

women no longer fear that their rights will be imperiled regardless of where they live and where they come from.

We will not be silent. We will not stop fighting. We will not give up, and we are not going away.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

(The remarks of Senator COLLINS and Senator SMITH pertaining to the submission of S. 1657 are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

Ms. SMITH. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

PRESIDENTIAL PARDONS

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, media outlets have begun reporting that President Trump is looking into granting pardons to certain military personnel who have been convicted of committing war crimes in both Iraq and Afghanistan. If these reports are true, I find this to be most troubling.

I have an article here that appeared CNN that says:

The idea of pardons of accused servicemembers who have not yet gone to trial and been convicted that is raising the most concern from some military law experts.

The United States' global influence is due, in large part, to its reputation for upholding human rights and adhering to international humanitarian law and the law of armed conflict, otherwise known as the law of war. As Stephen Preston, a former general counsel of the Department of Defense, wrote in the Department of Defense's Law of War Manual:

The law of war is part of who we are . . . the laws of war have shaped the U.S. Armed Forces as much as they have shaped any other armed force in the world . . . The law of war is a part of our military heritage, and obeying it is the right thing to do . . . the self-control needed to refrain from violations of law of war under the stresses of combat is the same good order and discipline necessary to operate cohesively and victoriously in battle.

Five interdependent principles serve as the foundation of the law of war: military necessity, humanity, proportionality, distinction, and honor. These principles are pillars of America's moral standing in the world that allow our military to be the most lethal fighting force against our adversaries but also the most respected and revered by citizens of the world.

The principles of the law of war are aligned with the constitutional values that our Founding Fathers set forth

and that all generations of U.S. military servicemembers have sworn an oath to uphold and defend against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

Department of Defense policy states that "each member of the armed services has a duty to: (1) comply with the law of war in good faith; and (2) refuse to comply with clearly illegal orders to commit violations of the law of war." By virtue of their oath and training, members of the U.S. military are accountable for their individual and collective actions through the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

The U.S. Government is also obligated to implement and enforce the law of war as required by our Nation's own domestic laws, policies, regulations, orders, and by the multiple treaty obligations we have with other countries.

U.S. military members who are investigated and convicted of violating the law of war, through the prescribed Department of Defense investigative and judicial procedures, have violated international and domestic laws and have failed to uphold their oath and professional ethics. Whether it was My Lai during Vietnam or Abu Ghraib in Iraq, we have seen how the horrific acts committed by a small group of rogue actors can strategically diminish America's global standing, moral leadership, and strengthen our enemies.

We Americans combat extremism, tyranny, and hate to preserve our way of life. Under no circumstance is adapting to the behaviors of our worst adversaries ever justified—ever. If we willfully allow our institutions or the individuals within them to deviate from the laws and standards of conduct that underpin our great Nation, then we lose our way, and the world loses its champion of righteousness and internationally recognized norms and values.

I do not believe anyone in this Chamber disagrees with the laws and values of this country. The matter at hand is whether we will hold people accountable who violate those laws and fail to act on behalf of America with honor. To me, the right answer is very clear: The United States will not willfully commit or condone war crimes, and we must bring those who do commit them to justice regardless of citizenship, affiliation, or background. That is what we stand for as a nation. Those are our values, and that is America's leadership.

Even in the fog of war—especially in the fog of war—we must endeavor to act with the moral clarity that distinguishes the United States of America as a shining city upon a hill.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

THE ARCTIC

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I have asked for a few moments on the floor today to speak about an issue I

care about deeply. It is a part of the globe, a part of the world that, in my view, is truly evolving and is as dynamic an area as anyplace on planet Earth. This is the Arctic.

The Arctic is growing in prominence around the globe. Countries like China, India, and Germany have taken a keen interest in what happens in the far north.

I have had many colleagues ask me: Why should a Senator from, say, the State of Indiana care about the Arctic?

I guess my rhetorical answer would be this: Well, why should China care about the Arctic? Why should Japan, Germany, and India care about the Arctic? If they are paying attention to it, shouldn't we, as an Arctic nation that actually has territory in the Arctic, be interested and focused on this as well?

To be fair, we have made some good progress this year. I appreciate the administration working with us. I appreciate my colleagues here in the Congress who worked with us to ensure that we were able to advance appropriations for the first polar security cutter. This is significant news for the American Arctic. People have heard me say that we have about 1½ icebreakers in the United States right now. We have the Polar Star, which breaks ice down in Antarctica, meeting our obligations there. We have the Polar Sea, which is tied up in Washington State and will probably never see service again. We have a medium-strength icebreaker, the Healey, which does a fair amount of research work. But for us, as an Arctic nation, it is important to have a fleet of icebreakers.

That is what we, as an Arctic nation, must be working toward, so a contract for the design and construction of the first polar-class icebreaker to be built in the United States in the past 40 years was awarded just last month. As a nation, we haven't seen work on an icebreaker in four decades now.

A total of \$20 million is also being provided for long lead time materials for a second polar security cutter. Hopefully, we will be talking about more than just one polar security cutter and we will one day have what this country, as an Arctic nation, should have, and that is a fleet.

But the Arctic is about more than just icebreakers. It is about the people who live there. It is about the environment. It is about its location on the globe. The Arctic is a living and breathing place. I think some people, in their mind's eye, view the Arctic as a frozen wasteland, or perhaps it is a snow globe that just kind of sits up on a shelf and you don't touch it. But it is not. It is home to some 4 million people in the Arctic region. It is not highly populated, but there are people living, working, raising their families, subsisting, and engaging in commerce. It is an important place.

It is a good thing when officials at the highest levels get together to discuss the issues within the Arctic. That