

information was received. That simply does not meet the test of basic logic.

The final thing is that it compromised the integrity of the way we look at our law. The Department of Justice and the Office of Legal Counsel wrote opinions designed to allow and protect this program that were so bad that they have since been withdrawn by the Department of Justice.

The Presiding Officer is a very able and experienced lawyer. Those of us who have been in the Department of Justice know well that the Office of Legal Counsel stands at the pinnacle of the Department of Justice in terms of legal talent, ability, and acumen. Many of us believe the Department of Justice stands at the pinnacle of the American legal profession. So those are the people who ordinarily are the best of the best. When they write legal opinions so shoddy that they have to be withdrawn, when they overlook and fail to even address the U.S. Circuit Court decisions that describe waterboarding as torture when they are answering the question, is waterboarding torture, that is shoddy legal work.

When I first got a look at this and came to the Senate floor to speak about it, I described it as "fire the associate" quality legal work. That is what we got from the very top of the Department of Justice. It is not because there was a lack of talent there. It is because things were bent and twisted to support this program. So it is very important that the truth just came out.

I am very glad this has happened. It is a sad day in many respects because these are hard truths. These are hard facts to have to face. But we are better off as a country if we face hard truths and hard facts.

I will close by saying this. I have traveled all over that theater looking at the way our Central Intelligence Agency operates and the way our other covert operations operate. I am extremely proud of what our intelligence services do. I am incredibly impressed by the courage and the talent of the young officers who go overseas into often very difficult and dangerous situations and do a brilliant job. In many respects, it is for them that I think this report needs to be out. It needs to be known that this was not the whole department, that there are many officers who had nothing to do with it and would want nothing to do with it and knew better. There were many people who were professionals in interrogation who knew how amateurish this was. It was done by a bunch of contractors, basically.

So I think we should be well aware, as we reflect on this, of their courage and of the sacrifice and of the ability and of the discipline of the young men and women who put themselves in harm's way to make sure that this country has the information and the intelligence it needs to succeed in the world. I am proud of them.

I am also proud of the Intelligence Committee and our staffs who worked

so hard to perform this extraordinary service.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that following the vote on confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 1081, Walter, the Senate consider Calendars Nos. 1094 and 1095; that there be 2 minutes for debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees prior to each vote; that upon the use or yielding back of time the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nominations in the order listed; that any rollcall votes, following the first in the series, be 10 minutes in length; that if any nomination is confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nomination; that any statements related to the nomination be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. For the information of all Senators, these two nominations are Peter Michael McKinley to be Ambassador to the Republic of Afghanistan and Richard Rahul Verma to be Ambassador to India.

We expect that the nominations will be considered and confirmed by voice vote.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

OBAMACARE

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, a Bloomberg headline Monday noted: "Half of the Senators Who Voted for ObamaCare Will be Gone in 2015." ObamaCare, it seems, has not been kind to the party that jammed it through Congress.

In fact, the third ranking Democrat in the Senate admitted as much 2 weeks ago when he told an audience that Democrats made a mistake after the 2008 election by putting all their

focus on passing a health care law. He further said:

Unfortunately, Democrats blew the opportunity the American people gave them. We took their mandate and put all of our focus on the wrong problem—health care reform.

Now, as a result, my colleague from New York said: "The average middle-class person thought, 'the Democrats aren't paying enough attention to me.'"

Well, Democrats weren't paying enough attention to middle-class families. The American people didn't support the health care law, and they made that clear. But Democrats just ignored their objections and forced it through anyway.

They were far from frank about what was in the bill. In fact, ObamaCare architect Jonathan Gruber essentially admitted that Democrats were deliberately deceptive when passing their health reform law. Gruber said:

This bill was written in a tortured way to make sure CBO did not score the mandate as taxes. . . . Lack of transparency is a huge political advantage. And basically, call it the 'stupidity of the American voter' or whatever, but basically that was really, really critical to getting the thing to pass.

That is from Jonathan Gruber, as I said, an architect of ObamaCare.

Well, 4½ years after the law has passed, it is clear Americans were right to be concerned. The law that was supposed to reduce the cost of health care for American families is actually driving up prices.

Each Friday my office puts out a document featuring the ObamaCare headlines of the week. I would like to read a few headlines from the past week that I think give a picture of where we are with this law.

This is from the Associated Press: "Healthcare.gov average premiums going up in 2015." From the Wall Street Journal: "More Cost of Health Care Shifts to Consumers." From Businessweek: "Obamacare's Future: Cancer Patients Paying More for Medication." From Gallup: "Cost Still a Barrier Between Americans and Medical Care." From the Fiscal Times: "High Deductible Plans Have More People Delaying Treatment." From U.S. News & World Report: "Americans Unhappy With Obamacare Shopping Experience." And from The Hill: "Security Flaws Found in Obamacare Fee Calculator."

And I could go on. Those are just headlines from last week. I could read similar headlines from the week before and from the week before that.

Any way you look at it, ObamaCare is a mess. The President promised the law would lower premiums by \$2,500. In fact, the average family health care premium has increased by \$3,064 since the law was passed, and family premiums are still going up.

The President promised Americans could keep the health care plans they had and liked. In reality, ObamaCare has forced millions of Americans off their plans.