

I have commended Egypt's actions. But you can't challenge the leader of an authoritarian State in public and among other Members of Congress and take actions adverse to their interests and at the same time serve as an agent of that same foreign government.

Over my 30 years of engaging in foreign policy, I don't know of any dictator or authoritarian leader who is willing to be publicly chastised or who regards someone who dares to do so as its agent, which brings me to the danger of what the Justice Department has created by charging a sitting Member of Congress with acting as a foreign agent.

The relevant FARA statute's definition of "agent" is broad. It includes anyone who engages in "political activities," "publicity services," or other certain acts at the order, request, or under the direction or control of a "foreign principal."

Applied to Members of Congress, it covers anything that could "in any way influence any agency or official of the United States, or any section of the public within the United States" as to public policy.

So when Members of the Senate from agricultural States went to communist Cuba to sell rice or poultry or sugar or beef and were told by the Castro regime that they would consider doing so but that the Senators needed to convince the U.S. administration to change U.S. law and lift the embargo and permit credit to take place for such sales, and then came back to the United States and advocated for exactly that request, did that make them a foreign agent of Cuba? I think not.

When Senators travel to Israel and hear from their elected leaders requesting greater economic and defense assistance or for the replenishment of the Iron Dome, did their advocacy upon return make them a foreign agent of Israel? I think not.

When Senators traveled to the Middle East in pursuit of engaging countries to become part of the Abraham Accords and heard from Saudi Arabia that a civilian nuclear program, a mutual defense agreement, and technology transfers might be prerequisites for Saudi Arabia joining the Abraham Accords, and then they came back to the Senate to advocate for that, were they foreign agents of the Saudi Government? I think not.

What if, in any of these examples, that country bought rice or sugar or meat from your State? What if that country purchased Boeing aircraft made in your State? Would that be a quid pro quo? What if you got contributions to your campaign from U.S. entities or individuals associated with those countries? Would that be a quid pro quo? For the government, the sky is the limit if they want to pursue you.

What a chilling effect on the mere engagement of these conversations and inquiries would it be if the sum of those actions, taken in pursuit of your factfinding effort to inform you of

what your legislative actions should be, can be turned into official acts in violation of the law and not within the protection of the speech or debate clause of the Constitution.

Now, some may be alarmed by what I have described but in this case explain it away by saying: But in this case, there are allegations of cash and gold bars. The problem is that there is no evidence of the giving or receiving of cash and gold bars. In fact, there has been and will be at trial a full explanation of what is the truth about those issues—a truth that proves I am entirely innocent of the charges.

And that is the problem. Almost everyone, including my friends in the press who have reported on it, haven't read the indictment. They have only taken the government's sensational narrative of what the accusations are as truth. They haven't sought facts of the allegations.

I am innocent, and I intend to prove my innocence—not just for me but for the precedent this case will set for you and future Members of the Senate.

I am, however, alarmed that the greatest and most ardent defenders of the Constitution in this body are among the most vociferous in calling for my resignation. They would deny me due process and undermine the fundamental principle of our law—that in America, you are innocent until proven otherwise by a jury of your peers. Now, Members of the Senate are not above the law, but they are not beneath it either.

If for political expediency an indictment and its accusations are now tantamount to guilt, we have upended our system of justice in America. And when the next person or group of persons are wrongfully accused, you will not be able to claim that the constitutional guarantees of due process and innocence until proven guilty need to be observed.

Now, some say that a U.S. Senator answers to a higher standard, but even then, the question of whether that standard has been violated depends not on accusations but proof of guilt after being afforded due process beyond a reasonable doubt.

Finally, let me say that I understand how the government's accusations, made in the most sensational and purposefully damning way possible, its misuse of the grand jury system to bring superseding indictments even though it had all the information they alleged from the beginning, can be a source of concern and contempt by some of my colleagues, the political establishment, and most importantly, the people of New Jersey. I get it. And I am suffering greatly as a result of what they have done. After 50 years of public service, this is not how I wanted to celebrate my golden jubilee. But I have never violated the public trust. I have been a patriot for and of my country.

Now, let me close by saying I understand some of my colleagues are in

tough races, and for them, this was a political calculation. Let me also say that for the administration, the political establishment, and for my detractors, it would be much easier to have me exit the scene so that an unjust deal on immigration that won't really solve our problems at the border but that would hurt the Latino community would be easier to be achieved or that a new deal with Iran would be more possible or a cozying up to the Castro regime could take place or selling F-16s to Turkey could be finalized. I get it. But I will not step aside and allow those things to happen in the name of political expediency. I have never chosen the easy path. I never have, I never will, and I will not do so now. I simply ask for justice to be allowed to work its way.

With that, 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. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the quorum call be rescinded.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that immediately following the confirmation vote on the Kazen nomination, the Senate recess until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings.

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

The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator COTTON and I be allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes, followed by Senator TUBERVILLE for up to 10 minutes, prior to the scheduled rollcall vote.

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

CONGRATULATING HARDING UNIVERSITY'S NCAA DIVISION II NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the Harding University football team on winning the 2023 Division II NCAA National Championship. The school is proud to call Searcy, AR, home, and we are pleased to join all those celebrating this historic, undefeated season.

Those of us who have ever played football or followed along as fans are familiar with the term that describes each team's time with the ball as they move down the field: "drive." But drive is also what you need to finish a perfect season. The Harding Bisons exemplified it and racked up major achievements along the way, including breaking the collegiate rushing record with more than 6,000 yards on the ground for the season.

The Bisons' offense tapped into a tried-and-true style of football. Its successful run game propelled the team and wore down opponents all season long, culminating in a dominating performance in the national title game, where it scored 38 unanswered points.

As a former football player, I remember well how much this sport asks of young men. It is more than just a game, and the preparation that goes into competing at a high level can be grueling. Intense practices, careful film study, strength training, and much more are all key ingredients an elite program must get right. Harding did just that, in addition to putting on a consistent display of athleticism and skill.

Winning a national championship has solidified their brotherhood and forged a bond the team and its fans will hold on to for years to come. The hard work of the players, dedication of Coach Paul Simmons and his staff, as well as the enthusiastic support of alumni, fans, and the Searcy community, were all critical to making this dream come true.

Great coaches can get truly the best out of their players, so it is easy to see why Coach Simmons was named National Coach of the Year by D2Football.com. We applaud his commitment to excellence personally and for every individual involved with his team.

Senator COTTON and I, along with so many Arkansans, are thrilled to commemorate Harding's outstanding season. As Bisons players, coaches, and fans are painting Searcy black and gold this week to celebrate these champions, it truly is a time to honor them.

I look forward to seeing this program reach even further heights and am thankful for how it represents the university, community, and our State on and off the football field.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I join Senator BOOZMAN today in congratulating the Harding University Bisons from Searcy, AR, for winning their first ever Division II football championship against the Colorado School of Mines Orediggers in a decisive victory—38 to 7.

Going into last month's game, few could have predicted such a decisive outcome. Both teams were undefeated. While Harding had the No. 2 defense and the No. 3 offense in the country, the Orediggers had the No. 3 defense and the No. 2 offense. It was an evenly matched game if there has ever been one, but after the first quarter, the Bisons didn't let the Orediggers score a single point.

Time and again, the Harding defense stopped the Orediggers dead in their tracks, with Nathaniel Wallace making two out of the Bisons' six sacks and linebacker Clark Griffin making six tackles, including two for a loss.

The offense charged just as well as the defense stopped. Harding's offense ran for an impressive 502 yards, with running back Blake Delacruz rushing 212 yards for a championship record. Braden Jay added 161 yards on the ground and scored three out of the Bisons' five touchdowns, with Jhalen

Spicer and quarterback Cole Keylon punching in the other two.

It was a game that players and their families will never forget, and it is a game that Harding University and Searcy, AR, also will never forget.

This championship victory is the culmination of years of hard work, dreaming, and especially prayer because, for those who don't know, Harding University is a small Christian college in the middle of our State, and Harding's Christian mission touches every part of the university, including the football program. In his pregame speech, Coach Paul Simmons told his players that "the scoreboard doesn't matter" and that the "great cloud of witnesses" around them "just want to see you be excellent and do things in a way that really does honor God"—a great message from a great coach for a great team before a great game.

With this game, Coach Simmons has led the Bisons to 65 overall wins since 2017—the fastest accumulation of victories in Harding University's history.

I want to again congratulate Coach Simmons and his entire team for their extraordinary victory last month. I want to congratulate them for their even more extraordinary 15-and-0 season, in which they scored an average of nearly 47 points per game.

The Harding Bisons should be proud of their many accomplishments. The State of Arkansas certainly is.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, as a native of the State of Arkansas, I would like to add my congratulations to Harding University national champions football. Being a former football coach, I know how hard it is to achieve any kind of championship, but to win a national championship is special. It is special to these young men and coaches, and people involved will always remember. So my congratulations go out to Harding. I actually played against Harding for 4 years, being in the same conference as they were in, back in the seventies. So, man, what an honor—I guess the first time—the first ever national championship. So, again, congratulations to the Harding Bisons. It is quite an honor.

NUCLEAR ENERGY

Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about the need for more American energy. We are now in the coldest time of the year. The demand for energy is going up as people try to keep warm. This is placing a strain on our power grid across this country.

This administration obviously has no solution for this problem. I think they are adding to the problem. The Biden administration is on a crusade to make us dependent on unreliable renewable resources, like wind and solar.

I am not against wind and solar. I think they are very good. I think it is feasible that we invest in them. There is a role that they play in our economy. But we can't depend on wind and solar. It is not possible. The Sun

doesn't shine every day, and the wind doesn't blow every day. Our energy grid needs to stay running for 24 hours—what a thought.

Despite Joe Biden's best efforts, most of our energy grid today still comes from fossil fuels. By the way, it will always come from fossil fuels unless we have another alternative, which I will talk about. But when wind and solar power fail, people don't realize this.

At one time in my life, I had a huge wind turbine in my backyard—a couple hundred yards—and I noticed that even if the wind didn't blow, the turbine still ran. It ran because it ran off of a diesel generator—better known as fossil fuels.

You cannot run a modern economy without fossil fuels. It is impossible. I know we are talking about it every day, and you hear all the climate gurus talking about, you know, we have to do away with fossil fuels and we have to be net zero—which, by the way, if we did net zero, we wouldn't live very long because, by the way, we do need carbon in the air.

So with wind and solar, we need an all-above approach to American energy production to keep prices low and capacity high. We have to have it. And how do we do that? We do it by investing in nuclear power.

In 1979, we were on the way to being energy-independent through nuclear power.

We had a problem at Three Mile Island with a nuclear plant that went basically, in our words and in terms of this generation, berserk. They had problems. They had leaks.

There was a media presence at that time that started attacking nuclear energy because it was going to kill everybody; nuclear energy was going to be a disaster. At that time, we were constructing over 100 nuclear sites across the United States of America—100, closer to 150. Because of Three Mile Island and how it scared—the media actually scared the people of this country, we scratched those plans. We quit construction. We said: We can't do this. We are going to kill everybody on the planet with nuclear energy.

Right now, nuclear makes up about 20 percent of our energy grid. If we hadn't stopped back in 1979, it would be much closer to 70, 80 percent, and we wouldn't have to be burning fossil fuels.

I am proud the United States has the most nuclear power production of any country in the world. I think it shows that we are a leader. But we should get back to it. We could be producing a lot more nuclear energy right now. But, as I said earlier, the redtape from this administration and the "climate cons" is slowing permitting and production.

We actually just opened I think the first nuclear plant in many, many years in the State of Georgia, in the southeastern part of the country, which will provide energy for thousands and thousands and thousands of people for years to come because of