

of Honor winner from Hawaii who used to sit right here; and from a college professor turned proud prairie populist and Senate Pied Piper who was taken from us far too soon and far too quickly. From every Member of the Senate, there are characteristics, passions, quirks, and beliefs that bring this place alive and unite to make it the most extraordinary legislative body on Earth. That is what I love about the Senate.

I love that instead of fighting against each other, Bill Frist, the former Republican leader, and I were able to join forces to fight HIV and AIDS around the globe and to convince an unlikely conservative named Jesse Helms to support and pass a bill unanimously that saved millions of lives on our planet. That is what makes this place so special.

Instead of ignoring a freshman Senator, Chairman Claiborne Pell allowed me to pass my very first amendment to change our policy on the Philippines. So I found myself with Dick Lugar, paired as Senate election observers who helped expose the voter fraud of the Marcos regime, ending a dictatorship and giving a nation of more than 90 million people the opportunity to know democracy again. That is what the Senate can do, and that is what I love about it.

Instead of focusing on our different accents and opposite ideologies, Jesse Helms and I found that our concern for illegal drugs was greater than any political differences between us. So Jesse made it possible for an investigation to proceed and for the Senate to expose the linkages between the Contras in Nicaragua and the flow of drugs to American cities. That is what the Senate can do.

The Senate can still work if we learn from and listen to each other—two responsibilities that are, like Webster said about liberty and union, one and inseparable.

So as I offer my final words on the Senate floor, I remember that I came of age in a Senate where freshman Senators didn't speak that often. Senators no longer hold their tongues through whole sessions of Congress, and they shouldn't. Their voices are just as valuable and their votes count just as much as the most tenured Member of this body. But being heard by others does not exempt them from listening to others.

I came to the National Mall in 1971 with fellow veterans who wanted only to talk to our leaders about the war. President Nixon tried to kick us off The Mall. We knocked on door after door on Capitol Hill but too often couldn't get an audience of representatives. A precious few, including Ted Kennedy and Hubert Humphrey, came to where we were camped out and heard what we had to say. I saw firsthand that our political process works only when leaders are willing to listen to each other but also to everyone else. That is how I first came to the Senate—not with my vote but with my

voice—and that is why the end of my tenure here is in many ways a bookend.

Forty-two years ago, I testified before Senator Fulbright's Foreign Relations Committee about the realities of war in Vietnam. It wasn't until last week that I would sit before that committee again, this time testifying in my own confirmation hearing. It completed a circle which I never could have imagined drawing but one our Founders surely did. That a citizen voicing his opinion about a matter of personal and national consequence could one day use that voice as a Senator, as the chairman of that same committee before which he had once testified as a private citizen, and then as the President's nominee for Secretary of State, that is a fitting representation of what we mean when we talk about a government "of the people, for the people, and by the people."

In the decades between then and now, this is what I have learned above all else: The privilege of being here is in being able to listen to your constituents. It is the people and their voices much more than the marble buildings and the inimitable institutions they house that determine whether our democracy works.

In my first appearance before the Senate, at the Fulbright hearings, I began by saying, "I am not here as John Kerry. I am here as one member of the group of 1,000, which is a small representation of a very much larger group."

I feel much the same way today as I leave. We are still symbols, representatives of the people who have given us the honor to speak and advocate and vote in their name, and that, as the Bible says, is a "charge to keep." One day, the 99 other Senators who continue on for now—and soon to be 100 again in a few days—will also leave in their own turn—in your own turn—some by their own choosing and some by the people's. Our time here is not meant to last forever. If we use the time to posture politically in Washington, we weaken our position across the world. If democracy deadlocks here, we raise doubts about democracy everywhere. If we do not in our deeds prove our own ideals, we undermine our security and the sacred mission as the best hope of Earth. But if we do our jobs right, if we treat our colleagues with respect and build the relationships required to form consensus and find the courage to follow through on our promises of compromise, the work we do here will long endure.

So let us in the Senate or in the House be bigger than our own districts, our own States. Let us in spirited purpose be as big as the United States of America. Let us stand for our beliefs but, above all, let us believe in our common history, our common destiny, in our common obligation to love and lead this exceptional Nation. They say politics stops at the water's edge. That is obviously not always true. But if we care for our country, politics has its limits at home and abroad.

As I leave here, I do so knowing that forever the Senate will be in my soul and that our country is my cause and yours. I thank you all for your friendship and the privilege of serving with you.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the period for morning business be extended until 4 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COONS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

HAGEL NOMINATION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, the nomination of Chuck Hagel to be the next Secretary of Defense has already done damage to the credibility of the United States in its attempt to deny Iran a nuclear weapon, thus emboldening one of the most dangerous regimes in the Middle East. To limit that damage, President Obama should choose someone else to lead the Pentagon.

After all, the Nebraska Senator is the same person who has consistently opposed sanctions against Iran. He is the same person who wanted Washington to support Iranian membership in the World Trade Organization. He is the same person who voted against designating the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist group at a time when it was orchestrating the murder of U.S. troops in Iraq.

He is the same person who refused to sign a letter asking the European Union to label Hezbollah—an Iranian proxy—as a terror group, even though it is so designated by the U.S. State Department. He is the same person who urged President Bush to offer Iran "direct, unconditional, and comprehensive talks." He is the same person who called for establishing a U.S. diplomatic mission in Tehran.

He is the same person who dismissed "a military strike against Iran" as "not a viable, feasible, responsible option." And he is the same person who suggested that the United States might be able to live with a nuclear Iran.

During his years in this Chamber, Senator Hagel's opposition to Iran sanctions placed him in a very small minority. For example, only one other Senator joined him in voting against sanctions in 2001, and only one other