

few years ago. Remember the horrible images of U.S. citizens being executed by ISIS. Remember all of the trauma we have seen the Syrian Government perpetrate on its own people.

Remember the successful efforts of a combination of forces that ultimately took on ISIS, that removed it from its headquarters of its caliphate and caused it to disperse if it were not eliminated at the time. A lot of that was led with Kurdish fighters who were fighting alongside U.S. special operations advisers. Even though complicated because of the Russians' being there and the Turks' having interests and Assad's trying to hang on to power, the United States has been successful in not eliminating but in lessening the influence of ISIS.

Then came the shocker—the shocker of the President's announcing unilaterally that, all of a sudden, he was going to pull the special operations troops, as advisers, out of Syria. This would likely cause immediate instability. It would certainly allow for ISIS to reconstruct itself, and it would cause chaos with the Kurdish troops who fought alongside the Americans, with the Turkish Government's going after a number of them.

This is an ill-advised and probably a non-advised decision by the President, and it should be reversed. This Senator calls on all of the national defense, national security, and national intelligence professionals who are within the administration to get the President to reverse this unilateral decision that he has made. Otherwise, U.S. interests are going to be ill-served.

AN EARLY CHRISTMAS PRESENT

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, my concluding remarks are about an early Christmas present that I received this past Monday at a staff going-away party that occurred in Florida, where all of our Florida staff came together to wish each other well. Little did I know that a special guest was going to appear. He was none other than one of the chefs of the catering company that was catering this holiday going-away party. Let me tell you the story of this 34-year-old chef and what happened 34 years ago.

At the time of the middle 1980s—1985 to be exact—this Senator was a young Congressman. A husband and wife, who were constituents of mine in East Central Florida, came to me in great distress because their infant boy had been born with a defective liver.

The advance of medicine at that particular time was that there was no known cure except to do a liver transplant. Thirty-four years ago, organ transplants were still in their infancy, and 34 years ago, there was no organ registry being maintained in order to try to find a family who had lost a loved one so that a loved one's organs could be harvested and then be available for those who were on a registry waiting for them. None of that existed 34 years ago.

Only since then have we seen this miraculous organization set up whereby people who need organ transplants can get on the list. Then, whenever an organ becomes available, no matter where it is in the country, that match—that organ—is immediately packed in ice and is flown to the receiving hospital where the organ transplant is going to occur. None of this existed. It was a catch-as-catch-can to find an organ to transplant. This was especially true with a liver transplant because a liver transplant, at the time, had to have the identical blood type, and it had to be the identical size of the recipient's liver.

Here was a few-months'-old child who was desperately clinging to life and needed a liver transplant to survive. At the time, we were in session. There was a particularly major bill that was up, and its passage in the House of Representatives was in the balance—with in just a handful of votes. The bill was proposed by President Reagan. I had already decided that I was going to vote for the bill, which was in favor of the President's position, when I saw an opportunity to maybe save this child's life. So I held out and declared my position as “undecided” in my knowing that the votes were coming down to just one or two at passage.

Actually, we must have been out for the weekend before this vote was to have occurred, because I received a phone call from President Reagan while I was at my home in Florida. The President greeted me and told me what he was asking me to do.

I said to him: Mr. President, I have already decided that I am going to vote for the bill, and I know that it is welcome news to you. I wish you would do something for me—possibly save a child's life.

I then told him the story of the need of a liver of a certain blood type and of a certain size for a transplant in a minor child. The President said he would do that.

Shortly thereafter, the Secretary of Health and Human Services called, who was a former colleague from the House—Secretary Margaret Heckler of Massachusetts. She said: At the President's request, I am going to have a press conference to put out this information that this child is in need of this specific type of transplant.

Margaret Heckler did that. A donor was found because of that press release in 1985 in California. They raced that harvested organ, by jet, to the hospital in Pittsburgh. Ryan Osterblom, with his parents, was then flown to the hospital. The successful transplant occurred 34 years ago.

Early last Monday, you can imagine the Christmas present I received when there at our going-away party for our staff, the chef of the catering company was none other than 34-year-old Ryan Osterblom. That was the best Christmas present I could have.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

TRIBUTE TO BILL NELSON

Mr. ROBERTS. Madam President, I thank Senator NELSON for that touching story.

That would be a Christmas present for not only you but for anybody who has heard the circumstances.

I, too, remember having the privilege of being in public service with President Reagan. He had a human quality that was second to none.

I thank you, Bill, for your service—we used to be on Armed Services together, fighting the battles—but more especially for being a friend. You always had a smile on your face. I probably didn't when we got on the elevators together.

You would say: Pat, what is wrong?

I wouldn't want to go into anything, but I would think, why am I so glum if BILL NELSON is stuck on “happy” all the time?

It was the Florida sunshine, I guess.

I thank you for the privilege of being in public service with you, sir. Best wishes for your future, which I know will be very good and very bright, and thank you for that story, which is a great Christmas story. Repeat it often, sir. Thank you.

TRIBUTE TO ORRIN HATCH

Mr. ROBERTS. Madam President, I want to join my colleagues who, over the past few weeks, have come to the floor to thank Senator ORRIN HATCH—the great Senator ORRIN HATCH—for his service to this institution. Senator SULLIVAN just informed me that the body here—the Senate—has, by unanimous consent, passed a bill to name a courthouse in Utah after ORRIN HATCH. He was sitting as the President pro tempore, and the surprised look on his face was a treasure for everybody who saw it.

ORRIN HATCH has consistently maintained a demeanor that represented the Senate well—and that is an understatement—over the course of his illustrious and record-setting 42-year career. As a matter of fact, I think the definition of “gentleman” in the new edition of Webster's dictionary simply lists two words: “ORRIN HATCH.”

Whether he agreed or disagreed with any policy positions or with any individual Senator, he always, always treated you with the greatest of respect. Perhaps that is part of the reason that Senator HATCH will go down as one of the most effective legislators in the history of the Senate. All you have to do is go in his office and see all of the awards, the recordings that illustrate his fantastic music career as a songwriter, and all of the bills. I think it is safe to say that no other living Senator has had more bills that he has sponsored and that have been enacted into law than ORRIN HATCH. We come here to make a difference. We do that through legislation, and that is an indication of the great legacy that this man has left this body.

Not many people have the where-withal, the stature, and bona fides to have Members from both parties sing their praises. That has happened, of course, on this floor, and that is what ORRIN stands for. ORRIN will be sorely missed—and I mean sorely missed.

Senator HATCH is not most people. Simply put, the institution he loves will not be the same without him.

Since coming from the House to the Senate, I have had the privilege of knowing ORRIN up close and personal. Our offices are right next to each other. I bump into his security detail every morning and say good morning. I feel very safe about that. Then when we have votes, and just about the time he leaves his office and is accompanied by his security detail, he always asks me: Why don't you ride with me? So I have joined his security detail. Every security detail should have a marine. I tell him that I will be in the back to protect his back if anything would happen; obviously, nothing did. But the Senator from Utah should know that I still have his back, and I will always have his back.

I think the measure of a man, with regard to his long hours in the Senate, is hard to measure until you work with him—and I am talking about ORRIN, of course—but work with him with regard to legislation. We are talking about the Finance Committee, and we are talking about the tough legislation that we always have. We would always go to the conference room—those who are privileged to serve on the Finance Committee—and we would walk in, and there would be fruit juice and there would be vitamins and there would be goodies to eat—goodies, of course, that are good for you, as determined by the Senator.

He had that very soft voice, and he would bring people to order. It was a very respectful situation in which we were trying to put together a bill to see if we could move it and work with our colleagues across the aisle. He had such a soft voice that, on occasion, I found that it was best to sit in the back of that conference room and look right at him, so I could tell precisely what he was saying because he never used his voice in a way that was high pitched; it was very calm and reasoned. That was his demeanor. He acted like a Hollywood version of a Senator.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act probably would not have come to pass without the leadership of ORRIN HATCH. Boy, was that an effort. We went through the trials and tribulations of tough arguments on both sides. But we always kept in the committee, with him at the helm, a posture of at least trying to work together. We faced some tough issues. At the end of it, there were quite a few amendments. We worked late into the night. The amendments were not going to pass on a partisan vote. That is very unusual for ORRIN. He kept his cool. He kept his demeanor.

Finally, at the end, it became an impossible situation in which we were

just going to get into a shouting contest, and he maintained order. When he maintained order, he really maintained order. Usually he didn't have to do that.

My first boss in public service, acting as the chief of staff, was Senator Frank Carlson. He was a great man. He helped found the National Prayer Breakfast here, and in many other Agencies, all throughout the government, that spread. He worked with Billy Graham, somebody named Dwight David Eisenhower, and Conrad Hilton—those four, including Frank Carlson, started the Prayer Breakfast.

The Senator always told me there are no self-made men or women in public service. It is your friends who make you what you are, and if there were ever a person you could put in that category in the Senate, it is ORRIN HATCH. He is a person who would stand behind you when you were taking praise and beside you if you were taking some boos, but ORRIN HATCH never had to do that because in working with him, the chances were that you had a good chance of passing a bipartisan bill.

All of us stand with him with respect and out of friendship. We have a cloth of comity here that is not seen, but it has been observed at least in my 22 years here in the Senate, perhaps a little more than in the rowdy House, of which I was a Member for 16 years, and then 12 before that as a chief of staff. I am sort of like a piece of furniture here, as some would say, with a marble top. But I have seen a lot.

I am very worried about the comity of the Senate. If you pull at those threads, as we have been doing with issues where we should come together, even though there are very tough questions, I worry that we could get into sort of a situation like in Dodge City at the Long Branch Saloon and somebody having a rowdy time there. That should not be the Senate, and it should not be a situation where we pull at those threads of comity to the extent that we won't have any left, and then it is just a shouting contest.

The exception to the rule was the Farm Bill, which the President is going to sign this afternoon. I had the privilege of leading that effort, along with Senator DEBORAH STABENOW from Michigan.

I had some reporters in the other day, and they said: How did you get along with DEBBIE STABENOW?

I said: Well, No. 1, we trust each other; No. 2, we are friends; and No. 3, it isn't our first rodeo. We just worked with each other to get it done. We got 87 votes.

That is precisely the example we followed from ORRIN HATCH, who did so much—produced legislation with Democrats that you would never think would work with a Republican or vice versa. That is his legacy. That is the man I have been privileged to know as a friend.

There is a video out about ORRIN HATCH. He has boxing gloves on, bright

blue. There he is—just a couple of days ago when they took the video—willing to throw a few punches, trying to eat bacon with his boxing gloves on. It is a hilarious tribute to him, big smiles on everybody's faces. A tough guy, but not tough to deal with, he always had a way of working things out.

It is a privilege to know ORRIN HATCH. Not many people at my age call me "Boy," but he always would come out that back door and offer a ride, and he would say: Boy, do you want to come along?

I said: Yes, sir.

It has been quite a privilege.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

TRIBUTE TO MAC COLLINS

Mr. PERDUE. Madam President, last month, we lost a true Georgia original.

Mac Collins was a friend of mine. He was a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 12 years. He was born in Flovilla, GA, in 1944. At the time, Flovilla had a population of 240 people.

Mac always liked to say he was a graduate of the school of hard knocks. Together with his wife, Julie, he started a trucking company many years ago. Mac started with a single vehicle that he often had to repair at night. Julie kept the books, answered the phones, and sometimes helped load the trucks. The Collins family had a simple motto: "Can't never could." They never gave up, and their hard work paid off. Today, Collins Trucking hauls timber and goods across the South and Midwest and is still a family owned and operated business.

Eventually, Mac turned to public service. He won a seat on the Butts County Commission and a few years later became Butts County's first Republican county commission chairman.

Eventually, Mac was elected to the Georgia State Senate, where he served from 1988 until 1982. Back then, I think you could count on one hand the number of Republicans in the entire State. He was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1992 and served for 12 years. He fought to make America more competitive by changing its archaic Tax Code. He worked on veterans issues and served on both the critical U.S. House Ways and Means Committee and the prestigious Intelligence Committee. Mac was serving in leadership as deputy whip during some of our Nation's most trying days in the aftermath of 9/11.

Throughout his years of service, Mac Collins never forgot his roots. For Georgia Republicans, he was definitely a pioneer. For all Georgians, regardless of their political beliefs, he was a champion. Max's example of entrepreneurship and servant leadership serve as a shining example for us all.

Mac is survived by his wife, Julie, four children, a dozen grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. Bonnie