

Ted Cruz Blasts 'Washington Post' Cartoon

Regardless of one's views on whether or not Republican presidential candidate Ted Cruz should be featuring his daughters in his campaign advertisements, *Washington Post* editorial cartoonist Ann Telnaes crossed a line once thought unimaginable in past presidential campaigns.

The Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist took up the issue of using one's children as "political props"—a common phrase used to attack a candidate's use of a person, group of people, location, or object to score political points in a campaign—in her depiction of Cruz and his daughters. It showed Ted Cruz in a Santa suit with his trademark cowboy boots, turning an organ grinder with two chained monkeys to depict Caroline and Catherine.

The cartoon was publicly available on *The Post's* website for only a few hours, during which time it was blasted by Republicans and Democrats alike. In defense of her cartoon, Telnaes said, "[T]here is an unspoken rule in editorial cartooning that a politician's children are off-limits ... But when a politician uses his children as political props, as Ted Cruz recently did in his Christmas parody video in which his eldest daughter read (with her father's dramatic flourish) a passage of an edited Christmas classic, then I figure they are fair game."

Her boss, editorial page editor Fred Hiatt, ultimately disagreed. Saying he hadn't seen the cartoon before it was published, he said he "understood" why Telnaes thought the paper's policy could be ignored in this case, but he did not agree. A few hours later, however, *The Washington Post* took the incident to a new level of shamelessness:

“Why That Now-Retracted *Washington Post* Cartoon Is a Gift to Ted Cruz”

Post reporter Callum Borchers wrote: “Whether you agree with Telnaes’ original reasoning or Hiatt’s overriding rationale, one thing should be obvious to any political observer: This is a win for a candidate who is rising in the polls thanks to support from more conservative Republicans and who has been highly critical of the press—most memorably during the third Republican presidential debate, when he blasted the moderators’ questions as being illustrative of ‘why the American people don’t trust the media.’”

The article then suggests Cruz is overly manipulative—“he has a penchant for tactics”—in a way that is both irritating to fellow Republicans and that “ultimately change little.”

“Setting the Trump-ish language aside, that is one of the knocks against Cruz—that he’s full of principle but short on results. Having *The Post* yank the cartoon allows him to look like he gets results from those predisposed against his—and his supporters’—worldview.”