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Senate

The Senate met at 9:45 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.

Eternal God, who makes us one, use our lawmakers today as agents of reconciliation. Lord, give them the wisdom to build bridges that will enable diverse people to accomplish Your purposes on Earth. Lord, inspire our Senators with such oneness of spirit and resolve that they will provide our Nation with a model of cooperation. Remind them of the wisdom of Matthew 12:25, which states that a house divided against itself cannot stand.

Lord, we thank You for giving Senator GRASSLEY another birthday.

We pray in Your unifying 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 1 minute in morning business.

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

ELECTIONS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, first of all, I thank the chaplain for the happy birthday that was part of the prayer. So they heard it in Heaven, as well as throughout the United States.

Before the 2016 election, Democrats speculated very feverishly: Would Donald Trump accept the results of the election of 2016?

Then he won, and it is the Democrats who have refused to accept the result. They sought to delegitimize the election, citing Russia's meddling or questioning our Presidential election system. On Inauguration Day, you know the famous Washington Post headline said it all: "The campaign to impeach President Trump has begun." He was President about 1 hour at that time.

In fact, we now know that efforts to fabricate a Russia collusion narrative were already under way well before the President was inaugurated. The same people are again fretting that President Trump might not somehow accept the election results if he loses. And, of course, under our Constitution, no President has any option but to accept those results because the term ends on January 20.

But can't we also ask the alternative? What if President Trump does win? Well, this was the advice from Hillary Clinton to former Vice President Biden: that Biden "should not concede under any circumstances."

So will the Democrats respect the election results this time?

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. SCHUMER. Madam 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 PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

PRESIDENT TRUMP

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, this morning I was planning to address a number of topics, but the President

held a press conference yesterday afternoon that was so callous, so uninformed, so egomaniacal, so divisive that I am compelled to respond to it this morning.

We are in the middle of a global pandemic that has killed nearly 200,000 Americans, far more than the number of Americans who died in World War I—more than any other Nation on God's green Earth, more than countries with larger populations, and more than countries with mere fractions of our wealth and power.

Here is how the President spoke about the number of American deaths yesterday at his press conference:

If you take the blue states out, we're at a level that I don't think anybody in the world would be at . . . [If you take the blue states out,] we're really at a very low level.

Yes, Mr. President, if you don't count the total number of Americans who have died, you might think it is not so bad. If you close your eyes and pretend that half of the country doesn't exist, maybe some might think you didn't do such a spectacularly awful job.

What kind of person looks at the number of dead citizens in the country he is supposed to lead, and in an attempt to glamorize himself, dismisses every American who died in a State that didn't support the President politically? What a disgrace. It is monstrous. There is not a shred of empathy, not an ounce of sorrow. What kind of President do we have?

The President just wants you to see a graph about how his catastrophic failure to fight COVID-19 could have been worse.

I suggest President Trump spend some time reading the stories of the men and women across the country who have passed away from this terrible virus.

This isn't about a number. Oh, no, it is about the people families and communities have lost, whether they be in red States or blue States. Many of these families have been unable to hold

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



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funeral services to properly mourn their loved ones for fear of spreading COVID to another member of their family. That is why these remarks by the President are so horrific.

What does the outcome of an election determine if these lives should be counted? Isn't that awful? Why does the outcome of an election determine if these lives should be counted? Does he mean that the loss of Americans who lived in States with Democratic Governors shouldn't count? If that is the case, President Trump is saying that the deaths of David Pickman of Somers, CT; and Patrick McNamee of Ypsilanti, MI; and Virgil Sutton of Dallas, NC, don't count—don't count. How about Ralph Davis, the high school basketball coach in Milwaukee, WI? Did his life not count because he lived in a State with a Democratic Governor? What kind of demented person would say that those American lives don't count?

The President also said: "But some of those states, they were blue States and blue-state managed."

I suppose that means that the life of Dennis Wilson shouldn't count because he was an educator in Lenexa, KS. If only Mr. Wilson had lived 17 miles east in the Hickman Hills neighborhood of Kansas City, MO, maybe the President would think his life should have counted.

How about Captain Doug Hickok? If he lived—I don't know—in Cheyenne, WY, I suppose the President might have valued his life. Unfortunately for Captain Hickok, he lived 1,700 miles east in Bangor, PA, so President Trump says his life isn't worth counting.

Maybe I am giving the President too much credit. You never really know what the heck he means when he talks. So it is possible that his definition of blue States isn't limited to States with Democratic Governors. Maybe his definition of blue States includes States with more Democrats than Republicans in their congressional delegations. That would mean Valentina Blackhorse's life didn't count because she lived in Kayenta, AZ, nor would the life of a Des Moines toddler who died from COVID in June.

What kind of demented person would make that calculation? President Trump, that is who.

Of course, there is no bottom with President Trump. He is so contemptuous of every virtue, so dishonorable, so dishonest that the vices parade themselves forward one after another.

At the press conference after his disgusting comments about ignoring American lives from blue States, President Trump lied, once again, about his support for Americans with preexisting conditions, a lie he has told and retold while his administration is in court suing to eliminate those very protections.

Don't worry, though. President Trump promised that a brandnew, fantastic Republican healthcare plan is

just around the corner. He said you will see it in 2 weeks, just like he told FOX News in July when he said he would sign a healthcare plan in 2 weeks, a full and complete healthcare plan, and again in August, just 2 weeks away—just like his infrastructure bill, a new middle-class tax cut, lower prescription drug costs, a new stimulus package, a report on COVID-19's impact on minorities, and new COVID tests, all of which the President said would be "2 weeks" away but, in fact, never materialized, not in 2 weeks, not ever.

He must think the American people are chumps that he can say anything he wants with no accountability, not do it, and then do it again and again and again.

For centuries, American Presidents have faced challenges with honor and with courage. They have stepped up to the podium and used their bully pulpit to give honor to American lives. But when this President, President Trump, stands at that great podium, he reveals his cowardice, his callousness, his selfishness, his ignorance, and, most of all, his insistence on dividing us. His inability and unwillingness to unite a grieving nation will be his legacy.

When Donald Trump took the stage at the 2016 National Republican Convention, he painted a false portrait of a country in crisis, and declared, "I alone can fix it."

Four years later, the country faces actual crises—the greatest economic crisis in 75 years, the greatest public health crisis in a century—and President Trump now says: "It is what it is."

"Could you have done more to stop it?"

"I don't think so," he says.

"If you take the blue States out. . . . We're really at a very low level."

"I don't take any responsibility at all."

"It's going to disappear."

"A lot of people think the masks are no good."

"[W]hen it gets a little warmer, it miraculously goes away."

"I see the disinfectant, [where it] knocks it out in a minute . . . and is there a way [we] can do something like that, by injection?"

"I'm not a doctor, but I'm, like, a person that has a good, you know what."

This man, who said all these ridiculous, harmful things, is leading the country through the worst public health crisis in a century.

Americans don't have to ask themselves, as Reagan once asked, if they are better off now than 4 years ago. President Trump has told everyone exactly what the score is.

When Donald Trump said he was running for office, he said: "I alone can fix it." When Donald Trump is running the country during the worst pandemic in this century, he says: "It is what it is." Five words. Both times, five words. Five words that sum up an approach to

government and leadership that is completely antithetical to everything the word "leadership" means.

Promise big, deliver zero, deliver small. That is President Trump's view of government. Boast when you don't have any responsibility; shrink from it when you do. That is President Trump's view of public service.

It has diminished our institutions and our democracy. He has cost our country its moral standing in the world; he has threatened the future of our planet; and he has cost Americans their healthcare, their jobs, and their lives. But it is not so bad if you don't count the numbers.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam 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 MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, our Democratic colleagues have sought to spend this week discussing election security. Well, they really have sought to discuss absolutely anything besides pandemic relief since their leaders are still blocking bipartisan negotiations that could actually get a result.

So our friends across the aisle have tried to change the subject to election security or immigration from Venezuela or anything besides the hundreds of billions of dollars in relief they have been filibustering.

But the integrity of our democracy is a crucial issue. We are fewer than 50 days from November 3. Every voter deserves to know their State and local authorities are as well equipped as possible to oversee fair, safe, and secure elections.

So let's discuss the progress made since back in 2016, the threats still before us, and how it is when this non-partisan issue gets hijacked—literally hijacked—for partisan point-scoring.

Here is how the Democratic vice chair of the Intelligence Committee described our vulnerability to foreign influence in 2016 during the Obama-Biden administration. This is the Democratic vice chairman of the Intelligence Committee about 2016. He said: "We were caught flat-footed." "We were caught flat-footed."

That administration's relationships with State governments were dysfunctional; information sharing was weak; cross-sector partnerships hardly existed; and 8 years of weak foreign policy had emboldened Putin to push the envelope.