

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Wednesday, September 17, 2025

BUSINESS MEETING

Wednesday, September 17, 2025

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:15 a.m., in Room S-116, the Capitol, Hon. James E. Risch, Chairman of the Committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Risch [presiding], Ricketts, Daines, Hagerty, Barrasso, Paul, Cruz, Scott, Curtis, Cornyn, Shaheen, Coons, Murphy, Kaine, and Rosen.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES E. RISCH,
U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO**

The Chairman: Ok. The meeting will come to order.

First of all, we have a robust agenda to get through today, and attendance is always an issue here, as you know. And I guess I can read the -- I am required to read in the record, according to the Parliamentarian, the people that we are going to vote on. So, I guess I could start with that and then can move on.

The first en bloc, number 1, there are 13 nominations: Thomas DiNanno, Michael DeSombre, Jacob Helberg, Benjamin --

Senator Shaheen: I think you should read what they are being nominated for. I'm sorry. I think you should. That way there is no question.

The Chairman: I will take your suggestion. Thomas DiNanno, to be Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security; Michael

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DeSombre, to be an Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs; Jacob Helberg, to be Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy and the Environment; Benjamin Black, to be Chief Executive Officer of the United States International Development Finance Corporation; Nicole McGraw, to be Ambassador to Croatia; Somers Farkas, to be Ambassador to Malta; Kenneth Howery, to be Ambassador to Denmark; Chris Pratt to be Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs; Stacey Feinberg, to be Ambassador to Luxembourg; Howard Brodie, to be Ambassador to Finland; Arthur Fisher, to be Ambassador to Austria; Nicholas Merrick, to be Ambassador to the Czech Republic; and Roman Pipko, to be Ambassador to Estonia. And that is the first vote.

On the second vote there are six nominations, and the six are Sergio Gor, to be Ambassador to India; Melinda Hildebrand, to be Ambassador to Costa Rica; Bill Bazzi, to be Ambassador to Tunisia; Todd Wilcox to be Assistant Secretary of State for Diplomatic Security; Dan Negrea, to be Representative of the United States on the Economic and Social Council of the U.N., with the rank of Ambassador, to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as an Alternate Representative of the United States to the Sessions of the General Assembly of the U.N.; John Giordano, to be Ambassador to Namibia.

The third vote will be on 12 nominations -- what's that? You have got a roll call, or we have a quorum? All right.

I am being told we have a quorum, so before we start, I do want to thank

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the Ranking Member for cooperation on putting this together. It has been very complicated.

Same goes for my Staff Director, Chris Socha, and the minority Staff Director, Naz. All of them and their teams have worked really hard to get this done. We thank everyone, and the Senate will be better off for this.

So we are going to --

Senator Shaheen: I would like to make a statement before we vote.

The Chairman: Please do.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JEANNE SHAHEEN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW HAMPSHIRE**

Senator Shaheen: I have a longer statement that I am going to submit for the record. But I just want to point out that it is worth noting that this committee has been approving nominees. We have sent a record number of nominees to the floor this year, a record number have been confirmed, and if we compare the nominees coming out of this committee during the Biden administration to where we are now, more nominees under this President have been confirmed than under President Biden in his first year at this time.

So I think that is an important reminder for everybody on both sides of the aisle that we are moving nominees, and it speaks to, I think, the good work of the committee staff, as Senator Risch said, and the work of all of the members of the committee.

[The prepared statement of Senator Shaheen follows:]

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STATEMENT SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY
RANKING MEMBER JEANNE SHAHEEN

There is a long list of nominees before us today—35 in total.

This includes 15 nominees this committee has not yet voted on and another 21 that we already reported to the floor.

To be clear: we are being asked to vote on more than 20 nominees for a second time because Republicans want a foolproof plan to push through more nominees on the floor.

Today's agenda undercuts the argument that the Senate needs to rewrite the rules because the nominations process is too slow.

This committee has been doing its job.

As the Chairman has repeatedly noted, we have sent a record number of nominees to the floor this year.

And a record number have been confirmed.

So there is no need for a nuclear option.

Now, I don't blame the Chairman. I know the President is pushing to get nominees confirmed.

As a former Governor, I understand wanting slots filled.

And I believe it is important for the Senate to do its job and confirm qualified nominees.

But the idea that the pace this year is unprecedented obstruction is simply not true.

More nominees have been confirmed under this Administration than under President Biden at this time in his first year.

And we all recall the dozens of qualified nominees that were held up for months—even years—under the last administration, and prior administrations.

We are considering the nominee for the Bahamas today—the nominee under President Obama was highly qualified, but sadly passed away after waiting years to be confirmed.

Mr. Chairman, you know that I have chosen not to play partisan politics with nominees under this Administration.

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I take our duty to confirm qualified nominees seriously.

But I want us to be realistic about where this nuclear option on nominees leads.

It will mean that there are fewer nominees who garner bipartisan support.

It will also mean that the constitutional duty of this committee to vet and confirm ambassadors to represent our country overseas will be diminished.

So I want everyone on this committee to have eyes wide open about what we're doing here.

The president will get more nominees confirmed.

But in the process, it will further erode bipartisan support for nominees and make it harder to cooperate across the aisle.

One final note: I am glad to finally see career nominees on today's agenda.

This Administration has nominated the lowest number of career officials of any Administration on record.

By comparison, there were five times as many career nominees at this point during the last Administration.

It is critical that career nominees get in place and continue to be nominated.

The Chairman: And I agree with that, and again, I come back to that the cooperation with the minority, this could not have been done without them, and we really appreciate that.

Senator Rosen, did you have a run-on sentence you wanted to make?

[Laughter.]

Senator Rosen: No, no. I just want to record a different vote.

The Chairman: Oh, ok. That will be fine.

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Senator Rosen: And I will make it not too bad of a run-on sentence.

The Chairman: All right.

So let's start with En Bloc Number 1. Is there a motion to adopt?

Voice: So moved.

The Chairman: Is there a second?

Senator Ricketts: Second.

The Chairman: The move seconded, and Senator Shaheen.

Senator Shaheen: Mr. Chairman, we have some people who would like to be recorded as a yes and have those records be entered in those nominees. So we have some people who would like to vote for some individuals on this list but are not comfortable voting for the entire list.

The Chairman: Ok. We can certainly do that. I hope we do not run into trouble with the Parliamentarian again. But I am perfectly happy with putting that in the record. I will fight every way I can if she pushes back on that.

So with that, the Clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

Senator McCormick: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

Senator Hagerty: Aye.

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The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

Senator Barrasso: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

[No response.]

The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

Senator Paul: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

Senator Cruz: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: Aye.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

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Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: No, and should I change my vote on some of them now
or after you have called the vote?

The Clerk: And Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 12, the noes are 9.

The Chairman: The motion is passed.

Senator Coons: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Yes.

Senator Coons: Could I be recorded as a yes on DiNanno, DeSombre,
Helberg, Black, Pratt, and Brodie?

The Chairman: The record will so reflect.

Senator Coons: Thank you.

The Chairman: Any others? Senator Rosen.

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Senator Rosen: May I be recorded as a yes for Mr. DiNanno, Mr. Helberg, Mr. Black, and Mr. Pratt?

The Chairman: The record will so reflect. Thank you.

We will now move to En Bloc Number 2, which I previously read. Is there a motion to adopt?

[Chorus of "so moved."]

The Chairman: Second?

[Chorus of "seconded."]

The Chairman: Moved and seconded.

Senator Shaheen.

Senator Shaheen: Well, first I want to just confirm that people who would like to be recorded as yes on any of these individuals will be entered into the record, just as we did on the first list.

The Chairman: We will put that into the record.

Senator Shaheen: And I would like to speak to Sergio Gor, because I know that there has been a lot of support for him coming from the Administration. I had a good conversation with him. I think he is very interested in what is happening in India and showed an effort to understand and support U.S. policy with respect to India.

I did ask him, because I am very concerned about reports that there is retribution against people who are serving in this Administration who are in the State Department who have been career and civilian employees of the State Department, and I do not like the idea that there is retribution. I do not think

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anybody should be subjected to that. And I asked him about that, and he committed that he would not go after anybody who might have disagreed with some positions of this Administration. I certainly intend to hold him to that, and appreciate that he has been willing to engage on the concerns that I raised with him. So I do intend to vote for him.

The Chairman: Thank you.

Further debate?

There being none, the Clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

Senator McCormick: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

Senator Hagerty: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

Senator Barrasso: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

[No response.]

The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

Senator Paul: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

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Senator Cruz: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: Aye.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

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The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: No,

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 12 and the noes are 9.

The Chairman: The motion has passed, and that bloc has been approved.

We are now going to move to some individual roll call votes. There are 12 of them. And again, this is pursuant to an agreement. Thank you for working with us on that. So we are going to take them one at a time.

Is there debate on -- well, let's start with Michel Issa to be Ambassador to Lebanon. Is there debate?

Voice: I move the nomination. Is that what you want?

The Chairman: Yes, that would be good.

Second?

Senator Scott of Florida: Second.

The Chairman: Moved and seconded that we send Mr. Issa to the floor.

Is there debate?

Senator Shaheen: Well, I would just like to point out that Lebanon has made some really positive steps in the last few months. They have elected a President after over 2 years. They have put in place a Cabinet that is focused on

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ending corruption in the country. They are working on banking reform. They are working on civil service reform. They are working on judicial reform. And I would hope that the Ambassador, if he is confirmed, will continue to work with this new government in Lebanon to push for those reforms, and that we will do everything we can to support that.

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator Shaheen, and I concur on those remarks. And I would say that virtually everyone recognizes that Lebanon is a real opportunity at this moment, one that we could not have imagined even a year ago. And it is critical. If we do not take the opportunity, somebody else will, and I think everybody dealing with feels the same way.

Is there further debate? There being none, the Clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

Senator McCormick: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

Senator Hagerty: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

Senator Barrasso: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

[No response.]

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The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

Senator Paul: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

Senator Cruz: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: Aye.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

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Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: Yes.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 14 and the noes are 7.

The Chairman: The motion is passed.

We will now take up Leandro Rizzuto. Is there a motion to send to the floor?

[Chorus of "so moved."]

The Chairman: Second?

Senator Scott of Florida: Second.

The Chairman: It has been moved and seconded.

Is there debate?

There being none, the Clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

Senator McCormick: Aye.

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The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

Senator Hagerty: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

Senator Barrasso: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

[No response.]

The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

Senator Paul: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

Senator Cruz: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: Aye.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

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Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 11 and the noes are 10.

The Chairman: The motion is passed.

We will take up Sarah Rogers to be Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy. Is there a motion?

Senator Ricketts: So moved.

Senator Scott of Florida: Second.

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The Chairman: Moved and seconded that the nomination be sent to floor with past recommendations.

Is there debate?

Hearing none, the Clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

Senator McCormick: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

Senator Hagerty: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

Senator Barrasso: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

[No response.]

The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

Senator Paul: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

Senator Cruz: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

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Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: Aye.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: No.

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The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 11 and the noes are 10.

The Chairman: The motion is passed.

We will move to Riley Barnes. Is there a motion?

Senator Ricketts: So moved.

The Chairman: Second?

Senator Scott of Florida: Second.

The Chairman: And moved and seconded.

Is there debate?

Being none, the Clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

Senator McCormick: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

Senator Hagerty: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

Senator Barrasso: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

[No response.]

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The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

Senator Paul: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

Senator Cruz: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: Aye.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

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Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 11 and the noes are 10.

The Chairman: The motion is passed.

We will take up Thomas Rose to be Ambassador to Poland.

Moved?

Voice: So moved.

The Chairman: Second?

Voice: Second.

The Chairman: It has been moved and seconded.

Is there debate?

There being none, the Clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

Senator McCormick: Aye.

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The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

Senator Hagerty: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

Senator Barrasso: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

[No response.]

The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

Senator Paul: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

Senator Cruz: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: Aye.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

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Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 11 and the noes are 10.

The Chairman: The motion is passed.

We will move to Lynda Blanchard to be Representative to the United States for Food and Agriculture with the rank of Ambassador.

Senator Ricketts: So moved.

The Chairman: Is there a second?

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Senator Scott of Florida: Second.

The Chairman: It has been moved and seconded.

Is there debate?

Being none, the Clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

Senator McCormick: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

Senator Hagerty: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

Senator Barrasso: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

[No response.]

The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

Senator Paul: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

Senator Cruz: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

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Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: Aye.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: No.

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The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 11 and the noes are 10.

The Chairman: The motion is passed.

We will take up Anjani Sinha to be Ambassador to Singapore.

Senator Ricketts: So moved.

The Chairman: Moved.

Senator Scott of Florida: Second.

The Chairman: Seconded.

Is there debate?

Being none, the Clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

Senator McCormick: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

Senator Hagerty: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

Senator Barrasso: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

[No response.]

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The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

Senator Paul: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

Senator Cruz: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: Aye.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

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Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 11 and the noes are 10.

The Chairman: The motion is passed.

We will take up Bill White to be Ambassador to Belgium.

Motion?

Senator Ricketts: So moved.

The Chairman: Second?

Senator Scott of Florida: Second.

The Chairman: It has been moved and seconded.

Is there debate?

Being none, the Clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

Senator McCormick: Aye.

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The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

Senator Hagerty: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

Senator Barrasso: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

[No response.]

The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

Senator Paul: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

Senator Cruz: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: Aye.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

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Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Kaine: Hold for a second. Aye. Oh, this is why.

[Laughter.]

Senator Shaheen: It is a vote only on Bill White to be Ambassador to Belgium.

Senator Kaine: No, and I would like to speak about it. People have made their mind up, but I would like to put something on the record about this.

The Chairman: Continue with the roll call.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye.

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The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 11 and the noes are 10.

The Chairman: And that motion is passed.

Senator Kaine, would you be all right to do it at the end?

Senator Kaine: After the votes?

The Chairman: We have a lot of people that have to leave. Thank you so much. I really appreciate that.

We will take up Caleb Orr to be Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs.

Senator Ricketts: So moved.

The Chairman: It has been moved. Seconded?

Senator Scott of Florida: Second.

The Chairman: It has been moved and seconded.

Is there debate?

There being none, the Clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

Senator McCormick: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

Senator Hagerty: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

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Senator Barrasso: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

[No response.]

The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

Senator Paul: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

Senator Cruz: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: Aye.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: I am going to pass for a minute.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Kaine: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: I'm sorry. No by proxy.

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The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

I'm sorry. I'm not awake.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye.

Senator Shaheen, did you want to record a vote?

Senator Shaheen: Yes.

The Chairman: You are an aye?

Senator Shaheen: I am aye, yes.

The Chairman: Senator Shaheen will be recorded as an aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 12 and the noes are 9.

The Chairman: The motion has passed.

We will move to Herschel Walker to be Ambassador to Bahamas. A
motion?

Senator Ricketts: So moved.

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The Chairman: Second?

Senator Scott of Florida: Second.

The Chairman: It has been move and seconded.

Is there debate?

There being none, the Clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

Senator McCormick: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

Senator Hagerty: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

Senator Barrasso: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

[No response.]

The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

Senator Paul: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

Senator Cruz: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

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The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: Aye.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Kaine: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

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Senator Rosen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 11 and the noes are 10.

The Chairman: The motion is passed.

We will move to Richard Buchan to be Ambassador to Morocco.

Senator Ricketts: So moved.

Senator Scott of Florida: Second.

The Chairman: Moved and seconded.

Is there debate?

Being none, the Clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

Senator McCormick: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

Senator Hagerty: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

Senator Barrasso: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

[No response.]

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The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

Senator Paul: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

Senator Cruz: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: Aye.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Kaine: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

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Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 13 and the noes are 8.

The Chairman: The motion is passed.

We will take up Paul Kapur to be Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs.

Senator Ricketts: So moved.

Senator Scott of Florida: Second.

The Chairman: Moved and seconded.

Is there debate?

Being none, the Clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

Senator McCormick: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

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Senator Daines: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

Senator Hagerty: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

Senator Barrasso: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

[No response.]

The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

Senator Paul: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

Senator Cruz: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: Aye.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: No.

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The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Kaine: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 11 and the noes are 10.

The Chairman: The motion is passed.

We will take up Michael G. Waltz, to be the Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations with the rank and status of Ambassador Extraordinaire, et cetera, and the Representative of the United States of America in the Security Council of the United Nations, and the Representative of the United States of America to the Sessions of the General

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Assembly of the United Nations during his tenure of service as Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations.

Senator Ricketts: So moved.

Senator Scott of Florida: Second.

The Chairman: Moved and --

Senator Paul: Mr. Chairman.

The Chairman: Senator Paul. It has been moved and seconded. Is there debate, Senator?

Senator Paul: Ok. So, this is going to be an affirmative recommendation, not a neutral recommendation.

The Chairman: It is going to be an affirmative recommendation. That was the motion.

Senator Paul: Ok. I just, for the record, will vote no, because I think his support previously for preventing the Commander in Chief for moving troops around fundamentally misunderstands the country and the constitutional process, so I will be a no.

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator.

Is there further debate? If none, I would ask unanimous consent that there be a single roll call vote, since it is two nominations.

Is there objection?

Senator Paul: Hold on. You said two nominations?

The Chairman: Well, it is the same person for two different positions. Is there objection?

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Senator Shaheen: I have no objection.

The Chairman: There being none, the Clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

Senator McCormick: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

Senator Hagerty: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

Senator Barrasso: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

[No response.]

The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

Senator Paul: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

Senator Cruz: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

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Senator Cornyn: Aye.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Kaine: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye.

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The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 11 and the noes are 10.

The Chairman: The motion is passed.

We have one more vote left, and that is on four careers. And I would ask unanimous consent for the Committee to consider the following four noms of career Foreign Service officers on the first agenda en bloc, by a single roll call vote. They are Sean O'Neill, to be Ambassador to Thailand; Julie Stuft, to be Ambassador to Kazakhstan; James Holtsnider, to be Ambassador to Jordan; Stephanie Hallett, to be Ambassador to Bahrain.

Is there objection to considering the four?

Senator Shaheen: No objection, Mr. Chairman, and my understanding is that all Democrats have planned to vote aye by proxy, who are not here.

The Chairman: That is agreeable.

Is there a motion?

Senator Ricketts: So moved.

The Chairman: Moved.

Seconded?

Senator Scott of Florida: Second.

The Chairman: It has been moved and seconded.

Is there debate?

Being none, the Clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

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Senator McCormick: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

Senator Hagerty: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

Senator Barrasso: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

[No response.]

The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

Senator Paul: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

Senator Cruz: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: Aye.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: Aye.

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The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Kaine: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 21 and the noes are 0.

The Chairman: The motion is passed, and thank you to the Committee.

Again, thank you for -- oops, I am sorry. Senator Kaine, you wanted to get your remarks on the record.

Senator Kaine: I had raised before in this committee my concerns about

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Bill White, and the committee, to your credit, pulled him back for a month of consideration. But I just want to put on the record, I think this is a grievous mistake. To approve someone to be Ambassador to Belgium who has tweeted out in platform an antisemitic, Holocaust denying, Belgian convicted criminal is a real dark mark on this committee. It is going to be big news in Belgium, and I suspect it is going to be big news here.

Belgium is a cesspool of antisemitism right now. The Charlie Hebdo attack happened in France. It also happened in Belgium. Some of the attackers were Belgian. The Holocaust Museums in both Belgium and France have been defaced by Belgians. And the Belgian government has had to take very specific actions to try to turn around a very dangerous situation of antisemitism in Belgium.

Mr. White has a background where he has done some good things for veterans, and I think many people are aware of those things. And if he had been nominated to be Ambassador to another country, platforming Belgian Holocaust denying, antisemitic convicted criminals might not have been a disqualifier. I think many of us would still have voted yes.

But to put this guy in as Ambassador to Belgium I think is a very, very bad move. It is going to send a very, very bad message about the U.S. respect for Belgium and the U.S. commitment on antisemitism. And I had hoped we might deal with this quietly in committee, because I am not going to be quiet about it on the floor.

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator. You are aware, I think, probably

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that he has walked back some of that stuff, and I understand that is not sufficient for you, but just for the record.

Senator Kaine: You are my friend. He blamed some of it on, "I tweeted stuff because a friend of Lindsey Graham's asked me to do it." But he also had other social media attacks on Lindsey Graham, one of our colleagues. And the notion that I am going to platform a Belgian Holocaust denying, antisemitic convicted criminal because a friend of Lindsey Graham's asked me to, I found that explanation completely specious. That was not the reason that he did the post. I mean, I do not even know how you know who a Belgian Holocaust denier is, much less why you decide to platform them.

So anyway, you know, there are answers to these questions that I do not know, but I just think for this Committee to green light this person for this country is -- I have said my case.

The Chairman: Thank you.

Senator Hagerty: Chairman?

The Chairman: Yes. Senator Hagerty.

Senator Hagerty: I took Senator Kaine's comments in the last meeting to heart, and I think you know I was the one that said to pause this. That gave me an opportunity to get into this deeper. And one thing is clear -- Mr. White deeply regrets the platform of the postings that he made. He also comported with a number of very pro-Israel activities that he supported, where he has led. He has raised billions of dollars for things I think we would all care about in terms of helping wounded warriors, things of this nature. His efforts with the *Intrepid*, all

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very positive.

I asked one of my friends, Ron Gidwitz -- some of you may know Ron. Ron was the CEO of Helene Curtis before he became the Ambassador to Belgium, and then subsequently our Ambassador to the EU at the same time. Ron is an accomplished businessman and was widely viewed among us who were Ambassadors at the time in the 45th presidency as one of the strongest Ambassadors.

Ron has met with Mr. White, and has pledged to continue to work with Mr. White to mentor and offer him guidance. And Ron feels confident that Mr. White sufficiently regrets the mistake that he made and is taking every positive effort that he can to do the best job he can to represent us in an appropriate fashion. I just thought I might share that.

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator Hagerty.

Senator Shaheen.

Senator Shaheen: I appreciate your looking into it, Bill, and coming up with that response. I have to tell you, what I found as upsetting as the substance of what Mr. White had to say online was the fact that he kept tweeting out inappropriate comments after he had been nominated. I mean, it is one thing to understand that you are a private citizen and so you should be able to express your views. But it is another when you have been nominated to represent this country and you continue to express those views in ways that are antithetical to the policies of this country.

I think that is a real problem, and I hope whoever is working with him

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makes it very clear to him that as an Ambassador he should not be engaging in that kind of activity. So, I don't know if you know whoever is working with him, but I would urge you to convey that because as Tim has said so eloquently, that is just not in America's interest.

The Chairman: I agree with the Senator. I think that point is well taken.

I would say that we have a Secretary of State that people agree and disagree with him. But he is a strong Secretary of State, and I have a strong belief that if Mr. White says anything that is out of step, particularly in this lane on antisemitism, that the Secretary of State is going to be all over him. I feel strongly about that. And I know the Secretary of State will take a call from anybody from this committee regarding --

Senator Shaheen: Can you share that with the Secretary of State, who has not been willing to answer my call?

The Chairman: I will have a chat with him about that.

Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

The Chairman: Particularly in light of him getting his agenda today.

Thank you all. I appreciate it. The committee is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 10:01 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]