

Pressed further, the President said: "Get rid of the ballots . . . there won't be a transfer, frankly. There will be a continuation."

"Get rid of the ballots . . . there won't be a transfer, frankly. There will be a continuation."

Those are all his words: Get rid of voting; get rid of the ballots. Just let him stay in power whatever illicit way he chooses to do so. That is what he is saying.

Now, everyone from school children to the most senior among us knows that the peaceful transfer of power is one of democracy's core attributes. There is no democracy without it. Like the rule of law, the separation of powers, checks and balances, everything we have learned that is great and noble about our system in government, President Trump has sullied, diminished, and now he threatens to actually dismantle. The greatest threat to American democracy right now is Donald Trump.

The President issued similar threats in the runup to the 2016 election, and he is doing it again now. If I win, the election is legitimate, argues the President, but if I lose, it is rigged. That is what he is saying now—again: If I win, the election is legitimate, but if I lose, it is rigged. By the way, I may just stay in office and not count the ballots.

Unbelievable.

The gravest threat to American democracy right now is President Trump. Save for a few, the Republican majority here in the Senate practically brushes by it: They don't know the full context. Oh, the President says crazy things. Maybe he was joking.

They are willing to continue ramming through a Supreme Court Justice whom the President said is needed "before the election . . . because [the election] will be before the United States Supreme Court."

Where are our Republican colleagues? This is not a partisan issue. Democracy is at stake. Every constituent from every corner of the land, regardless of party or ideology, should be asking the Republican Senators to speak out and demand that Donald Trump not be allowed to do what he says he is going to do and say they will join all of America in standing in the way if he tries.

The most innocent interpretation of the President's comments is that he is just trying to get people not to vote: Mail-in voting is "rigged." I am going to stay anyway, he cries. "Twelve more years," they chant at his rallies—all to erode American faith in the election and discourage Americans from voting. It doesn't matter how false, it doesn't matter how undemocratic, it doesn't matter how corrosive it is to our democracy, the President doesn't care. It is his own ego and nothing else. The President says it if he thinks it will help him win. That is the most innocent interpretation.

If you take the President at his word, he wants to throw out ballots, refuse

the peaceful transfer of power, and rush through a Supreme Court Justice to ensure that they could rule in his favor if the election is contested. That is him at his word.

According to a new article in *The Atlantic* magazine, some Republicans are actually considering a scheme to override the will of the voters in certain States. Under this nefarious scheme, if the President loses a State controlled by Republicans, they would ignore the result; they would ignore what the voters ask for and send a rival slate of electors to Washington instead, deliberately provoking a constitutional crisis.

Every American should read this article.

Mr. President, I refer my colleagues to this link for the article: <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2020/11/what-if-trump-refuses-concede/616424/>.

If you read these facts in a story about Belarus or Hungary, you might not bat an eye, but this is America. This is America. And here in America, our elections are sacrosanct. The peaceful transfer of power is our lifeblood. The rule of law is the very foundation of our society. These currents run deep in our veins and are far stronger than the flimsy authoritarianism of President Trump.

President Trump, you are not a dictator, and America will not permit you to be one. We will not permit you to be one.

This November, we will have an election. The votes will be counted. It may take a little longer than usual because so many people will vote by mail because of COVID, but the votes will be counted. There are numerous lawsuits making sure it happens, and those lawsuits are succeeding. The results of the election must be accepted. The peaceful transfer of power must follow. Otherwise, we will lose our democracy.

At this perilous moment, every Republican in this Chamber should stand up and say that a President who isn't entirely sure if he will commit to a peaceful transfer of power isn't a President at all. Stand up and say he is wrong and that you don't want to live in a country where he is right. Pledge to uphold the pillars of our country. If Republicans stand up and say this is wrong, that may—may—be able to sway this President or his followers from repeating these attacks.

And there is something every citizen can do, particularly those who are alarmed or discouraged by what President Trump said this week: Vote. The President cannot deny your right to vote. The answer to these naked threats to our democracy is more democracy: Vote.

Don't let Trump intimidate or discourage you. Vote. Vote like our democracy is on the line because it is.

Vote, vote, vote.

SUPREME COURT NOMINATIONS

Madam President, in 2016, Leader McConnell and Senate Republicans

held a Supreme Court vacancy open for nearly a year on the supposed principle that "the American people should have a voice in [selecting] their next Supreme Court Justice."

Now, 41 days before a national election in which we might have a new President, Leader McConnell cannot even mention his supposed principle. In another speech on the floor today, he never mentioned it—never mentioned it. All the sophistry and diversionary arguments that are getting more and more like Trump don't undo the fact he totally reversed himself, and the American people know it, and the overwhelming majority of Americans want us to wait until a new President is elected before we choose a Supreme Court Justice.

Yesterday, the Presiding Officer confirmed that the Senate has never—never—confirmed a Supreme Court nominee this close to the election. Again, all the history, all the obfuscation, all the relevant facts don't deny it. Yesterday, the Presiding Officer of the Senate—a neutral figure who happened to be a Republican—confirmed that the Senate has never confirmed a Supreme Court nominee this close to the election. We hear a lot of talking points from the other side, some twisted readings of precedent. But facing a simple question—Has there been a Senate precedent confirming a Justice this close to an election between July and election day?—the Presiding Officer confirmed that "no such precedent exists."

Leader McConnell and the Republican majority are not following their supposed principle, and they are not following precedent. This is nothing more than an exercise in brute force.

It may very well destroy the already waning sense of comity and collegiality in the Senate, once hallmarks of this great Chamber. It may have done an end to it, unfortunately and sadly. And for what? Why do we go to such great lengths to ram through a Justice mere weeks before an election, making a complete mockery of their previous position? Because this is the only way for Republicans to achieve their radical rightwing agenda, which the public will abhor. Unable to get their legislative agenda passed through Congress, they have to rely on the courts to erode, bit by bit, the rights the American people now enjoy.

Republicans would say: That is not true. They are hysterical. They are just speculating, trying to scare voters.

But this is what the President has said. He wants to nominate a Justice who will "terminate" the Affordable Care Act. His administration is suing in court, right now, to invalidate the law—a case that will be heard 1 week after the election, a case that could rip away healthcare from tens of millions of Americans in the middle of a pandemic, and Leader McConnell says this is "hysterical." Go tell a mother or father whose son or daughter has

cancer and they can't get insurance because they no longer have the protection that it is hysterical. Shame.

This is real stuff, and this is not speculation. There is a suit before the Supreme Court right now on this issue.

Speculation? Was it not President Trump who said that women should be punished for having an abortion? Was it not the Republican majority who confirmed the majority of judges to the Federal bench with disturbing views on a woman's right to choose? Was it not the Republican leader who has admitted that he hopes to "pick away" at women's rights through the courts?

What about workers' rights? What about voting rights? The Supreme Court, even with Justice Ginsburg, slowly eroded workers' rights in the Janus case and voter rights in the Shelby County case, opening the door for a flood of voter suppression efforts.

Imagine—just imagine, America—what another rightwing Justice, a solid 6-to-3 majority would mean for a Court that has already eroded your rights?

This is not speculation. Oh, no. This is about every right and freedom that Americans hold dear. It is no wonder that President Trump and Senate Republicans are afraid to test this in an election and are so eager to rush this nomination through.

BREONNA TAYLOR

Madam President, yesterday, a grand jury in Kentucky declined to charge three officers in the shooting of Breonna Taylor. One was indicted on minor charges of wanton endangerment. The other two will face no charges at all.

Today, I and millions and millions of Americans grieve for the family of Breonna Taylor, knowing that justice will not be served in the murder of their daughter. The fact that an African-American woman can have her life taken while she sleeps in her own bed and those responsible are not held accountable is a harrowing reminder that something is very, very broken in our system. It is another reminder that we are in desperate need of comprehensive policing reform.

A few months ago, in the aftermath of George Floyd's death, Senate Democrats introduced the Justice in Policing Act. It would ban no-knock warrants in Federal drug cases. It was the no-knock warrants that hurt—that killed—Breonna Taylor. It would ban choke holds, and it would make it easier for Americans to hold police departments accountable when they violate their civil and constitutional rights. The House passed this important bill in June.

Here in the Senate, Leader MCCONNELL, typically, refused to take it up at all. But we will not stop fighting until we finally bring that lasting change that our Nation needs, change that protesters, civil rights organizations, and the families of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor are still, tragically, waiting for.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

#### EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. BRAUN. Madam President, in 2002, 18 years ago, Senator Tom Daschle raised a similar resolution—a resolution on the importance of the Pledge of Allegiance. With unanimous support in the U.S. Senate, it passed on the floor uneventfully and without amendment. This body can choose to do the same today—to reaffirm our support for the Pledge of Allegiance.

I also rise to honor a Hoosier who understood the innate value of the Pledge of Allegiance to civic education.

In 1969, Red Skelton, an American comedian and entertainer who was well known for his program on CBS, "The Red Skelton Hour," wrote a speech on the importance of the pledge. In reflecting on his time in Vincennes, IN, he wanted to talk about how important the value instilled by it is still applicable today. After the performance of his speech, CBS received 200,000 requests for copies. His speech would go on to be sold as a single by Columbia Records and performed at the White House. I think it would be an honor to repeat this, and I will do so after yielding the floor to my colleague, Senator SCOTT from Florida.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. First of all, I thank my colleague, my friend from Indiana, for his absolute commitment of trying to make an impact on what is going on in Washington. We both came up here at the same time, and I have enjoyed working with him every day.

I had the opportunity to pursue the American dream. I got involved in politics because I saw that dream slipping away for far too many. All Americans should have their shots at living their versions of the American dream.

For me, I grew up poor. I never met my biological father. My adopted father was a busdriver, with only a sixth grade education, who did all four combat jumps with the 82nd Airborne in World War II. We lived in public housing. Even though my mom had no money, she was optimistic and hopeful. She told us we were blessed because God and our Founders created the greatest country ever, where anything was possible.

Unfortunately, the left has worked hard over the last 50 years to discredit the values of the America I was raised with and the values of the America I want my grandchildren to grow up with. Central to those values is faith and family. The Pledge of Allegiance explicitly acknowledges that our Creator is central to this American experiment. Unfortunately, the left is trying to undo the foundational principles of this country.

The left railed against our soldiers during the Vietnam war and is calling to defund our law enforcement. The

left discredits those who believe in a supreme being or the commitment of marriage, and it doesn't place value in family. The left doesn't care about our enormous debt and pushes for socialism. The left thinks it is OK that our schools don't teach about the Founding Fathers or free markets and wants you to think America was never great.

We all acknowledge that Americans, our country, and our institutions have flaws, but the left has worked to discredit our Founders, our institutions, our churches, our law enforcement, our morals, and almost everything my mom taught me. Yet we join today to honor the Pledge of Allegiance, the very spirit of our Nation—"one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all." That is the America I, along with my colleagues here, are fighting for.

The values that I grew up with—the ones my "tough love" mom taught me—are becoming a way of the past, but I believe these values, these virtues, can and should be part of our country's future.

I love it when my grandchildren pray before eating, recite the Pledge of Allegiance, ask to visit military museums, thank police officers and soldiers for their service, and place their hands over their hearts when they hear the national anthem. I hope they memorize the Declaration of Independence and the 23rd Psalm.

We will not give up on the American dream and a nation where anything is possible. We will not let the radical left take away our freedom and opportunity.

Again, I thank Senator BRAUN for leading this effort today. Freedom is fleeting and worth fighting for, and we will not stop fighting for the country I was raised in because that is the country our children and our grandchildren deserve.

I yield to Senator BRAUN.

Mr. BRAUN. Madam President, I thank Senator SCOTT. The emphasis on faith, family, community, freedom, liberty, and equal opportunity is what makes this country great. We can never forget it, for it is embedded in the Pledge of Allegiance.

I return now to reading the point of view from Red Skelton. This is in terms of his recollection when he was a kid back in Vincennes, IN.

He begins:

I heard, I think, one of the most outstanding speeches I have ever heard in my life. I think it compares with the "Sermon on the Mount," Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address," and Socrates' speech to the students.

We had just finished reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, and he [Mr. Laswell, the principal of Vincennes High School] called us all together, and he says, "Uh, boys and girls, I have been listening to you recite the Pledge of Allegiance all semester, and it seems that it has become monotonous to you. Or, could it be, you do not understand the meaning of each word? If I may, I would like to recite the pledge, and give you a definition for each word."

I saw this many years ago myself, and when I looked at the video again, I