

gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK) for 30 minutes.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I don't intend to take 30 minutes, but the time that I do spend is very important, because I want to honor a very, very special person.

First of all, let me start off by wishing you a Merry Christmas. I say that because, as we are getting into the season, many of us are thinking about family and friends and spending Christmastime at home, which I hope to be able to do as well.

Every Christmas season my thought goes back about 73 years ago. You see, my dad was a medic in World War II, and December 16, which will be just a few days from now, will be the 73rd anniversary of one of the largest, most significant battles of World War II: the Battle of the Bulge.

My father was a medic in the Battle of the Bulge, and I still remember the stories he used to tell of the cold weather and the snow and how, when the Germans broke through the Siegfried Line, they decimated American forces—we lost thousands and thousands of troops in those few days—how the snow was just so heavy and so thick that many were trapped in their foxholes, unable to escape. Many retreated back to areas of safety and the lines behind.

But I don't want to talk about my dad here today. I want to talk about someone else, a dear friend of mine, someone I got to serve in the Georgia Legislature with. It was another young Georgian from Spalding County who was a pilot in the Army Air Corps.

Now, Captain John Yates was not what you may think of. Most people think of an Army Air Corps pilot flying a B-29 or a B-25 Mitchell. What John Yates flew was a small, single-engine Piper Cub aircraft. He was a liaison pilot.

Now, most people aren't familiar with what a liaison pilot is, but they played a very crucial and critical role in the victory in Europe in World War II and even in the Pacific theater.

You see, as a pilot, I have a lot of appreciation for someone who will fly a very small plane. I mean, I am a pretty tall guy. I don't fit in the cockpit of a Piper Cub very well.

□ 1400

That is why I have never actually flown one. But John Yates would climb into the cockpit of this small, single-engine aircraft—which are still in use today. Many of them are used in the bush areas of Alaska because of how lightweight they are, and small, and compact. They don't take a whole lot of runway.

But he would climb into this small, aluminum airplane and would fly just above the treetops to draw enemy fire. He actually flew a plane to be shot at. This wasn't like close air support airplanes we have today that have titanium shells that can absorb a lot of im-

pact. No, this was just a small plane with an aluminum skin around the fuselage.

But his purpose was to fly close to the enemy to try to spot the enemy and cause the enemy to fire at him so our artillery and our other aircraft would actually know where the enemy forces were and where their heavy artillery was. That is an incredible job for someone to do, especially a young person, maybe in his twenties, as he was serving in World War II.

After 60 years from the time that he flew those Piper Cub aircraft, I had the opportunity to serve with John Yates in the Georgia Legislature. There is one thing I appreciated about John, as we find from a lot of veterans, and as a veteran myself—I know that same feeling—once you serve, you always have this desire to serve in another capacity.

In 1989, John was elected to the Georgia House of Representatives. I came several years later to serve with him. But John continued his fight for his fellow servicemen and for his country in the Georgia Legislature, as he was chairman of the House Defense and Veterans' Affairs Committee and was always on the front lines of fighting for veterans' care, to ensure that the government provided to veterans the care that they needed and the services that they deserved.

He understood the meaning of patriotism. He lived as a patriot. Everything he did portrayed the idea of patriotism. One thing I liked about John Yates is one of his favorite quotes was from Winston Churchill. That quote was: "Never give up. Never give up. Never give up."

That is something that we can take hold of ourselves today, especially as Americans. We have a history of never giving up, a fortitude of not just taking defeat and running away, but taking defeat and turning it into a victory.

John Yates never quit serving. All he looked for was the ability to serve in the next mission that he was called for. On December 11 of this year, John Yates went on to his next mission in Heaven.

We are going to miss John Yates. The State of Georgia is going to miss John Yates. But I stand here today, Mr. Speaker, to honor one of those true American patriots who stood in the face of battle and faced the enemy face-to-face; and when he came home, he followed that desire to continue to serve, and he served until he passed away just a few days ago.

HONORING HEROES OF CONGRESSIONAL BASEBALL SHOOTING

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I would like to just take a moment and recognize another anniversary. Six months ago today, on a baseball field just a few miles from here, I and several of our colleagues found ourselves in a combat zone of our own.

It doesn't seem like it has been 6 whole months since a crazed gunman walked onto our field and started

shooting at us. But the reason I want to bring that up today is because every person on that field that day who was shot at is still in this House today and still walking around in Washington, D.C.

By the grace of God, we were protected during that time, and I just want to thank everyone for their prayers and support, and those who responded to that event and came out and saved the lives of many of us.

STEVE SCALISE, the whip whom we serve with here; Matt Mika, one of our staff members; Zack Barth, a congressional staffer; and Capitol Police Special Agent Crystal Griner all were wounded during that battle, and it really was a battle.

But I also want to highlight some of those who did not leave the field that day, who stayed and helped others; people like my good friend from Mississippi, Congressman TRENT KELLY, an Army Reservist, who, when he identified the shooter, did not panic, but he alerted others, and then eventually led many to safety behind a concrete building.

Representative MO BROOKS stayed and helped apply a tourniquet to Zack Barth who had been shot in the calf.

Representative BRAD WENSTRUP, who is also a colonel in the Army Reserves, a combat doctor, was out on the edge of the field and could have easily run away, but he stayed and was one of the first to be able to run out and give aid to STEVE SCALISE out on the field as he lay near second base.

Retired Lieutenant General Representative JACK BERGMAN was able to actually lead several of our players and staff members to safety inside of the dugout away from the gunfire.

Brian Kelly, a civilian staff member on the team, stayed with me throughout the gunfire as we tried to lend aid to Matt Mika who was lying next to the Capitol Police SUV throughout the entire incident.

Finally, my thanks go out to Special Agent David Bailey, who I personally watched on numerous occasions put his own life in danger as he would move out into the line of fire to draw fire away from myself and Brian Kelly. He saw that, whenever the shooter was not shooting at Capitol Police, they were shooting at us so he would purposely move himself in the line of fire, and again, miraculously protected us, even as one of the rounds hit his cellphone which deflected away from his body.

Lastly, I want to thank the Alexandria Police Department, who came to our aid and eventually took down the shooter.

Moments like this are surreal to me and to others, and it is important that we go back and reflect and remember these moments. Because the only way that we can correct mistakes from our past, is if we go back and we relive them and we look at what caused this.

As we stand here today, one of the things that I see that we need in America that we have lost is the idea of civility. We have heard here on the floor

today differing opinions regarding policy; ideas of what is good for this country, what is right for this country. That is part of the strength of this country. That is the freedom that we have, which is to bring different ideas.

The whole idea of this Chamber is to bring different ideas and different policy opinions to the floor and debate them, and those ideas and opinions that have the support of a majority of the Members are moved forward.

But at some point in the past, we have transitioned beyond just arguing over ideas and we bring rhetoric that is distasteful. We attack the person and their families. I just believe that we can do a whole lot better in this Nation if we, once again, find the ability to agree to disagree and respect the rights, freedom, and the liberty of the other person to have their opinion. If we can do that, then we can engage in discourse and we will lessen the amount of violence that we see that is driven by political rhetoric.

That would be the message that I would pass off to America on the anniversary of the shooting because that is the idea that people like John Yates lived their lives for and fought their battles for, was for the freedom that we have in this Nation to continue to exist.

I believe America's greatest days are ahead of us, but we have got a little work to do to actually grasp hold of it.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for allowing me to honor the memory of my good friend and colleague, John Yates.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

FEDERALISM ISSUES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I heard my colleagues across the aisle discussing the issue of Special Counsel Mueller. Since there are one or two possibilities about some of the things they said regarding Republicans, especially on a committee, either Mr. COHEN's memory is terrible or he is falsely, intentionally misrepresenting things.

I am not saying that is the case. I am saying it is one or the other, and I will get to that momentarily.

The hearing we had this week in the Judiciary Committee with Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein was deeply troubling to those who want the Department of Justice to be about justice; those who want to see the FBI be that great arbiter, that great entity that will ensure that justice is done. We need an entity like that.

The ATF, their reputation was sorely soiled back during the attack by the ATF on Waco at the facility where some folks had been sucked into basically a cult. It didn't have to happen. And as we found out, local law enforce-

ment said that they knew that David Koresh went to Sam's Club right there on Belle Meade—I think they said Tuesday. And if the ATF had told us they wanted to arrest him, we could have helped them arrange to pick him up as he walked out of Sam's Club with grocery sacks in his arms. There would have been no incident. No lives would have been lost, no children burned up in a fire, no people killed. It was so unnecessary, but the ATF apparently wanted to make a point and wanted to have a big show. Actually, there were constitutional issues there.

I read in the paper that a gentleman who served with me at Fort Benning in Georgia, during my time in the Army, had advised the post commander out at Fort Bliss that he should not allow the U.S. Army tanks or equipment to be used, in violation of the posse comitatus, unless he had a direct order from the President himself.

As we found out after the fact, the President made clear that: Oh, that was Reno's deal. You have to talk to her about that.

So, clearly, he did not order the U.S. military to use equipment and allow their equipment to be used against civilian American citizens. So there were all kinds of terrible things that came out and it really made the ATF look bad.

□ 1415

I was a fan of the ATF, the Federal ATF. I knew them to have done some great things, and I had some very dear friends, and still do have some very dear and very great friends, who are in the ATF.

But the point is that such horrendous judgment in the ATF set up what they knew or should have known would probably result in losses of lives, including severe injuries to ATF themselves. I don't think they lost anybody, but they certainly were severely wounded and treated there in Waco. But that kind of outrageous judgment that puts political and news interests ahead of just doing the job and seeing justice done ends up being such a terrible blot on the reputation of any entity that it is hard to work back from that.

I still hear people who refer to that incident nearly 25 years ago, and still it is such a blot on the ATF that it is hard for people to consider the ATF without thinking how terribly, just inappropriate, the ATF acted at times and caused people to wonder: Is that the general rule, or was that an exception? People, after some other episodes, began to think it is the rule with the ATF. Some claim: Let's get rid of it.

What has gone on now and is currently going on now with the Deputy Attorney General taking all three positions that he sees no evil, he hears no evil—he doesn't know of any evil going on. He thinks everything is like the poet said: "God's in His Heaven, all's right with the world." I believe the author had a little girl saying that.

But it is not right with the world. It is terribly wrong. America and the world sit in a position of Western civilization where potentially the most incredible and amazing strides in healthcare, in energy, and all kinds of areas of life on this Earth have been made better exponentially, and the United States of America is at the very heart of those great developments.

A majority in the United States throughout our history would always say: We call those blessings from God.

Now, maybe it is and maybe it isn't a majority, but we are ever getting closer to a position where this grand experiment in self-judgment is potentially on the verge of being lost. History is not being taught as zealously as it once was. Places like Hillsdale College or Liberty or Regent, there are some places where it is being taught. I had fantastic history teachers, which is what I majored in at Texas A&M because I knew I was going to do 4 years in the Army, at least, and if we were at war when my 4 years were up, I would have continued to serve.

But our students don't know history anymore. Why? Because President Carter decided that the Federal Government intervention into education, even though it is not an enumerated power under the Constitution, and it is, therefore, a power that is reserved to the States and the people and not the Federal Government, we have been acting extra-constitutionally, that means outside the Constitution, for quite some time going back to the late seventies under President Carter.

Our students have suffered as a result. They don't know history. Someone had advised me that even though history is not an important part of the federally mandated test, there are things that in different subjects are mandated by the Federal Government. Here is an element that students should know about the subject. I was advised that the one area that the federally mandated test, the only area historically that students were required to know, is that when the United States dropped two atomic bombs, one on Hiroshima and one on Nagasaki, it raised serious questions about the United States' morality, which is absolutely fictitious unless the ignorance of the authors requiring such a thing did not allow them to know the truth.

The truth is that Truman was advised that because the Emperor of Japan had ordered the Japanese people to fight for their homes to the death, then the Allied Forces would have to land in Japan. They would have had to move across the country, and it was considered a very fair and possibly quite conservative estimate that there could be 10 million people losing their lives if Allied Forces had to land and were fighting the Japanese people home to home to home.

So the morality of the issue is: Would we morally be better off in this absolute war that the Japanese started