

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

President Clinton Doesn't Deserve 'Character Assassination' He's Getting

To the editor:
How many citizens of our great country have really given intelligent and objective thought to the following? Every time President Clinton scores a constructive legislative victory, another "roach" crawls out of the woodwork, to assassinate President Clinton's character.

These assassins are always supported by some extreme right wing of the Grand Ole Party, as the Republican Party was known when it was controlled and represented by elected officials, such as Tom Dewey, Dwight Eisenhower, Barry Goldwater and many more.

I was a proud Republican until the Reagan-Bush years. For 12 years Reagan and Bush threw money at the rich and at the Pentagon, allowing our country's infrastructure to fall apart. No attention was given to education and the out-of-control crime. Drugs flourished, as did corruption in the White House.

Does anyone remember the shredding of the Iran-Contra cash ledger by Oliver North? Does anyone remember Ronald Reagan and George Bush on television, looking the American people in the eye and lying to them? Does anyone remember the criminal pardons issued by George Bush to save the skins of his cronies and himself?

At least Barry Goldwater was a man of principal, who epitomized honesty and integrity. He has, on more than one occasion, said that Richard Nixon, who I voted for twice, was one of the worst liars he ever knew. He also has stood up to the Christian Coalition and others trying to destroy President Clinton, telling them to get off his back.

Look at the courage of President and Mrs. Clinton, who have been under constant attack prior to and after the election, yet have managed to take on issues and pass important legislation that will make for a better life for us all.

Reagan kept his promises by making the rich richer and throwing billions of dollars at the military, while our infrastructure deteriorated. Bush, in the 1988 campaign ran on Willie Horton and the flag, against a pitiful candidate, Mike Dukakis.

Yet, while President Clinton pursues his campaign promises to strengthen and unite our country, the Republican right-wingers, the Christian Coalition, Perot and the news media latch on to any piece of "mud" to discredit his character. How many of you remember any president being subjected to investigating his tax returns and investments going back 17 years?

Clinton is accomplishing things that should have been done long ago, and hobbies, such as the National Rifle Association will also spend millions fabricating stories and throwing mud. It is a sad indictment of our society, especially the "Religious" Right. I was raised to believe that truly religious people were tolerant, not hateful.

Raymond L. Ratigan
Calabash



Silent Spring Ahead?

To the editor:
We, the friends and neighbors of Mayor Mason Barber of Sunset Beach, were deeply distressed to read in last week's *Beacon* a letter from a member of the Sunset Beach Taxpayers Association. The letter was offensive to ourselves and, we are sure, to Mayor Barber.

Newcomers to Sunset have always been welcome. We count ourselves fortunate to have such a diverse community. Old-timers give everyone a fair chance with hopes they will respect the land in which they have been blessed to live on. Still, there will be those who come here with the express intent to change things to the way they see fit. Some even threaten lawsuits to get their way.

We who are writing this letter, have lived in Sunset for some time, one of whom was here before the roads were paved! We'd like to know just who these SBTAs people are. Do they live here full-time, with a right to vote? Do they do anything positive for the town, or just initiate lawsuits? Have they seen Mayor Barber picking up all of the trash along the roadsides, or seen the work of the Sunset Beach Beautification Committee?

We count ourselves fortunate to have so dedicated an individual as Mayor Barber as our mayor. Why should the town council and mayor be attacked publicly for doing exactly what the residents here told them to do? We voted for the sewer referendum. Are you going to tell all of the full-time residents of Sunset Beach that they voted wrongly? Do you have the right to hinder our chances of federal funding?

A sewer system is inevitable for all barrier island communities where development is occurring. The frag-

ile balance cannot be sustained as more and more chemicals and waste are put in the water system. Will you all be here when the waters are polluted, due to human practices?

While everyone has the right to free speech and can make their views known, it should be a right also to protect the innocent who cannot speak. There will be indeed a cry that is not heard coming from that which we now take for granted. When the birds stop singing, we'll have a "silent spring."

Mrs. S. Bunn Frink
Anne Neroni
Sunset Beach

Won't Be Back

To the editor:
For the past seven years, my wife and I have spent part of each winter in your area. We Yankees enjoy your weather and Southern hospitality. In fact we talk about it so much that this past Easter our son, his wife and children (ages 7 and 9) came to visit us. They had a great time and hope to come back next year.

Our two grandsons had never seen the ocean so were looking forward to it. We felt that Holden Beach would be a great experience for them. After driving from one end of the beach, to the other I found what I felt was a good place to park, at a "public beach access" sign well off the street in front of an empty lot. The home on the other side was unoccupied.

The kids had a great time and are looking forward to going back. Upon returning to our car I discovered a \$25 parking ticket. It wasn't until then that I saw about 100 feet each way from the "Beach Access" sign "no parking" signs. Even though I hadn't seen them I was obviously in violation. This I will admit.

My reason for writing is not to protest the fine, (I was guilty)—but rather the amount of the fine. The town clerk gave me an explanation which I asked for. She was very polite and I realize she was only doing her job—but I don't believe incidents such as this will do much to promote activity in your area. It seems for the tourists' benefit the signs should be closer to the accesses so they can be seen. Twenty five dollars is unreasonable for a parking ticket. That was my last trip to Holden Beach. As much as we liked that area, I don't plan to ever go back. Your methods are no way to promote tourists.

Howard Wood
Lewis Run, Pa.

Vote Your Conscience

To the editor:
This is a message to the Brunswick County Planning Board.

Ladies and gentlemen of the planning board, please vote your conscience when it comes to matters of rezoning property and telling the citizens of Brunswick County how they can or cannot use the property they have owned for 20 years.

If you are going to vote the way Wade Horne tells you to vote and not the way your head tells you to vote, then the planning board needs to be disbanded and complete control given to Mr. Horne and his department to zone the county as they see fit with no opposition at all.

C.G. Wood
Supply

Praise For 'Harmony'

To the editor:
A short time ago I had the pleasure of being entertained by the West Brunswick Show Chorus "Harmony."

It was such a pleasure to see young adults utilizing their talents in giving pleasure to others. In a society where we hear so many negative statements concerning our young adults, I feel it is important to give them the positive boost they deserve.

To "Harmony" and their director, congratulations on a job well done. Keep it up!

How Is A Good Life Like A Pencil?

Have you ever thought about how a good life is a lot like a pencil? I hadn't either until recently, when I heard a speech by a fellow named Ralph Walker. Ralph's a member of Goldmine Toastmasters in Concord and a minister, soon to leave the Tar Heel State for a post as public relations director for a school in Florida. He's a tough guy to beat in a public speaking contest, whether it's high-flung oratory or a tall tale.

Ralph's pencil analogy was like an extended object lesson for children—in fact, that of a sermon may have been its germination.

Like a good pencil, a worthwhile life has to have a point, he said. How simple. Jose Ortegay Gasset had said it the long way, "An unemployed existence is a worse negation of life than death itself. Because to live means to have something definite to do—a mission to fulfill—and in the measure in which we avoid setting our life to something, we make it empty...Human life, by its very nature, has to be dedicated to something."

Yup, says Ralph, our lives need to have a point.

Also like a pencil, it's what is inside us that counts. People, like pencils, come in all shapes, sizes and colors. None of that really matters—it's the graphite inside that matters. We've seen in the last several decades incredible advances in technology. But nothing replaces the need for character in the individual. What we have in America today, Walker and other speakers said, isn't so much a crisis in leadership as a crisis in character. It's what is inside that counts.

The third thing that we need that every good pencil has is an eraser—the ability to correct mistakes as we go. We're going to make mistakes. The important thing is how we handle them. Not to let mistakes get us off track or use them as an excuse to give up, but to correct them and become wiser.

It reminded me of something written by Hans Reichenbach: "If error is corrected whenever it is recognized as such, the path of error is the path of truth."

Last of all, Ralph told us, a pencil works best in an upright position. So do we.

"Upright," according to my dictionary, means "in a vertical position; erect in posture or carriage; morally respectable; honorable."

Our lives need to have a point; it's what's inside that counts; we need to correct our mistakes; and we work better upright. A good life has a lot in common with a pencil.

Kind of says it all, doesn't it? Thanks, Ralph.

Susan Usher



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