

The responsibility of our broken system

Is our federal government really broken?

Maybe, maybe not.

Former Sen. Bob Dole argues that the Senate needs more co-operation and more civility, less name-calling and partisan hardball.

**On the
Prairie Dog**
Steve Haynes



In his day, to some extent, we had that, and the system worked a little better on routine bills like transportation and budgets. Today, every bill seems to be a battle, every move political.

It's not that the parties shouldn't look out for their own interests, and especially, their beliefs. But the hard liners on both sides tend to forget that the vast majority of Americans sit somewhere in the middle.

Americans believe in compromise, in getting along, in working things out. The great majority do not want either the ultra-left-wing agenda of the Obama administration nor the far-right destination of the ill-defined "tea party" movement. While both visions are helpful in shaping our debate, neither is likely to prevail.

Some argue that slow government is not necessarily bad. They say the founders, including both Hamilton and Jefferson, intended the system to move slowly lest it lay an egg. That's not a bad argument, and 20 to 30 years ago, you could see things that way.

Today, when the budget seldom is approved until we are well into the new fiscal year, and when many parts of the government move along with only "continuing resolutions" to authorize spending at last year's levels, their appropriations tied up in hopeless wrangling, you might not.

Careful deliberation and gridlock are not quite the same thing.

Yet, when the Democrats were in charge and "got things done," they passed a 2,000-page health care bill that many still have not read. The Department of Health and Human Services continues to issue regulations which, if anything, make things worse.

"Doing something" often is not the answer, especially when no one understands what they've done.

Congressional practices, from holding up judicial appointments to endless delays, do not serve the nation. Both parties have been guilty, and both must change.

People don't want burdensome regulations, but often they push for the government to "make things better," and the end result is more regulations, more government control. That is almost never good.

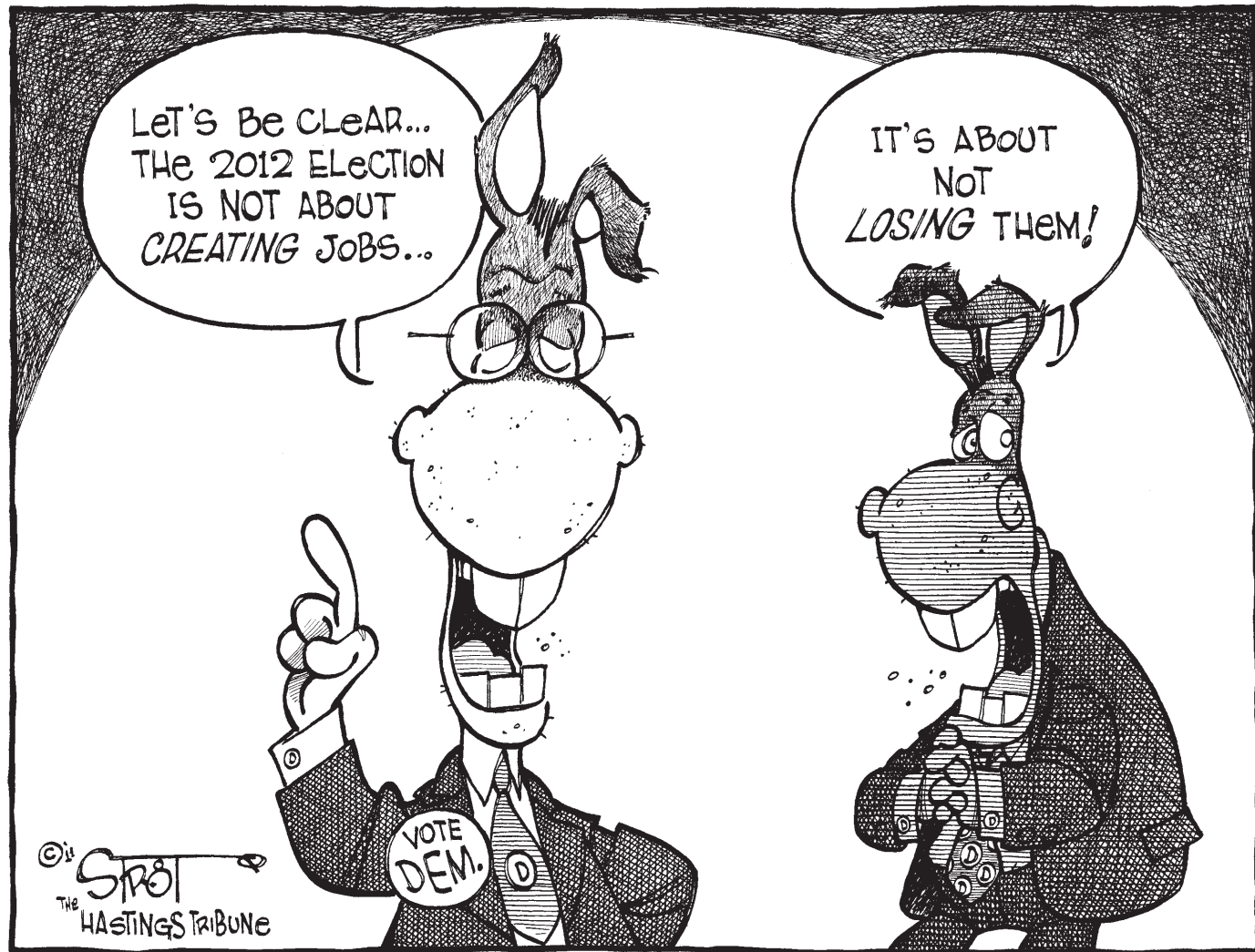
Americans tend to expect far too much from government. They expect the president to fix the economy, create jobs and make us safe, when in fact he can't do much. In short, we expect a miracle worker, candidates cater to us, and then we're disappointed when the one we elect can't perform.

The parties need to get together and make government work, but in a commonsense way. That could start tomorrow, or even after the 2012 elections, but it needs to start soon.

Government shutdowns, a shortage of judges and endless delays do not bespeak good government. Neither do huge bills that no one understands, or reams and reams of stifling regulations.

The change that's needed is not in our laws or, for the most part, in what government does. It's in the lack of responsibility shown by our "broken" system and the endless gridlock can, and should, stop.

— Steve Haynes



Mishaps and blunders occur while working

Well, you ought to see the other guy! At least that's what I'm going to say when anyone asks, "What happened to your nose?"

We had planned a work day at the house we help run for families who come to visit loved ones who are incarcerated at the state prison not far from where we live. The local football coach had volunteered his team to provide the muscle we needed for the heavy lifting, moving, pushing and shoving. It was like a choreographed dance: carry this to there; throw that on the trailer; cut those branches; pull up that carpet; haul this to the thrift store. There were strong, willing young men everywhere ready to do any task we asked of them.

I was running from one building to another just trying to keep ahead of the action. A room-size roll of carpeting, backing side out, was lying on the sidewalk when I stubbed my toe and took a header right onto the roll. It was

Out Back

Carolyn Plotts



like in slow motion. I saw the carpet roll coming toward me; one foot went north, one went south; my arms played out; and I planted my face right into the roll's rough surface. More embarrassed than hurt, I jumped back to my feet and looked around to see who might have witnessed my mishap. Jim, of course, one of our friends and one of the football players were the only ones around. Jim rushed to my aid and as I brushed myself off I swore the others to secrecy. "This is our little secret," I told them. So my nose may be a little bruised, but the only thing really hurt was my pride.

-ob-

During a recent conversation with one of my friends she asked how I got started writing this column. I shared the story of how I kind of "fell into it" after my mom died. My friend asked how my writing is different than Mom's. That caused me to think. How are we different? I'm a lot like my mother, but she was a much deeper thinker. She was also more political and had an opinion on everything. Like the post office closing issue; she would have been all over that, leading the charge to keep small town post offices open. It might be too late, but I'll throw my two cents in and campaign to keep our post office.

-ob-

I caught this modern-day version of how a "techy" might interpret the commandment of "honoring thy father and thy mother": "Respect your parents; they did high school without Google and Wikipedia".

Proper etiquette for hunting on another's land

Insight

John Schlageck

In less than a month the Kansas fields, hills and woods will awaken to the sound of booming shotguns and barking dogs. Nov. 12 is the official opening day of upland game hunting. Hunters and their canines will once again swarm the countryside searching for pheasants, quail and prairie chicken. Duck and turkey season is already in full swing.

Farms and ranches have always been a handy, ready-to-use outlet for many urban dwellers who travel outside their city homes in search of recreational hunting. On opening day of the upland game season the interstate and U.S. highways will be a steady stream of pickups, SUVs and cars headed for central and western Kansas.

If you plan to hunt on private land remember one key word as you embark on this season's sojourn. That word is consideration. It means thoughtful and sympathetic regard.

In this country, wildlife belongs to the people, but landowners (farmers and ranchers) have the right to say who goes on their land. If you are interested in hunting, make arrangements before you hunt.

Don't wait until the day you plan to hunt someone's land and then knock on the door at 6 a.m. By now you should

have already asked to hunt.

After you've secured permission, here are some suggestions to follow that will ensure a lasting relationship between you and the landowner.

Agree on who, and how many, will hunt on the land. Specify number and furnish names. Talk about specific times and dates you plan to hunt.

Contact the landowner each and every time before you plan to hunt, and let the landowner know of your intentions. The landowner may have forgotten about your original conversation. It's just common courtesy to say hello before hunting and ask again for the opportunity — or privilege, as I consider it — to hunt on someone's property.

Determine the exact location on the land you have permission to hunt. Some areas may be off-limits because of livestock or crops.

Always, and I can't stress this enough, leave gates the way you find them. If they are open, leave them that way. If they are closed, shut them after you pass through.

If you ever leave a gate open and

a farmer's cow herd gets out of the pasture, "Katy bar the door." You'll never be invited back to hunt. Don't even ask.

Once you've enjoyed a successful hunt, stop by to thank the landowner for his generosity. Offer to share the game you bag.

After the season, write a note expressing your appreciation for the opportunity to hunt. Consider offering a gift as a token of your gratitude.

Leasing of land by the hunter from the landowner is becoming more popular in Kansas. Such agreements allow a hunter a guaranteed hunting site. It also provides the landowner income necessary to recoup some of the investment he needs to leave habitat suitable for wildlife to survive and prosper.

If you enter into such a lease, make sure it is written and includes all provisions both parties deem necessary. This should include a clause for the landowner and his/her family to hunt on the land.

Always remember that the hunter and landowner should discuss the terms of the hunt before hunting begins. This is extremely important. Hunters never forget, you are a guest and it is a privilege to hunt on the owner's land.



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I am in favor of the Death Penalty, and think it should be carried out the morning after being sentenced.
R.W. Yeager

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