

The Trump administration, I am confident, will speak out with sanctions against the International Criminal Court. They did during the first Trump Presidency. I am confident they will again. What I am not confident of is every future President after President Trump, if they will hold the same high standard to be able to protect American citizens, our soldiers, and to be able to stand alongside with Israel.

I have come to this body over and over and over again, and I have said we should speak out in these areas. We should speak out against anti-Semitism. For instance, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, that definition of what anti-Semitism is, that is a definition the United States was a party to more than three decades ago. Our State Department so recognizes what it means to be anti-Semitic and makes it very clear on that. But this body has failed to actually impose that same definition of anti-Semitism in our Department of Justice—for instance, the FBI—or the Department of Education.

Some may say, well, why is that even an issue? Well, ask the Jewish students at Columbia University, and they will tell you why that is important. This week, at Columbia University, masked students burst into a modern history of Israel class chanting anti-Semitic tropes and calling out to crush Zionism, in their class at Columbia University this week, during Holocaust Remembrance Week.

I think having a clear definition of what anti-Semitism is and calling out universities that would allow that kind of oppression on their own students, I think, is important. I think for this body to be able to speak out with one voice to say we are not going to allow American soldiers nor our allies to be called in by a kangaroo international court, I think, is important to us.

And this week, of all weeks, on Holocaust Remembrance Week, we should speak with one voice. To say “never again” means never again. And we will continue to stand with our friends and allies in Israel, and we will continue to stand against anti-Semitism here, there, anywhere.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

JANUARY 6 PARDONS

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to share a little bit of maybe a reflection on the pardons of last week.

Part of the reason why I do, after the President issued the pardons for all of the January 6 protesters, I had a friend of mine call me up because I had said that some of the protesters probably got swept up in the events of the day. But some of those protesters harmed police officers, and I can't support that. I said, when I say I wear this pin almost every day and when I say I back the blue, I back the blue, period.

I back them when they are beaten by people who came into this Capitol on

January 6. I back the blue because I am endlessly—over the last 10 years, I have been to this floor numerous times to mourn the loss of more than 80 police officers in North Carolina alone who died in the line of duty. I do this time after time after time.

The Republican Party is the party that stands for law and order and law enforcement, in my opinion. I have seen people excuse the protests in Kenosha and Portland as just mostly peaceful protests. The amazing thing was, when you see this on TV or you see it in the papers, they are saying mostly peaceful protests in Portland and Kenosha, and there is a building on fire in the background in and around a police precinct.

And in Washington, Federal agents were injured by law enforcement officials during the Biden administration. Every single one of us said that is inappropriate and those people need to be brought to justice.

Now, on January 6 of 2021, I was standing right over there in the middle of that aisle. My seat was right there. So when we were doing the certification of the election, you could hear people had breached the building. They were running around the Capitol. They were banging on doors. And, finally, my chair being right next to that door, we heard a loud crash. And I saw Capitol Police officers say, “Secure that building,” and run up there to protect the Members who were in the Chamber. And we were all here.

I saw some people immediately go to the Capitol Police so that they could take them to safe refuge, and they are the same people who have fundraised on a website that is called ActBlue. Fortunately, it has been taken down because I ranted enough. After a year, they finally did it. But they had a run for justice, 13.12. The alphabetic analog is ACAB, which translates into their slogan: “All Cops Are Bastards.”

How does this relate? They raised money on it. In fact, they even encouraged people to do their 13-mile run around police stations to disrupt and intimidate police officers.

Now, how does this relate to everything that is going on here? I was the last Senate Member out of this Chamber on that day. In fact, it was one of the Vice President's details whom I happen to know that came back to me and said, Now you have really got to go. I walked through that hallway, down the stairwell that is over there, into the train tunnel, and what I saw were police officers who were bleeding; they were bruised; and they were beaten down.

The people who did that were pardoned last week. To those people—and I will give the President the benefit of the doubt. I support pardons for people who should have never come into the building. I don't know if I were President, if I would have pardoned them. But I can actually, at least, understand the rationale for those. But I think if you back the blue, there can be no

equivocation on any exception for someone who assaults or murders a police officer.

The funny—not funny thing. The tragic thing is I just filed two bills that would increase the penalties for assaulting a police officer and increase the penalty for murdering a police officer as a Federal crime up to and including the death penalty. I want to send a message to those folks in blue that I, as an elected official and Member of the U.S. Senate, will never equivocate when it comes to backing the blue.

I would argue that if anybody has a problem with them, then call 911 and tell them you never want them to show up to your door when you are in trouble because most people know that the police officers who serve us and protect us in this building are great people.

I have this ask to those who have been pardoned—the QAnon Shaman who sat in that chair that the gentleman from Indiana is sitting in now and boasting over how he came into this Chamber, do you know what his social media tweet was when President Trump gave him a chance and gave him a pardon? Now I am going to go buy me some F'ing guns.

For the others who have been pardoned, be like a handful of some who have refused the pardon because they felt like they deserved the punishment.

For those who have received a pardon, view it as the gift that it is. Apologize to these police officers for what you did to them. If you do that, then I will feel like maybe President Trump gave you a chance to redeem yourself.

But if you come and spike the football in this Capitol Building and you pretend like what you did was right, righteous, or justified, please do not come anywhere near me.

It is important, for the past week I have told the police officers when I entered the building, I thought the pardons of those who assaulted police officers were wrong. I told every one of them. I said, I know you shouldn't react to it because you have to be apolitical. But I am a political person. I can say whatever I want to and then answer to the people of North Carolina.

But I thought it was important for me to come to the floor and record this in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD: Particularly, the challenge to the people who assaulted police officers, show that you are remorseful. Demonstrate that you were wrong. Don't pretend that that pardon means that what you did was right.

For that reason, I felt compelled to come to the floor and make this statement because where I come from and where I have been my entire public service career, I will never stop backing the blue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

TRUMP EXECUTIVE ORDERS

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise today because, over the last 2 days, I

have been hearing from officials and organizations throughout Rhode Island that have been concerned about losing access to essential Federal funding. In fact, Rhode Island officials told my office that, for several hours yesterday, they could not access the Federal portal that allows them to draw down funding from the Medicaid Program. Other agencies and organizations have reported that they, too, were locked out of funding portals for critical grant programs.

And why is this?

Well, Monday night, the Office of Management and Budget, or OMB, issued a memorandum instructing Federal Agencies to freeze funding that had been authorized and appropriated by Congress until it can be determined that the program comports with President Trump's ideological views, as judged by the White House. Just a little over an hour ago, OMB rescinded this memo. But then the White House Press Secretary has tweeted that the freeze is still in effect. This illustrates the uncertainty and the lack of calculation that went into this process.

Now, as my colleague Senator MURRAY, the ranking member of the Appropriations Committee, has noted, the list of programs being put under the microscope was dramatic: grants for law enforcement; veterans care; disaster relief and mitigation; funding for the 9-8-8 suicide prevention lifeline; homeless and housing funding; childcare and public schools, including IDEA, funding; community health centers; food access programs, including Meals on Wheels and school lunch programs; funding for preventing violence against women; and much more. And all of these programs affect families throughout my State of Rhode Island—working families in particular—because in many respects, we all depend upon some support at some time.

The Trump administration, a little over a week on the job, decided to violate the law, to withhold that funding previously approved by Congress on a bipartisan basis, and has sowed chaos and fear throughout the Nation in the process.

Last night, the Federal district court issued a 1-week stay on the administration's memorandum regarding not-for-profit agencies receiving Federal funds. But we are again in this dilemma because the President apparently has rescinded the order but his Press Secretary is still tweeting something different.

It demonstrates how, frankly, incompetent the administration is—putting out directives with little to no thought or coordination, without anticipating—or, more importantly, caring about—the negative ramifications that an order like this can have on families throughout this country.

What President Trump was really doing, I believe, is testing how far he can go before he is stopped.

When President Trump tries to ignore the law, ignore the Congress, and

there is no response, what is the point of checks and balances? Why are we here in the Senate? If we pass, along with the House, authorizations and appropriations and the President of the United States can ignore our actions, we have to speak up.

Indeed, my Republican colleagues were excoriating the Biden administration for executive “overreach” but now are relatively mute when it comes to a defiance of law and indeed, I believe, a defiance of the Constitution.

This attack should be alarming to all my colleagues who consider the Congress a coequal branch of government, and it will be instructive to the American people to see how all of my colleagues—in the majority and in the minority—choose to respond to President Trump's continued attacks on this institution, as well as the Constitution and, most damaging, families throughout this country.

One of the programs that was shut off yesterday is Medicaid. Now, a lot of people think Medicaid is just something for those poor people who can't afford healthcare, but, indeed, it is a major source of funding for nursing homes throughout this country. And many of the recipients come from working families, come from families that have worked their entire lives and now they have a senior—a mother or a father—who needs the kind of care a nursing home provides, but they could not afford it without Medicaid. That, I think, is one of the most graphic examples of the indifference or the ignorance of the administration when it comes to what they are doing.

But let me return, finally, to the point. We have a role to do in the Constitution. We advise and consent on nominees. We are doing that as we go forward. But, also, we have to act as a check on the President. We have to act as a force for good that supports the Constitution. And that is a role I believe we have to take much more seriously today than at any other time in my tenure in the U.S. Senate.

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

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

NOMINATION OF DOUGLAS BURGUM

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, Americans are paying more and getting less for just about everything—more for energy, more for housing, more for the most basic necessities—and, frankly, they are tired of it.

Across the country, businesses are struggling with higher costs. Families are burdened by rising prices, and entire industries are stalling under the weight of heavyhanded regulations handed down from unelected bureaucrats in Washington, DC.

The Department of the Interior could and should be part of the solution. Instead, it has been part of the problem. In fact, in many instances, in countless respects, it is the problem. The worst part is that it didn't have to be this way.

Under Secretary Deb Haaland, the Biden administration had a choice. They had the tools at their disposal to alleviate the struggles of millions of Americans and to ensure affordable, reliable energy. Instead, it chose to abandon them. Instead, it chose to surrender to ideological zealotry and foreign powers that do not have our best interests at heart. Now Americans are paying the price.

The Department of the Interior is not an Agency of limited consequence. It governs nearly one-fifth of the land mass of the entire United States. It wields the power to dictate the fate of energy production, water rights, wildlife conservation, and the livelihoods of millions of Americans, especially in public land-rich States like my home State of Utah. And yet, for the last 4 years, Secretary Haaland stood idly by, doubling down on policies that throttled domestic production while begging foreign adversaries to fill the gap.

Governor Doug Burgum understands what Secretary Haaland apparently forgot—that abundant, affordable energy is a fundamental pillar of our national security as Americans. But Secretary Haaland's failures don't stop at energy. The Department of the Interior touches nearly every aspect of life in the West, from land management to water rights, often to the detriment of those who depend on it.

Now, for States like Utah, where two-thirds of the land is owned by the Federal Government, Washington's mismanagement is not an abstract or a theoretical debate. The consequences that we face as a result of decisions made at Interior affect us in a real and profound way. Expanding national monuments without local input and contrary to what local input was given, imposing suffocating land use restrictions, and burying—quite deliberately—resource development under an avalanche of redtape are not the actions of a government that serves them. They are the actions of a government that rules and lords over them.

The consequences of that mismanagement stretch higher than elevated prices at the pump. As wildfires ravaged the West, reducing homes to ash and livelihoods to memory, Secretary Haaland and President Biden condescendingly lectured the American people that climate change was to blame. Unfortunately, for them, the reality is far less convenient. Decades of Federal neglect have transformed our forests into kindling. Their refusal to engage in responsible forest management to clear the dead wood and to thin the overgrowth has created a