

Southern Maryland community has for Tubby Smith and for his family. It is important to learn Tubby's outlook on life, and I quote: "To never forget where you came from, never forget who you are, and never forget where you are heading."

I ask all of my colleagues to join with me in congratulating Coach Smith and the Kentucky men's basketball national championship.

REACHING A BALANCED AGREEMENT ON TOBACCO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) for those kind words of tribute to the Kentucky basketball coach, Tubby Smith. All of us from Kentucky are certainly quite proud of his accomplishments in his first year as the head coach of the University of Kentucky, and he certainly demonstrated the type of leadership and character that are so important to young men and women at the University of Kentucky. It makes us even more proud to know that he is from the State of Maryland.

I want to thank the gentleman for those kind remarks for our basketball coach at the University of Kentucky.

I also would like to point out that this afternoon I had the opportunity to visit with six high school students who came to my office to talk about some issues facing young men and women today. As we had our discussion, they pointed out that some of their greatest concerns on issues facing young people today were: One, teenage pregnancy; and two, the use of illegal drugs.

I found that quite informative, because over the last 6 or 7 months, our President of the United States, our Vice President, Mr. David Kessler and others have placed great emphasis and have drawn attention to the fact that tobacco and the use of tobacco products by young people may be one of the most serious issues facing young people. Yet, in my discussions with these young people today from Kentucky and other young people throughout my district, none of them really talk about the use of tobacco products as one of the major problems facing young people today.

As I listen to the debate on this tobacco issue and the universal tobacco settlement over on the Senate side, and as I have read the universal settlement agreement between the tobacco companies and the State Attorneys General, it has really caused me to do a lot of thinking about this issue. All of us recognize the importance of doing everything possible to prevent young people from using tobacco products, and that is why 50 States already prohibit the sale of tobacco products to young people throughout this country.

Yet in spite of that, the real issue in this universal tobacco settlement

seems now to me to come down to be a matter of money. In the settlement agreement, the tobacco companies agreed that they would pay \$368 billion every 25 years forever to reach this settlement, and, in exchange, they agreed that any individual would be able to bring a lawsuit against the tobacco companies to recover any damages suffered by using tobacco products; that those individuals would have that right to bring these lawsuits forever. The only immunity that the tobacco companies asked for in exchange for \$368 billion every 25 years forever was to simply settle the class lawsuits and the lawsuits filed by the States in these innovative legal theories, that were filed by the States to reimburse the States for Medicaid costs that the States incurred by individuals who voluntarily used tobacco products.

But as I look into this more and more, it seems that this issue is much broader than simply teenage smoking, because there are hundreds of thousands of individuals and their children who depend upon the tobacco product for their livelihood, for the education of their children, to take care of their families. As a matter of fact, there are 140,000 farm families in the United States alone that grow this product.

This discussion talks only about teenage smoking, and yet we are not giving any consideration to the impact, the economic impact, that this settlement can have on these hundreds of thousands of families who depend upon this product for their livelihood.

As I listen to the Senate debate, I am quite discouraged that more and more it seems to be a matter of wanting to punish an industry, to provide punitive damages against an industry that has grown and processed a legal crop, a crop that has been legal in America since Jamestown; a crop that, if you walk around the Capitol of the United States, you will see tobacco leaves at strategic points in this Capitol, a crop that has provided valuable economic interests to our Nation.

I would simply say as we continue our debate on the tobacco settlement, let us not forget the economic impact that this is going to have on farmers, workers, and many other people. I think we have a unique opportunity to reach a balanced agreement.

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE HONORABLE BELLA ABZUG

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Hawaii (Mrs. MINK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I rise with sadness to express my personal condolence to the family of the late Bella Abzug.

Bella Abzug came to Congress in 1970. I had been elected 5 years previously. We quickly became very close friends and collaborators. Despite the fact that we came from very different backgrounds and from opposite corners of

this country, our concerns were the same. I had been fighting against the Vietnam War for 5 years. The few of us who opposed the war at that time had tried every parliamentary maneuver we could think of to end the war. Clearly, after 5 years we were exhausted and our struggles to turn the Nation's policies around needed help.

Bella's election to Congress gave us fresh vigor and new momentum. She was a tireless, relentless advocate for peace. From the moment she was sworn into office, she made her voice heard and fought with all her might and power to get this country out of the war in Vietnam.

She knew that she was effective and she knew that her voice made a difference.

Just as Bella fought for peace, she also fought for equality and justice. With all her heart and soul, she stood for the rights of the poor to be heard. She pushed her way to assure the poor a voice in the deliberations of the Congress. She was their voice, and they loved her for her commitment to their plight.

Justice was for Bella the right to earn a decent living and the right to be able to provide for your family. She fought against discrimination and championed the cause of equality for women. No one I know did more for women than Bella. Her life was given to that cause. No matter where she went, everyone knew by her presence that she was their voice for equality and for justice.

She challenged the conscience of America to prove its worth as a society by permitting women to claim their place as full and equal citizens. Bella's best efforts were in building networks and forging coalitions. She forced people to forget their turf wars and to work together for the greater good. Even after she left Congress, she continued in this work.

She organized huge demonstrations for abortion rights, for equal rights, for child care, for food for the hungry and for the AIDS programs. She led international conferences and taught women everywhere how their combined voices could make important changes in their lives.

When formal government conferences were convened, she called nongovernmental women together for massive counter-conferences. She angered Presidents by challenging them to do better for women, for the poor and the oppressed minorities. I counted Bella as one of my closest friends. We counseled together on many occasions, even after we both left Congress in 1976. We looked to each other for support and comfort in a world that seldom understood nor cared to understand women and politics. We knew that by joining together on many fronts, that we could double the volume of our voices so that no one could miss the message we wanted to convey.

Bella was a deeply caring and sensitive human being. She always asked

about your family when she met you. She worried about my daughter when she was hurt in an automobile accident. She was always thoughtful and generous in her personal relationships.

She taught me chutzpah, an important tool to make sure you are not pushed to the back of the bus. She challenged regular order and paved the way for all women to be heard.

Women today who have a place at the table have Bella Abzug to thank. Without Bella, we would be years behind. When women's history is finally written, I am certain that Bella's life will be among the most celebrated.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the following information about Bella Abzug.

BELLA ABZUG

b. 1920

American lawyer and politician

"Women have been trained to speak softly and carry a lipstick. Those days are over."

INTRODUCTION

Bella Abzug was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives after a long career as a labor lawyer, civil-liberties advocate, and peace activist. During the time she served in Congress she challenged congressional decorum by bluntly denouncing her male colleagues as a privileged elite of white, middle-aged men who were out of touch with the needs and aspirations of most Americans. Abzug was among the most vocal members of congress demanding an immediate withdrawal of American military forces from Indochina during the Vietnam conflict in the 1970s. She also took strong positions in favor of women's and minority rights and federal aid to cities.

Abzug was born Bella Savitsky on July 24, 1920, the daughter of a Emanuel and Esther Savitsky. Her father was a butcher in New York City. In 1942 she graduated from Hunter College in New York with a bachelor of arts degree. Two years later she married Maurice Abzug, a stockbroker and novelist, with whom she had two daughters. After earning a law degree from Columbia University in New York in 1947, she practiced law privately for 23 years, until she was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.

FLAMBOYANT CONGRESSWOMAN

During her two terms in Congress (1970-74) Abzug served on the committee on public works and transportation and was chair of the subcommittee on government information and individual rights. She was also assistant Democratic whip to Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr. Soon after Abzug reached the floor of Congress she became a highly visible, flamboyant figure, with her trademark wide-brimmed hats and feisty manner. While her strongly worded, forthright speeches had great popular appeal, her political allies often believed her personal style detracted from their cause. Abzug was criticized for preferring to make headlines on her own instead of negotiating and compromising to pass legislation. But the New York Democrat earned increasing respect from her colleagues over the years while remaining true to her political vision.

In her capacity as chair of the House subcommittee on government information and individual rights, Abzug conducted inquiries on covert and illegal activities by agencies of the federal government. She helped produce the "Government in the Sunshine" law, which gave the public greater access to government records. Abzug co-founded the National Women's Political Caucus in 1971 and authored numerous bills intended to pre-

vent sex discrimination and improve the status of women. On local issues she devoted much of her time to securing federal funds for New York City during the city's fiscal crisis in the mid-1970s. In 1972 she wrote "Bella! Ms. Abzug Goes to Washington," an account of her experiences as a congresswoman.

RETURNS TO LAW PRACTICE

Abzug gave up her congressional seat in 1976 to seek the New York Democratic party nomination for the U.S. Senate, narrowly losing the race to Daniel Patrick Moynihan. She went on to run unsuccessfully for mayor of New York City in 1977 and for a congressional seat representing the East Side of Manhattan in 1978. Political analysts attributed these losses to her confrontational image and the conservative nature of the electorate. President Jimmy Carter appointed Abzug co-chair of the National Advisory Committee for Women. Carter dismissed her in 1979 after the committee issued a report criticizing the president's decision to cut funding for women's programs. She then returned to her legal practice. Abzug remained in the public eye, however, as a lecturer, television news commentator, and magazine columnist. She was also an executive for women's organizations, including Women-USA, a grass-roots political action organization, and the Women's Foreign Policy Council.

WRITES BOOK ON "GENDER GAP"

Abzug drew on her decades-long leadership experience in the women's movement to write "Gender Gap: Abzug's Guide to Political Power for Women," which was published in 1984. With co-author Mim Kelber, Abzug examined the possible causes and political consequences of the "gender gap," the wide disparity in voting patterns between men and women noticed in some American elections. In the 1980 presidential election, for instance, many more women than men voted to reelect Carter, and the gender gap made the difference in a number of elections for state governors later in the decade. Although statisticians have had trouble identifying the specific political differences that may separate the sexes at the ballot box, Abzug credits the feminist movement for encouraging women's independence.

BECOMES ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCATE

In her book Abzug also outlined a range of political, social, and economic issues on which women can have an impact. Among them is the environment, an area in which Abzug herself became active in the early 1990s. Appointed as special adviser to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), she became a leading advocate of environmental security and a more economically just world. In 1991 she was an organizer of the Women's Congress for a healthy Planet as part of the Earth Summit sponsored by the United Nations in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The congress issued the "Action Agenda for the Twenty-first Century," which challenged men and women to work together for a "safe and sustainable future." Abzug identified a particular role—and a higher degree of freedom—for women in cleaning up "the mess" that has been made throughout the world: "I believe women will bring a new vision, with new perspectives as to how and what to change," she told an interviewer. "It's easier with women because they are not part of what has taken place. They aren't totally unshackled, not only by lack of ownership but by lack of involvement in decisions to date. They are freer and more independent."

HONORARY CHAIR BELLA ABZUG: A WOMAN OF STRENGTH

The 20th Anniversary Celebration of the Spirit of Houston will kick off amidst memories of the 1977 Houston Conference, which attracted 20,000 men and women, and visions of the 21st Century. The National Women's Conference has named the Honorable Bella S. Abzug, former Congresswoman, current President of the Women in Environment and Development (WEDO), guide and mentor to women worldwide, to serve as Honorary Chair of the 20th Anniversary Celebration. The Conference will be held in Washington, D.C. at the Georgetown University Conference Center November 20-23, 1997.

Ms. Abzug maintains an unwavering struggle for a world where women participate fully and equally in all aspects of life. She works tirelessly to give voice and visibility to women worldwide by forging links and partnerships at every level. Abzug encourages women to achieve equality through economic, social and political empowerment.

While serving in the United States Congress representing New York, Congresswoman Abzug introduced a bill in 1975 proposing that a national women's conference be held as part of the Bicentennial celebration and other women members of the House of Representatives united with her to work toward the adoption of the legislation. Under the onslaught of this determined group, Public Law 94-167 passed in the House on December 10, 1975 and by the Senate on December 23, 1975.

Public Law 94-167 directed a 42-member National Commission, presided over by Bella Abzug, to convene a National Women's Conference, preceded by state and regional meetings. The mandate read in part: "... The Conference shall ... recognize the contributions of women to the development of our country ... assess the role of women in economic, social, cultural and political development ... identify barriers that prevent women from participating fully and equally in all aspects of national life and develop recommendations for means by which such barriers can be removed. ..." Although it amounted to less than one nickel for each female in the country, Congress appropriated \$5 million to carry forth the mandate of the Public Law. But women know how to "make do", and Bella Abzug led the nation's women in that effort.

After a year of hard work and devotion to the task, Presiding Officer Bella Abzug stood at the podium on November 19, 1977 and extended a welcome to three First Ladies, whose sheer presence was more moving than anyone would have imagined. First Ladies Rosalynn Carter, Betty Ford and Lady Bird Johnson expelled any notion that they were ceremonial wives. They said they were women who could speak for themselves. Lady Bird Johnson said she had come to believe that the women's movement belongs to women of all ages.

Ms. Abzug was a key organizer at the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995. During the Conference, she received numerous awards and accolades that recognized her many contributions. Prior to the Beijing Conference, in 1994, she was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame in Seneca Falls, New York where the first women's rights meeting was held in 1848.

Bella Abzug is a civil rights attorney and has earned recognition as a leading women's rights advocate and public speaker. She is the founder of WEDO, an international network with consultative status at the United Nations. WEDO networks organize women's caucus meetings at major international conferences of particular concern to women.

Bella S. Abzug, one of the most admired women of America, honors the 20th Anniversary Celebration of the Spirit of Houston and the National Women's Conference by her presence and her acceptance of the role of Honorary Chair.

Information on the 20th Anniversary Celebration, including Conference and hotel registration forms, can be obtained at the NWC Web site.

CONTRACT WITH WOMEN OF THE USA

(By Bella Abzug)

The downsizing of women off the national political agenda is being challenged in a new and exciting campaign. The "Contract with Women of the USA" is gathering momentum across the country.

Even though we are a majority of the U.S. population, women are being attacked, trivialized and ignored in much of the current political debates. Modest gains that we have won in years of struggle are in jeopardy. The time has come to put women's needs and concerns up front, in actions as well as words.

Initiated by the Women's Environment and Development Organization, of which I am a co-founder, and the Center for Women Policy Studies, the Contract campaign is endorsed by growing numbers of women's organizations, women members of Congress, state legislators and others. Our target is a thousand endorsements by this fall. Even more important, the Contract provides a flexible organizing and advocacy vehicle for addressing state and local issues of importance to women.

Women state legislators are taking the lead in supporting the Contract and working with women and other public sector groups to develop their own state contracts. Kicking off the campaign on International Women's Day on March 7th were women legislators in Arizona, California, Iowa, Maryland, Minnesota and New York.

Newt Gingrich's "Contract with America" has run into stalemate and massive rejection by the American people. Our "Contract with Women of the USA" reflects the realities of American women's lives in all our family, economic, political, social, racial, age, religious and educational diversity. It offers an alternative and unifying vision in which women and men work together on an equal basis for our mutual benefit.

The 12 principles and action commitments in our Contract are based on the Platform for Action, approved by consensus last September at the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women by the United States and 188 other governments, as well as by 30,000 nongovernmental women, including 7,000 from our country.

The dozen commitments outlined in the "Contract with Women of the USA" call for economic, social and political equality for women; access to affordable health care and reproductive rights; an end to discrimination and violence against women; continuation of social safety nets for poor women and children; inclusion of women in peace-making; educational opportunities for women; and mechanisms to monitor and further women's gains.

Women legislators in the six kickoff states have signed on to the Contract. Similar actions are being planned in other states. We welcome the support of women legislators and activists throughout the country and urge them to join us in this important effort.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SMITH of Michigan addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

NO-FEE POST OFFICE BOXES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, after nearly 20 years of effort, I have a victory to announce: Since I came to the Congress in 1979, my constituents in small Nebraska communities and Americans like them throughout our Nation have sought relief from the injustice of having to pay Post Office box rental fees because the U.S. Postal Service did not provide delivery to their homes. They came to the post office to pick up their mail because they had no home delivery, and they paid box rent for the privilege of doing so.

Incredibly and unfairly, they paid box rent while saving the U.S. Postal Service the cost of providing home delivery, which is provided free to urban residents and those living in the countryside. Can you believe it?

Well, finally, Mr. Speaker, that has changed. This afternoon I was notified by the U.S. Postal Service that effective April 5, 1998, throughout the United States, eligibility for no-fee post office boxes finally will be extended to those citizens living in small towns without home delivery whose residences or businesses are within the immediate vicinity of the post office and who, therefore, are ineligible for delivery service.

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See the Federal Register, March 27, 1998, page 14820, for the details.

In the parlance I have learned as a lonely Member fighting this inequity over the years for small town America, effective April 5, there is no more quarter mile rule. Those Americans will now have free box rent for a normal-sized box. The costs are gone at last.

I congratulate the U.S. Postal Service for making the right decision.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. HOEKSTRA addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

TRIBUTE TO THE FAMILY OF RON BROWN, AND IN RECOGNITION OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NUSSLE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. This evening, Mr. Speaker, I will not take

all of my time, but I wanted to pay tribute to the Ron Brown family, Alma, Tracey, and Michael. This evening Tracey Brown, the daughter of our former Secretary of Commerce, Ron Brown, had the book signing for her personal tribute to her father. I believe that there is no greater tribute than that a child can give to a parent.

Certainly as we reflect on what this government means and the idea of public service, we certainly recognize that former Secretary Ron Brown was that kind of public servant: a giant, gentle, strong, persevering.

As I looked around the room where the book signing occurred, I saw so many diverse faces, people from all walks of life; people who had no personal stake in their presence this evening, other than to pay particular tribute to a man who was unselfish in his giving, in his love of his country.

It was interesting to see my colleague, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT), who indicated that he had attended college with Ron Brown and is noted in the book.

It is not often we have time to thank family members and to again say how sorry we are that we lost such a patriot, such a contributor to the process of government. But to Tracey Brown and her family, I would like to thank them so very much for persevering, staying steady, and continuing to love our country.

We are very privileged to have Mrs. Brown, who continues to stand as an example of a family that has given so much.

To Tracey, my hat is off to her for the singular purpose of this last year of writing about her father.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, if I might, I will add my recognition and special feeling about the 30th anniversary or commemoration of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King. It is important in this time, when we spend so much time using and reusing the words and the beliefs of Dr. King.

Sometimes they are used in ways that I think are not befitting both his image, his message, and his leadership, for too often on the floor of this House I have heard so many cite Dr. King's message about a color-blind society, or being judged by your character, not the color of your skin, to raise legislation to eliminate opportunity for minorities and women.

Often when we are debating the question of totally eliminating affirmative action for women and minorities in this country, after acknowledging just recently that discrimination is still a very harsh part of American society, I will hear those rising to the floor, commentators and others, citing the words of Dr. Martin Luther King.

I would like to think of Dr. King as a gentle spirit, one who knew the importance of nonviolence as opposed to violence, but he was a serious, straightforward gentleman. He always spoke his mind. You never had to think about what he was saying.