

products in China and to keep access to the Chinese market.

At the same time as our country wages a cold war against the Chinese Communist Party, some of our best and brightest are taking their talents—King James, LeBron James, who is up to his ears in Chinese cash—to work for companies that are little more than puppets of the Chinese state.

That is deeply troubling, and it is high time the U.S. Senate take a stand against the China lobby. That is why I will, regrettably, oppose Mr. Fonzzone's nomination. Although he is far from the worst offender, it is time we start drawing a line, and in the future, I will therefore carefully scrutinize nominees for ties to the regime in Beijing and military companies like Huawei.

If you wish to serve in the U.S. Government in the future, let me be very clear: Do not do business with the Chinese Communist Party or its military or the companies that support it. Stop it today. Don't take the work. Don't take the meeting. Don't cash the check.

A man cannot serve two masters. It is as true today as it was in the old days.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Mr. President from Missouri.

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senators RUBIO, PETERS, and I be allowed to complete our remarks before the scheduled rollcall vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there any objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF KIRAN ARJANDAS AHUJA

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, I am here today to talk about those things that unite us as Americans, and I am here to talk about those things that divide us.

For centuries, public service has been something that unites Americans, drawing us together. Citizens from all walks of life serve in our military. They serve in Federal and State and local governments. They serve in police units and in fire departments across our country. They serve as teachers and coaches. And we as a nation are better off for their service and for their sacrifice.

Those who serve our Nation do it not because they have to but because they want to. They do it because they believe this Nation is worth serving. They do it because they believe this Nation is worth defending. They believe it is worth celebrating. And they are right to think all of those things. Service to this country is an act of selflessness that affirms our Nation is a place worth believing in.

But I am concerned that the present administration and this President, President Joe Biden, do not share this point of view. I am worried that President Biden is nominating for Federal office individuals who do not share a view of America as a good and decent place, who do not believe that the his-

tory of this Nation is worth celebrating; nominating, instead, people who believe that this is a country founded in racism and shot through with corruption.

Many of these nominees are partisans of a viewpoint that goes by different names but shares several features in common—a view that America is a systemically racist place and systemically unjust; a view of America as corrupt; a view of American society as one that needs to be deconstructed, that needs to be pulled apart, torn down, and then rebuilt in a fundamentally different way.

Now, this broad ideology has become known in public as critical race theory or sometimes just critical theory. And let me tell you, as someone who has taught in our Nation's universities, someone who has seen our institutions of higher learning up close, I would say to those in the media and elsewhere who now deny that there is any such thing as critical theory, that critical theory is, in fact, very real, it is very influential, and it appears to have become the animating ideology of this administration. That is cause for great concern.

Critical theory is an ideology that says the United States is rotten to its core. The leaders of this movement think our society is defined by White supremacy. They think our leaders are complicit, at best.

They think that all Americans are either oppressors or oppressed. In our world-class military, these critics see a vehicle for discrimination. In our American flag, they see propaganda. In our family businesses, they see White supremacy. In our police officers, they see agents of racial oppression.

These critics allow no room for merit, for experience, or for grace in our life together. They pit Whiteness and Blackness against each other in a manner that reduces every American, no matter their character or their creed, to their racial identity alone.

One of these critics, Dr. Ibram Kendi wrote this:

The only remedy to past discrimination is present discrimination. The only remedy to present discrimination is future discrimination.

That is right. That is what he said. Think about that for a moment. He is saying he is opposed to equality under the law. He is opposing our merit-based system for Federal employment. Dr. Kendi and his followers are in no uncertain terms advocating for State-sanctioned racism in the United States of America.

Now, it is a free country. Dr. Kendi and these other authors can write their books and debate their views and put them out in public. It is absolutely their right to do so. They are welcome to do so. But what we cannot allow—what we must not allow—is our Federal Government to affirm and sanction and advocate this critical race theory. We cannot allow the United States of America, the greatest Nation

on Earth, to legitimize a new era of racial engineering.

In the past few years, critical race theory has gained new prominence in the giant corporations, in the media, in the military, and even in our children's schools. We are seeing this across the country. We have seen too many of our children exposed to a curriculum like the 1619 Project and its derivatives that encourage division rather than unity, that rewrites our history in the service of an ideological agenda rather than in the service of truth.

Young children set off to school with eyes full of hope and hearts, full of pride in our country, only to be taught that White privilege defines the Nation, that subjects like mathematics are inherently racist, that the Christian faith is oppressive. They are taught that the nuclear family perpetuates racism.

Now, imagine for a moment if you were taught the same. Imagine if you were taught that your dreams were unjust or unfair, that your family were oppressors, that you were at fault for the problems of our society today. These are just children. We should be nurturing their dreams. We should be nurturing their hopes. We should be giving them a great hope for the future, for the future of this great Nation known as the United States of America, a hope for the future of the greatest Nation in the history of the world, rather than teaching them to mistrust their classmates and to distrust their own history.

It doesn't end there. Last year, we discovered that Federal agencies and other organizations funded by taxpayers were holding workplace training sessions where Federal employees were told that "virtually all White people contribute to racism"—that is a quote—or where civil servants were required to say that they "benefit from racism."

Now, President Trump put an end to this divisive curriculum, and he was right to do so. Workplace diversity training should focus on bringing people together, not on driving them apart. But under this new administration, I fear that critical theory is making a comeback.

In March, President Biden rescinded the former President's ban on this divisive curriculum, and now, he has nominated Kiran Ahuja to be Director of the Office of Personnel Management. That is a key position that runs human resources for the entire Federal Government and millions of its employees. Ms. Ahuja's nomination is before the Senate today. I am concerned that Ms. Ahuja is a disciple of radical theorists. She has frequently promoted Dr. Kendi. She called him a "thought leader" at her confirmation hearing back in April. Just last year, Ms. Ahuja wrote that we must free the Nation from the "daily trials of White supremacy." Those are her words.

She appeared to endorse Dr. Kendi's claim that the election of President

Trump in 2016 was an example of “racist progress” in this country, and she declared that we must do everything in our collective power to realize Dr. Kendi’s vision for America.

I am concerned that, as the Federal Government’s HR director, Ms. Ahuja could use her platform to promote radical ideologies that seek to divide rather than unite people. She could bring critical race theory back into Federal Government training and to every level of Federal personnel, stronger than ever. And I am not alone in this concern. All of my Republican colleagues on the Homeland Security Committee opposed Ms. Ahuja in a vote back in April.

Two weeks ago, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association—they represent 100,000 Federal police officers that protect and defend our Nation every day—they announced that they were also concerned about Ms. Ahuja’s nomination because of her advocacy of critical theory.

I have to say, I agree with Federal law enforcement. I agree with what they said in their letter. We should nominate candidates for public office that are committed to ideological neutrality, to fairness, and to impartiality under the law. I want to be clear, I do not for a moment question Ms. Ahuja’s sincerity or integrity. In fact, I thank her for her willingness to serve the Nation; but I cannot agree with what appears to be her fundamental ideology. At the end of the day, this is not about politics or personalities; this is about ensuring that the Federal Government stands for unity, not division, harmony, not hate.

As the Reverend Dr. King famously said, and he was right, we should judge our fellow citizens by the content of their character, not by the color of their skin. We need a strong nation with strong citizens who see each other as Americans, not as oppressors or oppressed.

Now, I have heard a lot of criticism about my position here today. I have heard the corporate media and those on the left say that I misunderstand critical theory or that it is not real or that it is not a real problem. I have heard many say the United States is indeed built on oppression and remains a systematically racist place.

All I can say is that is not the America I see, that is not the America I know. The working people of this country who have rallied to this Nation’s flag in every hour of danger, who are the first to help a neighbor in need, who coach our Little Leagues and volunteer at our churches, who go to work day in and day out to provide for their families and protect the place they call home, these are not oppressors; these are liberators. These are not oppressors; these are great people. They live with a spirit of liberty that has made this country the greatest country in the history of the world, and they want to see that liberty extended to every member of the American family. That

is who the American people are. That is what makes them great. That is what they believe—because they are a great people. Our future is a cause for hope and not despair.

The advocates of critical theory tell us we have to dismantle our culture, our history, our families, our Jewish and Christian heritage and beliefs because they are all oppressive. They say the future of this Nation will be defined by racial division and racial strife. I reject that prophecy of our future, and I take my stand on the goodness of the American people and the God who guides us. I take my stand on hope.

It is not oppression that defines the American story. It is hope. From the minutemen at Lexington and Concord, to the pioneers who found a new life in the West, to the heroes of the Underground Railroad, to the Union soldiers at Little Round Top, to the workers who fought the old monopolies for fair pay, to the women who fought for suffrage, to the young men who twice liberated Europe, to the civil rights demonstrators likes of Bull Connor, to the firemen and police officers who rebuilt New York and gave this country confidence again in the years after 9/11, it is love for one another and love for our country that we call home that has defined our story and given us hope; and that love and that hope will define our future once again. I am confident of it.

In this Nation, we are not united by ethnic creed or race or religion—and proudly so. We are united by our shared history. We are united by what we love together. We are united by the radical belief that those who liberate others, those who practice grace and mercy, those who call forth the best in those around them, they are the ones who changed the world; and that principle, that truth, that hope, is what drives our history. And we are not done building that history yet. The greatest Nation in the history of the world is not done yet.

Critical theory in all of its guises distorts our history, it destroys our common love, and it would leave us hopelessly divided, at enmity with one another and alone. To this dark vision, we must say no. To radical hope, we must say yes.

For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to vote no on Ms. Ahuja’s nomination.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise to support Kiran Ahuja’s nomination to be Director of the Office of Personnel Management, or OPM. Ms. Ahuja is a proven leader who has the experience and commitment needed to restore confidence in OPM and provide a vision for the future of the Federal workforce.

OPM is an independent agency that supports more than 2 million Federal employees who serve all across the government. Both OPM and the Federal workforce have faced unprecedented

challenges in recent years, from attempts to dismantle the agency, to a record-setting government shutdown, to the coronavirus pandemic. And unfortunately, these challenges were made worse due to the lack of consistent and committed leadership at OPM. Our dedicated public servants are on the frontline every day, responding to the ongoing pandemic, protecting our national security, and delivering vital services to the American people each and every day. The dedicated men and women who serve at OPM and throughout the civil service deserve a qualified, experienced leader who is committed to supporting the people who make government work.

Ms. Ahuja’s career includes over two decades of management experience, including running nonprofit organizations, leading the White House initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders during the Obama administration, and serving as Chief of Staff at OPM.

Throughout this confirmation process, Ms. Ahuja has demonstrated that she understands the mission of OPM and the experience of safeguarding the nonpartisan civil service. She has committed to working closely and transparently with Congress to strengthen and to modernize the Federal workforce.

I am confident that Ms. Ahuja is the right person to lead OPM at this pivotal time. She will provide the strategic vision and the management needed to reinvigorate the Federal workforce.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the confirmation of Kiran Ahuja for Director of OPM.

VOTE ON FONZONE NOMINATION

Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Fonzone nomination?

The yeas and nays have been ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 55, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 243 Ex.]

YEAS—55

Baldwin	Hassan	Peters
Bennet	Heinrich	Reed
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Blunt	Hirono	Sanders
Booker	Kaine	Schatz
Brown	Kelly	Schumer
Burr	King	Shaheen
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Sinema
Cardin	Leahy	Smith
Carper	Lujan	Stabenow
Casey	Manchin	Tester
Collins	Markey	Van Hollen
Coons	Menendez	Warner
Cornyn	Merkley	Warnock
Cortez Masto	Murkowski	Warren
Duckworth	Murphy	Whitehouse
Durbin	Murray	Wyden
Feinstein	Ossoff	
Gillibrand	Padilla	