

time for all of those months—or Secretary Blinken or Secretary Austin or the National Security Advisor? What were they doing while Afghanistan collapsed into chaos?

I think the facts suggest an answer. Rather than focusing on protecting Americans from the enemy, rather than focusing on getting Americans safely out of Afghanistan, they were focused on fighting a phony culture war that they invented and that appears to be their top priority.

Just consider: On June 11, when Secretary Austin was asked if he thought that the U.S. military was a fundamentally racist organization—this was at a hearing in the Armed Services Committee here in the Senate: Is the U.S. military a fundamentally racist organization?—he said: I can't give you an answer. And, instead, he talked about the military's urgent support for "equity"—his words. One week later, 21 districts in 9 Provinces had fallen under Taliban control in Afghanistan, and the Afghan Security Forces began to abandon their posts.

On June 21, Secretary Blinken announced the "Progress flag" would fly at the State Department, a special flag that celebrates, in Blinken's words, "diversity and intersectionality"—that famous catchphrase of critical race theory. The very next day, the Taliban seized the main Afghan trade gateway as the enemy's advance began to pick up pace.

On June 23, General Milley said in his testimony to the House Armed Services Committee: "I want to understand white rage." That is his quote. And he defended the administration's recent focus on White extremism in the military. The very next day, U.S. intelligence assessed that the Afghan Government would collapse within 6 months of our withdrawal.

On July 1, Secretary Blinken was busy changing U.S. passports to create new selections for nonbinary, intersex, and gender-nonconforming categories. The very next day, American troops withdrew from Bagram Air Base, what had been the hub of American power in Afghanistan, leaving it for the final time.

On July 14, Secretary Blinken invited the United Nations to formally investigate "the scourge of racism, racial discrimination, and xenophobia" in the United States. He invited the United Nations, that frequently corrupt body, to investigate his own country for racism, xenophobia, and racial discrimination. Meanwhile, at the very same time, even as Blinken spoke, the Taliban offensive was surging across Afghanistan.

On August 9, Secretary Austin was busy crafting a new, controversial COVID-19 vaccine mandate for all of our servicemembers. The very next day, U.S. intelligence officials warned that the Afghan Government would collapse within 90 days or sooner.

On August 17, Jake Sullivan—that is the National Security Advisor—said

that the Taliban were helping to provide "safe passage" for Americans fleeing Afghanistan. Well, one week later, the terrorist attack at Kabul left 13 American soldiers dead, at least 169 civilians wounded, and, shortly thereafter, hundreds of Americans left behind as our last transport lifted off.

Facts are facts. These are the facts, and they tell the story. Joe Biden and his team were more focused on their culture war than they were on protecting Americans. That is the long and the short of it. They were more interested in imposing a radical left social agenda than in getting Americans out of Afghanistan.

They were interested in using the military as a social experiment rather than respecting it as the warfighting institution it was built to be. Rather than making decisions that were sound in tactics and sound in strategy, Joe Biden and his team were aiming to please their radical, woke, progressive base. And the American people paid the price.

Now the American people deserve accountability for what has happened. They deserve accountability for the lives lost. They deserve accountability for the civilians killed, accountability for the Americans left behind.

And that is what this body is for. That is this body's responsibility. It may be an inconvenience to the Democrat leader; it may be an unwanted responsibility for supporters of the President; but it is our job nonetheless.

Americans have died. Americans have been abandoned. The Nation deserves an accounting, and it is not too much to ask the Senate to do its job. It is not too much to ask the Senate to get the truth, and it is not too much to ask the Senate to force accountability for this terrible crisis that this President has disgracefully led us into.

I can say, for my part, I will do everything I can to get that accountability, to get that truth, and to give the American people the answers that they deserve.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

#### NORTH KOREA

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, with North Korea test firing ballistic missiles last week, you might ask: Where is the United Nations?

There are a series of international sanctions aimed at North Korea's nuclear program. These sanctions are in accordance with the U.N. Security Council's regulations passed in the wake of previous North Korea nuclear tests and ballistic missile tests. There is a U.N. Security Council Sanctions Committee on North Korea that is charged with monitoring these sanctions on North Korea.

The Wall Street Journal has reported that an expert panel working on a report for this U.N. committee has faced roadblocks from Chinese representatives, supported by Russia in some circumstances.

China and Russia supported these sanctions, but now they appear to be running interference for North Korea so North Korea can continue to violate the reason these sanctions were put on.

The expert panel is supposed to report the facts. And then by reporting the facts, they aren't representing national governments and shouldn't be representing national governments.

It is blatantly clear that the Chinese representative is doing the bidding for the Chinese Communist Party. The footnotes with dissenting comments are anonymous, but there is no doubt where they came from. In other words, China.

In one case, it is as petty as insisting that a reference to a company with "Taiwan" in its name should include an assertion that Taiwan is a province of China. That is something you hear from China all the time. Everyone knows China is obsessed with making others pretend that Taiwan is not an independent country.

That leaves no doubt where these objections are coming from. You can draw a very straight line back to General Secretary Xi. The bigger problem is that other objections seem designed to minimize and paper over the violations of these sanctions by North Korea. That is as good as confirmed by suspicions that China has been helping North Korea evade the sanctions that China supported in the first place and still claims to support.

General Secretary Xi probably thinks that letting North Korea run wild with its nuclear weapons program would cause problems for the West. And we all know that the West is very concerned about North Korea's developing of nuclear weapons and the ability to deliver.

General Secretary Xi is very shortsighted when he takes that view that he wants to cause problems for the West by helping North Korea, because it can't be in China's interest to have a nuclear-armed and unstable regime as a next-door neighbor, which North Korea is a nuclear-armed and a non-stable regime.

General Secretary Xi's strategy of sowing chaos is playing with fire. That is why all of this activity going on in the U.N. and China trying to cover up the violations of the sanctions is dangerous not just for the U.S. interests, but it is very dangerous for China and the world.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

#### THE ECONOMY

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I spent those several weeks that we were away from Washington, DC, around Labor Day in Kansas, and, unfortunately, it is clearly evident that inflation has returned. Gas prices are up, prices at the grocery store are up, and further price hikes are on the horizon.

Unfortunately, price increases at the grocery store and at the gas pump and, really, everywhere else put the greatest

burden on low- and middle-income families who are already feeling the strains caused by COVID-19 in their pocket-book.

It is apparent, I think, that our spending here in the Nation's Capital over a long period of time is part of the cause for that inflation and, in fact, a significant part of the cause for that inflation. But it doesn't seem to me that my Democratic colleagues are aware of the consequences of pouring a massive amount of more money, more government spending on already this inflationary circumstance that our citizens are now encountering.

The Democratic tax-and-spend spree will exacerbate our inflationary circumstances, meaning that the prices will continue to rise as we borrow more money to pay for these things. It means that interest rates will rise and, at some point in time, those who lend us money will no longer be willing to do so.

While I am sure that many of my Democratic colleagues would tell me the good things that would happen from the spending that is included in this bill, we cannot discount the people who they indicate they are trying to help would be the ones who suffer the greatest burden from increasing costs of everything that they buy.

Given the historic levels of spending that has occurred over the last year and a half, now is not the time to spend even greater amounts of taxpayer dollars.

My view is that we were too slow in turning the spigot in regard to spending that preceded the election of President Biden and a Democratic majority in the U.S. Senate and House. And that, then, resulted in—even though we had already spent so much money—an additional nearly \$2 trillion being spent back in January, and now a \$3.5 trillion, which I think ultimately ends up costing a lot more than \$3.5 trillion.

In order for the \$3.5 trillion package to be paid for—if it ultimately is paid for—the Democratic majority is pursuing tax hikes that will have significant consequence on small businesses and farm families, both of which are so essential to the economic well-being of Kansas and many other States across the country, especially in middle America.

Tax increases on working Americans should be, if at all, a last resort, not a funding opportunity for sweeping—sweeping—massive government expansion. This government expansion includes funding of a radical climate agenda, like the Green New Deal, installing new entitlement programs, and increasing government intrusion into the lives of Americans to levels we have never seen before.

While businesses are struggling to recoup lost revenue from the COVID-19 pandemic—the consequences of that pandemic—the Democrats' plan would slap more taxes on businesses and drive up the costs for everyone.

We should not jeopardize our Nation's economic well-being so that

Democrats can make good on their campaign promises. Voters certainly did not have that in mind when they elected such a slim majority here in the Senate: 50 Democrats, 50 Republicans. That wasn't a mandate for the kind of spending and taxing that is now being considered here on the Senate floor.

This proposed massive influx of government spending is irresponsible. Americans generally know how to live within their means, and it is time that government show some fiscal restraint as well.

For a long time, as I did the townhall meetings across Kansas, it was often the topic of conversation. One of the first things Kansans would raise with me is all this spending—all this deficit spending. And for a while that conversation kind of went away. Today, it is back. It is the topic of conversation at every townhall meeting I had for those several weeks in Kansas. It is what I heard at Rotary and Kiwanis and Lions Clubs. Americans, Kansans in particular, are asking for us to show some responsibility here, and this legislation now pending shows no responsibility.

To make matters worse, as the Democrats have spent valuable time testing the limits of their power to pursue this tax-and-spend spree, they have shirked their basic duties of governing.

The debt limit and government funding, the appropriations process, are clearly the province of the party in power. I am anxiously awaiting for our Appropriations Committee to be able to do its work. The appropriations work is to be completed by September 30, which, once again, will not be the case. We await an agreement on topline spending numbers and a balance of prioritization between domestic and defense spending. While the air—the oxygen—is being sucked out of the Senate for purposes of a reconciliation bill and a \$3.5 trillion-plus spending bill, we need to be focused on the basics of making sure that government doesn't shut down and that we do our work in appropriating the necessary amounts for government to function.

We have known that the suspension of the debt limit would expire this summer—that has never been in question—but Democrats, with control of the White House and both bodies of Congress, have neglected to address either the debt limit or the regular appropriations process, the funding. They are now combining the issue of debt limit with the annual funding for government operations. This is what we call a CR, a continuing resolution, in which we fund the government at its current level into the future because we haven't gotten our work done. Now that CR and the debt limit increase are tied together. This is another example of not owning their governing obligations, not acting as honest brokers, and not, certainly, seeking bipartisanship. They only seek bipartisanship when it suits their political interests.

What you won't hear from the majority leader and my Democratic colleagues is that there is a clean, short-term continuing resolution that has been proposed by Vice Chairman SHELBY of the Appropriations Committee and the minority leader, Leader MCCONNELL. In addition to avoiding an unnecessary lapse in government funding, the Shelby-McConnell CR includes funding for our ally Israel, relief for hurricane-stricken States, and support for Afghan refugees. This is an act of good faith, and it deserves bipartisan support.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

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

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, the United States of America has always paid its bills on time—always. It is an unbroken record that dates back to our founding—a 232-year streak—and that unbroken record has helped the United States become the anchor of the global financial system and the many benefits that it brings to every American in our country. But now, as we have heard on this floor over the last 2 days and more, Senate Republicans are threatening to end that unbroken record.

Senate Republican Leader MCCONNELL has not only said that he and Senate Republicans will vote against increasing the debt ceiling to allow us to pay bills that are already due and owing but that they will block a vote on the measure altogether. That would destroy our economy; it would throw our country into a recession; it could cause the loss of millions of jobs all over the Nation, and trillions of dollars of wealth would collapse.

What makes this threat by Senate Republicans so especially outrageous is that they know exactly what devastation will be caused by their actions. In fact, in 2019, Senator MCCONNELL himself stressed the importance of raising the debt limit so we could avoid an unnecessary economic meltdown.

Here is what he said then:

We need to address the debt limit. It secures our Nation's full faith and credit and ensures that Congress will not throw this kind of unnecessary wrench into the gears of our job growth and thriving economy.

He knew, plain and simple, that refusing to increase our debt limit would throw a wrench into the gears of our job growth.

In fact, after voting to raise the debt limit that year, he said:

We raised the debt ceiling because America can't default. . . . That would be a disaster.

“That would be a disaster.” That is what the Senate Republican said about what happens if you don't raise the debt ceiling—the exact thing that he and Senate Republicans are threatening to do right now.

The Republican leader, Senator MCCONNELL, was not alone in expressing those sentiments. When President

Trump was in charge, Senate Republicans voted to raise the debt limit three times, and the Democrats joined them in doing that when President Trump was in office because we, too, understood the consequences of failing to pay our bills on time. And let's not kid ourselves. There are lots of things that President Trump and Senate Republicans did over those 4 years that we disagreed with—policies that we thought were irresponsible, not good for the country—including the 2017 Trump tax plan that provided huge tax breaks to the biggest corporations in the country, tax breaks to the wealthiest Americans, with over \$2 trillion added to our national debt. They didn't pay for a dime. Not a penny of that was paid for—it was all on the credit card—but when it came time to pay the bills that were due and owing for our country, the Democrats joined the Republicans in lifting the debt ceiling because we knew the devastating consequences of the alternative.

Let's also be very clear that the monies that we currently owe, that are currently due and owing, are largely made up of the debt incurred when President Trump was in office. The national debt increased by a total of \$7.8 trillion during that 4-year period. In fact, over one-quarter of our entire national debt comes from those 4 years of the Trump administration, and our Republican Senate colleagues spent those 4 years voting here in the U.S. Senate for policies that they now say they don't want to pay for. They voted to put expenses on the credit card, and now, when it is time to pay the bill on that credit card, they are like: Sorry. We are out of here. The country is on your own.

So this is, obviously, rank hypocrisy, plain and simple. If that were all, it would be unsurprising—in fact, sadly, expected—but while the hypocrisy is shameful, what is downright dangerous are the consequences of that hypocrisy.

A recent study was done by Mark Zandi—he is the chief economist at Moody's Analytics—who estimates that a prolonged default would cost the U.S. economy up to 6 million jobs, wipe out as much as \$15 trillion in household wealth, and send the unemployment rate surging to, roughly, 9 percent, just as we are working to again stabilize our economy and pull out of the downturn that we have been in.

Now, those predictions are frightening, but they shouldn't be surprising to anybody. You know, our constituents—none of us—can just decide one morning, as they get up, to say, "Do you know what? We are not going to make a mortgage payment. We are not going to make a rental payment. We are not going to make a payment for our cars," without expecting to suffer some financial consequences ourselves.

So imagine, one morning, that the Senators here—in this case, Republican Senators—get up and say: The United States of America is not going to pay its bills today. That sends shock waves

throughout the entire country and system, and that is why you get the cataclysmic results that Mark Zandi at Moody's Analytics is predicting, and that is why we are hearing from every responsible adult that we can't allow this to happen.

Six former Secretaries of the Treasury, having served under Presidents of both parties, have urged the congressional leadership to make sure we raise the debt ceiling and pay our bills that are currently due and owing. They made clear "postponing action to raise the debt limit until too close to the deadline undermines confidence in our political system at home and abroad."

In other words, what they are saying is, when you go over the waterfall, you are in deep trouble, but even if you get close to it and can begin to hear the rumbling waters of that waterfall, so can the rest of the world and the financial system, and that, in itself, ends up causing economic damage.

As Secretary Yellen said, it would be "unthinkable" for the United States to do what Senate Republicans are proposing to do, and the chief policy officer at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce said that the United States of America defaulting on its obligations is not an option.

They are all right. We should be listening to them and to the American people because, if Republicans continue on the path they are, it is going to cause job loss, and that loss in household wealth, as well, will be hitting families throughout this country.

So, if the necessity of raising the debt ceiling is so clear, why are we here?

Well, I have been listening to our Republican colleagues over the last couple days, and they say, well, they don't want to raise the debt ceiling because they don't like the Democratic plans to beat COVID-19, and they don't like the Build Back Better agenda. There are two fundamental misunderstandings with this argument.

The first, as I mentioned, is that these are bills that are already due and owing, and Republicans voted for a lot of these policies. In fact, I have seen them back home in their States telling their constituents how they helped deliver relief for small businesses and how they helped expand broadband. Well, that is part of the bill that is coming due right now that we have to lift the debt ceiling to pay for.

But they also fundamentally misunderstand what President Biden is talking about in his Build Back Better agenda. I know, these days, it is an alien idea to many of our Republican colleagues, but President Biden and Democrats are planning to pay for the Build Back Better agenda. We are putting out proposals to do that, to reform our Tax Code, to reform our Tax Code in a way that we should do anyway, regardless of the important investments that we need to make, and to reform our Tax Code so that major multinational corporations cannot continue

to park millions and billions of dollars of profits in overseas tax havens, like the Cayman Islands and other places, and shirk their obligations to this country and to the American people.

We should shut down those loopholes. Some of those loopholes also encourage those companies to move their plants and workers overseas. We should shut down those loopholes. We should make sure that the IRS has the capability to enforce the current law and taxes that are already due and owing under current law. The current IRS Commissioner, appointed by the former President, has said that we lose hundreds of billions of dollars to people who are cheating on their taxes. That hurts all the rest of us in this country, and most of those people are higher income people. We need to make sure that the very wealthiest people in the country—the billionaires—pay some taxes. We have seen some years when they pay zero in taxes, some of them.

I keep hearing from our Republican colleagues that they don't want to vote for this because of some future plan, even though what we are talking about now is to pay for other things that have been previously incurred which Senate Republicans voted for, and they are criticizing a plan which we intend to pay for.

And, yes, we have planned to make some important investments with that revenue. We intend to extend the tax cuts for middle- and lower-income families with kids. They are going to expire at the end of this year, December 31. The up to \$300 a month tax cut for families for each child, that goes away if we don't enact the Build Back Better agenda.

We intend to reduce the cost of prescription drugs—something that is hitting every American really hard in their pocketbook.

We intend to increase the availability and affordability of high-quality childcare. A lot of parents aren't reentering the workforce because, like every parent, they want to make sure their child is in a safe and secure place during the day, and it doesn't make economic sense if they have to pay as much for that childcare as they make on the job. So we need to address that issue.

We want to expand Medicare to cover vision, dental, and hearing services. That is a big gap in the program.

So I hear Republicans down here railing against the Build Back Better agenda even though every survey shows that the American people of all parties support that agenda. And then I hear them say they are not going to vote to lift this debt ceiling because of that proposal even though we are planning to pay for that proposal.

I just heard one of our colleagues talking about inflation. The reality is, if you pay as you go, then that is not a problem. The problem is when people put everything on the credit card and then decide not to pay for it. That is what the Republicans did during the 2017 Trump tax plan.

So I would just say to my colleagues: You yourself are on record here in the U.S. Senate talking about what kind of economic devastation would be caused if the United States defaults on its debts if we don't lift the debt ceiling. You know what that action would mean for American families because you have said it here on the Senate floor and around the country. So don't threaten the American people and our entire economy with something that you know to be so irresponsible.

I will end with this: You should do the right thing and join with Democrats in lifting the debt ceiling to pay for bills that are already due and owing and that you voted for. But, for goodness' sake, if you don't want to do the right thing, at least get out of the way. At least don't use the filibuster to prevent Democrats from doing the right thing for the country. That is a cynical ploy. I don't know what the political calculus is.

I have heard the Republican leader say that he didn't want the Biden agenda to succeed, but, for God's sake, let's put country first, and let's make sure that we do the right thing for the American people. Let's lift the debt ceiling. Let's pay our bills on time, as we have done every year throughout our history.

I urge my colleagues to either do the right thing on the vote or get out of the way and help the country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KING). The Senator from Oregon.

NOMINATION OF SARAH BIANCHI

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, yesterday, the Senate confirmed the nomination of Jayme White to serve as a Deputy U.S. Trade Representative. Today, the Senate has an opportunity to fill another important position following a debate on President Biden's nomination, Sarah Bianchi, for that role.

I am just going to speak briefly and outline a few key reasons why Ms. Bianchi is the right person for this important job and why the Senate should confirm her nomination today.

She is a longtime, accomplished member of the Biden economic team. She has worked in a host of settings during her time in public service: the Office of the Vice President, the Domestic Policy Council, the Office of Management and Budget, and as a staff member here in the Senate. She brings valuable experience in the private sector to her nomination as well. She has helped build a strong Biden economic agenda that is focused on making sure that all Americans have the opportunity to get ahead.

With respect to the key issue of trade, which is under the jurisdiction of the Senate Finance Committee, that means fighting for American workers and American businesses and cracking down on the trade cheats that will flagrantly try to rip off jobs and economic growth.

The variety and the depth of Ms. Bianchi's experience in public service

will be a big asset to Ambassador Tai and the team at USTR.

When the Finance Committee voted on Ms. Bianchi's nomination, she was approved by a vote of 27 to 1. I often say that it is a struggle to get a bipartisan group of 27 Senators to even agree on buying a TUP, but supporting the Bianchi nomination is clearly a bipartisan proposition on a vital economic position.

In fact, all of President Biden's USTR nominees that have come before the Finance Committee, I am pleased to say, have gotten strong support from both sides of the aisle; for example, a longtime staffer of mine, Jayme White—80 votes yesterday, 80 votes, with strong support, I might add, from business and labor. It is because these individuals are focused on getting beyond some of the old theories about trade—free trade, fair trade, and the like. What really brings Democrats and Republicans together is trade done right.

That is what Ms. Bianchi is all about. When she is confirmed, she will take on a challenging portfolio at USTR, which includes Asia, Africa, investment, services, textiles, and industrial competitiveness.

The headline in that list, of course, is taking on China. The Finance Committee has worked hard on policies designed to take on China's many trade rip-offs. There is China's use of forced labor, for example, massive unfair subsidies that destroy any semblance of a level playing field, theft of intellectual property, and the Great Firewall and censorship of the internet extending beyond China's borders. These abuses, these rip-offs, directly threaten American jobs, innovations, and values from sea to shining sea.

For the U.S. Senate, part of how Members must address these issues is confirming highly qualified and experienced nominees like Sarah Bianchi, whose job will include confronting China directly. The Senate simply can't afford to leave this important Deputy USTR role open any longer. Now the Senate has a top-notch nominee before us.

I support Sarah Bianchi fully. Twenty-seven members of the Finance Committee supported her earlier this year during our committee's markup. I urge Senators to vote yes on the Bianchi nomination.

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

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

SPECIAL COUNSEL DURHAM

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, last week, Special Counsel Durham indicted Michael Sussman, an attorney for the Hillary Clinton Presidential campaign. He was indicted for lying to the FBI.

The indictment gives example after example of the Democratic Party's bag of dirty tricks.

In September 2016, Sussman met with the FBI's general counsel, James Baker. At that meeting he provided information and data files that allegedly contained evidence of a secret communication between the Trump organization and the Russian bank Alfa Bank.

The evidence, however, was fabricated. The allegations about the Trump organization being linked with a Russian bank—these were false. The email server at issue was neither owned nor operated by the Trump organization.

But the lie in the indictment occurred when Sussman allegedly told the FBI general counsel that he wasn't providing the information on any client's behalf. He repeated the same to another government agency. Those assertions were apparently false. He was working for the Hillary Clinton Presidential campaign.

Now, interestingly, the indictment states that although Baker was allegedly unaware of the political affiliation of the information starting in April 2016, Sussman represented the Democratic National Committee and regularly met with the FBI. According to the indictment, the FBI failed to connect the dots. What Special Counsel Durham's indictment shows in significant detail, by the way, are the steps that the Clinton campaign and her Democratic allies took to dirty up Trump—and did so—with known false information.

Time and again, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have cast false information against Trump to tie him to a foolish conspiracy that he is an agent of the Russian Government. Time and again, when the evidence is made public, the Democratic Party is shown to be the master of the disinformation universe, and much of the so-called mainstream press fell for and peddled the falsehoods.

What's wrong with our journalists being journalists and investigating everything to the bottom rather than trying to not do their work and letting people get away with this sort of action?

Now I am going to take a few examples from the indictment. Notably, Sussman was working with an unnamed executive at a technology firm that had been offered a position in the Clinton administration, should she have won that election in 2016.

The information compiled and analyzed the false Alfa Bank information and, according to the indictment, "exploited access to non-public data at multiple internet companies to conduct opposition research concerning Trump."

To accomplish those ends, the executive enlisted "the assistance of researchers at a U.S.-based university who were receiving and analyzing Internet data in connection with a pending federal government cybersecurity research contract."