats.

AFGHANISTAN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, make no mistake, the foreign actors who seek to harm the United States have not let up while we have attended to other problems. For example, in Afghanistan, despite agreeing just months ago to engage in further peace negotiations with the Afghan Government and sever its ties with al-Qaida, the Taliban has, instead, continued its violent campaign against the Afghan people.

President Trump has expressed frustration with the Taliban's failures and is reportedly considering withdrawing from Afghanistan even more rapidly. Yet, as we weigh our options, we must not forget the painful lessons of the last administration's mistakes.

Former President Obama and Vice President Biden were intent on beating a hasty retreat from Iraq, conditions on the ground notwithstanding. Just as many of us warned at the time, their recklessness left a vacuum that terrorists and Iran readily filled. ISIS flourished. Tragically, the rest is history. The resulting chaos threatened our interests and drew American efforts back into the region.

By contrast, the Trump administration has seen a number of successes in this difficult region. The President's strategy has secured a territorial defeat of ISIS. It has put new pressure on Iran and given the Iraqi people a fighting chance, which their new government seems inclined to take.

Yet helping Iraq stand up to Iranian influence will not be an overnight project. Iran wants to drive the United States from the region. China and Russia would also be thrilled with a reduction of American presence and influence there. So, as we struggle to clean up the broken pieces of one rushed withdrawal, we need to avoid repeating those mistakes somewhere else.

I applaud the Trump administration for its approach thus far in Afghanistan. The President has taken constraints off U.S. forces. We have helped Afghan forces go after the terrorists. We have ratcheted up the costs on the Taliban, bolstered the Afghan forces that bear the brunt of the violence, and won international support for our mission there. We have done all of this with fewer resources and fewer personnel than during the previous two

administrations. The President's strategy and diplomacy have helped create a path for discussions among Afghans—the only thing that could actually secure the country's future.

If these qualified successes continue, it would be appropriate to further reduce our American presence as certain conditions are met, but we must retain enough forces and influence to maintain our counterterrorism capabilities. Given recent reports and our longstanding experience, we cannot just trust the Taliban will sever ties to al-Qaida and other terrorist networks. We need to be vigilant. We need to maintain enough presence to judge whether the Taliban complies with agreements and help the Afghan Government impose consequences if it does not. We need to maintain enough presence to preserve our strategic foothold against ISIS, the Haqqani Network, and al-Qaida. We should also maintain enough presence to help prevent a full replay of Iraq or Syria—a bloodbath and a human rights collapse, particularly for generations of Afghan women.

Last year, a bipartisan supermajority in the Senate voted for an amendment I authored, which warned against precipitous withdrawals from Afghanistan and Syria in ways that could jeopardize the hard-won progress we have attained, embolden Iran and Russia, and create more pain for us and everyone else in the future.

Our enemies would be thrilled if the United States would grow too tired to continue the hard work of standing with our partners, confronting our adversaries, and maintaining measured leadership that projects our security around the world. Our enemies would be delighted if we would grow too weary to act in our own long-term interest. We must not give them that satisfaction.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of James H. Anderson, of Virginia, to be a Deputy Under Secretary of Defense.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. LOEFFLER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

PROTESTS AND BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, this has been a very difficult week after what has been a very difficult few months. A nation, beleaguered by disease and economic depression, has once again come face-to-face with the racial injustice that infects our society. The death of George Floyd in police custody was a searing reminder of a long list of unarmed African Americans whose lives have been taken under similar circumstances—Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and too many others—a well of grief and loss and pain too deep to express. It was a searing reminder of the bigotry and discrimination that African Americans encounter as part of their daily reality.

That is why so many Americans of all ages, colors, and faiths are out in the streets protesting right now. They are fed up with racial injustice in this country and want to see some change. Here in the Senate, Member after Member has come to the floor to share support for the same cause.

Yesterday, our caucus held a somber, emotional, and very personal meeting, during which our Members shared their own lived experiences of racism and spoke about what we need to do next because the truth is, while speeches and protests are vital, they will never be enough.

We need greater accountability and transparency in police departments and reformed police practices so these events don't happen in the first place. We need to reform the criminal justice system that is still too short on justice and begin chipping away at the racial disparities that exist in healthcare, housing, education, and in the economy.

These issues will not be solved in a week or a month or in a year. Let's hope they can be solved in this decade. But I will be damned if we don't at least try to make some progress. Already, my colleagues Senators BOOKER, HARRIS, CARDIN, KLOBUCHAR, DUCKWORTH, SCHATZ, SMITH, and others are working with the Congressional Black Caucus in the House to develop legislation to address a number of issues related to police violence and racial justice. Senate Democrats will not wait to propose and push for bold, bold change.

Will our Republican colleagues join us? Leader MCCONNELL, commit to put a law enforcement reform bill on the floor of the Senate before July 4.

I have made this request for several days without an answer from the Republican leader. Even more disappointing, the Republican leader blocked a simple resolution I offered last night that reaffirmed Americans' constitutional rights to peaceful protest, condemned the violence that is occurring in too many places, and condemned the President as well for having gas and rubber bullets used on a peaceful protest in Lafayette Park, where there were families and children protesting in the grand American tradition of peaceful protest.

There was no partisan rhetoric in this resolution. It was three simple concepts, a recitation of the facts, but because Senate Republicans are so afraid—shivering—at the thought of criticizing the President, even when they know his actions are way out of line, Leader MCCONNELL came and blocked this resolution. Shame, shame, shame.

We all know there are very few checks on the President, especially a President who believes he can do anything he wants—and he said it. One of the most effective checks on President Trump could be the caucus of Republican Senators for once standing up to him when he is way out of line. Where are they? Where are they?

Even a columnist like George Will has shown a disgust at the Republican Senate, and he is a conservative, for their failure to stand up to Donald Trump on issues like this. All too often on thorny issues such as gun safety, racial justice, and police reform, my Republican colleagues sort of say what is necessary to get through the day, when there is an immediate crisis, and then wait for public attention to fade.

Leader MCCONNELL called us back into session in early May during the height of the COVID pandemic, but we still have not considered a single piece of legislation on the floor. Now listen to this. Yesterday, when Leader MCCONNELL was listing legislative priorities for June, he did not mention COVID legislation. Let me repeat for those who may have missed it in the swirl of news and events of the day. When listing his June priorities to reporters, Leader MCCONNELL did not mention COVID-related legislation. Other Republican Senators have said that another relief bill might come in late July—might, might.

This is shocking. This should be a wake-up call to the American people. Americans of all ages, races, creeds, and philosophies, call your Republican Senators. Demand action.

The recession will get deeper. It could develop into a depression if we don't have relief. We have not done enough in the eyes of every economist I have looked at and respected. Governors and mayors across the country in red States are slashing budgets in advance of the new fiscal year, which for most States starts July 1. States will be forced to cut millions of jobs and critical services. These cuts mean

increased school class sizes, longer emergency response times, fewer services to keep the elderly at home and out of nursing homes. These cuts not only exacerbate the recession but the wrath of the coronavirus itself. That is what is happening while Senate Republicans wait until July, maybe, to consider another relief bill.

America, look at what our Republicans are doing: not giving the relief you need for your safety, for your schools, for the services that local government provides.

The Republican majority doesn't seem to have time to address a cascading series of national crises—no time. Why is that?

Where is President Trump? Where is his Cabinet? They all know that we need more. They all know we haven't solved the economic problem—far from it. They all know that we have to do a lot more on testing.

So our Republican majority doesn't seem to have time to address the COVID national crisis, but do you know what it does have time for? Chasing President Trump's wild conspiracy theories. It sounds like the death knell of the Republican Party as we know it. They can't deal with the two major crises of the day—racial justice and the COVID crisis—and they are busy pursuing conspiracy theories, some of them emanating from Russia, to go after President Obama and Vice President Biden.

This makes no sense. This, again, sounds like the death knell of the Republican Party. The Republican Party we used to know would have some principles but not be afraid to run to every major issue—to any major issue almost. But that is what they are doing.

Today, in the Judiciary Committee, the Republican committee chairman has called in Rod Rosenstein to dredge up the President's favorite conspiracy theory related to the 2016 election. It is an egregious misuse of the institution—the Senate.

Nearly a quarter of our workforce is unemployed. Over 100,000 Americans are dead from a strange and contagious disease; Americans are in the streets demanding racial justice; and shopworn, discredited conspiracy theories are what the Republican majority is focused on? What alternative universe do they live in? What alternative reality are they in the midst of? One detached from the real reality that the American people face: conspiracy theories to help President Trump's reelection, rightwing judges, many of whom have antipathy to the civil rights we are talking about now.

The Republican Party in the Senate has moved so far into a corner, the corner that Donald Trump is in, that they can't address two of the most important and major issues that have affected this country in decades.

The American people should be furious with the Republican Senate majority, and the American people and historians will record with sadness how this

once great party, even though I didn't agree with it, has declined so—no courage, no principle, but simply cowering for President Trump and his crazy theories that even they know are crazy.

The American people, of course, should be furious with the President as well. On Monday night, Americans watched Federal officers, under the direction of the President and the Attorney General, use gas and rubber bullets to disperse a crowd of peaceful protesters in a public park so that the President could stage a photo op in front of a church, waving the Holy Bible as a prop.

Last night, Americans saw an even more haunting image on the internet and their televisions: rows of camouflage troops standing at attention on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, like an occupying force defending a critical position.

When you see the image of troops dressed for combat flanking the Lincoln Memorial, an altar of freedom, you cannot help but think of Tiananmen Square. This administration ordered Federal officers to gas peaceful protesters and charge on horseback and defend our monuments like battlefield positions.

What is President Trump doing to this grand democracy? What is he doing? And why are our Republican colleagues just going along?

President Lincoln's second inaugural address is engraved in that building where armed soldiers stood. During a moment of extreme political division and civil strife, President Lincoln urged malice toward none, charity toward all, and sought to bind up the Nation's wounds.

There could be no greater contrast between Lincoln and this President, this President who seems to have malice toward all and charity for none, who seeks to deepen our Nation's wounds rather than bind them up. Our Nation is crying out for leadership, for direction, for some healing and some unity. Will this President even try to provide it?

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip is recognized.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I want to speak here in just a moment to the issue of internet traffic and how that has been impacted by the coronavirus, how it has impacted our lives during the coronavirus. Before I do that, though, I want to just respond to a few things the Democratic leader mentioned.

He again pointed out that the Republican Senate isn't doing work here. It is hard to fathom how he can possibly come to that conclusion. The Democrat-run House of Representatives is out of session for the entire month—the entire month of June. They are not even here. The Democratic House of Representatives isn't even in town.

The Senate is here doing work, and important work, I might add. He said

we haven't passed any legislation. Well, the week before the Memorial Day break we passed the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act reauthorization, a critical piece of national security and intelligence legislation that all our intelligence experts tell us is critical to fighting the war against terrorists. Pretty important legislation, I would say.

He pointed out that the agenda for the month of June doesn't include much. Well, that is only if you don't think that the National Defense Authorization Act is not important. Funding the military, authorizing the weapons systems, paying the personnel, the technology, the intelligence, all the things that go into protecting the country seem to me to be pretty important.

So the National Defense Authorization Act is a piece of legislation that the Senate will process during the upcoming weeks here in the month of June. In fact, that will probably take a good week to move across the floor of the Senate. It typically does. It is something we have to do on an annual basis, but there is nothing more important and more critical to the national security of the United States than the National Defense Authorization Act.

We will be passing a major parks bill this next week, which will help fund the backlog in a lot of our national parks—something that has been a priority for many Democrats here in this Chamber for a long time. In fact, it is a great bipartisan bill. In fact, I think, out of the Democratic caucus, there are somewhere on the order of 43 of the 47 Democrats who are cosponsoring the piece of legislation that will be called up later this week and be on the floor most of next week.

So it is something that has been around here for a while. It is going to be a major legislative accomplishment. It will be a bipartisan accomplishment when it passes.

So I would just say that the fact that we aren't doing the things the Democratic leader wants to do doesn't mean the Senate isn't very busy. The things he wants to do, the things he talks about wanting to do, are things that we are doing. We are dealing with the coronavirus on a daily basis around here.

I am a member of the Senate Finance Committee. Yesterday, the Senate Finance Committee had a hearing in which officials from the FDA, for example, critical agencies when it comes particularly to pharmaceuticals in this country, attended, and the subject of the hearing was the pharmaceutical supply chain and what we need to do to shore that up, to make sure that in future pandemics, with lessons learned from this one, we aren't dependent upon unreliable supply chains in places around the world that, frankly, may not be dependable. That is a pretty important issue when it comes to dealing with the effects and the impacts of the coronavirus.

Today, in the Senate Commerce Committee, another committee on which I serve, we are going to be examining the impact of the coronavirus on our transportation infrastructure and how important this transportation has been throughout the course of the coronavirus in ensuring that we keep commerce going, that we keep food in the grocery stores.

We are going to be looking at both the highway aspect, the rail aspect—all of those—and how they are impacted by the coronavirus and what we might need to do to ensure that they continue to be able to provide the services that they do going forward.

So we are consistently looking at, on a daily basis, the coronavirus, the impact it is having on our economy, the impact it is having on the health of people in this country, the health emergency, and putting measures in place that would deal not only with that health emergency but also with the economic crisis created by it.

In the meantime, we are seeing the economy start to open up again, which I think is a very good thing. I am hopeful we will see, as the economy opens up, that people will get out, consumers will spend, investors will invest, and we will see that economy start to grow again, jobs to come back.

Obviously, we have very high unemployment right now—a major concern. We also have a major unemployment insurance piece of legislation that was moved by this Congress earlier to provide assistance and help for those who, through no fault of their own, have had to go on unemployment.

To suggest for a moment that we aren't focused on the coronavirus is completely missing the point—as is to suggest, also, that we haven't done a lot already. We passed four major pieces of legislation, totaling almost \$3 trillion, and that is \$3 trillion if you don't include the amount of leverage we gave to the Federal Reserve and the Treasury to extend credit and create liquidity out there. With the power of that leverage, it is somewhere on the order of about \$6 trillion in assistance that we have put out there through different legislative vehicles to the American people.

So you are seeing that translated into the Paycheck Protection Program, which is keeping people employed, keeping jobs in this country, keeping businesses functioning and operating. It has been a very successful program.

You are seeing it in the form of direct assistance to State and local governments. And \$150 billion has been put out there, much of which hasn't been spent, and that is on top of a lot of other assistance to State and local governments, which totals somewhere on the order of about \$500 billion. Almost half a trillion dollars, so far, sum total, has gone out to State and local governments.

Much of that, as I said, is in the pipeline, hasn't been spent yet. It can be

used, as the Treasury has pointed out, given the States' flexibility, for emergency personnel, first responders, police, all the things that the Senator from New York talked about. That is flexibility the States have now to be able to meet the needs that they have and to work with their local governments and meet the needs of the local governments.

So there is a lot of money in the pipeline, not to mention, of course, first and foremost, the money we put out there for investment in therapeutics, in vaccines, in diagnostic testing, and all the money that has gone out to hospitals and nursing home providers and long-term care facilities to help them get through this crisis in the form of direct assistance. So there is a lot of money in the pipeline—as I said, about \$2.9 trillion that has already been authorized, and I think about 40 percent, maybe, has been spent. So there is still a lot of assistance going out there.

My friend, the Democratic leader, would just want to put a whole bunch more money out there without knowing what the need is, and I think, at a time when we are already running a \$21 trillion—now \$25 trillion—debt, we ought to be very circumspect and pay attention to what is happening in our economy, what the needs are, what we need to keep the economy opening up and responding, what we continue to need to do to help people who are unemployed, what we continue to need to do to help families in this country who are struggling through this crisis.

But we ought to do that based on the need, not just somebody saying: Well, let's just throw a bunch more money out there and hope that it has an impact. We have done that. We have flooded the zone with dollars. There is a tremendous amount of resources out there right now, a lot of which has yet to be spent, and it strikes me, at least, that, in the eyes of most Americans, they would view it as pretty important, before we spend more tax money—all of which, I might add, is going to be borrowed money—that we see how what we have done already is working, if it has been effective and is having the desired impact.

There is so much going on around here dealing with the coronavirus, it just completely defies any sort of logic to what the Democratic leader suggested was happening here in the Senate.

He made one other comment, which I think I have to respond to. He said that the Senate is in the process—Republicans in the Senate are processing rightwing judges who have antipathy for the very civil rights issues that we are dealing with right now.

I don't know how you can make a statement like that. I don't know how you can ascribe motive or intent to judges. You don't know who these judges are.

We have a judge we are going to be processing here for the DC circuit. It is

a pretty important circuit in this country. He is the district judge from Kentucky. He has been rated as very “well qualified” by the American Bar Association. The American Bar Association isn’t a rightwing group at all. In fact, many on our side think they certainly drift the other direction. Yet they have said this judge is a well-qualified judge. Do you think they would be saying something like that about a judge who had antipathy for civil rights? I mean, that is just, I would say, a reckless and irresponsible statement unless you have something to back that up and support it.

So I just thought it would be important to respond to some of the things that the Democratic leader just said with respect to the agenda here in the Senate, which, as I pointed out earlier, is a very full one. If you compare it to the agenda of our colleagues in the Democrat-controlled House, which is zilch because they are not here for the entire month, it seems to me the Senate is getting a lot of work done.

5G

So, Madam President, what I came here to talk about—I came down to the floor a couple of weeks ago to talk about how the coronavirus is highlighting the importance of strong internet networks.

Despite the surge we have seen in internet traffic that the coronavirus has produced, with Americans using the internet for everything from work to school to family dinners, U.S. networks have held up tremendously well.

Americans have been able to enjoy the same speed and streaming quality that they typically enjoy, something that hasn’t happened in a lot of other countries, and that is a direct result of the United States’ light-touch approach to internet regulation, which has encouraged American companies to invest in the latest communications infrastructure and new technologies to make more efficient use of spectrum.

Our Nation is currently preparing for the widespread adoption of the next generation of internet technology—what is known as 5G. We need to make sure that our 5G networks will be as strong as our current networks, but we still have some work to do to get to that point.

I come down here frequently to the floor to discuss that work, which includes paving the way for the widespread installation of the small cells that are necessary for 5G networks, enhancing the availability of the mid-band spectrum that is necessary for 5G deployment, and investing in a 5G workforce.

But there is also another aspect we need to think about when it comes to 5G, which is sometimes not talked about as much, and that is network security. With its incredible speed and connectivity, 5G will usher in a new era of innovation: advances in medical care, the large-scale deployment of precision agriculture, safer transportation technologies. 5G will bring all of these things and more.

But like any new technology, 5G networks will present new risks and vulnerabilities. And because 5G will mean a vastly greater number of connected devices, the risks with 5G will be greater. That is the why a central part of deploying 5G networks has to be looking at how we can mitigate security risks.

We need to ensure that our component parts of our devices and, critically, the component parts of telecommunications networks, like cell towers and the small cells that will be required for 5G, are secure. A primary way to do that is by ensuring that 5G equipment comes from trusted vendors.

Currently, one of the biggest suppliers of 5G equipment worldwide is a Chinese company, Huawei, which is supported by the Chinese Government. China’s 2017 national intelligence law requires Chinese companies to support the Chinese Government’s intelligence activities. American security officials have raised concerns that much of Huawei’s equipment is built with back doors that give the Chinese Government access to global communications networks.

I don’t need to tell anyone that we should be wary of China’s motives and that China’s interests are frequently opposed to those of the United States.

China’s handling of the coronavirus is a striking current example of the Chinese Government’s prioritizing its own interests or pride over the public good. As a New York Times article noted in February, “The [Chinese] government’s initial handling of the epidemic allowed the virus to gain a tenacious hold. At critical moments, officials chose to put secrecy and order ahead of openly confronting the growing crisis to avoid political alarm and political embarrassment.”

Whether it was driven by the hubris of the Communist Party or merely the callous indifference the Communist state has for the well-being of its own citizens, China was not transparent about the grave danger of COVID-19. It failed to release accurate information about the nature and spread of the virus, and it took active steps to make sure the truth did not get out in other ways. Whistleblowers were punished; the centers were censored; and journalists were expelled.

Despite the fact that its negligence undoubtedly contributed to the global spread of COVID-19, China still continues to be less than forthcoming about the virus. Unfortunately, this is run-of-the-mill governing in China, as we saw with the SARS outbreak in the early 2000s and as we have seen in many other instances.

Not content with its role in aggravating the spread of the coronavirus, the Chinese Communist Party has also taken advantage of the pandemic to strip Hong Kong of its autonomy and freedom. China’s hope is that our Nation is too preoccupied with this pandemic to notice its efforts to undermine what should be Hong Kong’s autonomy under the one state, two systems construct.

We have noticed. As many of my colleagues and I have expressed, we stand with Hong Kong. We must carefully consider an appropriate response, one that will rebuke the Communist Party of China without negatively affecting the people of Hong Kong, their well-being, and their democratic aspirations.

We didn’t need COVID-19 or China’s recent actions in Hong Kong to know that giving the Chinese Government a backdoor into American communications networks is a bad idea. But it certainly underscores the need to make sure that 5G infrastructure is not made by companies beholden to the Chinese Government. The United States has taken a number of steps to prevent equipment from Huawei and another suspect Chinese company, ZTE, from being used in U.S. communications networks, but these companies still pose a risk to the United States.

For starters, some U.S. broadband providers, often in rural areas, still have equipment from Huawei and ZTE in their communications networks. A number of our allies and trade partners—entities with whom we regularly share information, including sensitive national security information—have used or are using technology from Huawei and ZTE.

What can we do? An initiative is already underway to replace suspect telecommunications components in U.S. networks with hardware from trusted companies.

In March, the President signed legislation developed by the Commerce Committee chairman, ROGER WICKER, the Secure and Trusted Communications Network Act, to help speed up this process. This legislation, which I cosponsored, will help small telecommunications providers with the cost of replacing network components that pose a security risk.

Also, in March, I introduced legislation to help address the other part of the problem, and that is the use of Huawei technology by our allies and our trading partners. We regularly exchange information, including sensitive national security information, with our allies and trading partners. And this information can only be secure if networks on both ends are secure. That is why the United States has called for other countries to reject telecommunications technology from Huawei and ZTE.

A number of countries have committed to using trusted companies to build out their telecommunications networks, but other countries are still planning to make use of Huawei’s technology. My legislation, the Network Security Trade Act, would make telecommunications security a key objective when negotiating future trade deals.

We should be using trade agreements to push for enhanced network security globally, which would benefit not only our country but every country with which we do business.

We recently opened negotiations on a new trade deal with the United Kingdom, which has been using Huawei technology to build its 5G networks. I am pleased that it now looks like the UK is reconsidering its use of Huawei components. I hope they will decide to reject the suspect technology.

I hope the trade negotiations will emphasize the importance of using trusted companies to build out the UK's telecommunications networks. The security of our communications with our trading partners and allies—particularly those allies like Britain—needs to be a priority.

As we move forward into the 5G future, we need to make sure that our technological advancements are matched with advancements and network security. That starts with keeping Huawei and other suspect technology out of our networks and, if at all possible, out of the networks of our allies.

I will continue to do everything I can to ensure that we have not only the infrastructure but the security needed to keep American networks at the forefront of the telecommunications revolution.

Before I close, let me just say one more word about China. As I said earlier, China's coronavirus deception is undoubtedly partly responsible for the fact that this virus has now spread to every corner of the world. China's recent actions with regard to Hong Kong underscore the hostility of the Chinese Government to the values that freedom-loving countries hold dear.

China has a lot of work to do if it ever hopes to rebuild trust with other nations. At a bare minimum, we expect China to uphold its recent trade commitments, which are critical to America's hard-hit farmers and ranchers. I will be looking, and our entire government will be looking, to see if China's word on trade agreements can be relied upon. I hope that the Chinese Government will live up to its commitments.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that following my remarks, the senior Senator from Oklahoma is recognized.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I note with some interest that one Republican colleague after another comes to the floor—their “protect the President at all costs” colleagues, no matter what he does, no matter what he says, no matter how he acts, no matter how incompetent, no matter how divisive—and continues to point their fingers at the Chinese for the coronavirus. God knows, China deserves heaps of blame for the outbreak in the early spread of the coronavirus. There is no question they deserve a lot of blame for the outbreak in the early spread, and they are

lying about it. But keep in mind that we are 5 percent of the world's population, and 30 percent of the deaths from the coronavirus have been Americans. This President continues to make excuses and point fingers. And the compliant, always obedient, sheeplike Members of the Republican caucus conference of the Senate continue to stay quiet, continue to do nothing about this President's behavior and the 105,000 deaths from coronavirus in this country.

PROTESTS

Mr. President, the protests around our State, throughout our country, are an expression of fear and grief and frustration and of anger. Black communities led the Nation in mourning the killings of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor over the last week. They are now leading calls for justice and long-term changes to dismantle the systems of oppression that hold them back.

Instead of listening to those calls from the people who built this country, instead of offering leadership and rising to meet this moment—as every one of his predecessors of both parties did in times of trouble for our country—President Trump fails yet again. Instead of uniting, he divides. Instead of comforting, he stokes fear. He points fingers. He places blame. Instead of healing, he rubs salt in the open wounds of Black Americans.

On Monday night, the President of the United States turned the arm of the state on peaceful protesters—we saw the video—tear-gassing the citizens he is supposed to serve, all so he could walk across the street and stage a photo op at a church he doesn't attend and hold up a Bible that he doesn't read. The timid—you choose the adjective—timid, cowardly, spineless Republican colleagues in this Senate just remained silent. How offended they would have been if a Democratic President had done what this President does and fails to do—the tear-gassing of citizens he is supposed to serve, the photo op at a church, the holding up of the Bible he doesn't read, the excuses, the divisiveness, all of that.

People are tired. People are angry: more Black sons and daughters and mothers and fathers killed by police officers—the very people who are supposed to protect all Americans; more death, when many are already grieving—so many in the Black community already grieving the loss of family members and friends for the coronavirus, grappling with the economic stress this pandemic has caused.

The pandemic has been the “great revealer.” We know Black and Brown communities have been hit hardest by the coronavirus. They are more likely to get sick. They have less access to healthcare. They make up the communities hurt by Jim Crow laws and redlining and now the locking in of those rules and regulations by the Trump administration. Black and Brown communities disproportionately make up our essential workers. It is not because

they don't work as hard. It is not because of individual choices. We all work hard. We are all trying to do something productive for our families and our communities. We all want to build a better country for our daughters and our sons. No; it is because of a racist system that is making it harder for their work to pay off and putting at risk their lives for generations, long before this virus appeared.

A grocery store worker in Cincinnati said to me: They tell me I am essential, but I feel expendable. I don't feel safe at work, and they don't pay me very much. I feel expendable.

Long before this pandemic, millions of Americans knew we had a system that treats them like they are expendable. Their hard work isn't paying off. For some, it feels like the system is broken. For Black and Brown workers, it never worked to begin with.

In the midst of the trauma and the grieving, millions of those same Americans still go to work day after day, week after week, in grocery stores, as delivery people, in drugstores, as bus-drivers, and the people who do the linen and change the beds in hospitals, the food service workers, the custodians, the security people, the first responders. In the midst of the trauma and grieving, those same Americans—millions of them—still go to work day after day, week after week.

Our job is to show the victims of systemic racism at the hands of their own government that the same government can and will protect them from this pandemic. We hear them. We see them. We fight for them. Their lives matter.

Our response to this crisis must be to stand behind all the people who make this country work, all workers, whether you swipe a badge or punch a clock, whether you earn a salary or make tips, whether you are raising children or caring for an aging parent; all workers, whether your hard work isn't paying off now or whether it never paid off the way it should.

Dr. King said:

One day our society will come to respect the sanitation worker. For the person who picks up our garbage, in the final analysis, is as significant as the physician, for if he doesn't do his job, diseases are rampant. All labor has dignity.

It is Black and Brown workers who have too often, far too long, far too often been robbed of their dignity on the job. If we want to be a country where all people have dignity, we need to start by recognizing that all labor has dignity. But so far, our response to the crisis is not the response of a government that believes that. This Senate, this President, can always find trillions of dollars for corporations—for tax cuts, for bailouts. But when hard-working families need help with rent or to put food on the table, President Trump and Leader MCCONNELL say we can't afford it.

The President and the administration have already made racial and economic inequality worse and undone