

against the will of the people, no matter what the conservative Justices may believe.

As we work on this important matter, we will also keep working on other proposals to reassert Congress's article I authority to rein in the abuse of our Federal judiciary. The American people are tired—just tired—of Justices who think they are beyond accountability.

The Supreme Court's ruling in *Trump v. United States* is just the finishing touch on one of the most destructive Supreme Court terms in modern history. A few days before the ruling on Presidential immunity, the MAGA Court also upended 40 years of precedent by overturning the *Chevron* doctrine. In doing so, they have potentially turned the Federal Government upside down in a very dangerous way, declaring that judges now know better than Agency experts on matters ranging from student loans to Medicare, to AI, to climate change, to net neutrality, and so much more.

From now on, anytime there is a shred of legislative ambiguity, anytime Congress didn't explicitly anticipate every conceivable scenario for how Agencies should apply complex policy, judges are now free to impose their own views even if they don't know a lick about the policy in question, even though they are the unelected branch of government. It is impossible for the Congress to think of every possible scenario, so either you have subject-matter experts in the administration making a judgment call or unelected judges making a judgment call. That was the whole point of the *Chevron* doctrine—to give administrative subject-matter experts some deference.

The MAGA Court's annihilation of the *Chevron* doctrine is their latest and most dangerous attempt to side with powerful special interests against the wishes of the middle class, to come up with new legal theory to suit their ideological needs and overturn decades of well-accepted precedent.

These cases are just the start. In the last few months, the conservative majority on the Supreme Court also has upheld racial gerrymandering in South Carolina—can you imagine?—allowed the criminalization of homelessness, struck down the commonsense ban on bumps stocks, defanged the EPA's ability to regulate against air pollution, and so much more.

It all points to a clear, growing, disturbing trend emerging out of the Supreme Court. It is plain as day—plain as day—that this MAGA majority is hell-bent on siphoning power away from the electorate and from the other branches in order to reshape America in their ultraconservative and extreme vision.

So I will repeat what I said at the top of my remarks. American democracy now stands at a crossroads. The MAGA Court's disastrous rulings are the clearest illustration of why elections have consequences. And this year, the

American people will choose between two vastly different visions for our country.

If Donald Trump returns to the Oval Office, if Republicans retake control of Congress, the disastrous rulings coming out of the Supreme Court will just be the start. The chaos we saw on January 6 will just be the start. If they get the chance, Donald Trump and the MAGA right will plunge our country into an abyss of extremism that the vast majority of Americans oppose and America has really never seen.

Nowhere else is this contrast between Democrats and Republicans as clear as on the issue of reproductive freedom. This week, Senate Democrats intend to pick up where we left off in June by bringing every single Member of this Chamber to task on a woman's fundamental right to choose. It is our goal to take up a very simple resolution, co-sponsored by every female Senator in our caucus and myself, that asks a very, very simple question: Where do Senators stand on freedom of choice? Do we believe that a woman should have a basic right to reproductive care? Do we agree that the rights protected under *Roe* should be Federal law? Freedom of choice is perhaps the defining issue for Americans this year, and this week, every Senator must show where they stand. Of course, Democrats have already made it abundantly clear where we stand: Yes, we emphatically believe women should be free to make their own healthcare choices.

Democrats also believe in building on the incredible progress of the last 3½ years. Under Democratic leadership, we made great strides in America to lower the cost of living. We made prescription drugs, like insulin, more affordable. We have brought manufacturing jobs back to our shores. We have invested in clean energy economy. On the world stage, we have stood up to defend democracy against autocrats and restored America's good name among the free nations of the world.

Donald Trump and the MAGA right cannot say any of this. Instead, what Donald Trump and MAGA Republicans have made clear is that if they get into power, they will dismantle American democracy as we know it. MAGA radicals are long done with talking and euphemisms. The leader of one of America's most powerful conservative think tanks recently made the hard right's goals very clear:

We are in the process of the second American Revolution, which will remain bloodless if the left allows it to be.

That, Madam President, is the kind of talk that leads to political violence.

To go down the road that MAGA radicals want to take is to take America into the twilight zone—something more akin to the autocratic fervor we saw in Europe in the early 20th century than the America we all know and love.

So the stakes for our country this year are immense. Here in the Senate, Democrats will continue bringing to

the floor the issues that matter to Americans most and will work ferociously to defend them.

While it is tempting to reduce elections nowadays to a form of reality TV, the truth is, the stakes are much higher. It is a battle for two radically different visions of our country.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. 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 ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, on another matter, the Senate this week will continue its work confirming more of President Biden's outstanding nominees to the Federal judiciary.

The nominees that have passed through this Chamber have in many cases been historic, and today is no exception. The Senate will vote on the nomination of Nancy Maldonado, who will be the very first Hispanic judge on the Seventh Circuit if confirmed.

Under President Biden and Democratic leadership, the Senate has confirmed 35 Hispanic judges to date, and nearly two-thirds of all our nominees have been people of color. When our courts more faithfully reflect our country, it is a good thing for faith in our judiciary, which we greatly need right now.

I am confident that Judge Maldonado will make an excellent judge. I am proud to vote in favor of her confirmation and thank my colleagues who will do the same.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The 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 ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, this week, the Senate convenes with important business to address. America's closest allies are in town. The eyes of the world are on the most successful military alliance in human history. Friends and foes are watching to see whether the superpower that forged the NATO alliance and guided its success across seven decades has the will to continue to lead.

This week, with the leaders of dozens of allied nations here in Washington, the Senate could do its part to answer that question. We could show America's most trusted friends and partners

that we are still willing to stand with them.

We could pass the National Defense Authorization Act, which our colleagues on the Armed Services Committee reported overwhelmingly nearly a month ago. We could, but we won't because the Democratic leader has other plans. As important allies visit the Halls of the Senate, the clearest sign of our resolve to lead will instead continue to collect dust.

Rather than taking up the NDAA, the Senate Democrats have decided to spend precious floor time on performative stunt votes and more of President Biden's unfit judicial nominees, beginning with Judge Nancy Maldonado. There is a particular irony in our colleague's decision to put off urgent work like the annual Defense authorization in favor of giving lifetime tenure to a judge with a staggering backlog of her own.

With the eyes of the world on Washington, this week offers the Senate an opportunity to demonstrate the credibility of America's commitments. It is an opportunity we can ill afford to miss.

U.S. SUPREME COURT

Now, on another matter, last week, the Supreme Court concluded its term with a number of consequential decisions. Three of these rulings and the reactions they triggered on the left illustrate just how differently Republicans and Democrats view the Court's role.

As I have explained before, Republicans want a government that is accountable to the people, as the Constitution prescribes. Democrats, on the other hand, want government that is insulated from the democratic process.

Here is the Democratic ideal of how to govern: If Congress has not spoken on an issue, let unelected bureaucrats manipulate statutes, fill in the blanks, and make new law. Then, if anyone violates these new bureaucratic-made laws, let the bureaucrats take them to a bureaucratic court—not to a jury or a real judge, but to a kangaroo court of other bureaucrats who answer to still more bureaucrats.

And, finally, if the President—the one actor in the executive branch who answers to the people—dares to interfere in this process in ways that bureaucrats don't like, let him face criminal charges from yet another group of bureaucrats.

It is dystopian. It is something you find in the law books of the old Soviet Union.

And the Supreme Court said they would have none of it. In what might be the most consequential decision in my time here, the Supreme Court held that bureaucrats do not get the benefit of the doubt when they write new laws.

Congress writes laws, and the way the bureaucrats apply those laws is subject to a full judicial review. There is no "get out of legislation free" card, no Chevron deference—period.

The Court also held that, when the Constitution says you have the right to

a jury trial, it means just that. Just because bureaucrats decide to pursue someone for ruinous fines, they don't get to try the case themselves. When bureaucrats go after someone—potentially, for violating rules that Congress never even contemplated—the case has to go to a real, Senate-confirmed judge and a jury of one's peers.

Lastly, the Court clarified something that careful readers of the Constitution have known forever: Bureaucrats can't criminally charge a President for his official actions. The Constitution vests in the President executive powers that cannot be circumscribed—not by Congress and not by inventive prosecutors.

Democrats seem to want to turn Washington into The Hague. Their problem with the Supreme Court isn't that they won't be able to prosecute a President for unofficial criminal activities—because they still can. Their problem is that they won't be able to prosecute official actions that they don't like.

Prominent Democrats seem to look at the successful criminalization of political disagreement in places like Europe and South America and think: They might just be onto something.

It is not hard to imagine what is coming. We have already seen hints in the reports of the inspector general investigating entirely appropriate conduct by Attorney General Barr that Democrats simply disagree with.

But why should Democrats stop there? As the Chief Justice explained, "without immunity . . . prosecutions of ex-Presidents could quickly become routine. The enfeebling of the Presidency and our Government that would result from such a cycle of factional strife is exactly what the Framers intended to avoid."

I certainly agree. The people elect the President. He is responsible to them for his official conduct, not to bureaucrats with law licenses.

So we are not just talking about two sorts of reactions to the Supreme Court's latest rulings. We are talking about two very different visions of America: a Democratic vision in which bureaucrats decide our policy disputes and have the power to punish those elected officials who dare—dare—to disagree, and a constitutional vision in which policy is entrusted broadly to the people through representative democracy.

Suffice it to say that Republicans prefer the latter.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Iowa.

NATO

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, this week officials from all 31 of our

NATO allies are going to be here in Washington for what is referred to as the NATO summit. At that summit, we will be celebrating 75 years of the most successful military alliance in modern history. And why do I call it the most successful military alliance? I mean that after two devastating world wars about 20 years apart—and those wars brought incredible bloodshed and destruction to Europe—now, we have had almost 80 years of relative peace in Europe. No European NATO member has been invaded.

Now, we take it for granted that most of Europe is peaceful, but that was not the case before NATO arrived. Remember that the Soviet Union, after World War II, quickly exerted domination over the countries that it occupied at that time. But the U.S.S.R. wasn't satisfied with that situation.

So many people expected war to break out in Europe at some point during the Cold War, but it did not. Thank God, no war happened.

The Soviet Union helped launch wars in Asia and violent revolutions in Africa and Latin America. The Soviets invaded Afghanistan, but the U.S.S.R. did not dare touch those countries that were under the NATO umbrella. The strongest defense resulted in peace.

NATO was not the result of some idealistic dream. Rather, NATO was a very practical response to the hard lessons learned of two World Wars that the United States tried its best to stay out of those wars as long as it could.

Now, we all remember from history that World War I was supposed to be the "war to end all wars."

Woodrow Wilson, you will remember, proposed the League of Nations in a very naive belief that an international forum could prevent war through diplomacy and international condemnation. Obviously, the League failed.

By contrast, NATO is a working military alliance of Nation States, not some debating society, as the League turned out to be.

After World War II, the United States realized that minding our own business and letting Europe sort out its messes wasn't working. We, eventually, got dragged into World War II anyway, by which time it took an incredible amount of resources and over 400,000 American lives to bring that war to an end.

NATO grew out of the realization that U.S. leadership was essential to preventing World War III. NATO prevented a war by being prepared for war. Strength equaled peace. We know that deterrence works, but deterrence must be credible.

Our defense must be strong enough that would-be aggressors would think twice before attacking. As Ronald Reagan said:

NATO's strategy for peace has always been simple: Prevent aggression before it starts. Be strong enough, be determined enough so that no adversary should think, even for a moment, that war might pay.

At the 2008 NATO summit in Bucharest, Romania, NATO members said