

other legitimate government requirements for recognizing such efforts are clearly defined. Would you agree?

Mr. PRYOR. Yes, I would agree with that characterization.

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank Senator PRYOR for his work on this issue.

Mr. BROWN. I ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUMENTHAL). Without objection, it is so ordered.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JESSE OWENS

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise to honor the memory of Jesse Owens, an Olympic recordbreaker and pioneer on the track and off the track, who was born 100 years ago tomorrow.

Born in Alabama as the youngest of 10 children, James Cleveland Owens moved with his family to Cleveland, OH, at the age of 9. Leaving the South during the great migration of those several decades between 1910 and 1970, Jesse's family came north seeking economic opportunity and greater personal freedom. His father left his work as a sharecropper in the South—something difficult to do because so often the landowner held those sharecroppers by holding real or imagined debt over their heads—and found a job in the steel industry in Cleveland, OH.

James Cleveland Owens enrolled in Bolton Elementary School on the east side of Cleveland. Because of his strong southern accent, when the teacher asked his name and he said J.C., the teacher misheard it and started calling him Jesse—a name that stuck.

While in junior high, he met Charles Riley, who taught physical education and coached the track team. Charles Riley nurtured Jesse's obvious talent, helping him to grow stronger athletically and to set long-term goals that served him well as he went on to Cleveland East Technical School.

In 1927, my hometown of Mansfield, OH started hosting the storied Mansfield Relays—maybe the biggest in the country—a sporting event that drew athletes from six States and Canada. I remember in the 1960s my family hosting many of the athletes who came to our town to compete.

Obviously prior to my parents doing that, among these many promising athletes none shone brighter than the sprinter from an hour up north. At the Mansfield Relays, Jesse Owens sharpened his focus and won the 1932 and 1933 relays for East Tech, setting records that lasted into my childhood in the 1960s and 1970s.

He later went on to attend the Ohio State University, where he was known as the Buckeye Bullet, winning a record eight individual NCAA championships. The story goes that at the Big 10 track meet 1 year in Ann Arbor, MI, while competing in a 45-minute period, Jesse Owens set 3 world records.

We are used to seeing college athletes who are revered today. But in his day, Owens could not live on campus due to a lack of housing for Black stu-

dents, and he could not stay at the same hotels when his track team traveled or eat at the same restaurants as the White players on the team who traveled with him. But he achieved global fame and heroism status because of what he did in the 1936 Olympics in Berlin.

While a hateful regime in Germany hoped to use the Olympics to promote the Aryan race and promulgate a wrongheaded, dangerous, and inherently racist belief in the superiority of that race, Jesse Owens turned this theory on its head. He won four gold medals in Berlin, and he set world records in three events while tying for a world record in a fourth event. He showed that talent and sportsmanship transcend race, and he embarrassed an evil dictator who hoped to manipulate the Olympic Games to further his political agenda.

Interestingly, Adolph Hitler refused to shake hands with Jesse Owens when he won one of those events. The International Olympic Committee told the German Government that Hitler must either shake hands with all the winners or none of the winners. The story goes that Hitler refused to come back and observe the Olympics—again, a testament to the heroism, courage, and discipline of James Cleveland “Jesse” Owens.

Despite these achievements—and the Rose Garden and Oval Office greetings that today's Olympians are accustomed to—Jesse Owens never received congratulations or recognition by President Roosevelt or President Truman. It was only during the presidency of Dwight Eisenhower, beginning to be a different time in race relations in this country, that a President of the United States actually recognized Jesse Owens' achievements.

He was, by most measures, the best athlete in the world, but he returned to the United States of America a Black man in the 1930s to face economic challenges and racial discrimination that are far too familiar to far too many Americans. But he continued to travel and inspire athletes and fans across the globe. I had the honor of meeting Jesse Owens when he was the speaker at my brother Bob's high school graduation in 1965, when I was 12 years old.

Jesse Owens worked alongside the State Department to promote good will in Asia, and worked in 1950 to promote democracy abroad as part of a Cold War effort.

Think about that. A Black man who is the best athlete in the world, was a hero to large numbers of Americans—Black and White—in 1936, standing up in many ways against the Fascist machine of Adolph Hitler, not being recognized by a President of the United States who was winning a war against Hitler ultimately. Yet he went out 5 years later after that war to promote democracy abroad as part of a Cold War effort, still proud of his country, still knowing our country had work to do.

In 1973 he was appointed to the board of directors of the U.S. Olympic Committee, where he worked to ensure the best training and conditions for U.S. athletes. He lent his skill and his talents to various charitable groups, notably the Boys Club of America.

In 1976 Jesse Owens finally received the Presidential recognition he deserved. He was presented with the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Ford.

Jesse Owens was a pioneer. Despite facing adversity, he had the strength of mind and the discipline, common to almost all great athletes, to become the most elite of athletes. Despite being treated differently and shamefully from other athletes of his stature, he went on to shatter records. Despite the darkest of days globally, he did his part, standing up to fascism, dispelling racism, and promoting unity.

Tomorrow we celebrate the 100th birthday of a hero to all Americans, James Cleveland “Jesse” Owens.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business until 7 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Ms. COLLINS. I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to proceed as in morning business for up to 25 minutes.

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

SYRIA

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, the decision on whether to authorize the President of the United States to use the military might of our great Nation against another country is the most significant vote a Senator can cast. The Constitution vests this responsibility in Congress—a duty that rests heavily on the shoulders of each and every Member.

We are now engaged in a serious debate about what the appropriate response should be to the horrific use of

chemical weapons by the regime of Syrian President Asad who killed his own people using chemical weapons on August 21. This was not the first use of chemical weapons by President Asad. He launched several smaller scale attacks, murdering his citizens, and, notably, many, if not all, of those attacks occurred after the President drew his redline a year ago. But it was not until the large-scale August 21 attack of this year, which resulted in the deaths of approximately 1,400 people, that President Obama decided a military strike against Syria was warranted. The fact is Asad violated the international convention prohibiting the use of chemical weapons and crossed President Obama's redline many times during the past year.

Deciding whether to grant the President this authority is a very difficult decision. I have participated in numerous discussions with the President, the Vice President, and experts in and out of government. I have attended many classified briefings as a member of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, and I have carefully weighed the assessments of the intelligence community and military and State Department officials. My constituents have also provided me with valuable insights that have helped to guide my decision. After much deliberation and thought, I have decided I cannot support the resolution that was approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee last week.

One of the criteria for the use of military force is surely whether the adversary poses an imminent threat to the American people. More than once President Obama has stated Syria's chemical weapons and delivery systems do not pose a direct imminent threat to the United States. Neither the United States nor any of our allies have been attacked with chemical weapons. Instead, President Obama justifies the attack he is proposing as a response to the violation of international norms, despite the fact that we currently lack international partners to enforce the Convention on Chemical Weapons through military means.

Although the term "limited air strikes" sounds less threatening, the fact is even limited air strikes constitute an act of war. If bombs were dropped from the air or cruise missiles were launched into an American city, we would certainly consider that to be an act of war, and that is why this decision is fraught with consequences.

American military strikes against the Asad regime, in my judgment, risk entangling the United States in the middle of a protracted, dangerous, and ugly civil war. GEN Martin Dempsey, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has warned us that the use of U.S. military force "cannot resolve the underlying and historic ethnic, religious, and tribal issues that are fueling this conflict."

The introduction of American Armed Forces into this violent conflict could

escalate to the point where we are perceived to be, or actually are, involved in a Syrian civil war or a proxy war with Hezbollah or Iran.

In this complex conflict, it is also becoming increasingly difficult to sort out the good guys from the bad. There is no doubt that Asad is a brutal, ruthless dictator who murders his own citizens and who is supported by thousands of Hezbollah terrorist fighters. The opposition, however, is not pure. It has now been infiltrated by not one but two affiliates of Al Qaeda as well as by criminal gangs. Caught in the middle are millions of Syrians who simply want to lead peaceful lives. The tragic result has been more than 100,000 people killed, 4 million displaced internally, and 2 million refugees.

We do not know how Asad or his allies would respond to a U.S. military attack, but an asymmetric attack by Hezbollah aimed at one of our bases or at other American interests abroad certainly is one potential response. My concern is that reprisals, followed by subsequent retaliations, followed by still more reprisals could lead to an escalation of violence which never was intended by the President but which may well be the result of the first strike.

I have raised this issue directly with administration officials since the "one and done" strike, as retired GEN Michael Hayden puts it, may well not work. I have asked the administration what they would do if Asad waits until the 91st day, when the authorization for the use of military force expires, and then conducts an attack using chemical weapons that kills a much smaller number of people. What will we do then? In each case where I have raised this question, I have been told that we would likely launch another military strike.

In addition to my concern about being dragged into the Syrian civil war, I question whether the proposed military response would be more effective in achieving the goal of eliminating Asad's stockpile of chemical weapons than a diplomatic approach would be.

Let's be clear. The strikes proposed by the President would not eliminate Asad's chemical weapons, nor his means of delivering them. In the President's own words, the purpose of these strikes is "to degrade Asad's capabilities to deliver chemical weapons." Indeed, you will not find any military or intelligence official who believes that the strike contemplated by the administration would eliminate Syria's chemical weapons stockpile or all of the delivery systems. General Dempsey wrote to Armed Services Committee Chairman CARL LEVIN that even if an explicit military mission to secure Syria's chemical weapons were undertaken, it would result in the control of "some, but not all" chemical weapons in Syria, and that is not what is being discussed because that would undoubtedly involve boots on the ground.

According to the President, the purpose of his more narrow objective is to deliver a calculated message to convince Asad not to use his remaining chemical weapons and delivery systems ever again. But would such a strike be effective in preventing Asad from using these weapons again on a small scale after he has absorbed the strike just to deliver his own message that he retains the capability to do so? Asad would retain a sufficient quantity of chemical weapons, and he knows that we did not respond to smaller chemical weapons attacks that he undertook before the August 21, 2013, event.

So on the one hand, the President is seeking to conduct a precision military strike that is sufficient to deter Asad from using any chemical weapons again. On the other hand, he wants to narrow the scope of a military strike so that Asad does not perceive this act of war as a threat to his regime. Yet the President has previously stated that U.S. policy is the removal of Asad.

While administration officials have gone out of their way to state that the military strikes are only to deter and degrade Asad's chemical weapons use and are not intended to pick sides in the civil war, the text of the resolution before us is at odds with the administration's representations. The text states that it is the policy of the United States to "change the momentum on the battlefield in Syria so as to create favorable conditions for a negotiated settlement that ends the conflict and leads to a democratic government in Syria." Well, no one could ever consider the Asad dictatorship to be a democratic government in Syria.

Furthermore, on September 3 Secretary of State John Kerry testified that "it is not insignificant that to deprive [Asad] of the capacity to use chemical weapons or to degrade the capacity to use those chemical weapons actually deprives him of a lethal weapon in this ongoing civil war, and that has an impact."

That is a very mixed message from this administration about the purpose of these strikes.

All of us want to see a peaceful Syria, no longer led by Asad, nor controlled by the radical Islamic extremists who are part of his opposition. But is military action that could well get us involved in Syria's civil war the right answer?

When I think about the proper response to Asad's abhorrent use of chemical weapons, I am mindful of the suffering and death that has occurred as well as the international conventions banning chemical weapons. Since this is an international norm, however, where are our international partners—the United Nations, NATO, the Arab League?

I have grave reservations about undertaking an act of war to enforce an international convention without the international support we have previously had when undertaking similar action in the past, such as in Kosovo,

Afghanistan, and even Iraq. While NATO's Secretary General has expressed support for consequences, NATO's North Atlantic Council, which is the body that approves military action for NATO, has not approved this military action. The Arab League has condemned with words the use of chemical weapons, but there is yet to be any Arab League statement that explicitly endorses military action or promises to be engaged in that action. Even our ally who has been most supportive, France, has asked for a delay to allow the U.N. inspectors to deliver their report next week.

Let me add that I believe that report early next week will verify that it was the Asad regime that used sarin gas. That is my expectation.

A military strike may well enforce the international norm with respect to chemical weapons, but at the same time it would weaken the international norm of limiting military action to instances of self-defense or those cases where we have the support of the international community or at least our allies in NATO or the Arab League.

In addressing this difficult and tragic crisis in Syria, the administration initially presented us with only two choices: Take military action or make no response at all. I reject and have rejected from the start the notion that the United States has only two choices—undertaking an act of war or doing nothing in response to President Asad's attack on his citizens. There are a variety of nonmilitary responses to consider that may well be more effective. The most promising of these options, proposed by the Russians—one of Asad's strongest allies—would place Syria's chemical weapons stockpile in the custody of the international community before they would ultimately be destroyed.

I am not naive about "trusting" the Russians. My point is that this option may well be in Russia's own interests, would be more effective in securing the stockpile of chemical weapons in Syria, and would involve the international community. This diplomatic alternative would put Syria's chemical weapons under verified international control and would once and for all prevent Asad or anyone else in Syria from using those weapons. A risk of attacking Asad's facilities is that the chemical weapons could fall into the hands of terrorist elements in the country. That risk would be eliminated if the weapons were removed completely from Syria.

One of the arguments advanced by proponents of the authorization for the use of military force resolution is that America's credibility is on the line. This is a legitimate concern. To be sure, it was unfortunate that the President drew a line in the sand without first having a well-vetted plan, consulting with Congress, and obtaining the necessary support for doing so. I would maintain, however, that the credibility of our great Nation is be-

yond that of just one statement by the President, even in his important capacity as Commander in Chief. The credibility of the United States is backed by a military that is the most advanced and capable in the world. The strength of our military sends the clear, unmistakable message that the United States is capable of exerting overwhelming force whenever we decide it is the right thing to do and it is necessary to do so. It would be a mistake for our adversaries to interpret a single vote regarding a military response to Syria's chemical weapons program as having ramifications for our willingness to use force when our country or our allies face direct imminent threats, especially with regard to the proliferation of nuclear weapons and intercontinental ballistic missile capabilities.

At the very least we have an obligation to pursue all nonmilitary options that may well be more effective in preventing the future use of Asad's chemical weapons than the military option the President has proposed to undertake.

For these reasons, should the authorization for the use of military force approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee come to the Senate floor, I shall cast my vote in opposition.

My hope, however, is that the negotiations underway with the Russians will pave the way for the removal of chemical stockpiles from Syria and for their verified ultimate destruction. That is the best outcome for this crisis. That would lead to a safer world.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I understand that Members can speak for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

WRDA

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I would like to speak about an issue completely separated from the international concerns we all share because closer to home there was an action taken today by the House of Representatives that has me extremely concerned as the senior Senator from Louisiana and a leader in our delegation and is an issue I have worked on literally since the first day I came to the Senate now almost 17 years ago.

Today, the House of Representatives, unfortunately, in presenting their WRDA bill, which was a bill that was negotiated at great length with great skill by Senator BARBARA BOXER, the chair of the committee of jurisdiction, and the ranking member, Senator VITTER, who did an outstanding job for the country and for Louisiana, negotiated quite skillfully a bill that was very balanced.

It contained no earmarks, as have been eliminated by the majority of the Congress. It did give a green light for projects that had received a positive

Chief's report, which is the signal to go forward with the project for flood protection or navigation or dredging under the jurisdictions of the Corps of Engineers.

Unfortunately, for unexplained public reasons today, which we will find out as soon as we can and report, the House of Representatives, the leadership, decided to drop probably the most important project in the bill for Louisiana, and that project is Morganza to the Gulf. The saddest part about all of this, the House removing this project, this project has already been authorized three times in the last 15 years by the Senate and twice by the House of Representatives.

The people who would be benefited by this project, about 200,000 people who live in south Louisiana, Lafourche Parish and Terrebonne Parish, the same area that was battered by Katrina, Rita, Gustav, Ike, and the oilspill, the same people who have suffered through flood after flood after flood, the same people who have taxed themselves, gotten \$200 million of their own money to build phase 1, have now been told no by the House of Representatives.

For what reasons I cannot understand. They have gone through all of the processes required. They have waited in line, a line that should never have been there because they were given a yes. But as the Presiding Officer knows, under the Corps of Engineers' rules, they can say yes to your project initially and then it takes so long to get to your project because we have a very inefficient system. If the estimates then come in at 20 percent over the original estimate, the law kicks you out and you have to start all over. So they started all over. That is the tragedy of this action. We were furious they had to start all over, but that was the law. So they did. They got a positive Chief's report in June.

The House of Representatives just arbitrarily decides, even with a positive Chief's report, they are taking Morganza to the Gulf out of the bill. I am calling on the Louisiana delegation to stand, particularly members who are in the study committee. I think we have a leader of that committee, Congressman STEVE SCALISE, who was my partner in the RESTORE Act and has been a very able leader in our delegation, to absolutely put their foot down on this WRDA bill moving any further in the House of Representatives until we can get justice for this project.

Our people are doing everything we can to elevate our homes, to fight for fair flood insurance, to tax ourselves to build levees. We have traveled all over the world to find the best engineers in the Netherlands because we do not seem to have enough engineers in Washington who understand that you can live safely below sea level. Sometimes you have to because that is where the ports are. We do not have the luxury of living on tops of mountains. We are running the Mississippi River. We are not running a ski lodge