

This is a horrible way to talk about the Cold War because it starts from the premise that it all was just a game conducted between two morally equivalent competitors.

Similar comments about Cold War rivalries and the like are commonplace of late, especially during the Sochi Olympics, when NBC commentators were desperate to portray the entire Soviet chapter as nothing more than a pivotal experience.

America surely made mistakes during the near half-century twilight struggle. The fact is there was a right side and a wrong side to that conflict and we were on the right side of it. The Soviet Union, of which Vladimir Putin was a part, murdered millions of its own people, stifled freedom in nearly every forum, enslaved whole nations, and actively tried to undermine democracy all around the world, including in the United States.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. MCCAIN. I ask unanimous consent for 5 more minutes.

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

Mr. MCCAIN. President Putin, a former KGB agent, has said the collapse of the "evil empire" was "the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century." This alone should have been a clue to this White House that misspelled reset buttons weren't going to cut it. But they were too stuck in the past to see it.

I could go on and on, including the ridicule some of us were subjected to when we pointed this out from time to time, including in 2008 when I said in a debate with then-candidate Obama: Watch Ukraine. Watch Ukraine. Putin will not give up Ukraine.

We need to have an economic aid package immediately, and I am glad our Secretary of State is over there with initial U.S. loan guarantees, joining the EU, and a longer substitute package through the International Monetary Fund. We have to stabilize the economy of Ukraine which is near collapse. Financial sanctions, freezing assets, visa bans, trade embargoes—all of those can be accomplished, particularly expansion of the Magnitsky act, so people who are responsible will not have bank accounts, they will not travel, they will not ever get a visa. They need to pay a penalty for orchestrating what is happening in Ukraine right now.

Obviously we should not go to the G-8 summit. He should be thrown out of the G-8. It should now be the G-7. They obviously have to suspend military-to-military engagements. We need to have a path—and a quick one—for both Moldova and Georgia to move into NATO. Both countries are occupied by Russian troops, Moldova in Transnistria and in Georgia at Kajan South Abkhazia, and quite often Russians keep moving the fence farther and farther into the sovereign territory of these countries. In an attempt to ap-

pease Mr. Putin, we abandoned missile defense systems in Poland and the Czech Republic. We need to reinstate those and move forward as quickly as possible.

There are a number of things the most powerful Nation in the world needs to do. I am not counting on our European friends. Already there have been statements by Angela Merkel and the leaking of a memorandum from the British Government. We may have to do a lot of these things by ourselves, because they are dependent on Russia for a lot of their energy supplies, and we have seen a significant recession in European leadership over the last 10 to 20 years. But we need to act, and we need to speak in favor of the people who are now being overtaken in Crimea by Vladimir Putin's army and military. I worry.

In conclusion, I say it is time we wake up about Vladimir Putin. It is time this administration gets real. It is also time for us to worry about what Vladimir Putin will do in eastern Ukraine on the pretext that somehow disorder and demonstrations might require Russian presence.

My friends, if we allow Mr. Putin to assert his authority over these areas because of Russian-speaking people, that message is not lost on Poland where there is a Russian population, on Romania, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, and Moldova. We are on the verge possibly of seeing a move to reassert the old Russian empire, which is Mr. Putin's lifelong ambition.

I have overstayed my time. I thank my colleague from Alabama.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I appreciate the opportunity to listen to Senator MCCAIN. I think facts have proven him right for many over many years of warning this country about how we have to conduct international relations in a realistic way.

I had the opportunity to be in Georgia and Ukraine about 3 years ago. In Georgia, we went to South Ossetia where the Russians had moved in, against European international law, and had set in. Last week or so, we were informed by the Prime Minister of Georgia they were building barbed wire fences along that border, digging in even deeper than they had before.

In Ukraine, we met with some of the democratic dissidents who were trying to hang on to democracy there. They had beaten Shevchenko, the fabulous lady who helped lead the Orange Revolution. She was worried about going to jail. I didn't think she would go to jail, but they put her in jail and kept her in jail for years on what EU and NATO officials have all said were bogus charges. They told us some of the democratic activists were somewhat depressed because Putin, with his intel background, was using the Russian intelligence services in Ukraine to buy up media and buy up television to prop-

agandize the country. They were hurting, and they didn't know if they would be able to successfully resist. It was such a delight for me to see this basically nonviolent revolution in which the people stood up for their country. Now we see Mr. Putin did not accept the sovereignty, and he is going to try to utilize military force in a way which is stunning. I have to say, Crimea is far larger and more strategically significant than South Ossetia and Abkhazia, but it is the same actions.

I thank Senator MCCAIN for his leadership.

ADEGBILE NOMINATION

I will share a few thoughts on the nomination of Debo Adebile to be the Assistant Attorney General of the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, a very important position.

There is no question he is a bright young lawyer, has a good resume. He spent 13 years with the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, one of the advocacy groups of the historic organization. They have been champions for advocacy and defense of civil rights and have done tremendous work over the years, and I have seen a lot of it. But they have also used the courts to advance political agendas which haven't always been accepted and have been seen to be improper.

While serving as the acting president and director-counsel of the Legal Defense Fund, Mr. Adebile positioned himself at the center of many high-profile cases—cases in the news media, and issues he dealt with. Perhaps most notably as litigation director, he chose, without being asked or without being even needed, to participate in the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal, the country's most notorious killer of a police officer. Abu-Jamal was tried at trial and convicted of the murder of a young 25-year-old Philadelphia police officer, Daniel Faulkner. The evidence at trial proved that Abu-Jamal shot Officer Faulkner in the back, and then stood over him and shot him three more times before firing a final shot into Officer Faulkner's face. Immediately following the murder, he stated that he hoped the officer died.

As noted by Philadelphia District Attorney Seth Williams, in his letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee in opposition to this nomination, he said:

Evidence at the trial established that while this was not some case of random street crime, Abu-Jamal was a supporter of the MOVE organization, an anarchist group that explicitly advocated violence against police.

This is the district attorney's summary of this case.

Some members of this body have argued that Mr. Adebile's choice to involve himself and his organization in this case is irrelevant because it is simply a case of a lawyer representing an unpopular client.

And lawyers do that. They are called upon to do that. I live in Monroe County, AL, the home of Atticus Finch,

Harper Lee, who wrote "To Kill A Mockingbird." He was asked to defend an unpopular defendant in the setting of Macon, which is Monroeville, AL. He undertook and did his duty because he knew it was his duty.

But I will take a few moments to read from District Attorney Williams' letter to Chairman LEAHY and Ranking Member GRASSLEY which powerfully illustrates why this is not the same thing. We are talking about a lawyer's duty to take on unpopular clients and make sure every American who is charged with a crime is entitled to an adequate defense. The district attorney of this very large office goes on:

Abu-Jamal made every effort to turn the trial into political theater. He repeatedly interrupted the proceedings, insulted the judge, and chanted the name of MOVE leader John "Africa." During the appeals, his supporters attempted to intimidate the judge by massing in front of his home in a residential neighborhood. Worst of all, they have maintained a three-decade-long campaign of verbal abuse against Officer Faulkner's widow, Maureen, who simply wanted justice for her dead husband.

This is indisputable. I think no one denies it. The D.A. goes on to say:

His lawyers . . . echoed these tactics in their legal maneuvers.

In other words, the lawyers defending him used the same tactics that the defendant did.

In other words, the lawyers defending him used the same tactics that the defendant did. They were not required to do that. Lawyers are officers of the court. They should never misrepresent anything in court or take a position contrary to plain law or misstate facts. Lawyers are not entitled to do that. So District Attorney Williams' letter goes on to say:

Despite the overwhelming evidence of guilt, they have—

The defendant and the lawyers, he is saying here—

—they have consistently attempted to turn reality on its head, arguing that Abu-Jamal was framed and that it was he, rather than Officer Faulkner, who was the victim of racism. The LDF perpetuated these allegations when they took over Abu-Jamal's case. Although Abu-Jamal's death sentence was eventually overturned on the basis of new procedural rules invented after his trial, his murder conviction has been upheld, and his lawyers' bogus racial claims have been consistently rejected in both state and federal court.

That is the D.A.'s continuing summation of it. He goes on to say:

Aside from being patently false, moreover, these claims are personally insulting to me. As an African-American, I know all too well the grievous consequences of racial discrimination and prejudice. I also know that Abu-Jamal was convicted and sentenced because of the evidence, not because of his race; and I have continued to fight for the jury's verdict because it was the just result.

So I respect that opinion. I don't think he would be saying that if he didn't believe it. He goes on to say:

Given all the laudable objectives of the NAACP, it is telling that Mr. Adegbile chose to devote his resources to this particular

cause rather than the many legitimate battles that called for his formidable abilities.

I was a federal prosecutor for 15 years and attorney general of Alabama for 2 years. I am a firm believer in the essential integrity of the American criminal justice system. I have seen it too long. I have tried too many cases before a jury. I believe they do justice every time. But there are—in a place as large as Philadelphia, and in places as large as America and in any state in America, you have poor people, people who are uneducated, people who can be deprived of rights they didn't know they had. Errors by chance could occur in a trial. There are needs for groups like the NAACP, the Legal Defense Fund, and other groups to defend people who have been caught up in the system and unfairly treated. That is a legitimate thing. So what I hear the district attorney saying is: Why choose this one to be so active about? He has good lawyers. The case was on appeal. So he goes on to say:

Of course, in our system even a radical cop-killer like Mumia Abu-Jamal is entitled to legal representation. That does not mean, however, that those lawyers who elect to arm him in his efforts are suitable to lead this nation's highest law enforcement offices. To select such a lawyer, among all those qualified for the position, speaks volumes to police officers and their families.

So he is saying: OK, you can do this. You can defend these cases. That is perfectly all right. You can pick that case out of all of them in the country and defend it, but you should not necessarily be promoted to this high position.

So this is not simply a case of a lawyer representing an unpopular client. It was a political cause. There was really no question about it.

What troubles me more than some of the other issues in the case is Mr. Adegbile's co-counsel, Christina Swarns, who actually worked for him. He was a supervising attorney. She explained the Legal Defense Fund motivation for getting involved in this case. Why? She explained it at a "Free Mumia" rally in 2011. This is what she said at that rally:

It is absolutely my honor to represent Mumia Abu-Jamal. It is my pleasure, it is my honor to have that opportunity, and there is no question in my mind, there is no question in the mind of anyone at the Legal Defense Fund—

I suppose, surely, that includes the nominee—

that the justice system has utterly and completely failed Mumia Abu-Jamal and in our view, that has everything to do with race and that is why the Legal Defense Fund is in this case . . . We are acutely aware that the injustices of the criminal justice system are inextricably bound up in race.

She says the Legal Defense Fund agreed with that. But the district attorney, Mr. Seth Williams, an African American himself, said the conviction had nothing to do with race but everything to do with the plain fact that he murdered a police officer, was observed, confessed and admitted it, and

said he hoped he died, and the jury found that. A biracial jury convicted him.

So while that is just her opinion, that is her statement, and she said she was speaking for the Fund. I serve on the Judiciary Committee, and we asked Mr. Adegbile: What about this statement by Ms. Swarns, and do you agree with it? How do you explain it, and what do you have to say about it?

Did he say he didn't agree with it? Did he say she misspoke? Did he say, I wouldn't have used those words? Did he say it was inappropriate, I didn't know about it?

This is what he said:

I do not know what Ms. Swarns had in mind when she made the comment.

That is not satisfactory to me. The question was a very serious one. I believe the comments by Ms. Swarns were inappropriate. They were false. They demeaned the integrity of the legal system of America improperly. As an officer of the court she had no right to do that. She really should have been disciplined, in my opinion. What did he say to the Judiciary Committee's written questions submitted to him? What does he say? All he said was: "I do not know what Ms. Swarns had in mind when she made the comment."

I think it is pretty clear what she had in mind. This is a radical view of criminal justice in America. It is very wrong. It is not correct. It is false. I am amazed that he would not at least take this opportunity now several years later to correct it.

In 2011 a Legal Defense Fund press release at the time that the nominee was leading the department declared:

LDF seeks to sweep the grave injustices embodied in this case into the dust bin of history and, in so doing, give communities of color reason to believe that they can and will receive equal justice in Pennsylvania courtrooms.

So it is a direct attack on the integrity of the courtroom and the jury and the judge and the appellate courts and federal appellate courts in Pennsylvania. That is the official press release of the Legal Defense Fund.

I don't think there is any evidence that there was any grave injustice done. In fact, justice was plainly done in this case. So that same press release, former LDF director, John Payton, is quoted as saying:

Abu-Jamal's conviction and death sentence are relics of a time and place that was notorious for police abuse and racial discrimination . . . unless and until courts acknowledge and correct these historic injustices, death sentences like Mr. Abu-Jamal's will invite continued skepticism of the criminal justice system by the African American community.

Mr. Adegbile has not rejected these statements. In fact, he is proud of his role in the case, testifying it demonstrates America's commitment to follow our procedural rules even in those hardest cases.

I just would say that a chief of the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice in Washington,

DC, holds an extremely important position. He is not a blind advocate for one vision of what some might call civil rights. I do not think it is a civil rights position these lawyers are taking. He is supposed to be a neutral observer. If a police officer violates the civil rights of someone under his custody, then he ought to be prosecuted, dismissed, and punished for it. But the Civil Rights Division leader is supposed to be somebody that everybody can trust, who people believe does not have an agenda, and who they believe is fair to all. So therein lies the rub.

Even someone who murders a police officer deserves legal representation. There is no doubt about that. But the Philadelphia District Attorney, Mr. Seth Williams, an African American said:

That does not mean, however, that those lawyers who elect to arm him in his efforts are suitable to lead this nation's highest law enforcement offices. To select such a lawyer, among all those qualified for the position, speaks volumes to police officers and their families.

It speaks volumes to them that this individual, this nominee for the Department of Justice, would be perceived as someone who is just voluntarily, aggressively, and improperly, in my opinion, taking the side of someone who is tried for murdering a policeman.

So the Civil Rights Division must protect the civil rights of all Americans. It must not be used to further a political agenda of any special interest groups as too often has occurred in this administration, in my opinion. It must be a place where the rights of all Americans are protected, regardless of their race and political party.

We have seen racial prejudice in the past, and it does need to be stamped out, but I do not believe the President's nominee is qualified because I do not see the required degree of objectivity and balance that will be necessary, and I will oppose the nomination.

I don't like to oppose nominees. It is no fun. I am sure this nominee has done many good things in his life. But there are points in time when we just have to say that as a Senator, I cannot vote for a nominee I don't believe is going to be objective and fair in the conduct of that important office.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDENTIAL OFFICER (Mr. MANCHIN). The Senator from Missouri.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I want to talk for a few minutes today about health care and more inquiries I have from the people I work for in our State about health care. Like we always do, I followed up with them to verify that I understand their account, and they don't mind if I at least mention their first name and where they are from as we talk about these problems.

This morning I had a chance to speak to the American Federation of Hos-

pitals about the challenges we face, and I mentioned the comment I made on the floor a few days ago, which was: If we were dealing with this health care debate today, in my view it would be a much different debate. Every Member of the House, every Member of the Senate, and almost every American who has been impacted in any way by the changes in health care understands this a whole lot better than we may have understood it 4 years ago.

I was in the House in 2009 and was leading our effort to come up with the alternatives that were clearly out there that I think we could have, and, frankly, should have pursued. But at that time it was clear a lot of Members had not really thought about this, and in many cases people who worked thought about it even less. We had a situation that, in many ways, was an accidental development at the end of World War II where most people in America who had insurance got their insurance at work. If the people at work liked the insurance they had, of course, among other things, they hoped they would be able to keep it. Hopefully many of them will, but clearly many of them won't.

The letters I have today are reflective of all kinds of challenges people are seeing. One of the things that was working very well in the almost 40 States that had it was the high-risk pool. The high-risk pool allowed people who had preexisting conditions a way to get insurance. They were in a pool that was pretty well defined. Not everybody with a preexisting condition had an ongoing cost. You might have a condition that was under control, you might have had a heart problem or cancer problem or another problem that stood in the way of your getting other insurance, but it didn't mean you had a lot of ongoing costs. It did mean the high-risk pool was a place you could go.

In our State, the premium for the people in the high-risk pool was 135 percent of what everybody else was paying. So you would take the average rate of what people were paying for insurance and add 35 percent to that.

Remember, these were people who everybody understood—including them—had a preexisting condition. They had a place to go. If the new plan would have reduced that 35 percent back to what everybody else was paying, that might have been a worthy goal, but that doesn't appear to be what has happened at all to the 4,000 people who left the Missouri high-risk pool when it ended because of the new law on December 31 of last year. There was a transition for some of them.

I have a letter from Bjorn of Kansas City. He said his wife was previously insured under the Missouri Health Insurance Pool for preexisting conditions. In her case she had a back condition. That was canceled in the middle of 2012, and she was put in another high-risk pool that the law allowed to happen as a transition.

The problem that created for them was it reset their \$1,000 deductible. They met the \$1,000 in the high-risk pool, and they met the \$1,000 deductible again in the second half of that year.

The insurance they have been able to find costs them four times what they were paying before. It is not 135 percent of the old premium. I guess four times that would be 550 percent of the old premium. So somebody who was paying 135 percent of what used to be the normal premium for an individual is now paying 550 percent of what used to be the premium for the old individual. If that was the way to help people who had a preexisting condition, they better hope the Federal Government doesn't try to help them any more.

Mark, from Parkville, says his two sons—young and healthy as they were, according to him—just had a 20-percent increase in the policies they had. The only reason they were given for the increase was that the new requirements of the Affordable Care Act meant their premium would go up. Mark said he lived out of the country for 2 years and was amazed to find upon his return that the cost for the same type of health coverage he had before he left went up from \$250 a month to \$1,000 a month.

Bill, from St. James, MO, said his deductible went from \$1,000 to \$2,500.

In Missouri, West Virginia, and lots of places, you and I know that if the individual deductible is \$2,500, a family looks at that—that is just like not having insurance at all. If a couple of you happen to get sick that year, it is suddenly \$5,000.

I met with some Missouri hospital folks last week in St. Louis. They said their fastest growing uncollected debt was now among people with insurance. Why would that be? Because people with insurance suddenly have a deductible that is much higher than the average person with insurance used to have.

The point they were making was that people can't pay \$2,500 or \$3,000 or \$5,000 or an even higher deductible, so that part of the bill doesn't get paid. That is the new growing debt that hospitals have.

These people who have the high deductibles are insured for maybe lots of things they didn't used to be insured for, but they don't use any of the things they are now insured for that they didn't used to be insured for. Bill from St. James says:

ObamaCare sure has not helped us.

I work for a small business that has renewed my healthcare and my deductible has risen from \$1,000 to \$2,500. My visits went from a \$20 copay to a \$30 copay and specialists from \$50 copay to \$75 copay.

He says he doesn't understand how he is helped by the new health care law.

Carl, in Lee's Summit, MO, said he has type 1 diabetes and his deductible went up to \$7,500. Again, for most families, a \$7,500 deductible is like not having insurance at all. If we could go