

As Norm puts it, he never even knew a Republican or a Lutheran before he left home for college.

Yet this middle-class son of Brooklyn became one of the best senators the people of Minnesota have ever known. And he has always made sure to give them all the credit, even when the voters would have excused him for taking a little credit of his own.

Another great American politician said the U.S. Constitution was “the work of many heads and many hands.” Norm’s always had the same attitude about his own career. He is grateful for the opportunities he has had. He gives it everything he has. Then he is grateful when his efforts on behalf of others succeed, which is more often than not.

The day he got here he was asked how it felt. He had a simple response. He said he was humbled by the opportunity. “I believe that what I can do well, my gift,” he said, “is to serve people, and now I have this incredible opportunity to serve as a United States Senator.” Six years later, on the day he conceded defeat, his first impulse was again to thank others. He thanked his staff for the long hours and hard work they had put in on his behalf. And he said he would always be grateful to and humbled by the people had of Minnesota who had given him the honor to serve, and even more grateful for the patience and understanding they showed over these last several months.

It wasn’t the outcome he wanted. It wasn’t the outcome that his Republican friends and colleagues in the Senate wanted. But we couldn’t have expected anything less from Norm Coleman than the class and graciousness he showed in the closing act of this phase in his career as a public servant.

As I said, Norm came to be a Republican Senator from Minnesota by a rather unusual route. He was a campus activist in the 1960s, and a rather prominent one at that. After college, Norm earned a scholarship to the University of Iowa Law School and came to love the people and the place.

From there, he went on to Minnesota to serve in the Minnesota Attorney General’s Office. Later, he would use his talents as chief prosecutor for the state of Minnesota, and then as mayor of St. Paul, first as a Democrat and then as a Republican. In what has to go down as one of the more remarkable feats of bipartisanship in American politics, Norm has the distinction of serving as the 1996 cochairman of the committee to reelect Bill Clinton and 2000 State chairman for George W. Bush’s campaign.

As a big-city mayor, Norm didn’t disappoint. He showed a real knack for bringing business and government together. He led a downtown revitalization effort, created thousands of jobs, brought the National Hockey League to St. Paul and fought to keep taxes low. He left office with a 74 percent approval rating, after two terms that a local magazine called “by almost any measure . . . an unqualified success.”

In 2002, Norm was still thinking about how he could serve on the State level when he got a call from the President asking him if he would run for the Senate. He accepted the challenge and then he fought a tough and principled campaign against our late beloved colleague Paul Wellstone before Paul’s tragic death shortly before the end of that tumultuous campaign. Norm grieved with the rest of Minnesota at Paul’s passing, defeated his replacement in the race, and was sworn in 2 months later as Laurie, their children, Jake and Sarah, and Norm’s parents, Beverly and Norman, looked on. Laurie summed up the day like this: “It’s incredible to think that he has this opportunity.”

Norm didn’t waste a day. An instant hit at Republican events across the country, he kept up the same torrid pace in the Senate he had set in his come-from-behind win the previous November. He pushed legislation that benefited Minnesotans and all Americans, and he never let up.

Norm spoke the other day about some of his accomplishments here. He mentioned a few areas in particular, including U.N. oversight, working with Minnesota farmers, and his work on energy independence. But he said his best ideas came from the people of Minnesota.

He was being humble. In a single term, Norm put together a remarkable record of results. On energy and conservation, he played a key role in establishing the renewable fuels standard. He helped pass an extension of the tax credits for wind, biomass, and other renewable fuels. He secured loan guarantees and tax incentives for clean coal power; protected fish populations; and supported conservation programs to protect Minnesota’s lakes, rivers, and woodlands.

He led major anticorruption efforts, including a groundbreaking exposure of fraud at the U.N. He exposed more than a billion dollars in wasteful Medicare spending and uncovered serial tax evasion by defense contractors. Norm was also instrumental in passing the Conquer Childhood Cancer Act which increased funding for childhood cancer research.

The proud son of a World War II veteran, Norm has been a true friend to all veterans. The first piece of legislation he introduced was a bill requiring the Pentagon to cover the travel expenses of troops heading home from service abroad. Norm worked on a bipartisan basis to establish the first-ever national reintegration program for returning troops. And he worked hard, in the early years after 9/11, to strengthen homeland security.

Norm Coleman’s service in the Senate has been marked by the same high level of distinction that has marked everything else he has done in three decades of public service. Today we honor our colleague and friend for that long career that we hope is far from over. And we punctuate an incredibly hard

fought campaign that some people thought might never end.

In the end, it didn’t turn out the way many of us had hoped it would. But none of us were surprised by the graciousness with which Norm Coleman accepted the verdict, and all of us can celebrate the 6 years of dedicated service he gave to the people of Minnesota.

After another setback some years back, Norm Coleman said that real defeat isn’t getting knocked down. It is not getting back up. And I have no doubt that this is not the last we will hear from Norm Coleman. He already has a legacy to be proud of. But it is a legacy that is still very much in the works. More chapters will be written. And they will bear the same strong hand and commitment to people and principle that he has shown in every other endeavor of a long and distinguished career.

In private conversation Senator Coleman often talks about resting on the truths of his faith. It is an untold Washington story—the glue of faith that holds this city together. So as I say goodbye to Senator Coleman, I would like to do so with words from the Torah that he knows well:

The Lord bless you, and keep you; The Lord make His face shine on you, And be gracious to you; The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace.

And on behalf of the entire Senate family, I want to thank Norm for his service. We will miss him.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period of morning business for 95 minutes, with the Senator from Illinois, Mr. DURBIN, controlling the first 5 minutes, the Republicans controlling the next 60 minutes, and the majority controlling the final 30 minutes, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Illinois.

NORM COLEMAN

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, first let me associate myself with the remarks of the Republican leader, Senator MCCONNELL, relative to our colleague Norm Coleman. I enjoyed serving with Norm. We worked together on a number of issues during our service in the Senate. I was actively supporting his opponent AL FRANKEN in the Minnesota race. I thought, as Senator MCCONNELL noted, that Senator Coleman showed extraordinary grace in conceding after the latest Minnesota Supreme Court decision. It was a relief to all involved and to the people of