

for policies that suppress voting rights in the State legislature, and in the Mississippi secretary of state's office, he pushed for restrictive voter ID laws. He criticized the Voting Rights Act and peddled unproven claims about voter fraud. In 2011, he said the NAACP's concerns about voter suppression in Mississippi were "poppycock."

We are in the middle of a national conversation about police reform and systematic racial justice. Leader MCCONNELL talks about it on the floor, and at the same time, he has the temerity to push a judge with demonstrated hostility to voting rights, a man who criticized the greatest advance in civil rights legislation in the past century, for a seat on the circuit court, in which people of color make up 55 percent of the population.

The nomination is so appalling in general that, at this particular moment, several Democrats, myself included, have taken the unusual step of writing Leader MCCONNELL today to request that he withdraw Mr. Wilson's nomination. I believe, if there is sincerity in the remarks here about healing racial wounds, then the withdrawal of Mr. Wilson will occur, plain and simple. It would be disgraceful for the Senate to approve a nominee who has long trivialized voter disenfranchisement and racial discrimination at the ballot box. Leader MCCONNELL should halt any further work on Mr. Wilson and, instead, work with the administration and civil rights groups to find a nominee who will actually protect voting rights on the Fifth Circuit.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

#### PROTESTS

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, "I hope I am over wary, but if I am not, there is, even now, something of ill omen amongst us. I mean the increasing disregard for law which pervades the country, the growing disposition to substitute the wild and furious passions in lieu of the sober judgment of courts, and the worse than savage mobs for the executive ministers of justice. This disposition is awfully fearful in any community; and that it exists now in ours, though grating to our feelings to admit, it would be a violation of truth and an insult to our intelligence to deny. Accounts of outrages committed by mobs form the everyday news of the times."

Now, those are not my words. Those are the words of a young Abraham Lincoln. Sadly, they ring with truth today.

In recent weeks, violent mobs have roamed our streets, defacing and tearing down statues and monuments—in

most cases, with neither resistance from the police nor legal consequences.

On Friday, a mob tore down another statue just a few blocks from here. The police stood idly by and watched as rioters toppled it and set it on fire. One can only assume they were ordered not to intervene by Washington's leftwing mayor.

Here is the thing: Steps were already underway to move that statue lawfully. Washington's delegates in Congress had legislation to that effect. But mobs don't care to negotiate—only to destroy.

The delegate said: I have no doubt I could have gotten that bill through, but the people got here before due process.

It is hard to imagine a more chilling summation of mob rule. As Lincoln knew, the mob threatens not just old statues but the lives and livelihoods of us all. Indeed, the mob threatens civilization itself in many ways.

Most simply, Lincoln knew that mobs inevitably make mistakes and commit injustices. Some may celebrate the destruction of disfavored statues and monuments, but what of the vandals in Boston who defaced a monument to the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, the first African-American regiment to fight for the Union, whose bravery and skill was immortalized in the movie "Glory"?

What of the outlaws of Philadelphia, who defaced a statue of Matthias Baldwin, a devout, passionate abolitionist?

Mobs don't discriminate between legitimate and illegitimate targets of their destruction. That is because they are mobs.

Lincoln also warned that the "lawless in spirit" will become "lawless in practice" because of mob violence seeing no consequences for crimes.

A mob doesn't stop at statues. Rioters have already torched police precincts and low-income housing in Minneapolis. Churches and synagogues have been vandalized. Next, perhaps the mob will target the homes of police officers, and soon enough the mob may come for you and your home and your family.

As the mob expands its power, Lincoln cautioned that good citizens, "seeing their property destroyed; their families insulted, and their lives endangered; their persons injured; and seeing nothing in prospect that forebodes a change for the better; become tired of, and disgusted with, a Government that offers them no protection."

Mob rule can only serve to demoralize our people and shake their faith in our government and our way of life. As the mob rises, civilization recedes.

Finally, Lincoln observed that "by the operation of this mobocratic spirit, which all must admit, is now abroad in the land, the strongest bulwark of any Government, and particularly of those constituted like ours, may effectually be broken down and destroyed—I mean the attachment of the People."

The final victim of mob rule is the very spirit of civic-minded patriotism

that's necessary to preserve our Republic.

For all these reasons, Lincoln said: "There is no grievance that is a fit object of redress by mob law." We cannot tolerate mob rule, and we cannot allow it to go unpunished.

While local authorities would usually take the lead in prosecuting these criminals, unfortunately, many of them seem unwilling to stand up to the mob and uphold the rule of law. Therefore, I call upon the Department of Justice to bring charges against these mob vigilantes, prosecuting them to the fullest extent of the law. The Anti-Riot Act and the Veterans' Memorial Preservation and Recognition Act can provide legal grounds in some cases; still other Federal statutes may govern in other cases; but there must be consequences for mob violence because if you give the mob an inch, it will take a mile.

Witness the events of just this past weekend, where mobs tore down statues of George Washington and Ulysses S. Grant. When you tear down statues of Washington and Grant, it is not about the Civil War; it is because you hate America. Indeed, these rioters hate America.

In Portland, where they tore down the statue of Washington, they also spray-painted on him the date "1619," a reference to the New York Times's revisionist, anti-American history project. Perhaps we should call them the "1619 riots." After all, the architect of that execrable project said: "It would be an honor."

This hatred for America was nowhere on greater display than in San Francisco, where the mob tore down the statue of Grant. That would be U.S. Grant, commander of the Union Army, whose very initials embody his tenacious, unrelenting approach to war: unconditional surrender.

That would also be President Grant, the political heir of Abraham Lincoln, a statesman who smashed the first Ku Klux Klan, signed the first major civil rights legislation, and presided over passage of the 15th Amendment.

In one famous instance, President Grant sent in the troops to disperse a White mob in New Orleans that was terrorizing the city's Black and Republican residents and had to depose the State's lawful Governor.

Grant had zero tolerance for mob rule. He said: "[N]either Ku Klux Klans, White Leagues, nor any other association using arms and violence to execute their unlawful purposes can be permitted in that way to govern any part of this country."

This was a man whom the great Frederick Douglass eulogized as "too broad for prejudice, too humane to despise the humblest, too great to be small at any point." Yet the mobs still came for Grant.

Some people have been asking: Where is the line? I say: This is the line—the line between mob rule and the rule of law.

Since I began by quoting Lincoln, let me conclude by borrowing from Grant, who wrote during the Battle of Spotsylvania: "I propose to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer."

I will fight it out on this line if it takes a lot longer than that.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ERNST). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### NOMINATION OF CORY T. WILSON

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, later on this afternoon, the Senate will vote on cloture on the nomination of Judge Cory Wilson to fill a vacancy on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

I rise at this point in strong, enthusiastic support of confirmation for my friend, Judge Cory Wilson. This will be a historic moment for this body and for the administration. A vote to confirm Judge Wilson would make him the 200th judge to be confirmed under President Trump. This is the highest number of judges confirmed at this point in a Presidency since the Presidency of Jimmy Carter. Judge Wilson is an outstanding nominee to have this distinction.

The seat we are voting to fill is actually the last remaining circuit court vacancy at this time, reflecting the remarkable progress we have made in rebuilding the Federal judiciary. Judge Wilson is an outstanding nominee to mark this milestone. His credentials, intellect, and respect for the rule of law are well established.

The American Bar Association is considered by many to be the "gold standard" for assessing judicial nominees, and the American Bar Association has awarded Judge Wilson its highest rating of "well qualified" to serve on the Fifth Circuit. I certainly agree with this assessment by the ABA.

In recent weeks, Senators on both sides of the aisle have been able to question Judge Wilson about his judicial philosophy, and I believe he has shown a steadfast commitment to honoring the Constitution and enforcing the laws passed by the Congress as we have written them.

Judge Wilson is a native of South Mississippi and currently serves on the Mississippi Court of Appeals, where he decides appellate matters, including civil, commercial, domestic, and criminal appeals. He graduated from my alma mater, the University of Mississippi, with highest honors, and then he went on to Yale Law School, where he distinguished himself in many respects. He served on the Yale Law Journal, was a member of the Yale chapter of the Federalist Society, and was on the Barrister's Union, which is

the equivalent of the Yale moot court. He served as a law clerk for the Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, having been appointed and having served as a clerk for Judge Cox on the Eleventh Circuit. He was a White House fellow for the Department of Defense, and then he came back to Mississippi.

Before becoming a judge, Cory Wilson was an accomplished lawyer in his own right in private practice and served in senior roles in State government in the Mississippi Secretary of State's office and the office of the State Treasury. For 3 years, he also represented Mississippi's 73rd district in the State House of Representatives, where he was vice chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

Judge Wilson is active in civic affairs and his church, Highlands Presbyterian Church. He and his wife Stephanie have one son.

He has garnered respect and admiration and endorsements from many of my constituents during the years of service, and in the last few weeks and days, I have been presented with letters of endorsement from people who know him—lawyers he practiced with and people he has been associated with. In particular, I want to draw the attention of Members of the Senate to a letter from retired Judge Robert L. Gibbs of Jackson, MS.

Who is Judge Gibbs to write a letter on behalf of Cory Wilson? For one thing, we should know that Judge Gibbs is a Democrat, and he practiced law in Mississippi for a time for Mississippi legal services. He spent 10 years in the office of the Mississippi attorney general, a statewide elected Democratic official, and then Robert Gibbs served as a circuit judge, an elected position in a Mississippi court of general jurisdiction. He served for some 7 years there as a circuit judge in Mississippi. That is who Judge Robert Gibbs is.

Here is what Judge Gibbs says about our nominee, the very Cory Wilson whom we will be voting cloture on around 5:30 this afternoon.

This is a letter dated June 10. It is to the chair and ranking member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Senator GRAHAM and Senator FEINSTEIN.

Dear Chairman Graham and Ranking Member Feinstein:

I submit this letter in support of the nomination of Judge Cory T. Wilson for a seat on the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals.

I am former Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit Court District in Mississippi and have known Cory as an attorney, who practiced before me and as a colleague as we worked on cases together. From these experiences, I can attest that no one works harder in this profession than Judge Wilson. When we were representing clients, Cory would normally prepare the first draft of pleadings and send it to me to review. Seldom were there any reasons to make changes because he utilized his legal abilities to navigate through the complexities of the legal issues which resulted in a well thought out, plausible argument.

During Judge Wilson's investiture as a Judge on the Mississippi Court of Appeals, I

had the pleasure of being one of the speakers.

This is retired Judge Gibbs saying he had the pleasure of being one of the speakers.

I spoke about three traits of Judge Wilson—(1) Respect, (2) Character and (3) Legal Intelligence. To keep this letter to a respectful length, I will not repeat everything I said but the essence is, Cory respects everyone he comes into contact with, he does not change who he is because of race or political affiliations and his ability allow him to break through legal jargon and get to the point.

Judge Gibbs goes on to say this:

Judge Wilson and I are quite different—I am Black and he is White. I am older and he is younger. I am a Democrat and he was a Republican (before he became a judge). I live in the majority African American City of Jackson, Mississippi and he lives in a suburb of Jackson. Yet these differences have become our strengths. We often have lunch and discuss the pressing issues of the day as friends. He has sought my advice, based on my judicial experience, on how to be a better judge. And while we may disagree on some matters, in the end we realize that we are just two lawyers who want our communities to be better and we know that having a fair judiciary is one of the ways to make that happen.

These are the words of an older, retired circuit judge who happens to be an African-American Democrat in endorsement of a younger White Republican nominee whom we will have a chance to vote on in a few moments. We need more members of the younger generation of whatever race who are best friends with an older generation of professionals of another race. We need more people like Judge Robert Gibbs and Judge Cory Wilson who are friends, who sit down, who have lunch together and discuss the law and the ways we can make this country better.

I think this is a profound endorsement by someone of a different race, of a different political party, and of a different political philosophy, saying that Judge Cory Wilson is someone we will be proud to vote for.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that this letter be printed in the RECORD at this point.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

GIBBS TRAVIS PLLC,

June 10, 2020.

Re Nomination of Cory T. Wilson as Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

Hon. LINDSEY GRAHAM,  
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary,  
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. DIANNE FEINSTEIN,  
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary,  
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRAHAM AND RANKING MEMBER FEINSTEIN: I submit this letter in support of the nomination of Judge Cory T. Wilson for a seat on the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals.

I am former Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit Court District in Mississippi and have known Cory as an attorney, who practiced before me and as a colleague as we worked on cases together. From these experiences, I can attest that no one works harder in this profession than Judge Wilson.