They helped lead an incredible team, along with my deputy chief of staff, Kim Brisky, who always had an opportunity to make sure that we stayed on the straight and narrow, who always was there for us when we needed a pick-me-up. And so, Kim, who is, I am sure, going on to bigger and better things, she was absolutely fantastic.

My deputy director, Philippe Melin, actually has been with me as long as anyone. And I will say that he may sometimes rub people the wrong way, but I have always appreciated his passion for the district, his ability to throw himself into any particular issue, to fight on behalf of children when it comes to education; whether it be building coalitions, Philippe has actually been super.

My legislative director, Matt Diller, is that quiet individual that made sure the trains were running on time.

Our communications director, Brad Stewart, probably held up a camera more times than I care to remember, and I apologize to him for messing up probably more times than I needed to. Ultimately, when it came to our social media and actually getting the word out, Brad was vitally important in making sure that our message was getting out to the people that it needed to.

We had an outstanding staff in Washington that worked hard to amplify the voice of each and every constituent, and Jordan Heyman, who was really focused on a lot of healthcare work, came to us from the campaign, but really rolled up her sleeves and was fantastic.

Noah Barger, Noah—or Jason, as he is sometimes referred to—always had a smile on his face, was probably one of the rocks in that office.

Chelsea Caulfield, who is truly the spark plug of our team, and would come into the office to see a smile from Chelsea, who made sure that I was where I needed to be and when I needed to be there.

Brittany Consolo, who came into our office. Time and again, people would always comment about how kind Brittany was, and so, for her, I say that we know that she has got a very bright future as well.

And the hardest working district office in the country:

Eric Miller, who really was what I consider one of the leaders of our casework, is one of the guys that put his head down day in and day out. We would not be or could not have gotten to the 1.250 cases were it not for Eric:

Victoria Williams, who has a special talent when it comes to not only working with people and connecting, especially with those on domestic abuse and the like, which was an area that she threw herself into;

Peter Collins, who had more spreadsheets available than I think anybody else, but Peter, again, one of my favorite Hellenic individuals in the office:

Scott Lietzow was a passionate advocate and worked with our veterans day in and day out and helped put our Veterans Advisory Board together, and he worked with them day in and day out to make a difference in their lives:

Allie Breschi, a proud Denison graduate, was helping Brad out in terms of our communications and did a super job;

Andy Chiero also worked with our veterans:

Alma Herrera, who, I think was really a dynamo, and we missed her as she went off to finish up some schooling;

Natalie Szmyd came in and filled the role and helped out with our Polish community:

Bobby Miller also was one of those individuals that exceeded expectations right from the beginning;

Jordan Richter and Nikki West; Ginny Wood, who helped out with our seniors; Justo Arellano and Martin Lopez really were absolutely fantastic in rounding out our team.

So again, I think you are only as good as the team that you have put together, and I am super proud of the team that I was able to put together, that really worked tirelessly on behalf of the constituents of the 10th District.

One of the things I am proud of is that lifelong Democrats would come up to us and say, you know, thanks for helping us out on this, and I think that we have got to talk to you about, you know, when you do something good for us. But ultimately, our job was, regardless of whom you are elected by, I made sure that our team knew that we represented 100 percent of the people.

This team really cared so much about the work that we were doing and made a real difference in the lives of literally everyone that they had an opportunity to touch.

But some people that I think are important to thank are my colleagues. This is a pretty remarkable place, with some really remarkable people, and I want to thank them for their friendship and the great work that we were able to accomplish together. I will miss them dearly, those on the other side of the aisle as well, because most of our legislation, almost every piece of legislation that we offered, was with bipartisan support. I kept telling my team, if we couldn't get those on the other side of the aisle to sign up, this bill wasn't going anywhere.

I also want to thank the people who make this body work, the unsung heroes, the folks down in the wood shop, the folks behind the rostrum, the people that make Congress work. Really, these are the folks that respect the institution, and the institution will move on 10 years from now and, we hope, hundreds of years from now.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the last group that I want to thank is my family. I have three beautiful children and a wife who is a saint to allow me to do this day in and day out. So, for Harper, Bobby, and Honor, thank you for giving up the time. I am sorry that I was not there, but we have a new chapter; and so we know, if this is the worst thing

that happens in terms of our time away from the Congress, we have great new things ahead for us.

And for my bride, Danielle, sweetheart, I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to do this. I know that you oftentimes were the one making sure that the trains ran on time back at home, and for that I will forever be grateful.

So from day one, this has been about working together to get the job done, making the Federal Government more efficient, effective, and accountable, and restoring strong American leadership on the global stage.

When I was growing up, my parents gave me a plaque that said: "Your integrity determines your identity." As a small-business owner, I learned that nothing gets done without teamwork.

□ 1845

If we want to achieve anything as a nation, we must commit to advancing commonsense, bipartisan solutions to break through this gridlock. That is why I am so proud to have consistently been ranked one of the most independent, bipartisan Members in the United States Congress. This commitment to genuine bipartisanship has been the key to some of our biggest successes that we have had over the last 2 years. It is also what has helped us to become effective on amplifying the independent voice for the 10th District of Illinois.

I strongly believe that America's best days, Mr. Speaker, are ahead of us. Together, I am confident that we can ensure a more prosperous and free future for our children and for future generations.

To the people of the 10th District, I offer my sincere thanks for the opportunity of a lifetime to be able to represent you in the United States Congress. It has truly been the greatest honor of my life.

To my staff, again, I want to say "thank you" for all that you do. It has been an honor to be able to work with you.

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

THE FIRST 100 DAYS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, before I begin my remarks, I think it's only appropriate to congratulate, thank, and wish all the best to my friend. BOB DOLD.

BOB, you have earned a reputation around here. You may not know it, but I am going to tell it to you: I think you are the hardest working person here. I listened to a number of your accomplishments. It is not only representative of your thoughtfulness and your desire to serve the country, but it is

this integrity of work ethic that has impressed me and so many other Members here.

I know this departure is a bit bittersweet. Sweet in a sense that you are now free to be with your primary purpose in life: your children, your family, and your mission together as a family; and a little bit bitter in that you are going to miss us and we will miss you. I thank you for your leadership.

Mr. Speaker, regarding my remarks tonight, I want to begin with a little anecdote. Vice President-elect Mike Pence was a Member of the House of Representatives. I overlapped some time and service with him. He was a friend and, in some ways, a mentor. He came to speak to a group of us recently, and Vice President-elect Pence had this to say: Buckle up.

Buckle up because, Mr. Speaker, the next 100 days are going to be intense. Beginning in January, we will have a new President and a new Congress. The next 100 days not only will be intense, but it will also create possibilities. That next 100 days will set a new architecture for government and a repurposed relationship between the people and the state.

Mr. Speaker, for far too long, partisan paralysis has plagued this Congress leading to stagnation in Washington. We know it and the people know it. With this historic and transformative election, the playbooks of both political parties that had been used for decades are tattered and lay in shreds; and rightfully so.

This transition of Presidential administrations has unleashed the potential for a genuine reimagining of public policy, and it is time for the Nation to adopt a more inclusive model. Power that has been concentrated in Washington and on Wall Street has left millions of Americans feeling left behind and at the margins of what many regard as a corrupt and elitist world. Millions of Americans face stagnating wages, downward mobility, and an increased cost-of-living. Income inequality has risen while, at the same time, the small business sector has been seriously harmed. This must change.

So what are we looking at?

We are looking at this: we are looking at new healthcare horizons, new trade and tax policies aimed at restoring the decimated manufacturing sector, returning jobs and returning dignity and social cohesion to large swaths of our Nation. An economic system of inclusion and empowerment capable of generating widespread participation is now the new center ground of this country.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in the time that we have, I would like to survey multiple public policy areas that are in need of deep replenishment, and I would like to speak about the opportunity of possibilities that lies before us.

So right out of the gate, what are we going to do?

Congress will launch a significant healthcare reform initiative. Mr.

Speaker, we all know this, but it needs to be said once again: skyrocketing cost and diminished choice is the residue of poor policy, and we can do better. At the same time, we cannot default back to the previous arrangement which left way too many persons behind. While there might be a fierce fight in this body on the specifics of reform proposal, broad agreement will likely coalesce around two things: protecting persons from inhuman market forces while, at the same time, incentivizing the best of market innovation to bring about change.

Americans with spiraling healthcare costs know that a new healthcare construct is needed. To address these concerns, the next approach must reinvigorate health insurance with the goals of lowering price, protecting the sick, and improving options. The next generation health savings account will be at the cornerstone of this effort restoring relationship, responsibility, and respect as drivers of healthcare policy.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Affordable Care Act, known as ObamaCare, has helped some people, yet, at the same time, it has hurt others. We often speak about repealing and replacing it, but perhaps it is time to speak about repealing it and replacing the repealand-replace language with new language that really underlies the principles that we all ought to be embracing. They are really three-fold; the first of which is relationship, responsibility, and respect.

Mr. Speaker, for persons who have had a gravely sick child, perhaps there is nothing more difficult than having to turn that child's care over to other persons. I recall when our daughter. Kathryn, was a little infant. My wife and I. with our daughter, walked to the door of the surgery room and then handed her over to the nurse. We had to let her go into the hands of people that we had to trust. She has had a long journey. She has had five major heart surgeries and nine total surgeries. But that very first moment where we turned our little baby over to the nurse was an extraordinarily poignant and deeply impactful one for my wife and me, made only better by the reality that that team of people that had been put around her genuinely cared and that we were in relationship with them. Relationship between the doctor and the patient, between a healthcare system and the person-not the commodity, but the person-is an absolutely critical first principle.

Mr. Speaker, a long time ago, I had a very severe headache. I was a young man, and I had to buy my insurance privately. I did so. I tried to be responsible. But because that headache was so intense, I decided: Well, I am going to have to seek a specialist.

Bypassing the family doctor in order to save myself \$50, I went to the ENT, the ear, nose, and throat surgeon. She told me that, after an x-ray, she couldn't really tell what the problem was and that they were going to need to do a CAT scan.

Immediately I launched into some questions. I said: Doctor, I know there is a problem with medical liability and there is an attempt by the medical establishment to create the conditions in which the potential for lawsuits is mitigated and there are a lot of tests to run.

She interrupts me. She says: Why are you telling me all this?

I said: Because, Doctor, I am paying for it. I have a major medical policy, what is called a catastrophic policy, with a very high deductible. This is coming out of my pocket. Do you really need the test?

She said: Oh, I see. Well, yes, I need the test; but now that you said that, I am just looking at your sinuses. So why don't we call a couple of places in town and ask them if they could widen the cross section of the image and give you a discount for doing so?

She had her assistant do that. In a minute, we found a facility that would actually discount the price based upon another type of test.

So what happened here?

I saved perhaps another \$75, the doctor got the tests that she needed, and perhaps, more importantly, the community resource was more properly allocated because I had a role in the decisionmaking process. Put in economic terms, I had an incentive in the allocation of that resource because I was paying for it. That is called responsibility.

Back to this idea of what we are coming to, particularly for the next generation, the younger generation, whereby we create and revitalize the whole health savings account policy apparatus. If you set a little money aside on a tax-deferred basis, then it helps you control the ordinary costs of health care, and, at the same time, if something goes wrong, you shouldn't have to be on the gurney in the hospital asking for a price list for the cheapest anesthesiologist. No, you are protected. That is the right methodology of thinking forward that will actually protect you when you are in vulnerable circumstances but empower you to take better control in relationship with your doctor and medical provider of those first-dollar costs.

That is what I think we can see coming as a cornerstone of the revival of our healthcare system. That is a start of a system we can regard with respect. It is relationship, responsibility, and respect. Those are the principles and the new cornerstones of health care moving forward.

Mr. Speaker, regarding infrastructure, another important policy area, broad bipartisan agreement exists around rebuilding our Nation's infrastructure. From airports to roads, to bridges, to information technology, new projects are on the horizon. I would add that sustainable energy should be on that list. As a public good, properly selected infrastructure improvements are a benefit to society at large.

Infrastructure can also be virtual, setting up systems for better interconnectivity. It also has implications for health care as we build out, for instance, innovative healthcare models. The challenge, of course, to all of us will be in financing and insuring the proper division between Federal, State, and local governments as well as with the private sector.

Mr. Speaker, the third policy area is spending. In an unprecedented legislative development, our government is moving forward on two budgets simultaneously. Those of us serving on the House Appropriations Committee have a very heavy lift. In a parallel process, we will fix up the current budget while creating a budget for the following year

While it is easy to speak about new ideas, plans to pay for them are the test of smart government. We must remain sober about spending. Deficit spending is a form of taxation—especially on the poor and seniors—when this debt that is run up is monetized. The good news is that this peculiar set of circumstances gives lawmakers—all of us—much more flexibility in creating genuinely creative policy outcomes.

Mr. Speaker, a fourth area I want to touch on is taxes. Tax is a broad issue that, like health care, has many thorny and complex considerations. I anticipate that Congress will move to solve tax anomalies that harm America's competitive standing in the world, including giveaways to multinational corporations. The Tax Code should reposition funds captured overseas to be brought back into America, and any reform should prioritize small business—the source of new jobs and the source of local economies.

This process should really be guided by a three-fold goal. First of all, fairness. Second, simplification. And the third is economic growth in order to produce revenues for the government.

□ 1900

First of all, let's touch on this issue of fairness. President-elect Trump, our new President, has called for doing away with a provision in the Tax Code called carried interest. I agree with him. If you are wealthy enough, you can basically take income and restructure it to be paid as capital gains. That means a higher income tax becomes a much lower tax through this mechanism. The vast majority of people in America can't do it. A few can. Closing this is not a panacea, necessarily, but it is a good first step. It points to a deeper principle; one that is called fairness.

When a person makes things with their own two hands, when they use the creative gifts of their intellect, this is an imprint of their own personal dignity, the dignity of work, that gift, that meaningful place where you can actually see the fruit of your own labor

So what is the first thing we do? We tax it. We call it earned income, while

another category of income called unearned gets a preferential rate. This is a discussion we need to have.

The second point, simplification. A few years back, we had a tax reform act here. It was controversial. A number of us voted for it, and it passed. Before doing that, I decided to run up the road and see someone who lives near where I do. His name is Warren Buffett. Now, Warren Buffett and I have different philosophical approaches on many things, but he was generous enough to welcome me to his office. We spent about an hour together. I wanted to get his particular perspective not only on that tax bill but on some other things.

In an interesting exchange, Mr. Buffett turned around to his credenza, pulled out a file, an old file, pulled out a single piece of paper, and said: JEFF, just do this, just do this. Put the Tax Code on a piece of paper. Simplification.

Now, a Tax Code, in reality, cannot always be cut. It has to be optimized. We have to run the government, we have to have revenues, but in a manner that does not deteriorate the ability of the economy, small business and others, to create jobs, and to provide the proper catalyst for economic growth. And that is the balance.

Mr. Speaker, let me turn to the issue of regulation. But before I do, can I inquire as to the amount of time that is left.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DONOVAN). The gentleman from Nebraska has 11 minutes remaining.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Let's touch upon the issue of regulation. Washington is readying to correct regulatory overreach that has constrained the ability of small business to flourish. For far too long, Washington has distorted markets and, most importantly, the imagination of people to find better solutions for themselves and for their neighbors. Government must play its role, but with constraints on its tendency to seize more power.

Mr. Speaker, I recently visited a 125-year-old bank in a small town called North Bend, Nebraska. It is an agriculture community. This bank is now in its fourth generation. The family was eager to show me something they had recently discovered. There is an architectural gym that had been covered over by a ceiling. In doing some remodeling, they found a hidden stained glass panel and gorgeous ornamentation on the various beams above. The bank is, rightly, proud to showcase this history and this beautiful symbol of a flourishing past.

The story began when all of the banks in the area in this town went under during the Great Depression. One of the local banks reorganized itself and came forward with a proposal to the community. It was this: If you stay with us, you stay with our bank, we will give you 50 cents on your dollar now and pay you back the rest over time.

Mr. Speaker, it took the family that owned that bank 20 years, but they paid every dime back to every member of that bank, without ever taking a dividend for themselves until that money was paid back. The original owner died shortly thereafter. He gave his word, and he got it done.

As a longstanding community institution, this local bank did not bring our Nation down in the financial crisis of 2008. It did not benefit from insider class privilege that enabled liar loans and high-risk collateralized debt negotiations. It did not help multinational banking conglomerates grow so large in hubris and reach that they nearly tanked our economy. At the same time, this small Nebraska bank is besieged by a regulatory overlay created by a crisis that it did not participate in. It is not fair.

So rightsizing regulation does not mean doing away with it, Mr. Speaker. It means what is sensible to protect the health and safety and well-being and create a fair playing field for everyone with minimal intrusion for maximum market functionality. There is a real cost to regulation, there is a real cost to no regulation, and there is a real cost to dumb regulation. We look forward to finding that balance once again.

Mr. Speaker, there are many other aspects that I could speak about regarding community revitalization and foreign policy, but I want to touch on an important debate that is under way now regarding our immigration system. Our immigration system is stretched. Laws have not been enforced, have led to chaos and dislocation, testing the natural generosity of Americans. Righting the legal system, stopping unscrupulous employers, and holding those who break the law to account are the start of restoring a humane and fair immigration policy.

In another small town right north of Omaha, Blair, Nebraska, it is nestled among the beautiful, rolling, wooded hills along the Missouri River. It is a traditional hub of agricultural activity as well. I am proud to represent them in the United States Congress.

There are several large manufacturing plants, and it is a very stable community, a community of very strong values, so much so that recently a Sunday school class of little children wrote to me about the need to help other impoverished children in countries across the world. Their letters were so touching and heartwarming. They demonstrated this enduring universal ideal that animates the moral imagination of Nebraska's young people and young people throughout the country.

But fast forward to a jarring criminal incident that took place a few months ago when three men were arrested in Blair driving nearly 90 miles per hour, with a loaded gun, stolen in Iowa. Two of them were Somali immigrants from Lincoln and Minneapolis here on visas. Both were wanted by the Department

of Homeland Security, and, between the two, had 34 previous arrests. The third man had 50 previous arrests. Even though the three have been in America long enough to have been arrested 94 times, they still requested a court interpreter. They abused their privilege. They do not belong in America.

America has a great capacity to be generous. But those who have received our generosity have an obligation. If you want to come to America, you will accept American values. If you want to come to America, you will work, provide for yourself, and integrate responsibly into dutiful citizenship. If you want to come to America, it is absolutely essential, and I and many others will stand with you. Celebrate your past culture, explain it to your new community, and, at the same time, celebrate your new one, as so many good people coming to our country do.

Our Nation has generally maintained a vibrant immigration system, and it has been an important part of the character and development of our country, but chaos, disorder, and crime undermine our ability to maintain that openness.

Of all of our country's pressing priorities, one of the most should be ensuring that the criminal justice system, the judicial system, and the immigration system work in concert to swiftly remove persons who have seriously transgressed our laws. This will help keep America safe and protect the integrity of immigration policy for those who want to come here, rebuild their lives, contribute to this wonderful society, and sustain America's generous impulse.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is appropriate to leave you tonight with some comments on the future of democracy. Some of what I talked about are ideals, but they give us a chance to envision and create a more inclusive government, economy, and society. Given that the future of democracy depends on quickly moving forward in the right direction, there is a mood of both curiosity as well as urgency here. Curiosity as to how we are going to translate this moment and urgency not to waste it.

Even though the election was a proxy for many open and deep philosophical divides in our country, now there is the possibility of great change. As President-elect Trump said on the night of his election: We must now come together, and I want to be President for all Americans.

President Obama very generously and graciously extended a hand of friendship to President Trump and said: President Bush was so extraordinarily helpful to me in this transition, I will work the same in any way he wants with President-elect Trump.

President Clinton, admitting that this was a painful loss said: It was a fair election. We need to give the new President-elect a chance, and we must unite

I think that set an important tone, Mr. Speaker.

We take it for granted, but this demonstrated the brilliance of how our democracy provides for this peaceful transition of power. In spite of some protest, we have witnessed the ongoing resiliency of America's governing traditions. In Congress, a great deal of ideological rigidity has been vaporized. Conversations among fellow Republicans and Democrats are yielding a sense of new horizons, which, if properly considered, will help shape a meaningful approach with the next White House.

Mr. Speaker, the next hundred days are critical. It is time to create the architecture of a 21st century government, one that is innovative, one that is effective, restoring the trust and confidence of the people.

Mr. Speaker, there is a great old movie starring Bette Davis called "All About Eve." In that classic Hollywood moment, she looks around to her guest with that smoldering gaze and says: "Fasten your seatbelts, it's going to be a bumpy night."

Mr. Speaker, real change is always bumpy. But when done with purpose and clarity, with the intention of doing good for others, we can allow ourselves to dream big again.

I yield back the balance of my time.

HONORING RANDY NEUGEBAUER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN), the chairman of the Space Subcommittee of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, it is a tremendous honor and privilege for me to stand up here to honor one of my colleagues, who is going to be retiring, Representative RANDY NEUGEBAUER, who is just finishing up his seventh term. He has been a great mentor. I am finishing up my first term in office.

I want to say how much the Neugebauers mean to me and my wife, Roxanne.

RANDY NEUGEBAUER and his beautiful wife, Dana, have been a tremendous addition not only to the Texas delegation up here in the United States Congress but also to the Republican spouses and Democrat spouses, who have worked so long and hard for many years to support their Member spouses.

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I just want to say how much I appreciate him, admire him, and wish him Godspeed. He is a great Christian man, and his wife is a great Christian woman. We appreciate so very, very much his long years of service to our country, to our Nation, to his district, as well as to his God.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. Babin) for his comments.

I now yield to another colleague from Texas, ROGER WILLIAMS.

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, I wish to join my colleagues down here tonight to honor a patriot and a good friend, Congressman RANDY NEUGEBAUER.

While your retirement is well-deserved, RANDY, your departure is, certainly, a loss not only to us as your friends, but to Texas and America.

RANDY and I serve together on the Financial Services Committee. Before we came up to Washington, we were both in small businesses. Still are. I knew RANDY before he was a Congressman, and he is still the same guy. Congressman NEUGEBAUER is a voice of reason. He has valuable, firsthand knowledge of how the private sector worksknowledge which is needed very much in Washington today. He understands how Washington's decisions affect Main Street America. That empathy is crucial to conducting good policy, and it is rare. We could use more lawmakers like RANDY NEUGEBAUER. Congressman Neugebauer is a Texas Tech fan. I feel sorry for him, but he always thinks they will win every single game.

Congressman RANDY NEUGEBAUER, I wish you and your wife, Dana, my best as you begin the next chapter of your lives. May your spare time be spent with your grandkids, fly fishing, and rooting for the Raiders. You have served your State and our Nation with honor and devotion. We will all miss you. You will be missed. I must simply say to you, RANDY, guns up. May God bless you, and may God bless America for allowing you to serve this great country.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. I appreciate the gentleman's comments.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the chairman of the Agriculture Committee, another good Texan.

Mr. CONAWAY. I thank my friend for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to brag on RANDY NEUGEBAUER. He is a friend, and he and I have a unique circumstance that we share in that we ran against each other in Texas. Larry Combest served District 19 at that point in time, and they had a special election. Randy and I ran against each other. It hasn't happened in a long time, but right after that election, people asked me: What do you think about RANDY NEUGEBAUER?

I said: Well, he is my friend.

They said: I know, but that is what you politicians always say—the "good gentleman," the "friend." You never tell the truth in those circumstances.