

were first setting foot back on American soil, by a true American hero, JOHN MCCAIN; someone who had served our country with such courage and character.

By the end of the day, JOHN had spent 3 hours greeting two planeloads of soldiers. He loved greeting them and posing for pictures. It was such a heartwarming, unexpected event and a very special moment. It not only gladdened the hearts of the troops but also of the Troop Greeters, who were thrilled to have their hero with them.

It was vintage JOHN MCCAIN that he stayed even after the weather had cleared and greeted each and every one of those troops.

JOHN MCCAIN did what he thought was right, regardless of the political consequences. He had absolutely no interest in scoring partisan political points on the Senate floor. He welcomed and would listen to good ideas, whether they came from the Democratic or the Republican side of the aisle. While he was always open to new evidence, good ideas, and was capable of changing his mind, he was unshakeable when he was convinced of the appropriateness of a course of action.

JOHN was impatient. He wanted to get on with solving the problems facing our country. He had no use for the political games that, sadly, far too often are played in the Senate.

One often overlooked aspect of JOHN was his love for the environment. I once visited him at his beloved ranch in Sedona, and I was surprised when he took me all over the property, pointing out birds, naming them, and clearly taking such delight in the wildlife. Until that moment, I did not know of his interest and love for nature.

Later on, I accompanied JOHN on a trip he organized to the Arctic to see the permafrost melting and to meet with Native Alaskans. We also traveled to Antarctica, where we spent 4 days meeting with scientists who told us of the impact of global warming.

He took me on so many trips and broadened my horizons. Four times we went to Afghanistan, four times to Iraq. We went to Yemen. We went to Libya and met with Colonel Qadhafi before he was overthrown and killed. JOHN taught me so much on these trips.

The principles that guided JOHN's life are best summed up by his own words from his beautiful autobiography, "Faith of My Fathers." He said: "Glory belongs to the act of being constant to something greater than yourself, to a cause, to your principles, to the people on whom you rely, and who rely on you in return."

JOHN MCCAIN was a statesman and a dear friend who was devoted to a cause greater than himself, and that cause was the United States of America.

It has been an honor to serve alongside him for nearly 21 years in the U.S. Senate. Although he will be deeply missed by all of us, he leaves behind an

extraordinary legacy that will inspire Americans for generations to come.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, yesterday was a difficult day for me.

Before I get to that day, let me recognize the Senator from Oklahoma for a motion.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I thank the Senator from Georgia.

I ask unanimous consent that at the conclusion of the remarks of the distinguished Senator from Georgia that I be recognized for such time as I shall consider.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING JOHN MCCAIN

Mr. ISAKSON. Yesterday was a difficult day for me. I am 74 years old. I was born in 1944. Like many Americans, my youth was during the Vietnam era. The prime of my youth was the Vietnam era.

In fact, my senior year in college, I got a graduation diploma and a draft notice on the same day. They were put in the same book. Everybody was going. Everybody was being called up for the draft. There was a lottery, but so many people were eligible that almost everybody in my age group would have been drafted if they didn't join the service.

I joined. I joined the National Guard, which I am very proud of, and I am still a guardsman to this day. It also gave me the chance to serve my country in a way that would not put me at as much risk to go to Vietnam as it would if I were drafted. I consciously did that because I wanted to do everything I could to stay here and get married a few months later to my wife Dianne. I was of the age to be drafted, and I made the decision to find a way to serve that would not put me in a position of being drafted, where I lost control. I was able to do it, and a lot of people were, but a lot of people weren't. I know that. The ones who could know it, and the ones who couldn't know it. The Presiding Officer knows what I am talking about, being a guardswoman herself.

I lost my best friend in Vietnam, Jackson Elliott Cox III, Waynesboro GA, Liberty County—Bird Dog Capital of the World.

Jack and I graduated from college together. Jack went off for a weekend and came back and told us all he had joined the Marine Corps, was going to OCS, and was going to go to Vietnam and fight the bad guys. We all said: Jack, don't volunteer to do that. You could get killed.

He said: No, I want to do it. It is a great country. I have had a great life, going to the University of Georgia, have a wonderful mom and dad, good friends like you all. I want to go to OCS and be an officer in the Marine Corps—and he did.

A few years later, he was shot by a sniper in the 11th month of a 13-month

stint in Vietnam. Alex Crumbley, the superior court judge in Georgia years later; Pierre Howard, the Democratic Lieutenant Governor of Georgia; and myself—we were the three best friends, the "Four Amigos," if you will. We went to 589 Liberty Street in Waynesboro and spent 3 nights and 4 days with Emily and Jack, Jack's dad and mom.

When the Marine Corps brought the body back, it was lying in state in their dining room, and we had a wake and a service for him. We stood guard. We cried. We talked about the good times. We talked about the bad times. We felt sorry for ourselves because the life that had meant so much to all of us was gone.

Jack felt a calling for the country, and he did a great service for the country. I am proud of him, and I am proud to have been his friend.

I tried to do what I could but never in the category of a JOHN MCCAIN or a Jack Cox. There were a lot of people my age who didn't do as much as they probably could have or might have done, and probably from time to time have second thoughts about it, too, because the Vietnam war was so tough.

I had friends coming back who had to dress in blue jeans and khakis when they got off the troop train from wherever they were in Atlanta because people would get accosted on the street if they were in their uniform during that era. Today, we go to the airport, and if we have troops coming through who are going to fly back for duty somewhere, they will get standing ovations, and people will give up their seats to let them sit there. It wasn't like that in the 1960s and 1970s. It wasn't like that at all.

In fact, people were risking their lives—58,000 did give their lives for all of us—and in many cases, we were making fun of them as a nation. It was terrible. It messed up our politics, messed up our country, messed up our people, and messed up everybody else. But America is a great country. What I am telling you is tragic to me, and I apologize to everybody that I didn't do everything I should have done, but I think all of us owe each other a commitment to say that we are never going to let America get that way again.

Americans should always be as we were on 9/11 or 9/12 of 2001, when we all put American flags on our cars, we all sang the national anthem, and we said the Pledge of Allegiance after we were attacked. For a few months, we were the most patriotic Nation in the world. We ought to be that way every single day because every single day, just like those firemen and emergency medical people of 9/11, there are those who were in the Vietnam war, who signed up, who fought, risked their lives, and in some cases died, like JOHN MCCAIN and like my brother-in-law Rocky Davison, my wife's brother, who flew Navy A-4 reconnaissance planes in Vietnam—one of the most decorated pilots in the Navy during that era. People like him

were great. My father-in-law flew reconnaissance in World War II in the Pacific. He did everything he could to help the country during difficult times. There were so many people who did that for our country, and we owe all of them a debt of gratitude and a debt of thanks.

We need to remember that we are all Americans. To those who saved us as a country, kept our freedom when we were about to lose it, fought for us, risked their lives, and died for us, we owe it to them, at times like this, to elevate them to the appropriate place in history. That is what I am trying to do with JOHN MCCAIN today.

I want to elevate JOHN. JOHN was better than I am, and I know it. JOHN was the best of my generation. JOHN MCCAIN was and is a great human being.

I don't know what is going to be said in the next few days about JOHN MCCAIN by whomever is going to say it or what is going to be done, but anybody who in any way tarnishes the reputation of JOHN MCCAIN deserves a whipping because most of those who would do the wrong thing about JOHN MCCAIN didn't have the guts to do the right thing when it was their turn. We need to remember that.

So I would say to the President or anybody in the world, it is time to pause and say that this was a great man who gave everything for us. We owe him nothing less than the respect that he earned, and that is what I intend to give JOHN in return for what he gave me.

JOHN took me to Kosovo 20 years ago when President Clinton said that we were going to send some people over there to verify the crime sites, the ethnic cleansing. I went to Pristina with JOHN. I went to Montenegro. I went to the World Security Conference in Munich a few years after that and got to sit with Vladimir Putin. I saw JOHN MCCAIN talk to Vladimir Putin as if they were next-door neighbors but also as if they were Dutch uncles. I was so proud to be from a country that had a guy like JOHN MCCAIN, who could break the ice with the toughest of our adversaries, speak up with pride for America, and calm them down when they needed to be calmed down.

Yet JOHN and I had some problems too. MITCH MCCONNELL did me the worst favor of my lifetime when he made me the chairman of the Ethics Committee. That is a hard job, and nobody likes the person who chairs that committee because they are scared of them. But I got the Ethics Committee job at a time when JOHN MCCAIN was still on the special committee for the Ethics Committee to decide what to do on using airplanes during campaign events as candidates or for our PACs. JOHN had access to a plane, which gave him an exemption from the rules that we passed. It made it tough as heck because he didn't have to worry about the cause and effects. But JOHN took a second to understand the problems

that a normal legislator, who might not have had access to a private plane, might have had. In the end, he took his circumstances and his ability to have a private plane and applied them to the changes that were made to be sure that everybody was being treated fairly. JOHN didn't just expect things to be good for JOHN; he expected things to be good for everybody. He always did that, and I always learned a lot from him.

The other thing I learned was how to cuss. Let me tell you, JOHN MCCAIN could do a lot of things, but cussing was one of the best things he ever did. He was a consummate cusser, and he knew how to do it to have emphasis added. That is what the papers always say when they put the pound marks and things like that after some statements JIM INHOFE makes or I make.

JOHN and I were working on legislation. I am chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee. He was chairman of the Armed Services Committee. We had a huge veterans bill that we had to come together and have a meeting of the minds on in terms of healthcare. JOHN was late for the meeting. He came into the meeting. He pulled the door behind him and slammed it. For 10 minutes he laid the best cussing on me and everybody else in the room that I had ever heard.

He said: I haven't got time to put up with this anymore. Y'all just listen to what I have to say and tell me what you are going to do.

That is a tough way to convene business, but JOHN sometimes knew how to get us all to think, to get us all to talk. He would intimidate you enough so you would have to fight him for what you believe in, and you would get a better piece of legislation than if he just let it pass or if he had intimidated you to death. JOHN knew exactly what he had the capability of doing, and he knew exactly when to apply the intimidation—and the thanks and the grace. He did it at the right time every single time. Did we agree all the time? No, but I know I am a better person, our country is a better country, and the world is a better place because of JOHN MCCAIN.

In the next 3 or 4 days, as we go through and run into kids we know or relatives or my own children, whom I will be with this coming Sunday in the mountains, we are going to have a little meeting about JOHN MCCAIN just to make sure they know what I know and so I know that they know about a great American hero because I want them, when they have kids in their 40s—my kids are in their 40s today—to remember on Veterans Day, on Memorial Day, and on all other days, the JOHN MCCAINS of the world and those who will come after JOHN, who will put their life and future and fortune on the line for the greatest country in the world, the United States of America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I can't think of anything more difficult

than to speak after the last two speakers. Of course, I have known them for a long time. They are two totally different, opposite people.

We have SUSAN COLLINS, who is a well-recognized moderate. She is one who understands and has great appreciation for the environment. She is not the kind of person you would associate with a tough guy like JOHN MCCAIN, who has gone out there and has done things that other people haven't done but just talked about.

Then we heard the statement from the Senator from Georgia. You know, I was thinking about that. I am a few years older than he is. We have a lot of things in common. He was talking about his being drafted; I was drafted. I will always remember, I was actually enrolled many, many years ago—I was going to be at the University of Mexico in Mexico City in an international program. At that time, I was at the University of Colorado. I did all of my finals and all that early so that I could get back in time to go to Mexico.

I got back to Tulsa, where I am from, and I got a letter from a very important person, the President of the United States. I thought, how nice of Eisenhower to remember me. It was my draft notice, so that changed my life. But it changed my life in a way that it was the greatest single experience I have ever had, and I wouldn't be doing what I am doing today if it were not for the discipline that comes from being in the military.

We will always have heroes we deal with, and we are dealing with a hero when we deal with Senator MCCAIN.

I have often said that I think Timothy, who wrote 2 Timothy 4:7, had JOHN MCCAIN in mind when he said: "I fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." That is exactly what he did.

He was kind of a mean guy. A lot of people didn't like JOHN MCCAIN. He wasn't the most lovable person to be around. But he was a fighter. He never shied away from a good fight. He was passionate for the causes that he believed in and a strong advocate for human rights and Democratic values, standing up for oppressed people around the world. That is the softer side of JOHN MCCAIN that a lot of people don't know about.

He was a fighter but not just a fighter; he was a fighter for the people of Arizona. After he returned from the time he had spent in prison, he got back to Arizona, and he started fighting again. He did that for 36 years after his incarceration.

He was shaped by his own military service and that of his father and grandfather. It has been said several times in statements about his father and grandfather—and I have done some studying on them—that is really what formed JOHN MCCAIN. Both of them were admirals in the Navy, and it was natural that he was going to be in the Navy, and, of course, he was.

During his time of leadership on the Senate Armed Services Committee, he

continually focused on impact. There are those individuals—such as the occupier of the Chair right now—who have served on the Armed Services Committee with Senator MCCAIN, and the Presiding Officer knows, as I know and as anybody else who has served with him knows, he was always for the underdog—always for the troops out in the field. I think the Senator from Maine articulated that very well. They were the people he had compassion for. He would always take care of the soldier, sailor, airman, and marine.

He articulated this, by the way, in one of his books, “Faith of My Fathers.” He was talking about his father and grandfather. This quote says it better than any of the rest of us can say it.

An officer’s obligations to enlisted men are the most solemn of all. An officer must not confer his responsibilities on the men under his command. They are his alone. He does not put his men in jeopardy for any purpose that their country has not required they serve. He does not risk their lives and welfare for his sake, but only to answer the shared duty they are called to answer.

That was Senator MCCAIN. He looked after those individuals who were under his command.

He was a ferocious opponent, but the key thing about Senator MCCAIN was that he was willing to take on those tough debates, which have become more and more rare in this Chamber. We don’t see them as we used to, but JOHN would relish the debate, earning the respect and admiration of everyone.

I can remember—there are so many areas because of all the years we served together, not just on the Senate Armed Services Committee but also his time in the House and my time in the House. We had differences of opinion. I think I am a little bit stubborn sometimes too.

I remember there was a commissary issue, and that got pretty violent before it was over. We took each other on. There was the BRAC issue. He wanted another BRAC round in this Defense authorization bill, and I didn’t want one because I thought that if there was anything we shouldn’t be doing, it would be closing down missions that we may be needing as we are rebuilding. So we had an honest difference of opinion.

I remember, in 2003, back when everyone was jumping on this whole global warming thing, that was going to be everyone’s ticket to the White House. I remember when JOHN had the McCain-Lieberman bill. I remember that lasted for 3 days of debate—3 days of debate—and I had hardly any Senators come down on my side of the issue, but we won anyway. After that was over—and that was one JOHN had his heart in—he came over to me and said: Good job. You won; I lost. That was it. There were no hard feelings. That is the kind of person JOHN MCCAIN was, one whom we will never forget.

A lot of people look at Arizona and think it has always been a Republican State. It wasn’t. In 1994, I ran for the

U.S. Senate. It was kind of interesting because it was a Democratic State. It was kind of interesting because this guy who was kind of the darling of the Democratic Party was my opponent. Nobody would come out and help me. Only three Senators came out and helped me during that race. They were Senator GRASSLEY, Senator Bob Dole, and JOHN MCCAIN.

JOHN MCCAIN came out. I will always remember this because we had a lot of things in common, but I hardly knew the guy. He came out not just once; he came out twice. The first time he came out because he had a background in aviation and I have a background in aviation. I remember I had a nice, air-conditioned, twin-engine plane, but I had lost an engine the night before so I had to fly my kid’s plane. It was very hot. It is called a little Grumman Tiger. It doesn’t have any air-conditioning. It was in the 90s and got close to 100 that day.

I wrote down the different places we went to—Oklahoma City; then we flew to Shawnee, where he and I visited the Vietnam Memorial. Then we flew to Lawton. Lawton happens to be the home of Fort Sill, the No. 1 area in the whole world for artillery, and we did our thing there. All the time, he was campaigning for me, a guy who couldn’t win.

We went to Altus Air Force Base. That is still actually one of the top training bases. We now train C-17s and KC-135s. In fact, because of JOHN and some of us on the committee, we will be flying the KC-46. Of course, this happened long before that. Anyway, we ended up in Bartlesville, hosting a fundraiser for me with the NRA.

I guess he wanted to spend more time in that plane because he came back 2 weeks later, and we did the same thing. There was no reason for him to do that because we hardly knew each other when we started. We got to know each other a lot better up there in all that heat. Nevertheless, he was there. You always remember the people who help you when nobody else will.

I can say a lot of things about JOHN MCCAIN. You heard him on the floor. You will hear more—the hero, the patriot—but what is never in dispute is that JOHN MCCAIN was a fighter who was always deeply loyal to his country, his family, his constituents. He was a patriot and always faithful. We all know that patriotism and loyalty to your country isn’t based on your words. You have to live it. Of course, he did that every day.

As a young naval officer following in his family’s footsteps—his father and his grandfather—JOHN kept the faith. He graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy. It is interesting, he never talked about being an outstanding student and all that. In fact, he used to say: I was fifth in the class—fifth from the bottom. But he became a naval aviator.

He was deployed during the Vietnam war. He flew 23 missions and was shot

down in enemy territory. We all know the story. We know that he kept his faith. It bears repeating that he was held by the North Vietnamese for 5 years. I actually remember going there and seeing the conditions under which he was held during that period of time. Because both his father and grandfather were admirals, he had the opportunity, if he wanted, to bail out. He didn’t do that. He wanted to be there. He didn’t want to have any special kind of treatment. That was JOHN.

After the Navy, JOHN kept his faith by continuing to serve his country—this time as a congressman, then a Senator, and, ultimately, as chairman of the Armed Services Committee. He also kept the faith on the causes he believed were just, never wavering under political pressure.

We all grieve because JOHN has finished his race here on Earth—and on his own terms, surrounded by his friends and his loving family. JOHN served his country faithfully for 60 years. We owe him a great debt for that service.

This week, we will mourn him and honor him, and we will be celebrating the truly remarkable life of an American hero. We all have our JOHN MCCAIN story: a time when we were moved by his stubbornness, his courage, his passion—sometimes all three at the same time. I look forward to hearing these stories and tributes from my good friends.

We all grieve for Cindy and his family. They will continue to be in our prayers.

Lastly, I do believe, now that I have thought about it, that is what Timothy had in mind when he wrote: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have kept the faith.”

So we say thank you, JOHN MCCAIN.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORAN). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

REMEMBERING JOHN MCCAIN

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, until the very end, he served his country—until the very end. “Service,” to JOHN MCCAIN, meant living something unique in all the history of the world. It meant living in service to something unique—the American idea.

E pluribus unum—“from many, one”—might seem like a quaint vestige from a more idealistic time when compared to the brutal and determined divisions of our time, but it was an idea that defined JOHN MCCAIN’s life. In and through his service, he defied categorization; frustrated the tired conventions of the way party loyalists were supposed to behave; acted against his own political interests time and again in a way that, from our vantage