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These Days



By

Sokolsky

LIFE IS FRAGILE

We are so sure, so positive, so full of ourselves. Then something happens to bring us close to the knowledge of how fragile we are, how fragile life itself is. I recall when Winston Churchill was knocked down on Fifth Avenue, how Fritz Kreisler was knocked down by a truck. Churchill lived to lead his country through blood, sweat and tears. Kreisler has been spared for a world that loves him.

These thoughts came to me as for a moment it seemed as though all of us, nearly an entire family, in the heat of cheer, off on a summer holiday, faced the immediate possibility of sudden death. It does not take more than a split second to discover humility—and thankfulness to a gracious God.

Our car was standing stark still on an approach to the West Side Highway, not more than five minutes from home. We were moving from the big city to a farm in Massachusetts. All winter we look forward to the day when we shall make our annual return to the woods and a few weeks of closeness to nature. We were waiting to get into the line of traffic.

Then came, at a terrific rush, a policeman on a motorcycle. He apparently was after a speeder or something. Suddenly we felt the impact of his machine into our car. He fell over his machine. To us, it seemed as though he had flown into the air and soon enough, too soon, we heard his groans. We only suffered damage to our car, but we suffered emotionally with him. It might have been us.

For hours we waited. And it was impossible not to think of how the courtesy of the road seems to have disappeared altogether. Few drivers put their hands out to signaling changes of destination or slowing up. Few ever think of warning the car behind them of sudden stops. On country roads at night, it is not rare to see bright lights undimmed for passing cars even though a collision might result from such negligence.

But the worst offenders seem to be baby folk who hold conferences while driving and lovers who believe the closeness makes the road more safe.

One becomes more conscious of these infractions after a first accident. If there had been no speeder, the motorcycle policeman would not so suddenly have taken to the chase and none of this might have happened, imperiling his life and almost ending ours. Perhaps after the speeder reaches his destination, there was nothing to get there for. Yet, there could have been half a dozen deaths because he did not follow the rules of the road.

It is not only the rules of the road that we so often ignore; it is the rules of life itself. For there are rules which the whole experience of the human race, at whatever level of culture, does accept. The Senate committee which is now meeting to consider ethics in government faces the same problem that we did in our collision; it is not so much the law as it is decency, which comes down to the simplicities of the Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule and such aphoristic statements of right.

The simple rules of life suffice when all the complexities of laws and regulations do not. Most men do not commit murder because they fear the law. Probably when a man shoots an adulterous wife, he never thinks of the law. His emotions are vengeful; he does not think at all and all the laws on all the books from Hammurabi to Fullbright will not check his hand, unless deeply ground into his character is the simple statement:

Benson Man Is Buried

Final rites were held Sunday afternoon for Jesse J. Beasley, 62, of Benson. He died at his home early Saturday morning after a long illness.

The services were held at the Randall Fide Will Baptist Church. The Rev. G. W. Kirby officiated and burial was in the Beasley family cemetery.

Mr. Beasley was a veteran of World War I. He was a member of the Free Will Baptist Church. Surviving are his wife, Mrs. Lettie J. Jackson Beasley; 10-yr daughters, Mrs. Garland Gilbert of Clinton, Rt. 3, Mrs. Lawrence Hudson of Four Oaks, Route 2, Mrs. Herbert Bass of Dunn, Rt. 2, Mrs. Leona Myers of Newton Grove, Rt. 2, two sons, Fulton of Benson and Charles M. Beasley of the home; his stepmother, Mrs. Emily Beasley; a stepbrother and sister; grandchildren and one stepgrandchild.

Mister Breger



"Here's a funny cartoon of a man behind a pile of bills, hopelessly trying to keep a budget!"



By ED SULLIVAN

THE PASSING SHOW

If you have bags under your eyes, they won't disqualify you in color TV. The cameras, exaggerating the color of your eyes, focus the viewer's attention on your eyes, instead of the miniature satchels beneath them. In fact, color TV is much kinder than black and white TV, the fears of performers to the contrary. People with dyed hair may be in trouble, if the job has been done badly.

Having participated in the first sponsored color broadcast over the CBS-TV network, your reporter feels like an expert. About the only difference in his pioneer broadcast was length of rehearsals. The big hour shows on TV don't need more than 6 to 10 camera rehearsal hours; this opening color show required 32 camera hours, due to the fact that 18 sponsors shared in it, each demanding the camera attention they'd bought.

Now that color broadcasts are on a daily schedule, and individual sponsors will buy shows of their own, rehearsal times will be reduced to the black and white schedules.

How does color affect you set owners? At the moment, it would cost you about \$100 to get a converter, a color wheel, to qualify your set for color reception. This price undoubtedly will come down, as soon as manufacturers decide which way to jump in the network color war, and get into production.

Color adds completely new areas of enchantment to TV. Costumes, sets, the color of performers' eyes, the fabric of dresses and suits and even shorts acquire visual voltage.

This first sponsored show originated at CBS-TV studio 57, on Fifth Ave. at 109th St. Having been born just five blocks north, on E. 114th St., I feel quite at home.

Most enthusiastic attendants at this pioneer broadcast were the youngsters of the neighborhood. During the evenings of rehearsals, the little Puerto Rican children would line up along Fifth Avenue and stare with fascination at the goings-on revealed through the open studio doors.

First time they saw Bill and Cora Baird perched on a catwalk, manipulating their puppets, the kids let out a squeal of excitement that brought a patrol car hurrying to the scene. Out hopped a young cop. "What gives?" he asked the tallest of the youngsters. The boy pointed to the puppets. "Say, that's okay," said the policeman. "I used to operate puppets in our high school plays."

The kids looked at the cop with new interest, through new eyes. "Of course, I wasn't that good," he explained, a trifle awkwardly.

Brought into the studio in small groups, the youngsters eyed the color monitor set with tremendous interest. Most of their comments were in Spanish, but they started the technicians with their specific questions.

"Will we need a new color tube for our TV set?" one little boy asked director Fred Rickey. "No," said Rickey, "all you'll need is a converter." Another youngster brought us up sharply by indicating cobalt in one commercial display: "You can't use that any more," he said. "The Government needs that for the war emergency."

When the youngsters exited, the cameramen shook their heads: "Kids today are ten times smarter," said one.

Moving into his 71st year, Pat Rooney is still a featured performer in "Guys and Dolls," singing, not dancing, oddly enough in his role of a Salvation Army Worker.

Pat Rooney, son of a famous stage dad, was born in 1880, at 50 W. 10th St. The building now is occupied by a famous institution. Sig Klein, clothier and haberdasher to fat men. Four blocks north, at Tony Pastor's, Rooney got his first big break, in 1895, in a song-and-dance act with his sister, Mattie.

For years Pat worked with Marion Brent, his first wife. His wood and winning of her was a truly a romance of the stage. They had met when he was directing the dances and appearing in the Rogers Brothers musicals, produced by Klaw and Erlanger, and she was in the chorus of a show called "Peggy from Paris." Later, when both were members of the cast of "Mother Goose" in 1904, they were spliced at the Hotel Lenox in Boston.

In addition to their dancing, they were delightfully effective in comedy sketches like "The Busy Bell Boy" and "At the Newsstand." An Indianapolis Sun notice of an engagement at the Grand Theater there, shortly after their marriage, called attention to the fact that "Pat Rooney was probably the most musical pair of feet upon the stage. Young and active, full of vim and vigor, he goes about his work as if he enjoyed it and his steps are so gracefully executed and with such marked precision that his dances are probably the most interesting now being performed on the American stage. Indeed it is doubtful whether he has a superior in his style of work upon any stage of any country."

Rooney's trademark is his famous waltz clog to the tune of "The Daughter of Rosie O'Grady," written by Walter Donaldson. His preferences in dancers tends toward those with original styles. High on the list is George M. Cohan, whom Pat considered a great eccentric dancer: "His walking dance was great." Fred Astaire is another of his favorites because "he creates things and is wonderful at both tap and ballet—a perfectionist."

Harriet Hoctor was "a joy to see almost matchless at toe dancing and ballet." Bessie Clayton "could do the most intricate steps on her toes." "Gene Kelly is another Rooney favorite because "he has a personality that goes hand in hand with dancing. He's very much at ease and is expert in all types of dancing from ballet to eccentric."

It's hard for Pat to restrict his list of great dancers to just these. He remembers Barney Fagan, the master of the soft shoe and such tap artists as Mill Wood, Ida May Chadwick and Johnny Gleason. He remembers Ed Robinson, Jack Donahue, George Tappas, Hal LeRoy and Anna Pavlova.

"Thou shalt not kill." That command originates not from legislation or personal decision. It reaches him from outside himself, from God, not as a request or a suggestion, not with explanations or reasons—but as a direct statement of what is expected of him. Vengeance is the Lord's, not man's. The transference is important, for it withdraws from us altogether many of the emotional reactions which lead to indecencies, improprieties, wrongs. If we reject the commandment, we imperil not only ourselves, but all times.

Frederick OTHMAN

WASHINGTON.—Austin Anson, the tactless Texan, wondered if he had a plate of big, red, juicy sliced tomatoes lately. I hadn't. He wasn't surprised. Scientific progress, said he, has ruined this nation's tomato appetite.

As manager of the Texas Citrus and Vegetable Growers and Shippers Association of Harlingen, Tex., Anson has for sale at the moment 4,000 freight-car loads of the finest fastest tomatoes ever to soak up the Texas sunshine.

They should retail in any grocery in America for 15 cents a pound, but Anson fears most people will have to pay at least twice that—and still not get the top-grade, de luxe quality. The cellophane tube is the villain.

You've seen this tube at the grocer's with four small tomatoes lined up inside it. A few years ago Anson and his tomato growers figured the tube would be the salvation of their business. It would put tomatoes in front of the housewife in such attractive fashion that she couldn't resist 'em. So thought the vegetable growers.

"But that damaged cellophane widget boomeranged on us," Anson said. "We thought it up back in 1948. Up until then the average woman would buy around two pounds of tomatoes, which she'd pick out, herself, from the bin.

"Then came this blasted tube. Sure, the tomatoes looked pretty in it. But usually at least one of the four wouldn't be fit to eat. This package weighed only 14 ounces and the average grocer insisted on charging about 30 cents for it. That's just plain gouging. So the people aren't eating tomatoes much any more because of this profiteering. Especially they're not eating our Texas tomatoes.

"Ours are too fine and big this year to squeeze into those little tubes."

Every town in the Rio Grande Valley is jammed with tomatoes looking for a market. In some places they're piled along the curbs. The demand seems to have vanished. A little simple arithmetic, according to Anson, explains that.

"Our growers get three cents a pound for their tomatoes," he said. "The crates tissue paper hand labor and shippers' margin amounts to 6.4 cents a pound and the rail-

roads charge around three cents a pound for a long haul.

"I mean our tomatoes can be delivered anywhere in the country for 10 cents a pound. So one of our shippers was on the phone trying to push some of his cheap tomatoes in Salk Lake City.

"The wholesaler there admitted his cut was 10 cents a pound, while the retailer took another 10-cent gouge. This is what they call taking care of their fellow man, charging 30 cents for tomatoes that ought to sell for 15 cents. Everybody could make a perfectly decent, normal profit at 15 cents a pound. But, no. These babies have got to double it.

"This same situation is being duplicated in every market in the United States today and all I've got to say is heaven help places like New York, Boston and Chicago. In those cities they probably weigh our three-cent tomatoes on jewelers' scales."

I told Anson I doubted if the wholesalers and retailers would appreciate his remarks. He blew up. He said (leaving out the sputtering) that if any of 'em wanted to argue, he personally would rub them with tomato paste and pack them in cellophane tubes.

He was sore. And I can say only that if any vegetable dealer has facts and figures which he believes will refute Anson's charges I'll be pleased to continue the great tomato controversy in this column.

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Partin Funeral Services Held

Funeral services were held Monday afternoon for T. Everett Partin, 76, of Willow Springs, Rt. 1. He died at his home Saturday after an extended illness.

Mr. Partin was a native of Harnett County, son of Mark A. and Edith Adams Partin. He had been a member of the Mt. Pleasant Presbyterian Church for several years.

Officiating at the funeral was the Rev. J. Robert Phipps of Fuquay Springs. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Surviving are one brother, Early Partin of Willow Springs, Rt. 1, and two sisters, Lettie and Lena Partin, both of the home; also several nieces and nephews.

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Laws Should Be Tightened

A federal narcotics agent told Senate crime investigators the other day that he believes Charles (Lucky) Luciano, deported Italian vice king, directs a large ring which ships heroin and other dope into the United States.

It was just a short while ago that Luciano, also a big vice lord, was fined heavily by the Italian government for illegally importing a new automobile and a sum of money from the United States into that country.

"Both of these incidents raise the question: 'Why are our import and immigration laws so lax that things like this can occur?'"

Persons familiar with immigration laws know that they are so lax and so weak in some instances that they are almost ineffective. This fact accounts for so many undesirable and unwanted aliens being in this country—many of them without permission.

It was surprise you to know that members of the United Nations staffs from other countries—including Russia—are not subject to inspection or search when they enter the United States. They can bring in anything they desire.

They get through on the grounds of diplomatic immunity.

While most of the foreign representatives (with the exception of Russia and those friendly to Russia, of course) have honorable careers as diplomats, the United States is taking an awful chance.

Even the members of our own diplomatic corps bear watching, as evidenced by the base of Alger Hiss—a man so trusted that he was picked to serve as advisor to the late President Roosevelt but who turned out to be a traitor to his country.

It is unthinkable that these foreign agents should be allowed to migrate and commute back and forth without more rigid supervision.

France made the same mistake once and soon found itself overrun by Germans and World War II followed. The phrase is old and trite, but "It could happen here."

It seems to us that tight—extremely tight—immigration laws should be a necessary and vital part of our national defense program.

It Says Here

by Bob Hope

Britain tries to solve the meat shortage. To supplement their slim meat rations, Britishers are eating whale meat, beaver, reindeer, and camel meat.

When a British housewife buys camel, her butcher probably asks, "Do you want one hump... or two?"

I have no idea what camel tastes like, but it must make awfully lumpy sandwiches.

And when a family has whale for dinner, there's probably a slight pause while dad goes down to the local sawmill to have it sliced.

Beaver should have its advantages. After you're through with the meal, mother can have a coat made from the leftovers.

I'm told they've revised British cookbooks to handle these new items. Imagine a recipe reading: "Take one whale and simmer slowly in a blast furnace. Serves 800."

Horse meat is also found on British tables. It must be exciting to eat something you bet on the day before.

Yes, sir, these days in England, when a family visits the zoo, it's not only educational but also a preview of tomorrow's menu.

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