

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

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Michelle Stefanick, a State Department fellow in Senator SNOWE's office, be granted the privileges of the floor during consideration of the Defense authorization bill.

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

CELEBRATING THE 231ST BIRTHDAY OF THE ARMY

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 512, which was submitted early today.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 512) celebrating the 231st birthday of the Army and commending the men and women of the Army as exceptional individuals who live by the values of loyalty, duty, and selfless service.

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

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to our U.S. Army. On June 14, 1775, our Founding Fathers formed the U.S. Army out of a desire to defend their liberties. The Continental Army that emerged in the midst of our war for independence laid a foundation for patriotism, tenacity and courage that remains at the care of the Army of today. Since that time, American Soldiers have fought in more than 10 wars, from the American Revolution to the global war on terror. This 231st birthday serves as a reminder that today's Army continues to stand as the guardian of our nation's freedom. Today, we salute the brave men and women who call the Army home, and those soldiers that have served and died before them, in a celebration of their "Call to Duty."

The American soldier has always been the centerpiece of the Nation's defense. Coupled with the desires to maintain our democracy and freedom, these soldiers continue to march to the sound of the guns by putting "boots on the ground" in more than 120 countries around the world today. From Valley Forge to New Orleans, from Gettysburg to the Marne, from Sicily and the beaches of Normandy to Inchon and the Ia Drang Valley, from Kuwait to Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, the American Soldier: brave, professional and determined, has not faltered in his duty and stands ready to answer the next call.

Since 1775, millions of men and women, from all backgrounds and parts of our Nation, have raised their right hands and taken an oath to support and defend our Constitution. Today's 231st birthday reminds us that these soldiers are the backbone of our society. Living each day by the "Warrior Ethos," these men and women per-

sonify the Army values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage.

No tribute to our men and women in uniform, whether they are from Alabama or elsewhere, would be complete without mentioning their families. America salutes our military families and the unspoken burden they bear when their husbands and wives, fathers and mothers or sons and daughters are called away to steamy jungles or unforgiving deserts to defend this great nation and our way of life. The love and support our soldier's families provide through their support and strength. We remember also their sacrifices and the long days they spend apart.

To those currently serving, our thoughts and prayers are with you and your families on this 231st Army birthday. Humbled by your sacrifice and awed by your achievements, we continue to find comfort in knowing you are an eminent presence: resolute in standing watch over our democracy and freedoms. Celebrate this Army birthday and continue to live to a higher standard through the Army values and the Warrior Ethos.

Our celebration of the 231st Army birthday reminds us all of the sacrifice so many have made in the preservation of our Nation. These words are but a small token of the appreciation and thanks that are owed for the dedication to duty and sacrifice these brave men and women make on a daily basis. These soldiers deserve our gratitude, our praise and most importantly our continued support as they continue to drive on with the mission. Happy Birthday to our Army.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I rise today in honor of the Army's 231st birthday. For over two centuries, the Army has served this Nation with honesty, courage, and dignity, and it is my privilege to take this opportunity to commemorate its birth. Both in times of peace, and in times of war, the U.S. Army has been poised and ready to answer the call of duty to defend our Nation. All of our Army units—Active, Guard and Reserve—share the heritage of the first Continental Army which fought so valiantly for the principles of justice, freedom and democracy. The commitment and duty of the Army soldiers who have risked their lives to preserve our freedom have left an indelible mark on this nation. During the Army's 231 year history, tens of thousands of these brave men and women have sacrificed their lives on distant battlefields to keep our nation safe. I salute them for their service to this country.

I also pay tribute to the families of those soldiers who risk their lives for our Nation. Too often the important role that families play goes unacknowledged but their faith and devotion are vital to the Army's success. The families of our soldiers have my deepest appreciation for the sacrifices they make and for the support they give our troops.

As this Nation continues to fight in the global war on terror, the Army has been key to providing the Joint force the capabilities it needs to persist in its struggle for liberty and democracy. Through the efforts of the U.S. Army the world has been made a more secure, prosperous, and better place for all of mankind. As I witnessed, firsthand, during my recent trip to Iraq, the men and women serving in the Army who so courageously defend our Nation represent the best of what our country has to offer and have my deepest respect. Thank you for your selfless service. It is an inspiration to us all.

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, I rise today to wish the U.S. Army happy birthday. It was 231 years ago today, June 14, 1775, that the Continental Army of the United States was formed.

Over the past 231 years, millions of men and women have served in the oldest branch of our Armed Forces. Their honor, courage, sacrifice and service are the foundation of America's greatness.

The Army principles of "Duty, Honor, Country" is America. Every generation of Americans who have served in the U.S. Army from the Continental Army to our fighting men and women serving today in Iraq and Afghanistan have been shaped by these principles. The United States Army has shaped lives just as it has shaped our history.

The U.S. Army has protected our democracy and helped make the world more secure, peaceful, and prosperous.

On this 231st birthday of the U.S. Army, we also recognize and thank the individuals who have sacrificed and served our country. They inspire us and will continue to serve as role models for future generations.

"Happy Birthday" to the U.S. Army. And, in the Army's great rich tradition and as a proud Army veteran, I proclaim my annual Senate floor "HOOAH!"

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 512) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 512

Whereas, from the first Continental Army under General Washington to the beaches of Normandy and the city streets of Iraq, the Army has protected the flame of democracy;

Whereas the citizens of the United States continue to enjoy freedom and spread the light of democracy because the men and women of the Army have stood through adversity, remained steadfast in the most difficult of circumstances, and bravely fought against the enemies of peace throughout the world;

Whereas the sacrifices of those men and women of the Army have called all citizens

of the United States, both public and private, to the highest forms of citizenship;

Whereas the Army maintains its presence in 120 countries across the world, including Saudi Arabia, Korea, and Kosovo;

Whereas the accomplishments of the Army in the Global War on Terror have demonstrated the courage and strength of the men and women of the Army;

Whereas, in Iraq, the Army has brought freedom to a population once under tyrannical control, allowing the citizens of Iraq to enjoy the recent election of officials, the formation of a constitution, and the formation of the government under Prime Minister al-Maliki;

Whereas the men and women of the Army continued to provide stability and security to Iraqis by killing Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who was commonly known among terrorists as the "prince of al-Qaeda";

Whereas Iraq has become a better place and a great ally, which was evident when the ambassador of Iraq presented his credentials to the Secretary of State for the first time in 15 years; and

Whereas those great accomplishments add to the longstanding tradition of the Army and attest to the extraordinary capability of the men and women who serve the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) salutes the men and women of the Army;

(2) commends the men and women of the Army as exceptional individuals who live by the values of loyalty, duty, and selfless service; and

(3) recognizes that those great citizens—

(A) are the reason why the Army continues to stand as the best military force in the world; and

(B) continue to perform amazing tasks and uphold the honored traditions of the Army by adhering to the principle expressed by General Douglas MacArthur when he proudly declared that "Americans never quit."

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, today, the significance of this resolution is something that needs the attention of this body. We are today honoring the 231st birthday of the U.S. Army.

Throughout the centuries, the noble service of Army soldiers has defended this great Nation. From the first Continental Army under GEN George Washington, to the beaches of Normandy, to the city streets of Baghdad, America's Army has protected the flame of freedom. Their sacrifice calls us all—both public and private—to the highest standard of citizenship. We enjoy our freedoms because they have been steadfast through the most difficult of circumstances and continue to spread the light of democracy to the darkest corners of the world. We stand here today because they continue to willingly put their lives in harm's way.

The Army's history is one of success. During the Mexican-American War our country expanded westward to the Pacific and south to Texas. The Philippine and Spanish-American Wars demonstrated the Army's courage against strong insurgent forces and created the vital posts that exist today in Southeast Asia. The Army continued to fight bravely in World War I and World War II to defeat the Central powers and the Axis in Europe and the Pacific. With the rise of Communism, the Army once again answered freedom's call in Korea and Vietnam.

Today, these courageous soldiers continue the great tradition by serving across the world in the war on terrorism. While the Army maintains a presence in 120 countries across the world in countries such as Djibouti, Korea, and Kosovo, the vast majority of our efforts have been focused in Iraq and Afghanistan.

I just returned from my 11th trip to the Iraqi AOR. While I was over there I observed firsthand the progress being made by our troops. The Army has taken the bulk of the responsibility, and much of what we have accomplished we owe to their outstanding service.

The Army has brought freedom to a population once under tyrannical control. Freedom shines through the recent election of officials, the formation of a constitution, and formation of the first permanent government under Prime Minister al-Maliki. Recently, the first Iraqi Ambassador in 15 years presented his credentials to the Secretary of State. We have taken out the "prince of al-Qaida," al-Zarqawi. These great successes add to the longstanding tradition of our military.

Having just returned from that area, and having been there 11 times, and having talked to our U.S. Army soldiers, as well as with the other services, it is incredible that they are so much like they were in the past. I recall when I was first drafted into the U.S. Army. It was so long ago that I was drafted with Elvis Presley. And he had a little better duty than I did. Nonetheless, you learn something when you become an active member of the U.S. Army. You learn a type of discipline and a type of tradition, and that tradition stays with you all the rest of your life.

It was not long ago that my fellow Army veteran, Senator DANNY AKAKA, and I formed the Army Caucus to bring attention to the work of the Army in the past, the present, and in the future.

To let you know how things change, I can remember only 12 years ago, when I was serving in the other body, in the House Armed Services Committee, someone testified at that time that in 10 years we would no longer need ground troops. To let you know some of the problems we have—and the fact is, yes, there are a lot of smart people around—but nobody knows what contingencies we will have to be facing in the future. And I can assure you, as we proceed into the future, as we modernize our equipment, it will be in use again, and the U.S. Army will come through, as they always have since the days of George Washington.

As the Army continues to fight for freedom today and peace tomorrow, I salute each Army soldier for their sacrifice, dedication, and perseverance in protecting America. These soldiers are exceptional individuals who live by the values of loyalty, duty, and selfless service. It is in this spirit that the Army continues to uphold its highest values and take its rich tradition into the next 231 years.

May God bless the United States Army.

Mr. President, 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.

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

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

REFERRAL OF DISCHARGED NOMINATION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the nomination of Randall M. Fort to be Assistant Secretary of State be discharged from the Committee on Foreign Relations and that it be referred to the Committee on Intelligence.

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

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. As in executive session, I ask unanimous consent that at 3:30 on Monday, June 19, the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following judicial nomination on the Executive Calendar: No. 699, Sandra Ikuta, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit; provided further that the time until 5:30 be equally divided between the chairman and ranking member of the Judiciary Committee or their designees; provided further that at 5:30, the Senate proceed to a vote on the nomination, with no intervening action or debate, and that following the vote, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

AUTHORIZATION TO SUBMIT TRIBUTES TO SENATOR ROBERT C. BYRD AND FORMER SENATOR BOB DOLE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senators be permitted to submit tributes to Senator BYRD and former Senator Dole for the RECORD until Friday, June 16, and that each be printed as a Senate document.

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

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF IGNACY JAN PADE-REWSKI

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Foreign Relations Committee be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to consider S. Res. 491.