

this is a hostage situation, I don't know what is.

Over the past several months, we have had to put a provision in the National Defense Authorization Act to hold Turkey accountable. It relates to Pastor Brunson's imprisonment. It relates to their consideration for buying a Russian-made missile defense system that would never be allowed to inter-operate with the NATO missile defense system. We have also told them that we may have to reconsider whether we would actually transfer Joint Strike Fighter F-35 planes to Turkey and the timeline they are supposed to go there, which would be at the end of 2020.

I hope we get past all of this. I hope that measure in the National Defense Authorization Act is the last one I have to pursue here. Yet, as long as Pastor Brunson is imprisoned in Turkey, I will do everything I can to get the 72 Senators who signed the letter that expressed concern for Pastor Brunson—it is extraordinary to get that many Senators to agree on something in this body—to take it up another notch unless Pastor Brunson is set free.

I hope, next week, I will come to this floor and thank Turkey for doing the right thing in releasing Pastor Brunson and in allowing his wife, Norine, to travel out of the country. I hope, next year or next week, I will be talking about the positive things we can do with the NATO allies to secure their homeland, to improve our trade agreements, and to actually have the relationship with that NATO ally that I want so badly to have. Until Pastor Brunson is released, there is no way on this Earth that I will do anything to make our relationship better.

It is within President Erdogan's power to take this off the table today. I hope that President Erdogan and the Turkish officials hear our pleas. Show us, a NATO ally, the respect we deserve, and free Pastor Brunson.

I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:48 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

REMEMBERING JOHN MCCAIN

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I have been thinking about this, I have been dreading this, and now I am going to do this.

To all of my colleagues who have come before me, you have done right by our friend Senator McCain. The family appreciates all the good words, the kindnesses, and the antidotes that

have come their way. This is a tough time for the family.

John has seven wonderful children.

Cindy, as a devoted wife, you really did well by John.

I am going to try to make this somewhat fun even though I don't feel in a funny mood right now.

Let's start off with the tie. To anybody who may be watching on television, this is a Naval Academy tie.

I wore this today, John, to honor you and to annoy you all at the same time.

He would constantly tell me: LINDSEY, I wish you were in my Naval Academy class.

I would say: Well, that is very nice, John.

Do you know why, LINDSEY?

No, John.

If you would have been in my class, I would have been sixth from the bottom, not fifth.

Thank you very much, John.

Humiliation and affection were constant companions. The more he humiliated you, the more he liked you, and in that regard, I was well-served.

To my colleagues, thank you again so much for what you have done. The only way I know to put this in words that maybe John can relate to is that after a military operation is over, after a mission is complete, the pilot comes back and debriefs. If there is a military operation, you do an after-action report. I thought to myself, what would it say? What would the after-action report for John McCain say? The purpose of these reports is for lessons learned so that we will benefit and make sure that we remember—remember the things that went well and the things that did not so that we will be better off as a unit and as a nation.

The title of the operation was pretty easy—you can say a lot of things about me but “clever” is not one of them—“Operation Maverick.” It began in the fall of 1954 at the Naval Academy—the year before I was born—and it ended August 25, 2018. And what can we learn? The source of the report is me, his political wingman, code named “Little Jerk”—you all have your names, and you earned them like I did—who was lucky enough to walk in his shadow and to witness history up close, to be in the presence of a giant at a time everything around us was so small.

What did I learn? I learned that a few dumb jokes told over and over again actually become funny and can take you a long way in politics, MARCO. I am going to give them to you because John liked you.

He said: LINDSEY, how hot is it in Arizona?

John, I don't know.

It is so hot that the trees chase the dogs.

Well, isn't that funny, John.

He said: What is unique about Arizona?

I said: I don't know, John. I would imagine a lot of things.

Barry Goldwater ran for President and lost. Mo Udall ran for President

and lost. I ran for President and lost. LINDSEY, it is the only place in the Nation where mothers tell their children: You can never grow up to be President.

I say to the Senator from Oregon, remember that. Maybe you can break the string.

He said: LINDSEY, aren't you a lawyer?

Yes, I am, John.

Do you know the difference between a lawyer and a catfish?

No, I don't.

One is a bottom-dwelling, scum-sucking creature, and the other is a fish.

No wonder we did so poorly with lawyers, John.

He said: Do you know why I didn't join the Marines, LINDSEY?

No.

My parents were married.

I am going to miss these dumb jokes.

What else did I learn? I learned how to fight a lot, everything and everybody. I learned how to forgive. And from him, I saw how to heal.

On the fighting side, I learned that the captured warrior who was tortured became the statesman who forgave and healed a relationship between his former adversary and our Nation.

I went to the Hanoi Hilton with John. That is one of the highlights of my life. It is now a museum, and we are the bad guys because they get to write how the museum reads. I remember being in front of his cell, and you could see the wheels turning and the memories coming back. As we walked forward, surrounded by a bunch of handlers—and John McCain was like Elvis in Vietnam. It was the most amazing thing in the world how people adored him in Vietnam. I saw a bunch of photos on the wall of the prisoners playing volleyball and sitting in the Sun with sunglasses on.

I said: John, it must not have been that bad after all.

With a wide smile, he said: I don't remember it this way—which allowed us to get out of Vietnam.

I remember him embracing a war that nobody wanted to talk about because he understood what it would cost to lose it. I remember him supporting the surge when everybody was willing to get out of Iraq because they were so tired of it and saw no way forward. I remember the fighter. I remember the 2008 campaign when, in 2007, John McCain was fifth in a four-person race; written off as politically dead; no money. The “Straight Talk Express” had no wheels.

After a visit to Iraq in July, where General Petraeus allowed him to talk to 600 people who were going to reenlist in a war that they did not have to continue to fight, and about an equal number were becoming citizens because they were fighting for their country and had expedited citizenship—there were two empty chairs in the front with boots, and John asked: What is that all about? Two didn't make it to the ceremony, but they were given their citizenship that day. I remember

about 2,000 soldiers wanting a photo, and every one of them got it. I remember it being so hot that I couldn't breathe, but we stayed anyway.

I remember coming back and him getting the nomination, only to lose. I remember that night very well. He had wanted to be President, he was prepared to be President, but it was not his to have. I remember above all else the speech he made that night. John taught us how to lose.

When you go throughout the world, people remember his concession speech as much as anything else. There are so many countries where you can't afford to lose because they would kill you. John said that night: President Obama is now my President. So he healed the Nation at a time he was hurt.

I learned that serving a cause greater than yourself hurts. Anybody in the military can tell you the risk you take. He couldn't put his jacket on and he couldn't comb his hair because he got hurt serving a cause greater than himself.

I remember how easy it is to say and how hard it is to do, how hard it is to tell your base "I think you are wrong" and how hard it is to solve problems that nobody else wants to talk about.

I learned that failure and success are different sides of the same coin. John told me: I have become better from my failures because it teaches me, and I have been tempted by my success, and without my failures, I would have never been successful.

So to those who are striving as a young person, remember John McCain. He failed a lot, but he never quit. And the reason we are talking about him today and the reason I am crying is because he was successful in spite of his failures.

For family and friends, the after-action report would say: A relationship with "Maverick" brought joy and difficulty. Both were your constant companions. He was a difficult man. He could be tough. But the joy you received from being with him will sustain you for a lifetime. And I am so lucky to have been in his presence.

He taught me that principle and compromise are not mutually exclusive and are the foundation of a great person, as well as a great nation. He taught me that immigration—as hard as it is to solve, somebody has to do it. He said to me, along with Ted Kennedy: You are going to learn, LINDSEY, that the other side has to get something too. I have learned that lesson.

To my friends on the other side, as long as I am here, I am going to remember that you have to get something too.

He taught me that when good ignores evil, it may be convenient, but it seldom works.

He talked about what would happen in Iraq if we left. He was right. He talked about what would happen in Syria if we didn't get involved. He was right. Why? Because warriors are the best, I believe, at making peace, and

the warrior understands the difference between a false peace and real peace.

To those who accused him of wanting endless wars, you had no idea what you were talking about. He wanted sustainable peace and understood the consequences of not seeing it through. The soldiers adore him.

To those who have traveled with John, you seldom had two meals in the same country. You met more people than you could remember. But you were struck by one thing: We are going to really bad places a lot. And those in the military adore this man.

He taught me that boldness and practicality must be practiced in equal measure.

I say to the Senator from Rhode Island, he believes in climate change, and so do I. But there is a practical streak about John that I think made him very successful. He told me time and again: You have to let people catch up with you. You have to have a rhythm and a pace. There are 100 people in this body from different walks of life. You may think you are right, and if you are, it will be proven over time, but give your colleagues the time and the understanding to catch up with you.

He taught me that honor and imperfection are always in competition. I do not cry for a perfect man; I cry for a man who had honor and who was always willing to admit his imperfection.

If you are thinking about getting in politics, the one thing I would ask you to look at when it comes to the life of John McCain is that it is OK to tell people: I screwed up. I got this wrong. I want to make it right.

In my view, honor is doing the right thing at your own expense, and he did that time and again.

He taught me that life without passion and love is a sad life. He had a happy life. He had 10 lives. He was involved in five aviation accidents. If we sent John a bill for all the planes he crashed, he could never pay it off. He lived life to its fullest. He was often disappointed, but he was never deterred from getting back up and going at it again.

"Love"—not a word often associated with Senator MCCAIN, but it should be because if you were loved by him, you knew it. You were loved with all of your faults. And I was lucky to have been loved by him.

So how would I characterize "Operation Maverick"? Wildly successful. It made the world a better place. It gave the Nation something to talk about at a time when we can't agree on anything. It is not universal acceptance of a life of John McCain, but it is pretty damn close. It is the only time that MSNBC, CNN, and FOX are saying the same thing.

The only way that happened is because those of us who had the pleasure of being in his presence and those who covered him in the media business want to tell the story.

I have been approached since his death by cab drivers, waiters, and cops, and they all said: Sorry for your loss.

My name is Graham, not McCain, but I feel like a McCain. I don't know if I have earned that honor, but I feel like one.

The average man and woman in this country got John McCain. What will it mean for the future? It means there will be generations of politicians coming along who will be influenced by him. The McCain Institute is alive and well, and its goal is to attract young leaders throughout the developing world, expose them to democracy, and teach them the art of compromise and the rule of law. What a legacy that is.

John will inspire courage. He will reinforce the idea that nothing is inevitable as long as a few people are willing to fight for what they believe is right.

It is going to be a lonely journey for me for a while. I am going to need your help. The void to be filled by John's passing is more than I can do. Don't look to me to replace this man. Look to me to remember what he was all about and try to follow in his footsteps. If you want to help me, join the march. If you want to help the country, be more like John McCain. I believe there is a little of John McCain in all of us, and the little of John McCain practiced by a lot of people can make this a really great nation.

So, my friend, you did good. You lived in the shadow of a four-star father and a four-star grandfather. You always worried if you disappointed. You did not.

To Cindy and the children, thank you for making me a part of the clan. To Team McCain, you taught me what loyalty is all about. To my colleagues, thank you for your kindness.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I rise to speak about John McCain.

As one of those rising to pay tribute, I am perhaps one of the least qualified to do so. I say that because although John McCain and I served together, it was only for the last 4 years of his storied Senate career, and we were not on any common committees.

But let me say why I am qualified. In that brief period, I saw firsthand that of which others with many more years of acquaintance rise and speak. I speak of 2014, when I was running for Senate for the first time, and John McCain came to Louisiana to campaign on my behalf. It was remarkable to see how veterans responded to him. We would go—oh, my gosh, it was the sort of schedule that is legendary for John McCain. We started off in Covington, LA, then went to New Orleans, then went to Baton Rouge, to Lafayette, drove up the length of the State to Shreveport, and then came back to New Orleans—all in 1 day. Others would have been tired. He was energized.

He taught me about social media. Folks would come up to him and wish to have their picture taken. He would take a selfie, and say: Post it on Facebook.

Sure enough, they did. In that way, his contact with people went from just a group meeting—always incredibly well attended—to the individual meeting, to everybody those folks were reaching out to through Facebook.

But even that is not the story I wish to tell.

We had an incredibly intense schedule in which we were meeting one person after another. In Shreveport, as we were walking out, a fellow handed John McCain a note. He said: Senator, this is a fellow who is a fellow Vietnam vet, and he is in the hospital now and cannot come. He would love to hear from you. Here is his phone number.

So we get in the car, and John picks up his phone and he calls. He says: Hello, my friend, this is John McCain. I am sorry you are under the weather. Tell me about it.

He spoke to the man as one Vietnam veteran to another, reaching through the wire, letting that man know he was deeply cared for and honored for his service to our country and his sacrifice for our country.

That tells me a measure of John McCain—in this incredibly intense schedule, finding that moment to reach out to an individual to let him know how much he was valued as an American.

So I rise to speak briefly. I started by saying that I am probably among the least qualified, but, perhaps, because of my brief interaction and the quality of the interaction and the intensity of how John McCain presented himself, not just to me, not just to his fellow Americans, but to all of the voters of Louisiana, I might be the best qualified—the best qualified because, even in that glimpse, you see that which made John McCain a great American: bringing it all, all the time, for everybody who lives in this country, to represent this country as best as possible to the rest of the world, and in so doing serving not just our country but the rest of the world.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise today to honor our late colleague and friend, Senator John McCain.

I want to begin by offering my deepest sympathies to John's loving wife, Cindy; to his children, Sidney, Meghan, Jack, Jimmy, Bridget, Doug, and Andy; and to that most remarkable woman who shaped his life, his mother, Roberta.

Those who knew him knew that, above all else, John was a loving father, devoted husband, and a dedicated family man. Today we mourn with the entire McCain family.

I would like at this time to take a few moments to reflect on his heroic legacy.

When I think of John McCain, two words come to mind: courage and sacrifice. As the son and grandson of decorated naval officers, the desire to serve his country ran deep in John. Fol-

lowing in their footsteps, he graduated from the Naval Academy and went on to serve his country in Vietnam.

The events that followed, including his bravery facing unrelenting anti-aircraft fire, being shot down, captured, and held in horrific conditions, have become military legend. His indomitable spirit carried him through his years of imprisonment, but his willingness to sacrifice for his fellow servicemembers should be a testament to all of his courage and sacrifice.

As everyone knows well, John endured grueling hardship throughout his captivity. On courage, he so eloquently explained: "Courage is not the absence of fear, but the capacity to act despite our fears."

At one point during his captivity, John made what I can only imagine to be one of the most difficult decisions of his life. He was offered special treatment and release due to his family's military prominence, but he refused. He stated that he would not accept release until all the prisoners of war taken before him were also released. To put his comrades and his country before his own welfare, especially when confronted with a future of uncertainty and abuse, is the most profound example of his willingness to sacrifice his life for others.

John spent more than 5 years in captivity at the Hanoi Hilton, but rather than allowing the horrors of the experience to continue to color his life, he instead returned to the Navy for several years before beginning a career in business. Not long after, he again heeded the call to service and won a seat in the House of Representatives representing Arizona.

The first indication that Senator McCain would be an outspoken leader and staunch defender of servicemembers came when, as a freshman member of the House, he opposed legislation supported by President Reagan to keep marines in Lebanon. He refused to further endanger servicemembers for an objective that he viewed as unattainable. It took political courage and conviction for John to stand up to a man he has called one of his heroes and oppose him on principle.

This willingness to stand by his convictions and speak his mind, no matter the perception, would become a hallmark of Senator John McCain. First in the House, then in the Senate, and on the Presidential campaign trail with the aptly named "Straight Talk Express," John was renowned for the candid expression of his thoughts and steadfast defense of his principles.

While John and I served for many years together in the Senate, I was fortunate to work most closely with him during the past 4 years when he was chairman of the Armed Services Committee and I was the ranking member. Our pairing could be rocky at times, not because he was a Republican and I was a Democrat but because he went to the Naval Academy and I went to West Point. As John often joked, I did OK

for someone who didn't have a college education.

Thank you, John.

In all seriousness, Senator McCain's leadership was vital in shepherding through Congress numerous National Defense Authorization Acts that have substantively reformed the Department of Defense, improved care for servicemembers, and increased the capacity of our military to meet the myriad national security challenges we face.

Throughout his life, Senator McCain was a steadying force through turbulent times in global affairs. The threats to our national security and the stability of the global order are more numerous and diverse now than at any point in our recent history. As we grapple with these challenges, we should remember John's guidance: "We live in a land made of ideals, not blood and soil. We are the custodians of those ideals at home, and their champion abroad."

He believed in an America that is united by values, not divided by manufactured distrust and animus. Most importantly, he emphasized the moral obligation that we, as Americans, carry to provide leadership in the world and serve as a beacon of hope, opportunity, and justice, both here and across the globe.

As a further reflection, I was always impressed by John's respect for colleagues who were committed to principle but who sought principled compromise. This respect animated our relationship and made it possible to find common ground.

Finally, what ultimately motivated John McCain, I believe, was the knowledge that thousands and thousands of Americans in uniform were protecting this Nation. He understood that we owed these men and women and their families more than we could ever really pay. He always kept faith with these valiant Americans and inspired all of us here to keep that faith. As our sailors, soldiers, marines, and airmen guarded our country and Constitution, he guarded them with a special and profound love.

I will miss Senator McCain's partnership and friendship, and this Chamber will be hard pressed to find a more respected voice of reason and bipartisanship. It is my hope that we can follow in the footsteps of the virtues that Senator John McCain exemplified: courage, sacrifice, compassion, determination, and, above all else, an unyielding patriotism that motivated a lifetime of service. We can best honor Senator McCain by living our lives by the example he set.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, in the wake of Senator John McCain's passing, I was particularly moved by the announcement that, in accordance with his wishes, he will be buried in the cemetery at the U.S. Naval Academy. It is a fitting resting place for someone

who belonged, in a special way, to the U.S. Navy, and it is characteristic of him that in death he wished to rest with his comrades in arms.

It was during his service in the Navy that LCDR John McCain's plane was shot down over North Vietnam. He ejected, breaking several bones in the process, and was taken into captivity.

During World War II, ADM Chester W. Nimitz, describing the actions of the Marines in the battle of Iwo Jima, noted that "uncommon valor was a common virtue." The same thing can be said about the American soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines in the prison camps of North Vietnam. John McCain joined their number in October of 1967.

During the years of his confinement, he was regularly beaten and tortured. He survived thanks, in part, to the friendship of his fellow prisoners of war. In 1968, his captors offered the malnourished and ill McCain the chance to be returned home early, ahead of prisoners who were next in line. John McCain said no. He spent another almost 5 years in captivity before being released on March 14, 1973. It scarcely needs to be said that he remained a thorn in his captors' side the entire time.

Living in perhaps the most privileged country in the world, it is hard for most of us to imagine going without the internet for a few months, let alone something more fundamental like electricity or indoor plumbing. The courage and character and sheer determination required to undergo regular torture, malnourishment, and deplorable living conditions is almost impossible to fathom. Yet hundreds of U.S. soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines—John McCain among them—endured these torments and persevered.

Amazingly, it was in the prison camps of North Vietnam that John McCain discovered the fierce love of country that would animate the rest of his life. Years later, he noted:

I fell in love with my country when I was a prisoner in someone else's. I loved it for its decency, for its faith in the wisdom, justice, and goodness of its people. I loved it because it was not just a place but an idea, a cause worth fighting for. I was never the same again; I wasn't my own man anymore; I was my country's.

John McCain was his country's man. Throughout a congressional career that spanned 35 years, he served her faithfully. He inspired those who served with him, on both sides of the aisle. He always called on all of us to live up to all that is best and greatest about the United States of America.

He was a fierce crusader for the causes close to his heart, from supporting our Nation's veterans to equipping our military with the tools it needs, to advancing liberty around the world.

He was also a wonderful colleague and friend. Shortly after I got to the Senate, I read his book, "Faith of My Fathers." As I am reading this book, I

am starting to think that some of the dates and places sound pretty familiar. I did a little research and ended up discovering the Distinguished Flying Cross my father Harold Thune received had been awarded to him by none other than ADM John McCain—our John McCain's grandfather.

When I shared this with John, and every time I would see him, he would say: "We've got to call your dad," and that is exactly what we did one day. I cherish that special connection with a family who has meant so much to our country and to freedom.

It was an honor to serve with John McCain. I will miss his sense of humor and the passion he brought to every battle. I admired him greatly. He reminded me and all of us every day that life is not about advancing ourselves but about serving a greater cause and that, paradoxically, it is in service that we find freedom.

In his farewell message to his countrymen, John said, "To be connected to America's causes—liberty, equal justice, respect for the dignity of all people—brings happiness more sublime than life's fleeting pleasures. Our identities and sense of worth are not circumscribed but enlarged by serving good causes that are bigger than ourselves."

Already, the new class of midshipmen has overrun the grounds of the U.S. Naval Academy. In the days and years and decades to come, midshipmen will walk past John McCain's grave and the graves of other marines and sailors who have served our country. The graves will fade into the background of everyday life, but they will still whisper always of the courage and sacrifice of those who have gone before.

Later, at that time of their testing, some of those midshipmen may remember the graves of those heroes and resolve to be like them, to be like John McCain.

When discussing how he would like to be remembered, John McCain said, "I want, when I leave, that the ceremony is at the Naval Academy, and we just have a couple of people that stand up and say, 'This guy, he served our country.'"

"This guy, he served his country." I think he can be assured there will be more than a few people saying that on Sunday. There can be few finer epithets.

I yield the floor.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, the Trump administration is engulfed in scandal. The President has been implicated in at least one felony. His former campaign chief, former deputy campaign chief, longtime personal lawyer, and former national security adviser are all confessed or convicted felons. With every passing week comes a shocking new revelation about Russian interference in the 2016 election, another bombshell report detailing their infiltration of conservative circles, or another story about how woefully underprepared the United States is to defend against another attack.

Here in Congress, Republicans have their heads buried in the sand. It sure seems like they are going to keep on pretending it is business as usual.

A year ago, I placed a hold on a Treasury nomination—Isabel Patelas to be Assistant Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis—because of the Department's refusal to turn over documents related to follow-the-money issues and other key investigative questions. Since then, colleagues, Treasury's stonewalling has not changed. In fact, in light of all that has been revealed in the last year, their stonewalling is even more unpardonable.

The Treasury Department is participating in the coverup of criminal activity. The least the Congress can do—the very least—is hold nominees until the administration changes its behavior. It ought to happen on a bipartisan basis. Republicans ought to stand up with Democrats and say, "This is dangerous. This is corrosive to our democracy. This is wrong."

Leader MCCONNELL has gone ahead, filed cloture, and called votes on the Patelas nomination without doing any of that.

For me, this started a year ago, when I asked the Treasury to provide the Finance Committee with key documents related to follow-the-money and Russia. I am the ranking Democrat on the committee, which has jurisdiction over the Treasury Department. We have a team of skilled investigators who are highly adept at digging into the kinds of questions that had been raised about Russian oligarchs like Alexander Torshin and about shell companies and other forms of money laundering and illicit finance. That is why I requested these documents from the Treasury, but the Treasury essentially blew us off.

Russia's interference in our democracy has been thoroughly covered in news reports, and many of those reports get right to the heart of why I have called for investigators to follow the money. I will quote from an article in BuzzFeed about Alexander Torshin, the accused Russian spy Maria Butina, and her American associate Paul Erickson.

"[Butina's] indictment said that she was communicating with Russian intelligence while here and was 'acting at the direction of a high-level official in the Russian government.'"

"That person, federal authorities told BuzzFeed News, is Alexander Torshin—Butina's former boss, once a member of Russia's upper house of parliament, and a close confidant of President Vladimir Putin."

"In 2015, Torshin was appointed deputy governor of the Central Bank of the Russian Federation and Butina was hired as his special assistant. Torshin is believed to have close ties to gun rights activists in the US, and McClatchy reported that the FBI is investigating whether Torshin illegally funneled money to the NRA."

“According to her indictment, Butina worked for Torshin until May 2016, and she came to the US on a student visa later that summer. The same month, Spanish authorities reported that Torshin had been laundering money for [a] Moscow-based . . . crime syndicate.

“This year, Torshin was among the Russian oligarchs sanctioned by the US Treasury Department for playing a key role in ‘advancing Russia’s malign activities.’ Law enforcement sources told BuzzFeed News that tens of millions of dollars in his suspicious financial transactions were flagged by Treasury officials working on the FBI’s counter-intelligence investigation into Russian influence.

“These transactions included large, round-number wire transfers—a hallmark of money laundering—from Istanbul and Dubai, the sources said.”

Elsewhere in the report, BuzzFeed outlined how anti-fraud investigators at a major bank flagged transactions by Erickson and Butina as suspicious. Again, I will quote from the article.

“The two also appeared to use a company, Bridges LLC, to conduct suspicious transactions. Bank officials said they couldn’t determine the purpose of the company, which was incorporated in South Dakota in February 2016. Butina was listed as the ‘sole signer’ on its checking account, but Erickson wrote and signed checks from it. He told McClatchy that Bridges was formed to help Butina obtain financial assistance for her graduate studies . . .

“About \$89,000 passed between Erickson’s US accounts and one held by Butina at Russia’s Alfa Bank. In 2014, Erickson received \$8,000 from Butina’s Alfa account. Between June 2016 and March 2017, Erickson sent a dozen wires to her Alfa account totaling \$27,000.

About \$93,000 was sent or received during a single four-month period—from May to August 2017 . . . Bank officials discovered wires, checks, transfers, and cash deposits totaling that amount, including checks made out to cash, between the duo’s accounts last year.

“In June and July 2017, Erickson wired \$45,000 to an unidentified law firm in Washington on Butina’s behalf. It is not known why Butina retained an attorney at that point, and her current lawyer, Robert Driscoll, told BuzzFeed News that his firm was not the recipient of the money.

“ . . . Investigators from Wells Fargo flagged dozens of other suspicious transactions involving Butina and Erickson for FBI agents and the Treasury Department’s financial crimes division. Bank investigators told Treasury officials they were suspicious about where the money came from and that they could find no ‘apparent economic, business, or lawful purpose’ for the transactions.”

I am not going to comment on any classified material, and I am not confirming these reports, but these arti-

cles are right out in the open. The information reported by BuzzFeed alone ought to have been enough to convince Senators that the administration needs to be forced to comply with oversight requests from the Congress—just that one report—and that is far from the only bombshell that has dropped in the last year since I announced a hold on the Patelunas nomination. Still, Treasury is stonewalling. They are blocking our oversight and our investigations at every turn.

It is an outrage that Senate Republicans are apparently A-OK with this stonewalling.

So colleagues, here is what I want to know: When does it become too much? How many reports detailing election interference does the Senate need to stand up and take action? How many stories about shell companies and shadowy payments from oligarchs need to come out into the open? Maria Butina is sitting in a jail cell in northern Virginia—how many other spies need to be arrested before Senate Republicans stand up to an administration that is hiding the facts?

A year ago, the President’s son confirmed meeting with Russians in Trump Tower during the campaign, at least one of them connected to Russian intelligence. Senate Republicans did not try to get answers.

On the morning of Monday, July 16, Maria Butina was charged with being a Russian spy. It was revealed she had infiltrated a “gun rights organization” and woven herself into prominent conservative circles to manipulate our politics. That same day, the Trump administration announced a pro-dark money rule that would make it easier to get away with this kind of lawbreaking the next time. Republicans did nothing about it.

Last Tuesday afternoon, Paul Manafort was found guilty on five counts of tax fraud, two counts of bank fraud, and one count of failure to disclose a foreign bank account. Michael Cohen pleaded guilty to charges of tax evasion, bank fraud, and two felony campaign finance violations he said he committed at the President’s direction.

Again, Donald Trump has been implicated in a felony campaign finance violation. Manafort and Cohen, who are convicted and confessed felons, are both deeply enmeshed in the broader investigation into Russia’s interference in our election and potential collusion with the Trump campaign.

The very same day, Senator WARNER, as part of his questioning on the U.S. Senate Banking Committee, had to repeatedly press Sigal Mandelker, the Treasury Department’s Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Crimes, during a hearing on the effectiveness of Russian sanctions, to be more responsive to bipartisan requests from the Intelligence Committee. Treasury is 8 months behind in their responses to some requests.

To her credit, Ms. Mandelker said she would respond in a timely manner,

though she noted she would have to consult with people back at her office. The problem is that, pretty much every time anyone from this administration has uttered such a promise, it has been broken faster than it takes a wildfire to spread in the arid West.

Regardless of the promises made, the very next day, Leader MCCONNELL went ahead and filed cloture on a nomination I have been holding due to the Treasury’s stonewalling over those exact issues.

Colleagues, the President is routinely attacking the rule of law in this country. He is attacking the Justice Department, which is run by people he appointed. He has mused about pardoning people who are unquestionably guilty of committing crimes. He said that perhaps it should be illegal for individuals to cooperate with law enforcement by providing information that can bring criminals and coconspirators to justice.

When is enough enough?

In my view, nobody in this body, in their heart of hearts, could possibly believe that the ties between the President, his associates, the Trump organization, and Russia do not warrant thorough investigation. You could not possibly have kept up with the news over the last 18 months and come to any other conclusion. Everybody can smell the smoke, but you would have to blind yourself not to see the fire.

By stonewalling our investigations, the Treasury is complicit in the cover-up. They are hiding the facts from the Congress and the American people. The Senate’s powers of oversight and investigation are derived from the Constitution of the United States, and the Trump administration is trampling all over it. Every member of this body, Democrat and Republican, ought to be outraged.

That is why it is wrong to proceed with the Patelunas nomination. I drew the line here, with this nominee, but Leader MCCONNELL filed cloture against my known wishes, scheduling the vote to collide with Members’ plans to attend Senator McCain’s memorial.

Furthermore, what the Treasury Department is doing to keep this information about follow-the-money hidden in the shadows is wrong. The Senate should not stand for it.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I rise in support of the nomination of the Honorable Richard Clarida to be a member and Vice Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

Dr. Clarida has a breadth of private sector, government, and academic experience involving both monetary policy and financial markets.

At his nomination hearing in the Banking Committee, he demonstrated his expertise and provided members insight of how his background, knowledge, and experience will aid the Federal Reserve Board and the country.

This was evidenced when he received bipartisan support from members of

the Banking Committee with a vote of 20-5.

Dr. Clarida currently serves as managing director and global strategic advisor at PIMCO, a position he has held since 2006.

Previously, he served as Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Economic Policy from 2002 to 2003 and as a senior staff economist with the Council of Economic Advisers from 1986 to 1987.

In his academic career, he was an assistant professor at Yale University from 1983 to 1988 and has served as a professor of economics at Columbia University in various capacities since 1988.

If confirmed, Dr. Clarida will play an important role in monetary policy normalization.

Dr. Clarida has written extensively about monetary policy and, along with others, developed a framework for monetary policy analysis that has been widely cited and used by policymakers around the world.

Such expertise will be especially important as the Fed continues to wind down its balance sheet and raise interest rates after years at the zero lower bound.

The Fed has also begun the important work of implementing S. 2155, the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act, which was signed into law on May 24 of this year.

If confirmed as a member and Vice Chairman of the Board of Governors, I look forward to working with Dr. Clarida on these important issues.

The Board of Governors currently has vacancies, with only three sitting members to carry out its vital work.

I strongly support this nomination today and urge my colleagues to do the same.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). The majority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, the pending cloture motions on Executive Calendar Nos. 911, 783, and 720 be withdrawn, and that at 3:45 p.m. today, the Senate vote on the following nominations in the order listed with no intervening action or debate: Executive Calendar Nos. 910, 911, 783, and 720; that if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

I further ask unanimous consent that the pending cloture motions on Executive Calendar Nos. 633, 635, 636, 674, 676, 692, 693, 731, 779, 782, 838, and 893 be withdrawn; and that following disposition of the Patelunas nomination, the Senate vote on the following nominations in the order listed with no intervening action or debate: Executive Calendar Nos. 633, 635, 636, 674, 676, 692, and 837; that if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be im-

mediately notified of the Senate's action.

I further ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader, in consultation with the Democratic leader, during the week of September 4, the Senate vote on the following nominations in the order listed: Executive Calendar Nos. 693, 731, 778, 779, 782, 838, 839, and 893; that if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Minnesota.

REMEMBERING JOHN MCCAIN

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, last week, we lost an incredible patriot, Senator, and American—our friend and colleague Senator John McCain. My heart goes out to his wife Cindy, his mom, his daughters, and family.

In the Navy, John exemplified heroism and bravery, and in the Senate, he was a mentor to so many of us. He taught us how to work with leaders on the world stage, but then he taught us something just as important; that is, how to work with each other when we are here and back home.

This past month, my husband and I got to visit John and Cindy at their ranch in Arizona one last time. Even while battling brain cancer, he continued to be engaged in the issues of our time. He continued to have that signature McCain humor and that grit.

My last memory of John was, I had brought a few of his books to him, and he was getting tired and pointed to one sentence in one of the books and said to me: That, that is what matters.

The sentence was this: "Nothing in life is more liberating than to fight for a cause larger than yourself." No one proved that more than John McCain.

LINDSEY GRAHAM just gave beautiful remarks about his best friend—his best friend who had taught him so much, who taught him how to pick yourself up and be resilient when things go wrong, who taught him how to always put your country first.

I saw that resilience firsthand when John invited me to go with him and LINDSEY on a trip to Asia. It was an incredible moment in his own life. It was right after he had lost that Presidential election—something he had dreamed of attaining for so long, and it didn't work out. Did he just go home and not do his work? No. He dove right in and took a young Senator with him to Asia, along with his best friend LINDSEY, and some of his most beloved staff.

What I saw on that trip I will never forget. He was literally a few months out of losing a Presidential election, but he was still excited about the world around him. He was excited when the Defense Secretary called him with something he wanted him to work on with him.

He had great humor when he read about President Obama's latest pur-

chase of a dog and other things, and he just said it and smiled and put the newspaper down.

He loved introducing me to people whom I thought I would never meet, and he loved sharing those stories. On every leg of the trip between countries, he would read books. He would read books about World War II. He would read books about anything in history that he thought was relevant to today. He loved it for the sake of history, but he also loved it because he believed history teaches us something; that you can't ignore history; that you take the lessons of history and bring them with you forward.

John's own history was incredible—a Navy pilot during Vietnam. After being shot down, he was held and tortured as a prisoner of war for over 5 years in that infamous Hanoi Hilton.

On the trip to Asia, we went to that prison, and I saw the cell where John had been held for those 5 years—the cell in which he made the decision to allow other prisoners to be released before him because he didn't want to look like he got special treatment. That was a moment I will never forget. Then, we went on a tour of the rest of the prison. Again, with that signature wry humor and resilience, as the guide was showing us a new exhibit, which included happy pictures of prisoners of war sitting around a Christmas tree or playing table tennis, and she proudly showed us those pictures, he nodded his head with all the media behind him and then whispered to me: I don't remember any of this.

We then went to an exhibit that was brand-new of his flight suit, and it was a pristine flight suit with his name embroidered on it. Next to it was a picture of him and the plane being shot down, and the flight suit was all torn up. They would show us the flight suit, and he took pictures and smiled. Then, as we were walking away, he said to me: That was not my flight suit.

That was John McCain. When he walked around the streets of Vietnam, a place where he had been held prisoner for 5 years, he was like a rock star. Do you know why? Because he had come back there so many times, bringing different Americans with him, working on issues that mattered to them, working on trade issues, normalizing relations. They loved him there. That was him; that was John McCain.

The other thing about him was there were so many Senators that he mentored, but I always loved how he would take some of the new women Senators under his wing and make sure they went on these trips. In many of the rooms where we met with foreign leaders, it would be, again, John and LINDSEY and I. Of course, Senator McCain went first as the leader of the delegation, and then all of these male foreign leaders would next look at LINDSEY GRAHAM because they figured he was the next senior, which was correct. But John McCain would stop