

disinformation that I wasn't even privy to serves only the interest of our shared adversaries. This happens to be the behavior of cowards. And, of course, it should stop. As I started out my remarks today, we have seen this movie before. It didn't end well for those who relied on a disinformation dossier in 2016.

Finally, the truth is slowly starting to come out and the FBI, the media, and the Members of Congress who touted the disinformation look pretty bad today. I started out by saying we need to learn from history—I believe it was George Santayana who said something like that maybe 100 years ago—or you are going to repeat the mistakes of the past. Let's not repeat this history. Instead, we ought to be learning from it. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROMNEY). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

(Mr. ROUNDS assumed the chair.)

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

COVID-19 HEROES

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I want to talk about two topics today. One topic I was reminded of when I was in St. Joseph and Joplin, MO, over the weekend, talking to healthcare providers and volunteers of all kinds who are trying to do what they can to help us emerge from this pandemic stronger than we were to start with.

Certainly, what first comes to mind is the healthcare workers themselves—the medical workers, doctors, nurses, and support staff whom we have relied on from the very first moments that we began to realize that this virus was bigger than any health issue we have dealt with in a long time. We are still depending on them today. At some point someone can run out of some of the capacity and steam that you have to do the job that needs to be done, but we see these heroes continuing to step up, and some giving their lives.

Billy Birmingham, in Kansas City, was an emergency medical technician. He was with the Kansas City Fire Department, and he died of coronavirus in April. His son described Billy as selfless. He said Billy had decided he wanted to find new ways to help people. So he reinvented himself as an EMT when he was in his 40s so he could help others. He was an EMT for about 22 years.

We see the emergency medical technicians and first responders out there saving lives, bringing people into the hospital who are in a desperate situation, infectious, as many of them can be, and at sort of the height of suffering and unable to do much to help you help them, but we see that happening. We are benefited by it, and we see a lot of sacrifice in the community.

There are people such as Heather Black at the Harry S. Truman Memorial Hospital in Columbia, MO. She donated 623 hand-sewn masks for her colleagues and the veterans at the facility whom they care for. She brought her sewing machine to work so that she could make masks during her free time before and after her shift and during her breaks. One of her colleagues said: You have to be just literally awed by somebody that dedicated to helping people. Remember that she is making masks, and between the breaks she is helping care for the patients at the veterans hospital.

We see people finding different ways of being heroes in their communities. Dozens of people in Cape Girardeau, in May, decided to put a parade together for residents of the veterans home who were unable to have visitors. The veterans got to the windows and the dozens of people came by doing what they could to present a Memorial Day kind of parade. There are groups in St. Louis and other places, but particularly the one I was thinking about in St. Louis. They went around and collected food and personal care items, and they took those to people who had lost their jobs, who were suffering from the pandemic, who were isolated in their efforts.

I talked today to a number of people in the behavioral health area who understand that, at moments like this, people who have behavioral health issues have logical reasons for those issues to begin to pile up on them. You are isolated. You are sick or somebody in your family is sick. You have lost a job or somebody you know has lost a job. And those issues get bigger.

Then we see businesses who figure out how to use their unique set of resources, whatever that might be, to make things happen. When we find it hard to get hand sanitizers, a number of distilleries went into the hand sanitizer business. Anheuser-Busch, which is not a distillery but a brewery, used their brewery facilities to produce more than a half-million bottles of hand sanitizer and then they used their distribution system to get those half million bottles in the communities and places around the country where they would do the most good.

Bass Pro Shops, in my hometown of Springfield, donated 1 million face masks to healthcare workers on the frontlines. From delivering truckloads of critical supplies to simply checking on our neighbors, there are thousands of stories to tell in towns across Missouri and in towns in Georgia, where the Presiding Officer lives. There are people doing all they can to make this terrible situation less terrible and this challenging situation less challenging. We are grateful to them.

I know a number of people have come to the floor today to talk about those heroes and how they serve us.

COVID-19 TESTING DEVELOPMENT

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, the second topic I wanted to talk about is that we spend lots of time discussing what to do in this next phase of dealing with the coronavirus legislation. I want to talk about something we did earlier and the results it has produced.

In April, Senator ALEXANDER and I proposed that the National Institutes of Health create a "Shark Tank" program for scientists to develop new technologies for COVID-19 testing. NIH set up that program very quickly. We gave them the authority and money to do it, but they did in a week what they normally would have done in 6 months. They have been working overtime ever since with the private sector and with BARDA, or the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority, to meet the tremendous need for quicker and earlier tests.

The Presiding Officer and I talked about this just the other day. The President is right in his view that some of these tests only tell us information that gives us more data. We need tests that are quicker and have an immediate response. When you go get a test and you don't have a response for 5 days, that really doesn't do anybody a whole lot of good. You have been moving around for 5 days, maybe without symptoms, and you don't know that you are continuing to spread the virus. If you had known in 5 minutes or 15 minutes what it took you 5 days to find out, how many less people would have gotten the disease if you had known what you needed to know when you needed to know it?

We need tests that give accurate results in minutes, that are easy to take, and are inexpensive—tests that may cost from a \$1 to \$5 or \$6, that give you an immediate response. So that is what we asked of this program at the National Institutes of Health to work on, to put together scientists, researchers, and engineers to come up with their boldest ideas.

So far, since April 29, 650 applications have been submitted with ideas from single individuals or businesses who say: I think this would work. That would be sort of the starting point. By the way, a lot more than 650 people had "this will work" ideas, but when NIH sat down and looked, they came up with 650 applicants they thought needed a careful look.

Thirty-one of those projects have gone into phase 1 testing. They go through a process of validation, seeing if the likelihood that this will work is as great as what the scientists, engineers, and technologists who populate the shark tank thought it would be.

NIH announced that 20 of those projects would be considered even more closely over a few weeks in phase 2, and just last week, NIH selected 7 companies that would start scaling up production of their technology. Taxpayers are investing about \$250 million to help those tests get out there quickly. These tests could be available as early