

The Department of Homeland Security houses a number of critical Agencies, and shutting down this Department has real consequences. Democrats are threatening the work of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, of the TSA, of key cyber security offices. FEMA training centers, like the National Fire Academy in Maryland, are closed. Roughly 45,000 Americans who are in training at one of these centers can't go to class right now.

We are hosting the World Cup in a few months, and some security training for that event is on hold right now because of the shutdown.

Civilian Coast Guard employees won't get a full paycheck at the end of this week, and thousands more Americans, from disaster response personnel at FEMA to TSA agents, are worried about potentially missing pay as soon as next week.

As I said, this is the second time in 6 months the Democrats have shut down all or part of the Federal Government.

The Department of Homeland Security employs thousands of Americans. We should want the most talented and most dedicated individuals serving in these roles. But when these Americans and their families are routinely used as political pawns, morale suffers. Think of what that means for these Agencies' ability to recruit and retain the very best. But I guess none of that matters to Democrats.

Republicans want to get to an agreement on Homeland Security funding. So does the White House. And we have acted in good faith throughout these negotiations. The Trump administration has taken a number of actions on its own in Minneapolis, including deploying body cameras, tailoring its mission to criminal illegal immigrants, and requiring identification for officers.

On top of those actions, the White House put forward a very serious offer to legislate reforms almost 2 weeks ago. It took Democrats 5 days to respond, and when they did respond, it was with a counteroffer that was essentially the same as their first, which raises a question, and that is, are Democrats actually interested in a solution here or are they just interested in a political issue?

There is room for compromise here but only if both sides give room. Democrats aren't doing that.

I shouldn't need to remind my Democrat colleagues that the Department of Homeland Security does critical work. Border security and immigration enforcement are one part of its mission. And it is an important mission. We need to have a secure border, and we need to deport criminal illegal immigrants.

Now, we can have a debate about how these tasks are undertaken, but we are not going to support anything that makes it impossible for law enforcement to carry out its job. We are not going to support anything that makes it more dangerous for officers to do

their jobs. Unfortunately, that is what some of the Democrats' proposals would do.

Old habits die hard, and, unfortunately, the party of "defund the police" seems to be slipping back into calls to defund law enforcement. I hope that is not the position of the Democrats' here. I hope our colleagues are actually willing to come to a solution, but if they are, it is time to show it. This shutdown is already hurting hard-working Americans and impacting efforts to preserve both public safety and national security, and it is time to end it.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Well, Mr. President, we are in for a long, tedious, and exhausting night as Donald Trump is set to deliver his fourth State of the Union.

Donald Trump said yesterday he is going to talk for a very long time tonight.

God help us.

I am not sure what he thinks there is to celebrate, because America, in short, is a mess thanks to him. American Presidents often talk about how they inherited a mess and turned things around, but in Donald Trump's case, he created a mess and then set the building on fire. High costs are still kicking Americans in the gut. Donald Trump's tariffs have unleashed chaos and confusion. ICE agents are patrolling our neighborhoods in masks like cartel thugs.

Isn't that right, Senator LEE?

Corruption is up; trust in America is down; and we still have no idea what is in the Epstein files.

If I were a Republican sitting in the House Chamber tonight, I would be squirming in my seat, praying to Heaven that the President wraps up things quickly because the American people are sick of his drivel, and the stench of his unpopularity is spreading across the Republican Party like a toxin.

Look, we know how tonight is going to work. Donald Trump will claim that everything in America is going great, but he is in a huge bubble. America is deeply unhappy with his leadership, and he will blame everyone else for all our country's troubles. He will blame Biden. He will blame the Supreme

Court. He will point the finger at everyone but himself.

Tonight, the American people will see a President whose ego does not let him see reality. And what is that reality? I will give you three words: costs, chaos, corruption. That is the reality of Trump 2.0: costs, chaos, corruption. Democrats, of course, offer something different. This year, we are going to give the American people a choice—a choice to lower costs, to end the endless cycle of chaos, and to restore some sanity to our country.

And, as we speak, I am continuing to work with my colleagues to demand Donald Trump and Republicans listen to the American people and stop ICE from terrorizing our communities. The Democrats' position on Donald Trump's brutal ICE tactics haven't changed. Republicans need to work with Democrats to rein in ICE and end the violence. I am disappointed we have not gotten their counter yet, and it is time for them to stop playing games.

Finally, while none of us are excited about tonight's Trumpian endurance test, there are at least two things I look forward to tonight: First, I will be pleased to welcome five great New Yorkers as my guests for tonight's Address—each of them here to put a real face on the consequences of the administration's chaos.

First, we will have Dani Bensky, a survivor of Jeffrey Epstein and now a leading voice demanding transparency, accountability, and justice for survivors who have been failed for far too long.

Second, I will be pleased to welcome Raiza Contreras, a mother whose son Dylan entered the U.S. legally but who was still detained by ICE. Dylan did everything right—followed the rules, showed up to his hearing—and was still arrested by ICE in the middle of a courthouse lobby, if you can believe that; and Raiza is here tonight, fighting to bring her child home. It is amazing that Americans have to come and do this.

Third, we have Gearoid Keogh, a union construction worker on the Gateway Tunnel project who lost his job thanks to President Trump's cruel decision to cut off funding to this project.

Fourth, Aleshandra Fernandes joins us, a Long Island ironworker whose offshore wind job has been thrown into limbo again and again because of Trump's irrational, stupid hatred of offshore wind.

Finally, we have Ben Pearson, a Rochester small business owner who was forced to lay off more than a quarter of his workforce—a quarter of his workforce—hard-working people; he liked to pay them; they did good work—because of Donald Trump's tariffs.

To each of my guests tonight, you make New York proud, and thank you—thank you—for being here. Your presence is the reminder America

needs of the real-life harm that Trump's agenda has done to our country.

Finally, there is one more thing I am looking forward to tonight—listening to my good friend Senator PADILLA, who will offer Democrats a Spanish language response. His story of what he went through in the past year, after being assaulted by Federal agents, and his larger story of how his family built something of themselves in this country is inspiring and admirable. I thank Senator PADILLA.

I thank Governor Spanberger as well, and I thank all Democrats who will spend time tonight correcting the lies that will waft out of the House Chamber from Donald Trump's mouth tonight. On Ukraine, 4 years ago the tanks, missiles, and infantry rolled in from Russian territory onto Ukrainian soil. Today my colleagues and I pause to honor the memory of the courageous dead in Ukraine. We reaffirm that the Senate and the American people stand with the Ukrainian people, even if our President's courage and resolve might waiver.

Today, I am disgusted that the United States made a mockery of itself for the whole world to see by voting to abstain from a resolution in the United States on a peaceful and just end to this war. Can you believe it? Putin brutally invades Ukraine, the whole world sees it and knows it, and Donald Trump, out of obeisance, sucking up to Putin, abstains from a resolution simply on a peaceful and just end to this war. What, does Donald Trump want the war to continue and more people to die? I guess so.

On this anniversary of the Ukrainian war, it is shameful that this administration has chosen to mark it by turning its back on the Ukrainian people at the UN. Let's be clear: Any peace that Donald Trump gives into, any peace made on Putin's terms, will be no peace at all. It would rather be a reward for Putin for his belligerence, a reward that autocrats around the world—including here at home—will take note of.

When I was majority leader, I led this Chamber to pass historic defense packages to help Ukraine defend themselves, and 4 years later, despite all the loss and bloodshed the people of Ukraine have endured, they have held the line, but the conflict, sadly, is far from an end.

American support remains indispensable and perhaps the most important factor to determine the outcome of this awful conflict.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California is recognized.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. President, I request 30 minutes to address the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. President, tonight, just down the hall, the President will

stand before Congress and the American people. He will paint a picture of strength, prosperity, and national renewal. He will claim credit for successes he did not achieve and deny responsibility for crises that he created. He will tell us that America has never been greater, but the American people deserve the truth. And the truth is that over the past year, we have not moved closer to forming a more perfect Union. Tragically, it is quite the opposite. Our disunion has only grown.

Our Founders understood something when they chose the words "a more perfect Union." They didn't contemplate achieving perfection. They envisioned something more realistic, more achievable—the pursuit of a more perfect Union, a constant effort to push the country forward, a grinding, slow and sometimes painful process. They recognized that America is not a finished product but a beautiful, ongoing experiment in self-governance that requires hard work and constant perseverance.

For 250 years, through wars and depressions, through slavery and Jim Crow, through periods of bitter division and hard-won reconciliation, Americans have honored our Founders' intention and moved the Nation forward. We have stumbled; we have fallen short; and at times, we have failed to live up to our promise. But we have always eventually bent the arc of our own national story towards justice, towards fairness, and towards a more perfect Union.

And yet from the moment he inflicted himself on our public life, Donald Trump has done everything possible to reverse that progress. By design, it appears, by virtue of the product of some defect of character perhaps, but in every way he can and every moment he can, he has sought to divide us. Today, in fewer words than the President will use tonight, I want to talk about some of the ways that President Trump has not only failed to advance our Union, but done so much to bring about our disunion.

Now, I have served in the Capitol for over two decades, and I have visited the capitols of our friends and some of our adversaries across the world. I have seen firsthand that, notwithstanding our possession of the strongest and most courageous military in the world, America's greatest strategic asset is not the might of our arms or size of our aircraft carriers; it is the strength of the alliances we have around the world.

The web of partnerships we built after World War II, NATO, our Pacific alliances, our hemispheric relationships, they are force multipliers. They help us keep the peace. They are the reason that a nation of 340 million people can project power and values across a globe of more than 8 billion. Yet, tragically, President Trump has systematically taken apart the advantage these allies give us. He has insulted the leaders of Canada, Germany, France, and the United Kingdom—our closest

democratic allies—not to mention countries like Denmark.

He has questioned whether America would defend NATO members under article V, the collective defense provision that has kept most of Europe peaceful for 75 years. He has treated longstanding security commitments as protection rackets, demanding payment as if our allies were vassal states rather than partners. And he has done all this while praising Viktor Orban, Vladimir Putin, Xi Jinping, and other dictators. The result? Our allies don't trust us, and our most powerful adversaries don't fear us, and that makes America less safe.

When the next crisis comes—and it will come, and it may even be precipitated by this President—we will find ourselves isolated in ways that would have been unthinkable just a few years ago. This weakens and endangers our Union. But the power of our Union isn't just about the strength of our military or our ties abroad. It is also about the strength of our intellect here at home.

I find myself thinking about an exchange from the television series on Chernobyl. A scientist tells a Soviet bureaucrat:

Every lie we tell incurs a debt to the truth. Sooner or later, that debt is paid.

This administration has run up a debt to the truth that will take generations to repay.

Over the last several years, the President of the United States suggested people inject bleach to cure COVID, that windmills cause cancer, that climate change is a hoax invented by China, that Tylenol use in pregnancy causes autism—the list goes on and on. And over this past year, we have seen systematic attacks on scientists at CDC, at NOAA, the EPA, and the NIH—career professionals driven from public service for the crime of publishing findings the President doesn't like, DOGE'd for speaking truth to power, for respecting facts and science, or simply—seemingly and perversely in this cruelest of administrations—fired for the apparent fun of it.

We have seen university researchers lose Federal funding, not because their work lacks merit, but because their conclusions contradict preferred political narratives.

We have seen attacks on vaccines and changes to our public health system that have caused needless outbreaks of disease. This President has most assuredly not made America great again, but he has managed to make measles great again. And when experts gently try to correct these falsehoods, they are attacked, doxed, and threatened. This is part of a deliberate cultivation of ignorance as a political strategy.

When you undermine expertise, when you treat all opinions as equally valid regardless of evidence, when you replace scientists with sycophants, you make people vulnerable to con artists and demagogues. You make democracy itself impossible because democracy requires an informed citizenry capable of distinguishing truth from lies.