Baldwin  Gillibrand  Murray
Benett  Harris  Nelson
Bimenhal  Hassan  Paul
Becker  Heitkamp  Peters
Brown  Hesse  Reed
Brown  Warner  Rice
Cardin  Jones  Sanders
Carper  Kaine  Schatz
Cassidy  King  Shahan
Collins  Lee  Stabenow
Cortez Masto  Manchin  Tester
Craco  Markley  Udall
Daines  McCaskill  Van Hollen
Donnelly  Menendez  Warner
Duckworth  Merkley  Warren
Durbin  Moran  Whitehouse
Feinstein  Murkowski  Wyden
Flake  Murphy  Young

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 54) to direct the removal of the United States Armed Forces from hostilities in the Republic of Yemen that have not been authorized by Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I believe there are problems with the law governing the consideration of these types of resolutions. One of biggest is the consideration of amendments. I have a series of parliamentary inquiries that I think will help clarify the problems with the statute.

Parliamentary inquiry: Does this statute provide any guidelines for the consideration of amendments on this resolution?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. No, it does not. The statute does not set forth the text to be used in the joint resolution, and this statute uses the expedit ed procedures from the Arms Export Control Act, a statute which does not allow amendments, so there are no parameters for the consideration of amendments built into the language.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I believe that most times the Senate uses expedit ed procedures, we have either a germaneness requirement for amendments or they cannot be amended. Can the Chair expound on what some of those are and what that concept means in the Senate?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Generally speaking, when the Senate considers a measure under statutory expedit ed procedures, like the Budget Act, the Congressional Review Act, the Trade Act, or the Arms Control Act—or
even under the Cloture Rule—there are guardrails for the consideration of the measure and for amendments thereto. There are statutes and rules with prescribed text, limits on debate time, jurisdictional fences, filing deadlines, and germaneness requirements, or a complete prohibition on amendments. Often, there are points of order and waivers written into the structure as well. The Senate trades its normal procedure of unlettered debate and amendment and the need for 60 votes to end debate to consideration for a more predictable, structured, and streamlined process of consideration and a majority threshold vote.

Mr. MCONNELL. In the opinion of the Chair, is a statute with no end point for consideration and no restrictions on text or amendments consistent with the other expedited procedures which the Senate often uses?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. No. The construct is inconsistent with the concept embodied in other expedited processes—even those that are themselves flawed—and the opportunity for abuse of this process is limitless.

Mr. MCONNELL. I agree with the Chair, and I think the Senate should speak to this issue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I think it is important when using expedited procedures, especially on matters of national security such as this, the Senate has consideration to the matter at hand. Therefore, I raise a point of order that amendments offered under 50 U.S.C. 1546(a) must be germane to the underlying joint resolution to which they are offered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The laws governing the consideration of this type of resolution do not prescribe what type of amendments can be considered. The Senate has not previously considered this question; therefore, the Chair refers the question to the Senator for its decision. Shall amendments offered under 50 U.S.C. 1546(a) be germane to the underlying joint resolution to which they are offered?

The question is debatable for 1 hour. Mr. CORKER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to use an oversized floor display.

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

YESEN WAR POWERS RESOLUTION

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I come to the floor after the extensive and great humanitarian crises facing our planet, and that is the horrific war in Yemen.

In March of 2015, under the leadership of Muhammad bin Salman, who was then the Saudi Defense Minister and is now, of course, the Crown Prince, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates intervened in Yemen’s ongoing civil war. As a result of the Saudi-UAE intervention, Yemen is now experiencing the worst humanitarian disaster in the world.

According to the United Nations, Yemen is at risk of the most severe famine in more than 100 years, with some 14 million people facing starvation. In one of the poorest countries on Earth, as a result of this terrible war, according to the Save the Children organization, some 85,000 Yemeni children have already starved to death over the last several years, and millions more face starvation if the war continues.

Further, Yemen is currently experiencing the worst cholera outbreak in the world, with there being as many as 10,000 new cases each week, according to the World Health Organization. This is a disease that is spread by infected water that causes severe diarrhea and dehydration and will only accelerate the death rate. The cholera outbreak has occurred because Saudi bombs have destroyed Yemen’s water infrastructure and because people there are no longer able to access clean water.

Last week, New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof wrote an article that describes his recent visit to Yemen. I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the New York Times article, “Your Tax Dollars Help Starve Children.”

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

(From the New York Times, Dec. 7, 2018)

**OPINION—YOUR TAX DOLLARS HELP STARVE CHILDREN**

(By Nicholas Kristof)

ADEN, Yemen.—He is an 8-year-old boy who is starving and has limbs like sticks, but Yaqoob Walid doesn’t cry or complain. He gazes stolidly ahead, tuning out everything. She can’t see, can’t hear, can’t talk. She has become the worst famine the world has seen in a generation.

“The risk of a major catastrophe is very high,” Mark Lowcock, the United Nations humanitarian chief, told me. “In the worst case, what we have in Yemen now has the potential to be worse than anything any professional in this field has seen during their working lives.”

Both the Obama and Trump administrations have supported the Saudi war in Yemen with a military partnership, arms sales, intelligence sharing and until recently air-to-air refueling. The United States is thus complicit in what some human rights experts believe are war crimes.

The bottom line: Our tax dollars are going to starve children.

I fell in love with Yemen’s beauty and friendliness on my first visit there, but this enchanting country is now in convulsion. When people hear an airplane today in much of Yemen, they flinch and wonder if their area is about to be bombed, and I had interviews interrupted by automatic weapons fire overhead.

After witnessing the human toll and interviewing officials on both sides, including the president of the Houthi rebels who control much of Yemen, I find the American and Saudi role in this conflict to be unconscionable. The Houthis are a representation of a people in a country that has been betrayed and divided, and UN Security Council Resolution 2216, which describes the Houthis as a terrorist organization, is a travesty.

What is most infuriating is that the hunger is caused not by extreme weather, but by cynical and failed policies in Riyadh and Washington. The starvation does
not seem to be an accidental byproduct of war, but rather a weapon in it. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, backed by the United States, are trying to inflict pain to gain leverage in negotiations from the Houthi rebels. The reason: The Houthis are allied with Iran.

The governments of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, backed by the United States, are trying to inflict pain to gain leverage in negotiations from the Houthi rebels. The reason: The Houthis are allied with Iran.

Yemen began to disintegrate in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, and then the Houthis, a traditional clan in the north, swept down on Sana and seized much of the country in 2014, the group’s slogan: “Death to Israel! God is great!” President Houthis rule the country. The Houthis are allied with Iran, and the Saudis and some Americans see them as Iranian stooges.

The Houthis have been successful. They have imposed order and crushed Al Qaeda and the Islamic State in the parts of Yemen they control, as I saw during a recent visit there. I felt secure and didn’t fear kidnapping.

However, the Houthis operate a police state and are hostile to uncovered women, gays and anyone who criticizes them. They recruit child soldiers from the age of about 12 (the Saudi- and American-backed forces wait until boys are about 15), interfere with food aid, and have engaged in torture and attacks on civilians.

Still, the civilian loss of life has overwhelmingly been caused by not Yemen but by Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and America, through both bombings and starvation. It’s ridiculous for the Trump administration to be exploring naming the Houthis a terrorist organization. And while the Houthis are allies of Iran, I think the Saudis exaggerate when they suggest that the Houthis have Iranian support.

The foreign minister on the Houthi side is Hisham Sharaf Abdalla, a Palestinian-American-educated official. I love the fact that he’s a Palestinian. I told him, “We look to the U.S. as the only force that can stop this war.”

Peace talks are now beginning in Sweden—a few people expect them to solve the crisis—and I insisted that his side was eager to reach a peace deal and improve relations with America.

The Houthis, a large, confident man with a smile, was a member of the Houthi clan. An aide introduced me to him, for President Houthis change locations daily to avoid being bombed by the Saudis.

President Houthis, a confident man with a tradition in his belly, was friendly to me but also suspicious of the United States and full of conspiracy theories. He suggested that Washington was secretly arming Al Qaeda and that the United States was calling the shots for Saudi Arabia in Yemen, at the behest of Israel.

Houthis have been fighting the war so poorly that even some of their soldiers from the United Arab Emirates and allied militias, and I worry that the U.A.E. is feeding up with the war and may pull them out without alternative arrangements.

A Houthis government official in Houthi-controlled areas, I was perpetually on my phone of starving children, and they said that this was not a mint on the pillow, but a bullet-proof vest; at night, sleep was interrupted by nearby fighting among unknown gunmen.

Another danger is that the Saudi coalition will press ahead so that fighting closes the door to Hudaydah, through which most food and fuel come.

I stopped in Saudi Arabia to speak to senior officials there about Yemen, and we had some tough exchanges. I showed them photos on my phone of starving children, and they said that this was not a mint on the pillow, but a bullet-proof vest; at night, sleep was interrupted by nearby fighting among unknown gunmen.

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Another danger is that the Saudi coalition will press ahead so that fighting closes the door to Hudaydah, through which most food and fuel come.
"You're not going to solve this long-term until the war is ended," said David Beasley, the executive director of the World Food Program. "It's a man-made problem, and it needs a man-made solution."

That solution will entail strong American backing for a difficult United Nations-backed peace process involving Yemeni factions and outsiders, aiming for a measure of power sharing. This diplomatic process requires engaging the Houthis, not just bombing them. It also means a cease-fire and pressure on all sides to ensure humanitarian access and the passage of food and fuel. The best leverage America has to make the Saudis part of the solution is to suspend arms sales to Riyadh so long as the Saudis continue the war.

In conference rooms in Riyadh and Washington, officials simply don't fathom the human toll of their policies. In a makeshift camp for displaced people in Aden, I met a couple who lost two daughters—Bayan, 11, and Bonyan, 6—in a bombing in a crowded market. "I heard the bomb and I went running after them," the dad, Ahmed Abdullah, told me, with a ache in his voice. "They were dead. One had her skull burst open, and the other had no arms or legs left."

He told me that the family then fled, and he and his 9-year-old daughter, and someone else would be responsible for feeding her. This is common: The share of girls married by age 18 has increased from 56 percent before the war to two-thirds today, according to Unicef.

Another son died of fever when the family could not afford to take the boy to a hospital. A 19-year-old daughter, and none of them are going to school any more; a 10-year-old daughter, Baraa, who is next in line to be married, couldn't tell me what seven plus eight equaled.

A bit hastily, I told Ahmed that I thought that my country, America, had probably provided the bomb that had killed his daughters. He was not angry, just resigned.

"I am not an educated person," he told me earnestly. "I am a simple parent." And then he offered more wisdom than I heard from the sophisticated policy architects in America and Saudi Arabia: "My message is that I want the war to stop."

Mr. SANDERS. Let me just take this opportunity to quote some of what he said in that December 7 New York Times article:

"The war and lack of health care facilities have also led to outbreaks of deadly diseases like diphtheria and cholera. Half of the country's clinics and hospitals are closed.

A CNN report found evidence that American weapons have been used in a string of such deadly attacks on civilians since the war began. According to the independent monitoring group, Yemen Data Project, between 2015 and March 2018, more than 30 percent of the Saudi-led coalition's targets have been nonmilitary."

A few weeks ago, I met with several brave human rights activists from Yemen in my office. They had come to urge Congress to put a stop to this war. They told me, clearly, when Yemenis see "Made in USA" on the bombs that are killing them, it tells them the USA is responsible for this war, and that is the sad truth.

The bottom line is, the United States should not be supporting a catastrophic war led by a despotic regime, controlled by one family, the Saud family, one of the wealthiest and most powerful families on Earth.

In a 2017 report by the Cato Institute—a conservative think tank—Saudi Arabia was ranked 149th out of 159 countries for freedom and human rights. For decades, the Saudis have funded schools, mosques, and preachers who promote an extreme form of Islam known as Wahhabism.

In Saudi Arabia today, women are not treated as second-class citizens; they are treated as third-class citizens. Women still need, in the year 2018, the permission of a male guardian to go to school or to get a job. They have to follow a strict dress code and can be stoned to death for adultery or flogged for spending time in the company of a man who is not their relative.

Earlier this year, Saudi activist, Loujain Al-Hathloul, a leader in the fight for women's rights in Saudi Arabia, was kidnapped from Abu Dhabi and
forced to return to the country. She is currently being held without charges. The same is true of many other Saudi political activists.

Human Rights Watch recently reported that imprisoned women activists have been subjected to torture, including electric shocks, and other forms of physical and sexual assault.

Further, as every Member of the Senate knows or should know, there is now overwhelming evidence that Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman was responsible for the brutal murder of Jamal Khashoggi, a Saudi dissident who lived in the United States. He was a columnist for the Washington Post. He made the mistake of going into the Saudi consulate in Turkey and never came out alive. We believe his body was dismembered, and nobody knows where it is.

Unbelievably, President Trump continues—despite the overwhelming evidence of the Crown Prince’s involvement in the murder of a man living in the United States, a Saudi dissident journalist—to proclaim his love and affection for the Crown Prince and the Saudi regime, but that is not how, in my view, the American people feel.

For years, American men and women in our military have put their lives on the line in the never-ending struggle for democracy and human rights, and we cannot and must not turn their struggles, their sacrifices aided and abetted by our own government, into another form of physical and sexual assault.

I believe we have become far too comfortable with the United States engaging in military interventions all over the world. We have now been in Afghanistan for over 17 years—the longest war in American history. Our troops are now in Syria under what I believe are questionable authorities. The time is long overdue for Congress to reassert its constitutional role in determining when and where our country goes to war.

If you want to vote for a war, vote for a war. If you want to vote against a war, vote against a war, but as a Congress we have to accept our constitutional responsibility; that it is ours, not the Presidents of the United States.

This resolution provides that opportunity. It finally says that in this one war in Yemen—this terrible, horrific war—that Congress is prepared to act, and I hope very much that all of us will seize this opportunity.

For the sake of starving children in Yemen; for the sake of what this country stands for in terms of democracy and human rights and not following the leadership of a despotic, authoritarian regime; for the sake of the U.S. Constitution that it is the Congress and not the President who has the authority to make war; for all of these reasons and more, I ask strong support for this important resolution.

With that, I yield the floor.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I want to thank the Senator for most of the comments he made. I think they were made very eloquently. I share many of the same concerns he mentions.

I voted to cause this to come out of committee because I felt this discussion on the Senate floor needed to take place.

The Senator from Vermont knows I have concerns about using this vehicle to do it, but by causing this debate to take place, many of the concerns the Senator has expressed will be expressed by others, and I agree with many of those.

Saudi Arabia has not conducted this war in a manner, in my opinion, that takes into account the great harm that is taking place with civilians. I agree with that 100 percent.

I am more than nonplussed over the fact that I believe—and I have sat in a very detailed—very detailed—intelligence review of what happened with the journalist at the consulate in Turkey, and I absolutely believe that if the Crown Prince came before a jury in the United States he would be convicted guilty in under 30 minutes. I absolutely believe he directed it; I believe he monitored it; and I believe he is responsible for it.

I have had concerns about using this vehicle, and I have concerns about what this may mean as we set a precedent about refueling and intelligence activities being considered hostilities. I am concerned about that.

I think the Senator knows we have operations throughout Northern Africa, where we are working with others, in other governments on intelligence to counter terrorism. We are doing refueling activities in Northern Africa, and it concerns me—he knows I have concerns—that if we use this vehicle, then we may have 30 or 40 instances where this vehicle might be used to do something that really should not be dealt with by the War Powers Act.

I will say, the strong package of the gentlemen’s issue has been dispensed with. It helps a great deal. So now, in the future, if this particular vehicle is utilized, we now know we have set the precedent that only germane issues can be brought up.

If we have concerns—and we have now solved those—that other issues might be brought up and all of a sudden, the leaders would lose control of the floor. I would like to see Members have more votes. I agree with that. But I think things that we now narrowed this in a very appropriate way.

The Senator and I have discussed a resolution that is separate and apart from this. I have agreed with Senators on the other side of the aisle that I will not introduce that resolution until this issue has been dispensed with. I do hope we will have a unanimous vote on it to strongly condemn the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia for the actions he has taken relative to killing the journalist—who was a resident of the United States and has children living here—in the consulate in Turkey. That is a separate issue that I hope we will take up almost immediately after we dispense with this.

I want to thank the Senator for his concern. I share many of those concerns. We have some legal concerns right now about using this vehicle, and the Senate knows that. I am concerned about where this goes down the road. We will have some amendments we will deal with over the next day or so that may clear that up to a degree.

I just want to say to him that even though we have legal concerns about this particular process, I thank him for his concern for the United States, for his admonishment, for his demarching of a Crown Prince in Saudi Arabia who I believe is out of control, doing things on top of killing journalists—blocking Qatar without even thinking, arresting a Prime Minister in Lebanon—this particular vehicle.

I think we have now narrowed this in a way that really should not be dealt with by the War Powers Act.

I think the Senator knows that. I have agreed with Senators from this. I have agreed with Senators.

I want to thank the Senator for his concern.

I think we have now narrowed this in a way that really should not be dealt with by the War Powers Act.

I yield the floor.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss S.J. Res. 54, a pointed statement from the U.S. Senate that the status quo in Yemen is untenable, that we will not stand idly by as the President lends our country’s name to the calamitous military forays of another nation, and that our security and the world do not have a blank check.

To my knowledge, this is the first time the Senate has considered a joint
resolution under this provision, which is directly derived from the Wars Pow- ers Resolution. This is an important step to reasserting Congress’s role in authorizing the use of force. I was proud to see a strong show of support for the procedural vote to make this resolution public. I heard my colleagues on both sides of the aisle continue to embrace that moral fortitude.

I am also pleased to support Senator Young’s amendment to this resolution, which, again, supports and Senator Sanders also supports. This language would clarify that refueling operations definitively constitute U.S. support for hos- tilities in this context, and I know he has been very focused on this issue of Yemen and a critical voice in the Sen- ate on this crisis.

Some may have been holding out hope that the administration would show a good-faith effort to hold the Saudi coalition accountable for its ac- tions in Yemen or to hold the Saudi Government or Crown Prince accountable for all of their actions. Well, we haven’t seen that leadership. On the contrary, I believe that, in spite of concrete evidence, the Trump administration is intent on doing nothing to hold the accountable or the Crown Prince responsible for their actions.

As we debate a path forward to ad- dress the tragic humanitarian crisis in Yemen and to hold the Saudi coalition and the Houthi combatants accountable, I want to make clear what we stand for as a nation. We will continue to demand that we consider additional measures to make clear what we stand for as a nation.

The United States must assert moral leadership. Does the President of the United States have the moral responsibility to act? It is time for the U.S. Senate to act. It is time to stand up for the values that define us as a nation.

President Trump has made clear over and over again that the only way he takes the high road is if he is dragged up to it, kicking and screaming. Taking their cue, the Saudis at this moment see no incentive to change their ways. It is time for the Senate to act. The United States can take con- cerns about the particular legal issues that are being created here, but I wanted this debate to take place on the floor. I thank him for his concerns about the way the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia is conducting himself, about the war itself, and how ham-handed the Saudis and others have been, having shown so little concern for the citizens who live in Yemen. So I appreciate his efforts.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Lee). The time of the Presiding Officer is up.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from New Jersey for his concern about this issue. I voted to dis- pense with this out of the committee. I apologize to the particular concerns about Jamal Khashoggi, the American resident Jamal Khashoggi, the murder of American resident and journalist Jamal Khashoggi, the effective kidnapping of heads of state, the murder of American resident and journalist Jamal Khashoggi, the effective kidnapping of heads of state, the murder of American resident and journalist Jamal Khashoggi, the effective kidnapping of heads of state, the murder of American resident and journalist Jamal Khashoggi, the effective kidnapping of heads of state, the murder of American resident and journalist Jamal Khashoggi, the effective kidnapping of heads of state, the murder of American resident and journalist Jamal Khashoggi, the effective kidnapping of heads of state, the murder of American resident and journalist Jamal Khashoggi, the effective kidnapping of heads of state, the murder of American resident and journalist Jamal Khashoggi, the effective kidnapping of heads of state.
I know Senator Young is standing; I will cease in a moment—that we need to do more—even though I will probably embrace what the Senator is doing—just say just as we are outraged that the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia is complicit in the killing of Jamal Khashoggi.

There is a long list of things the Crown Prince has already done beyond that, some of which I mentioned in my remarks. But at the end of the day, if all we do is express our outrage, then anybody in the world, any leader in the world, any country in the world, any relationship with could say: Well, they will publicly slap us on the wrist, but that will be the total consequence.

If that is the total consequence, then at the end of the day, people will act with impunity. When they do that, we go down a dangerous path, not just for those who live in those countries and may be subjected to those types of indiscriminate executions and other gross violations of human rights; we send a global message that is a downspiral. That is what I and some of my colleagues I am going to join briefly to talk about—we intend to pursue this in the next Congress—want to see happen. I appreciate that the Senator supports that sentiment, and I look forward to continuing to work with him until the very end of this session.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, before yielding to Senator Young so he can make his amendment pending, I just want to follow up and say—look, I do want to go on record and say that I support the provisions of the Senator's bill that block for a period of time offensive weaponry sales to Saudi Arabia. I support that. I also support provisions of the bill that sanction people who are blocking humanitarian aid for the people that are suffering.

The Senator and his staff know we have some operational issues, and I know those are going to get worked out. I know that the way to start legislation and get it to where we really want it to be is to start out strongly. I know the Senator knows he is not going to pass it this year, and if I were the Senator from New Jersey, I would go about it exactly the way he is going about it.

So I do appreciate the thrust, and I do hope we pass those into law with some of the other provisions so that there is a price to pay for what has taken place. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

AMENDMENT NO. 4080

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 4080.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Indiana [Mr. YOUNG] proposes an amendment numbered 4080.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To clarify that this resolution prohibits United States Armed Forces from refueling non-United States aircraft conducting missions as part of the ongoing civil war in Yemen)

On page 4, line 21, add after the period at the end the following: "For purposes of this resolution, in this section, the term "hostilities" includes in-flight refueling of non-United States aircraft conducting missions as part of the ongoing civil war in Yemen.

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support amendment No. 4080 to S.J. Res. 54. I introduced this amendment this morning, and I am proud to report that Senators Shaheen, Collins, and Coons are now cosponsoring this important bipartisan amendment.

Amendment No. 4080 would amend S.J. Res. 54 by simply defining the term "hostilities" to include "in-flight refueling of non-United States aircraft conducting missions as part of the ongoing civil war in Yemen.

In other words, this amendment prevents the resumption of U.S. air refueling of Saudi coalition aircraft in Yemen—those very aircraft that, in too many instances, have been responsible for indiscriminate bombing and violations of international humanitarian law. That is all this amendment would accomplish. It does not define the term "hostilities" more broadly for the War Powers Resolution or in any other instance.

Before discussing the amendment in more detail, allow me to zoom out for a moment and explain how I see the broader picture related to Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

The civil war in Yemen, as so many now know, is an unmitigated national security and humanitarian disaster. The longer the civil war continues, the more influential Iran and various terrorist groups will become in Yemen. Meanwhile, approximately 14 million people in Yemen lack access to food, and famine is getting worse by the day.

Famine and the indiscriminate targeting of civilians by the Saudi-led coalition will only push more Yemenis toward Iran and toward its proxies, giving terrorists increasing opportunities to threaten Americans, our partners, and our interests. So it is essential to America's national security interests, as well as our humanitarian principles, that the administration use all available leverage to end the civil war in Yemen without delay.

The only way to end this civil war and make significant and durable progress on the humanitarian crisis is through an inclusive political process. Everyone agrees on this. It is positive that the parties to the conflict are talking in Sweden as part of the U.N. envoy-led peace process. We want that process to succeed. I know the administration supports these talks, and I commend them for the encouragement they offer. But we have to be mindful of potential pitfalls in the peace process, though, so we have to do all we can to support this effort here in Congress.
Since March of 2017, I sought to underscore the importance of the humanitarian crisis in Yemen and to provide this administration leverage that it can use to pressure the Saudis to support an urgent and good-faith effort to end the war. As I have said, we want to stop using food as a weapon of war.

In that effort, I have used every available tool at my disposal as a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. That has included, for example, a resolution that was passed by the Senate, legislation passed into law, subcommittee hearings, letters, and even a hold on the nomination of our former Secretary of State’s top lawyer at the Department of State. That was before the administration understood, as they do now, the importance of having a negotiated political settlement between all the parties.

But as I have provided additional leverage to the administration over a period of time, we have to acknowledge that the civil war has continued, the world’s worst humanitarian crisis has deteriorated further, Iran’s influence has increased, and the Saudi Crown Prince has, unfortunately, been left with the impression that he can get away with almost anything, including murder.

To be clear, with or without amendment S.J. Res. 54 may never become law. Even in that case, I believe adoption of amendment No. 480 to today would send an even stronger message at a critical moment to our Saudi partners that we expect them to do everything in their power to end this civil war.

Some may argue that no additional pressure is needed. I have heard that argument. I reject that argument, and here is why. On October 30, Secretaries Pompeo and Mattis called for a ceasefire in Yemen within 30 days. Those 30 days—for those who are checking your calendars—came and went on November 29. Yet the Saudi coalition has continued airstrikes.

I have a hard time believing that if Secretary Mattis picked up the phone and told Riyadh to knock off the airstrikes in Yemen, the Saudis would ignore him. If that call hasn’t occurred, there may be a problem. If it has and the Saudis have ignored that demand, then, that may be a problem. Either way, we may have a big problem on our hands.

It is not in our national security interest to sit idly by as the Saudis ignore the clear demands of our Secretaries of Defense and State, especially when we are members of the coalition. Our taxpayers are funding these military operations, that are destabilizing a country where Iran, al Qaida, and ISIS have a foothold.

Let’s support our Secretaries of State and Defense. Let’s support them in their efforts. Let’s give this administration yet more leverage vis-a-vis the Saudis.

The number of innocent people confronting famine is growing by the day. Innocent people are being bombed. Iran and terror groups are benefiting from the status quo. The Saudis have ignored our Secretaries’ call for a ceasefire. My question to my colleagues here on Capitol Hill and to the administration is: about how they might vote with respect to this amendment that I am bringing up is this: What are we going to do about it? What are you going to do about it today, because you have an opportunity to do something about it?

I will say that today, even if this resolution does not become law, we can take an important step and send the right message to Riyadh. There is no doubt that the Houthis have engaged in absolutely abhorrent behavior in Yemen, and, then, it takes two sides to negotiate.

We don’t have much leverage over the Houthis. We have significant leverage over the Saudis, and we must utilize it. If S.J. Res. 54 does become law, my amendment would ensure that it accomplishes its stated purpose with respect to air refueling.

Some may continue to argue that the United States is not engaged in hostilities in Yemen. Our taxpayers are providing funding. There is intelligence support and logistical support and refueling of aircraft carrying bombs, but some will argue that we are not engaged in hostilities in Yemen. In other words, joint resolution, absent my amendment, risks leaving the status quo in place in Yemen. With my amendment, the legislation would ensure that the administration cannot resume refueling of Saudi aircraft conducting missions related to this civil war.

To those principled colleagues—and there are a number of principled colleagues on this issue—who are convergent on the issue and have been studying it for a long time, I have great respect for them. I know there is at least one who is concerned about any precedents we may be creating relating to the War Powers Resolution or other situations. Let me be clear. My amendment explicitly says this definition for hostilities only applies to this resolution we are considering today and only to this case.

I will also reiterate that my amendment would not restrict U.S. refueling or aerial support or refueling of other aircraft for missions focused on al-Qaida and associated forces. We have it covered. Either way, Senators looking to send the right message today to the Saudis and those looking to change the situation in Yemen should support amendment No. 480.

For a very quick word on the War Powers Resolution—the underlying resolution—here again, principled and serious people are on both sides of the War Powers Resolution debate, and I see merits on both sides of that argument. The President is indeed the Commander in Chief. That said, the Founders also establish clear article I constitutional war powers and responsibilities for Congress.

For me, today, in this situation, and only with respect to Yemen, I believe a reasonable reading of the Constitution leaves it up to us to make a choice on this resolution. Our humanitarian principles and national security interests require it. With that, I urge my colleagues to support amendment No. 480 and to support passage of the underlying resolution and send a message to Riyadh.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, through the Presiding Officer I wish to ask the Senator from Indiana, what you are saying is that you are doing everything you possibly can do to ensure that if your amendment passes, never in the future will your amendment be relied upon to say if we are refueling, that means we are involved in hostilities; is that correct?

Mr. YOUNG. I thank the chairman for the clarification so that I can further clarify for the record that this amendment only applies for purposes of this resolution and in the section I offered it.

Let’s say in Mali, for example, that our country in the future were involved with refueling operations of our partner or our ally’s aircraft. This wouldn’t apply. This would establish absolutely no precedent.

We have had national security legal counsel look at this. We have taken a belt-and-suspenders approach. No reasonable reading of this could construe this to establish any legal precedent that ought to cause concern for anyone concerned.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I ask again the Senator: For those of us, many in this body, including the Senator from Indiana, who worry that the mere refueling that may take place in Mali, where maybe we are supporting French troops, or the refueling in other places—the mere refueling in another country, the mere refueling itself—you are saying that by voting for your amendment, you have no intention of ever creating a precedent that another Senator could use the War Powers Act simply because of refueling taking place; is that your intention?

Mr. YOUNG. My intention is to only address the situation in Yemen, and that is precisely what this amendment does—nothing more, nothing less.

Back to the example of Mali and French aircraft, there would be absolutely no application of this amendment to any other conflict, to the refueling of those aircraft or to our own aircraft.

That is why we have doubled up on clarifying precautionary language, so that no one could conceivably construe that in any legal analysis that makes any legal test of common sense or legal precedent. I don’t always see things consistent. But we have had attorneys look at this, and it applies narrowly only to this context.
I will entertain any more questions, but I feel as though I am restating this. It is a very important matter. So I am glad the Chairman gave me an opportunity to answer it.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I appreciate the Senator from Indiana answering those questions. Today, we are, as you know, establishing precedent on a number of things. No. 1, we overwhelmingly decided that if the War Powers Resolution is used in this manner, onlygerman is going to be put forth. I think that was a big step forward as it relates to this type of debate and in using the War Powers Resolution as it is being used.

I did want to get the Senate record to be very clear that the Senator from Indiana, should his amendment pass, was in no way trying to create a scenario where if we are refueling somewhere, that automatically means we are involved in hostilities. What he is trying to do is address this specific issue.

Since we have been able to have this in the RECORD and since, hopefully, future Senates will rely upon the RECORD to look at what is taking place today, I want to thank the Senator for his amendment and tell him that I plan to support it.

Mr. YOUNG. I thank the Chairman.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields the floor?
The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, this has been the center of a lot of discussion, and it is a little confusing. I think there are things that everyone in here agrees with, but how we are going to express ourselves has to come down to all possibilities of the options that are there.

I want to start off by saying that I oppose the Sanders-Lee provision. I think the resolution would have us find that since March of 2015, members of the U.S. Armed Forces have been introduced into hostilities in Yemen between the Saudi-led coalition and Houthis. I think that is the best solution to the problem we are confronted with now. Like many of my colleagues, I was deeply disturbed by the killing of the Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi at Saudi Arabia’s consulate in Istanbul in October. I deplore everything in conjunction with it, it may not be a smoking gun as such, but I believe that Saudi Arabia’s leadership is responsible for Mr. Khashoggi’s death.

Those responsible are going to have to be held accountable, and we must make sure that this comes to an unaccepted event. That is clearly what the resolution says.

The resolution also acknowledges the Trump administration’s important decision to sanction 17 Saudis for their roles in Mr. Khashoggi’s murder.

At the same time, Saudi Arabia is an important Middle Eastern partner. Its stability is vital to the security of our regional allies and our partners, including Israel, and Saudi Arabia is essential to countering Iran. We all know that. We know how tenuous things are in that part of the world. We don’t have that many friends. We can’t afford to lose any of them.

While we must be frank with our partners and let them know when they have done, in our opinion, something wrong, we must be cautious and avoid steps that would damage a strategic relationship that goes back over half a century. For this reason, I am hoping that this resolution will be introduced, in which case I will be supporting the resolution the leader and Senator CORKER have introduced. It criticizes the Saudi Government for its recent behavior and encourages it to get on the right path—the right path to double its reform efforts, the right path to respect the rights of its citizens, and the right path to work toward a peaceful resolution in Yemen.

You know, I don’t like any of the choices we have. This is clearly the best choice that is out there. I yield the floor.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

U.S. forces in support of the coalition do not currently command, coordinate, accompany, or participate in the movement of Saudi coalition forces in the counter-Houthi operations. As of November 11 of this year, the U.S. Armed Forces are providing only fueling support. That is no longer an issue. Even if it were an issue, this is not one that would constitute the category we have been talking about.

As for the Saudi coalition, the counter-Houthi operations in Yemen, even if the refueling support we were providing were going on today, it would not constitute involvement in hostilities. For that reason, I do oppose it.

I don’t know which of these resolutions is actually going to be on the floor for a vote and in what order they would be on the floor, but the resolution that has been put together by Senator CORKER and our leader I think is the best solution to the problem we are confronted with now.

Saudi Arabia is a very important ally of the United States. It is an important partner for stability in the region. We must engage in an important counterterrorism, intelligence-sharing relationship with Saudi Arabia. They have helped us track down some very bad people. We have helped them track down some very bad people. Sunni extremists—separate and aside from the argument as to where that movement gets some of its seed funding—are out to get the Saudi regime, just as they are out to get the United States.

Second, it is important to note something that we take for granted in the region—this new long-term detente that has existed between the Gulf States and Israel, which did not use to be something you could rely on. In fact, one of the most serious foreign policy debates this Senate ever had was on the sale of AWACS to Saudi Arabia back in the 1980s. The objection then was that by empowering Saudi Arabia, you were hurting Israel, and Israeli security. No one would make that argument today because Saudi Arabia has been a good partner in trying to figure out a way to calm the tensions in the region and, of course, provide some balance to the region, with the Iranian regime on the other side continuing to this day to use inflammatory and dangerous rhetoric about the future of Israel.

So this is an important partnership, and I have no interest in blowing it up. I have no interest in walking away from it. But you are not obligated to follow your friend into every misadventure they propose. When your buddy jumps into a pool of man-eating sharks, you don’t have to jump with him. If you think that the bad is enough is enough, I came to this floor 3 years ago and suggested that time had already come.
Muhammad bin Salman, who is the Crown Prince, who is the effective leader of the country, has steered the foreign policy of Saudi Arabia off the rails. Folks seem to have noticed when he started rounding up his political opponents and killing one of them in a consulate, but that was just the tip of the iceberg. Look back to the kidnapping of the Lebanese Prime Minister, the blockade of Qatar without any heads-up to the United States, the wholesale imprisonment of hundreds of his family members, and the imprisonment of hundreds of his family members' contacts all throughout the day with the team of operatives who did it. Yet they thought we were so dumb or so weak—or some combination of the two—that they could just lie to us about it.

That was an eye-opener for a lot of people here, and a long-term support of the Saudi relationship because they knew that we had trouble. They knew that sometimes our interests didn’t align, but they thought that the most important thing allies did with each other was tell the truth, especially to protect yourself. They didn’t align outside of your bilateral relationship. Then, all of a sudden, the Saudis lied to us for 2 weeks—for 2 weeks—and then finally came around to telling the truth but everybody knew they weren’t.

That made a lot of people here think, well, wait a second—maybe the Saudis haven’t been telling us the truth about what they have been doing inside Yemen.

A lot of my friends have been supporting the bombing campaign in Yemen. Why? Because the Saudis said: We are hitting these civilians by accident. Those water treatment plants that have been blowing up—we didn’t mean to do that. We were only trying to treat—improving the treatment facility inside the humanitarian compound—that was just a bomb that went into the wrong place, or, we thought there were some bad guys in it. It didn’t turn out that there were. And I think it is important for us to tell the truth about what they were doing in Yemen. They were hitting civilians targets on purpose. They did have an intentional campaign of trying to create misery. I am not saying that every single one of those schoolbuses or those hospitals or those churches or weddings was an attempt to kill civilians and civilians only, but we have been in that targeting center long enough to know—that they have been doing, you know, the things that they have been doing: hitting a lot of people who have nothing to do with the attacks against Saudi Arabia.

Maybe if the Saudis were willing to lie to us about what happened to Jamal Khashoggi, they haven’t been straight with us as to what is happening inside Yemen, because if the United States is being used to intentionally hit civilians and civilians only, but we have been in that targeting center long enough to know—that they have been doing, you know, the things that they have been doing: hitting a lot of people who have nothing to do with the attacks against Saudi Arabia.

Maybe if the Saudis were willing to lie to us about what happened to Jamal Khashoggi, they haven’t been straight with us as to what is happening inside Yemen, because if the United States is being used to intentionally hit civilians and civilians only, but we have been in that targeting center long enough to know—that they have been doing, you know, the things that they have been doing: hitting a lot of people who have nothing to do with the attacks against Saudi Arabia.

So I would argue that this resolution is an appropriate response if you are only concerned about Jamal Khashoggi because it is a way to make clear that if you lie to the United States, there are consequences. It is also a way to say to the Crown Prince: We are not going to be partners with you in your most important foreign policy endeavor. We are not being straight with us about this or other matters.

If you care just about what happened to that journalist, this is still an important vote for you to cast. And I get that some people have questions with the mechanism by which we get here, the War Powers Resolution. I understand that it is new, that it hasn’t been tested before. But I believe this is the right moment to have this debate and to have this vote.

I am hoping that we are going to come to a conclusion here as quickly as we can in which we maintain bipartisan consensus. I just joined several of my colleagues upstairs to express our strong concern—this isn’t the beginning and the end of our debate about what do with Saudi Arabia moving forward. I support Senator Menendez and Senator Young’s legislation to take some additional steps to halt arms sales. I think there is more leverage on the individuals who are responsible for this crime. But I would also hope that all of us take a little bit of time over the holidays to really think about how we restart this relationship in the region and send a message to the world that there is no relationship in which we are the junior partner—certainly not with Saudi Arabia.

If Saudi Arabia can push us around like they have over the course of the last several years and in particular the last several months, that sends a signal to lots of other countries that they can do the same thing—that they can murder U.S. residents and suffer almost no consequences; that they can bomb civilians with our munitions and suffer almost no consequences.

This is not just a message about the Saudi relationship; this is a message about how the United States is going to interact with lots of other junior partners around the world as well. Saudi Arabia needs us a lot more than we need them, and we need to remind folks of that over and over again.

Spare me this nonsense that they are going to start buying Russian jets when we have just been saying that those countries can protect you better than the United States, take a chance. You think the Saudis are really going to stop selling oil to the United States? You think they are going to walk away from their primary breadwinner. It is just a signal to say that we don’t want to be engaged in this particular military campaign? I am willing to take that chance.

We are the major partner in this relationship, and it is time that we start acting like it. If this administration isn’t going to act like it, then this Congress has to act like it. As Senator Graham said, sometimes Congress has
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. President.

I take this time to support the passage of S.J. Res. 54. I commend my colleagues who have brought this resolution forward. The impact of this resolution would be to end the U.S. military engagement in Yemen, and I believe that military engagement should end for several reasons.

First, let me comment on what others have already pointed out, and that is that the humanitarian crisis in Yemen is one of the worst, if not the worst, in the world. That is saying a lot because there is a lot of areas around the world where we are seeing humanitarian challenges.

In Yemen today, 10,000 people have been killed due to the war, and 22 million—75 percent of the population in Yemen—are at grave risk today. It is estimated that there are 400,000 children under the age of 5 who are at the risk of starvation due to hunger and malnutrition, and 85,000 children have died, according to Save the Children, from Yemen, since Yemen.

The U.S. military engagement has really not assisted in ending this humanitarian crisis. There are 1 million people with cholera and 8.4 million people on the verge of famine. For a long time, we have been, focused on the Port of Hodeidah, saying that it had to be opened in order to be able to deliver humanitarian assistance. I think many of us thought that because of our military involvement in Yemen, at a minimum, it would be the port open. We find we are not able to have safe routes for the delivery of humanitarian assistance, so through our military we have not been able to impact the horrible tragedies that are taking place because of this humanitarian disaster.

Second, I think most experts will tell us there is no military solution to the war that is taking place in Yemen that dates back to 2014. The warring sides are not going to end as a result of the military. It is going to take diplomacy, and I think the military involvement has not assisted in a diplomatic answer. We have not made the progress I think many of us would have expected.

So, yes, I do believe America needs to be engaged in Yemen, just not from our military. Let’s do an all-out press on diplomacy and bring the parties to the peace table and end this horrible conflict.

Yet, make no mistake about it, the Houthis are not nice people. I understand that, but we are not going to win this by our military. So let’s concentrate on diplomacy. I think many have pointed out that, yes, we have been in Yemen since the attack on our country on September 11. Nothing in this resolution would affect our ability to fight against al-Qaida and its associated forces.

The resolution specifically exempts—specifically exempts—from the withdrawal of American military our campaign against al-Qaida and associated forces.

There is also no question that since the Saudis have engaged in this conflict, they have violated human rights. Yes, we are facilitating and helping. I am not saying we are committing, but we are certainly part of the Saudi effort. We are supposed to help them with targeting. That means giving them intelligence that we know is not going to cause casualties. I am certain the American military is helping in that regard, but the bottom line is, we are told that 61 percent of casualties are due to coalition strikes. There is tremendous civilian loss as a result of this campaign, and the United States is one of the honest brokers in trying to minimize that. We have not been successful through the use of our military.

The use of our military has never been authorized by Congress. Now, this is a debate we have had many times. I know the distinguished chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has been part of that debate and has wanted us to come to grips with a congressional authorization for military use in Yemen. I applaud the chairman. I am very proud to be on that committee. I think if it were left up to our committee, we may have been able to agree on a resolution, but it was clear we couldn’t get it through the Senate, couldn’t get it through the Congress. That was clear. I am not saying we are culpable for not passing authorization, but we have not passed authorization, and there is no authorization for our increased military presence in Yemen, despite the fact that article I, section 8, clause 11 of the Constitution of the United States gives the Congress the sole power to declare war.

We are responsible for the military, and if you can’t get that authorization, there should at least be a presumption that we shouldn’t be using our military. If you can’t get the support of Congress—if the President, Commander in Chief, can’t get the support of Congress for the use of force, there should be no involvement in emergency situations. We expect it of the Commander in Chief. This is not an emergency situation. This is a situation where there should be an authorization for the use of force if we are to remain. I don’t believe we should remain.

We have had our disagreements with the President on the use of force. Congress passed the War Powers Act in 1973. The President didn’t like it. We passed it anyway. We believe the President should not only notify but respect the will of Congress’s power under article I to declare war and authorize our military presence.

Section 5(c) gives the power to Congress to pass a joint resolution to remove our troops where there has been no authorization. So what is being done today—the resolution that is before us—is the vehicle that we determined to be the appropriate way to remove our troops from unauthorized war. Therefore, it is an appropriate action by the Congress—probably the only action we can take in order to end the war in Yemen with U.S. participation.

I want to make a comment about the relationship between the United States and the Saudis. I heard many of my colleagues talk about it. I think it is a very important relationship. I think there are those who are a member of the United States. I had many opportunities to visit with the Saudis. I know about a lot of the things they are doing, but make no mistake about it, that relationship is important to the United States, but it is very important relationship. I think it is a very important relationship. I think it is a very important relationship.

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I haven’t even mentioned the tragic death of Jamal Khashoggi. When taking a look at what happened there and the involvement of the royal family and the Crown Prince, that clearly cannot go unchallenged. Human rights violations and the military campaign, all of that cries out for the United States not to be engaged in the military aspects of what is happening in Yemen, and the United States, but it is very important to the United States. I think it is a very important relationship.
facts that are central to civil discourse, for speaking up and for speaking out, the Guardians” are the Person of the Year.  

TIME magazine wrote:

As we looked at the choices, it became clear that an attack and abuse of truth is really the common thread in so many of this year’s major stories . . . this ought to be a time when democracy leaps forward, when informed citizenry being essential to self-government. Instead, it’s in retreat. And the story of this assault on truth is, somewhat paradoxically, one of the hardest to tell.

TIME magazine wrote in this week's issue:

In Annapolis, Md., staff of the Capital, a newspaper published by Capital Gazette Communications, which traces its history of telling readers about the events in Maryland to before the American Revolution, press on without the five colleagues gunned down in their newsroom on June 28. Still intact, indeed strengthened after the mass shooting, are the bonds of trust and community that for national news outlets have been eroded on strikingly partisan lines, never more than this year.

“I can tell you this,” declared Chase Cook, a reporter for the Capital Gazette [on that fatal day], “We are putting out a damn paper tomorrow. That’s my promise to you. It may be just a few hours after five of his colleagues were killed. The man charged with their murders had been obsessed with the paper since it reported on the harassment of a high school classmate—part of its routine coverage of local legal proceedings. He made the office a crime scene. To put the damn paper out, staffs set up laptops in the bed of a pickup in a parking garage across the street.

When the next edition arrived—on schedule—the opinion page was blank but for the names. . . .

I must tell you I am very proud of what the Capital Gazette has done. They continued through very difficult times with the quality reporting and opinion pages they have been known for, for a long time—a real treasured institution in our State’s capital.

One of the four TIME magazine covers includes the journalists of the Capital Gazette, the Annapolis, MD, newspaper where five employees were murdered by a gunman last June. I spoke about this shooting on the Senate floor last June, and the Senate unanimously adopted S. Res. 575, which I authored and which was cosponsored by all Members of the Senate. This Senate resolution commemorates the lives, careers, and service of five victims that the manipulation and abuse of Annapolis, MD: honors the survivors of the attack and the families of the victims and pledges to continue support for their recovery; thanks law enforcement officers and other emergency first responders for their heroic actions; expresses the confidence of the Senate to defending the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States.

Wendi Winters was among the five Capital Gazette employees killed in the June 28 shooting. According to eyewitness accounts from survivors, Wendi armed herself with the closest weapons at hand—her trash and recycling bins—and charged the attacker, shouting for him to stop. It is believed Wendi’s actions distracted the shooter enough to enable several of her coworkers to escape.

We think of violence against reporters as something that happens in other countries, in war zones and the like, but not here, not in the United States of America. All around the world, reporters work to gather facts, ask questions, and report the news in the spirit of free, open, and transparent societies and governments that all people deserve. Too often, reporters are harassed, jailed, and even killed simply because of the nature of their work, which often exposes criminality and corruption.

Jason Rezaian, a reporter with the Washington Post who was falsely imprisoned in Iran for doing his job as a journalist, had this to say earlier this year. He talks about the attack I referenced earlier in Annapolis.

Mostly I believe attacks on the media taking place on the other side of the world, usually in countries where the flow of information is restricted or conditions are such that a sense of devotion or political or tribal affiliation can compel individuals to take heinous action. . . . Writing about a deadly attack that happened less than 30 miles away, I’ve heard from overseas that I recently visited with relatives from overseas, is a new experience for me. And I have to say that I don’t relish the task.

We Americans have certain rights and responsibilities granted to us through the Constitution, which established the rule of law in this country. Freedom of the press is one of those most basic rights, and it is central to the First Amendment of the Constitution. It protects our right to an open and fair law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press.” This precious freedom has often been under attack, figuratively speaking, since our Nation’s founding.

Today, attacks on the American media have become more frequent and more literal, spurred on by dangerous rhetoric that has created an “open season” on journalists and, more specifically, on the news media. President Trump launched an attack in 2017 after a gun massacre—repeatedly, and with increasing frequency—by indicating that he would “totally undo” the protection given to journalists by the law.

To begin with, one of the most basic questions we need to ask is whether we should have a government that supports free press or one that favors a government that favors certain media or newspapers, or newspapers without a press. The freedom of the press is a fundamental right of the American people, and the Government cannot be made to respect or abridge the freedom of the press.

Then-candidate and now-President Trump has made several public statements that have undermined the independence of the press, including his attacks on specific journalists. In his first term, he has continued to make false claims about the media and to spread misinformation.

The President has used his public and private platforms to attack the press and undermine their ability to do their jobs. He has called journalists “enemies of the people” and “fake news.” He has threatened legal action against them and encouraged violence against them.

The rights of journalists to report the news are essential for a functioning democracy. The President and his administration have repeatedly attacked the press and threatened legal action against journalists. These attacks are a violation of the First Amendment of the Constitution and a threat to the integrity of the press.

So, I called out the President and his administration for their attacks on the press. I sent them a letter, which the Senate passed unanimously, calling on them to stop making threats against the press and to support the First Amendment of the Constitution.

We are all Americans, and we all have a responsibility to defend the freedom of the press. It is crucial for a functioning democracy. The President and his administration must respect the First Amendment of the Constitution and support the free press.”

In conclusion, I call on all Americans to stand up for the First Amendment of the Constitution and support the free press. We must work together to protect the rights of journalists and to ensure that the press can do their job without fear of intimidation or violence.

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — SENATE

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Donald Trump’s constant dismissal needs to end. He needs to accept that one of the press’s most important roles is to speak truth to power—truth to power, including to the President of the United States.

Here at home, we are left to wonder what the President is thinking. Donald Trump is more inclined to agree with Russian President Vladimir Putin’s view of the press—where journalists are routinely jailed and physically attacked—than with Thomas Jefferson, who famously said: “Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter.”

Journalists, like all Americans, should be free from the fear of being violently attacked while doing their job. But how do I interpret his sincerity, when, more frequently, he is calling the media “fake news” or “totally unng” and telling the people of America that reporters are truly bad people?

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citizens, including the freedom of press.

Yesterday, TIME magazine featured three covers in addition to the Capital Gazette. One is Jamal Khashoggi, the Washington Post contributor who was killed in Istanbul in October. I would note that this is the first time that a TIME Person of the Year is a deceased person.

The United States of America must stand up for justice and human rights at home and abroad. I agree that Saudi Arabia is a strong ally in a variety of important areas, but that should only strengthen their understanding of America’s commitment to the rule of law, and we as a Nation cannot sanction extrajudicial killings. America’s national security is harmed, not helped, when dictators and strongmen believe they can get away with such heinous actions as the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

Congress must act to demand accountability for those responsible for Jamal Khashoggi’s murder and to send the right signal to the world that America will continue to be a beacon of justice and defender of human rights.

Another cover features Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo, two Reuters journalists who were arrested 1 year ago in Myanmar while working on stories about the killings of the Rohingya Muslim refugees. These journalists remain behind bars, but their wives were photographed for the cover. From this floor, I stood in solidarity with these Reuters reporters who were detained in Burma for shining a light on the horrific abuses that occur in the Rakhine State.

I have stood in solidarity with Ethiopian journalists and bloggers who are routinely arrested for criticizing the Ethiopian Government and exposing human rights abuses in that country, and have talked frequently about China, a country that engages in routine censorship and online blocking, harassment, reprisals, and detention of journalists, visa delays, and denials for journalists.

Another TIME cover shows Maria Ressa, the chief executive of the Philippine news website, Rappler, who was indicted on tax evasion charges by President Duterte’s administration as part of a crackdown on free speech and dissent.

According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, an independent, non-profit organization that promotes press freedom worldwide, more than 600 journalists and media workers have been killed in the last 10 years while doing their job.

Of the member States of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Russia remains the deadliest country for journalists.

Turkey is the largest jailer of journalists in the world, and scores of media outlets have been closed since the attempted coup there. The heavy-handed measures used against media freedom in Turkey, both before and during the recent elections, illustrates the lengths to which the government went to control the information available to voters. It also serves as a reminder of the threat to viable pluralist media for free and fair elections.

I have also worked on many other countries that have infringed upon the freedom of press in my role on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee as a ranking member on the Helsinki Commission. I could give you examples of what we have done in Malta, what we have done in Slovakia, what we have done in Belarus—and the list goes on and on.

I therefore ask the Trump administration and my colleagues in the Senate to redouble their efforts to protect the freedom of the press, both at home and abroad. We must lead by example as the very foundational legitimacy of a democratic state. America’s leadership is essential to protect the freedom of the press—an essential institution for a democratic state. We must lead by first setting an example by commitment to the freedom of press here at home. We must demand that freedom of the press be a priority in our global affairs, recognizing it is important to our national security.

TIME magazine got it right by naming the “Guardians and the War on Truth” as persons of the year.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDENT pro Tempore (Mr. BARRENBROOK). The Senator from Utah.

YEMEN WAR POWERS RESOLUTION

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, the Senate is currently considering S.J. Res. 54. I am proud to be a co-sponsor of this legislation—lead cosponsor, along with my distinguished colleague from Vermont, Senator SANDERS. He and I, along with Senator MURPHY and a number of other Members of this body, have engaged in this bipartisan effort to make sure that the separation of powers among our three branches of government is respected.

There is perhaps no more morally significant decision made in government than the decision to go to war. Whenever we take an action as a government that puts American treasure and, especially, American blood on the line, we have a sacred responsibility to evaluate and carefully weigh the relative risks and advantages of acting and the relative risks and advantages of not acting.

To make sure that kind of analysis takes place, the Founding Fathers wisely put this power squarely within the Executive branch most accountable to the people at the most regular intervals—the Congress. This was a big distinction from our former National Government, based in London, where the chief executive—the King—had the power to commit troops to war without going to Parliament.

Alexander Hamilton explained this principle in Federalist No. 69. He explained that it was no accident that this power was put in the hands of Congress. To be sure, the power Congress has to declare war means more than simply to state something in the abstract. It is something that has to happen before we put American blood and treasure on the line.

It is something that should never happen in the absence of some type of dire emergency—some set of exigent circumstances in which the President must protect the United States of America from an impending attack.

It needs to be declared by Congress.

This isn’t a mere formality; this is the only thing that guarantees that this is a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. It is the only thing guaranteeing that we will actually have a debate about the relative merits of the conflict in question. There are a number of reasons why.

In addition to the fact that there is an obvious economic expense associated with war, there is a tremendous human cost associated with war on our side. As we are involved in that, on the side of the allies whom we might be fighting, and on the side of those against whom we might be fighting.

This particular conflict in Yemen provides one of many examples of the moral perilousness associated with war. Of the many moral questions brought about as a result of war. We are involved in a conflict half a world away. We are involved in providing targeting assistance, midair refueling, reconnaissance, and surveillance. We are involved in this conflict as coalignants.

As we are involved in that, we are responsible in one way or another not only for the American lives that might one day be directly implicated in this conflict—but more than they are today because we know how wars go; we know how they tend to spread. We know that once we put the good name of the United States of America on the line, we are understandably reluctant to walk away from it because of what that might say to the rest of the world.

But in order to make it legitimate, in order to make that decision authentic, in order to make it sustainable, it has to be done in the appropriate way, which means it first has to go to Congress.

Many of my colleagues will argue—in fact some of them have argued just within the last few minutes—that we are somehow not involved in a war in Yemen. My distinguished friend and colleague, the Senator from Oklahoma, came to the floor a little while ago, and he said that we are not engaged in direct military action in Yemen.

Let’s peel that back for a minute. Let’s figure out what that means. I am not sure what the distinction between direct and indirect is here. Maybe in a very technical sense. The definition of warfare or military action that has long since been rendered outdated—we are not involved in that, but
we are involved in a war. We are co-belligerents. The minute we start identifying targets or, as Secretary James Mattis put it about a year ago, in December 2017, the minute we are involved in the decisions involving making sure indirect military involvement in a place to hit, that is involvement in a war, and that is pretty direct. The minute we send up U.S. military aircraft to provide midair refueling assistance for Saudi jets en route to bombing missions in Yemen, that is our direct involvement in war.

Now, if you don’t agree with me, ask any one of our armed services personnel who is involved in this effort. I would imagine that he or she would beg to differ. I would imagine that the parents, the children, the family members, the loved ones of these brave men and women who have been involved in this effort would beg to differ when told that we are not involved in a war in Yemen.

In any event, regardless of how you define war, regardless of what significance you might attach to direct versus indirect military involvement in a civil war half a world away, it still triggers the constitutional requirement that Congress and not merely the President decide that we are going to get involved in this war.

Look and see that there are some competing powers in the Constitution. It was set up deliberately that way. There is some arguable gray area between, on the one hand, the outer limits of the President’s Executive Authority as the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and, on the other hand, the power enjoyed exclusively by Congress to declare war. Because there is some gray area, some matters on which people of reasonable minds might disagree as to where a war begins, Congress, several decades ago, adopted the War Powers Act in an effort to try to delineate the respective powers of these branches. Congress decided, among other things, that it would not sit idly by any time we got involved in hostilities.

Many of my colleagues will argue and many of them have argued on this very day, in fact, that we are not involved in hostilities in Yemen and therefore the War Powers Act is not triggered. Yes, there are a couple of problems with that argument.

One, it is just categorically untrue for the reasons I mentioned a minute ago. We are directing them get to the bombing sites. We are telling them what to bomb, what to hit, what to take out. That is rather direct involvement in war.

Incidentally these days, our wars are high-tech. Very often, our wars involve cyber activities. They involve reconnaissance, surveillance, target selection, midair refueling. It is hard—in many cases, impossible—to fight a war without those things. That is what war is.

Many of my colleagues, in arguing that we are not involved in hostilities, rely on a memorandum that is internal within the executive branch of the U.S. Government that was issued in 1976 that provides a very narrow, unreasonably slim definition of the word “hostilities.” It defines hostilities in a way that has evolved, that might have been accurate, perhaps, in the mid-19th century, but we no longer live in a world in which you have a war as understood by two competing countries that are lined up against each other and engaged in direct exchanges of fire, one against another, at relatively short range. War encompasses a lot more than that. War certainly encompasses midair refueling, target selection, surveillance, and reconnaissance of the sort we are undertaking in Yemen.

Moreover, separate and apart from this very narrow, unreasonably slim definition of “hostilities” as determined by this internal executive branch document from 1976 that contains the erroneous notion, we ourselves, under the War Powers Act, don’t have to technically be involved in hostilities. It is triggered so long as we ourselves are sufficiently involved with the armed forces of another nation when those armed forces of another nation are themselves involved in hostilities.

I am speaking, of course, in reference to the War Powers Act’s provisions codified at 50 USC 1547(c).

For our purposes here, it is important to keep in mind what that provision reads: “For purposes of this chapter [under the War Powers Act], the term ‘introduction of United States Armed Forces’ includes the assignment of members of such Armed Forces to command, coordinate, participate in the movement of, or accompany the regular or irregular military forces of any foreign country or government when such military forces are engaged, or there exists an imminent threat that such forces will become engaged, in hostilities.”

In what sense, on what level, on what planet are we not involved in the commanding, in the coordination, in the participation, in the movement of or in the accomplishment of the armed forces of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia-led coalition in the civil war in Yemen? I challenge anyone to explain to me how it is that we are not involved in the way described by 50 USC 1547(c). We are. Because we are under this power-sharing agreement that was reached in the War Powers Act that has been in place over the last four or five decades, we need to follow those procedures. It is one of the reminders we have that we need to respect the separation of powers.

We first brought this resolution—or one like it—earlier this year. It was about 8 or 9 months ago. At the time we brought it up and got it to the Senate floor, we utilized a privilege status accorded to resolutions like these in order to secure a vote on the Senate floor to try to bring this bill out of committee. At the time, sadly, we received only 44 votes to get it out of committee. That was not enough.

Fast-forward a few months to the week before last when we voted on it again. It was, actually, the same vote, and it resulted in 63 Members of this body supporting the idea of advancing it out of committee.

Then, today, we moved to the consideration of this bill, and we got, if I am not mistaken, about 60 votes for that. I am thrilled, I am ecstatic that we had that result, and I look forward to my colleagues passing S.J. Res. 54 in the coming days. I urge my colleagues to vote for it. I suggest, however, that it would have been even better had we done it sooner.

What, you might ask, changed? What changed between when we voted for this a few months ago and we fell short of the votes we needed and when we brought it up the week before last to discharge it out of committee and then voted today to move to the bill? Well, a number of things have happened.

First, the war in Yemen has continued. We have had a whole lot of people killed in Yemen as a result of the civil war. We have had a whole lot more people in Yemen die as a result of causes related to that war. There has been starvation. There have been all kinds of atrocities that have accompanied that war.

Now, I know—this is war, and war inevitably involves atrocities. War inevitably leads to some people dying as a result of a direct kinetic attack, and it almost inevitably leads to other people dying as a result of starvation or their being subjected to other violent acts or tragic outcomes. I get it. That is what war does. That is precisely why it is unconstitutional and morally bankrupt for us to get involved in a war without the people’s elected representatives in Congress voting to do so, without our having the ability to debate it, to discuss it, and to vote affirmatively to put our brave young men and women in harm’s way to engage in that war.

What else changed in addition to the fact that this war has gone on and on with a lot of death and suffering and misery by a whole lot of innocent people?

We have also seen that when we pulled back the mask a little bit, when we pulled back the curtains and looked into exactly who we were fighting for and why we were fighting the people, understandably by people very, very concerned, by people very, very worried. The death, the murder of a journalist got a lot of people’s attention.

I completely agree with the comments that have been made by several of my colleagues that every life is sacred that every human being has inestimable worth in the eyes of God and should be respected by each and every one of us. It is therefore sad that it has had to take this long for us to care about it. It shouldn’t be the case that we had to wait for a journalist to be murdered for us to care about this unconstitutional, unjustified, and, I believe, immoral war.
Regardless of how we got here, we are here. The murder of Mr. Khashoggi caused us to think long and hard—with good reason—about the fact that we have gone somewhat blindly into war, first under a Democratic President and then under a Republican President, where it has continued, following, somewhat blindly, the leadership of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The fact that the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia has been implicated in the murder of Mr. Khashoggi has caused a lot of people to stop and say: Wait a minute. Maybe this doesn’t make sense. Wait a minute. Perhaps this is a regime that we ought not be supporting or at least, at a minimum, regardless of the fact that we may have some interest, some reason to be allied with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in some ways, maybe—just maybe—this is enough of a reason for us not to be fighting a war on behalf of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. We know this to be true.

Those of us who serve in this body or who serve down the hall in the U.S. House of Representatives know something very significant, which is that if we went to almost any one of our constituencies in any part of the country and asked them “Why should we, the United States of America—the greatest military power, the greatest republic, arguably, the greatest civilization the world has ever known—be putting American blood and treasure on the line to fight the events in a civil war half a world away in Yemen?” we know that 99 times out of 100—or perhaps 999 times out of 1,000—that it would not result in a confident answer. We know that it would result in an answer full of uncertainty, ambiguity, grave concern, and well-justified fear for the fact that we are involved in somebody else’s civil war—in a civil war in which we have no business fighting, in a civil war in which we have blindly followed the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia into conflict.

This is our decision to make. That war results in bloodshed and the shedding of blood that will be on our hands if we fail to exercise our constitutional prerogatives under a system of government in which we have taken an oath to uphold, defend, and defend the Constitution of the United States. I hope and expect that we will do our duty. I hope and expect that we will respect the wishes of those who put their lives on the line to protect us.

I urge my colleagues, with all the emotion and all the compassion I am capable of summoning, to vote for and pass S.J. Res. 54.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I am going to change pace a little bit here. I want to talk about a couple of people on my staff who are going to move on to greener pastures, you might say, and I want to tell you about them.

First of all, I want to acknowledge a man who has always been there for me when I have needed him. Day or night, hell or high water, yes, even during the first few weeks of his fatherhood, my chief of staff, Mr. McKenna, has given himself to Montana and to this Nation.

For years, he and his wife Patience and their children Mira and Wes have dedicated nights and weekends to ensuring that our State remains the best place to live and raise a family.

Dating back to my first U.S. Senate campaign in 2006, Aaron has been an integral part in shaping my message, crafting my political policy, and ensuring that I take the job seriously, but he never loses the ability to laugh at himself—the mark of a true leader.

One 4th of July, he tasked his communications team to write a statement honoring Independence Day. My team wrote:

We can’t be consumed by our petty differences anymore. We will be united in our common interests.

Aaron was appalled by the hyperbole, and he began editing the statement, only to find out that his team had pranked him by copying and pasting lines from the Hollywood blockbuster movie “Independence Day.”

Aaron’s no-nonsense style has kept us focused on what matters, and that is the people. His ability to see the big picture and the end goal is one of his greatest gifts.

His work ethic is second to none. He is the first person in the office in the morning, and he is the last one out at night. He is rooted in his desire to create opportunity for the next generation, and his passion drives him to excel every day—never settling for second best.

He has worked as my press secretary, as my communications director, and now he wraps up his time as my chief of staff.

I want to tell him, on behalf of my entire family and team Tester: Thank you for your service.

Aaron has been at my side through three grueling elections and countless national media appearances.

I remember the first time I met this man. He was working at a local TV station, and I was informed by my then-communications director that we had this guy who wanted to work for my campaign. At the time, I said to Matt McKenna: Why would he want to work for me? He has a good job.

Matt responded: Maybe he actually thinks you can win this election.

That is exactly what Aaron Murphy believes. He believes in the future of this country. He believes in the future of Montana.

There was another time, before the 2012 election, when Aaron was driving to my farm. He took the wrong road, and he ended up stuck in the mud. He buried the car up to the frame, and, fortunately, he found a spot where his cell phone worked and got ahold of me. I went out with the tractor and pulled him out of the mud. I was laughing at the time, making fun of his inability to navigate a muddy road, but Aaron saw an opportunity. He later told that story to a national reporter, who used it in a story to show that I hadn’t lost my roots.

Thanks for getting stuck in the mud, Aaron.
Here is the thing about Aaron Murp. He sees things differently. He has the ability to connect with people and drive an agenda that matters to everyday Americans. He is genuinely creative, full of passion, and good for a terrific line of dad jokes.

Aaron, on behalf of my family, on behalf of the entire staff—both here in DC and in State—I want to thank you for your hard work, your service, your dedication, and your willingness to come back to the political fray and help me for 2 years.

Thank you very much.

TRIBUTE TO DAYNA SWANSON

Mr. President, I also want to talk about my State director, who is also leaving for greener pastures. I guess that is what happens when you get re-elected.

My State director’s name is Dayna Swanson. She is an incredible woman. She is a leader, wise counsel, and friend. Anybody who knows Dayna knows she has a bag of dynamite.

A few years back, Dayna wanted to get an old pickup. She looked around, and she found an old pickup. She found a 1949 Chevrolet pickup that had a pretty, fresh, green paint job. In fact, it was that also included part of the chrome bumper painted green. It looked good to Dayna, and she bought it. Needless to say, it probably needed a little work. When you went around the corner, the doors would fly open, and sometimes it would start, and sometimes it wouldn’t.

I figured, what the heck. It is an old pickup. It is a great parade vehicle. We had a homecoming parade coming up in Missoula, so I asked Dayna if we could use her new 1949 pickup in the parade. We were in the parade with the vehicle and, as usual—it is what you would think—it overheated, the hose blew, and before we knew it, the Lieutenant Governor was pushing the rig down the road with me driving it, which was kind of nice.

That is Dayna. She is not afraid to take a risk. She inherited these traits from two marvelous people, her parents, Butch and Kathy.

Dayna and I come from different parts of the State of Montana, but we still have some things in common. I come from North Central Montana, where agriculture is the business. It is done there, and we dig in the Earth to make a living. She comes from just east of the Continental Divide, where hard-working miners dig in the Earth to find minerals and, consequently, are able to put food on their table.

Her Anaconda roots—her Irish roots—define her, as evidenced by her love of Jameson Whiskey, but it is her heart that makes her so special.

Dayna has compassionately lead my Montana team in the State, guiding them through difficult times, overcoming government bureaucracy, and putting on the board for the State she loves—Montana.

When a Montanan walks into one of my offices, regardless of what the problem is, Dayna goes to work to make sure the problem is solved. Dayna’s team bends over backward to get them the help they deserve.

Her leadership skills literally save lives. When I first got elected 12 years ago, Dayna designed our constituent casework process. She knew that my No. 1 goal would be to help the people of Montana, and every day since then, she has committed her heart and soul to that mission.

She has served Cabinet Secretaries across the State, showing them what rural America looks like. She has worked with county commissioners, State legislators, and everyday Montanans to ensure that Montana remains the last best place.

She has flown in the dead of winter with me when it has been so cold you couldn’t see the ground, and when you did land, you could see that the wings of the plane were covered with ice.

For 12 years, she has been my eyes and ears on the ground in Montana. We have spent hundreds of hours together—windshield time—from places like Libby and along the Lewis and Clark. We have shared countless laughs and have worked to make the State a better place.

While her time in my office comes to a close, I know there are great opportunities on the horizon for Dayna and her partner Denise, who just took over as superintendent of schools in the Seattle school system. She will be heading out to Seattle, where she will make Seattle a better place, just as she has made Montana a better place.

In Dayna Swanson’s particular case, on behalf of my wife, the entire Tester team, and the people of Montana, I say: Thank you for a job well done.

With that, I yield the floor.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

ZIMBABWE

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, last week I chaired a hearing in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health that focused on Zimbabwe. As a country, we fell in love with the continent of Africa and, specifically, with the country of Zimbabwe, where I served part of my Mormon mission. The year was 1983, and the country had recently gained its independence. The presidency of Robert Mugabe was serving as Prime Minister at the time. I don’t think anyone could have predicted back then that Mugabe would serve as leader of Zimbabwe until November of 2017, nor could anyone have imagined the damage that he would do to this beautiful country.

Jubilation erupted in the streets of Harare in November of 2017 when Zimbabweans heard the news that Mugabe had been ousted by his own party and forced to retire. The people of Zimbabwe burst into spontaneous celebration, hoping that with Mugabe finally removed from power, the country will begin to move forward after nearly 40 years of his reign.

I had the opportunity to visit Zimbabwe in February of 2016, where I led a delegation to southern Africa. Mugabe’s misrule of the country was on display evident, at that time. The devastation it had taken its toll on the capital city of Harare. Yet, somehow, the people of Zimbabwe were so capable, so resilient, and had persevered and were looking to a brighter future.

I was able at that time to reconnect with friends whom I hadn’t seen for 30 years, including one of my missionary companions, Peter Chaya, who despite severe physical disability brought on by polio as a child, managed to raise four children and is a great asset to his church, to his community, and to his country.

Zimbabwe’s greatest potential has always been its people, and it is time for the government to take steps to ensure that this potential can finally be realized.

I want to work with Zimbabwe to make this happen, and that is why I introduced the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Amendment Act, along with Senator Coons, last March. Senator Coons has been a valued partner in efforts to bring better governance to Zimbabwe, and I am sure that we will play a constructive role.

The ZDERA Amendment Act, signed into law in August, reiterates that in order for sanctions on Zimbabwe to be lifted, the government must restore the rule of law, it must hold free and fair elections, and it must demonstrate a sincere commitment to land reform, but—and this is different from the prior statute—our changes send a signal to the Government of Zimbabwe, to the opposition, and to the Zimbabwean people that the United States is interested in improving the state of our bilateral relationship, including in the areas of trade and investment.

The bill asks that the government of Zimbabwe take concrete, tangible steps toward good governance and the enactment of economic reforms. It asks that all statutes inconsistent with Zimbabwe’s 2013 Constitution are either replaced or amended to bring the country in line with that Constitution. Finally, it underlines the need for a robust civil society that is allowed to function freely and without government interference.

The conditions outlined in the ZDERA Amendment Act are reasonable and will not take too long to achieve. I urge President Mnangagwa to move ahead and repeal troublesome statutes and engage in meaningful economic reform along the lines of what Finance Minister Ncube has already recommended.

I remain concerned that a lack of momentum for reforming Zimbabwe
will squander the opportunity presented by the former President’s ouster. We can’t expect Zimbabwe to flip a switch and reverse nearly four decades of misrule in a few months’ time, but we should expect more urgency to reform the economy and to expand the political space there as well. The leader of the Movement for Democratic Change, Nelson Chamisa, is young and capable. He has a long career ahead of him. It would be to his benefit and to the benefit of all Zimbabweans to recognize the legitimacy of the new government and to help create an inclusive process moving ahead.

As in any democracy, Zimbabwe needs a loyal opposition in the form of an opposition party or parties to hold the government accountable within the framework of the rule of law. There will be new elections to contest and more chances to make the case to voters. Now is the time to unify the country.

During this past few months, I have thought often about my friends, like Peter Chaya and others in Zimbabwe, whom I know deserve far better from their government than they have received in the past four decades. They deserve a government that represents them, a government that provides an environment that allows them to follow their dreams and to realize the dreams of their children.

Zimbabwe deserves a government worthy of its people, and I encourage my colleagues to look for ways to engage constructively with Zimbabwe’s new government moving ahead. The new ZDERA presents a good, worthy framework.

By next month, my role will change, but I will remain involved, and I will still be committed to a strong partnership between the United States and Zimbabwe.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Rounds). The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, we have been debating for quite some time on the Senate floor the Yemen war powers resolution introduced by my colleagues Senator SANDERS and Senator LEE, which would cut off support for the Saudi-led war in Yemen—support that began under President Obama.

Surrounding this vote today, many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle have expressed extreme frustration with the Saudi Crown Prince, Muham-
two important goals—ending the humanitarian crisis and bringing a peaceful resolution—will actually be harder to reach.

That is not just my view; that was the view of Secretary Mattis and Secretary Pompeo when they came to brief all 100 Senators 2 weeks ago. In particular, Secretary Mattis knows the region and certainly knows about how hostilities end and begin in the region.

Their arguments—some of which I agree with—first, there is no doubt the Saudis have prosecuted the war badly, but both the Obama administration’s Department of Defense and the Trump administration’s Department of Defense have worked hard to minimize casualties.

Does anyone actually believe the situation in Yemen will improve without U.S. assistance and guidance? The question almost answers itself. Having our military involved has helped the Saudis improve their coordination and improve their targeting to minimize civilian casualties. Having our military involved has helped the Saudis manage disagreements between them and their Gulf partners. These partners also play an important role in helping to bring an end to this war.

Having our military involved has also helped provide critical leverage as we move the hopeful peace negotiations underway in Sweden as we speak. Yemen’s Government and the Houthis rebels have evidently agreed to a prisoner swap, which could include thousands of prisoners and could be the beginning of a diplomatic breakthrough.

I had the opportunity to talk with Secretaries Mattis and Pompeo this weekend. Both said this would be exactly the wrong time, at a key diplomatic opportunity. It was the wrong time. They have both agreed that we need to keep the United States limit and end its military assistance to Saudi Arabia.

I know sometimes people don’t like to hear this, but military strength can be seen as a diplomatic threat. It is often seen as critical to successful diplomatic negotiations. For the first time, there is promise—promise in negotiations in Sweden. All of us want that to succeed. However, I believe we undermine our chances of success in these diplomatic efforts if Congress forces the United States to end military assistance to the Saudis.

We also have an even more direct and real national security interest in the region. Yemen is an important front in the war on terror: It is the home to al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, AQAP. They have attempted multiple times to directly attack our homeland. They were responsible for the attack on the USS Cole in 2000, for example. They came to brief the 2015 massacre at Charlie Hebdo’s offices in Paris. Limiting our military involvement in Yemen could pose significant risk with regard to AQAP that I believe would be unacceptable for the American people.

The third line of argument we have seen on the floor and many have been discussing goes much broader than just the relationship between our military involvement in Yemen and really implicates the entire U.S.-Saudi strategic relationship. It is the desire of a number of my colleagues to use this debate and the despicable Khashoggi murder as an opportunity to downgrade this decades-old strategic relationship.

The Saudis are difficult partners, no doubt. They have been for decades. Last week, when I was presiding, Senator Risch gave an excellent speech saying that he believed the Saudis are testing the limits of their relationship with the United States and that we should look to draw some hard lines and recalibrate elements of our relationship while demanding improvements in other areas. I agreed with much of Senator Risch’s speech, including his conclusion, like mine, that we should not be cutting off our military assistance to the Saudis in Yemen because it would do much more harm than good.

Nevertheless, some Senators have argued for much more downgrading of the U.S. relationship with Saudi Arabia. In fact, so much of this has been exclusively focused on the Saudis, with no other reference to any other country in the Middle East, that it seems this debate on the floor has been in a vacuum, but as we know, there are a lot more countries in the region, including the world’s biggest sponsor of state terrorism, Iran. So I would like to talk about that. Should we be talking about them because, in fact, the war in Yemen began when Tehran-backed Houthi rebels seized power in 2015. Again, there is not a lot of discussion about how it began.

Tehran is trying to establish a Hezbollah-like entity on the Arabian Peninsula in Yemen, including increased capabilities to target cities in Saudi Arabia with ballistic missiles applied to all part of the region. The Iranian broader strategy in the region to encircle our traditional allies—whether Saudi Arabia, Gulf Arab States, and of course Israel—with proxy fighters throughout Syria, Lebanon, Yemen, and close relationships in Iraq. Yet no one in this debate seems to want to talk about Iran. I thought I would do so for a minute.

Let’s talk about the humanitarian crisis in Yemen. U.S. humanitarian aid has totaled almost $697 million in the past 14 months. Yes, Saudi Arabia could do a much better job, but they have invested well over $1 billion to try to end the suffering. Iran—the country which started the war, the country nobody on the Senate floor is talking about—now dominates the region with proxy fighters throughout the Middle East. This is all part of Iran’s broader strategy to keep the war and are trying to circle our allies, including Israel. The war in Yemen is not good for the United States—the Iranians, who are watching this debate and smiling because no one is talking about them. So I thought it was important to come down and say: Some of us are. Some of us know you are behind the war in Yemen. Some of us know you continually say you want to wipe Israel off the face of the Earth. Some of us know the Iran deal only emboldened you.

What we need to keep in mind is, yes, we have difficult partners. No doubt the Saudis are difficult. They are not perfect by any sense of the word. But this is a difficult region, and these are difficult issues, and if we think we can debate Yemen and our help there without talking about the Saudis and the Iranians, who started the war and are trying to circle our allies, including Israel, and think somehow this debate is not emboldening them more, I think we are misguided.

I voted against this resolution because I still think it is important to keep in mind that the lens through which we need to assess our security interests and those of our allies in the Middle East is through what helps or undermines Iran. I am concerned that this resolution can help them, and that is not good for the United States. It is not good for the United States, it is not good for the humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen, and it is certainly not good for all allies like Israel.
I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I want to begin by thanking a number of my colleagues who have contributed so much to bring us to this point on S.J. Res. 54. I have been very pleased and honored to work with them in co-sponsoring these measures in the past—most recently in March and now today—to end all U.S. involvement in the Saudi-led war in Yemen that is killing innocent civilians and murdering children and committing, arguably, war crimes.

The United States should have no complicity in these actions that betray our values and our national interest, so this resolution would direct the removal of all U.S. Armed Forces from hostilities.

There are many to thank—Senators SANDERS and LEE, Senator MENENDEZ, and my colleague from Connecticut, Senator MURPHY—but I want to thank some people who have not been mentioned during this proceeding.

Before Yemen and before the killing of Khashoggi—that is, before the civil war in Yemen and the Saudi involvement in it—the brutal assassination of the brilliant, courageous killing of the American journalist Jamal Khashoggi—there was 9/11. The victims and loved ones of those victims are remembered by me. They are friends. They are heroes. They have fought now, and are fighting, to hold the Government of Saudi Arabia accountable for its culpability—not yet proven in court, but they are seeking to hold the monarchy accountable for its possible involvement.

They have been largely absent from the discussion on this floor, but they are the original champions of holding the Saudis responsible for any and all possible involvement in supporting the 9/11 attack on our Nation. Make no mistake: loved ones were victims, but it was an attack on our Nation, on the Twin Towers, on our Defense Department, on a plane that was forced to crash in Pennsylvania.

I am pleased that the U.S. Senate is pursuing justice for Jamal Khashoggi. He was a journalist, an opinion writer for an American newspaper with two young children who are U.S. citizens.

The United States has a moral obligation to end support for a government that has engaged in kind of heinous, murderous action. There is intelligence that points directly to the highest levels of the Saudi monarchy—namely to the Crown Prince, Muhammad bin Salman.

The United States ought to end its support for the humanitarian crisis caused by the Saudi-led war in Yemen. Make no mistake—it was and is a Saudi-led attack, and the Kingdom is responsible for it, but this monarchy was and still is inherently engaged in bad behavior well before the Yemen civil war and Khashoggi’s tragic death. The Saudis have a long record of violating human rights and international norms. They have funded extremism that led to the rise of terrorism. They may well have provided financial support and even training for the Saudis who went to the United States and thereafter enabled and led and participated in the attack on our Nation.

This resolution is designed to help the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen and ask about the DOD's involvement, apparently without appropriate notification of Congress, and its agreements to provide refueling support to the Saudis and the Saudi coalition partners. We were concerned that the DOD had not appropriately documented reimbursements for aerial refueling support provided by the United States.

Eight months later—just days ago—the Department of Defense responded to our letter and admitted that it has failed to appropriately notify Congress of its support agreements; it has failed to adequately charge Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates for fuel and refueling assistance. That admission 8 months after our inquiry is a damning indictment. These errors in accounting mean that the United States was directly funding the Saudi war in Yemen. It has been doing it since March 2015.

In November, the administration announced an end to U.S. aerial refueling support for Saudi military operations in Yemen, but we still must determine whether the Department of Defense was incompetent or disingenuous—or both—in failing to charge the Saudis and Emiratis for previous refueling assistance. We need accountability, a full explanation from the Department of Defense.

The Department will be seeking reimbursement for its refueling support, but I will continue to demand and conduct oversight to get to the bottom of this apparent negligence. I have made clear to the Department of Defense that funds—potentially millions and tens of millions—were used to fund the Saudi war and used to fund it without the legally required acknowledgment and approval from the Congress of the United States.
Very simply, the United States should not be funding this war. We should not be supporting this war. We should not be providing intelligence or logistics support. We should not be complicit in the indiscriminate targeting of civilians in Yemen, the murder of families, and the humanitarian crisis that are ongoing right now. That is why today we should pass this resolution.

It is all the more important today, as well, that the Senate take a stand, given the Trump family ties to the Saudis and the President’s habit of undermining the intelligence community. In the absence of leadership from the President, Congress must reassert its constitutional responsibility to authorize the use of U.S. military support.

We must take action to uphold the Constitution, as well as American values and interests. Intelligence assessments indicate with high certainty that members of the Saudi royal family, led by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, ordered and orchestrated the murder of Jamal Khashoggi. But both President Trump and his son-in-law Jared Kushner have undermined these findings and tried to stifle the intelligence community conclusions. They have undermined not only these conclusions but more broadly the intelligence community itself.

President Trump has debased and disdained brave intelligence professionals by demeaning their fact-based conclusions as “feelings.” President Trump has falsely claimed that “we may never know all the facts surrounding the murder of Mr. Jamal Khashoggi.”

His Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense, unfortunately, have further demeaned those findings by saying that there is no direct evidence or there is no smoking gun. The fact is that there is powerful and compelling evidence.

We have the public statements of my colleagues coming from briefings by the intelligence community, and we recently learned that the White House Middle East adviser—I should put “adviser” in quotes—Jared Kushner offered advice to his close friend Muhammad Bin Salman about how to “weather the storm” during the warranted backlash of Saudi Arabia after the murder of Jamal Khashoggi. Rather than ensuring accountability, Jared Kushner is inexplicably offering support.

There is also stunning evidence that the Saudi Government lobbyists reserved blocks of rooms at the Trump hotel in Washington, paying for an estimated 500 nights in the luxury hotel just six months after President Trump was elected, bringing veterans to Washington to lobby against JASTA, the bill I mentioned earlier—the bill that enables the 9/11 victims to have their day in court, the bill that upholds American values and American people.

The effort of the Saudi Government to bring those veterans to Washington and fund their stays in the Trump hotel was a despicable irony and insult to America, but it yielded the Trump Organization $270,000,000 and millions of dollars, by the President’s own acknowledgment—and, indeed, his boasting—go to the Trump organization from Saudi Arabia. There is no evidence they bought or bought in New York, Chicago, and Washington, DC, to say nothing of deals that may be contemplated by the Trump Organization now or after Donald Trump leaves office. These kinds of payments must undermine the very flawed and likely corrupt basis for the Trump administration’s foreign policy with Saudi Arabia.

American credibility is at stake. We must end all U.S. involvement in the Saudi war. We must sanction the top levels of the Saudi monarchy under relevant statutes like the Global Magnitsky Act. We must ensure that the President removes U.S. forces from any hostilities against the Yemeni people.

There are countless reasons to vote for this resolution. I call on my colleagues to support it and to make sure that U.S. support for this unacceptable conflict in Saudi—the aggression and attacks by Saudi Arabia on innocent civilians—is ended now.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon?

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, under our Constitution, we have article I, which addresses the powers of Congress, and article II, the powers of the Presidency. Our Founders were so concerned that the President would take us into war without justification that they made sure to explicitly place the power to go to war with Congress—with the House and Senate.

But here we are, debating the issue of how the President took us into war in Yemen as a facilitator of Saudi Arabia, providing intelligence, providing advice, refueling planes, providing armaments. It is time for us to take a powerful and clear stand and change this—and end this—here.

Here is what has been going on. For multiple years now, Saudi Arabia has been bombing the civilian infrastructure of Yemen, indiscriminately slaughtering civilians, destroying schools and hospitals and neighborhoods. What is the result of destroying the water systems? The largest outbreak of cholera in the history of humankind. We now have well over 100 children under the age of 5 dying of hunger and starvation each day. We are told by the experts that 8 to 14 million people are at risk of starvation, but many are already starving, and not just children under 5—the whole spectrum of children, women, and men.

We have been directly involved in ways that, in my mind, violate the War Powers Act by directly facilitating the movement of armaments and assisting Saudi Arabia in this assault, and this assault must end. We must send a strong message, and we can do that through this vote we are facing ahead of us. That is one piece of the conversation regarding Saudi Arabia.

The other piece is that the Saudi Government has assassinated an American resident—an American resident who is also an American newspaper columnist. What do we have as a response? We have the weakest possible response from President Trump, with President Trump saying that we didn’t know what happened. The Saudi Crown Prince may have been involved; he might not have been involved. Who will ever know?

We need a strong watchdog for American values. We need the President to stand up to Saudi Arabia. We don’t need to hear that we are going to be weak in the face of an assassination of an American resident because they happen to buy armaments from the United States. Yet that is what we are hearing from President Trump—weakness, selling out American values because they buy some American products.

What more trouble can we invite around the world if we don’t stand up for human rights and we don’t stand up for our residents and we don’t stand up for our journalists, all tied in together here?

Let’s be forceful in how we vote on this resolution. Let’s send a strong message.

This challenge of the President in ignoring the article I powers in our Constitution, in which the power to be involved in war is vested in this body, Congress, is not the only problem we have. We also have core corruption of our Constitution in the form of gerrymandering and voter suppression and dark money, all of which erode the fundamental vision, the vision in our Constitution of a “we the people” government, one that serves as President Lincoln so eloquently said, to operate “of the people, by the people, for the people.” Instead, we have the government operating of, by, and for the powerful in this country—the 1 percent in this country.

It certainly wasn’t done in 2017 with a bill that took $1.5 trillion—or call it $2 trillion, if you include the interest on the $1.5 trillion—out of our Federal Treasury and gave it to the very richest Americans. Boy, that is not a “we the people” action.

We weren’t investing in healthcare. We didn’t invest in education. We need apprenticeship programs. We need technical education. We need better public
schools. We need affordable colleges. We didn’t invest in education. We didn’t make our healthcare system more affordable. We didn’t take on the drug companies. We didn’t proceed to invest in the challenge of unaffordable housing. We focused on increasing the size of wealth in our nation and create living-wage jobs. Those are the four foundations of a thriving family—healthcare, housing, education, and living-wage jobs. We ignored all of that and had the government focus on giving more or less to the richest Americans, giving more or less to corporations, giving more or less to the richest Americans—government by and for the powerful.

Voter suppression is a key strategy in this. What did President Reagan have to say about that? President Reagan said: “For this Nation to remain true to its principles, we cannot allow any American’s vote to be denied, diluted or defiled.”

Now, there is a statement by a man who understood that voting is the foundation of our democratic republic—a core right of Americans—and he believed we needed to stand up and make sure that core value remains fully alive and well in our Nation. We have seen those who wield power for the powerful proceed to deny or dilute or defile the power to vote, particularly in poor communities, particularly in communities of color.

We have seen everything. We have seen poll taxes. We have seen literacy tests. We have seen post-Civil War good character tests. We have seen the use of felony charges to make it impossible for African Americans to vote in the South. We have seen voterimidation, and we have seen it sometimes through racist dog whistling and political postcards. We have a long history of these types of actions to deny, dilute, and defile the power to vote. It was like a game: if you can do it in one way there is something of our past that we saw with the 1965 Voting Rights Act, but that act was struck down by the Supreme Court. We are seeing all kinds of forms of voter suppression emerge in 2016 and 2018.

In 2018, thousands of Native Americans in North Dakota living on Tribal reserves and using their P.O. boxes for their mail address were kept from casting a ballot because of a law that came into effect in 2018. It said you can’t vote without a conventional address—the North Dakota “conventional address” effort to dilute or deny or obstruct the power to vote.

In Georgia, the then-secretary of State, Brian Kemp, who was himself running for Governor, attempted to block 53,000 Georgians from voting—70 percent of whom were African-American or Hispanic. There were differences in the wording of the way they filled out their registration form. If the name wasn’t exactly identical or had some other slight variation, he was sitting on those voting registration cards—the “identical name” gambit from Georgia.

In Ohio, a county elections board proceeded on the orders of Secretary of State Jon Husted to purge thousands of Ohioans from the voting rolls. If you are not on the voting rolls, you can’t vote when the election comes. Again, who were disproportionately affected? African Americans—the Ohio voting roll purge strategy of voter suppression.

What did we see in North Carolina? Thanks to a law passed by the Republican State legislature, nearly 20 percent of North Carolina’s early voting locations were closed, forcing voters to travel longer or wait in long election-day lines to cast their vote. I will give you one guess on who was impacted the most. Who was this target aimed at? Well, it was aimed at African-American voters—the long line strategy from North Carolina and Kansas, as well.

In Kansas, the county clerk in Dodge City, citing construction, moved the only polling place in a town that is 60 percent Hispanic from a spot downtown to an area on the city outskirts, andarming shows outside the city limits. This was a location that had no sidewalk and is separated from the rest of the city by train tracks, making it as difficult as possible for voters to get there. It was targeted at a Hispanic community.

We saw voting suppression aimed at college students, too. In Iowa, the legislature passed a bill to cut 11 days off early voting this year in order to make it harder to vote. It also had a tricky little deal on ID requirement, which will not now go into effect until next year, but it created a great deal of confusion about this year because it made people think they weren’t eligible to vote because it said your ID had to have an expiration date on it. Why was this tricky little thing done? Because college IDs often don’t have an expiration date on them.

Well, it is a total violation of the vision Ronald Reagan laid out, and realisation of the American dream—of our Constitution and the power to vote. In New Hampshire, a bill was signed into law this past July aimed at suppressing college-age voters as well. It says students and other part-time residents have to become permanent residents. How do you become a permanent resident in order to cast a ballot? You have to buy an in-State license. If you have a car in another State, you have to reregister it in New Hampshire, which means fees, fees for license plates, and possibly separate State and municipal fees. It is like a poll tax placed on college students. So there we have this 21st century poll tax coming back aimed at college students.

Why are all these voting suppression processes aimed at poor communities, aimed at communities of color, African-American communities and Hispanic communities? Why are they aimed at college students? They are aimed at those three populations because those three populations vote primarily on the Democratic side of the ballot. It is wrong for any official in this country to simply target voters of the other party to try to prevent them from voting. It is un-American. It goes against the essence of what our Constitution is all about.

It is wrong, and yet, since the Voting Rights Act was torn down by the Supreme Court of the United States, we see it time and again. We don’t just see it before the election. We see it during the election day.

In Georgia, we saw hours-long lines to vote in majority-minority districts, either because people were told to vote there, it was in a building that was locked up. Voting machines were inside, but the doors were locked. The building had been foreclosed on, but they didn’t bother to move it next door or something close by, enabling people to vote.

In Texas, we heard about the machines that were changing people’s votes from a Democratic candidate to Republican candidate.

The other day, President Trump was working to cast doubt on the legitimacy of our normal election processes—tweeting out that ballots coming in after election night shouldn’t be counted. What was he talking about down in Florida, absent ballots that shouldn’t be counted? We are talking about the absentee ballots for our soldiers overseas. But because the President was concerned that they might change the outcome, he didn’t want them counted.

If only Ronald Reagan could spend a few minutes with President Trump and remind him of what our Nation is all about, what our Constitution is all about, how important voting is, and that it should never be denied or diluted.

None of these efforts are unique. We saw these efforts back in 2016, as well, in the first election after the Voting Rights Act was torn down by the Supreme Court. That was the Shelby County v. Holder decision. The Court thought this wasn’t necessary any more. Maybe they should ask Congress whether it was necessary. Now that we find out it was necessary, maybe they should reverse their decision. We need to put a new issue before them. Maybe we need a new Voting Rights Act. Maybe it should apply to every State, rather than just the States that were in the 1965 Voting Rights Act bill.

In 2016, that first election after the Voting Rights Act was torn down by the Supreme Court, we saw 900 fewer polling places open to voters than in 2014–2 years earlier. Most of that change was in the States that previously were under the regulation, the oversight of the Voting Rights Act. We saw that in Texas, Arizona, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, South Carolina, and North Carolina. When you reduce the number of polling places in poor communities and communities of color, you create long wait lines, and you deny the vote.
Nearly 17,000 Wisconsinites—disproportionately minorities—were kept from the polls because of Wisconsin’s voter ID law. The State saw its lowest turnout in two decades. This law had nothing to do with security. It had everything to do with voter suppression because it was known that residents in low-income and minority communities are less likely to be able to access the IDs that are required for polls. This is keenly targeted.

In fact, after North Carolina’s voter ID law was struck down in 2016, the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals decision noted that it targeted African Americans with “almost surgical precision.” The State resorted that year—after it was struck down—to eliminating early voting days, severely curtailing the number of polling places, and affecting their hours of operation in communities of color.

By the way, the lead plaintiff in the case that challenged the voting suppression strategy of the voter ID law passed away this weekend at age 97. Ms. Rosanell Eaton was once described by President Obama as a beacon of civil rights. She was a life-long devotee of and advocate for voting rights. Now, that is a patriot.

It is because of unsung heroes like her that our Nation has come far and why we must continue pushing ourselves forward to ensure justice and equality for all.

In the ‘we the people’ nation, can any of these efforts to suppress the vote be allowed to continue? The answer is no—not if we want the vision of government, of, by, and for the people. How can any of us sit by and allow citizens of this country—citizens like Rosanell Eaton—to be systematically denied the most fundamental right?

We have to work together—Democrats and Republicans—to honor and to strengthen the vision of the ability to vote, to demand a force and formidable voting rights bill for the 21st century, ensuring in every way possible that every single American can exercise his or her right to vote freely and fairly. We need a voting rights bill that bans the type of shenanigans and the types of deceptive strategies that target poor communities, communities of color, and college students that I talked about today.

But we also need a voting rights bill that requires preapproval for changes to voting procedures to make sure that they are not being changed in order to take away the ability to vote and to make it more difficult for some communities than for other communities within a State. We need a voting rights commission with the power to ban new voter suppression practices as they evolve because, surely, people will try new strategies from people who do not believe in the vision of our Constitution.

From the 15th amendment of 1870, which recognized African-Americans’ right to vote, to the 19th amendment of 1920, 50 years later, which recognized a woman’s right to vote, and all the way up to the civil rights marches of the 1960s and the 1965 Voting Rights Act, America’s story has been of expanding opportunity for every American to have a say in the direction of our government.

But we are far from ensuring that today every American has that opportunity because the strategies of voter suppression are rampant, they are extensive, and they are targeted. Voter suppression and voter intimidation must be stopped and we need to ensure that every American has the unfettered right to have a voice in their government, that every American has the unfettered right to cast a ballot during the election.

President Reagan had it right back in 1981. He supported the expansion of the Voting Rights Act. He said: “For this Nation to remain true to its principles, we cannot allow any American’s vote to be denied, diluted or defiled.”

Let’s make it so... Thank you, Mr. President. (Mr. GARDNER assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT). The Senator from Colorado.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of Calendar Nos. 1154 through 1169 and all nominations placed on the Secretary’s desk in the Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, and Navy; that the nominations be confirmed; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate, that no further motions be in the Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, and Navy; that the nominations be confirmed; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate, that no further motions be in the Senate’s action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general
Lt. Gen. John N. T. Shanahan

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general
Maj. Gen. Kevin B. Schneider

IN THE ARMY

The following named officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grades indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be major general
Brig. Gen. Stephen J. Hager

To be brigadier general
Col. Thomas A. Duke, Jr.

The following named Air National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12211:

To be major general
Brig. Gen. Laura L. Yeager

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be vice admiral
Vice Adm. Michael M. Gilday

The following named Air National Guard of the United States officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12212:

To be major general
Brigadier General Jeffrey W. Burkett
Brigadier General Jessica Meyeraan
Brigadier General Russ A. Walz

The following named Air National Guard of the United States officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12212:

To be brigadier general
Colonel James R. Camp
Colonel Wesley J. Clare
Colonel James T. Demarest
Colonel John M. Green
Colonel Peter T. Green, III
Colonel Robert C. Korte
Colonel Darrin P. Leleux
Colonel Mark A. Maldonado
Colonel James F. Marren
Colonel John R. Mulvey
Colonel John F. O’Connell
Colonel Matthew J. Peterson
Colonel Robert A. Schulte
Colonel James G. Silvas

The following named Air National Guard of the United States officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12212:

To be brigadier general
Colonel Darrin K. Anderson
Colonel Mark D. Auer
Colonel Buel J. Dickson
Colonel Kenneth S. Eaves
Colonel Steven S. Lambrecht
Colonel Toni M. Lord
Colonel Glen A. Martel
Colonel David W. May
Colonel Gary A. McCue
Colonel Thomas H. Mora
Colonel John W. Pogorek

The following named Air National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12212:

To be brigadier general
Col. Thomas A. Duke, Jr.