

brush it off, but they would ask: Senator Dole, what about this and what about that? And all the way through, he was great, a sense of humor, self-deprecating. Everybody on that plane realized this was a true hero of that war.

I will speak more later on, but he was a good friend.

I was honored to join Senator Pat Roberts to speak about Senator Dole when he received the Congressional Gold Medal. I told him what an honor it was that he asked me to speak. Certainly, when I think back on my years here in the Senate, that is one of the highest honors I received, to have this man whom I admired, I liked, was my friend, to ask me to speak for him. I also felt that there were so many others who were probably even far better prepared to speak for him. I felt the honor.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

REMEMBERING ROBERT J. DOLE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, yesterday, our country lost a great statesman, and many in this Chamber lost a dear former colleague.

Senator Bob Dole, who represented Kansas in the Senate for 27 years and who served 3 years as Senate majority leader, passed away yesterday morning at the age of 98.

Throughout his life, Bob Dole redefined and elevated what it meant to be a public servant. He was born not to wealth but in poverty, a son of the Kansas heartland, who grew up beneath the shadow of the Great Depression. As a young man, Bob unblinkingly answered the call to serve by enlisting in the Army during World War II, where he earned two Purple Hearts and a Bronze Star.

After his election to the Senate, Senator Dole quickly won the admiration of his colleagues with his candor, his sharp wit, and his penchant for good-natured ribbing, but beneath all that was an unquenchable desire to get things done in this Chamber.

While he frequently sparred with Democrats, some of his greatest achievements were bipartisan endeavors, including his work to pass the Americans with Disabilities Act, legislation to strengthen Social Security, and revamping Federal nutrition programs. Despite rising to the top ranks of his party, Senator Dole always kept close relationships with those on the other side of the aisle.

Senator Dole exemplified the "greatest generation." While I never had the pleasure of serving in the Senate with him, I always admired his steadfast ad-

vocacy for veterans, for Americans with disabilities, and his love for his country.

For the information of all, Senator Dole will lie in state this Thursday, under the Capitol Rotunda, where we will pay tribute to his life and to his legacy.

I thank the Speaker and Leader MCCONNELL in helping make this event's ceremonies possible.

For today, I join all my colleagues in mourning the loss of this great public servant, and I wish all of Senator Dole's family my deepest condolences.

REMEMBERING FRED HIATT

Madam President, on another tragic note, we learned today of the passing of Fred Hiatt, the Washington Post's long-time editorial page editor. He was a titan at the paper—and in journalism—for years. My heart goes out to his family and colleagues on their terrible and sudden loss.

SENATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Now, Madam President, on a different matter, as we begin the first full week of December, there is much that the Senate must attend to before we reach the end of the year.

First, Senate Democrats remain committed to taking up and passing President Biden's Build Back Better Act before Christmas. As I outlined in a letter to my caucus this morning, Senate Democrats have been working furiously to clear the necessary steps to achieve this goal. As we all know, the reconciliation process is not an easy one.

The reason this timeline is so important is that this legislation is about lowering costs for American families. As we enter the winter months, American families deserve a little extra help in affording things like childcare and pre-K. They need help in lowering costs on things like prescription drugs and making healthcare more affordable, and families need to know that critical programs like the child tax credit will continue uninterrupted. This program has already done immense good for millions upon millions of families. Build Back Better will make sure these benefits stay in place.

For these reasons, we are going to continue the process until Build Back Better is signed into law. This is arduous work. It takes time, precision, and a lot of pieces moving together. It has taken months of communication, negotiation, and countless late nights and weekend workdays to bring us to this point.

I want to thank my colleagues, their staff, and the Parliamentarian for dedicating the full measure of their attention and talent toward this endeavor. We are close, and we will keep going until the job is done.

BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Madam President, on other Senate priorities, as we continue working on Build Back Better, Democrats will simultaneously address other year-end priorities as well. First, we will con-

tinue working, as necessary, to process President Biden's nominations both to the Federal bench and to serve in key posts within his administration.

On that front, today, we will begin consideration of a terrific nominee, Jessica Rosenworcel, tapped by President Biden to serve as Chair of the FCC.

Ms. Rosenworcel has nearly a decade of experience already as an FCC Commissioner and will soon be the first-ever woman confirmed to serve as Chair, breaking another glass ceiling in our government. She has been a fierce advocate for closing the digital divide, for protecting net neutrality, and, when confirmed, Ms. Rosenworcel will oversee critical Federal programs that help low-income Americans secure internet access.

There are other nominees to come this week. Regrettably, if our Republican colleagues continue their holds on various individuals, Senators should prepare for the possibility of late nights and votes on the weekend. The President deserves to have his team, and we will spend whatever time we need to ensure his nominees are confirmed.

Finally, Democrats will also continue addressing other issues before the end of this year. We will keep working on finding a path forward on voting rights legislation, and there are many intense discussions going on in that area. We will also work to address the debt limit and preserve the full faith and credit of the United States. I want to thank Leader MCCONNELL for his cooperation in that regard.

And, this week, we also anticipate that we will be able to reach a final conference agreement on the NDAA. Congress has passed the annual Defense bill without fail for, roughly, 60 years, largely on a bipartisan basis. I expect this year will be no different.

So there is a lot of work to do. It will likely take weekends and late nights to get it done, but we will continue forging ahead on behalf of the American people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

REMEMBERING ROBERT J. DOLE

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I thank the distinguished leader for his words and his statement about our friend Bob Dole. I also agree with him in that we have to stay here and get this work done.

Madam President, as someone who has observed the evolution of relations between the United States and Cuba for nearly 50 years, particularly since I first traveled there in 1999, I find the situation between our two countries today bewildering, tragic, and exasperating.

Bewildering, because senior Administration officials—who have publicly and privately acknowledged that the 60-year policy of unilateral U.S. sanctions, isolation, and threats has failed to achieve any of its objectives and instead has hurt the Cuban people—have

nevertheless adopted that same failed policy as their own.

Tragic, because the policy has emboldened Cuba's hard-liners who have cracked down even more on citizens who dare to peacefully protest about shortages of food, medicine, and electricity, and against government repression. And it has exacerbated the crisis that has engulfed the island due to the COVID pandemic and the government's dysfunctional economic policies.

Exasperating, because anyone who understands Cuba could have predicted what has happened since the Trump Administration reversed the Obama Administration's policy of engagement and would have taken steps to mitigate it. Instead, the current policy is making the situation even worse.

For the past ten months, I have urged the White House to not repeat past mistakes when it comes to our relations with Cuba's government and the Cuban people and to pursue a policy based on our longterm national interests. I deeply regret that has not yet happened.

Instead, this administration's policy, so far, has been dictated by a tiny but vocal constituency in this country that has always opposed U.S. engagement with Cuba. It is a policy that history has shown is doomed to fail.

Currently, the United States and Cuba have diplomatic relations, but to what end? There is no meaningful diplomacy being conducted, and our Embassy in Havana and Cuba's Embassy in Washington are barely functioning. Consular operations have ceased. The dialogues we had with the Cuban Government on issues of mutual interest, from law enforcement to human rights to public health—dialogues the Trump Administration cut off—have not resumed. How can this be in our national interest?

While Cuba remains on the list of state sponsors of terrorism due to a last-minute, politically driven, vindictive, and factually indefensible decision of the Trump administration, we continue to have diplomatic relations. Is this not irreconcilable? And whatever became of the administration's review of that deeply flawed designation which was promised months ago?

Cultural, scientific, and educational exchanges have largely ended. This is neither justified nor in our national interest. The COVID pandemic provided an obvious opportunity for cooperation between American and Cuban scientists, but that opportunity, like so many others over the years, was squandered due to politics, distrust, and spite.

The U.S. Treasury Department continues to block remittances from Cuban Americans to their relatives on the island even though it is their money, not Treasury's. Shouldn't Cuban Americans have the right to decide for themselves whether to send their own money to their relatives rather than having that decision dic-

tated by the White House? Remittances help Cubans be less dependent on the government, improve their standard of living, and provide the seed capital for Cuba's growing private sector, which, today, comprises one-third of the Cuban workforce.

The number of remittances siphoned off by the Cuban Government is a small fraction of what some have falsely claimed, and is no more than what other governments charge. Let's base our policy on facts rather than on rumor and what plays well domestically.

And Cuba, just 90 miles from Florida, is the only country besides North Korea where travel by Americans is severely restricted despite our common history and cultural traditions. It is as ridiculous as it is self-defeating.

The White House has repeatedly said that "democracy and human rights" are at the core of its policy toward Cuba. Those are aspirations—laudable aspirations—but they are not a policy. We all want to see a Cuba where political freedom and fundamental rights, especially freedom of expression, are respected and where an independent judiciary protects the right of due process. Those rights are severely restricted in Cuba today, as they are in many countries, including some recipients of hundreds of millions of dollars in U.S. aid.

Where we disagree is on how best to support the Cuban people's struggle to obtain those rights.

I have asked, but I have no idea what the administration's practical objectives are in Cuba or how it proposes to achieve them. After being told 6 months ago that the State Department was conducting a review of its policy, we have yet to see any change from the policy it inherited from the Trump administration a year ago. What happened to the review? What did it say?

Several administration officials have justified the continuation of President Trump's punishing sanctions because of the public protests in Cuba on July 11. They say "everything changed" on July 11.

Cuba is changing. Access to social media and cell phones has dramatically increased. Attitudes among the younger generation are changing. The Cuban Government is making historic, albeit hesitant, reforms to relax restrictions on private businesses. President Obama's opening to Cuba, which lasted only 2 years was instrumental in helping to bring about these changes.

Rather than acknowledge the unprecedented progress during that short period, those who defend a policy of sanctions say Obama's policy of openness failed because Cuba remains a repressive, one-party state. They completely ignore that the same was true for 50 years before Obama and for the 5 years since Obama. When it comes to helping to bring positive changes to the people of Cuba, President Obama wins hand down.

But, today, the United States is, once again, on the sidelines, clinging to an

outdated policy that history has shown will not succeed. In fact, it is having the opposite effect by denying opportunities to both Cubans and Americans.

U.S. policy toward Cuba is replete with contradictions, hypocrisy, arrogance, and missed opportunities. Cuba is an impoverished country that poses no threat to the United States; yet we treat it as if it does largely because of our own actions. While we maintain an intricate web of unilateral sanctions that every nation in this hemisphere opposes, the Russians and Chinese are aggressively filling the vacuum as anyone who visits Cuba today can readily see.

Engaging with a government whose policies are anathema to our own does not bestow legitimacy on that government's leaders or acceptance of its repressive policies. If that were the case, we should cease engaging not only with Cuba but with dozens of governments around the world, including several U.S. partners, Saudi Arabia and Egypt being obvious examples.

We condemn the arbitrary arrests, sham trials, laws that criminalize civil society, and the mistreatment and imprisonment of political dissidents. These abuses are common to many countries, and we apply targeted sanctions, and we restrict aid. But, for purely domestic political reasons, we continue to impose a vast web of sweeping sanctions against Cuba even when the administration knows they have not worked.

I have said it many times: Our policy toward Cuba needs to be guided—first and foremost—by what is in our national interest, not by what is in the interest of a tiny domestic constituency and not by making demands that we know the Cubans won't submit to.

Engaging with Cuba affords U.S. diplomats and American citizens the opportunity to build relationships with Cuban counterparts and identify issues of common interest on which to make progress. We saw that during the Obama administration despite some who could not bring themselves to admit it.

Over time, that is how we can then begin to address the more difficult issues that divide us, knowing that it is the Cuban people, not the United States, who will ultimately determine their country's future.

This administration has had 10 months to demonstrate that continuing the failed Trump policy of trying to bludgeon the Cuban authorities into submission can produce positive results. There is not a shred of evidence that it can. It never has. Are we going to waste another year and another after that?

I hope not, but that is what will happen if the White House does not change course and show the kind of thoughtful leadership on Cuba that we saw during the Obama administration and that was welcomed by a large majority of the American people. As Einstein said and so many have repeated, "Insanity

is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results." This administration can do better. It needs to do better.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

REMEMBERING ROBERT J. DOLE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, it is hard to believe it has been 25 years since Senator Dole took leave of the Senate. It is even harder to believe he passed away this past weekend, not because it comes as a shock to say goodbye to an elder statesman at age 98 but because our colleague was still so energetic, so involved, and so forward-looking right through to his final months.

If you didn't know Bob Dole, if you just read a summary of his impressive Senate career, his leadership tenure, his Presidential campaign, he might sound like a man of contrasts.

On one hand, our friend from Kansas preached conservative values—personal responsibility and fiscal discipline—but this son of the Dust Bowl and wounded warrior was also laser-focused on caring for the most vulnerable, notching landmark wins on subjects from food insecurity to veterans' issues, to the rights of disabled Americans.

On the one hand, Senator Dole took pride in our Republican Party. He rose to key roles that were necessarily somewhat partisan, first leading our Senate Republican conference for many years and then leading a Presidential ticket. But he was also a consensus-finding legislator, an honest broker with deep friendships and working relationships that spanned the aisle.

On the one hand, our colleague was earnest, unironic, and somewhat serious—a true "greatest generation" midwesterner. But he also wielded a charming, disarming, and self-deprecating sense of humor, whether he was cracking one-liners, often at his own expense, or doing a joint appearance with his comic impersonator.

Allow me just one example of Bob Dole's comedic talent.

In January of 1997, just after President Clinton had defeated Bob and won his reelection, the President graciously bestowed on Bob the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

There they were, in mid-January, just 3 days before the day Bob had spent months hoping he would be inaugurated, but President Clinton would be inaugurated instead. It was a gracious gesture and a warm event all around.

The time comes for Bob's remarks. He walks up to the podium, looks around, and he begins:

I, Robert J. Dole—

The crowd is already cracking up.

do solemnly swear—

Then a theatrical pause.

Oh, sorry. Wrong speech.

Once the laughs began to die down, there came the self-deprecating punch line:

[I thought] I would be here this historic week receiving something from the President . . . but I thought it would be the front door key.

The thing is, there was no contradiction in any of it, no paradox. Bob's life and career were very, very consistent. The virtues and the values that led Bob Dole to raise his right hand, enlist in the Army, and fight bravely until he could not raise that hand any longer were the same virtues and values that compelled him to raise his left hand for a different oath in the Kansas State Capitol a few years later and then across the Rotunda in the U.S. House and then here in the Senate.

The same virtues and values that animated Bob's passionate, pointed speeches in the 1960s about a citizen's duty animated his great empathy toward those who needed help.

With Bob Dole, what you saw was what you got, and from his comrades in the 10th Mountain Division to his constituents in Kansas, to the whole Senate and the entire country, what we got was extraordinary.

I cannot summarize in one speech the full life or legacy of our friend Bob Dole. There are the battlefield heroics, the hospital-bed friendships with fellow future Senators Phil Hart and "the best bridge player at Percy Jones Hospital," Dan Inouye. There is the policy legacy that endures to this day. These remembrances will take Congress this whole week, and they will occupy historians for decades to come.

Bob Dole had the same chief hero for his entire adult life: his fellow son of Kansas, a general, and then a President, Dwight Eisenhower. Bob didn't just like Ike; he idolized him. In Senator Dole's Senate farewell speech in 1996, he saved the second-to-the-last quotation for his hero from Abilene, KS.

He kept his foot personally on the gas pedal for the Eisenhower Memorial here in Washington well into his nineties. He invoked and praised Ike constantly throughout his career.

One such occasion was in late 1979. An event was held at Eisenhower's boyhood home, Presidential library, and the gravesite in Abilene on what would have been his 89th birthday. It so happened that only a couple of weeks later Mrs. Eisenhower would pass away and be laid to rest there as well.

On that day, Senator Dole explained that America had gotten "lucky."

Why? Because "when we were thirsty for leadership, we turned to a man from Kansas, a genuine hero who embodied in his own life the finest qualities of the American people . . . a man from grassroots America, steeped in

the traditions of neighborhood and patriotism and service . . . a strong man who earned his strength in war yet never forgot the disease of poverty or the scourge of personal suffering."

Bob was always eloquent, and those lines of his certainly did describe Ike.

But now that our friend's 98 amazing years have come to a close, we can say with certainty that Eisenhower isn't the only Kansan who meets those standards. Not only General Eisenhower but also 2LT Robert J. Dole was a genuine hero from Kansas who helped satisfy a nation's thirst for leadership, who was steeped in homespun American values and proud of it, who fought with great courage and valor on the battlefield, and whose concern for the most vulnerable in our society came right with him into the halls of power.

I mentioned that Eisenhower was Bob's second-to-last quotation in his farewell remarks to the Senate, so I want to close today where he closed 25 years ago. Musing on both his past and his future, our colleague's final quote was from the midwestern poet Carl Sandburg:

[Y]esterday is a wind gone down, a sun dropped in the west. I tell you there is nothing in the world, only an ocean of tomorrows, a sky of tomorrows.

Now, for our remarkable friend, the Sun of this world has set at last. But we pray in faith that he now beholds an even brighter light; that the endless ocean of tomorrows now stretches before him.

The entire Senate sends our prayers to Elizabeth and Robin and to so many family, friends, and former staff of Senator Dole. The whole country stands with you, not only in grief but in gladness and thanksgiving, for almost a century that was lived so patriotically, so gratefully, and so well.

RUSSIA

Madam President, now on a totally different matter, last week brought new information about Russia's military activities along its border with Ukraine. Heavily armed ground forces are mobilizing by the tens of thousands. It is looking more and more like Vladimir Putin intends to redraw another border by force.

The escalation of Putin's ongoing war against Ukraine is an immediate threat to Ukraine's sovereignty and to the security of its people. But as always with Putin, it is also a test with much broader consequences. Can aggressive powers violate sovereign countries without facing serious consequence?

Fellow authoritarians in Beijing and Tehran will be watching how the free world responds. And President Biden has an opportunity to set the tone when he speaks with Putin tomorrow. The stakes for the President's call with Putin couldn't be clearer. We know what happens when the United States fails to engage with Russia from a position of strength. We know what weakness and capitulation get us.

Remember how President Obama treated arms control and European-