

and the surrounding schools really well. Some opposing teams refer to it as “the barn.” But the one thing you were always sure of when Murdo-Jones County was playing a basketball game, you could hear Coach Applebee anywhere in the gymnasium because he had a raspy, strong, resonant, deep voice, and he was not afraid to use it. I remember that in the basketball gymnasium, and I remember it on the track as well.

One of my clearest memories of Coach Applebee—or “App,” as we called him—happened during my senior year. We were playing in the district championship game with a chance to go on in the playoffs and make it, ultimately, to the State tournament, which was every kid in my hometown’s aspiration. Those of us who loved sports always dreamed of playing in the State basketball tournament—something that I had been, from the time I was a kindergartner, aspiring to have the opportunity to do.

We got the last chance my senior year, in a district championship game. We were playing our archrival, Lyman County, in their gymnasium. As was typically the case, it was a back-and-forth game. They were ahead by a point at the end of the first quarter, we were ahead by a point at halftime, and they were ahead by a point in the third quarter.

It got down to the end of the game. We were down 1 point, with 5 seconds left on the clock. So Coach Applebee calls time-out. We huddle on the sidelines. He calls the play. We break the huddle. My teammates inbound the ball. I had a teammate that came down and set a screen for me on the baseline. I came out—today, to what would be the 3-point line, although we didn’t have the 3-point line back in that day—and I fired off a shot that I would hope was going to win the game and take us on to the regional playoffs.

Well, it came off the back of the rim. It didn’t go down. There were a lot of people in the gym that thought it was going to, but it didn’t.

Obviously, after the game—my last opportunity at pursuing a chance to play in the State basketball tournament—I was sitting in the locker room by myself. Most of the team had gotten on the bus, and they were waiting for some of the rest of us and for the coaches.

Coach Applebee came over to me, and he tapped me on the shoulder, and he said: “JOHN, it’s time to get on the bus. And, by the way, track starts next week.” He knew I wasn’t a big fan of track. Track wasn’t my favorite sport, but he was sending an important message. That message is: Look, you gave it your best shot. You gave it everything you had. There is always another sport, another day, and you will have another opportunity down the road to do what you want to do.

So that was a really important message and very affirming to me at a time as a young athlete who felt not

only had I let myself down but I had let my teammates down as well. I will never forget that comment he made to me at that critical time in what was early, early in my sports career.

Well, I just remembered, too, later that year, his coming and pulling me out of class—I think it was an English class—to tell me that I had made the all-State basketball team’s first team. As he came out and kind of pointed at me and signaled this way, I thought, “Oh, no. What have I done now?” But we got out in the hallway, and he couldn’t have been more excited to share that news. It was an example, again, of how invested he was in the success of the players he coached and the people—the young kids—around him. He was also the principal of the high school and wanted to see them succeed and do well in life.

Well, of course, track season was the next season. In my hometown, oftentimes, we had, you know, a lot of snow in the winter, and sometimes it didn’t get dried up in the spring or if we had a wet spring, for that matter—the track where we ran was a dirt track. It was north of town, and it was a fairly low spot. So, oftentimes, the track was wet. To do our conditioning, particularly early in the season, we would run city blocks. A block would be like the equivalent of about a 400 repeat, and we would run a series of those. We would do our long warmup runs, and we would run city blocks.

The other thing we would do is we would go down to the airport south of town. The airport south of town has a little landing strip, and it is about a half a mile long. My colleague Senator ROUNDS here has probably flown into it. He is a pilot. But we would run down. There was about 2.2 miles to get down there, so that was kind of our warmup run, and then we would do our workouts on the airport runway. We would all line up at one end of the runway, and Coach Applebee would be down at the other end of the runway. If you have ever seen a half mile along a straightaway, he looked like this little figure down there. And we would all line up, and sometimes you could even inch forward a little bit because he couldn’t see you—he was so far away—but he always knew what you were up to, and you could hear him. Even then, you could hear him.

I remember, later that year, running at the State track meet in Sioux Falls, which is a lot larger outdoor place that we ran, and Howard Wood Field in Sioux Falls seats somewhere on the order of 12,000 people, but even in a crowded outdoor arena, you could hear his voice up in the crowd. It was unmistakable. He was always barking something out—in many cases, admonishing you to do better, to run harder, to be more successful.

So I am just grateful for the impact that he had on my life, and as I think about the admonition from him of “track starts next week,” there is always another day. We have to get up

and do our work and make sure that we are doing the best that we can to accomplish our work here on behalf of the American people.

So those are the lessons that I have taken with me: Accept your losses, and get to work on the next thing. It is one of the many lessons that has stuck with me from Coach Applebee. I am going to miss seeing Coach Applebee on my visits to Murdo, and I remain deeply grateful for everything he taught me along the way. And I want his family to know my thoughts and prayers are with them, with his loved ones.

And I will just say: Rest in peace, Coach Applebee.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate majority leader.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 5

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 5) to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to take into custody aliens who have been charged in the United States with theft, and for other purposes.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I now ask for a second reading, and in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

The bill will be read for a second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2025

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that upon dissolution of the joint session today, the Senate stand adjourned until 11 a.m. on Tuesday, January 7; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate Democratic leader is recognized.

JANUARY 6

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, 4 years ago today, I stood on this very spot, alongside my colleagues, as we prepared to certify the 2020 election. As

we were going about our business, all of a sudden, I felt a hand pull my collar. My security detail gripped me by the arm and told me we had to get out—that a mob of rioters had broken into the Capitol and that we were not safe. I looked to the podium and saw Vice President Pence quickly being rushed out of the Chamber by his detail. As we evacuated, accompanied by two Capitol Police officers, we took a turn down the hallway, opened the door, and came within several yards of angry rioters before my security detail pulled us away to safety. We were maybe within 20 feet of them. Had one of them blocked the door or had a gun, Lord knows what would have happened.

Thus began one of the darkest, most shameful days in American history—of our democracy. That was 4 years ago today.

Less than an hour from now, the House and Senate shall convene for a joint session of Congress to complete the process of certifying the 2024 Presidential election. Today, we will not see the violence we saw 4 years ago. Today, the process will return to normal and remain solemn but peaceful. We are here today to continue the transfer of power, to acknowledge what the people have already decided and nothing more. Unfortunately, today stands in sharp contrast to what happened 4 years ago.

On that day, lawlessness and mob violence sought to bring democracy to its knees. Staff and Members of Congress hid beneath desks, barricaded the doors of their offices; rioters smashed windows and ransacked offices and broke into the Senate and House Chambers. Insurrectionists waved Confederate flags and donned Nazi symbols. Pipe bombs were planted near the DNC and RNC. This was in no way a peaceful protest. This was not even a protest that got out of hand. This was a deliberate and, in some cases, premeditated attempt to subvert the democratic process through intimidation and violence. It was one of the most shameful, reprehensible episodes in the history of this great Nation, and it happened because the loser of the 2020 election refused to accept defeat.

We cannot let anyone whitewash what happened here 4 years ago. Far too many individuals have tried to rewrite the history of January 6, have tried to sweep the truth under the rug and pretend like the day was perfectly fine or even a moment of great patriotism. That is a lie. Plain and simple—a lie. Future generations must never forget the truth. January 6, 2021, was a day that a violent mob tried to halt the results of a Presidential election. It was a direct assault on American democracy.

On that day, our Capitol Police faced their hour of maximum danger, but they responded with maximum valor. Outnumbered and overwhelmed, the Capitol Police and all of our first responders became the defenders of our democracy. Today, we honor all the

members of the Capitol Police, the DC police, our servicemembers, and all first responders who kept us safe 4 years ago as well as everyone who has kept us safe since.

We acknowledge and thank all of the Capitol staff who stayed late into the night to restore order and clean the wreckage left behind by the rioters. They did their job without fanfare, without complaint, and away from the spotlight. They join our first responders as the unsung heroes of our democracy—every one.

We mourn, of course, all those whose lives were lost in connection with the attack. We mourn the brave officers who died in the days and weeks and months after the attack. We pray for their families and that they find comfort and grace. And it is shamefully, utterly outrageous that the President is considering pardons for these rioters who broke the law and attacked our police officers on January 6. Pardoning the criminals who assaulted police officers and tried to halt the democratic process would be a dangerous endorsement of political violence. It would send a message to the country and to the world that those who use force to get their way will not be punished. It is wrong; it is reckless; and it would be an insult to the memory of those who died in connection to that day.

On that day, the rioters tried to halt the peaceful transfer of power, but as we know, they failed. The insurrection failed because our democracy is stronger than the gale force winds of mob violence. The rioters failed that day because Democrats and Republicans were united amidst a storm of utter lawlessness and committed to finishing the job of certifying the election.

As hard as January 6 was, it will be one of my proudest moments in office because, on that day, the majority of us united to uphold our oaths to the Constitution. I still remember that, at around 5 p.m. this day, Leader McConnell, Speaker PELOSI, Leader McCarthy, and I gathered and said: We are going back into session now, and we are going to count the votes. We decided this despite the worries of some that the Capitol was not yet safe—and we did. We were not going to let the rioters interfere with our democracy. It was a historic moment of bipartisan-ship, where both sides united in the protection of our democracy.

I mention January 6, 2021, for many reasons. I mention January 6 to remind everyone that democracy is precious and can at times be a fragile thing. I mention January 6 to set the record straight for all coming time so that future generations may know the truth of what happened on that day and that they remain vigilant against future attacks on our democracy. I mention January 6 to warn this generation and future generations of the immense dangers that arise when election denialism is tolerated and excused and propagated. We can never ever again allow the level of unhinged election

denialism to happen, not from Republicans, not from Democrats, not from anyone.

We are setting an example today. Even though the elections did not go the Democrats' way, I want to be very clear: On this January 6, our side will not engage in election denialism. We Democrats accept the will of the people. We accept the results even when we don't like them because our loyalties lie with the Constitution and with the rule of law. We hope what happens today rather than what happened 4 years ago stands as a shining example for future generations of how one conducts oneself in a free democracy.

We hope that the way we Democrats conduct ourselves today helps those Republicans who tried to subvert the election of 4 years ago understand the grave nature of their mistake. Far too many on the other side—far too many—willingly claim the election of 2020 was stolen even though they knew perfectly well it was not. Of course, I know plenty of my Republican colleagues, including my friend the former Republican leader, did not participate in the attempts to undermine the election 4 years ago, but too many did. If we want to prevent another attack like January 6, neither side can ever again tolerate the kind of conspiratorial madness we saw 4 years ago, and it starts by setting an example and doing the right thing today no matter which side got their way in the electoral process.

On this, the 4-year anniversary of the Capitol attack, the only obstruction we will see is the obstruction coming from the storm. Even then, Mother Nature will not be able to stop us from doing our jobs today. Today, we will convene; we will do our jobs; and then we move on to the business of governing for the American people because that is what our oaths demand of us.

I yield the floor.

MORNING BUSINESS

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:02 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolutions, without amendment:

S. Con. Res. 1. Concurrent resolution extending the life of the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies.

S. Con. Res. 2. Concurrent resolution to provide for the counting on January 6, 2025, of the electoral votes for President and Vice President of the United States.

S. Con. Res. 3. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the rotunda of the Capitol for the lying in state of the remains of the late James Earl Carter, Jr., 39th President of the United States.

The message also announced that the House agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 1. Concurrent resolution regarding consent to assemble outside the seat of government.