

stroke of genius. Trump is killing two birds with one stone by redirecting these funds. He is dividing us from our European allies in the face of Russian aggression and dividing the American people with his politics of hate. I have said it before, and I will say it again: Investing in Donald Trump's candidacy was the best decision Putin ever made. His patron at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue will stop at nothing to repay the debt. It might indeed be the only debt businessman Donald Trump has ever worked so hard to repay.

My friends, we have witnessed a real summer of love between Trump and Putin. Consider the G7 meeting in France last month. So clearly was the United States not the leading voice at the table. So tragically have we lost the confidence of our closest allies, and so predictably did our President once again make an appeal on behalf of his patron in Moscow by repeatedly calling for the expansion of the G7 to include Russia.

Sometimes I wonder: Does President Trump actually think that Russia is a democracy? Does he think that the Russian people live in freedom? Does he see Russia as an advanced economy? Does he believe Russia shares America's interests?

I have to say that little surprises me these days, but even I was taken aback to see him blame President Obama for Russia's behavior—on foreign soil, no less.

There is only one country responsible for Russia's removal from the G8 in 2014, and that is Russia. The Russian Federation was suspended from the G8 by its fellow countries because of its invasion and illegal occupation of Crimea, which is the territory of the sovereign nation Ukraine. Five years later, more than 10,000 Ukrainian patriots are dead. That is why Russia does not belong in the G8.

What has the Kremlin done since 2014 that could possibly justify an expansion of the G7? Has it suspended its illegal occupation? Has it behaved like a responsible member of the international community? Has it respected the sovereignty of other nations? The answers are no, no, and no.

Let's review Russia's behavior since 2014.

First—and on the top of mind for many of us—was Russia's sweeping and systematic interference in our 2016 Presidential election on behalf of then-Candidate Donald Trump, as is documented in the special counsel's sobering report. Spreading propaganda, manipulating social media, and spying on American election infrastructure is not the behavior of a G7 country.

Second was the Kremlin's chemical weapons attack on British soil—a blatant assassination attempt against a Putin opponent and his daughter. One British citizen was killed, and others required medical attention. This is not an isolated case. Just last month, a Russian citizen was gunned down in a park in Berlin at the suspected hand of the Russian authorities.

This is not the behavior of a G7 country.

Third is the Kremlin's complicity in Bashar al-Assad's war crimes in Syria. An untold number of Syrian civilians have been killed by Russian airstrikes launched in support of Assad. Those responsible should be tried in The Hague on war crimes charges. This is not the behavior of a G7 country.

Fourth, in recent weeks, Russian forces have ramped up their pressure on the country of Georgia. More than 11 years after Russia's invasion, the Georgian people suffer under its ongoing aggression. That is not the behavior of a G7 country.

Fifth is the recent Russian crackdown on demonstrators exercising their basic political rights. Throughout the summer, Putin oversaw the brutal beatings of children, women, and men and subjected everyday Russian citizens to arbitrary arrest and detention. What was their ask? What was their plea? That they be able to register their own local candidates for their own local elections.

The Kremlin's ongoing and too often violent oppression of the Russian people is not the behavior of a G7 country. No country in the G7 acts this way. This behavior is destabilizing, it is aggressive, it is authoritarian, and it does not belong at the table of democracies.

It is truly a disgrace that any American President would so easily discount all of what I have just described to win favor with his patron and pal.

Of course, these aren't the only gifts bestowed by President Trump during this summer of love.

Let's not forget how the President has delayed sanctions on Turkey over its purchase of the Russian S-400 system. Congress passed these sanctions under the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act, or CAATSA, in response to Russia's attack on our elections in 2016. We have these sanctions for a reason. They advance America's national security interests. They starve the Russian defense sector of much needed international business. By not imposing them, this President is both failing to hold Russia accountable and sending a dangerous message to other countries that they can buy Russian weapon systems without consequence. From the moment we passed CAATSA, this administration has resisted every step of the way.

So let's imagine, for a moment, what a legitimate American President, a President who is not a Putin puppet, would do in this situation. How would that person protect our country?

First, a legitimate President would not endanger the relationship with a key ally in order to gain political advantage at home. They would show solidarity with our democratic allies by providing all appropriated security assistance to Ukraine and funding for European efforts to counter Russian aggression.

Second, I am sure they would not welcome Russia back into the G7.

Third, they would impose CAATSA sanctions on Turkey and send a clear message to the world that the United States is serious about imposing pressure on the Russian defense industry.

So let me close. The United States of America must always stand on the side of democracy, human rights, freedom, and the rule of law. That is why we must secure our elections from the threat of foreign interference at home and defend democracies in the face of Russian aggression abroad.

That is why we must demand that security funding appropriated by Congress is actually delivered and that the sanctions we craft to counter our adversaries are imposed.

That is why we cannot be silent when an American President extorts foreign countries into influencing our elections or welcomes an authoritarian strongman's return to the G7.

I implore my colleagues to use the powers of Article I of the Constitution. We have to get to the bottom of these very issues and preserve the critical checks and balances we have in our Nation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

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

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Brian McGuire, of New York, to be a Deputy Under Secretary of the Treasury.

Mitch McConnell, Tom Cotton, Roger F. Wicker, Rob Portman, John Thune, Kevin Cramer, John Barrasso, James E. Risch, Richard Burr, James M. Inhofe, Lindsey Graham, Rick Scott, John Boozman, Mike Crapo, Tim Scott, John Hoeven, Deb Fischer.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Brian McGuire, of New York, to be a Deputy Under Secretary of the Treasury, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 82, nays 6, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 294 Ex.]

YEAS—82

Alexander	Fischer	Peters
Baldwin	Gardner	Portman
Barrasso	Grassley	Reed
Blackburn	Hassan	Romney
Blumenthal	Hawley	Rosen
Blunt	Heinrich	Rounds
Boozman	Hirono	Rubio
Braun	Hoeben	Sasse
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Schatz
Cantwell	Inhofe	Schumer
Capito	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cardin	Jones	Scott (SC)
Carper	Kaine	Shaheen
Cassidy	Kennedy	Shelby
Collins	King	Sinema
Coons	Klobuchar	Smith
Cornyn	Lankford	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Leahy	Sullivan
Cotton	Lee	Tester
Cramer	Manchin	Thune
Crapo	McConnell	Udall
Cruz	McSally	Van Hollen
Daines	Menendez	Warner
Duckworth	Moran	Wicker
Durbin	Murkowski	Wyden
Enzi	Murphy	Young
Ernst	Murray	
Feinstein	Perdue	

NAYS—6

Brown	Gillibrand	Merkley
Casey	Markey	Paul

NOT VOTING—12

Bennet	Isakson	Tillis
Booker	Risch	Toomey
Graham	Roberts	Warren
Harris	Sanders	Whitehouse

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 82, the nays are 6.

The motion is agreed to.

The senior Senator from Tennessee.

KEN BURNS' "COUNTRY MUSIC"

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, Ken Burns told me last year that his 8-part, 16-hour "Country Music" film, which concludes on PBS this week, could be more popular than his Civil War film. After watching the first episodes, I suspect he might be right. His new film plumbs the depths of the American soul, using the one tool—music—that is the most likely to touch the largest number of us.

As a U.S. Senator from Tennessee, I will confess my bias. The first 2 hours of "Country Music" a week ago Sunday were about the recordings of hillbilly music in 1927 at the birthplace of country music in Bristol, where the Tennessee-Virginia State line runs down the middle of Main Street. Two years ago, the Senator from Virginia, Mr. KAINE, and I, played a little concert—I on the keyboard and he on the harmonica—at the end of that Main Street, at a fiddler's festival that they had. The rest of the Ken Burns episode winds through a community called

Boogertown in Eastern Tennessee, in the Smoky Mountains, where Dolly Parton was born, to the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville and to Beale Street in Memphis.

We like to say that the whole world sings with Tennessee, but country music is more than Tennessee music. It is more than Appalachian music. It is more than the music of poor white Americans. It comes from the heart.

As Burns' and Duncan's storytelling reminds us, every one of us has a heart. There is no better evidence of this than paying less than \$20 to sit at a table at the Bluebird Cafe in Nashville. There you listen to three songwriters tell the stories behind their songs and play them for a small audience who doesn't even whisper during their performances.

I sat at the Bluebird on a Saturday in 2013, listening to a young songwriter, Jessi Alexander, sing her song, "I Drive Your Truck." One of her cowriters, Connie Harrington, had heard the story on NPR. It was the story of Jared Monti, an American soldier killed in Afghanistan trying to save another soldier. He won a Congressional Medal of Honor for that. To remember his son, his father, Paul, drives Jared's Dodge Ram truck because, the father says, "I am alone, in the truck, with him." When Jessi Alexander finished singing, everyone in the Bluebird was weeping. I said to the person next to me, "That has to be the song of the year," and it was.

Last week, I attended the Annual Nashville Songwriter Awards show. I looked through the program listing all of the previous songs of the year. In 2012, it was Dolly Parton's farewell song to Porter Wagoner, "I Will Always Love You." Dolly Parton is a great songwriter too. In 2003, it was "Three Wooden Crosses." In 1972, it was "Old Dogs, Children, and Watermelon Wine," by Tom T. Hall. Then, in 1969, it was "Okie from Muskogee," by Merle Haggard. "Three chords and the truth" is how songwriter Harlan Howard defines country music.

Ken Burns has become America's storyteller, a skill much more difficult than it would seem. He tackles the subjects that divide us, like the Civil War and Vietnam, and he presents them in a form that allows us to travel through those wrenching experiences, gathering the information we need to form our own opinions.

One could argue that Ken Burns is our most effective teacher of U.S. history, a subject woefully undertaught in our schools. The lowest scores on high school Advanced Placement tests are not in math and science. They are in American history. So I am glad to know that there is more of Ken Burns' work to come.

According to a New Yorker article in 2017, during the next decade Burns plans to produce films about the Mayo Clinic, Muhammad Ali, Ernest Hemingway, the American Revolution, Lyndon B. Johnson, Barack Obama, Winston

Churchill, the American criminal justice system, and African-American history from the Civil War to the Great Migration.

Producing these films must cost a lot of money, but, in my view, every penny that the Public Broadcasting System and private contributors have spent has been worth it. If I had the money, I would ask Burns how much time he will spend raising funds to pay for these next films and I would give him the amount of money that it would take so that he could spend that time producing an extra three or four more films before he hangs it up. Since I don't have the money, maybe someone else will do that.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be printed in the RECORD an op-ed that was in the New York Times, "Country Music Is More Diverse Than You Think," by Ken Burns and Dayton Duncan.

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

[From the New York Times, Sept. 13, 2019]

COUNTRY MUSIC IS MORE DIVERSE THAN YOU THINK

COMMON STEREOTYPES OVERLOOK THE ROLES THAT BLACKS AND WOMEN HAVE PLAYED IN SHAPING A UNIQUELY AMERICAN GENRE

(By Ken Burns and Dayton Duncan)

This spring the rapper Lil Nas X, who is black, released "Old Town Road," a twang-inflected song that rocketed to the top of the country music charts—even though Billboard temporarily removed it from the list, saying it wasn't sufficiently "country."

A few months later, when the Country Music Association announced that three women—Dolly Parton, Reba McEntire and Carrie Underwood—would host its annual awards show, some people criticized the choice as political correctness, as if "real" country music was restricted to good old boys.

Both controversies reflect the stereotypes that chronically surround country music. They overlook its diverse roots, its porous boundaries and the central role that women and people of color have played in its history.

Such narrow views would astonish the two foundational acts of the genre—Jimmie Rodgers and the Carter Family—who contributed to country music's early commercial success in the 1920s. They knew firsthand that what has made American music so uniquely American has been its constant mixing of styles and influences.

It all began when the fiddle, which came from Europe, met the banjo, which came from Africa—bringing together ballads and hymns from the British Isles with the syncopations and sensibilities of enslaved blacks. That mix, that "rub," which occurred principally in the South, set off a chain reaction that has reverberated in our music ever since.

The earliest country recordings were known as "hillbilly" music, just as African-American recordings were categorized as "race" music. The names echoed a prevailing prejudice that each genre (and its artists and its fans) was somehow beneath consideration from society's upper rungs—and that each one was unrelated to the other.

In truth, as the two of us learned during the eight years we spent exploring the music and its history, they were always intertwined. The music constantly crossed the racial divide that a segregated nation tried to enforce.

Before his career took off, Rodgers worked as a water boy in Mississippi for the mostly black crews laying railroad track. The men he met, and their music, shaped his own emerging style—the songs he made popular as an adult were essentially the blues, to which he added a distinctive yodel. In 1930, at the height of his popularity, he recorded with Louis Armstrong, the protean jazz artist.

When A.P. Carter collected songs for the Carter Family, he brought along Lesley Riddle, a black slide guitar player, to help him remember the melodies. Riddle also taught the Carters a hymn from his church, “When the World’s on Fire,” which they recorded. They then used the same melody for another song, “Little Darling, Pal of Mine.” Years later Woody Guthrie, a fan of the Carters, borrowed the melody for his classic “This Land Is Your Land.” That one song’s journey encapsulates the real, interconnected story of American music.

Bill Monroe, the father of bluegrass, was mentored by an African-American fiddle player. Hank Williams, the great honky-tonk singer, credited Tee-Tot Payne, a black street musician in Alabama, for “all the music training I ever had.” Bob Wills created Western swing by adapting jazz’s big-band sound to fiddles and steel guitars.

In Memphis in the 1950s, when rhythm and blues and gospel and hillbilly music began swirling together in the eddies of the Mississippi, Elvis Presley, Carl Perkins, Johnny Cash and others pioneered rockabilly, a precursor to rock ‘n’ roll.

The cross-fertilization went in both directions. Charley Pride—the first postwar black artist to have a No. 1 country hit, and the first artist of any color to win the Country Music Association’s male vocalist award two years in a row—was discovered in a bar in Montana, singing Hank Williams’s “Love-sick Blues.” He had grown up listening to the “Grand Ole Opry” show on the radio.

When the rhythm and blues star Ray Charles was given creative control of an album for the first time, he chose to record a selection of country songs. “You take country music, you take black music,” Charles said, and “you got the same goddamn thing exactly.” The album was a sales sensation.

“There’s a truth in the music,” the jazz musician and composer Wynton Marsalis told us, that “the musicians accepted at a time when the culture did not accept. And it’s too bad that we, as a culture, have not been able to address that truth. The art tells more of the tale of us coming together.”

Likewise, the history of country music is filled with strong and talented women in ways the common stereotype seems (or chooses) to overlook. From Patsy Montana to Patsy Cline, Kitty Wells to Dolly Parton, Emmylou Harris to Rosanne Cash to Reba McEntire, women have created some of country music’s most enduring art.

In 1926, A.P. Carter and his wife, Sara, had been turned down by a record label on the theory that a woman singing lead could never be popular. Instead, the Carters added Sara’s cousin Maybelle to the group and went on to make history, centered on Sara’s remarkable voice and Maybelle’s innovative guitar playing, “the Carter scratch,” which has influenced generations of guitarists.

Jimmie Rodgers relied on his sister-in-law, Elsie McWilliams, as the writer of more than a third of his songs. (He couldn’t read musical notations, so she came to his recording sessions to teach her new compositions to him in person.)

In 1966, the same year that the National Organization for Women was founded and the phrase “women’s liberation” was first used, Loretta Lynn wrote and recorded “Don’t

Come Home A Drinkin’ (With Lovin’ on Your Mind),” a statement that dealt with spousal abuse and alcoholism and a woman’s right to her own body, with a bluntness no other musical genre dared make at the time. Her label later held back her song “The Pill” because it seemed too controversial; when it was released, some stations refused to play it—until her fans made it a Top-5 country hit and crossed it over to the pop charts.

“If you write the truth and you’re writing about your life,” Ms. Lynn told us, “it’s going to be country.”

At its best, country music has never been confined to one simple category or convenient stereotype. It sprang from many roots and then sprouted many new branches through the 20th century, creating a complicated chorus of American voices joining together to tell a complicated American story, one song at a time.

Country deals with the most basic, universal human emotions and experiences—love and loss, hardship and dreams, failure and the hope of redemption—and turns them into songs. The songwriter Harlan Howard once defined country music as “three chords and the truth.” Three chords imply simplicity. But the truth part is always much more complex. And more profound.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

HONORING CAPTAIN VINCENT LIBERTO, JR.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor the life of Mandeville police officer Captain Vincent “Vinnie” Liberto, Jr., who was killed in the line of duty last week. Captain Liberto will be remembered for his life of service to the community and country.

After graduating from Brother Martin High School in New Orleans, he joined the U.S. Marine Corps, where he ultimately served 10 years as sergeant.

Captain Liberto had a combined 30 years of law enforcement service, 5 with the Orleans Parish Sheriff’s Department and 25 years with the Mandeville Police Department, where he was recognized as officer of the year.

The captain had a brilliant mind for law enforcement. He graduated from the FBI National Academy and ran the Mandeville Police Department’s Criminal Investigations Division, where he worked as a polygraphist and was responsible for the Department’s enforcement functions.

Those who knew him best describe him as a gentle giant, polite, upbeat, reasonable, and fairminded—all qualities that make a great police officer.

In his yard flies the Marine Corps flag, and mounted on the front door are twin wreaths, one for the marines and one for the police.

Captain Liberto is survived by his wife, Tracey, and seven children. He was 58 years old.

His passion for service was so strong that he inspired several of his children to follow in their dad’s footsteps by entering the military and law enforcement. That is the definition of setting a great example for children.

Captain Liberto’s death is a painful reminder that our law enforcement officers put their lives on the line to

keep our community safe. He died during a gunfire exchange when a routine traffic stop turned into a tragedy. The other officer, Ben Cato, was also injured but thankfully has returned to work.

Like Captain Liberto and Officer Cato, our law enforcement officers report to work every day knowing that they might not come home at night. They do it for us all, and for that we should always be grateful.

I ask those who are listening to say a prayer for Tracey, their kids, and the officers of the Mandeville Police Department, and for their entire community that is grieving the loss of one of their own.

Vincent Liberto made Louisiana a better place and our country a better place, and he will be sorely missed.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CHINA

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I don’t know of any topic that is more important for our country than the relationship between the United States and China.

I am a big fan of history. I love to read about history. I think one of the best ways to understand the future is to understand the past. It strikes me that, at some point in the future, someone will write a book about the 21st century, and I think that book will have mention of a number of the things that consumed our time in political debate. I believe the central issue globally that will define the 21st century is the relationship between the United States and China, in which direction it heads.

Let me say at the outset that China is destined to be what it already is becoming: a rich, important, and powerful nation. That in and of itself should not be threatening. It is a reality. It is one that I think holds promise, to the extent that a rich and powerful China is a responsible stakeholder in the affairs of the world.

I think there is another truth, and that is, what is developing today is an incredibly serious imbalance between the United States and China on trade and commerce, increasingly on diplomacy, and potentially—eventually—militarily and geopolitical.

So when I come today to speak about China, it is not simply in the context of our current trade tensions, which is a part of a much broader issue. The fact of the matter is that this is the way we should view it because this is the way the Communist Party of China views it. The truth is that they view our trade tensions as an inevitable blip in their long-term plan to supplant the