

SYLVIA HERMANN TRIBUTE
ROCKVILLE CIVIC CENTER MANSION
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
MAY 7, 1980

WHEN YOU'VE BEEN IN POLITICS AS LONG AS I HAVE, LET ALONE AS LONG AS AB HERMANN, YOU'RE USED TO FLOWERY ORATORY AND POLITICAL TRIBUTES. I USED TO SAY THAT AB ADVANCED ABE LINCOLN'S PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN.

BUT WHEN YOU'RE DEALING WITH BEAUTIFUL LADIES, YOU'RE A LITTLE MORE GALLANT. THE FACT IS, SYLVIA HERMANN HAS BEEN A MAINSTAY OF OUR PARTY FOR A LONG, LONG TIME. DURING THAT TIME, SHE'S BROUGHT US INTELLIGENCE AND PERCEPTION AND DRIVE.

SHE IS THE FOUNDER OF THE CENTURY CLUB, AND IN BESTOWING LIFE MEMBERSHIP ON HER THIS EVENING, YOU AND I KNOW THAT YOU'RE ALSO BESTOWING LIFETIME FRIENDSHIP, LIFETIME ADMIRATION, LIFETIME RESPECT AND AFFECTION.

YOU KNOW, POLITICS ATTRACTS A LOT OF FINE PEOPLE TO WORK FOR THE COMMON GOOD. SOMETIMES WE DISAGREE OVER THE

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PRECISE DEFINITION OF THE COMMON GOOD. SOMETIMES, WE EVEN GET BOGGED DOWN IN LABELING EACH OTHER AND DEVISING TESTS OF IDEOLOGICAL PURITY. THAT GOES WITH THE TERRITORY.

BUT SYLVIA HAS REMINDED US THAT THE PURPOSE OF POLITICAL PARTY IS, FIRST AND FOREMOST, TO WIN ELECTIONS, AND ONLY SECONDARILY TO SPLIT IDEOLOGICAL HAIRS. AND POLITICS ALSO ATTRACTS A LOT OF PEOPLE WHOSE PRINCIPLES ARE REAL, WHOSE COMMITMENT TO FURTHERING THEM IS GENUINE, AND WHO GIVE AND GIVE OF THEMSELVES TO ACHIEVE THE DAY WHEN A UNITED PARTY IS PUT IN POWER, AND THEN LIVES UP TO ALL ITS PROMISES.

AB AND SYLVIA HERMANN ARE SUCH PEOPLE. I WAS CHAIRMAN OF OUR PARTY DURING SOME DIFFICULT DAYS. THERE WERE DOOMSAYERS THEN, AS THERE ALWAYS SEEM TO BE, WHO WERE QUESTIONING OUR VERY FUTURE AS A POLITICAL ORGANIZATION. BUT NOT AB HERMAN. AND NOT SYLVIA. THEY MADE MY JOB EASIER, AND THEY GAVE COURAGE TO A PARTY THAT NEEDED TO KNOW THAT THE FUTURE STILL BECKONED.

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NOW, I'M HERE THIS EVENING, IN A FORMAL CAPACITY ANYWAY, TO REPRESENT ANOTHER GOOD REPUBLICAN NAMED RONALD REAGAN. I BRING HIS GREETINGS AND HIS WARMEST BEST WISHES TO AB AND SYLVIA, ALONG WITH HIS DEEP GRATITUDE FOR ALL THEY'VE CONTRIBUTED IN THE PAST, AND ALL THE PROMISE THEY HOLD FOR THE FUTURE.

BUT I COULDN'T BE HERE THIS EVENING ONLY AS A SURROGATE, EVEN FOR SO DISTINGUISHED A CANDIDATE AS GOVERNOR REAGAN. FOR TONIGHT, I AM PROUD TO BE HERE AND TO PAY TRIBUTE TO SYLVIA HERMANN AS A FRIEND. I DON'T HAVE TO TELL YOU THAT SHE'S REMARKABLE--YOU ALREADY KNOW THAT. I DON'T HAVE TO REMIND YOU OF HER DEDICATION, HER WARMTH, OR HER SINGLE-MINDED DEVOTION TO OTHERS--YOU HAVE FELT ALL THAT YOURSELVES. WHAT I CAN TELL YOU IS MY GRATITUDE FOR FRIENDS LIKE SHE AND AB, AND MY ABSOLUTE CONFIDENCE THAT AS LONG AS THE REPUBLICAN PARTY CAN CONTINUE TO ATTRACT AND MOTIVATE SUCH PEOPLE, THEN WE NEEDN'T WORRY ABOUT OUR FUTURE.

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THE WORDS THAT REVERBERATE AROUND THIS ROOM TONIGHT MAY NOT BE NEW. AB AND SYLVIA HAVE PROBABLY GOTTEN USED TO HEARING SUCH THINGS FROM FRIENDS AND ADMIRERS. BUT THOSE WORDS ARE ALL WE HAVE TO EXPRESS WHAT WE FEEL. AND WHAT WE FEEL IS AN ESTEEM THAT CAN BARELY BE CAPTURED IN WORDS ALONE.

NOW, KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK, SYLVIA...AND COME THIS NOVEMBER, WE'LL FIND THE CENTURY CLUB HOLDING ITS NEXT SOCIAL IN THE EAST ROOM OF THE WHITE HOUSE. AND WHEN WE DO, A LOT OF THE CREDIT, AS ALWAYS, WILL BELONG TO YOU.