

Whereas, on July 3, 2003, Yuri Shchekochikhin, a vocal opposition journalist and member of the Russian Duma investigating the 1999 apartment bombings that killed nearly 300 people, died 12 days after being hospitalized for a mysterious illness, believed to be poison, before he could travel to the United States to discuss Russian corruption cases with the Federal Bureau of Investigation;

Whereas, on October 7, 2006, journalist and human-rights activist Anna Politkovskaya, an outspoken critic of the Kremlin, was shot and killed in her Moscow apartment building;

Whereas, on November 3, 2006, Alexander Litvinenko, a former KGB officer and vocal critic of President Putin, was poisoned when radioactive polonium-210 was allegedly slipped into his tea as he met with two former Russian security services men in a restaurant in a London hotel, and British investigators have said they have evidence of Russian involvement in the murder of Litvinenko;

Whereas, on August 31, 2008, Magomed Yevloyev, owner of a news site called Ingushetiya, popular for its human rights and press freedom stories, died from a gunshot wound to the head sustained while being transported by regional Ingushetia police following his arrest at the airport in the regional capital;

Whereas, on January 19, 2009, human rights lawyer Stanislav Markelov, who defended opponents of the Government of the Russian Federation, was shot dead by a man using a pistol in the middle of the afternoon on a busy street in Moscow;

Whereas, on July 15, 2009, Russian human rights journalist and activist Natalia Estemirova was abducted in front of her home in Grozny, Chechnya, taken across the border into Ingushetia, shot, and dumped in a roadside gutter;

Whereas, on November 16, 2009, after human rights lawyer Sergei Magnitsky was jailed for uncovering \$230,000,000 in tax fraud perpetrated by Russian officials, died in prison after being beaten and enduring horrible conditions and suffering from pancreatitis that did not receive adequate medical care;

Whereas President Obama called for a "prompt, impartial, and transparent" investigation to bring the perpetrators of Mr. Nemtsov's murder to justice;

Whereas Secretary of State John Kerry stated "We hope the authorities will join the world in producing the credible, transparent investigation necessary to find out who did—who was behind this and who did it.";

Whereas Prime Minister Cameron stated that the callous murder must be "fully, rapidly and transparently investigated, and those responsible brought to justice";

Whereas suspicion of Russian authorities in Mr. Nemtsov's murder cannot be ruled out given his criticism of the regime;

Whereas far too few of those responsible in the killings cited above have been brought to justice, raising serious questions about the ability of Russian authorities to conduct a credible investigation into Mr. Nemtsov's murder;

Whereas impunity and lack of accountability prevail in the Russian Federation;

Whereas law enforcement, judicial, and investigative bodies are often used to target political opponents and civil society in the Russian Federation and thus lack the credibility to conduct an investigation themselves; and

Whereas the Russian Federation is a member of both the Organization for the Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe, and these independent groups should be considered for investigation into

Mr. Nemtsov's murder in order to lend the investigation credibility: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the courageous work of Russian opposition leader Boris Nemstov, who dedicated his life to the fight against corruption and in support of the universal and inalienable rights of the Russian people to freely choose their leaders and live according to democratic standards;

(2) calls for a swift and transparent investigation into his tragic murder using mechanisms from either the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) or the Council of Europe, including allowing willing OSCE member states to invoke the Moscow Mechanism, as was done with Belarus in 2011;

(3) encourages the public release of all surveillance tapes in the area surrounding the crime scene from different sources and angles to aid in the investigation;

(4) urges the President to add the names of persons that Mr. Nemtsov requested be added to the visa ban list as provided for by the Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act of 2012 (title IV of Public Law 112-208; 126 Stat. 1502) and continue to sanction human rights violators;

(5) encourages the President to send a high level United States delegation to Mr. Nemtsov's funeral service; and

(6) calls on the President to significantly increase United States Government support for like-minded partners in the Russian Federation and the region to combat the flow of propaganda and the climate of hatred created by President Putin in the Russian Federation.

AWARDING A CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO THE FOOT SOLDIERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN BLOODY SUNDAY, TURNAROUND TUESDAY, OR THE FINAL SELMA TO MONTGOMERY VOTING RIGHTS MARCH IN MARCH OF 1965

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 431 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 431) to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the Foot Soldiers who participated in Bloody Sunday, Turnaround Tuesday, or the final Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March in March of 1965, which served as a catalyst for the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (H.R. 431) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

## APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Democratic leader, pursuant to Public Law 107-252, Title II, Section 214, reappoints the following individual to the Election Assistance Board of Advisors: Dr. Barbara Simons of California.

## ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:45 a.m. on Tuesday, March 3; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 10:30 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided, and that the majority control the first half and the Democrats control the final half; further, that at 10:30 a.m. the Senate recess until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the joint meeting of Congress with His Excellency Benjamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister of Israel, as well as the weekly conference meetings.

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

## ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

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

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

The Senator from Texas.

## TEXAS INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I rise today to commemorate a very special day in history, particularly in Texas history, a day that inspires pride and gratitude in the hearts of all the people who call Texas home.

I rise today to commemorate Texas Independence Day, which is today. I will in a moment read a letter written 179 years ago from behind the walls of an old Spanish mission called the Alamo in my hometown of San Antonio, a letter written by a 26-year-old lieutenant colonel in the Texas Army, William Barret Travis. In doing so, I carry on a tradition started by the late Senator John Tower, who represented Texas in this body for over two decades. This tradition was upheld by his successor, Senator Phil Gramm, and by his second successor, Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, after him. It is a tremendous honor that this privilege has now fallen to me.

On February 24, 1836, with his position under siege and outnumbered

nearly 10 to 1 by the forces of the Mexican dictator Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, Travis penned the following letter:

To the People of Texas and All Americans in the World:

Fellow citizens & compatriots—  
I am besieged by a thousand or more of the Mexicans under Santa Anna.

I have sustained a continual Bombardment and cannonade for 24 hours and have not lost a man.

The enemy has demanded a surrender at discretion. Otherwise, the garrison are to be put to the sword, if the fort is taken.

I have answered the demand with a cannon shot, and our flag still waves proudly from the walls.

I shall never surrender or retreat.

Then, I call on you in the name of Liberty, of patriotism and everything dear to the American character, to come to our aid, with all dispatch.

The enemy is receiving reinforcements daily and will no doubt increase to three or four thousand in four or five days.

If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible and die like a soldier who never forgets what is due to his own honor and that of his country.

Victory or Death.

Signed: "William Barret Travis."

As history reveals, in the battle that ensued all 189 defenders of the Alamo lost their lives, but they did not die in vain. The Battle of the Alamo actually brought precious time for the Texas revolutionaries, under the leadership of GEN Sam Houston, to maneuver his army into position for a decisive victory in the Battle of San Jacinto.

With this victory—the Battle of San Jacinto—Texas became a sovereign and independent republic. For 9 years the Republic of Texas thrived as an independent nation, and then in 1845 it agreed to join the United States as the 28th State. Many of the Texas patriots who fought in the revolution went on to serve in the U.S. Congress.

I am honored to hold the seat once occupied by Sam Houston, one of the first two U.S. Senators to the new State of Texas, and more broadly I am honored to have the opportunity to serve almost 27 million Texans because of the sacrifices made by these brave men 179 years ago.

May we always remember the Alamo, and may God continue to bless Texas and these United States.

I yield the floor.

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ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:45 A.M.  
TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands adjourned until 9:45 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:28 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, March 3, 2015, at 9:45 a.m.