

One of the big realizations, because of this community church thing and the changing of the pastors every 2 years, is that I thought every 2 years the Lord's Prayer changed. She helped me to understand that dilemma.

That is where I got to meet Mrs. Brown. She was a Sunday school teacher, and I wound up in her Sunday school class. She taught the kindergarten class. When we first started, she actually moved up a couple of times with me as the classes got combined and as I got older.

At that very first one, for Bible school, we held it outdoors underneath the pine tree—a huge pine tree. I can still remember sitting there, enthralled with her descriptions as I held my New Testament. Of course, since I was in kindergarten, I couldn't read, but she filled in for that and gave me a great background.

Later, of course, I ran into a book by Robert Fulghum titled, "All I Really Need To Know I Learned in Kindergarten." For me, it was kindergarten Sunday school. And my teacher, of course—well, she was my first Sunday school teacher and my last living Sunday school teacher.

Some of the things she taught were to share everything; play fair; don't hit people; put things back where you found them; clean up your own mess; don't take things that aren't yours; say you are sorry if you hurt someone; and be aware of wonder. And "wonder" is, if you put some seeds—and we did this—in a paper cup with dirt and you water it, the plant goes up, and the roots go down. Some people would say nobody knows why or how, but Mrs. Brown said: That is not true. God has a plan. He knows you. He watches out for you. If you see things going wrong, check your direction because it might not be where God wants you.

All of this was a good basis for my life. I have always appreciated seeing her through the years, particularly when we have visited that church again, which is still a community church, although most of the towns have split those up into more than one denomination. But I have to say that if the criteria is 3,000 people, by the time the town gets to a first-class city size, the one church is so well established that it is hard for another one to actually get established in a small community like that.

As long as there are wonderful people like Mrs. Brown teaching kindergarten, first grade, second grade, and other kids in small communities, this country will be a great place.

I thank her for all the background she gave me and ask for your prayers for her family.

I thank the Senator.

Mr. BARRASSO. I thank Senator ENZI.

She was born May 29, 1930, in Casper, WY—the youngest of eight children—to the Dodge family. As Senator ENZI talked about building the dam in the Thermopolis area, the family lived in

Alcova during the construction of the dams and the reservoirs in that area before moving to Thermopolis, where the family owned and ran the Wigwam Bakery. They had the best bread, doughnuts, and anything you could ever imagine.

She worked a number of places—certainly at the family bakery, but also she worked at the First National Bank. Jerry always volunteered to take the mail from the bank to the post office because she had caught the eye of a young postal employee, Bob Brown. The two were married on September 18 in 1949, and as the Senator knows, they recently celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary.

As newlyweds, Bob was sent to Korea. He had been in World War II. He was sent with a whole group from the basin area of Wyoming, as part of the National Guard, to Korea. They first went to Fort Lewis, WA, and Jerry followed. To pay her way, she had to pick filbert nuts. She was telling me at Christmas the size of the bag that they had to fill with these filbert nuts before they got any pay. Well, it was a full day's work, so the lessons she taught Mr. ENZI about hard work, she knew it personally.

She was a hard worker. She worked at the bakery. She also worked for Dr. Nels Vicklund, Vicklund Pharmacy, in Hot Springs County. She worked for the Hot Springs County treasurer's office. Her really great joy was when she owned and operated her own store in downtown Thermopolis called Country Charm.

As the Senator knows, she was dedicated to her children, Bobbi and Mike, and adored her granddaughter, Hadley. She taught them to work hard, to be kind, and to always do their best.

She was a talented crafter, she enjoyed playing bridge, and she was a collector. She collected Santa Clauses, she collected chickens and pictures of chickens, and she collected rocks from around the world. No matter where I went, I needed to bring back a rock for Jerry. She also, as the gentleman knows, collected friends and memories. She had an encyclopedic memory of Wyoming names, Wyoming places, and Wyoming relationships—who was married to whom and whose cousin was who. She rarely left anywhere without a hug and really loved being everyone's favorite Aunt Jerry. She was also an avid reader—and an NBA fan, of all things. She loved God, loved America, and loved our flag. She was a longtime member of the Community Federated Church, the Order of the Eastern Star, and, as we were talking about in the cloakroom, she was State president of PEO.

Jerry Brown dedicated her life to her family, to her faith, and to her friends. She was committed to her church and her community. She had a well-deserved reputation for being a joiner, a goer, and a doer.

We will celebrate her life on Saturday, January 18, in Thermopolis at the

Community Federated Church, and we miss her dearly. May she rest in peace.

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. LANKFORD. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

IRAN

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, as we go back through the calendar just a few months and get some context of what has been building for a while, in May of 2019, four different vessels that were traveling just outside of the Gulf of Oman were hit by mines laid by Iranian leadership. In June, just a month later, two different vessels hit Iranian mines. Those mines weren't just placed in the water flipantly; they were actually placed on the ship. In June of 2019, a U.S. Navy surveillance drone was flying through the Strait of Hormuz in international airspace and was downed by an Iranian missile attack.

As we continue to move forward, we tracked an increase in Iranian activity in cyber attacks across the United States, but at the same time, individuals within our military bases in Iraq were facing more and more of a push against them in not just an external conversation, an actual kinetic attack.

Our supply lines in the fall of last year, as trucks that were leaving from Baghdad and driving down to Kuwait for our supply lines there, were increasingly facing improvised explosive devices, something we had not seen in a long time. Those explosive devices were created and placed by Shia militias with materials provided by Iran.

Then, in October, there were multiple attacks on our facility in Baghdad. In November, there were multiple attacks again on our facility in Baghdad. In December, there were multiple attacks again, each time increasing with more and more attacks.

We hear that term "attack," and it seems almost flippant, but we realize, for the thousands of Americans who work in that area of that diplomatic mission that is there in Iraq, there is a day that happens—it could be the middle of the night, it could be the middle of the afternoon, but a moment happens, month after month, week after week, and sometimes within that, day after day—where the sirens go off, and everyone on campus runs into a bomb shelter, and then the explosions begin around the grounds.

These were not just random attacks. These were designed kinetic rocket attacks coming into our Embassy that built up toward an attack on the U.S. Embassy on December 31, where thousands of people broke through the outer section, setting fires to the building, attacking the facility, smashing

against the glass, trying to get into the next layer that they were not able to penetrate—into the inner layer in the Embassy. But thousands and thousands of rioters were moving toward the base.

As calm was restored on the outside and a security perimeter was established on the outside, they could read what was written on the walls, spray-painted now on the Embassy: "Soleimani is our leader."

I was interested in talking to a friend of mine just a couple of weekends ago, and he made an interesting comment to me. He said: I didn't know who Qasem Soleimani was. I had never heard that name before, and then I went back and started doing some research to find out who this guy is and what he is all about.

His comment to me was: I went back and did some research and found out he is a bad guy.

I said: Yes, you don't know the half of it.

Soleimani is the leader of the Quds Force for the Iranians, was responsible for training the Shia militias in Iraq on how to kill Americans. Over 600 Americans died because of the training and equipping that Soleimani did for the Iraqis who were fighting against us at that time, specifically the Shia militias that Soleimani actually directed.

My neighbor was surprised to learn that Soleimani was the one who actually organized all things with Hezbollah in Lebanon. He had organized Hezbollah also in Iraq. He is the one who was coordinating all that was happening in Yemen, in the civil war that is currently ongoing in Yemen.

He was surprised to see that he was in Syria working with Bashar Assad and to see all that he was doing for that ruthless leader that murdered thousands of his own people. That was Soleimani.

For those of us who are tracking the direct threats against the United States, we are very aware of who he was and what he was all about because he was the point person to try to take the fight to the United States. In the past 6 months, that fight had gone from an "I am going to try to find individuals within Hezbollah or Shia militias somewhere to attack the United States" to being more strategic to bringing the attack directly from his forces under his command to try to take the attack to us. He had become more and more overt and more and more obsessed with attacking the United States.

Over the course of that time period, the Trump administration, over and over again, sent a message to the Iranian leadership: You are playing a very dangerous game, continually attacking American facilities, launching rockets randomly in there, starting fires, stirring up militias to attack us at every turn, attacking our supply lines. If an American is killed, President Trump made it very clear, the United States will respond.

In December, Soleimani pushed it to a whole new level, with a multiple

rocket attack into an American facility, killing an American and wounding four others. The President responded with a very reasoned response: taking an attack to where the Shia militias and Hezbollah were storing the munitions they were using to attack us, destroying that facility, destroying those munitions, taking the fight to four different training facilities where they were equipping the people to bring the attack to us but then also tracking very carefully the person who was actually planning the next set of attacks—Soleimani himself.

The time came in January, when Soleimani had been traveling through Syria, through Lebanon, working with Hezbollah, and then back into Iraq, and he was personally meeting with another terrorist leader in Iraq—one terrorist leader, Soleimani, leading a terrorist organization, meeting with another terrorist leading a terrorist organization there. Both of them were planning together and met up that morning at the airport. A little after 4 o'clock in the morning, they left from the airport, headed to go have their next meeting and planning their next set of attacks.

At that time, the Trump administration took the opportunity, while they were both far from civilians and no one else was on the road, to have a surgical strike and take out two different terrorist leaders, both in the process of planning their next attacks.

What has been interesting to me has been the response of the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House and some of the debate there. We should debate issues like this. These are difficult moments in difficult days. We are not at war with Iran, nor should we be at war with Iran. There are millions of peaceful people in Iran. Thousands and thousands of those people are protesting on the streets right now in Iran against their own government. They are furious at the corruption in their government. They are furious that the people in Iran can't get food and can't get fuel because the regime there is spending their money attacking Yemen, attacking Syria, feeding money to Hezbollah and Iraq, feeding money to Hezbollah and Lebanon. The money that should be going to help their own people, the Iranian regime is sending out all over the region to spur their terrorism.

The people there are frustrated and upset with their own government, and they are taking it to the streets under a threat of their own life. In the not-too-recent past, Iranians—whether it be the Green Revolution 10 years ago or just in days past and months past—had taken to the streets by the thousands, and some of them have faced all kinds of retribution coming back at them.

We should be supporting the good people of Iran who are miserable living under that regime. We are not at war with the people of Iran, but we are very clear as a nation, when you are planning an attack against us, and we are

aware of that attack and you have shown the due diligence to take prior attacks, we know you are not just thinking about it. You are actually planning it and about to carry it out.

We have learned our lesson from 9/11, and for the last three administrations, the policy has been very clear. If we know you are in the process of bringing an attack to us in the days and weeks ahead, we will strike first to protect American lives. We will not wait until you kill Americans to come bring a strike to you. That is what happened with Soleimani.

The debate that is happening on the floor now about a War Powers Resolution has been interesting to me because much of the language just affirms the current law. It almost seems to imply the Trump administration didn't follow the law when they did. The Trump administration continued to track an imminent threat that was coming into the United States. There has been some argument about how imminent is imminent. Some of my colleagues want to know that Soleimani was in the process of carrying out an attack within the next 30 minutes, and if he wasn't carrying out an attack immediately, in the next day or next hours, we shouldn't respond. I will tell you, intelligence is not that exquisite. You only know in the movies that someone is about to attack an exact spot at an exact time. That is not real life. With real-life intelligence, you gather information to track what you think is coming, but you don't get exact dates and exact locations like that.

We knew he was planning this attack. They were zeroing in on the locations, but he was very specific as to the Americans he was coming after.

To be able to bring the attack to him and to notify Congress within 48 hours, which is the law, is consistent with the War Powers Resolution. The President did follow the law. He was justified in being able to carry out the strike against a known, declared terrorist leader—in fact, two of them—in the process of planning their next attack against Americans.

The key thing I join my colleagues in talking about is not trying to be able to press back on the administration but to say that none of us want a war in Iran, including the Trump administration. In every conversation I have had with anyone in the administration, they have all been very clear. They are not planning a war with Iran. They don't want a war with Iran, but they do want Iran to stop their belligerent terrorist activities against us, against our allies, and against any American they seem to find in the region. I join my colleagues in warning Iran and assuring Iran at the same time that we have no desire for a war with the regime or with the good people of Iran. We should be able to find a way to work together.

Since 1979, when this regime was coming into power, they have taken the fight to Americans and to all of our allies. It is time we pushed back and

said: Stop shedding blood, and let's sit down at the table and be able to work this out.

In the meantime, let's not assume that Soleimani was some innocent bystander. He had a lot of American blood on his hands. Let's take into real life what it really means to live in Baghdad and serve in our diplomatic mission and hour after hour run to bomb shelters as rockets are raining down randomly on your facility. There is plenty of provocation. Now it is time for diplomacy. Let's get this worked out.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROMNEY). The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, first, I want to say to my colleague from Oklahoma that I appreciate his remarks. I was on the floor last week talking about this issue. He is absolutely right. Soleimani was a recognized terrorist, not by the Trump administration but by the global community, including the Obama administration, the United Nations. The two organizations that he had were both considered terrorist organizations. He was responsible for the deaths of hundreds of our constituents and thousands more who were maimed or injured.

When I have been at these briefings, I am sort of getting a different briefing than, apparently, some of my colleagues are. The briefings have been very explicit about the degree with which this particular individual had already attacked and killed so many Americans and, in fact, there were more plans, of course, in the future. That is why he was traveling around the Middle East, meeting with other commanders, including the commander of the Islamic militia group in Iraq that very day.

I think this is a time for us, as the Senator from Oklahoma has said, to be sober and to be realistic about the great threat that he posed to us, and not just in this administration but in previous administrations, and now talk about a way forward, avoiding war with Iran but making sure Iran is held accountable.

To the people of Iran, I say today that we are with you. We understand the fact that your country is one where your own rights have been repressed and you have not had the ability to achieve your dreams. We want that for you, as well. Our arguments are not with you. They are with the Government of Iran.

REMEMBERING CHRIS ALLEN

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I am here today to talk about something very sad. Last week, my staff and I were informed that a colleague of ours, Chris Allen, a Senate staffer in the Senate Finance Committee, passed away unexpectedly.

Chris was an amazing guy. He was diligent, hard-working, and an expert on pensions and tax-exempt organizations. He was a very valued colleague.

I got to know him particularly well over the last couple of years as we worked together on pension issues. He was the one who, along with Charlie Bolton in my office, really focused on the complicated issue of multiemployer pensions and other retirement security issues.

We have a crisis in our country right now. The pension system is in big trouble. Chris Allen played a pivotal role in ensuring that this very important issue was brought to the fore and that we have responsible solutions for it. He was developing a framework to prevent the collapse of that longtime employer system. He also recently prevented pension cuts to over 92,000 retired coal miners through his work. He is the one, I think, most responsible from all of the staff on the Hill for ensuring that we expanded 401(k)s to millions of part-time workers left behind by current law.

Last month, Congress enacted and the President signed the SECURE Act. It is going to help millions of Americans to have more peace of mind in retirement. I don't believe it would have passed the Senate at the end of last year but for Chris. That is how important he was. Through his quick wit and tenacity, he is the one who built the coalitions to get that done, and he built the momentum for it when, frankly, a lot of others had given up. As a result, all Americans are better off.

In this difficult time, my thoughts and my prayers are with his wife Lynda-Marie, his daughters Sophie and Lucie, and all of his family and his many, many friends, as we mourn the loss of a true public servant. I also want to express condolences to Chairman GRASSLEY and the entire staff of the Senate Finance Committee.

Chris will be dearly missed as a friend, a retirement expert, and a model public servant.

SENATE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I am here today to talk about the path forward on legislation and commonsense solutions that my constituents and all of our constituents would like to see this year. The Senators in this Chamber came back to town this week, along with Members of the House, at one of the most partisan times in our Nation's history.

We just learned that the House is now going to send us Articles of Impeachment. This will be the third Presidential impeachment trial in our entire history and only the second one in the last 151 years.

It will be the most partisan one ever. I agree with the NANCY PELOSI of a year ago, who said: "Impeachment is so divisive to the country that unless there is something so compelling and overwhelming and bipartisan, I don't think we should go down that path because it divides the country." I think she was right about that. Yet, unfortu-

nately, without meeting those criteria, here we are going down that path.

While we face a lot of contentious issues ahead of us, I still believe we can legislate for the benefit of the people we represent, and we must. That is our job. We can't let partisanship cause us to lose sight of all the opportunities we have here every day to come together, to find common ground, and to pass commonsense solutions to address the issues our constituents care most about.

In fact, I would say that under the radar and without fanfare, we have recently done that. At end of last year, we enacted a number of bills and provisions on a bipartisan basis that helped people. I talked about the SECURE Act a moment ago. Despite the headlines about gridlock and dysfunction and impeachment, we have been working on both sides of the aisle to find solutions to some of these real problems—like growing our economy, protecting national security, promoting conservation, or helping the most vulnerable.

OPIOID EPIDEMIC

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, one area where this Senate and the Congress, in general, along with the administration, have made significant progress is combating the ongoing drug addiction crisis in America that has affected so many families represented by all of us in this Chamber.

In my home State of Ohio, we have been on the frontline of this crisis for years. Opioids, in particular, have taken a heavy toll in our communities. In fact, in 2017, our opioid overdose rate in Ohio was almost three times the national average, with nearly a dozen Ohioans dying from these dangerous drugs every single day, making it the No. 1 cause of death in Ohio, surpassing car accidents.

Since 2017, we have begun to make progress, finally, to be able to turn the tide on opioids. In 2018, after a decade of increased overdose deaths every year for the previous dozen years, we finally had a reduction, a 22-percent reduction in overdose deaths. By the way, that led the Nation in terms of the percent decrease. It is still way too high—unacceptably high—but we are starting to make progress.

A lot of it goes back to what is being done here at the Federal level, but also the State level and local level, to address this problem. We have dramatically increased funding here for treatment for recovery, including providing Narcan as a way to save people's lives. It is a miracle drug that reverses the effects of an overdose. We have done some things that are very important. More recently, we have sent these resources through legislation that the President signed into law just last year. There are resources also provided by the State opioid response grants and also by our bipartisan Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, or CARA, helping our first responders to be able