

Propaganda Damaged U.S. More Than The Nixon Years

To the editor:
Eric Carlson's column about Richard Nixon shows how thoroughly brainwashed journalists and college students have become since 1950.

The overpowering urge for each to make sure the public gets their negative views of Mr. Nixon is a tip-off. Wise intellects know that the center stage character does not have as much impact on society as the manipulators in the wings.

And it wasn't Nixon's sins (or the Kent State incident) that "deepened" the disillusionment of young people. It was and has been the tremendous negative propaganda campaigns waged by Communists, "liberal" college professors and brainwashed journalists.

Mr. Carlson unfortunately never felt the "skepticism" spawned by earlier politicians. Franklin Roosevelt's (pre-planned) entry into war (in spite of contrary campaign promises) spiked a massive resentment Mr. Roosevelt earned for making the Great Depression worse and longer than it would have been if he hadn't developed a government of alphabetized bureaucratic soup.

And Mr. Carlson never experienced the disillusionment we veterans suffered when it became apparent that Mr. Roosevelt dealt the fruits of victory away to the Communists and Mr. Truman authorized a "United Nations" police action in Korea whilst the enemy was the dominant member of the U.N.

Nor did Mr. Carlson witness the Communists in action (unimpeded) on our college campuses at the same time our soldiers died in Korea fighting Communism.

There is no way Mr. Nixon could have caused as much damage to this nation as the mind-choking propaganda Mr. Carlson evidently cannot identify.

Oh dear! How history gets rewritten by those who weren't there!

Karl E. Brandt
Shallotte

Children Not Objects

To the editor:
I hope somebody can help me understand this. The Clinton health care plan will pay for abortion on demand, but not for fertility treatments for a couple who want to have a baby. It will pay for a scan to seek out a birth defect in the womb, but will then cut off rehabilitative care to many of those children with birth defects like spina bifida and cerebral palsy.

The man who led the writing of the plan, Ira Magaziner, said paying for this rehabilitative care doesn't fit "the financial framework." Is that what our children have become? Money to be saved? Objects to be discarded when they're born with a handicap? God help us all.

Carla White
Ash

Stormwater A Must

To the editor:
A letter in the last issue of the *Beacon* by Carl Bazemore of Sunset Beach requires a rebuttal.

I live in the lovely, residential community of Carolina Shores in Calabash, which Mr. Bazemore cited as an example of how well-planned a community can be. What he may not realize is that Carolina Shores had, from its beginning, a very efficient stormwater management system along with its excellent sewage treatment system.

Those of us who oppose the proposed Southwest Brunswick Water and Sewer Authority in both Sunset Beach and the small portion of Calabash not yet sewered do so because we know that a sewer system without stormwater management (originally to have been developed as an integral part of the SBWSA) will not reduce pollution in our contiguous areas because the population growth sewerage will bring, with no stormwater management in place, will compound our pollution problems.

Additionally, trying to repair the damage of such growth caused pollution after the fact will be infinitely more expensive.

Teddy C. Altreuter
Calabash

Ms Altreuter is a member of the Calabash Board of Commissioners.

Pained By Litter

To the editor:
I just recently returned from a trip to Japan and China to find the *Beacon* carrying a very appropriate cartoon.

N.C. 130 and Stone Chimney Road have been a source of great pain to my wife June and I for some time. We routinely pick up and have collected over 60 bags of (soft drink cans), beer bottles, plastic bags, etc., over the last few months and will continue to do so.

I have been in touch with Cris

Wilson and Ann Walker in Raleigh and Sally Fields, Brunswick County's coordinator for Keep North Carolina Beautiful, regarding the Swat-A-Litterbug Program. It seems that there is some action pending in this year's legislative session and that the highway department has a new sign program in the works for a fall introduction.

I believe the chamber of commerce should have an interest. After all, tourism cannot be turned on by the roadway condition. Also the Interdenomination Church Body may be helpful in expanding and keeping the faith with the program.

Wilson tells me the fine for littering is a whopping \$1,000. Where are the police and the courts in this matter? Busy catching speeders and drug traffickers, I guess.

Len Froehlich
Holden Beach

Puzzled Minds

To the editor:
Re. your editorial column May 5: Why elected officials arrive at decisions which are in opposition to the wishes of the people they represent has puzzled wise minds before. One observation worthy of note is as follows:

"One blames politicians, not for inconsistency but for obstinacy. They are the interpreters, not the masters, of our fate. It is their job, in fact, to register the fact accompli." John Maynard Keynes.

Richard A. Barreto
Calabash

Register And Vote

To the editor:
There seems to be a profile of the worst case criminal type in the continental United States and in Hawaii and Alaska. This perpetrator is a white male veteran riding a sit-down lawn mower holding an AK-47 with a bayonet affixed to it because of a lug on the barrel, mounting a charge on a theater concession stand in order to get his hot buttered popcorn with coconut oil and salt during intermission, before he rides off into the parking lot to partake of a cigarette. What a crock!

There is a bright side, though. The mower-rider's lucky. He's in the parking lot. With fuel oil and fertilizer legal, the theater could become a hole in the ground from a terrorist needing practice after the World Trade Center fiasco.

After watching the African National Congress elections where everyone voted, taking a week to complete, and the total not yet in, I recommend Americans, all Amer-

icans, register and vote. It will give ulcers to the politicians waiting for the results. It will drive the media and the pollsters nuts trying to predict the outcome. For me, it would be a blessing to see everyone participate in government by choice instead of sweating April 15.

Good luck and happy voting.
J.C. Fletcher
Calabash

A Week Not Enough

To the editor:
I would like to thank the businesses who provided breakfast and the people who provided food and flowers for the Teacher Appreciation Dinner during Teacher Appreciation Week.

I would also like to thank the teachers and teacher's assistants who give their all every day to give our children the best education and preparation for life in this world.

One week of showing our appreciation just doesn't seem to be enough.

Kathy Roemer
Teacher Appreciation Committee
Supply Elementary School

Friends Commended

To the editor:
The West Brunswick Friends of the Library are to be commended. As a group of volunteers they raised money to keep library service in the Shallotte area while the West Brunswick Branch is undergoing renovations. When faced with the prospect of no library service in the area for up to six months, they got busy and raised the money to open a temporary branch.

This fall we'll have a new and improved library in Shallotte, but in the meantime we can thank the Friends for their efforts.

Don Eggert, Chairman
Brunswick County Library
Board of Trustees

Write Us

We welcome your letters to the editor. Letters must include your address and telephone number. (This information is for verification purposes only; we will not publish your identifying address or phone number.) Letters must be typed or written legibly. Address them to:

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GUEST COLUMN

Today's Health Care Incentives Foster Waste

BY JOHN E. SKVARLA
and FRANK ELLIOTT

As we debate health care reform in North Carolina and the nation, consider the following fable:

Let's suppose that you are given a fresh start in business. No longer do you have to worry about selling your product, generating new business, developing new products, keeping your customers happy, collecting for sales, spending less than you collect, managing people and doing all those other things which shorten your life considerably.

Your fresh start comes with some minor strings attached. You can't actually begin to work for yourself until you are at least 30 years old. Between the ages of 25 and 30 you must serve an apprenticeship. However, during this apprenticeship you will be paid a salary considerably above the national average.

Your new profession is in the restaurant business. It's a good business to be in. People must eat, so there will always be a need for the service you provide.

Now, the goals of your restaurant are quite simple—to provide good food and make as much money as possible. These are realistic goals, and totally in keeping with the laws of human nature. How smart do you have to be to succeed?

Before we answer this question, let's look at the rules of the game:

Rule Number One: As a result of serving your apprenticeship, you received a specialty license for this restaurant. Those without such a license can't legally compete with you.

Rule Number Two: In this restaurant, there are no prices on the menus.

Rule Number Three: Since you are trained as a professional restaurateur, after asking a few questions (such as "How hungry are you?" or "What did you have for breakfast?") you alone determine what the customers will have to eat.

But wait, you say. The customers will never stand for this. You might order something that the customers can't afford or doesn't like. Isn't the customer going to demand to know what all this is costing?

No, because there is...

Rule Number Four: The customer doesn't pay the bill. Like all the other restaurants in towns you send the bill to an insurance company for payment.

Moreover, the customer doesn't even have to pay for the insurance coverage. The customer's employer does. So the customer couldn't care less about how much food is ordered by you or how much it costs. All

the customer knows is that he has a great appetite to satisfy and only the best will do.

Why not the \$500 bottle of wine? If the wine isn't finished or food is left on the table, so what? It really doesn't matter. From the customer's perspective, he doesn't appear to be paying for it. And, if satisfying the customer's voracious appetite requires turning the process over to a food specialist, what does it matter?

Finally, **Rule Number Five:** The insurance company doesn't act as the middleman for free. As its compensation, it gets to keep a percentage of the premiums paid by the customer's employer for the coverage. Every year the restaurant's price hikes are simply passed on to the good ol' guy who signs the

"Until we change...the system, we will continue to feast, oblivious to the inevitable famine that will result."

paychecks—the employee—in the form of increased insurance premiums.

Under this system, you and every other restaurant owner will want all of your patrons to have three-, four-, or five-course meals, because that increases the bill and hence your income. More is clearly better.

Under this system, the customers quickly learn to expect the very best. Give me the finest filet mignon. Give me two filets! And if after the main course everyone is full but they would like a little taste of that chocolate cheesecake on the dessert cart, of course you'll insist that they take the whole piece. And even if they only want a bite, they'll agree. Who cares?

As for the insurance company, as long as they can pass the cost of this feeding frenzy to the employer, they don't mind the waste. After all, the insurance company is paid as a percentage of the bill, so the higher the bill, the higher their income. It's a wonderful system. Everybody gets something without paying anything.

Of course, such a system is so laughable, and so implausible, as to be ridiculous. Anyone can see that it is tailor-made to give everyone the wrong incentives—incentives that foster wastefulness and ever-higher costs.

But this loony system is exactly how we provide health care in the United States. And until we change these underlying incentives in the system, we will continue to feast, oblivious to the inevitable famine that will result.

Skvarla is president of Comp Containment Inc. and Elliott is a reporter for the *Winston-Salem Journal*. They are co-authors of *We're Not That Stupid: The People's Prescription to What Really Ails America's Health Care System*.

Thank You... ★★★★★

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