

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR...

It was June 3, 1985 and I was listening to CBS Radio on my way to work that morning in Wooster, Ohio. I was directing an arts center there and we were working with Rubbermaid, headquartered in Wooster at that time, to purchase and renovate an old school building so we could move out of the college basement we were occupying.

That day I would be in four different committee meetings and as I pondered once again the futility of unnecessary committees, the CBS Radio's NEWSBREAK with Charles Osgood came on. I liked the one I heard that day so much that I wrote to Mr. Osgood and he sent me a copy of that Newsbreak.

It is still so relevant that I want to share it with you. With the debt ceiling discussions, committee after committee with amendment after amendment on Capitol Hill and at the Statehouse, and all of us who continue to serve on and work with committees, Mr. Osgood's poetic expression waxes even more true today. Here is what he said:

CHARLES OSGOOD:

Newsbreak, news and comment.

I'm Charles Osgood, CBS News. President Reagan's tax reform proposal is intended to make the whole tax system simpler and more fair. Some people are saying it is okay but needs a little fixing up here and there; others say it is too fair to some people and not fair to others. Some say it is too simple; others complain that it is not simple enough. The tax reform proposal now passes through the crucible of legislative action, the Congress, which means that everybody and his brother will have a chance now to show why this amendment, that adjustment, putting this in and taking that out, putting in a little something over here and taking out a little something over there, increasing this and decreasing that, will improve the whole package to no end. The proposal is not exactly a horse even now, but with each alteration, each refinement, each improvement, it will look every day, in every way, more and more like a camel. Stand by.



(ANNOUNCEMENT)

OSGOOD: A camel is a horse, they say, designed by a committee, And in Washington, a lovely but peculiar sort of city, Committees are a constant, ever-present way of life, Contributing a running kind of argumentative strife To the building of whatever one may have in mind to build Some will want the thing to happen, some will want to have it killed. And one way that they can kill it, wise observers there have said, Is to just keep on improving it until the thing is dead. Your horse is very lovely, sir, it's beautiful and lean, It's just about the finest horse that I have ever seen. I know exactly what you've said and what it is you meant, And I am in agreement about eighty-two percent. Your horse is almost perfect, but a way to make it stronger Would be to make those two hind legs the least little bit longer. And over here is someone else with something to suggest "I must insist," he says, "and I am sure it would be best, If we put an extra stomach on the beast that you propose And modify the face a bit, and change the mouth and nose." Someone else has this idea: The beast is sleek and lank, Why not add a hump, a sort of onboard water-tank? And if that hump seems ugly, as it might to some of you, We can make it more symmetrical—add not one hump, but two. The horse may lose a little bit of elegance and speed, But who says speed and elegance are what we really need? The committee takes a little off and adds a little on, And original objectives soon are lost or all but gone. And the committee, when its work is done, steps back and takes a look And thinks of all the effort, all the compromise it took. It's still so complicated that nobody understands, But they pat each other on the back and shake each other's hands And, though it may not seem too sleek or wonderful to you, They will say that this poor camel is the best that they could do.

(ANNOUNCEMENT)

Charles Osgood
CBS RADIO NETWORK
NEWSBREAK
Monday, June 3, 1985
8:30 AM, EDT

Rick H. Jones – Executive Director