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Opinion and commentary

by Paul Dickson

"We will not find a way out of our present troubles until we have the courage to look honestly at evil where evil exists, until we call injustice and dishonor by their right names, and until a large number of Americans from all sectors of opinion—right, left, and center—are willing to acknowledge their own special contribution to our troubles."

If you will think these words through, slowly and thoroughly, I believe you will join me in thinking that they are a pretty good sermon, which, if it could be spread far and wide enough, could do much to move us forward in the "hard, long, exciting task of building a new America," and of being united again in an inspiring purpose.

The first thing we would have to do in order to get willing to acknowledge our own individual and group contribution to our collective troubles would be to reach an identification of this contribution. For a starter, how about the suggestion that most of us are going to have to admit that there is another side to every one of the issues that we feel so strongly about, and that in each of these cases some people honestly feel differently from the way we do? That is, they are not scoundrels and communists, they just believe a different way is better?

If we use this premise as a base, we find ourselves in position to talk, and to listen, notable achievements in any disagreement. We are now in position to find out why our opponents honestly take the position they do, when it is so completely wrong to us. If they now will listen to our reasons for having the only possible right position, we are going to find ourselves first thing you know being polite to each other, over the fence, as it were.

From two-way conversation over the fence, of course, anything is possible, from a wedding to the need for an abortion, or a compromise that will allow both points of view to be satisfied in part.

Now did that last paragraph shock you, or make you decide not to read Paul Dickson any more? Well, if so, that's partly what it was intended to do. We can't sweep these things under the rug, you know, or close our eyes and hope they'll go away. Listening to the problem and the view of those who may cause or precipitate it is a large part of the battle, and the start we must make.

Another example of a shocker occurs to me: As a black parent, are you prepared to learn that your son is dating a white girl? As a white parent are you prepared to face the fact that your daughter is dating and seriously interested in a black boy? Wait, now, don't run. If you can't face this one you are going to have to go to South Africa, or get in a hole and pull it in behind you. It will not go away.

So by now I am certain some of my readers have cursed me for a wild-eyed liberal and worse, and they may be right. That's my virtue, and my definition of the kind of liberal I try to be, to give each person credit for having an honest opinion, honestly arrived at, whether I agree with it or not.

Funny thing, though, this doesn't automatically throw me in the crowd calling themselves liberals, not by a long shot—not any more, in fact, than it does in with the labeled "conservatives." Reason for this is that a great many self-styled liberals believe in being free thinking and open-minded, as long as you agree with them. They will often deny the right of opponents to disagree with them, and will almost never admit that there are reasons for disagreement which often never appear in the argument.

Now that's enough philosophy (?) — let's slip to a couple of tough ones to go to sleep on with some of the above outlined principles. One, the Arabs won't even admit the existence of Israel, for what to them are good and just reasons. Think what a big step a little conversation across the fence would be. Two, it looks like the protestants and Catholics of Ireland are going to fight forever, as they have been at it quite a while and seem to be fighting harder. We can relate to this by recalling our own attitudes when the first Catholics came to town, and when they started a church. Some have come to learn that they are really human beings, but that they have a different religious background from most of us hereabouts. Others of us still are fairly certain they are going to hell, unfortunately, and those of us in this group need to work on ourselves.

I heard a fellow I consider real smart say a few days ago: "To survive we must not just be able to change, we must create change." I wouldn't say he's right yet, but I'm thinking about it.

*Quotes are from "The Recovery of Confidence," by John W. Gardner

Browsing in the files of The News-Journal

25 years ago

Thursday, March 28, 1946
The Hoke County chapter of the North Carolina State College Alumni Association held its annual election meeting at the plant of the Hoke Concrete Works here on Friday night. Coach Beate Feathers was principal speaker.

Dr. G.W. Brown, Hoke County's delegate to the lower house of the North Carolina General Assembly for the past six years, announces in a political advertisement in this issue that he intends to seek to succeed himself in the Democratic primary to be held May 25

SIC Morris Tucker has been discharged from the navy after two years service.

Pfc Robert Weaver landed in New Jersey Sunday. He has been in Germany for the past fourteen months.

Lt. and Mrs. Ivey Hill Shankle and daughter are visiting Lt. Shankle's mother here. He has been separated from the service and is on terminal leave.

Hawaiian flowers, palms and greenery formed a beautiful setting for the annual Junior - Senior banquet of the Hoke County High School which was held Friday evening March 22 in the gymnasium.

'I know it's a planned withdrawal, Captain, but whose plan was it?'



By LAURIE TELFAIR

Brief Absences Good For Soul

The kids and I have been bacheloretting it this past week while the lord and master is out in the woods playing Army.

I think most wives will agree that brief separations are good for the soul — not to mention the household projects that get done then.

When hubby goes away, it's a perfect time for taking the wax off the floors, cleaning the closets, washing walls and windows and other such occasional chores. Not that I ever do any of that, but it is a perfect time for it if ever there was one.

I like to sew then. I can cut out patterns and leave sewing gear around the house to my heart's content without having to worry about gathering everything up each time I finish a session.

And woe unto him, if he comes home early. Once he came home briefly to restock clean underwear and it took nearly an hour to clear a path to the front door to let him in. As I recall, he gave up trying to hack his way from the living room to the bedroom and went back to field where things were clean.

Back in the days when I was more afraid to stay alone than I am now, I used to carry a pistol around with me for protection. As I look back, it's a wonder I didn't do in some innocent neighbor because I carried a big German Luger with me from room to room. Since I couldn't cock it myself, my husband would cock the gun for me before he left and put the safety on.

When he returned from his trip, he always called me from the office, then

Puppy Creek Philosopher

Dear editor:

It's not very important, but I was reading in a newspaper last night that there are now 255,200,000 telephones in the world.

Furthermore, as you might guess, nearly half of those, or 114,798,000, are in the United States. We've got one phone for every two people.

But what interested me was a further breakdown in the statistics, reporting that people in the United States last year made 156,450,000,000 phone calls. If you lost track of the zeroes, that's over 156 billion calls.

Moreover, that comes out to an average of 745 telephone conversations for each man, woman and child, the report said.

Now considering the fact a lot of people don't talk on the phone at all, like infants, and a lot don't have access to phones for long hours at a time, like farmers and laborers and bus drivers, etc., plus the fact a lot of people don't even have phones, you can see that some segments of the society are making a whole lot more than 745 phone calls a year. To get up to that 156 billion calls, somebody has to talk at least 10,000 times a year, or an average of about 30 times a day.

I can believe it. I'm not calling any names, but I can believe it.

Just to be doing, I figured up how much the world is paying for its 255,200,000 telephones, more or less. Just say the average phone costs a flat \$5 a month. That's \$1,266,000,000 a month, or \$15,192,000,000 a year, not counting long distance calls. When you add long distance charges, I'd say it's costing the world something around 30 billion dollars a year to talk.

I started to figure up how much truth is transmitted in those 30 billion dollars worth of calls a year but I never was any good at small fractions.

Yours faithfully,
J.A.

blew the horn when he got to the driveway. Before he would come to the door, he would call to me from the yard to make sure I knew it was him.

The first time I ever stayed alone, I had two pistols by the bed and another hidden just inside the door that I could reach as I entered the house. However, what really upset him was the extra box of ammunition I had by the bed to reload in case of siege.

After the kids came along, I gave up the gun as being too dangerous. I rely now in a large dog who regards cats and rabbits as mortal enemies and all humans as his friend. I feel safe, though, from any rabbit in the neighborhood.

Mealtime suffers when the meat and potato eater is gone. For brief absences of no more than a month, I can get along on sandwiches and spaghetti with an occasional trip to the local hamburger joint. Army clubs usually have delicious buffet dinners on Sunday, which serves as the weekly decent meal. (Did I read somewhere about malnutrition increasing in America?)

The automatic reaction of the kids to anything other than sandwiches or spaghetti is "Yeach" so I don't have much incentive to cook anyway. But eventually, during prolonged absences, even the youngsters are ready for a good meal.

Of course catastrophes just hang around waiting for the husband to leave. I have a friend who began to keep a list of major foul-ups while her husband was on a two-week trip. She stopped counting at 16 and began to whimper a little bit. By the time he returned, she was sitting on the kitchen floor rocking back and forth moaning softly while the washing machine overflowed, the oven refused to heat about 200 degrees and all the tropical fish died in the tank.

When the Army takes to the woods, the weather usually cooperates by producing a downpour and freezing temperatures. I was feeling very sorry for the poor souls out in the rain when I got a phone call through on a field telephone. (Or that's what I was told.) I think they all survived the rainstorm but I can't be sure. It was hard to hear above the sounds of the poker game and the clanking glasses in the background.

People & Issues

CLIFF BLUE ...

WASTE IN EDUCATION — At the request of Governor Scott the staff of the Board of Higher Education has brought together a report concerning the private institutions of higher education in North Carolina, looking particularly at enrollment and fiscal trends.

In public education at all levels there is some waste which is traditional in a democracy. Democracy is not the most efficient type of government. It is often cumbersome, slow and costly, but it is well worth the price we have to pay for it.

Concerning the teaching of chemistry in the private institutions of higher learning in North Carolina the report has this to say:

"Quantitative efficiency can never be the paramount aim of higher education, but the avoidance of waste is necessary for its survival.

"One example of possible waste that needs attention follows: twenty-six private senior institutions in North Carolina grant degrees to majors in chemistry. The 26 employ 96 teachers of chemistry who produced 198 bachelor's degrees in June, 1970. If the three top producers are not considered, the remaining 23 institutions employ 65 professors of chemistry who produced 73 bachelor's degrees in the academic year ending June 30, 1970. These 23 institutions maintain a ratio of almost one professor for every graduating senior in chemistry. Unless chemistry professors on each campus can demonstrate that the discipline makes a very large contribution to the intellectual life of the college community, most of these degree programs in chemistry should be abolished and chemistry majors advised to go where prospective chemists are more numerous and less costly per capita. This discussion deduces that upper-level chemistry courses are greatly underpopulated on the private campuses. The conclusion is inescapable even when one considers only faculty salaries, exclusive of expensive and little-used laboratories and the cost of expendable supplies for the discipline. Every discipline needs the kind of scrutiny suggested here for chemistry."

With the ever expanding cost of

government, we feel that every phase of public education, and education beyond the high school should be scrutinized to see that dead wood is cut out and that the most for the tax-dollar is secured.

If there is waste in private institutions of higher learning, chances are that there is greater waste in public institutions of higher learning.

And while we are discussing education, the waste is not peculiar to education, we venture to say, but to most divisions of public service — and more in the federal government than in state government because the federal government has so many duplicating programs.

Every president from FDR on started out to trim waste but when all is said and done bureaucracy, like Topsy, just keeps right on growing!

Many people feel that more trimming rather than upped taxes is essential in government spending.

CONGRESSIONAL RE-DISTRICTING — When all is said and done chances are that there will be very little if any changes made in Senator George Wood's congressional re-districting bill. While the bill, now passed by the Senate is not pleasing to everybody by a long shot, only ten counties were shifted in devising the bill, which says a whole lot.

SENATOR JORDAN — There remains a big question in the minds of many people whether Senator Jordan will be a candidate for reelection to the United States Senate.

Should Jordan decide to stand aside the possibilities to seek the office would include, Governor Scott, Attorney General Robert Morgan, Rep. Richardson Preyer, Rep. Nick Galifianakis, Rep. Alton Lennon and Senator Jyles Coggins the latter who just might run even if Jordan chooses to seek reelection.

No doubt but that Terry Sanford would like to serve in the Senate — at least he gave serious consideration to running against Senator Sam J. Ervin in 1968 but decided against it after having a poll made. Reports are that Terry agreed not to seek election in a state race in 1971 when he accepted the Duke University presidency.

Just One Thing After Another

By Carl Goerch

In a feature article in The Asheville Citizen Times a few years ago Miss Gertrude Ramsey made the following observation:

"Communication seems to have doomed the colorful and spiced language of the days of Good Queen Bess — communication and the fact that the people learned that others were unlike themselves. Perhaps mankind tries too hard to conform.

"There were times," Miss Ramsey continued, "when a noun, expressed what a (mountain) man meant, and he used it as a verb," and she gave the following examples:

"He's a - footing it down the mountain."

"They muscled that log clean up!"

"These molasses eat good."

"Jake's wife faulted him for forgetting it."

"It pure don't pleasure me none at all to go."

"Our least one's so growed he's a sweetheating Ponder's girl."

"I'm going a-squirreling."

And then these with her comments:

"It's come on to rain, and I'd laid off to fix the fence today," doesn't mean absentee-ism from a job. It means the speaker had planned to do the repair work.

"I know in reason she'd be took down sick," might be the response to a report

on a neighbor's health.

"There's another getting of wood in the logpile."

"To express the passing of time, consider the man who has long gone. Know anything better?"

A man was telling me of a little game he and his wife had learned to play. He said they both had noticed whenever they went out to dinner, how glum and silent most married couples are. Younger couples sometimes engage in conversation, a boy and a girl usually talk, two or more girls or women seated at a table laugh and talk, and the same is true of a group of men. Usually four men at one table will be hilarious in their enjoyment of conversation, even without any artificial stimulant. But a couple married for ten years or more usually sit without talking while waiting for their meal to be served, and then eat more or less in silence.

This man and his wife decided that they would make conversation, if none appeared spontaneously. So when they are dining out and feel one of those silences coming, the wife looks at her husband with an animated expression and says, "One, two, three, four, five, don't you think so?" And he answers as though she has just told him the most astonishing bit of news: "Six, seven, eight, nine, ten!" It sounds silly, and both laugh, and then repeat something of the same sort, or else go on into conversation that has suggested itself as an outcome of the silly exchange. It nearly always winds up by their finding plenty to talk about.

From time to time I've made mention of tautology or redundancy: such expressions as "widow woman," "tooth dentist," "consensus of opinion." A few days ago, however, Jim Battle called my attention to something I had written in the magazine about being a pallbearer at a funeral.

I never realized before that this is tautology in its best (or worst) form. Where else could you be a pallbearer except at a funeral?

STORIES

BEHIND WORDS

By William S. Penfield

Names

The name Latimer is of Anglo-Saxon origin and means a teacher of Latin. It is a corruption of the obsolete "latiner" — one versed in Latin.

Leland, which also is of Anglo-Saxon origin, means of or from the meadowland. The name's origin is more apparent in two of its variations — Leeland and Leighland. "Lee" and "leigh" mean meadow.

The "ley" is Morley is another variation of "lee." The "mor" is a contraction of "moor." The name was coined to describe a person from the moor meadow.

