HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF YITZHAK RABIN

SPEECH OF

HON. J. DENNIS HASTERT

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 8, 1995

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, I am filled with sadness on the passing of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. I want to extend my deepest sympathies to the Rabin family, and the friends and people of Israel.

Like Abraham and Moses before him, Rabin was an extraordinary leader of the Jewish people who had a vision of peace and prosperity for the Israeli Nation. His tremendous accomplishments are an inspiration to us all and reveal Mr. Rabin's dedication to God and his country.

Rabin's service to Israel is that of both a warrior and a peacemaker, continually pursuing the dream of normalcy and tranquility for Israel. Signing the Oslo accords at the Washington ceremony, he addressed the Palestinians with the following words: ''We, like you, are people who want to build a home, to plant a tree, to love, to live side by side with you—in dignity, in empathy, as human beings, as free men.'' His memory is a blessing to each and every one of us because of the standards he defined for character, integrity, vision, courage, and leadership.

For his diligence and dedication to authoring a lasting peace, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace. With his efforts, he served not only the people of Israel with great distinction, but that of the world as well. It is my hope that the foundation he created for peace between Israel and the Palestinians will continue to be built upon.

Its hard to understand why such tragedies occur. Yet, we must believe that good can come out of evil. We must hold to the belief that soldiers believe in their souls—with death, there is peace. As we devote ourselves to that, may we gain hope from our martyred friend that there will be peace in Israel.

For his unwavering devotion and undying vision for peace, I will not forget this man. Once again, my prayers go out to his wife, Leah, his loving family, and the people of Israel as they struggle through this tremendously sorrowful and trying time. May our memory of him prevail, so that his vision will not vanish.

THE CHARACTER CONUNDRUM

HON. MICHAEL G. OXLEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 14, 1995

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring a recent column by Richard Harwood of the Washington Post regarding the media to the attention of my colleagues.

The reality is that journalists have real power in America. To a degree, this is as it should be, since a free and independent press is critical to the health of any democracy. With this power, however, come certain responsibilities. Accuracy is one. Objectivity is another. Now, as Mr. Harwood points out, a measure of good judgment would be welcome.

As more and more of the fourth estate descends into tabloid-quality reporting, the question arises as to the motives behind the trend. Increased circulation—or ratings, as the case may be—certainly tops the list. Sadly, sex, scandal, and negativism sell. Add to this a seemingly innate cynicism among reporters and an institutional bias against conservative tastes and ideas, and you have the makings of the current state of affairs.

This is not to say that reporters should avoid matters of controversy. Rather, it is to suggest that an attempt be made to run stories of real substance on matters of genuine consequence, rather than exploiting every topic for its gratuitous shock value.

The media elite like to make themselves out as selfless servants of the public good, standing up for the little guy against the establishment. The truth is that the press is one of the most entrenched, unaccountable institutions in Washington. The next time a group of news editors gets together to wring their hands over the tawdry state of their industry, they need look no further than their own daily decisions for responsibility.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I commend the following column to the attention of all interested parties.

THE 'CHARACTER' CONUNDRUM

(By Richard Harwood)

James David Barber of Duke University is the author of the proposition that our fate as a society is more dependent than we may realize on the quality of our journalism.

As the political parties have sunk into a state of virtual irrelevance, journalists have become the new bosses of presidential politics. They are the power brokers and character cops who dominate the process of ''identifying, winnowing, advancing and publicizing'' the people who would lead the nation.

The task of the journalist, Barber tells us, is to illuminate the ''question of character. . . . The problem is to get behind the mask to the man, to the permanent basics of the personality that bear on Presidential performance.'' The key is ''the life story, the biography. . . . For people sense that all our theoretical constructs and elaborate fantasies take their human meaning from their incarnation in the flesh and blood of persons. . . . Biography brings theory down to earth, history to focus, fantasy to reality.''

The late Theodore White made a start on this kind of journalism with his book ''The Making of the President 1960.'' ''The idea,'' he wrote, ''was to follow the campaign from beginning to end. It would be written as a novel is written, with anticipated surprises as, one by one, early contenders vanish in the primaries until only two jousters struggle for the prize in November. . . . It should be written as a story of a man in trouble, of the leader under the pressures of circumstance. The leader—and the circumstances. That was where the story lay.''

The book was an enormous success. Other journalists followed his lead, including Richard Ben Cramer, whose thousand-page volume on the 1988 campaign—''What It takes''—is recognized as a masterpiece.

The problem with these great studies of character and action is that the information they contained was not available to voters until after the elections had long since been decided. Cramer's book involved six years of work and was not published until 1992.

Barber concedes the problem: ''Journalism will continue to be history in a hurry. That is the main stumbling block.'' A fellow political scientist, Thomas Patterson of Syracuse University, insists it will always be so because that is the nature of the news business. ''A party,'' Patterson argues, ''is driven by the steady force of its traditions and constituent interests. . . . [It] has the incentive—the possibility of acquiring political power—to give order and voice to society . . . to articulate interests and to forge them into a winning coalition. The press has no such incentive and no such purpose. Its objective is the discovery and development of good stories.''

And ''good stories,'' he writes, increasingly are defined as ''negative'' stories, stories that ''expose'' some trivial gaffe or misbehavior on the superficial assumption that they tell us something important about the ''character'' and ''fitness'' of candidates. More often, he argues, stories of this kind tell us more about reporters' cynicism and contempt for politics than about the character of the people they write about.

Richard Ben Cramer observed this in the baby boomers of the press corps and was appalled and driven to hyperbole as they worked over Gary Hart and his ''character flaws'' in 1988. These were the people of whom it could be said that in their salad days ''if sex were money, they all would have been rich.'' But now ''the salient fact about this boom generation had nothing to do with its love-and-drug-addled idealism when it—when they—were the hope and heritors of the world.

''By 1987, they still felt the world was theirs . . . and ought, by all rights, to dance to their tune. . . . But the salient fact at this point in their lives was . . . they were turning forty. They were worried about their gums. They were experts on soy formula. They were working seriously on their (late or second) marriages. They were livid about saturated fats in the airline food. . . . They did not drink, they did not smoke, drugs were a sniggering memory. . . . And they certainly, God knows, did not mess around. Sex! It was tacky. It was dangerous. It was (sniff!) . . . not serious.

''And . . . no one else was going to get away with sex either. Or drugs. Or ill health. Or fouling their air.''

They not only nailed Hart with charges of infidelity but nailed Douglas Ginsberg, a Supreme Court nominee, for smoking pot years earlier. They nailed Clarence Thomas for alleged lasciviousness, Bill Clinton for sex and experimentation with a joint, and tried to nail George Bush for an alleged affair with a co-worker. John Kennedy didn't live long enough to get the treatment.

Must presidential candidates—or journalists or bankers—come to marriage as virgins to prove their ''character'' and ''fitness'' for office? Must journalists, on those terms, be questioned on their fitness to judge others? Does an adulterous act, the sometime ingestion of a proscribed substance, too-slow dancing or the recitation of an ethnic joke now get you a permanent sentence in the political wilderness? Does having an abortion get you a disqualifying Scarlet Letter?

The columnist Mary McGrory asked some questions recently about Bill Clinton, who is now 2½ years into his first term as president; ''Is his character not yet jelled—is he a 14-year-old who might still grow up? Or is this a permanent pattern of oscillation between mature grown-up and sniveling teenager?''

All the journalistic energies spend in 1992 on Gennifer Flowers and similar matters did not get to or have any obvious relevance to the character and fitness questions that still puzzle McGrory and countless other journalists and citizens.

One thing is certain. When Prof. Barber exhorted us to examine and illuminate character, he was not talking about the insubstantial trash that we too often pass off as wisdom and insight into who these people are who want to lead the country. ''As far as I can see,'' he wrote, ''all of us are more or

less neurotic, damned, healthy, saved, debased and great. That does not mean you send the grocer to fix your your plumbing. . . . [You] try to reach beyond characterization to political impact.''

A subsidiary industry of the news business is the post-election conference or seminar on how we went wrong in our work. Why did we commit so much ''tabloid journalsim''? Why was coverage of the ''real issues'' so lously? Why didn't we better understand the candidates, their characters, their personalities?

When all this psycho-babble is over and the next campaign comes around, we tend to repeat the same scenario because we can't help ourselves, because the habits of journalism are too hard to kick, because our history is too hurried, because truth and news are not the same.

TRIBUTE TO W.D. ''BILL'' FARR

HON. WAYNE ALLARD

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 14, 1995

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in honoring Mr. W.D. ''Bill'' Farr for his 40 years of service on the board of the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District [NCWCD]. Mr. Farr was a true pioneer in the development of water for Colorado's front range.

During the drought years of the 1930's, the importance of water to farmers, fishermen, and other users on the front range became all too clear. In response, a friend of Mr. Farr's established the Northern Colorado Water Users Association, which would later become the NCWCD. One of the association's first projects, with which Mr. Farr was intimately involved, was to push for the construction of the Colorado-Big Thompson project [C–BT]. In 1954, the C–BT became fully operational and brought a supplemental supply of water from the western slope to seven northeast Colorado counties. Mr. Farr was certainly correct when he said that the ''C–BT is like a second Poudre River. Without it, we would not have the front range we see today.''

In 1955, Mr. Farr became a board member of the NCWCD. In the 1970's, Mr. Farr was instrumental in planning the C–BT's windy gap project and headed the municipal subdistrict of the NCWCD that built facilities below Granby Lake. As such, he is known as the father of the windy gap project.

Mr. Speaker, so that the House may fully appreciate W.D. Farr's unrivaled contribution to water development in Colorado, let me run through a brief chronology of his involvement with this issue: 1931—became board director with the Town-Boyd Lateral Co. of Eaton; 1942—named president of the board of the Sweet Jessup Canal of Carbondale; 1947—became board director of the Greeley-Loveland Irrigation Co.; 1955—became board director with the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District; 1970—named first chairman of the Municipal Subdistrict of the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District; 1971—became president of the National Cattlemen's Association; 1973—appointed to the Water Pollution Control Advisory Board of the U.S. Department of the Interior by President Richard Nixon; 1974—named chairman of the Region 208 Areawide Planning Commission of the Larimer-Weld Council of Governments; 1975—became first chairman of the Colorado Water Resources and Power Development Authority; 1975—became member of the Colorado Water Congress; 1985—named the Wayne Aspinall Water Leader of the Year by the Colorado Water Congress; 1994—represented the Farr Family at the dedication of the Farr pumping plant at Granby reservoir. The plant is part of the Colorado-Big Thompson project.

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, W.D. Farr's service to the State of Colorado cannot be overstated, and I thank you for joining me in recognizing his 40 years of service with the NCWCD. As the Representative for the mostly rural and agricultural Fourth Congressional District of Colorado, I have a deep appreciation for the lifetime commitment W.D. Farr has made to ensuring that the front range has an adequate water supply year after year.

Thank you, W.D. Farr.

PESONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DOUGLAS ''PETE'' PETERSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 14, 1995

Mr. PETERSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the United States-Russian Joint Commission on POW/MIA's, I was asked to attend critical meetings with the government leaders of two former Soviet Republics during the week of November 6. This work precluded my attendance in the House and as a result I missed a number of rollcall votes. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows: Rollcall No. 765—Yea, rollcall No. 766—Yea, rollcall No. 767—Yea, rollcall No. 768—Yea, rollcall No. 769—Yea, rollcall No. 770—Yea, rollcall No. 771—Yea, rollcall No. 772—Nay, rollcall No. 773—Nay, rollcall No. 774—Yea, rollcall No. 775—Nay, rollcall No. 776—Yea, rollcall No. 777—Yea, rollcall No. 778—Nay, rollcall No. 779—Nay, rollcall No. 780—Yea, rollcall No. 781—Nay, rollcall No. 782—Yea, rollcall No. 783—Nay, rollcall No. 784—Nay, rollcall No. 785—Nay rollcall No. 786—Nay, rollcall No. 787—Nay.

PURPA: COSTING CONSUMERS BILLIONS OF DOLLARS

HON. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 14, 1995

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw your attention to another Federal regulation which has outworn its welcome, the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act [PURPA]. Born in the energy crisis of the 1970's, PURPA was designed to encourage renewable energy sources which would provide power more efficiently. We clearly have made great strides in producing energy in our country and a great many small, independent power producers have introduced us to alternative forms of power generation. These producers play a central role in fueling the wholesale power market. However, like many Government mandates, PURPA has created a backlash which runs counter to its original goals of less costly, more efficient power generation, and allows a loophole whereby producers that burn primarily fossil fuels qualify as independent wholesale generators. But even worse, Mr. Speaker, PURPA has become downright harmful to American taxpayers, consumers, laborers and business.

Allow me to submit for the RECORD an article which recently appeared in one of New York's capital region papers, *the Schenectady Gazette.* While focusing primarily on a case in my home State of New York, the message of the author, Charles Conine, holds true throughout many regions of the country.

[From the Schenectady Gazette]

FEDERAL RULE KEEPS N.Y.'S ELECTRIC RATES HIGH

(By Charles T. Conine)

Niagara Mohawk last week proposed opening its service territory to full competition. This may be the first of many such actions by utilities to stop the financial bleeding caused by the Public Utilities Regulatory Policies Act (PURPA), a little-known boondoggle from the 1970s that costs consumers tens of billions, deprives the government of billions in taxes, wastes resources and eliminates skilled industrial jobs.

If the House of Representatives is looking for a regulation to reform, it should consider this one. Ending PURPA would find support from Republicans, Democrats, organized labor and consumers.

PURPA was adopted during the oil shortage of 1978 to promote renewable, domestic energy sources and increase energy efficiency. But instead of small, independent projects fueled with renewable energy, PURPA has spawned hundreds of unnecessary electric-generating plants, most of which burn fossil fuels.

PURPA developers can force public utilities to buy their electricity at a premium, regardless of whether the power is needed. PURPA developers also pay less in taxes than utilities do. The combination can be economically devastating for a state. New York, California, Pennsylvania and Maine have been hardest hit, but Colorado, North Carolina, Oklahoma and New Jersey also have their share of ''PURPA machines,'' as these projects are called.

UNNEEDED POWER

Let me tell you what PURPA has done to consumers and workers in upstate New York. This year, Niagara Mohawk has been forced to buy $1 billion of unneeded electricity from independent power producers, $400 million more than it would have cost the utility to generate the same electricity. In other words, business and residential customers will pay $400 million more this year for PURPA electricity, a figure that will continue to rise.

And because NiMo does not need the additional electricity, it has been forced to shut down power plants and eliminate the jobs of 2,000 electrical workers. Our union has worked closely with management to make changes in work practices and work flexibility, but the situation keeps getting worse.

These are prime industrial jobs that support many service jobs in the community—teachers, insurance agents, merchants, restaurant workers. The higher cost of electric power also puts other industrial jobs at risk and stifles growth. The only business that's growing in upstate New York is the moving business.

The loss of tax revenue also hurts. For example, the Nine Mile Point nuclear plant pays $52 million a year in local property taxes. Nearby is a independent power plant of equivalent size that burns natural gas, owned by Sithe Energies USA, a subsidiary controlled by Campagnie Generale des Euax