

NATIONAL PRESS CLUB LUNCHEON FEATURING FRED UPTON AND DAVID GERGEN

SUBJECT: 26TH ANNUAL GERALD R. FORD FOUNDATION JOURNALISM AWARDS

MODERATOR: ANGELA GREILING KEANE, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL PRESS CLUB

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ANGELA GREILING KEANE: (Sounds gavel.) Good afternoon, and welcome to the National Press Club. My name is Angela Greiling Keane. I'm a reporter for Bloomberg News, and the 106th President of the National Press Club . We are the world's leading professional organization for journalists committed to our profession's future through our programming with events such as this while fostering a free press worldwide. For more information about the National Press Club, please visit our website at www.press.org. To donate to programs offered to the public through the National Press Club Journalism Institute, please visit press.org/institute.

On behalf of our members worldwide, I'd like to welcome our speakers today and those of you attending today's event. Our head table includes guests of our speakers as well as working journalists who are club members. If you hear applause in our audience, I'd note that members of the general public are attending so it isn't necessarily evidence of a lack of journalistic objectivity. (Laughter)

I'd also like to welcome our C-SPAN and Public Radio audiences. You can also follow the action on Twitter using the hashtag NPCLunch. After our guests' speeches conclude, we'll have a question and answer period. I'll ask as many questions as time permits. Now it's time to introduce our head table guests. I'd ask each of you here to stand up briefly as your name is announced.

From your right, Marc Schanz, senior editor for *Air Force Magazine*; Laura Lee, producer for National Public Radio; Jim Michaels, military reporter for *USA Today*; John Dickerson, chief political correspondent for *Slate* and political director for CBS

News and winner of the prize today for distinguished reporting on the presidency. Joseph Calvaruso, Executive Director of the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation.

Skipping over our speakers for the moment, Jennifer Schonberger, anchor and producer of the *Wall Street Report* and the Speakers Committee member who organized today's luncheon. Thank you for that, Jennifer. Skipping over our other speaker for a moment, Alison Fitzgerald, project manager for Financial and State News for the Center for Public Integrity and the Chairwoman of the Press Club Speakers Committee; Steven Ford, Chairman of the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation and a son of President Ford. Hal Bernton, reporter for the *Seattle Times* and today the winner of the prize for his coverage of national defense issues. Rachel Oswald, staff writer for *Global Security Newswire*, part of the National Journal Group; and Ralph Winnie, Vice President for the Eurasian Business Coalition. (Applause)

It's my pleasure now to turn the podium over to Steve Ford, who will present our distinguished winners of the Journalism Awards today. (Applause)

STEVEN FORD: Thank you, Angela, and it's an honor to be here. Many years, Dad was here to do this award and he had such a great respect and love for the members of the press and journalism. He had his ups and downs with the press, but he always respected them, always counted them as friends and wanted that openness and transparency that was so important during his unique, unique time and the presidency.

We've got two winners up here, but the judges told us we just had so many great submissions for both the award for the Presidency and the Defense and they said we couldn't do this luncheon without having a couple of the honorable mentions be recognized. So I'd like to start off and do that. The honorable mention for the Presidency is Josh Gerstein and Carrie Brown of Politico and I think they're sitting over here. Would you please stand? (Applause) And for Defense, it's Andrew Tillman from *The Military Times*. (Applause)

Well, it is my honor to present our first award winner, John Dickerson, for the reporting on the presidency for the Gerald R. Ford Journalism Award. It was a fantastic series of articles and as I read it, much of it was about the temperament of what a president has to handle the problems and the pressures later on once he becomes elected and when he spoke about Obama, President Obama, he talked about what kind of temperament would he have to handle the war and the capture, killing of Osama bin Laden, the economy, those kind of things.

And it made me reflect on Dad and what he faced when he was President back in 1974 and the war in Vietnam, Watergate. The economy, too, was in tough shape. But as a family member, it's funny. We don't think of the temperament on those large issues, we think of your father, his temperament at home and how he handles family issues. I didn't see anything in the articles about if Sasha got bad grades or those kind of things. I know when Dad, when I think of his temperament, how even tempered he was. There was a night when-- Mom and Dad had a dog, Liberty, a golden retriever, that was in the White

House. And one night the dog woke Dad up, had to go do its business outside. And here it was, two in the morning. Wakes the President up, pushes on Dad. He gets out of bed, he puts his bathrobe on, his slippers and does what every father does; he takes his dog out to go to the bathroom at two in the morning.

And he goes out the diplomatic entrance, the Secret Service did not know he was leaving the White House at two a.m. in his bathrobe and slippers and he goes out and he and Liberty walk the grounds of the White House and they do their business, or the dog does his business. (Laughter) He goes back to walk into the White House and the door's locked. So that's the humanity of being President of the United States. It's not about Watergate, it's not about all those other things, it's not about dealing with the Russians or the Chinese. It's about your temperament when you have family issues like that come up.

So it is an honor for us to give this award to John, and I want to read what the - quote what the committee wrote down here. "The judging committee has selected John Dickerson of *Slate* as the winner of the 26th Annual Gerald R. Ford Prize for Distinguished Reporting on the Presidency. During the 2012 campaign year, John Dickerson produced an exceptionally thoughtful series of articles on the qualities required of the modern day successful President in the post-war era and the relevance of modern political campaigns and helping voters decide which candidate has those abilities.

"Using two decades of experience reporting in and around the White House, Dickerson effectively marshaled presidential anecdotes, campaign stories and political theory to entertain and inform and to analyze the often tenuous link between successful politicking and successful governing. The series covers all aspects of presidential leadership from inspiration and personal management to temperament and political skills and details how required skill sets have changed over the recent decades in the television and digital eras. He also provides an evenhanded primer on how those qualities apply to the major 2012 presidential candidates.

"Members of the judging committee were highly impressed by Dickerson's work; ambitious and sweeping, illuminated by an impressive array of examples and stories and offering real insight on the American presidency." It's my pleasure to give this award now. (Applause)

JOHN DICKERSON: Thank you, Steve, and thank all of you, and particularly to the Dickerson table with my father, Wy Dickerson's here, and Tandy Dickerson and my sister, Elizabeth Sinclair. Thank you to the foundation. When I first came to Washington, Michael Duffy, my colleague then at *Time* won the Ford Award. And one of the great honors is being in the company of the journalists who've won it before. Tom DeFrank, I think is here, a winner of this. And that's a real honor and it's great to have this award because it gives us all something to model ourselves on.

I'm not going to read the 25,000 word series, as they told me I could, but I want to thank the team that helped me put this together. The first is David Plotz, the editor of *Slate*. This is the product of something he forces each of us to do, to take a month out of

the year to write about something other than our day to day journalism. Forces us to think in different ways and in a more expansive way. That is a dream for any journalist to do once in their lifetime. He forces us to do it once a year, which is a joy.

My two editors, Michael Newman and Will Dobson, are here. Michael Newman helped me start this project, and Will Dobson wrestled it to the ground and made it a lot clearer than when it arrived in his computer. They are both great listeners, great thinkers, but they also have to endure me pacing in their office and speaking from out on the road when I was out there for CBS. And *Slate*, which I think makes them common law psychiatrists.

And then finally, the women in my life, my mother, the late Nancy Dickerson. A lot of these questions at the heart of the series come from the work that she did. She did it smarter and in high heels. And then my wife, Ann Dickerson. The editors get to go home at night, but she has to deal with the low level kind of madness that these kinds of series produce where you have to go and give extended monologues and talk about the presidency and not whatever actually seems to be happening in the house. So she didn't lock me out as the former President got locked out, and I appreciate that. So, thank you dear, and thank you. (Applause)

STEVEN FORD: Thank you. Dad had such a love affair with the newspaper business, in particular. And I remember as a kid growing up, every morning he would start with a stack of five newspapers and he'd have the big national papers and the *New York Times* and the *L. A. Times*. But he always finished with his local, hometown paper, the *Grand Rapids Press*. And I would ask him, I'd say, "Dad, you start big, you go back down to the local paper." And I asked him why and he said, "Well, the local paper would always tell me if all those big federal programs that got pushed through ever made it back to my hometown." And he read like that to his dying day. He just loved picking up a newspaper every morning.

So it is my honor now to give out the award, the Gerald R. Ford Journalism Prize for Distinguished Reporting on National Defense. And in 2012, it is Hal Bernton. Let me read to you what the judges wrote here. "The Judges were pleased to select Hal Bernton from the *Seattle Times* for the 2012 Gerald R. Ford Award for Distinguished Reporting on National Defense. Mr. Bernton's insightful series on the U.S. Army's review of reverse diagnoses of soldiers with post traumatic stress syndrome, PTSD, uncovered a multifaceted, complex issue regarding the many challenges that both medical professionals and soldiers face in dealing with the after effects of combat.

"Although there has been a lot written about PTSD over the last several years, this series uncovered a largely hidden issue; the manner in which diagnoses were handled that resulted in real world effects on the military personnel, their families, and the organizations designed to serve them in society at large. Mr. Bernton's writing approach is refreshing in its return to a traditional hard-nosed news reporting of complex issues coupled with genuine enterprise journalism that personalizes the human impact of military actions in Afghanistan.

“The stories were broadly sourced with verified data and written with brevity and clarity. But this was just not a set of in theater stories. Bernton also placed the spotlight on the issue of local importance at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, as well as addressing the national reverberations that such decisions have as American veterans transition into military retirement. His stories about the problem of tracking hidden improvised explosive devices in Afghanistan showed his skill at finding a new, unique and human angle on a widely reported topic.

“As a decade of war now winds down with millions of veterans returning home from service in Afghanistan and Iraq, the issue of PTSD and how the Army and other organizations address its rolling implications will be felt for years to come. Mr. Bernton’s distinguished work will help the American people and leaders and politicians better understand how truly complex and difficult PTSD diagnosis really is, and the impact it exerts on the lives of soldiers and their families.

“Mr. Bernton’s contribution to that discussion stood out among the many, many excellent submissions, and in the opinion of the judges best captured the spirit of the Gerald R. Ford Award.” (Applause)

HAL BERNTON: Well, this really is a very humbling honor for me. I've been helping to report on the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq for actually more than a decade, I think quite a bit longer than I expected when one of my editors basically said, “Hey, why don’t you help cover the military here,” back in 2001 or ’02. And I certainly realize from a lot of my reporting that a lot of the wounds of war, sometimes we think if we just get the right diagnosis or the right treatment, the right care, everything will be all right. And I guess one of the things I'm learning as I go on in things and the wars wear on is that sometimes no matter what happens, things aren’t all right for some folks.

I also wanted to just note as I got this award that Gerald Ford, President Ford, had actually a big impact on my life. When I was just out of college, I headed west and I was basically in eastern Washington thinking I could get a job picking fruit. But, President Ford had what he called the Job Opportunity Program and there was a sign up at the employment trailer saying, “We need people to build trails in the North Cascade National Park.” So, I took the job, I was able to get the job. I had a great time, watched the whole fall come over the Cascades.

I went back east for a few years, but I really just did not want to stay east after that. And so I went back west and I've been there really ever since. My whole career has been in the northwest, in Alaska. It’s been really an amazing thing. And I just wanted to end by thanking, really, my editors of my newspaper. It has certainly, like a lot of newspapers, regional newspapers, taken a lot of hits, a lot of layoffs. But it remains a very strong and very vibrant place, I think, to do good work. My editors, Dave Boardman and Jim Simon, supporting me over and over again when I wanted to go off to Afghanistan or basically not necessarily stick close to home to report stories. And really supported me, and I really appreciate that. And want to say, again, that *Times* really still

endures as a really great regional newspaper.

Lastly, just really to thank my wife and family and my parents here who have been very supportive of me over these years, and thanks so much. (Applause)

STEVEN FORD: Thank you. It is now my honor to introduce Congressman Fred Upton, who is another proud University of Michigan grad like my father. Fred was first elected to Congress in 1987 and represents Michigan's 6th Congressional District, which has parts of my dad's old district that he represented in southwest Michigan for close to 25 years, 13 terms. And in 2010, Congressman Upton was selected by his House colleagues to serve as Chairman of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, which has jurisdiction over matters concerning energy, healthcare, environment, telecommunications, commerce, manufacturing, trade, and oversight and investigations. Prior to his election to Congress in 1987, Congressman Upton worked for President Ronald Reagan in the Office of Management and Budget.

And I can tell you from our family, we are very grateful that in March of 2011, Congressman Upton sponsored the House resolution which allowed the placement of a statue honoring my dad in the capitol rotunda. The resolution was cosponsored by all 14 members of the Michigan congressional delegation and passed unanimously bipartisan support. So it's my privilege to ask Fred Upton to say a few words about my Dad's centennial year. (Applause)

FRED UPTON: Thank you, sir. Thank you. You know, as Steve said, I'm from southwest Michigan, so if you're from Michigan you hold up your hand, so here's where you are. And I do represent some of the same constituents that former President Ford represented when he was the Republican Leader in the House. In fact, I can remember a town meeting in a little bait and tackle shop in Ottawa County one Saturday morning where I had, I think, about eight people show up. The proprietor of the shop took me inside and he had a black and white picture and there was Jerry Ford as a congressman, and he had like 80 to 100 Boy Scouts that had a campfire in the middle and they were all circled around him as he was holding court and talking about what it was like to be in the Congress.

Jerry Ford was a Boy Scout, that is for sure. I was a Scout, too, not an Eagle. But as you hold up your hand and you recite what a scout does, the scout law, all those applied to him. And if you go to the wonderful library in Grand Rapids where I passed by it on Friday, you'll see that so much there is really tied to scouting from all around the country.

And, you know, our country needed him right at the right time. Watergate and the anti-war pickets and trouble that we had, all of the double digit unemployment, double digit inflation, so many double digit interest rates, they all were really a tough time for the country. And he provided the steady hand and the trust. And he really did restore the country to where we needed to go because we were torn apart and he was the right guy at the right time.

So not only did he put the country ahead of his own personal politics, costing him by all estimates the 1976 presidential election, he started the healing that our country so needed. And for me, I got to know him a little bit. I drove my boss, then a freshman Congressman, to the White House on the last day that he was President of the United States, the last full day; January 19th, 1977. And I had a number of conversations with him as a member of Congress on trade, on defense. Back then, we had cell phones that were as big as your shoe. And I would pull off on the road when he would call me. And we talked about our favorite sports teams, whether it be skiing or certainly the Michigan Wolverines.

This last Friday, I spent the weekend with John Dingell, who this week will serve as the longest-serving member of Congress in our history, a record that I think will never fall. And if you know John Dingell and you know any historian, I'm sure that he will be on everyone's top ten list as one of the most-- one of the greatest members that ever served in the United States Congress. And I asked John about his friend, Jerry Ford. And he said he was the most honest, decent guy he'll ever meet. He brought that respect not only to the Republican leadership in the House, but obviously to the presidency in a time where we needed it the most.

And when you think about it, Jerry Ford in a ten month span went from a member of Congress to the Vice President to the Oval Office as President of the United States. Our country certainly benefited from his unquestioned leadership; frankly, from both him and his great wife, Betty. They were a couple that because of their steady hands and faith helped stabilize a country that was so desperately needing the skills and human touch to get out of the crisis that really threatened our 200th birthday. Remember, 1976 was the 200th anniversary of our country. And it stretched the fabric to no end.

So he and Betty were both public servants from start to finish, pure and simple. And he left a wonderful mark on Washington and to the love and joy of so many people around the country. And I'm delighted to know the Ford family a little bit, and I'll tell you, there's not a time that I stroll through the capitol that I don't give them a big smile and a big salute because it is really a marvelous state if you haven't been to the rotunda of the Congress. Thank you very much. (Applause)

ANGELA GREILING KEANE: Thank you, Chairman Upton. Moving on to our second speaker today, how many people do you know who've worked for Presidents Ford, Nixon, Reagan and Clinton? There may be only one, our guest today, Mr. David Gergen. With experience in four administrations on both side of the aisle, it's no wonder his political commentary is highly sought after.

In addition to serving as senior political analyst for CNN, Mr. Gergen is a professor of public service and Director of the Center for Public Leadership at the Harvard Kennedy School. Starting with the MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour in 1984, Mr. Gergen has been a regular commentator on public affairs for some 28 years. In the late 1980s, he was chief editor of *U.S. News and World Report*. A native of North Carolina,

Mr. Gergen is a member of the D.C. bar, a veteran of the U.S. Navy, and a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. Please join me in giving a warm National Press Club welcome to David Gergen. (Applause)

DAVID GERGEN: Hello, it's good to see all of you here. It's wonderful to be with Fred Upton. I know why we have such a big crowd here today. The word got out that Fred was going to bring his niece. She's not here, but the rest of us have the pleasure of each other's company. And she's now of age, isn't she? Yeah, tell Dickerson that. Make sure Dickerson knows that.

I also want to congratulate John Dickerson and Hal Bernton for their awards this year. To some of you here who are younger, Jerry Ford may seem like part of a distant past, but let me just say this luncheon emphasizes how relevant his presidency and he personally remain today. I was in the Nixon administration and I remember what it was like to have a war on the press. I remember the wire taps and the way so many-- how Haldeman and Ehrlichman used to tell us, "You know, Kay Graham is wrong. This is a conspiracy by the left to bring us down." I knew Bob Woodward, we'd gone to school together way back when, and he and I had agonizing conversations on Sunday evenings about what was going on, how the pillars of the government seemed to be shaking and might come down.

But so much of that originated in sort of the tensions, the hatred, the animosity, the paranoia, if one may call it that, toward the press. And one of the reasons that Jerry Ford was important was he called off that war because he did have a very different view of what democracy was about. And understood, of course, when you're in government, there are times when you are angry about the leaks. Of course, some of these leaks endangered national security. But if you look at the balance of the need for the government to have secrecy versus the imperatives of the First Amendment and having a free society, that balance is often struck in the wrong place.

And we are going through a period now in which it appears to many of us that the balance has been struck in the wrong place. And we have to sort of stand up and say, "Wait a minute. The press is important. We all live better off when we have a watchdog and a press." We do need watchdogs. We don't really need Rottweilers, you know? And it can go too far, but we need watchdogs where all of our freedoms are protected when we have that.

And President Ford understood that and brought in-- you know, right in the beginning, brought Jerry terHorst in as first press secretary. They had a falling out over the pardon. And then what did he do? He turned to Ron Nessen, who is here with us today, who became a superb press secretary. Came in from television land. He turned to David Kennerly, a photographer for *Time* magazine but who understood the ways of the President and became-- joined him at the White House and became, actually, one of his more trusted advisors because not only did they share a good sense of humor, but Kennerly, like Ford, had a very decent and strong core to him. And the President valued his advice.

Tommy DeFrank who is here was one of the previous winners of this award. Tommy, I can't remember the exact history, but we kept trying to lure him. "Would you come in out of the press and work in the administration? We'd love to have you." And he resisted for a long time, but he has remained a pillar of a free press for a long, long time. And I think the fact that President Ford surrounded himself with people who came out of the press. And he didn't always agree with what they had to say. And sometimes, you know, there were times when it was extremely uncomfortable, as when Morley Safer interviewed Betty Ford and Betty Ford, in her usual frank, candid and wonderful way, said, "We have an 18 year old daughter. Would I be alarmed if she had an affair? No, I wouldn't." And President Ford was sitting there watching that Sunday night *60 Minutes* and he said, and I think Rumsfeld told him, or Cheney told him the next day, "It's going to cost you 10 million votes." He said, "No, it's going to be 20 million."

But nonetheless, admired and understood that even in the most uncomfortable moments, a vigilant press is extraordinarily important to the success of the republic. And when there are leaks, it's totally appropriate to go after who the leakers are, but to think that we might start criminalizing reporters for asking tough questions as we've seen in this recent affidavit that was filed, that goes way beyond where the balance ought to be struck.

So this is an important moment that we renew in the National Press Club what makes our society work, what goes into a democratic society that makes it vibrant and whole. And I can tell you I've been in government, I know what the temptation is to lie. I know how overwhelming that temptation is. As someone who sometimes spoke to the press on behalf of administrations, I was lied to inside. The temptation is powerful. But the fact that you know that there are people out there who are going to hold you accountable is what gets governments to tell the truth, and that is a good thing. That is a good thing. (Applause)

So it's appropriate that we remember Jerry Ford. Now, Ford's presidency was the shortest in the 20th century, the shortest in the 20th century. And many feel as a result, it must be inconsequential. That's exactly wrong. It is true that Jerry Ford started out with some stumbles. You know, he wasn't prepared to be President. Who could have imagined that? He had never aspired to be President. He wanted to be Speaker of the House. And when he realized he wasn't going to get there, he told his wife, Betty, "I'm going to retire, in 1976. I won't run again." And then lightning struck and he was pulled in, and he did the best he could. So there were some early stumbles.

But if you look at the overall record and how he strengthened and how he gathered himself together, how he began to understand the job and what he then did, he was a person who understood that if you're going to be a strong and effective leader, always go out and find people who are better than you are at what they do and you'll have a much, much better team. And if you look back at what President Ford did and over a very short period of time, he hired eight out of the eleven new cabinet officers. He replaced eight of the cabinet officers, and he replaced and in every case put in a terrific

person. One of them is here today, Carla Hills. Carla was at HUD when you were there, as I recall. And from my judgment, from my perspective, the Ford cabinet wound up to be the finest cabinet we've seen in modern times. Didn't last long, but if you look pound for pound, people like Ed Levy who was over at Justice, I thought Rumsfeld did a terrific job at Defense in those days, Kissinger at State, he had a very-- you can go down through the list-- he had Jim Lynn, who was in that group. There was a very fine group of people.

And over time, he accomplished a lot of things. He did help to end the war, which was really important for America. But just as importantly, he pursued the Helsinki Accords, he pursued détente and brought a new relationship with the Soviet Union which put us on a better path and helped to hasten the end of the Cold War. He also had a very sensible approach to budgeteering. He was a guy who believed if you cut taxes by a dollar, you ought to cut spending by a dollar. And if you've got a heavy growth, you can cut taxes some more. But it was one for one and I always thought that was the right idea. That was not very popular in another administration I worked in, the Reagan administration, but I always thought the Ford approach made a lot of sense.

But most of all, he brought a healing to the country, a sense of integrity returning to the White House, that he was a square shooter. And that made a great deal of difference to Americans because we had-- it wasn't just Watergate that had brought confidence in government crashing down, it was a whole series of things stretching back to Vietnam, all the lying and mendacity that went on in Vietnam, sending kids to their death for no particular good purpose, lying about what was happening.

And Watergate came along. The government, there was a sense in the late '70s that maybe we could no longer govern ourselves. That maybe we needed to have a constitutional amendment. Lloyd Cutler was in favor of that at one point. Maybe we need to reform this and make it more like a parliamentary system. And Jerry Ford helped put things aright. It took a while to get fully back on path, but he helped to put things aright and that was an enormous accomplishment.

And the truth is that as a result of that, he had such a strong pull. He started coming back to Washington on his birthdays, in June, and this marks another one of those birthdays. And he had a reunion every year of all the folks who'd worked for him, the alumni. And it was a wonderful gathering, an annual gathering that brought people together who hadn't seen each other for a while but were proud that they worked for him and shared that pride.

And this is another one. I happen to be just one of the representatives of that alumni group speaking to you today. And there was a sense, if I may borrow a phrase from George W. Bush, that President Ford was always underestimated (sic). (Applause) And frankly, I must tell you that we on the staff I think underestimated him.

I had the experience a few months after he left office of receiving a call from his office in the afternoon saying, "The President's got a speech draft. It's a speech he's

supposed to give in two or three days. He'd like you to read it and can he call you at home tonight after you've had a chance to read it?" I said, "Sure." So they faxed it to me and I read this speech and it was gorgeous, it was a gorgeous speech. It was very complex, it was rich, it was interesting, lot of theoretical points. Lot of words, three, four syllable words. It was just one of these speeches that just sang and it was just so thoughtful and interesting.

But it wasn't at all the way he spoke. It wasn't at all the way we wrote speeches for him. There was this fear of the White House staff, "Well, if you give him a complex speech, he'll stumble over the words. He won't really quite understand it, it won't be him. And therefore, you've got to give him these sort of see Spot run kind of speeches." And so I read the speech and I thought, well, I guess what he wants to do is have me sort of put it in his style. He wants me to turn it into the way he normally speaks.

So he called me that night, and he was drawing on his pipe and he said, "Well, did you get the speech?" I said, "Yes, sir, Mr. President." He said, "Well, did you have a chance to read it?" I said, "Yes, sir, Mr. President. It's a gorgeous speech, but do you want me to work on it a little bit and put it more in your style?" And I could hear him start to chuckle a little bit. And I said, "Well, Mr. President, I'm not quite sure this is you." And then I heard him chuckle some more and he said, "Well, let me just say something. This is the first time I've had a pool of silence in which I could write my own speech and I wanted to try it out on you." And I realized this man was capable of giving far better speeches than that crap we gave him, you know? I'm serious. And it was embarrassing to think why didn't we understand?

And I think now in the rear view mirror of history, we have started to understand. I think he looked better and better as a President, as a human being. He was a Midwesterner. I remember the last of the reunions that I remember well was his 90th birthday. President George W. Bush was in the White House and very generously gave a dinner for him in the White House and he and Betty were there.

And at dinner, President Ford said, when he got up to speak, he said, "You know, when I was young, my mother taught me three basic rules. And they have served me well all my life, even here in Washington. Work hard, tell the truth, and come to dinner on time." That's so Ford. That just so captures who he is.

Now, I don't want to spend much more time, Fred and I are going to take a few questions and if John and Hal could jump in, that'd be great. But I do want to end with this. For many, many years people, after George Washington served, asked, "What would George Washington do in these circumstances?" And then that faded a little bit and they asked for many, many years thereafter, "What would Abe Lincoln have done under these circumstances?" The historian David Herbert Donald said, "You know, there was a long time in the American presidency when people told each other, 'Get right with Abe. Try to make sure you conform the way you behave, the way you lead and the moral standards you set to Lincoln.'" And I would argue now that we ought to be thinking about-- you know, we ought to ask ourselves, "What would Jerry Ford do?" in some of

the circumstances we face today. For one, I think it's very clear that he would be staunch on defense. He came out of the war, out of World War II, as a lieutenant commander. He had 16 battle stars, 16 battle stars coming out. He was an artillery gunner. He faced kamikazes coming across the [00:40:30]. He was a tough guy, but he understood, he became an internationalist just like Arthur Vandenberg had and one of his mentors in Michigan as a result of the war. It was a very important part of who he was. And I think he would stand up and say, "Don't cut defense. You may think you're in a period of peace. The world is still dangerous. Figure out what your strategy is and make sure you fund it. You can afford it. Don't make it a plaything in terms of the budgetary wars."

I don't think there's any question that he would say, "You've got to get spending and taxes under better control and more disciplined. This is irresponsible to keep going the way we are." But I think first and foremost, he would argue, "We have got to get back to a way of governing in which people could work across the aisles and with respect," with understanding of the kind that John Dingell had toward Jerry Ford. Of the kind that Tip O'Neill-- may of us who worked for Reagan are proud of the Tip/Reagan relationship. It was very important to governing. But you go back and read Tip O'Neill's memoirs, and what you find is he loved Jerry Ford. He loved Jerry Ford. He thought he was the perfect person to work with because he could always count on him.

And I'll just close with this one story. Jim Cannon, who is no longer with us, sadly, but has left us a new book on Jerry Ford, *An Honorable Life*, in an earlier book told this story, which I always found so interesting. And that is when Richard Nixon was President and Spiro Agnew resigned in disgrace, Nixon needed a new Vice President. He wanted John Connally. John Connally of Texas, who had been a Democrat, just recently converted to Republican. But he had to get him through the Senate, so he called the leadership of the House and Senate, two Democrats; Senator Mike Mansfield, bless him, wonderful man. Mike Mansfield had all the glories and honors in the world, but when he died, he asked to be buried in the enlisted plot, in the enlisted plot up here in the National Cemetery. That's the kind of person he was.

And Carl Albert was the other, who was the Speaker of the House. And President Nixon called them both in and said, "Gentlemen, we have to figure out who the Vice President is." Everybody in the room knew there was a better than 50/50 chance Nixon wasn't going to survive and they were selecting the next President of the United States. And so Nixon said, "I'd like to put John Connally in." And they said, "Mr. President, do not do that. Please do not try that. He is slippery, we don't trust him. He's not a man of his word." And he said, "Well, who would you like?" Both of them said, both of them volunteered, "Please put Gerald Ford in the presidency. He's a man that we trust, we can work across the aisle, and we will have a better country with Jerry Ford there." The Congress, the Democrats, made Jerry Ford President. And I think that's a remarkable tribute to him and why we continue to celebrate him today. Thank you. (Applause)

ANGELA GREILING KEANE: Thank you, Mr. Gergen. I will invite both you and Chairman Upton to join me up here. And we have a fair number of questions. Some are posed to one of you specifically and some to both or either. We'll start with

the most common theme which you addressed in your remarks, Mr. Gergen, and that's bipartisanship or lack thereof. Why has Congress become so polarized? Why isn't there as much compromise, this questioner asks, and what do you see as the biggest roadblock within Congress for legislation getting done? This one, we'll start with you, Mr. Upton.

FRED UPTON: Can I go first?

DAVID GERGEN: Yes, please.

FRED UPTON: Well, thanks. Let me just say when I was elected back in '87, we had a member of our leadership team, Lynn Martin. I think she was the Secretary of the Republican Conference. So she addressed the new freshmen and she said, "Folks, we're Republicans, we're in the minority. So two things happen. If you got a good bill, it's either going to be defeated or it's going to get stolen. You have no-- that's just the way that things go." So for me, I decided that I, on virtually every piece of legislation, I would seek out the Democratic sponsor and we would try to work to get things done.

So one of my very first bills, I'm going to get to your question here in a second, one of my very first bills was to get Kweisi Mfume, Kweisi was a colleague, a freshman colleague of mine, represented the inner city of Baltimore, my mother-in-law, frankly, and we passed a bill that provided a tax credit for small businesses that had to make structural changes to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. We got the black caucus, we got just about all the Republicans. And all of a sudden, Rostenkowski grabbed me and said, "Hey, I think we're going to move your bill," and we did. And Kweisi came back to me and he said, "Fred, you've ruined my reputation. This is now hailed as the most important piece of legislation impacting small business. The Chamber's given it great kudos. I was a zero and now I'm big time in their scores. What have you done for my reputation?"

But we got to work together. And for me, I'm a relatively new chairman, I changed one of the rules in our markups. We take up bipartisan amendments first, they go ahead of the queue. And I've told my Republicans on my right and the Democrats on the left, "Let's work together, see if we can't get some things done." This afternoon, we're going to take up a pretty major piece of legislation impacting the pharmaceutical industry. John Dingell was one of my best supporters in getting that through the markup and we intend to have it passed by a voice vote a little bit later this afternoon.

But you look at what we've tried to do, and I've always been a policy over politics guy. The last Congress we passed 80 bills on the House floor that came out of my committee, our committee. All but four or five had Democratic support, and 40 of them the President signed into law. That's not a bad record. It's not a record that maybe a lot of folks like to hear on some of these talks shows that are out there, but we have to work together. There are a lot of great members-- I was at the White House earlier this morning on this mental health conference. There are a lot of great members who care passionately about where our country's headed and how we need to work together. We have divided government, we have to recognize that. But let's work together. We've tried to do that in

our committee.

And I know Dave Camp on the Ways and Means Committee, and my other colleagues have that same type of attitude. But the margin is small. You know, we have 233 Republicans in the House, 218 controls the House, so we have a margin of 15. So we've got to work together. We've got to govern together, is what this all is all about.

DAVID GERGEN: Well, it's a complex subject. Tom Mann and Norm Ornstein in their book, I think, describe many of the contours of the subject. And you can find, I think, many different reasons you can allocate to the hollowing out of the middle. Say, when Howard Baker was there, there was usually about 30 senators representing both sides of the aisle that you could count on to try to work something out and they could often influence the final and bring it to a successful final conclusion. That number has dwindled a great deal. And you've got the redistricting problems in the House, there are various rules. You can go on and on with all the rules.

But I also think it's partly a cultural issue and sort of where we are as a country and the generational changes that have taken place in the country. I had the privilege of coming here when the World War II generation was running things, mostly people who'd come of age during the war. We had seven presidents in a row from Kennedy through Bush, Senior, who were the World War II presidents. All seven wore a military uniform and they came back to Washington believing that they were the civic generation, that they were strong Democrats or strong Republicans, but first and foremost they were strong Americans and they worked together.

And that has been lost since that generation has left the stage. I don't think it's hopeless. What I do think is we need to be electing new people like Fred, the spirit that he represents and that we have a generation that's younger still that's coming, that is very different. And I think in many ways the millennials who are coming through now, contrary to what *Time* magazine put on its cover a couple of weeks ago about this being the me, me, me generation and narcissistic and lazy. I find this generation that's coming is very idealistic and very hopeful of changing the country. They are flowing into the nonprofits, Teach for America, I happen to be on the board. I can tell you what Wendy Kopp has done with that organization is extraordinary, tapping into the idealism of the young people.

And the other group that we should be very hopeful about, and there's a silver lining of 12 years of war, are the young people coming back and taking off their uniforms after serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Some of those people, yeah there are no question that there are mental health issues in some of the veterans coming back. But a good number of these people coming back are absolutely wonderful and they're going to restore that spirit of bipartisanship one day. It's going to take a while, but we'll get there. (Applause)

ANGELA GREILING KEANE: There's, of course, a lot of scandals going on right now at the current White House. But we're here at the National Press Club, so I'd

like to hear the take from both of you on the secret probes that were conducted into the sourcing at the Associated Press and Fox News. Is this an infringement on freedom of the press?

FRED UPTON: Well, I don't know where things are necessarily headed on this. I do think there are more than capable chairs and committees that are beginning an investigation into this. We've got councils, I'm not an attorney, but we've got an oversight investigation subcommittee and we've got the lawyers, we've got the capability to ask for subpoenas and information and we need to find out what the truth is. We need to follow the trail and find out where it takes us. And I'm quite confident that you'll see that happen on the IRS deal with Dave Camp as Chairman of Ways and Means, Darrell Issa as well. We'll get the answers and as my dad always said, Jerry Ford certainly believed, tell the truth the first time, you don't have to worry about it the second.

DAVID GERGEN: I've spoken, so I won't belabor the point. But there's no question in my mind that we crossed a line when the FBI filed an affidavit and called this fellow, Mr. Rosen, a potential co conspirator. And a criminal co conspirator as a reporter simply asking questions. And you cannot put the press in that situation. That's why it's so important to push back and make sure we get on the right side of this line, not on the wrong side of the line.

On the AP, it's hard to assess unless you're there, but it did seem excessive how many different people they swept into the net. The government has become very powerful. What we need to ask of our leaders is restraint. Restraint in the use of power, restraint when we send our forces abroad, where we plunge into in war, and restraint in how we treat each other. You know, it seems to me that what unites the IRS and the press issues are the sense of a lack of restraint. And there's got to be some-- people inside government have to sort of treat fellow citizens with a certain dignity and understanding. This is a complex society and we have to be respectful of certain standards. It's not just a question of what the laws are, it's a question of what the standards are. (Applause)

ANGELA GREILING KEANE: And Mr. Gergen, from serving in so many administrations looking at these things from the inside, how would you assess the effectiveness of this President's communication in the midst of these scandals?

DAVID GERGEN: I think this President has the capacity to be one of the finest communicators we've had in the White House. The speech in Philadelphia he gave during the 2008 campaign, if Bill Safire were alive today and continued to compile his Lend Me Your Ear anthology, it would be a star entry in that. And I think this President has often inspired in the way he has addressed people, especially the young, and we should respect that and he should be given credit for that.

I must say, I think on the question of what has been apparent, and John Dickerson and I were together, I think, here recently on *Face the Nation* on this question, I think they've been more effective in their communications in campaigns than they have been in governing. And for reasons that have been mysterious to me, they've been a little hand

fisted on whether it's Benghazi or some of the IRS. One of the first things you learn in damage control, and I've been through a lot of damage control in government, many, many years. I started with Watergate and wound up with Whitewater. So, one of the first things you learn in damage control is it's really important to get your story out fast. But first, it's important to get your story straight and understand what it is you're dealing with.

And it's not always easy because things get so lawyered up so quickly inside government. When I first got into government, Tommy will remember this, when you first got into government, lawyers were not omnipresent when you dealt with some of these questions and they didn't tell you, "Oh no, no, you can't release that. You can't let anybody see that." But now they're so heavily lawyered, the political side of the house has to push back and say, "Now, wait a minute. We've got a responsibility to get this stuff out."

ANGELA GREILING KEANE: And one question on current events in Congress for Mr. Upton, the public, if Congress is to be believed, has expressed a profound disinterest in the impact of sequestration on national defense, this questioner says. Why is that and how do you get this perception problem solved, the person asks.

FRED UPTON: Well, a couple things. I got my stripes working for Ronald Reagan who cared so much about the deficit, as we all do, and a lot of battles. I worked for David Stockton and then Jim Miller, who was there. It was one of the primary reasons I ran for office. You might remember back in the early '90s, we had this thing, or early '80s-- no, I guess mid '80s-- Gramm-Rudman. What was that? Across the board cuts if Congress didn't do its work. I was in that first meeting with Gramm and Rudman and others and that was almost how this thing was devised.

And in the House, I was a member of the super committee-- turn that off. I don't know where it is, but I hear it over here. (Cell phone ringing) I know it's not my wife because I already turned off mine. In the House, I was on the super committee and it broke my heart that we didn't get it done, it really did. We had a group of 12 people, you might remember, divided between the House and Senate Republicans and Democrats. And we had, sadly, an equal number versus a majority that really wanted to come out with a solution; some Democrats, some Republicans on both sides of this thing. And at the end they said, "Well, we'll do this sequestration and that'll force Congress to actually come up with something to get it done."

And at the end of the day, it didn't work. In the House last year, we passed two different bills with real offsets to the sequester and didn't get anything out of the Senate. We passed it in May of last year and then again, I want to say it was in September or October. I can remember sitting with Leon Panetta the day that President Obama was sworn in for a second term. You have the House and Senate leadership as committee chairs meeting with the administration. Leon Panetta, I was sitting next to Leon and I served with Leon when he was in the House before he became Secretary of Defense. He said, "You guys aren't going to let this sequester go through." I said, "Oh yes, it is." I

said, “We've passed a bill to offset that and the Senate hasn't done anything. It's coming. It's coming.”

And, you know, at the end of the day, this is certainly not the best way to do it, it isn't. We wanted to let the individual departments come up with their own choices, set their priorities for how to deal with these different things. We did it with the air traffic controllers; ended up they took money from the airport improvement fund to offset those layoffs that otherwise would have come. But we've got to get serious about the deficit. And the fiscal cliff issue was resolved. Again, that kicked in automatically as well. Revenues are up. The sequester was going to kick in automatically unless we came up with an offset and the Senate failed to take action.

So it is not going to change for the balance of this year. But at the end of the day, I am hopeful that we can sit down as Republicans and Democrats and figure out the fiscal path that we have to be on, include entitlements. You know, entitlements back when Jerry Ford was President, 10 percent of the budget. Today, it's a third. You can't deal with these deficits unless you look at the whole picture, and I'd like to think that we might be able to do that this fall when we really get up to the point of facing yet another debt ceiling extension that comes up probably in October.

ANGELA GREILING KEANE: We are almost out of time, but before wrapping up, we've got just a couple of housekeeping matters to take care of. First of all, I'd like to remind you about our upcoming luncheon speakers. Tomorrow, on June 4th, we'll host Chilean President Sebastian Pinera. Wednesday, June 5th, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. And on July 1st, Carly Fiorina, the former CEO of Hewlett-Packard who currently serves as Chairman of Good 360.

Second, I would like to present both of our guests today with our traditional National Press Club coffee mugs. (Applause)

FRED UPTON: This is in accord, I think, with the House standards on ethics. (Laughter) This is about the ceiling that we can take.

DAVID GERGEN: The old thing, you could accept any gift that you could drink in one sitting.

ANGELA GREILING KEANE: I won't tell you the value, though, because of course it's very great. But yes, I'm quite sure it's within congressional ethics. Thank you to both of our guests for being here today. I'd also like to thank our National Press Club staff including our Journalism Institute and Broadcast Operation Center for organizing today's event.

Finally, here's a reminder. You can find more information about the club at our website, press.org. If you'd like a copy of today's program, you can find that there. Thank you all for coming, we are adjourned. (Sounds gavel.)

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