Res. 84 are located in today's RECORD under ''Submission of Concurrent and Senate Resolutions.'')

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

VISIT TO THE SENATE BY KING HUSSEIN OF JORDAN

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, it is my honor at this moment to present a distinguished guest to the U.S. Senate. His Majesty, the King of Jordan, King Hussein. I will suggest that we have a brief quorum call so that Senators can be notified to get here.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, as in executive session, I ask unanimous consent that at 4 p.m. today the Senate proceed to executive session to begin consideration of the NATO treaty, for opening statements only, and the time between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. be equally divided between Senators HELMS or BIDEN or their designees.

I further ask that at 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday the Senate proceed to H.R. 2646 and that Senator ROTH be immediately recognized to offer an amendment.

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

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, we are encouraging all Senators to return to the floor at 5 p.m. this afternoon for the introduction of a resolution. We do have a briefing at this time in S–407 with Mr. Butler, who is the head of the UNSCOM group. As soon as that is completed at 5, we have a resolution that we think all Senators would be interested in supporting and commenting on. We will introduce that resolution at that time.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

PROTOCOLS TO THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY OF 1949 ON ACCESSION OF POLAND, HUNGARY, AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report Executive Calendar No. 16.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Treaty Document 105–36. Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on Accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.

Mr. HELMS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina is recognized.

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, half of the 20th century ago, Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic were consigned to communist domination because of expedient and short-sighted policies of the West. Less than a decade ago, communism was overthrown and the desire for freedom in Eastern Europe prevailed over totalitarian government. Dictatorships fell to democracy like falling leaves in Autumn.

The new democracies in Eastern Europe, already nearing the state of permanent fixtures, have existed for less time than they did between World War I and World War II. Then, like now, their ultimate survival was taken for granted.

Yet, even now, in the late twentieth century, European nations are again torn asunder by ethnic hatreds and religious division. Reconstruction of the empires of the past century—a century as bloody as any known to man—still plays prominently in the minds of some nationalists and despots. Today, as in 1949, the defense of democracy will keep the United States out of European wars.

History may judge the collapse of communism in Europe to be largely a result of NATO's success in containing the massive, external threat posed by the Soviet Union. But the end of the Cold War does not mean the end of threats to freedom and liberty.

In the famous words of Thomas Jefferson: ''The price of liberty is eternal vigilance''. We must remain vigilant against the reemergence of old threats from the century past, even as we prepare for the new threats of the century to come. In the judgment of this Senator, an expanded NATO will do both.

Thus, we consider today one of the more important foreign policy matters to come before the Senate in some time; the protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic into NATO. In approving this resolution the Senate has the opportunity to remedy this historical injustice of Yalta, to secure democracy in Central Europe, and to advance the national security interests of the United States of America. I confess that because the extension of security guarantees is a very serious undertaking, and should be made only when it is in the national security interests of the United States.

Mr. President, the membership of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic in the NATO alliance does serve the national security interests of the United States. I want to say why.

The Foreign Relations Committee, of which I am chairman, and honored to be so, has given its utmost attention to this question. The Committee's examination of NATO expansion has taken place over the course of four years, and has included a dozen hearings and nearly fifty witnesses representing the *full* spectrum of views on this issue. We have published a hearing record alone that is 552 pages long.

I extend my thanks to the many Foreign Relations Committee members who have taken this task so seriously, including Senator BIDEN, LUGAR, GORDON SMITH, and, of course, the distinguished Senator from Nebraska, Mr. HAGEL. I also commend Senator BILL ROTH for his leadership in the 28-member Senate NATO Observer Group. In Fact, through the combined efforts of the Foreign Relations Committee and the NATO Observer Group, 41 Senators have had the opportunity to engage closely in the review of NATO enlargement over the course of the past year.

The Resolution of Ratification was carefully written to address major areas of concern and to clarify issues that arose during the Committee's consideration. It is the product of a robust debate with the Administration—a debate that from the very start was premised upon my desire to be supportive of NATO expansion, but always guided by the necessity to achieve that goal in a manner that fully secures the interests of the United States.

I insisted upon that, and I insist upon that to this day. And we have done that with the resolution which is now the pending business.

That resolution, Mr. President, by the way, was approved by the Foreign Relations Committee 16 to 2, and it includes seven declarations and four conditions. In general, let me run down the list.

In general, the resolution reiterates the vital national security interest of NATO membership for the United States;

It lays out the strategic rationale for the inclusion of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic in NATO;

It calls for continued U.S. leadership of NATO without interference from other institutions such as the United Nations;

It supports full and equal membership in NATO for the three new members;

It encourages the development of a constructive relationship between NATO and the Russian Federation if the Russian Federation remains committed to democratic reforms;

It emphasizes that Europeans also must work to advance political and economic stability in Europe;

It emphasizes that while NATO is open to new members, the United States has not invited any new members at this time;

It declares the Senate's understanding that NATO's central purpose remains the defense of its members and requires full consultation by the Executive Branch on any proposals to revise this mission;

It requires the President to certify the Senate's understandings on the cost, benefits, and military implications of NATO enlargement and requires annual reports, for five years, on several key elements of Alliance burdensharing;

It clearly defines the limits on the NATO-Russia relationship; and

It reiterates the constitutionally-based principles of treaty interpretation and appropriate role of the Senate in the consideration of treaties.

NATO expansion has been endorsed by a number of respected foreign policy leaders—past and present—e.g., former President George Bush, Jeanne Kirkpatrick, Casper Weinberger, Dick Cheney, Henry Kissinger, Zbigniew Brzezinski and Richard Perle. It has the strong backing of foreign leaders of known moral courage and principle, including Margaret Thatcher, Lech Walesa, and Vaclav Havel. We have received messages of endorsement from every living Secretary of State, numerous former secretaries of defense and national security advisors, and over sixty flag and general officers including five distinguished former Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

More important, we have heard from the American people. Organizations representing literally tens of millions of average Americans including the diverse ethnic community, religious groups, civic organizations, veterans organizations, and business groups support this measure.

In 1949, when the Alliance was founded, the decision entailed some risks. The same is true today. But we who support an expanded NATO are convinced that the collective defense of democratic nations in Europe and North America serves the interests of our nation.

A half century ago we found our allies in this cause among the ashes and ruin of World War II. Today, with the collapse of communism, we have found three new allies in the continued defense of democracy.

If Europe is indeed on the threshold of an era of peace, as some suggest, then the inclusion of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic in NATO will hardly merit a footnote in history. In fact, NATO will gradually fade from the scene as it relevance diminishes. But if the threat to liberty proves more resilient, how grateful we will be for these three allies.

With the expansion of the NATO alliance, we have the opportunity to right an historical injustice. By accepting Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic into NATO, we reconnect them to the democratic West—a union that was severed by first Hitler, then Stalin. All Americans should welcome these nations as they finally become equal partners in the community of democratic nations, thereby ensuring that their new democracies shall never again fall victim to tyranny.

Mr. President, I believe this resolution will be approved with an overwhelmingly positive vote, an unmistakable vote of confidence for the democracies of Eastern Europe who, having been given a second chance at freedom this century, understand the price they must pay to preserve it.

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

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

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I must leave the floor to take an important telephone call. Before I go, I see the distinguished Senator from New Hampshire, whom I respect highly, and I hope he will have a few words to say about this.

But I ask unanimous consent that the staff members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee be granted floor privileges for the duration of the debate on this enlargement, and I ask unanimous consent that a list of the names of the staff members be printed in the RECORD.

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

STAFF MEMBERS—FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Andrew Anderson, Christa Bailey, Steve Biegun, Marshall Billingslea, Beth Bonargo, Ellen Bork, Sherry Grandjean, Garrett Grigsby, Patti McNerney, Kirsten Madison, Roger Noriega, Bud Nance, Susan Oursler, Dany Pletka, Marc Thiessen, Chris Walker, Natasha Watson, Michael Westphal, Michael Wilner, Beth Wilson, Alex Rodriguez, Lauren Shedd, Gina Abercrombie-Winstanley, Martha Davis, Ed Hall, Mike Haltzel, Frank Jannuzi, Ed Levine, Erin Logan, Brian McKeon, Ursula McManus, Janice O'Connell, Diana Ohlbaum, Dawn Ratiff, Munro Richardson, Nancy Stetson, Puneet Talwar,

Mr. HELMS. I thank the Chair. 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. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I assume the pending business is the NATO enlargement?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, the Senate now is about to engage in a great debate, a debate that is very important to our country and, indeed, to the world. I had hoped that we could have postponed this debate somewhat, for a number of reasons. NATO itself is planning to put out a report on the requirements, costs and feasibility of enlargement sometime in May. Originally this debate was scheduled to come up in May, and now it has been moved up to mid-March. It is no secret that I am an opponent of enlargement, for reasons that I will go into somewhat today and, of course, later on as the debate continues. But I also feel very strongly—as some of my colleagues did who signed a letter to the leader, on both sides of the aisle—that we need more time to debate this, to understand fully what we are doing.

I think that, when you first look at this issue, you might come to the conclusion that after being subjected to the tyranny of communism for 45 years, somehow these nations have earned a place in the NATO alliance. I think the nations certainly have earned their freedom, without question. They paid a heavy price for it. But so did the United States of America. We spent about $6 trillion in the Cold War to defeat Soviet communism.

From the time I first came to the Congress, in 1985, I have been a strong supporter of our military and a strong supporter of the NATO alliance—which, by the way, is a military alliance, which sometimes I think people forget. It was a military alliance created to thwart the attempt of the Soviet Union to attack Western Europe and conquer it with its massive armies.

But today there is no massive Soviet Army. There is no Soviet Union. Is Russia unstable? Of course it is. But it is not the Soviet Union and it is not the same threat that NATO was designed to contain. As we begin this debate, so many of our colleagues on the other side have said expanding NATO is a great idea, and that we need to move forward as quickly as possible. I have been around a few years on this Earth, and I have generally found that if something is a good idea today, it will probably be a good idea tomorrow. If it is a good idea tomorrow, it will probably be a good idea next month or perhaps even a year from now.

So I wonder what the hurry is. I wonder why panic has set in among so many proponents of enlargement. It seems to me that, if it is a good idea, then a healthy debate ought not to ring the curtain down on it. But there appears to be some fear, I guess, that adding more time to the debate might change the outcome. I hope it does. I hope we have enough time to change the outcome, because I sincerely believe, after a lot of review on this issue, that we are making a serious mistake.

Let me offer some of the reasons for opposing NATO enlargement. Given the administration's support and that of a lot of very prominent people of both

political parties—there has been a very impressive outside lobbying effort by a lot of people—the political pressure has been very strong for moving this forward. Again, the date has been moved forward, from May to March. But I believe the Senate should take its advice and consent role with treaties very, very seriously. This is a matter for advice and consent, and I have a hard time understanding how one can adequately advise and adequately consent if we are being told that the resolution of ratification has to be voted on now, with minimum debate.

The distinguished chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee is now on the floor. I know he had an extensive period of debate on this issue in his committee. Unfortunately, I am not a member of that committee. Sometimes I wish I were, because I admire the chairman greatly, but I am not. However, I am a member of the Armed Services Committee, and we are having a hearing this Thursday on NATO enlargement. I would like to be able to digest the information that we will receive there. Unfortunately, that hearing will now fall right in the middle of the debate, so it will be difficult to reflect on the hearing with the debate already underway.

As doubts have begun to appear, it has been somewhat disconcerting to see the proponents of NATO enlargement, the expansionists, so afraid that the Senate might carefully deliberate on this issue. As I said, if it is a good idea today, it ought to be a good idea a month from now or perhaps even a year from now. I might also add, only two countries in NATO have voted to broaden the alliance and bring in new members.

Some have suggested that those of us who are opposed to expansion are not committed to European security. If there is any Senator in the U.S. Senate who has a stronger record of support of the NATO alliance, or has a stronger anti-Communist record than I, I would like to know who that Senator is. Perhaps, Mr. President, they are really anxious for us to vote because they fear the case for enlargement might not bear the scrutiny that we are about to give it.

I have no plausible ulterior motive for opposing enlargement, and I am as anti-Communist and tough on the Russians as anybody alive. But this is not about communism anymore, although it appears some still think it is.

Since coming to Congress in 1985, I have enthusiastically supported spending billions of dollars for the defense of Europe. As a matter of fact, the United States spent roughly $6 trillion on defense during the Cold War, much of it directly for the defense of Europe. A lot of American lives were lost in wars against communists, and millions of Americans served in uniform at great sacrifice to their own families to contribute to the security of Europe. So, with the greatest respect for those countries that now seek membership in NATO, I do not think we owe anything to anybody. I have weighed all the alleged benefits, I have looked at the potential risks, and I have come to a number of conclusions which I would like to cite here.

First, if Europe or North America were truly threatened by Russia, the question of financial cost would be as irrelevant now as it was during the Cold War. Would we have gotten into a debate about how much it was going to cost if the Soviet Union had attacked North America? or attacked Europe? I don't think so. But for the foreseeable future—and I emphasize ''foreseeable future''—Russia does not pose a conventional threat to any country in Europe.

What is the conventional threat from Russia? They do not have a capable army. They have removed most of the conventional weapons, the tanks, and other items of warfare that would be associated with a standing army. I am unaware of any credible analysis of their military that disagrees with that conclusion. So, cost is an issue today because, unlike during the Cold War, we are not sure what we are buying.

Second, I cannot imagine a worse long-term strategy for European security than jeopardizing United States-Russian relations. We have fought now for 50 years, first to defeat communism and to rid the world of the Soviet Union, and now to bring Russia and the Independent States back into the family of democratic nations. Russia is not there yet. We know that. Russia has many problems. But their once-mighty military is gone, for all intents and purposes.

Regardless of what experts and even United States Senators may say, Russia opposes NATO expansion. Of course, that does not mean that we should. Russia does not dictate our foreign policy. In fact, as chairman of the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces in the U.S. Armed Services Committee, I routinely confront Russia on matters of arms control, proliferation, and national missile defense. These are important things to confront them about. But extending an alliance that she considers hostile to the countries that she cannot threaten is basically kicking the Russians for no reason. History tells us that this is unwise.

You see, I think some are still in the Cold War looking at a 21st-century issue. I want to be talking to the Russians about national missile defense, about weapons proliferation, about arms control, about the ABM Treaty, and about how we can hopefully work together for the sake of keeping the peace in the world. This is far more important than picking 3 nations as winners—Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Poland—and ignoring 14 or 15 others who could also make a compelling case to come in. And we have now said: ''You, you, and you, can come in.'' And to take this token step, we are putting at risk progress with Russia on arms control, proliferation, missile defense and the ABM Treaty.

I think we could be engaging the Russians to promote a world in the 21st century that has no dividing line between Western and Eastern Europe or dividing line between all of Europe and Russia. In the 21st century, I want this to be a world of peace. The 20th century was a world of war. I want to try to build something in the 21st century by looking ahead instead of thinking in the past. How do we do that? We engage the Russians on these issues, instead of antagonizing them or insulting them; we engage them. I think then, when the 21st century comes, we will see a Europe that is united with all nations in the European Union—united, friendly, cooperative in their economies, for the most part; perhaps even in their monetary system; and certainly acting as democratic nations with a common military bond.

But in addition, I hope to see a Russia that is a buffer between Islamic fundamentalism and China, a buffer between Europe and those two entities, Islamic fundamentalism and China, two very, very dangerous philosophies looming out there. One, China, has nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them. Fundamentalist Islamic countries are getting these weapons. We want a Russia that is going to be a buffer against these threats. We want a Russia that is a part of the West. For 50 years we have dreamed of the day that we could make this happen.

I am not some George McGovern liberal talking here. I am one who has been fighting the Soviet Union for 50 years, as many others have in both political parties. But we need to look ahead, think a little bit into the future about what we are doing. We are beginning to carve up Europe again, picking Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Poland and putting them on the right side of the line. But what is the threat to Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Poland today from Russia? I have not heard anybody tell me what it is.

If Russia decides to build its defenses back up—and it very well may happen—if they decide to turn to communism again, or some other brute-force-type government, if that even begins to happen, we can take the necessary steps, including the expansion of NATO. But why do it before we have to? Why pass up the greatest opportunity we have had in 75 years to bring the Russian people into the West? We have that opportunity. It would be a crime to pass it up. Declining to expand NATO now does not in any way prevent us from doing so in the future. There is absolutely no reason why we cannot do this in the future —no reason. If somebody can come on the floor and explain to me why we cannot do this a year from now, or 2 years from now, if the danger so exists, I would like to hear that argument.

It doesn't prevent us from doing it. Adding three insiders—Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary—creates a whole category of outsiders who say,

''Well, why not us? We were dominated by the Soviet Union. Why are you picking them over us?''

So you are going to subject NATO almost annually to the perpetual anguish of, ''Am I next?'' Latvia, Estonia, Romania, on and on down the line. ''When is it my turn to come into NATO?'' And meanwhile, while focusing on a cold war alliance, we continue to ignore what we want to do, which is to bring Russia into the Western World.

With the end of the cold war, NATO now faces serious internal issues about its means and ends which should be aired and resolved before new countries are added. Enlargement is a token and, frankly, an unimaginative distraction from these real problems. We saw this in the debate in the Persian Gulf crisis last month. Many NATO countries weren't with us.

Mr. President, I hope that we will think very carefully about this. It is a hardnosed decision about extending a military guarantee to a precise piece of territory under a specific set of strategic circumstances; it should not be a sentimental decision about a moral commitment to Europe. We already have that.

What do we really want to accomplish? Do we really want to accomplish another line drawn through Europe this year, perhaps extending that line through another part of Europe next year and another line bringing in another nation the following year and continue this cold-war-era attitude? Or do we want to build a world where the United States and a strong Europe and a strong, democratic Russia can be a buffer, a source of power to confront Islamic fundamentalism and perhaps—perhaps—Communist China? I think we are being shortsighted, and I am going to get into more detail as to why later in the debate. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. ROTH addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DEWINE). The Senator from Delaware.

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

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

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Kurt Volker, a legislative fellow in Senator MCCAIN's office; Bob Nickle and Ian Brzezinski of my office; and Stan Sloan, who is a member of the CRS, be granted the privilege of the floor throughout the entire debate and any vote on the protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty on Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNIZING THE COURAGE AND SACRIFICE OF SENATOR JOHN MCCAIN AND MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES HELD AS PRISONERS OF WAR DURING THE VIETNAM CONFLICT

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate immediately proceed to the consideration of a resolution which I now send to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 196) recognizing and calling on all Americans to recognize the courage and sacrifice of Senator John McCain and the members of the Armed Forces held as prisoners of war during the Vietnam conflict and stating that the American people will not forget that more than 2,000 members of the Armed Forces remain unaccounted for from the Vietnam conflict and will continue to press for the fullest possible accounting for all such members whose whereabouts are unknown.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the immediate consideration of the resolution?

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

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be 20 minutes for debate on the resolution equally divided in the usual form and that, at the expiration of that time, the resolution be agreed to and the preamble be agreed to.

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

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I would like to read just some portions of this resolution and then comment briefly on why we are doing it today:

Whereas, JOHN MCCAIN's A–4E Skyhawk was shot down over Hanoi, North Vietnam, on October 26, 1967, and he remained in captivity until March 14, 1973;

Whereas, JOHN MCCAIN's aircraft was shorn of its right wing by a Surface to Air Missile and he plunged toward the ground at about 400 knots prior to ejecting;

Whereas, upon ejection, JOHN MCCAIN's right knee and both arms were broken;

Whereas, JOHN MCCAIN was surrounded by an angry mob who kicked him and spit on him, stabbed him with bayonets and smashed his shoulder with a rifle. . .;

Whereas, historians of the Vietnam war have recorded that ''no American reached the prison camp of Hoa Lo in worse condition than JOHN MCCAIN.''

Whereas, his North Vietnamese captors recognized JOHN MCCAIN came from a distinguished military family—

I might add, a family from my great State of Mississippi—

and caused him to suffer special beatings, special interrogations, and the cruel offer of a possible early release;

Whereas, JOHN MCCAIN sat in prison in Hanoi for over 5 years, risking life from disease and medical complications resulting from his injuries, steadfastly refusing to cooperate with his enemy captors because his sense of honor and duty would not permit him to even consider an early release on special advantage;

Whereas, knowing his refusal to leave early may well result [or might have resulted] in his own death from his injuries, JOHN MCCAIN told another prisoner, ''I don't think that's the right thing to do. . ..They'll have to drag me out of here.''

Whereas, following the Peace Accords [in Paris] in January 1973, 591 United States prisoners of war were released from captivity by North Vietnam. . .;

Whereas, Senator JOHN MCCAIN of Arizona has continued to honor the Nation with devoted service; and

Whereas, the Nation owes a debt of gratitude to JOHN MCCAIN and all of these patriots for their courage and exemplary service: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) expresses its gratitude for, and calls upon all Americans to reflect upon and show their gratitude for, the courage and sacrifice of JOHN MCCAIN and the brave men who were held as prisoners of war during the Vietnam conflict, particularly on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Operation Homecoming, and the return to the United States of Senator JOHN MCCAIN.

Mr. President, in our daily duties, we quite often pass by men and women who have made a tremendous sacrifice in their lives or maybe have just done small things for individuals along the way. We begin to take them for granted. We begin to forget to say, ''Thank you for what you have done for me or for your fellow man or woman or for your country.''

Today at our policy luncheon, one of our members stood up and reminded us that it was 25 years ago today that John MCCAIN came home. There was a spontaneous applause and standing ovation, and it extended for a long period of time and extended a real warmth.

While in the Senate sometimes we get after each other in debate and we don't approve of this or that, I really felt extremely emotional when I thought about the sacrifice that this man had made for his country and for his fellow men and women in the military and for his fellow prisoners of war. I realized that we had not said thank you to him, and that when we say thank you on behalf of a grateful country to John MCCAIN, we are saying thank you also to all the men and women who served our country in uniform, who have been prisoners of war and, yes, those who are still missing in action to this very day.

So, I think it is appropriate that we in the Senate today adopt this resolution in recognition of the 25th anniversary of JOHN MCCAIN, but also as an extended expression of our appreciation for all of those who served our country in such a magnanimous way. I yield the floor.

Mr. DASCHLE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority leader.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I join with the majority leader and with all