

did she doubt our intelligence community's conclusion in these two cases, but not the others?

Well, I asked her, and here is how that answer began. This is a quote from Colonel Gabbard:

These two cases are being looked at to be used as a pretext for major military movement. And another—my fear was a repeat of the deployment of another half million soldiers like we saw in Iraq towards what was the Obama administration's goals, which was regime change in Syria.

Setting aside that Obama didn't deploy a half million soldiers to Syria, here is the problem. By her own admission, Colonel Gabbard's doubts about U.S. intelligence in these two situations began with her disagreements about how the intelligence was going to be used. She didn't want the United States and our allies to strike Syria as punishment for these chemical weapons attacks. So instead of making a strong argument on the policy, she tried to question whether the attacks happened in the first place.

Colonel Gabbard also invoked the Iraq war. She is right. We needed to learn important lessons from the lead-up to the invasion. The biggest lesson was to carefully follow the intelligence where it actually leads, rather than bending it to fit the outcome that you want, which is exactly what Colonel Gabbard did in this case.

It is that simple, folks, and it is also that dangerous, especially for someone in this job. If she has already disputed intelligence because of how it would be used, would she do it again in this position—the position of the Director of National Intelligence? She is the person deciding what the President would see.

Would she withhold information or would she seek out confirmation without regard for whom it came from or that her viewpoint was correct? Because that is what she did in this case—the report she authored questioning whether these attacks were staged relied on a professor without expertise in chemical weapons. His theories in this case were deeply flawed and have been widely debunked by experts.

I asked Colonel Gabbard if she was aware that this professor had appeared on Russian propaganda news stations. She said she had no idea.

To produce his findings, this professor relied on an Australian chemistry student with a history of defending the Assad regime. I asked her if she was aware of that. She said she was not—not at the time—but since she has been made aware.

Here is what that tells me: Colonel Gabbard was unwilling to even examine, let alone weigh, the biases and shortcomings of the sources she was seeking out and elevating. She embraced these people and their half-baked theories because they confirmed what she wanted to be true—that Assad didn't gas his own people in these two cases. She wanted it to be true so badly that, 5 years later, she says that she

was still unaware of the facts of their background—facts that me and my staff found with some rather routine searching of public information. It was not hard.

And she trusted and further publicized their claims without verification, despite our government making clear that Assad and Russia would attempt to raise these sorts of questions and theories to distract America and our allies.

Mr. President, if that is not a redflag, I don't know what is. Still, 5 years later, Colonel Gabbard came before the U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee and repeated all of this as if it weren't in contention. She continues to apply less skepticism toward these sources and narratives than the assessments of American intelligence operatives, professionals who have a ton of experience at this and whom she is nominated to lead—all because they support her point of view: The United States should not have struck Syria in retaliation for their use of chemical weapons. That is why she believed the people online.

Now, that kind of reverse engineering to try to steer a policy outcome is dangerous in a job like this.

Mr. President, the next couple of years are going to be challenging for our national security. I think we all agree upon that. We face threats that grow more complicated each and every day. And our intelligence community, they are the best in the world. They are really good at gathering intelligence of all kinds. The hardest part is sifting through that information and making some sense of what it all means, making determinations. That is what this job is all about. And everything we have seen from Colonel Gabbard throughout this process suggests that she is the wrong person for this job.

She lifted up Edward Snowden as a hero and is unwilling to call him a traitor. She tried to get rid of one of the most important intelligence collection tools that we have and has contradicted herself when answering for it. And most central to this role, she has displayed poor judgment and poor decision making when assessing intelligence, especially when it comes to chemical weapons use in Syria.

Each of these—each one of them on their own—should be disqualifying for holding this job. Taken together, they paint a picture of someone who is especially ill-suited and unprepared to take on this responsibility.

I know that these concerns are shared by my Republican colleagues. So let's be honest about it. Let's say no to the political pressure. And let's put our national security first, and let's vote no on this nominee.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. LUMMIS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be

in a period of morning business for debate only, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

#### U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES RULES OF PROCEDURE

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, the Committee on Armed Services has adopted rules governing its procedures for the 119th Congress. Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 2, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, on behalf of myself and Ranking Member REED, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the committee rules be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

#### UNITED STATES SENATE—COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES RULES OF PROCEDURE, 119TH CONGRESS

1. Regular Meeting Day—The Committee shall meet at least once a month when Congress is in session. The regular meeting days of the Committee shall be Tuesday and Thursday, unless the Chairman, after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, directs otherwise.

2. Additional Meetings—The Chairman, after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, may call such additional meetings as he deems necessary.

3. Special Meetings—Special meetings of the Committee may be called by a majority of the members of the Committee in accordance with paragraph 3 of Rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate.

4. Open Meetings—Each meeting of the Committee, or any subcommittee thereof, including meetings to conduct hearings, shall be open to the public, except that a meeting or series of meetings by the Committee or a subcommittee thereof on the same subject for a period of no more than fourteen (14) calendar days may be closed to the public on a motion made and seconded to go into closed session to discuss only whether the matters enumerated below in clauses (a) through (f) would require the meeting to be closed, followed immediately by a record vote in open session by a majority of the members of the Committee or subcommittee when it is determined that the matters to be discussed or the testimony to be taken at such meeting or meetings

(a) will disclose matters necessary to be kept secret in the interests of national defense or the confidential conduct of the foreign relations of the United States;

(b) will relate solely to matters of Committee staff personnel or internal staff management or procedure;

(c) will tend to charge an individual with a crime or misconduct, to disgrace or injure the professional standing of an individual, or otherwise to expose an individual to public contempt or obloquy or will represent a clearly unwarranted invasion of the privacy of an individual;

(d) will disclose the identity of any informer or law enforcement agent or will disclose any information relating to the investigation or prosecution of a criminal offense that is required to be kept secret in the interests of effective law enforcement;

(e) will disclose information relating to the trade secrets or financial or commercial information pertaining specifically to a given person if—

(1) an Act of Congress requires the information to be kept confidential by Government officers and employees; or

(2) the information has been obtained by the Government on a confidential basis, other than through an application by such person for a specific Government financial or other benefit, and is required to be kept secret in order to prevent undue injury to the competitive position of such person; or

(f) may divulge matters required to be kept confidential under other provisions of law or Government regulations.

5. Presiding Officer—The Chairman shall preside at all meetings and hearings of the Committee except that in his absence the Ranking Majority Member present at the meeting or hearing shall preside unless by majority vote the Committee provides otherwise.

6. Quorum—(a) A majority of the members of the Committee are required to be actually present to report a matter or measure from the Committee. (See Standing Rules of the Senate XXVI.7(a)(1)).

(b) Except as provided in subsections (a) and (c), and other than for the conduct of hearings, nine members of the Committee, including one member of the minority party; or a majority of the members of the Committee, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of such business as may be considered by the Committee.

(c) Three members of the Committee, one of whom shall be a member of the minority party, shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of taking sworn testimony, unless otherwise ordered by a majority of the full Committee.

(d) No measure or matter or recommendation shall be reported by the Committee in the absence of the concurrence of a majority of the members of the Committee who are present.

(e) Proxy votes may not be considered for the purpose of establishing a quorum.

7. Proxy Voting—Proxy voting shall be allowed on all measures and matters before the Committee. The vote by proxy of any member of the Committee may be counted for the purpose of reporting any measure or matter to the Senate if the absent member casting such vote has been informed of the matter on which the member is being recorded and has affirmatively requested that he or she be so recorded. Proxy must be given in writing. In order to report out a nomination, measure or treaty, the "yes" votes must come from those physically present in the room *only* and must outnumber the "no" votes—whether the no votes are cast by members present in the room or by proxy.

8. Announcement of Votes—The results of all roll call votes taken in any meeting of the Committee on any measure, or amendment thereto, shall be announced in the Committee report, unless previously announced by the Committee. The announcement shall include a tabulation of the votes cast in favor and votes cast in opposition to each such measure and amendment by each member of the Committee who was present at such meeting. The Chairman, after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, may hold open a roll call vote on any measure or matter which is before the Committee until no later than midnight of the day on which the Committee votes on such measure or matter.

9. Subpoenas—Subpoenas for attendance of witnesses and for the production of memoranda, documents, records, and the like may be issued, after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, by the Chairman or any other member designated by the Chairman, but only when authorized by a majority of the members of the Committee. The subpoena shall briefly state the matter to

which the witness is expected to testify or the documents to be produced.

10. Hearings—(a) Public notice shall be given of the date, place and subject matter of any hearing to be held by the Committee, or any subcommittee thereof, at least 1 week in advance of such hearing, unless the Committee or subcommittee determines that good cause exists for beginning such hearings at an earlier time.

(b) Hearings may be initiated only by the specified authorization of the Committee or subcommittee.

(c) Hearings shall be held only in the District of Columbia unless specifically authorized to be held elsewhere by a majority vote of the Committee or subcommittee conducting such hearings.

(d) The Chairman of the Committee or subcommittee shall consult with the Ranking Minority Member thereof before naming witnesses for a hearing.

(e) Witnesses appearing before the Committee shall file with the clerk of the Committee a written statement of their proposed testimony prior to the hearing at which they are to appear unless the Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member determine that there is good cause not to file such a statement. Witnesses testifying on behalf of the Administration shall furnish an additional 50 copies of their statement to the Committee. All statements must be received by the Committee at least 48 hours (not including week-ends or holidays) before the hearing.

(f) Confidential testimony taken or confidential material presented in a closed hearing of the Committee or subcommittee or any report of the proceedings of such hearing shall not be made public in whole or in part or by way of summary unless authorized by a majority vote of the Committee or subcommittee.

(g) Any witness summoned to give testimony or evidence at a public or closed hearing of the Committee or subcommittee may be accompanied by counsel of his own choosing who shall be permitted at all times during such hearing to advise such witness of his legal rights.

(h) Witnesses providing unsworn testimony to the Committee may be given a transcript of such testimony for the purpose of making minor grammatical corrections. Such witnesses will not, however, be permitted to alter the substance of their testimony. Any question involving such corrections shall be decided by the Chairman.

11. Nominations—Unless otherwise ordered by the Committee, nominations referred to the Committee shall be held for at least seven (7) days before being voted on by the Committee. Each member of the Committee shall be furnished a copy of all nominations referred to the Committee.

12. Real Property Transactions—Each member of the Committee shall be furnished with a copy of the proposals of the Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force, submitted pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2662 and with a copy of the proposals of the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, submitted pursuant to 50 U.S.C. App. 2285, regarding the proposed acquisition or disposition of property of an estimated price or rental of more than \$750,000. Any member of the Committee objecting to or requesting information on a proposed acquisition or disposal shall communicate his objection or request to the Chairman of the Committee within thirty (30) days from the date of submission.

13. Legislative Calendar—(a) The clerk of the Committee shall keep a printed calendar for the information of each Committee member showing the bills introduced and referred to the Committee and the status of such bills. Such calendar shall be revised from

time to time to show pertinent changes in such bills, the current status thereof, and new bills introduced and referred to the Committee. A copy of each new revision shall be furnished to each member of the Committee.

(b) Unless otherwise ordered, measures referred to the Committee shall be referred by the clerk of the Committee to the appropriate department or agency of the Government for reports thereon.

14. Except as otherwise specified herein, the Standing Rules of the Senate shall govern the actions of the Committee. Each subcommittee of the Committee is part of the Committee and is therefore subject to the Committee's rules so far as applicable.

15. Powers and Duties of Subcommittees—Each subcommittee is authorized to meet, hold hearings, receive evidence, and report to the full Committee on all matters referred to it. Subcommittee chairmen, after consultation with Ranking Minority Members of the subcommittees, shall set dates for hearings and meetings of their respective subcommittees after consultation with the Chairman and other subcommittee chairmen with a view toward avoiding simultaneous scheduling of full Committee and subcommittee meetings or hearings whenever possible.

#### U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS RULES OF PROCEDURE

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs has adopted rules governing its procedures for the 119th Congress. Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 2, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, on behalf of myself and Ranking Member BLUMENTHAL, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the committee rules be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

#### COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS RULES OF PROCEDURE 119TH CONGRESS I. MEETINGS

(A) Unless otherwise ordered, the Committee shall meet on the first Wednesday of each month. The Chairman may, upon proper notice, call such additional meetings as deemed necessary.

(B) Except as provided in subparagraphs (b) and (d) of paragraph 5 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, meetings of the Committee shall be open to the public. The Committee shall prepare and keep a complete transcript or electronic recording adequate to fully record the proceedings of each meeting whether or not such meeting or any part thereof is closed to the public.

(C) The Chairman of the Committee, or the Ranking Majority Member present in the absence of the Chairman, or such other Member as the Chairman may designate, shall preside over all meetings.

(D) Except as provided in rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, no meeting of the Committee shall be scheduled except by majority vote of the Committee or by authorization of the Chairman of the Committee.

(E) The Committee shall notify the office designated by the Committee on Rules and Administration of the time, place, and purpose of each meeting. In the event such meeting is canceled, the Committee shall immediately notify such designated office.

(F) Written or electronic notice of a Committee meeting, accompanied by an agenda