

Yet we have seen little effort by this administration to engage in a sustained dialog with Moscow on its human rights record and commitments under the Helsinki Declaration. We did more about human rights violations 20 years ago in Russia than we are doing today. It is like we have tape over our mouth.

As David Kramer of the German Marshall Fund of the United States notes in a Washington Post opinion on September 20:

The human rights situation in Russia is bad and likely to get more worse as [Russia's] March 2012 presidential election nears. Those in power will do anything to stay in power . . . Enough already with U.S. expressions of "regret" about the deteriorating situation inside Russia—it's time to call it like it is: Condemn what's happening there and consider consequences for continued human rights abuses.

I believe the Obama administration's inaction and reluctance to confront Russia on its human rights record sends a dangerous signal to Moscow that there are little or no consequences for bad behavior. At a minimum, such coddling of bad behavior by the West only serves to embolden Moscow as to our resolve to hold Russia to account on its international obligations, a distressing thought as we consider the new START in the Senate.

I have fought all my life to secure freedom for my brothers and sisters in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Yugoslavia. Once they received their freedom, I championed—and continue to champion—their membership in NATO and the EU. I am working with Senator SHAHEEN right now in the former Yugoslavia to see how many of those countries we can get into the European Union and how many we can get into the NATO alliance. I will be darned, at this stage in my life, to do anything that would jeopardize their security and economic prosperity. I have seen too many opportunities for the region slip away during my lifetime. I will not let it happen again.

Political expediency should never be an excuse to rush to judgment on public policy, let alone our national security. Treaties supersede all laws and acts of Congress. The Senate's advice-and-consent duties on treaties are among our most solemn constitutional duties. I cannot, in good conscience, determine my support for this treaty until the administration assures me that our reset policy with Russia is a policy that enhances rather than diminishes the national security of our friends and allies throughout Europe.

Moreover, I must receive the strongest assurances that this policy does not once again amount to the United States leaving our brothers and sisters in the former Captive Nations alone against undue pressures from Russia.

When I finally cash out, I want to know these countries we forgot at the end of the Second World War, where millions of people were sent to the gulag, will never be forgotten again.

I think this President has an obligation to look at this treaty beyond just

the nonproliferation side. He has an obligation to look at it as part of resetting our relationship with Russia, and we ought to get some things cleared up before we go ahead and sign this treaty.

I yield the floor.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

#### TRIBUTE TO BILL BARTLEMAN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to a legendary Kentucky newspaperman who, after 39 years, is retiring, and the Commonwealth will certainly be the poorer for it. I am going to miss my old friend, Bill Bartleman of the Paducah Sun, as his service in the fourth estate ends this month.

Bill's first day at the Paducah Sun was January 7, 1972, when the Murray State University graduate was hired as both a reporter and a photographer. In the four decades since, he has covered Senators and Governors, local lawmakers and the Kentuckians whose names you may not know but who, in his words, "make life happen."

He has interviewed a President of the United States, and he has ridden a hot air balloon over the Ohio River. He has become Kentucky's longest running legislative reporter. He has led quite a life of accomplishment, and I wish him well in the next stage of his career.

I first met Bill when he covered my initial race for the Senate in 1984, and he has covered every one of my races since that time. For my last election campaign in 2008, Bill moderated a debate between me and my opponent that was broadcast on C-SPAN. So the whole Nation had a chance to see Bill hard at work. He was fair, honest, and professional, as always.

After 39 years, it would be easy for some reporters to make the mistake of thinking they are the story—but not Bill. This veteran journalist has words of wisdom for young reporters. This is what Bill had to say:

Remember the responsibility of what you do.

He went on to say:

Bill Bartleman isn't important, but what he covers is important. You need to represent the public and report what happens fairly. You can't send people tainted water, and you can't send tainted news.

Those words are well said. Those of us in public life will always have a close relationship with members of the press. Sometimes it is a bit challenging and sometimes it is frustrating. Sometimes the politician and the reporter do not always see eye to eye. I cannot say Bill Bartleman and I agree on everything. But I can say that Bill Bartleman will always have my respect.

For 39 years, Kentuckians have benefited from his incisive political coverage. As he moves on to a position with Mid-Continent University in Mayfield, KY, I know I speak for many Kentuckians when I say: Thank you, Bill. Thank you, Bill, for your dedicated service. You certainly will be missed.

Bill's own newspaper, the Paducah Sun, recently published an excellent article about his life and career, and I ask unanimous consent that the full article be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Paducah Sun, Oct. 24, 2010]  
AFTER 39 YEARS, BARTLEMAN TO RETIRE  
FROM SUN

Kentucky's longest-running legislative reporter plans to retire from The Paducah Sun in November.

Bill Bartleman, 61, will retire from the Sun after 35 years of covering government and politics, and nearly 39 years total working for the newspaper.

"I have thoroughly enjoyed my career as a reporter for The Paducah Sun and have mixed emotions about retiring," Bartleman said.

"The profession has provided me with opportunities to experience things and see things that others don't get to see and feel. Most gratifying are the memories of the people I've met and having the opportunity to work for people who care."

The Pennsylvania native graduated from Murray State University in December 1971. Bartleman served his first day at the Sun on Jan. 7, 1972, after being hired as a dual reporter and photographer with the majority of his duties in photography.

He took over the paper's government and politics beat in 1975 and covered, in person, every session of legislature in Frankfort from 1976-2007 while using the Web, phone interviews and less frequent Frankfort visits for coverage in the past three years.

A frequent commentator for more than 30 years on Kentucky Educational Television's "Comment on Kentucky," Bartleman also served as a panelist for KET political debates for governor, U.S. senator and other offices.

In 2008, he moderated a U.S. Senate candidate debate between Sen. Mitch McConnell and Bruce Lunsford, which was broadcast on C-SPAN, the national cable affairs network.

Bartleman said he will become an administrator at Mid-Continent University in Mayfield on Dec. 1.

"I learned early in my career that The Paducah Sun has had a rich tradition and responsibility of reporting news thoroughly, fairly and accurately," Bartleman said. "It is a tradition handed down by Ed Paxton, Sr. I've always viewed myself as one of his caretakers to help carry on that tradition and responsibility. It is time for me to pass on my caretaker role to someone else and meet a new and exciting challenge."

#### PRIORITIES DURING LAMEDUCK SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, both Republicans and Democrats in the Senate held many meetings this week to assess the priorities of our respective conferences.

I am extremely proud of the clarity my Republican colleagues have used to express what our priorities must be and