

Whereas, according to Reporters Without Borders' 2015 World Press Freedom Index, Eritrea, North Korea, Turkmenistan, Syria, and China ranked lowest according to a range of criteria that include "media pluralism and independence, respect for the safety and freedom of journalists, and the legislative, institutional and infrastructural environment in which the media operate";

Whereas, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, in 2014 Syria was the world's deadliest country for journalists for the third year in a row;

Whereas, according to the International Federation of Journalists, more than 40 journalists and media staff have been killed since January 2015;

Whereas, according to Reporters Without Borders, the Government of the Russian Federation continued to intensify its pressure on the media to bring independent news outlets under control or be throttled out of existence;

Whereas Freedom House has cited a deteriorating environment for Internet freedom around the world and ranked Iran, Syria, China, Cuba, and Ethiopia as "Not Free" and having the worst obstacles to access, limits on content, and violations of user rights among the 65 countries and territories rated by Freedom House in 2014;

Whereas freedom of the press is absolutely essential to the creation and maintenance of free and open societies and a key component of democratic governance, the activism of civil society, and socioeconomic development; and

Whereas freedom of the press enhances public accountability, transparency, and participation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commemorates World Press Freedom Day by commending journalists like Mazen Darwish and others around the world for the vital role they play in supporting open and democratic societies, promoting government accountability, and strengthening civil society;

(2) expresses concern about the threats to freedom of the press and expression around the world, and pays tribute to journalists who have lost their lives carrying out their work;

(3) pays tribute to the journalists who have lost their lives carrying out their work;

(4) calls on governments abroad to implement United Nations General Assembly Resolution (A/RES/68/163), by thoroughly investigating and seeking to resolve outstanding cases of violence against journalists, including murders and kidnappings, while ensuring the protection of witnesses;

(5) condemns all actions around the world that suppress freedom of the press, including: the brutal murders of journalists by the terrorist group ISIS, violent attacks against media outlets like the French satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo*, and kidnappings of journalists and media workers in eastern Ukraine by pro-Russian militant groups;

(6) reaffirms the centrality of freedom of the press to efforts by the United States Government to support democracy, mitigate conflict, and promote good governance domestically and around the world; and

(7) calls on the President and the Secretary of State—

(A) to improve the means by which the United States Government rapidly identifies, publicizes, and responds to threats against freedom of the press around the world;

(B) to urge foreign governments to transparently investigate and bring to justice the perpetrators of attacks against journalists; and

(C) to highlight the issue of threats against freedom of the press year-round.

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA DAY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 331, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 331) designating December 12, 2015, as "Wreaths Across America Day."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am pleased to have joined with my colleague, Senator ANGUS KING, in sponsoring this resolution to designate December 12, 2015, as Wreaths Across America Day. Since its inception, the Wreaths Across America project has become an annual tradition of donating, transporting, and placing Maine balsam fir remembrance wreaths on the graves of our fallen heroes buried at Arlington National Cemetery, as well as at veterans' cemeteries and memorials in every State and overseas. In the program's 24 years, more than 2.4 million wreaths have been placed in honor of those who have served our country.

The origin of Wreaths Across America is an inspiring example of that generosity and gratitude. During the Christmas season in 1992, Morrill and Karen Worcester took time during their busiest season to donate and deliver wreaths from their company in Harrington, ME, to Arlington National Cemetery to honor the heroes who lie at rest there. At first, a small group of volunteers laid the wreaths with little notice. In recent years, however, the Arlington Wreath Project has grown to become a national phenomenon. The people of Maine are proud that this important and well-deserved tradition began in our State.

This year, on December 12, thousands of volunteers in Arlington, throughout our Nation, and overseas will carry out the mission of Wreaths Across America to "Remember, Honor, Teach." This will conclude a weeklong procession between Maine and Virginia, with stops along the way to pause and remember the men and women who have died to preserve our freedoms, spread the message about the importance of honoring those who serve, and remind the people of the United States about the sacrifices made by our veterans and their families. This procession helps to ensure that those sacrifices are never forgotten.

The Patriot Guard Riders, along with other dedicated escort groups, will accompany tractor-trailers filled with donated wreaths from Maine to Arlington National Cemetery. America's trucking industry has long supported Wreaths Across America by providing drivers, equipment, fuel, and related services to assist in the transportation of wreaths across the country to more than 1,000 locations.

Wreaths Across America not only honors our departed heroes, but also

imparts the important message to veterans who are still with us that we honor their service. It tells our men and women in uniform today that we are grateful for their courage and devotion to duty. It tells the families of those serving our country that they are in our thoughts and prayers. And it tells the families of the fallen that we share their grief.

Throughout human history, the evergreen wreath has been offered as a tribute to heroes. On December 12, 2015, we will again offer this enduring symbol of valor and sacrifice as part of our never-ending obligation to thank those who wore the uniform of our country. In this season of giving, we will pay tribute to those who have given us the most precious gift of all, our freedom.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, today I have joined my esteemed colleague, Senator SUSAN COLLINS, in submitting a resolution designating December 12, 2015, as Wreaths Across America Day. What started as a quiet tribute to our Nation's veterans in a small town in Washington County, Maine 24 years ago, has blossomed into one of the greatest honors paid to our servicemembers coast to coast. Every December, donated balsam fir wreaths travel from Harrington, ME, to veterans' cemeteries around the country and are placed on the graves of our fallen heroes. During this season of giving, it is only fitting to recognize this wonderful tradition and the generosity of those who conceived it, and as always, to reaffirm our commitment and appreciation for those who fought to preserve our freedom.

During the 1992 holiday season, Morrill and Karen Worcester of Worcester Wreath Company found themselves with a surplus of unused wreaths. Recalling a boyhood visit to Arlington National Cemetery, Morrill was inspired to use those extra wreaths to honor American servicemembers. So, aided by then-Senator Olympia Snowe and determined to celebrate our veterans and their families, the Worcesters arranged to have the wreaths placed in one of the older sections of Arlington National Cemetery.

Building on the Worcester family's vision, other folks from around Maine stepped up to help out and give back. James Prout, the owner of a Maine trucking company, made sure the wreaths were safely transported to Arlington. The Maine State Society of Washington, D.C., a group of people from Maine living and working in the Nation's capital, helped organize the wreath laying ceremony at the cemetery.

So it went for several years—wreaths were quietly assembled and sent to Arlington National Cemetery to honor our country's veterans. Then in 2005, a photo of the wreaths in Arlington took the internet by storm, and the tradition quickly gained widespread attention. The salient image of the snow-covered wreaths resting on the graves of the fallen transformed what was

once a quiet act of kindness to a national sensation. Soon thousands of volunteers were inspired to help in Arlington or to bring the project to their hometowns throughout the country.

Last year alone, Wreaths Across America and its national network of volunteers laid over 700,000 memorial wreaths at 1,000 locations including sites in all 50 States and numerous national veteran cemeteries on foreign soil. Thanks to truckers and the Patriot Guard Riders who escort the tractor trailers on their motorcycles, the wreaths travel to Arlington and beyond as part of a Veterans Honor Parade—stopping along the way to remember, honor, and teach.

I am proud to stand with Senator COLLINS in sponsoring December 12, 2015, as Wreaths Across America Day. On this day, and every day, let us remember the brave men and women who have served our country and thank the dedicated volunteers who proudly honor their memory and sacrifice.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 331) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

REMOVAL OF INJUNCTION OF SECRECY—TREATY DOCUMENT NO. 114-4

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, as in executive session, I ask unanimous consent that the injunction of secrecy be removed from the following treaty transmitted to the Senate on December 8, 2015, by the President of the United States: Treaty with Jordan on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, Treaty Document No. 114-4. I further ask that the treaty be considered as having been read the first time; that it be referred, with accompanying papers, to the Committee on Foreign Relations and ordered to be printed; and that the President's message be printed in the RECORD.

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

The message of the President is as follows:

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, signed at Washington on October 1, 2013. I also transmit, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty is one of a series of modern mutual legal assistance treaties negotiated by the United States to more effectively counter criminal activities. The Treaty should enhance our ability to investigate and prosecute a wide variety of crimes.

The Treaty provides for a broad range of cooperation in criminal matters. Under the Treaty, the Parties agree to assist each other by, among other things: producing evidence (such as testimony, documents, or items) obtained voluntarily or, where necessary, by compulsion; arranging for persons, including persons in custody, to travel to another country to provide evidence; serving documents; executing searches and seizures; locating and identifying persons or items; and freezing and forfeiting assets or property that may be the proceeds or instrumentalities of crime.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty, and give its advice and consent to ratification.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, December 8, 2015.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Wednesday, December 9; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the conference report to accompany S. 1177, with the time until 10:45 a.m. equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator SASSE and Senator WARREN.

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

The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 15 minutes as in morning business.

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

FREEDOMS ENSHRINED IN THE CONSTITUTION

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, I rise to speak about San Bernardino, about the decades-long fight that our free society faces, and about our dangerous unwillingness to tell the truth about the na-

ture of this battle—about who our enemy is.

We are at war. The American people already know this. Our enemies obviously knows this. It is only this town where our so-called leaders dawdle and bicker, pander and misprioritize. It is only this town that seems confused. Washington ignores what it cannot escape, and that is both a tragedy and a crisis, for it is impossible to win a war when one does not even admit that one is in a war.

Let's start by admitting that this war is different from most of the wars of the past. This is not about borders or territory. This is not about gold or other material goods. We typically think about state actors—about traditional governments going to war with traditional governments. In this war, however, the enemy includes many state actors, many armed groups who are developing global reach in this flatter, technologically linked world.

Our enemy is merciless and barbaric. They are willing to kill people who are not on traditional battlefields. They will kill noncombatants. They will kill women and children. They will kill at holiday parties and restaurants, at Jewish delis and sporting stadiums.

Just as sad as the evolution of our enemies, though, this war is hard for the American people to get their heads around because we have so much confusion right now—so much drift, so much orphanhood—not just about our enemies but about exactly who we are and about exactly what we are fighting to defend.

This body, the Congress, tries to do far too many things, and we do very few of them well, but when there are really important tasks that we should be tackling, well then folks seem to be unable to muster the energy or the courage or the time or the will to focus diligently on the task before us.

Today we have such a big task before us, and I will humbly suggest that before another person in this body or another member of the national media stands up to scold the American people about how they could possibly entertain voting for candidate X or Y, perhaps we should look in the mirror at why so many of our people are running to demagoguing leaders.

Do Senators really not understand what is happening? Did anyone really not see this coming? I think it is obvious why the people are doing what they are doing—because they get so little actual leadership out of this town, out of either end of Pennsylvania Avenue and out of either political party. Make no mistake, there were some genuinely dreadful things said on our national stage yesterday, but they were almost completely predictable. Did anyone really not see this coming?

Why is it that these words are so attractive to so many? Why do they find so many followers? Because they are comforting to a people who are scared. They are food to a people who are starved for leadership.