

FORUM

Accomplish something this year

"It's not what we know but what we use."
— Marchant

"It is time for every one of us to roll up our sleeves and put ourselves at the top of our commitment list."
— Marian Wright Edelman



Motivational Moments

Nigel Alston

It is that time of year again. Another year has come to an end, and New Year's resolutions are being made. Within a couple of weeks most resolutions will be forgotten.

I purchased a pocket notebook recently to record my ideas and goals for 1998. I am making a personal commitment to move beyond where I am today during the next 12 months. What about you?

Mark Victor Hansen, co-author of *Chicken Soup for the Soul* and an outstanding motivational speaker, encourages his audiences to set "too many goals — dozens, hundreds!" In his future diary, he has 548 goals. Wow!

According to Hansen, "you only get as far in the world as your desires are high."

S.B. Fuller, one of seven

children of a black tenant farmer in Louisiana, knew about desire, inspiration, and commitment. By age 5 he was working, and by age

years earlier. He went on to say he knew what he wanted, but he didn't know how to get it.

He developed a plan that

and *Grow Rich*, and *Secret of the Ages*.

What do you want to accomplish in the new year? Will you accept the challenge from Hansen and write your dozens or hundreds of goals in your "future diary?" Have you developed a plan like S.B. Fuller? Are you committed to getting results, or are you like the man in this poem?

There was a very cautious man who never laughed or cried. He never risked, he never lost, he never won nor tried. And when one day he passed away, his insurance was denied, for since he never really lived, they claimed he never died!

remarkable mother, who refused to accept their plight, even though that is all she knew.

She knew there was something wrong with the fact her family was barely getting by in a world of joy and plenty. "We shouldn't be poor, S.B.," she would say. "And don't ever let me hear you say that it is God's will that we are poor. We are poor — not because of God. We are poor because father has never developed a desire to be anything else."

S.B. Fuller went on to own several companies. When asked to explore his secret of success, he answered in terms of his mother and the statement she had made

Are you living or just getting by?

Until you are committed, there is always hesitancy. And making a commitment depends on the power of a made-up mind.

You are the one who has to decide whether you'll do it or toss it aside. You are the one who must make up your mind whether you'll lead or linger behind. Whether you'll strive to the goal that's far or just be content to stay right where you are. Take it or leave it, there's

your mind — you see, it's all up to you.

— Sally P. Brats

Make up your mind now to focus on what you want, not what you don't want. Develop a plan like S.B. Fuller did. Make a commitment to get results and do whatever it takes to make your goal(s) reality.

Each one of us has 86,400 seconds each day. If time is money, how are you going to spend your time in 1998. Aim high, but remember to hit the target!

Nigel Alston is an executive for Integon Insurance Company.

It's time to abolish the IRS

By SENATOR LAUCH FAIRCLOTH

I held a hearing recently in Raleigh on IRS abuses. I wanted to get outside the Washington, D.C. beltway and away from the special interests to hear from real North Carolinians about their problems with the IRS and the tax code. I expected to hear some disturbing news, but what I heard was truly shocking.

Many tell shocking stories

From Doug and Nancy, I heard the story of a family trying to pay off their tax bill, and going so far as to put their house up for sale to pay off their debts in full. They thought that was the responsible thing to do.

They made the mistake of telling the IRS of their good intentions. Their lives became a nightmare when the IRS placed a tax lien on their house, ruining their credit to this day. They still can't get the IRS to straighten things out with the credit bureaus — after all, they were volunteering to sell their house — but the IRS action branded them a bad credit risk and cost them thousands of extra dollars in interest on their car payments and other bills.

From Mary, I heard the story of a day care operator who waited two years before an IRS agent responded to her requests for help. Of course, the penalties and interest kept accumulating. She has been working 17 to 18 hours a day to faithfully pay her \$800 a month to the IRS, and has stubbornly refused to declare bankruptcy despite being told to do so several times by IRS agents.

Two brothers, Bill and Bob Dobo, have actually been trying to give away \$20 million to charities like the North Carolina Zoo, UNC Memorial Hospital and the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. All they need is an answer — either a yes or a no — from the IRS that the transaction will not impose a massive tax bill. For three years, they have heard nothing, and the charities continue to wait.

From one witness after another I heard such stories — the IRS has become an impenetrable bureaucracy that can't give simple answers, but tramples all over people's rights, ruins their credit, and hounds them with tax liens and threatening notices in their effort to collect \$1.5 trillion in taxes from the American people.

The tax code is too long

It doesn't help that the tax laws being



Senator Lauch Faircloth

"No one but a few tax attorneys and accountants who make their living off such complexity could possibly hope to understand our tax code."

enforced by the IRS are over 17,000 pages long — seven times longer than the Bible — and growing. In fact, I brought such a stack of papers to my IRS hearing. Put together it was 7 feet high! No one but a few tax attorneys and accountants who make their living off such complexity could possibly hope to understand our tax system.

Small businesses, in particular, are being crushed by all the paperwork. Perri Morgan, the N.C. Director of the National Federation of Independent

Business testified that small corporations are paying a minimum of \$724 in compliance costs for every \$100 paid in income taxes. That's a total of \$28.6 billion in compliance costs paid by these small business owners compared to \$3.9 billion paid in income taxes.

Amazingly, that is almost exactly how much money (roughly \$4 billion) that the IRS now admits they wasted trying to develop a new computer system that turned out to be a total failure.

To paraphrase Will Rogers, our tax code has made dishonest people out of honest people. That is one reason why I have introduced legislation to create a citizens oversight board of the IRS. My bill, the "IRS Oversight, Restructuring & Tax Code Elimination Act" (S.1555), creates an IRS oversight board composed entirely of private citizens who will review auditing and collections procedures of the IRS, force the IRS to provide more assistance to taxpayers, and make sure the IRS doesn't waste another \$4 billion on failed computer systems.

Here's my plan

Besides setting up such a watchdog for the IRS, my bill terminates the existing tax code by Dec. 31, 2000 and terminates the Internal Revenue Service by Sept. 30, 2000. I think Congress needs such a deadline to force us to take bold action. Over the last 40 years, Congress created this monster, and we must pass the kinds of reforms that will get rid of it.

Forcing ourselves to act is the only way to get this done.

If you are having problems with the IRS, I want to hear from you. You can write me at: Sen. Lauch Faircloth, 310 New Bern Avenue, Suite 120, Raleigh, NC 27601, or call me at (919)856-4791. You can also learn more about my plans to reform the IRS, or send me your IRS concerns at my new Internet address: <http://www.senate.gov/~faircloth/irs/>

Sen. Faircloth held a hearing on IRS abuses in Raleigh. He has now introduced a bill to create an IRS oversight board, and abolish the tax code and the IRS.

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