

New Congress contemplated

Along with the rest of the country, my family woke up this morning to a Republican majority in Congress. I'm making myself say things like "So what!" and "Big deal!" so I don't get too worked up about it. I better get used to it, or get used to being miserable.

I hope my conservative friends, who are so happy about the Republican majority, don't assume that by simply identifying with the Republican party they will be better off. I also hope my commie-pinko liberal friends, who are afraid segregation will return, will relax.

When I asked our 16-year-old what he thought of a Republican majority in Congress he said, "A what?"

"Never mind," I said.

Our 14-year-old says he doesn't know if he has any Republican friends. But then he doesn't know for sure if he has any friends who are Democrats, either. My wife and I are not amused by our boys' lack of political awareness. We are more concerned about whether it represents a trend of some sort.

My wife isn't as fearful as I am, but I'm not as fearful as most liberals, either. She is the great-granddaughter of a former rural Nebraska post-depression era working-class state senator. You might say politics runs in her family. She says, "It's one big happy family." I admire her brand of rural Nebraska conservative cynicism.

We expect that with a Republican-run Congress, the rich will get even richer. We are aware that the rich didn't do so badly for themselves during the last 50 years. We also realize that some poor folks are not as poor, too. So what! Big deal! I don't want to get too worked up about that, either.



E. Hughes Shanks

Although my wife's upbringing was a far cry from the fear-breeding liberal rhetoric of my childhood, we have very similar perspectives. She was raised to believe government was often a farce and an exclusive crony system that included only the rich folks. That's what I like about many rural white folks. They know what it's like to be left out. And that's probably why more of them don't vote. They don't believe in the system any more than the non-voting urban person of color does.

The conservatives and the Republicans represent the "haves," and the liberals and Democrats represent the "have-nots." I was raised by liberal Democrats and, understandably, have developed a particular affinity for the have-nots, including rural white folks. I married one.

My years of liberal-Democrat indoctrination should have convinced me that the Republicans would put the screws to me. What people fail to realize is that most people in America are have-nots, and the screws get put exclusively to the have-nots.

Liberal indoctrination teaches that, much like ethnic jokes lead to the degradation of people, a Republican majority in Congress should lead to more white power over the have-nots (non-whites and poor whites). I've been taught that

the Republicans would bring more tolerance for everything that keeps the have-nots down.

If a person buys into the liberal fears of conservative domination in Congress, he or she should expect less welfare, a ban on abortions and more segregation. One should also expect more NRA influence in Congress. That person might expect a more receptive climate for the Ku Klux Klan (or other "less hateful" white-only groups), more militarism and more prisons for more black men. All those things that are associated with conservatives and Republicans.

It isn't fair to say simply that I was raised to fear a Republican majority in Congress. It is fair to say that from what I was raised to believe, I shouldn't stand an ice cube's chance in hell now that the GOP is the majority.

Those who fear a Republican majority in Congress should be asking themselves whether the Democrats took the country where it wanted to go in the first place? And if so, did they do it without the help of the Republicans? Were the have-nots better off while the Democrats were in power? The least suspicious observer would have to ask, "Were the Republicans ever really out of power?"

Like most blacks — most of whom are conservative Democrats in my opinion — I know it's a farce. I also need to gain access to that exclusive crony system, so I'm always going to be fighting it, while at the same time trying to befriend its members. I was raised to believe that I should work to break up that crony system. It may be "one big happy family," but guess who's coming to dinner.

Shanks is a graduate student and Daily Nebraskan columnist.

Trouble brews with Stupid Pills

When we met for our traditional New Year's drink of Ovaltine, Slats Grobnik said: "Tell me about those pills. You buy them across the counter or does a doc have to write a prescription?"

Pills? What pills?

"Those Stupid Pills I figure you been taking lately. Boy, they really did the job, didn't they?"

I am not familiar with Stupid Pills and have not used them.

"You did it all on your own? Boy, then you're a natural like that baseball movie with Robert Redford. Maybe they'll make a movie like that about you, except at the end the only fireworks will be in your head."

Do you mind if we talk about something else?

"Hey, no problem."

Thank you. I gather that you, too, have been on vacation. Did you have a pleasant time?

"Sure. And I didn't get arrested even once."

That wasn't what I meant.

Did you go anywhere?

"Yeah, I took a little trip. You wanna hear about it?"

Sure.

"Well, I got where I was going without having to put up any bail money."

Forget it.

"Just making conversation. But I guess you don't wanna talk about it, huh?"

About what?

"How you got to be public enemy No. 1."

That's a slight exaggeration. But, no, my attorney advised me against saying anything until we go to court.

"Oh, that ought to be fun with the cameras being shoved in your face and the TV reporters asking you how you feel, and if you regret being a jerk, and if you're ever going to do it again, and if you are thinking about hanging yourself, and how now you ain't got no credibility no more, and are you going to get in another line of work, and did your boss say you ought to go to the Betty Ford clinic, and how are you going to get around without wheels, and is your wife going to get a divorce, and how are you ever going to write something bad about someone else when now you are such a bum, and if you decide to hang yourself will you do it where they can get a good shot for the 4 o'clock news, and ..."

Excuse me, I said I would rather not discuss it.

"But you ain't; I am. When you come out of the courthouse, you gonna take a swing?"

At who?

"The reporters or the camera guys. Even if the punch don't land, it would make a great bite for the 4 o'clock news, and they'd probably use it again at 10. You might even make the



Mike Royko

networks again."

Of course not. Why would I do something like that?

"Well, as long as you're taking those Stupid Pills, you might as well get all the benefits."

I told you, I am not taking any such pills. And let us change the subject, please. How are things at work?

"Just fine. And when I pull into the company lot, everybody don't run to call their insurance agents, and nobody asks me if I can walk a straight line and touch my nose. Speaking of that, with your nose, you should have been able to pass the test by touching it with your foot."

And how is the family?

"Everybody is fine. Why not? When they go out, they don't have to wear bags over their faces because of me. How about yours? Have they tried to have you committed yet?"

No, but it's nice of you to ask.

"What about Oprah or Geraldo?"

I don't watch their shows, but what about them?

"Have you thought about going on? I'm sure they'd be glad to have you even if you didn't wear a sequined gown and high heels."

Why in the world would I do that?

"Geez, to talk about your rise and fall — how you went from being a highly respected bum to a pathetic, sad, down-and-out bum. They'd probably bring on some other once-mighty bums — maybe ol' Spiro Agnew, Darryl Strawberry the ballplayer, and that guy Keating from the S&L scandal — so you could compare notes on how you turned into social outcasts. Then the audience could ask questions about how it feels to be such lousy lowlifes."

"It could be a heck of a show, and you could get a tape to leave to your grandchildren so they'll know what a live wire you were."

Thanks for the suggestion, but I believe I'll decline the honor and instead go through the normal legal process.

"That's all? Just go to court?"

That's customary, isn't it?"

How about if we just have another Ovaltine?"

"You're no fun."

Yes, and it's about time.

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Next year is now for Huskers

Finally.

After 23 years of waiting, Nebraska is once again the best in the land.

No more close-call losses, missed opportunities, dropped balls or bad officiating. No more slow defenses, outmanned offenses equipped with inadequate game plans or lack of the polls' respect. No more heartbreaks, disappointing trips south into hostile territory or bowl-game blowouts.

Nebraska, armed with two fully capable quarterbacks, the greatest offensive line in college history and a defense that was rated second going into the Orange Bowl, completed the near-impossible task of not only defeating the Evil Empire known as Miami, but coming from an 8-point deficit late in the fourth quarter on the Hurricanes home turf to do so.

Miami, an institution that allegedly pays its players for outstanding play (among other suspected underhanded activities), could not withstand a full four quarters of pure smashmouth football, Big Eight-style.

For three quarters the NBC cameras focused on Warren Sapp and his self-indulging antics, revealing his true nature of being nothing more than an ass. His teammates were equally as ridiculous, prancing like fools every time they lined up properly. I suppose the feeble-minded need all the encouragement they can get.

But when it counted, when the game was to be decided, Nebraska took control and displayed to the entire nation the true character of a champion.

When this season began, each player made a commitment to be the absolute best. Nothing short of a national championship would be acceptable. All those practices —



Michael Justice

spring camp, two-a-days, summer camp, spending Christmas away from home in a hotel room. All that work and effort for one goal, and in the final quarter it all paid off.

While Cory Schlesinger was sprinting practically untouched into the end zone for his second touchdown, we got a final look at Warren Sapp and he wasn't acting like a regular idiot anymore. He was too busy trying to catch his breath after being rolled by an overpowering offensive line. He was sapped, if you will. (Sorry, I couldn't resist.)

Unlike Warren Sapp and the 'Canes, the Cornhuskers stayed strong for 60 minutes and completed their initial task of going undefeated and capturing the championship.

When you look back on this magnificent season, each of you will have exciting memories. Some will cherish the victory over Miami, as it represents an end to both the national championship slump and the Orange Bowl drought. Or perhaps the Colorado victory when Brook Berringer stepped up and delivered at a time when many thought the Huskers would be blown out.

Perhaps it might be the thrashing of whiney-hiney Chad May at Kansas State and the embarrassment we bestowed upon a group of second-rate fans, who could only throw oranges while NU continually introduced May to the turf.

You may remember the astounding comeback against a talented Wyoming club that rekindled our injured confidence.

Maybe the incredible recovery of Tommie Frazier will be the first thing that comes to mind. Or his fourth-quarter play that helped win the battle in Miami.

You may even recall the outstanding performances of Berringer and Matt Turman that kept us in contention for the title in the first place. Without them, chances are we'd be celebrating another victory over Texas Tech.

Or would it be the greatest offensive line of all time that would spark your memory. Or could it be the defense, possibly the best NU has ever fielded, which held six teams to single digits in scoring and only allowed one opponent to score more than three times.

However you choose to remember this undefeated and unforgettable season is up to you, but the character and perseverance of these 1994 Cornhuskers is perhaps their greatest attribute.

With about ten minutes left in Miami, the NU character, the essence of any man, stood tall, refused to falter and denied exhaustion its turn. They pushed and Miami went backwards. They drove and shoved and Miami fell.

And, finally, they stood alone. No more Sapps or Costas or home-field advantage. No more wide-lefts or punt-return touchdowns called back. No more missed 2-point conversions or Iowa States. No more accusations and comparisons to Devaney. No more wait until next year.

For this year is ours.

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