

EDITORIAL AND OPINION PAGE

...the voice of the drum is an offering to the Spirit of the World. It's sound arouses the mind and makes men feel the mystery and power of things. BLACK ELK



AS I SEE IT

Druce Barron



A PERSONAL JOURNEY THROUGH LIFE WITH MEANING

I sincerely want my life to stand for something. I want, when my journey through this life is over, for someone to be able to say, in an offhand manner, "that man's life stood for something. He left things a little bit better than he found them."

I have been burdened this week by death and sickness and sorrow. Recently we have written about little Yancy, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Gaston Maynor, who was burned over 65% of his body in an unfortunate accident. And little Cecil Locklear, son of Mr. and Mrs. C. B. Locklear, who recently underwent sensitive heart surgery. Both Yancy and Cecil are recovering. We are grateful for their recovery, and grateful to those who have responded to these families in their time of grief.

And death continues to haunt us in Robeson County. There have been drownings and murders and unfortunate deaths lately.

And our friend, Mrs. Louise Brooks, is battling cancer. Death and sickness has crept up unaware seemingly.

And I have been burdened lately by the stalking Grim Reaper who is no respecter of persons. Sometimes he strikes suddenly when we are least prepared for his appearance. And we wince from the misery and pain of that Dark One who is relentless in his deadly pursuit of all of us.

And I have been thinking about life and its meaning. And I have retraced my steps over the last few years and I remember...

Headly bouts with alcoholism and long interminable nights and days in prison where clocks are incessant reminders that one is locked within the space of time.

I am grateful for almost seven years of sobriety, a day at a time. I remember the days when my soul cried out in pain and sorrow, and I turned to the deadening but temporary respite of inhibiting spirits...to no avail.

Alcohol released the rage locked inside me. I struck out blindly and usually wound up in jail. But one time my rage ended me in prison for a sentence of 7 to 10 years. I went to prison for something that I cannot, for the life of me, remember doing. That is a sad commentary but true nevertheless.

Prison taught me many human values, the greatest of which was the desire to live. I decided, in the squalor and inhumane confines of prison, that I really did want to live. I am grateful for that learned lesson. I have not been the same since.

When I was released from prison, years later, I returned for a moment to my wanton ways. And one long ago night I found myself back in a jail cell where I looked deep inside myself. And I declared, deep within the recesses of my tortured soul, that I WAS SICK AND TIRED OF BEING SICK AND TIRED.

That was the beginning of my spiritual rebirth. Out of the depths of my despair I found succor and relief. I cried out to a POWER GREATER THAN MYSELF. And, even now, when the dark clouds descend, I turn to that POWER GREATER THAN MYSELF who has never failed me.

When one restructures his life he must necessarily develop a philosophy that will sustain him through the dark nights of loneliness and despair. One must change to change.

And these few things I have learned and practiced to the best of my abilities, and, as my critics are wont to remind me, my abilities are limited considerably. But I try to do better today than I did yesterday.

One thing that haunts many alcoholics is his (or her) inability to accept errors and imperfections. I declare myself, for sanity's sake, an alcoholic. Even though I have not imbibed any alcohol or mind bending drug for nearly seven years I know that I AM ONE DRINK AWAY FROM A DRUNK. I am an alcoholic, just as one is a diabetic, forever. As long as I take my medicine and practice moderation, I will be all right.

But my life is strewn with errors as I look back down the path of life I have tried. And errors aggravate me sorely. But errors are part of life; to err is human they say. And, if one is a newspaper editor, he must learn to accept errors, whether they are proofreading errors, or errors of the heart.

One cannot relive yesterday or live tomorrow before the hopeful day arrives. One is stuck here in the now. All any of us can do is live today as well as we can. A famous man of medicine said, "Our main business is not to see what lies dimly at a distance, but to do what lies clearly at hand."

"Give us this day our daily bread..." the prayer goes. The prayer asks only for today's bread, never yesterdays or tomorrows. Just today. We can only do one task at a time; and the grains of sand fall from the hourglass one drop at a time.

I try desperately to live this day now one day at a time. I have been happiest and most at peace with myself and my fellow man when I have practiced this maxim to the best of my abilities.

Too, I have attempted to scrub resentment and ill will from my bosom. I used to hate easily and gloily. And my heart was seared with the negative thoughts. I practice, even now, this rule in my daily life. Although the proponents of double voting, Y. H. Allen, Ben Floyd, and others whom I have taken on editorially, might disagree I have never written as a prisoner of hate and/or resentment. If I could not have my say without hate and resentment I have left my opinion unstated. Hate and resentment are life robbing soundbites. Those we hate sleep, most times peacefully, while we toss about wild eyed with rage. We only hurt ourselves when we hate or resent another human being. But we do not have to accept evil doers, nor sit meekly by while they rob us. We only have to not hate or resent them.

And I have tried to be a friend to all men.

Here are seven ways to cultivate a mental attitude that will bring you peace and happiness. I have borrowed them from the philosophers and those who have tried to improve their plight, and the mental and spiritual plight of their fellow men.

SEVEN WAYS TO CULTIVATE A MENTAL ATTITUDE THAT WILL BRING YOU PEACE AND HAPPINESS

- RULE 1: Let's fill our minds with thoughts of peace, courage, health, and hope, for "our life is what our thoughts make it."
RULE 2: Let's never try to get even with our enemies, because if we do we will hurt ourselves far more than we hurt them. Let's do as General Eisenhower does: let's never waste a minute thinking about people we don't like.

- RULE 3: A. Instead of worrying about ingratitude, let's expect it. Let's remember that Jesus healed ten lepers in one day—and only one thanked Him. Why should we expect more gratitude than Jesus got?
B. Let's remember that the only way to find happiness is not to expect gratitude—but to give for the joy of giving.
C. Let's remember that gratitude is a "cultivated" trait; so if we want our children to be grateful, we must train them to be grateful.
RULE 4: Count your blessings—not your troubles!
RULE 5: Let's not imitate others. Let's find ourselves and be ourselves, for "envy is ignorance" and "imitation is suicide."
RULE 6: When fate hands us a lemon, let's try to make a lemonade.
RULE 7: Let's forget our own unhappiness—by trying to create a little happiness for others. "When you are good to others, you are best to yourself."

I have spoken no original thought. I have borrowed freely from the philosophers, including Dale Carnegie, a great man who worked at being happy. Most of the time he was.

And I decided to share these thoughts with you because Sorrow, the crippling one, has visited us too long with immunity. If he stays, we will contest him no holds barred for our loved ones and our hearts. If Sorrow visits, we must make Him stay in his place. Sorrow is not the Lord of our lives, only a negative evil doer who wanders into our midst from time to time and always uninvited.

Editorials

N.C. Kinder to the big guys than to the little ones

Most taxpayers are not treated as gently as the state has treated the Northwestern Financial Corporation, whose president is now facing legal problems, including a charge of bugging the FBI. The corporation, which is the parent company of the Northwestern Bank, one of the state's largest, owes the State of North Carolina \$878,000 in back taxes and interest dating back to 1968. According to news reports, officials of the state have known of the tax liability for more than three years but have not made any move to collect it. Under the law the State Revenue Department has five years in which to act after it learns of corporate income which has been unreported through U. S. Internal Revenue Service sources. But there is nothing in the law which says the state has to wait the full five years, or even three years, before trying to collect what is owed the state. It can move promptly to collect and the people of this state are curious why this has not been done. Certainly an explanation is due the rest of the taxpayers of North Carolina. Joe Blow is certain the state's tax revenues would be after him in a lot less time than that.

U.S. Postal Service Stifles Dissent

Everyone with any sense of time and pace knows that the U.S. Postal Service can be agonizingly slow afoot. Now it turns out that the Postal Service, or at least that part of it quartered in Durham, is also unbelievably slow-witted. Durham postal officials, if you can believe it, have threatened to prosecute a Duke University law student for exhorting Duke Power Company through the mails. This has to be something akin to bullying a baby for crying or rubbing salt into a poor wretch's wound because he howled in pain. The law student, Saul Kerpelman, who sees himself as an idealist, had simply been sending little notes to Duke Power each month, scrawled on the outside of the envelopes containing payment for his electric bill. Sometimes Kerpelman's message to Duke Power would be in bold capital letters, sometimes in signs and catchy slogans. Kerpelman conceded that some might have found his comments impolite, shocking or unpleasant. Duke Power found them to be obscene, although it is hard to conceive of anything in reference to today's electric bills being ruled obscene. Anyway, Duke Power complained to Durham's postal officials and the postal officials, with a zeal seldom shown in simple delivering the mail, threatened young Kerpelman with prosecution. (To split a hair, it is unquestionably illegal to send obscene material through the mails, but that seems to be altogether beside the point here.) Carrying his fine sense of outrage to Middle District Court in Greensboro, Kerpelman filed suit seeking federal protection from the Postal Service. This is something like asking the swampwater for protection from the alligator, unless federal courts have changed in the last 10 days.

Kerpelman's cry of distress, an eloquent brief in keeping with his notes to Duke Power, said in part: "Assaulted and affronted by huge, profit-bloated utility bills, outraged and with a feeling of powerlessness at the hands of this mighty North Carolina monument to capitalism and bureaucratic indifference and greed, (I) was spurred to take at least some meager action to inform the corporate colossus of (my) discontent and to register dissent." Kerpelman pleaded that his spirited monthly messages to Duke Power were in the finest tradition of the First Amendment, and indeed they were. Breathes there a man with soul so dead who never to his power company has said, go jump in the lake, or words to that effect? -The Fayetteville Observer

Spring Lake Takes Odd Stance in EDA Case

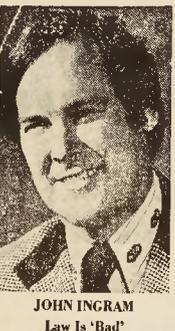
The controversy over the Economic Development Administration's allocation of funds under the nation's \$4 billion dollar public works program has taken on a kind of Alice-in-Wonderland character, at least in these parts. The odd new twist is additional evidence of the need for the federal bureaucracy to review the fund allocations to determine if the money is being spent fairly and lawfully. A month or so ago, Seventh District Rep. Charles G. Rose III found evidence of what appeared at the time to be gross computer errors in the allocation of the money by the U.S. Commerce Department's EDA. Some 40 small Tar Heel municipalities were denied any part of the big federal pie. Some other small municipalities in the state, including Spring Lake in this county and Lumberton in neighboring Robeson, were granted far more money than they thought they were eligible for or applied for.

As it turned out, the EDA's shutout of the 40 or so communities was deliberate, not an error. The agency, evidently in an effort to pump the money approved by Congress into the economy as quickly as possible, simply didn't go to the trouble of determining the eligibility of the small communities denied any portion of the money. It hasn't yet explained, at least not satisfactorily, why Spring Lake got almost double the amount it applied for and Lumberton's request was almost quadrupled.

In the unusual if understandable turn of events this week, the Town of Spring Lake sought to side with the federal government as a defendant in a lawsuit initiated by several of the shutout communities in an effort to get a share of the money. Thus the Cumberland town not only served notice it wants all of the \$1.8 million it was allocated whether or not it is entitled to that amount or the \$920,000 the town applied for. It also demonstrated an untoward lack of concern about whether the towns which initiated the lawsuit—Hope Mills, Maxton, Pembroke, St. Pauls and Carolina Beach—have been treated fairly in the implementation of the public works program in this region.

The Commerce Department's argument that rushing the money into the economy to give it a boost should take precedence over determining the eligibility of communities for which unemployment statistics were not readily available is not persuasive. For one thing, it could involve a huge amount of unnecessary waste if more money was allocated than can really be put to good public use in communities around the country, which the Lumberton and Spring Lake allocations suggest might well be the case. Also, according to Congressman Rose, "The public works law clearly states that small communities should not be excluded from consideration because the department did not have the data" readily at hand to compute their eligibility for a share of the money. And the communities seeking to determine the legality of the allocations in the courts are to be commended for doing so, Spring Lake's unseemly legal maneuver notwithstanding. -The Fayetteville Observer

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Insurance Head Still Fighting Power Cut

WINSTON-SALEM — State Insurance Commissioner John R. Ingram is continuing his fight against legislation enacted a month ago which cut his powers as an enforcer of reforms he has implemented. "This legislation has got to be repealed," Ingram said in a recent interview in Winston-Salem. "It's bad for the people in several respects." The law, which became effective Sept. 1, strips Ingram of his power to block insurance rate increases in advance, a power he has used liberally over the past four years. The new law permits insurance companies to proceed with rate hikes over Ingram's objections. Ingram then must take the matter to court, and funds from the increase are held in reserve pending a court ruling. In the past, the burden has been on the companies to sue for the right to increase rates, and in their court skirmishes with Ingram they have almost always won. But critics of the new law have maintained that it will result in massive rate increases next month. And Ingram said the law contributes to an atmosphere in which auto insurance for high-risk drivers and bans on age and sex discrimination in insurance writing cannot survive. "These were changes that were necessary to treat people fairly," Ingram said. "They (insurance lobbyists) designed this legislation to rally sabotage it."

TWO MINUTES WITH THE BIBLE DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

When Philip the Evangelist heard the Ethiopian prince reading Isaiah 53, he asked him: "Understandest thou what thou readest?" (Acts 8:30). This is a question we should continually keep asking ourselves as we read the holy Scriptures. Many religious people do not much care whether or not they understand what they read if only it warms their hearts! To them the Bible is little more than a fetish. Taking only those Scriptures which appeal to them and leaving the rest, they actually feel themselves quite spiritual and often talk about believing the Bible whether or not they understand it. But such "spirituality" is far from honoring to God, and such "faith" is blind and superstitious at best. While it is true that the Bible teaches many truths which we believe though they are beyond our comprehension, yet to believe what it says we must first understand what it says. God would have us read His Word and believe it intelligently. Indeed, true faith will want to understand more and more of God's Word. One who does not care whether or not he understands what God has said is not really interested in knowing what God has said. Such a person will take any passage that suits his fancy and use it as he wishes, for his "faith" is based, not on an understanding of what God has said, but on his own will. The Church would be stronger and more aggressive if more of God's people had a deep desire to know and understand what God has said to them, and if those in the pulpits had the same passion to understand God's Word and help others to understand it. In Mark 6:34 we read that our Lord was "moved with compassion" toward the multitudes because He saw them "as sheep not having a shepherd." AND HE BEGAN TO TEACH THEM MANY THINGS. The reason so many people do not do more than hope for salvation, is because they have never been taught God's simple plan of salvation, how "Christ died for sinners" so that they might be justified "by grace, through faith." We must begin our study of the Bible by understanding and believing this great truth.

According to Scripture

There is a difference between possessing the spirit and being filled with the spirit. All Christians have the first. But not all have the second. Let's read Eph. 4:30. Here it speaks of believers as being sealed. Whereas 5:18 commands those same believers to be filled again and again with the spirit. Possession of the spirit gives us the assurance and infilling service. I John 4:6 "By this we know the Spirit of Truth and the Spirit of Error." I am reminded of Paul's statement he so often made in the Bible, "Brethren, I would not have you ignorant concerning spiritual gifts." We as Christians need to know our place today as followers of God. In the Old Testament days or period, may be called the age of our fathers, the period covered by the gospel as the age of the son (Jesus) from pentecost until the second advent of Christ, is the age of the spirit.

Paul wrote in Romans 8:2 "For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death, and I cannot, therefore, afford to remain in ignorance of this important doctrine of the Holy Spirit." Paul states it broke the back of sin. Jesus said when the Holy Spirit is come he will reprove the world of sin. John 16:8. We know by reading John 14:16 that the Holy Spirit is a person and he has a personality and we should be made aware of his doctrine. When we read the old and new testaments of the father and the son we find it easy to understand or impossible to believe in the personality of Jesus Christ, but the acts and working of the Holy Spirit are so secret and mystical, so much is said of his influence, grace, power and gifts, that we are prone to think of him as an influence, a power when we should think of him as a person. And if you don't know him as a divine person, then you are robbing the Holy Spirit of the love which is due him from you. Many can testify to the blessings that came into their lives when they came to know the Holy Ghost, not merely as a gracious one, but as one who is an ever-present loving friend and helper—one who will stand by your side. For you see, it was not God who was made in the image of man, but man made in the image of God. And only God has a perfect personality and this brings us to the indwelling and being filled with the Holy Ghost. Now we know that there is only one baptism, but many infilling with the spirit. The Book of Acts bears witness to the fact that they were repeatedly filled with the spirit. Read Acts 2:4 and 4:39. Next week: "The Holy Spirit is Susceptible to Personal Treatment;" and also "Divine Works are Ascribed to the Holy Spirit."

REPORT FROM U.S. Senator JESSE HELMS
WASHINGTON—A reporter on one of the "all news" radio stations in Washington commented the other morning that there are a great many nervous Congressmen in Washington these days. He mentioned that he had asked a well-travelled Congressman about some foreign junkets. Then the reporter said, "The poor fellow nearly talked my ears off, explaining how innocent he was." I'm not going to pass judgement on anybody until all of the facts are in. However, in my opinion, it's a healthy sign that the practice of foreign travel by Members of Congress is being examined. Long before I ever thought of running for the Senate, I had the feeling that a great deal of such foreign travel was totally unnecessary. I have been offered many an opportunity to travel at the expense of the American taxpayers. I have rejected all of them. JUNKETS—The fact is, I just don't believe in junkets. I have heard all the arguments, for and against them—and I've not seen one trip, out of the scores that have been offered to me, that I felt would be helpful to me or other members of the Senate in doing our jobs. Maybe I'm old-fashioned in my view about a Senator's responsibility. I feel that we were elected to stay on the job—in Washington—and to be here to cast our votes on the often-crucial issues coming before the Senate. Much as I enjoy going home to North Carolina, I adopted a policy that I would not leave Washington during the week when the Senate is in session. Of course, this deprives me of the pleasure of attending a great many functions in North Carolina that I would enjoy immensely, but I am persuaded that I am doing the right thing in staying here. VOTES—The Senate has had more than 300 roll-call votes already this year. I have missed five of them, meaning that my attendance record is a little over 98%. It's about 97% for the slightly more than 4 1/2 years I've been in the Senate. I mention this, not boastfully, but simply to illustrate the point that it's not difficult for a Senator to maintain a reasonably good attendance record—if he works at it. Moreover, with the deluge of bad legislation constantly coming before the Senate, it is essential that those of us who oppose it stay here. I believe a lot of citizens would be surprised at the impact that just one Senator can have in opposing bad legislation. Maybe we can't defeat every bad bill, but we can slow it down, possibly amend it; and, at a minimum, prevent it from being as bad as it otherwise would be if no Senator bothered to oppose it. My view of a Senator's responsibility, therefore, is that he should stay on the job, study the issues, and be here to cast his vote. Admittedly, that prevents Senators from taking a lot of trips at the taxpayers' expense. On the other hand, I have a hunch that the taxpayers aren't all that anxious to finance such trips anyhow.