INDIVIDUALISM
VERSUS COLLECTIVISM
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It is mandatory that those of us with our country's welfare in mind, repeatedly take bearings on the course that is being followed and determine whether we are happy with our findings. In doing this it is essential that we have standards for evaluation purposes and view the status of our country in the light of those standards. No ship can reach its desired destination without following a course that will lead to it. This is just as true of the Ship of State as a less allegorical vessel.

There are certain standards which have been taken for granted in the past which must be considered in terms of how meaningful they are to us and how far we would go in sacrificing to retain them. This is essential as opponents have apparently devised far reaching plans to destroy them.

First let us consider what type of government we insist on having. There are only two basic systems. In a republic, the government is the agent of the free individual. In a totalitarian government, the individual is the slave of the state. Totalitarian governments can be kingdoms, dictatorships or bureaucracies. It should be clear that communistic governments are totalitarian. As long as people know of a better way of life, they will not willingly settle for slavery. That is why there is a Berlin Wall to contain those who want to get out and even so there have been a number who have faced death to escape, many of whom were not successful. That is why communist and other totalitarian forms of government are trying to subvert or destroy representative forms of government. The comparison of living standards and the happiness of the individuals involved is not in their favor.

No system of government has been able to supply such opportunities and high living standards for so many as our republic before its infiltration by collective principles. This brings us to the Declaration of Independence as the starting motivation for the origin of our country. In the second paragraph we find these words, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." There is no reticence in the reference to our Creator and our coinage still bears the statement "In God We Trust". This provides a religious but non-sectarian cornerstone for our country. This is further spelled out in the First Amendment to the Constitution guaranteeing religious freedom.

Man cannot raise himself by his own boot straps, any more than water can run uphill in defiance of the law of gravity. We must reach up to a higher spiritual force to lift ourselves against the downward pull of degrading influences. We need the spiritual guidance of our Creator to raise our moral and social behavior on a constantly upgrading effort. Any departure or lapse from this course, leads to the down trends of degradation we see all around us. The revivals of spirituality stimulated by crusades of the Reverend Billy Graham and others could change this downward trend and we need more of them that will grip the idealistic enthusiasm of our young people.

Patrick Henry exclaimed "Give me liberty or give me death". Liberty is not license to ignore the rights of others but it does emphasize self-reliance. It would be nice if everyone was self-disciplined but because this is not true, regulation is required. The Constitution grants the individual safeguards against tyranny and spells out the limitations of government.

It is important to observe how far self-styled liberals propose to go in attempting to obsolete the Bill of Rights. They will insist on such sections as advance their objectives but attempt to negate the Second Amendment guaranteeing the right of the people to keep and bear arms, which stipulates that the security of a free state makes this necessary. It should be emphasized that the words FREE STATE are used. This not accidental. Totalitarian states do not permit the people to keep and bear arms as they could not so easily be enslaved and suppressed. Our founding fathers, having escaped from despotism knew these facts and thought they had precluded this happening again.

When liberty is a primary objective, self-reliance replaces reliance on hand outs from the government for normal livelihood. The inequities of social security returns from the withholding of salaries and wages we earned, are further aggravated by regulations disqualifying individuals from what is due them, if they augment their income beyond a stipulated amount. There is no moral or economic justification for this and only serves further to degrade and enslave the older individual. The greater the earned income of the individual the more taxes he would pay to the benefit of us all. Why restrict his earning incentive?

The proposals, some of which are in effect, where workers are required to support shirkers through tax burdens, are a disgrace to a freedom loving people. Everyone knows that it is difficult to obtain workers to do the less desirable jobs required by daily life, at economically feasible rates. People that have not trained themselves for better jobs prefer to accept government handouts rather than do undesirable work. Instead of making it difficult to receive these doles, they are being increased and we hear or read of such statements as a minimum subsistence income. There is no reason in a free society why conscientious, hard working people should be required to support loafers. The problem is not new and is not a matter of class distinction. Captain John Smith had it in the early colony of Virginia except that those involved were related to nobility and thought they were too good to work. He finally came up with the edict "Who won't work can't eat". How long will it take us to make the same decision?
Possibly one of the most ominous trends is the drive against property rights. Like all collectivist programs, this is insidious and dishonest. It is designed to appeal to the "have nots" in the hope of getting their support and their votes. The fact that all of us are "have nots" by comparison with the individual at the top who only has one vote. In its insidious doctrine, it ignores the fact that the person at the top, if the status was achieved by honest means, serves the good purpose of showing what can be accomplished in this land of opportunity. When property has been honestly obtained, it represents part of someone's life. Someone has traded part of his or her life to obtain it. It becomes impounded or stored up "life" to be used when needed. This may be for the purchase of a home, education of a family or living under better than substandard conditions when due to advancing age, earning capacity diminishes, or when it is believed that a career of hard work can justifiably be followed by a period of enjoyment.

To confiscate this property to devalue it, by political means, so that its purchasing capacity is reduced, constitutes in my opinion, a form of robbery. When a burglar siezes one's property, he can, as yet, be prosecuted, but what defense has an individual against an administration which can give away programs devalues our property or by so-called tax reforms, confiscates it? Let us remember that the power to tax is the power to destroy. Let us get it very clear that property rights are human rights and where there are no property rights there are few if any human rights.

Where there are no property rights there is no individually controlled security for life itself. This is what the collectivists want. They want us to eat out of a common pot, have no competitive incentive to upgrade ourselves and our families to a higher living standard than our neighbor for fear it might cause jealousy or strife. Then let us ask ourselves the question, if we did not have such competitive incentives would there be any voluntary progress or upgrading of our segment of the human race or would we degenerate into a nation of slaves to be whipped into production as were the Israelites when they built the treasure cities for their Egyptian masters?

Who agrees with Patrick Henry and the principle of individual liberty? Who agrees that it is about time that we discard a national policy of expediency and return to the policy of being motivated by high principles including sufficient bravery to do what we know to be right?

GUEST EDITORIAL

Once again we are privileged to present to our readers an editorial by Mr. Ernest V. Joiner, Editor/Publisher of the Sebastopol Times, Sebastopol, California. This editorial appeared in the July 3rd issue of the Sebastopol Times, and though July 4th is now long past, remains equally pertinent in content, no matter what the date. We are most grateful to Mr. Joiner for his permission to bring this article to your attention.

Ernest V. Joiner

OPINION

- I DON'T have any plans to forget the Fourth of July celebrations of my childhood. We began looking forward to July 4 as soon as school "let out" for the summer. Of course, the July 4 events were different then, as what wasn't? This was a day when children dreamed of growing up to become policemen, soldiers, teachers, railroad engineers and even mayors. Youth's greatest respect was reserved for those engaged in keeping the peace, manning the engines of industry, and those who were personally honored by being elected to public office.

- IN THE early 1920s any town that could attract a state or national legislator to deliver the July 4 address was honored, and such appearance insured a large crowd. There was always the parade, and an important part of it was the group of uniformed veterans of World War I and Spanish-American War. They marched smartly, receiving the cheers of crowds that lined the street. The volunteer band played (loudly but not always in tune) the national anthem and "Stars and Stripes Forever" and nobody felt embarrassed. Eyes went misty and hats came off as Old Glory went by. The best local orators were recruited to read the Declaration of Independence; every kid was proud to be an American; any slur on the national honor and it was avenged in a bloody fistfight.

- THE PICNIC was an essential part of any Fourth of July celebration. Long tables were laden with potato salad, watermelons, cakes, pies, fried chicken, and pink lemonade. There were games and races for children and adults, seemingly designed to insure that just about everybody could be a winner at something. It was a time when people spoke of Thomas Jefferson more as a living person.

- FIREWORKS TOPPED off the day's festivities. Kids, most of them, had been instructed in the proper use of fireworks. Sure, a few lost fingers by holding on too long to those giant firecrackers, but they bore their injury with humor, even with some pride, since the "wound" was incurred in the exuberance of the Fourth of July.

- IT WAS pretty late when we at last got home and tumbled into bed, exhausted but happy, over what we considered a proper celebration of the nation's birthday. Asleep, we were more likely to dream about becoming military heroes in the defense of our country than about acquiring a new catcher's mitt, a cellar full of stick candy, or a little encouragement from the girl down the block.

- WE DIDN'T know that human nature, being what it is, was setting loose the greed and selfishness that might some day undermine the country whose birthdays we observed with so much dedication. We were unaware that writers and statesmen like Thomas Babington Macaulay had written in early 18th Century England that: "I have long been convinced that institutions purely democratic must, sooner or later, destroy liberty or civilization, or both." We wouldn't have believed him anyway. But we went right on converting, unknowingly for the most part, our republic into a democracy. A century after Macaulay, British Prime Minister Disraeli predicted what has happened to England, and that it would later happen to America. He told Parliament: "If you establish a democracy (government by the rabble), you must in due time reap the fruits of a democracy." Over here, Americans forgot that the Founding Fathers did their best to form a Republic, with enough safeguards to keep it from degenerating into a Democracy. We have never been able to differentiate between a Democracy and a Republic run democratically.

- In 1977 the Washington Post published a sobering article by Peter Jay, economics editor of the London Times. It dealt with the tragic consequences of government's intervention to neutralize the evil effects of a previous government intervention. Mr. Jay concluded: "So we reach the depressing conclusion that the operation of free democracy appears to force government into positions (the commitment to full employment) that prevent them from taking steps (fiscal and monetary restraint) that are necessary to arrest the menace (accelerating inflation) that threatens to undermine the condition (stable prosperity) on which political stability and therefore liberal democracy depend. In other words, democracy has itself by the tail and
is eating itself up fast.

- MR. JAY was agreeing with Howard E. Kershner, professor of economics at Northwood Institute, who formulated what he calls Kershner's First Law: "When a self-governing people empower their government to take wealth from some and give it to others, the process will not stop until the last bone of the last taxpayer is picked bare." The whiteness of the bones is already beginning to appear. Transfer payments, a polite and disarming governmental term used to describe that money which is taken by force from some of our citizens and given to other citizens, were running at $200 billion in 1976 and are now at $600 billion per year. At this rate, the taxpayers' bones will indeed be bare, and the prophecy of democracy will at last have been fulfilled.

- BEN FRANKLIN knew all about this. When asked what the struggling Continental Congress had produced, Old Ben replied: "A Republic, sir, if you can keep it." We didn't keep it. We turned toward a democracy which the founding fathers both feared and hated.

- JOHN WINTHROP, first governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony, said of democracy that it is "accounted the meanest and worst of all forms of government." During the American Revolution the word "democracy" was not in use. It does not appear in the Declaration of Independence. It does not appear in the Constitution of the United States. It does not appear in any of the first state constitutions. Thomas Jefferson feared it. Alexander Hamilton called it "our real disease." We didn't listen. We discovered we could vote things for ourselves out of the public treasury, and thus "transfer payments" were born.

- TODAY $600 billion a year are (in a democratic manner) being forcibly taken from one group of citizens and given to another. The cry is for even more democracy, democracy, democracy, as if this country were never a republic, and as if democracy as a form of government represents man's finest political achievement instead of one of its worst.

- I LOVE my country, but I can do it without loving some of its institutions. My heart can beat for America without also flouting for the Environ-mental Protection Agency or the Internal Revenue Service. I feel compelled to place my hand over my heart when the flag goes by, but the thought of showing similar respect for the EPA or the IRS gives me an easily located pain. I believe that all men are created equal to the extent that they are born naked, all the while aware that the greatest inequality of all is in "ordering" unequal persons to be equal.

- THE FOURTH of July should always be observed. Even if this country should cease to exist, July 4 should be observed worldwide as the birthday of mankind's most exalted experiment in human freedom and personal liberty. She's my country, right or wrong. And I'll never apologize for her, as if one mistake or a thousand should condemn civilization's mightiest force for individual freedom and dignity. But I can still complain that democracy is replacing republicanism, and that we stand to lose so much in the process. And I can still be thrilled by the Fourth of July.

- BOB ORBEN is right. The Spirit of '76 is embodied in one drummer, a flag-bearer, and a fife-player. They had only one hit record—but it's still selling!

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