

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil," said the political leader and writer Edmund Burke, "is for good men to do nothing." Individual responsibility for our own actions and instilling a sense of shared values play a crucial part in solving our country's problems. We need to look for common ground combining the great themes in American values—personal responsibility, freedom, individualism, respect, trustworthiness, fairness and caring. We must return to the ideas of our Founding Fathers who spoke unashamedly of virtue. They understood that without a virtuous people the country does not function well, and that without virtue individuals cannot realize either their own or the common good.

FAMILIES

Central to our efforts to take back our streets, our neighborhoods and our homes is strengthening the family. As Barbara Bush said, "Your success as a family—our success as a society—depends not on what happens at the White House, but on what happens inside your house." Like many Americans, I believe that the breakdown in families is at the root of many of our social ills. I am struck by how, in discussions of wide-ranging public policy questions, we often come back to strengthening the family as the best way to remedy the ills. Questions dealing with values, morals, and character should be addressed first in the family and then in society.

THE COMMUNITY

We need to develop and encourage community institutions that reinforce and strengthen the traditional values. Many familiar institutions work at this everyday—churches, scout groups, service clubs, to name a few. People can contribute in many ways—volunteering at a local Boys or Girls Club, helping out with a church youth group, setting up afterschool programs for "latch-key" kids, or supporting the character education programs that have sprung up to help young people think and talk about moral behavior and core values. In the words of the African proverb, "It takes a whole village to raise a child."

THE GOVERNMENT

Public officials deal with improving values in a variety of ways—from the White House conference on ways to teach character, the Congress struggling to find ways to keep pornography off the Internet, to public calls for teenage curfews and school prayers. Many politicians push government programs to strengthen values, including family and medical leave, earned income tax credits for the working poor, income tax credits for children, anti-crime efforts, and reforming welfare by emphasizing work and responsibility.

I believe that government can solve few of the core cultural issues that bother most Americans, but it can play an important secondary role. Congress can, for example, support local anti-crime efforts or help states improve anti-drug programs, and we should make sure that in the current budget-cutting climate important programs with proven results are not gutted. Lawmakers must also be careful to look at how broad legislation impacts on families, children, community, and values—for example, making sure we assess whether a certain tax policy would tend to strengthen families or weaken them.

CONCLUSION

In talking with many foreign visitors, I find what grips their imagination about America is not our affluence or military power, or even our clogged freeways and high crime rates. What really impresses them are

the values upon which our system is built. These values include not only liberty and individual freedom but also individual responsibility and a sense of community purpose. One visitor said to me the other day that when we as a nation depart from these values, we do so at our peril.

I am encouraged by the increased discussion in our country over character and values, and the consideration of what kind of people we want to be. This country has a marvelous power of self-correction, and my hope is that the process is now underway. A collective effort on the part of individuals, families, communities, and public officials can result in tremendous change. We often think of steps we should take to make America more prosperous. It is even more important to think of ways to make America safe, moral, and just.

A TRIBUTE TO JIM HARKINS

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 1996

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, as chance would have it, the end of 1995 brought about not only the elimination of the Interstate Commerce Commission but the retirement from the Regular Common Carrier Conference [RCCC] of a friend to many of us, Jim Harkins.

While Jim has had a long and distinguished career in the freight transportation industry, including stints in the railroad industry and with a major shipper, many of us first came to know him in his capacity from 1967 through 1985 as executive director of the Traffic Department of the American Trucking Association and of the National Motor Freight Traffic Association. It was probably from Jim that many of us who know anything about freight classification learned it.

In 1985, Jim became executive director of the RCCC. In that capacity, he has been an articulate, knowledgeable, and effective spokesman from the less-than-truckload segment of the motor carrier industry.

Although Jim is leaving RCCC, I am sure that we will continue to hear from him on matters related to freight transportation in this country. I also hope that Jim and his wife Lucille will have more opportunity to enjoy a relaxed life in Maryland and Florida with their four children, and of course, their grandchildren.

It has been indeed a great pleasure for this gentleman from West Virginia to have worked closely with Jim Harkins. On behalf of the many members of the Subcommittee on Surface Transportation, and the full Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, who know Jim, I wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

MEDICARE REFORM

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 1996

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member highly commends to his colleagues the following two excellent editorials which appeared in the Norfolk Daily News on January 2 and 3, 1996.

[From the Norfolk Daily News, Jan. 2, 1996]

MEDICARE OUTLAYS MUST HAVE LIMIT

Medicare was not conceived as a welfare program. But those who now argue for taxpayers to make up any differences between actual costs of Medicare and the premiums that beneficiaries pay are treating it that way.

If a similar philosophy prevails early in the next century when there are too-few workers to sustain benefits at projected levels without turning to Uncle Sam, then Social Security will also be in that "welfare" category.

It is important not to accept either of those programs as general welfare obligations of the U.S. Treasury, financed by taxpayers either through higher taxation or by more borrowing. Social Security and Medicare were conceived as programs that would depend on contributions by the beneficiaries themselves, who could afford to pay the equivalent of insurance premiums during their working years, and, in the case of Medicare, pay modest premiums during retirement.

In the case of Social Security, that has worked. It has been a struggle, however, to make sure that political promises to beneficiaries were matched by legislative action to adjust "premiums"—in the form of payroll taxes—to keep the system solvent. The struggle continues.

More than a difference in total outlays is involved in the contest between the White House plan for Medicare, which proposes spending of \$97 billion less than would otherwise be projected and the plan proposed by Republicans in Congress, which projects spending about \$200 billion less.

The difference is that the GOP plan puts a ceiling on the outlays, and fixed specific dollar amounts that would not be exceeded. That would bar further tapping of taxpayer resources. The White House plan takes a different approach, though also claiming to slow spending growth. It projects some savings but includes no provisions to enforce them. Greater demands on the system than projected would simply be made up by shifting the extra costs to taxpayers at large.

That has become the traditional way for the prevailing majorities in Washington to handle federal programs: Enact a formula for benefits, then tax or borrow to meet the overall demand. Setting and enforcing a ceiling on expenditures has been something to resist.

If that pattern were to be followed in the future in the government's other major insurance program—Social Security—trillions in debt limits would not be enough. The budgeteers would have to begin thinking in quadrillions. Better to fix limits right now.

[From the Norfolk Daily News, Jan. 3, 1996]

PLENTY OF BLAME TO GO AROUND

At the Social Security Administration office in the Washington suburb of Woodlawn, Md., 100 of the federal workers idled by the budget impasse staged a small demonstration. "Furlough Newt," proclaimed one of the placards displayed. Another said, "Give Newt the boot, not the loot." Still another was less focused on the speaker, but put the blame on Capitol Hill: "Congress we have a contract with America, too."

If the majority ruled among the elected policymakers in the federal establishment, the conflict which found the government partially shut down would have been resolved quickly. But a congressional majority is not enough. One man's veto—the President's—can mean that a super-majority is needed in Congress if legislators are to work their will.

Speaker Gingrich has attempted to use the congressional majority's power to get the

Clinton administration to accept a balanced budget in 2002, Medicare reform and modest reductions in taxation—all of them being goals which Mr. Clinton also proclaimed at various times. There is a sharp and continuing dispute about the details, of course.

An objective view of the situation should lead to the conclusion that the contending parties are equally accountable for the failure to reach an agreement, whatever the arguments.

Why should the federal workers only blame Newt when it is obvious that the president could have avoided the shutdown by accepting a compromise? Of course, it would not be seemly for them to be parading in front of the White House with banners calling for Bill, their boss, to give in to Capitol Hill.

Popular opinion, fed by sad stories of the lives disrupted momentarily by the partial federal shutdown, seems to reflect the idea that all the blame should be heaped on Newt and his cohorts. Who elected them, anyway? Only a majority of the voters in their districts, which is as good a claim to legitimate power as the president himself has.

A more presidential president, one willing to acknowledge that there is wisdom on the east end of Pennsylvania Avenue, would have found a way to end this impasse long before it became so disruptive.

TRIBUTE TO A HALF-CENTURY OF HERBLOCK—POLITICAL CAR- TOONIST AND POLITICAL CON- SCIENCE

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 1996

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, this past Sunday the Washington Post dedicated the Outlook Section of the newspaper to its outstanding editorial cartoonist, Herb Block—Herblock—in appropriate recognition of his 50 years of cartooning for the Post. In 1946 Herb accepted the offer to join the Washington Post, and for the past half-century, we have been blessed or—at least in the view of some—cursed with his wit, his humor, and his principles.

The selection of his cartoons from the past 50 years, which was included in the Outlook Section, brought back memories of the high points and low points of the political history of our Nation. Looking through these cartoons has brought Herb's wonderful gift into dramatic perspective for me. With a few well drawn lines and a few well chosen words, he has the ability to convey the essence of an entire complex political issue and highlight the absurdities and inconsistencies.

But the laughter is never at the expense of the message. This is not humor for the sake of humor, but wit with a point. I admire Herb's humor, but even more I admire his principles. His cartoons always reflect his strongly held point of view, and I must say that most of the time I am in perfect agreement with him.

Mr. Speaker, a few years ago when I was chairman of the House subcommittee conducting the investigation of fraud and mismanagement at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Herb did a number of delightful and insightful cartoons about the HUD scandal. At that time, I invited Herb to join me for lunch at the Member's dining room. We spent a delightful hour or more talking about his

background and highlights of his career. He mentioned then that he generally avoids spending time with those of us whom he cartoons, but I was delighted that he made an exception for me that day. It was an engaging experience that I still remember fondly.

Mr. Speaker, we in the Congress seem to find ourselves the frequent focus of Herb's sharp wit and his sharper pen. This past year, and particularly these past 19 days of Government shutdown, have provided him with abundant material, which he has exploited with this typical skill. In the past few days, as well as throughout the last half-century, Herb's humor and his principled point of view are important in keeping political issues in perspective. If this were Japan, I am certain that Herblock would be officially declared a "National Treasure." He is a national treasure, and I invite my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to him for his contribution to our national political debate and to the strength of our democracy.

Mr. Speaker, Kate Graham—the chairman of the Executive Committee of the Washington Post Co. who has had extensive experience and frequent exasperation with Herb—paid homage to Herblock in a wonderful column in Sunday's Outlook. I ask that her column be placed in the RECORD, and I urge my colleagues to read it.

[From the Washington Post, Dec. 31, 1995]

A TIGER BY THE TAIL—THE TURBULENT
PLEASURES OF LIFE WITH HERB

(By Katharine Graham)

My mother had a saying: "Any man worth marrying is impossible to live with." Why does this make me think of my glorious life and times with Herblock, one of the greatest ornaments to The Post and to all of journalism? Underneath his genius for cartooning and writing lies a modest, sweet, aw-shucks personality. Underneath that lies a layer of iron and steel. For the publishers and editors over him—or under him, as it would be more accurate to say—it's like having a tiger by the tail.

Herb started out in his hometown of Chicago doing editorial cartoons for the Chicago Daily News in 1929. Four years later he became a syndicated editorial cartoonist for the Newspaper Enterprise Association Service in Cleveland, where he won the first of his three Pulitzer Prizes.

When World War II came along, Herb went into the Army and produced and edited a feature service for Army newspapers. After the war, Herb was passing through Washington. A chance encounter led to a meeting with my father, Eugene Meyer, who happened to be desperately looking for a cartoonist for The Post. Herb provided a few samples and in return, my father gave Herb a subscription to the paper. "So you can see how you like us," my father explained.

Evidently the attraction was mutual. Herb arrived at The Post the same week that my husband, Phil Graham, arrived in January of 1946. The extraordinary quality of Herb's eye, his insights and sharp comments immediately stood out. When The Post was struggling for its existence, Herb was one of its major assets, as he has been throughout his 50 years here. The Post and Herblock are forever intertwined. If The Post is his forum, he helped create it. And he has been its shining light.

Herb fought for and earned a unique position at the paper: one of complete independence of anybody and anything. Journalistic enterprises run best when writers and editors have a lot of autonomy. But Herb's case is extreme. And because he's a genius, it works.

Since he arrived at The Post, five editors and five publishers all have learned a car-

dinal rule: Don't mess with Herb. He's just as tough within the confines of The Post as he is in the political world outside.

Herb's independence evolved gradually. In the early years, he made several sketches for the day's cartoon and dutifully submitted them to the editorial page editor to choose. When the editor was away, Herb began showing them to a preferred group of reporters and editorial writers whose opinions he valued. Gradually, the editor's role was dropped altogether.

Of course, this has produced a few tense moments. In 1952, during the Eisenhower-Stevenson campaign, The Post endorsed Ike, but Herb supported Stevenson and continued to jab away at the general. Which point of view do you think made the bigger impression with readers? Finally, Herb's cartoon was dropped by the paper for the last days of the campaign. Since his work continued to be syndicated in other papers, The Post looked silly. The Washington Daily News ran a headline: "Where's Mr. Block? One of D.C.'s Top Drawers Is Missing."

Even earlier, Phil protested Herb's cartoons on Congress. He feared they made The Post look as though it was ridiculing and undermining the strength of that institution. "I think we should put that little 'Congress' character back in the ink bottle," Phil wrote.

Back came three eloquent pages from Herb including, "When a majority of Congress fails to act, or acts badly, I think it's fair to be critical of Congress."

I too sometimes opened the paper and gasped at Herb's cartoons, particularly during Watergate when we were so embattled on all fronts. But I had learned not to interfere. And anyway, most of the time we're on the same wavelength. Even when we aren't, I should confess, I generally find myself laughing uproariously at the cartoon that has caused my apprehension. In this sense, Herb always wins.

Herb studies events and reacts to them in his own way. His point of view is liberal, and his instincts are common-sensical. But his common sense has a special twist. As economist Ken Galbraith once put it: "While Herb appreciates virtue, his real interest is in awfulness." His mind turns to the rascals, the phonies and the frauds. He has pursued them for 50 years without ever flagging except for time taken off for a couple of heart attacks and operations. But these ordeals were probably nothing compared with the distress he has caused a number of other people, such as President Nixon and Sen. Joseph McCarthy. It was Herb who is said to have coined the term McCarthyism, using it on a tar barrel.

Herb's unique ability to crystalize what is right—or, more likely, wrong—about an issue or a person has often influenced the course of events in Washington. Naturally, the strength and impact of his cartoons often provoke strong reactions from readers who disagree. Part of the job of Post publishers is to defend Herb and the paper from these reactions.

"Since Herblock is the most gifted political cartoonist of our times," Phil wrote one reader, "by definition he therefore cannot be an organization man. Being an old reactionary and individualist, I am all for people who simply have to be individualistic. . . . I think—though it will amaze you—that Herblock probably considers himself frustrated and suffocated by our policy."

I too have written my share of explanatory letters. One, in 1989, said that to cartoon is to caricature, and people who are very gifted at cartooning sometimes offend. "Most of the time, however, cartoons illuminate or amuse," the letter went on to say. I doubt the irate reader was completely satisfied, but the statement, I believe, is true.