

THE DALLAS POST

EDITORIALS

Emergency dispatch should stay here

An article by Grace Dove in this week's Post illustrates the importance of having emergency services dispatched by people who know the area. As Luzerne County officials consider adopting the 911 emergency service, they should keep that fact in mind.

The Back Mountain is a large region composed of seven separate municipalities and among them are many streets with the same or similar names. That causes confusion at the least and has the potential to cause great harm if emergency crews are inadvertently sent to the wrong place. Fire and police chiefs offer several suggestions about how to minimize the confusion. Among them; install clearly visible house numbers on your property; stay on the line when calling so the dispatcher can ask important questions; give accurate directions, including your community's name and easily spotted landmarks.

Municipal and post office officials have begun to address the problem by controlling the names given to new streets, for example not allowing another Maple Street in a new subdivision. That won't end the current confusion, but it will prevent adding more.

Luzerne County will have this problem on a grand scale; with 76 municipalities and innumerable common street names, dispatchers already face formidable obstacles in quickly calling help out to the correct location. It would seem sheer folly to replace an established, competent dispatching crew in the Back Mountain with one located in Wilkes-Barre and manned by people who may or may not know this area.

Bush takes campaign into the gutter

rabid, adj. 1. extreme, extremist, fanatical. 2. raging, raving, frenzied. You have to get to the third definition of rabid in *The Synonym Finder*, a marvelous book by J.I. Rodale, before the word is linked to the disease hydrophobia. It's the same way in most dictionaries.

But the word's meaning can be found elsewhere, particularly in the recent effort of our President and his supporters to paint his opponent as a radical with a shadowy past of anti-Americanism and covert meetings with Soviet spies.

The result is a 1992 presidential campaign dragged to new lows as George Bush, unable to get voters' attention by constructive means, has attempted to manufacture fear of Bill Clinton as a subversive in sheep's clothing. In contrast, of course, the President hopes to be seen as an old-fashioned patriot who can be trusted with the nation's treasury, among other things.

It won't work. The Bush campaign's attack is a personal affront to all thinking Americans who decided that entering the Vietnam war was a mistake and continuing it was a blot on our nation's history, or who backed the war but understand the importance of our freedom to disagree with our government. Have the war's opponents tried to characterize Mr. Bush's support of the war as mistaken or worse? Or, do his supporters think that patriotism means unqualified backing of all military action? That wouldn't be patriotic; it would be mindless and destructive.

I don't know what was in Bill Clinton's heart when he participated in protests against American involvement in Vietnam. And I don't care whether he did so here or abroad. Surely none of us would want to be judged harshly for things we did 23 years ago, and few of us can clearly remember them accurately. I recall going for a pre-induction physical that disqualified me from service, but couldn't tell you whether it was before or after receiving a draft notice, or whether I received one at all.

In a year when Americans are worried about their future and that of their children, reaching into the gutter to pull out the ghost of McCarthyism isn't going to fly. The President who said he had buried the divisions that grew from the Vietnam war now has disinterred them for his own purposes. Mr. Bush and his group of rabid supporters may believe winning is the only thing important in this election. I, and I suspect millions of others, don't agree.

Mr. Clinton has plenty of faults, and his proposals invite sharp questioning. The give and take of a substantive campaign would enlighten as well as attract potential voters. The trash we've been hearing lately does neither; instead it drives people away and strengthens their assessment that modern political races have little to do with important issues of the day but are only concerned with winning official privilege for the contestants, no matter what the tactics necessary to do so.

Ron Bartizek



Reeds

Photo by Charlotte Bartizek

J.W.J.

Unions, election terms and the radical fringe

By J.W. JOHNSON

As we are a little less than a month away from next month's election, I'm surprised that more hasn't been heard in the various campaigns about the following items:

—Renewed activity by the morally and otherwise bankrupt labor union movement to influence voters...particularly here in Pennsylvania with the Pennsylvania State Education Association.

—A renewed call for limited terms for federally elected officials.

—A growing concern that, with the superpowers essentially holding cautious hands, the real concern are the radical fringe.

Labor Unions

"We all declare for liberty, but in using the same word we do not all mean the same thing. With some, the word liberty may mean for each man to do as he pleases with himself and the product of his labor; while with others the same word may mean for some men to do as they please with other men and the product of other men's labor. Here are two, not only different, but incompatible things, called by the same name, liberty. And it follows that each of the things is by the respective parties called by two different and incompatible names, liberty and tyranny."

Thus, in 1864, did Abraham Lincoln note the dichotomy of interpretation and the reality of labor union tyranny today.

To be sure, the labor union movement was a necessary element in the evolution from a feudal mentality to one of more balance between labor and management in the workplace. With the movement, workers, and in particular, children, became human beings, not chattel nor expendable means to an objective.

However, and with the excesses born of legal insulation provided by that agency board in Hades, the

National Labor Relations Board, today the tail is wagging the dog.

Huge bank accounts filled with compulsory union dues find union bosses wielding political power in arrogant proportion to the number of union constituents, and in direct defiance of freedom of choice.

The 1986 election put union bosses back in dollar control of both houses of Congress. Said AFL/CIO official Howard Samuel in 1987: "We control the (congressional) committees and the agenda on the floor."

The question then, and is now, one of choice. Workers must have the right, but not be compelled, to join a labor union.

And when there is an accident or death on the job, it is often heard that "it wouldn't have happened if it had been a union job." It's true that individuals will often make choices which would be denied to them were they to be working under institutional standards.

It is also true—and may it ever remain so—that among the greatest freedoms we have in this nation is the right to be wrong; indeed, the right to fail. The alleged workplace job protection also fails the scrutiny of reality, i.e., the late 1980's collapse and deaths at the union project, L'Enfant Plaza in New Haven, Connecticut, or the more insidious and coercive terrorist styled violence which resulted in the death of 97 innocent people at the Dupont Plaza in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

More to the point, the labor union movement, fueled by misguided liberal Democrat compassion, has imbued generations of Americans with the notion that mere citizenship confers upon them the guarantee of happiness.

As I read the Constitution, there is no guarantee. We are assured, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Compulsory unionism hogties those who would shine during such a pursuit, and elevates those who would leech from fellow humans.

Ayn Rand suggested: "If you would destroy greatness, do not attack it; merely elevate mediocrity."

Thus the greatness born of freedom has been seriously weakened and replaced in countless workplaces across the nation; workplaces where now mediocrity of effort has become the standard; where we now have ceilings, rather than horizons; where the paycheck, and not productivity and pride in one's work, has become the goal...all through a union-backed torturing of the idea that free and independent human beings, with free access, will cause and create the best and brightest among us to emerge from the darkness of the human condition.

Shorter Terms

As an appeal to conservatives on both sides of the aisle, I'm also surprised that we've heard little about limited terms for federally elected officials.

While in office, President Reagan suggested that a two-term limit on the presidency was wrong. The two-term constitutional amendment was enacted during the Eisenhower Administration, pushed by Republicans who disliked the four-term election of Democrat Franklin Roosevelt.

However, the U.S. system of government has been so bogged down in recent years with a divided executive and Congress, the idea grows that whatever creates more stalemate—in this case, a lame duck president during a second term—should be changed.

There are alternatives, i.e., I believe presidents should be elected for one six-year term. At the same time, it's clear that a two-year term for congressmen is too short; a

representative almost never stops running for office; four years would make more sense, with an eight year maximum.

As well, senators should be elected for a minimum eight-year term, not to exceed 16 years.

History has shown the present election cycle to be inefficient. And while the two-year terms for representative reflect a common sense belief that new faces provide greatest representation and greatest access to the voters, election turnover is in reality negligible in the House of Representatives.

At the very least, one six-year term seems to be appropriate for president. A lame duck president is a grossly inefficient way to run government.

And In This Corner We Have The Radical Fringe

While most of the world watched and waited to see what would happen in the Saudi Arabian desert during Operation Desert Storm, the United Nations celebrated its 45th birthday. And as the threat of nuclear confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union diminishes by the day, the focus needs to shift away from the U.S./USSR Cold War to the potential of nuclear capability falling into the hands of radical third world powers who believe mass suicide is politically or theologically appropriate. Soldiers Hussein and Kaddafi come to mind.

It's these men and others like them who are more likely to bring nuclear destruction down around us. It is possible, in fact, that arms reduction by the U.S. and Soviets, along with a reduction of tensions, might actually encourage an unstable soldier or religious leader to actually believe his country could win a nuclear war.

It's quite unthinkable, and equally as possible.

A. Case for Conservation

Clean water: the Earth's most important resource

By ALENE CASE

"Whereas, clean water is a natural resource of tremendous value and importance to the Nation;" - Thus begins a proclamation passed by both houses of Congress and signed by President Bush declaring 1992 as the "Year of Clean Water" and October as "Clean Water Month." But, with all the hullabaloo over Christopher Columbus, the elections, and even Fire Prevention Week we probably didn't know we should be celebrating water. But, where would Columbus be without water? How could firefighters do their job without water? For that matter, would there be politicians or any other people on Earth if it were not for water?

October 18th marks the twentieth anniversary of the passage of the Clean Water Act. However, this is not simply a celebration of another birthday. We need to fully understand why the Earth is often referred to as the "Water Planet." Other planets were the wrong size or distance from the sun to hold

the large amounts of water that were given off in the volcanic eruptions after the creation of our solar system. In the eons since, the oceans and atmosphere on Earth have interacted to stabilize our climate and to sustain life in all its forms.

Water is quite an extraordinary material. Consider what would happen if water behaved like other substances when it changed from the liquid to the solid phase. In other words, imagine that ice did not float on water. All other liquids are more dense than the solids from which they are formed - therefore, they sink. But ice is about 8% less dense than liquid water and it floats. If the ice that formed each winter on Harveys Lake sank to the bottom, the lake would soon fill up with ice and it would not thaw in summer. In fact, it is this property of water that allows it to occur simultaneously as a gas, as a liquid, and as a solid on the Earth.

Next, try to imagine a world in which water was not held together by hydrogen bonds. In other words,

there would be no surface tension on which to float your fishing fly and no capillary action to carry nutrients to the leaves of trees. No other liquid has as much surface tension. This helps liquid water resist freezing and evaporation, controls the formation of raindrops, contributes to the behavior of ocean currents, and allows water to move through tiny spaces in rocks and soils.

One of the attributes of water that we often ignore is the ability to moderate temperature. It is no accident that Siberia and the interior of Canada get so cold in winter. These areas are far away from the reservoir of heat held in the oceans. Water vapor and clouds in the atmosphere also tend to retain heat which would otherwise escape to outer space. That greenhouse effect, about which so much has been said lately, is really one of the main reasons this planet is habitable. Carbon dioxide and water vapor in the atmosphere resemble the panes of glass in a greenhouse: they allow radiation

from the sun to enter but prevent longwave radiation (heat) from leaving. One estimate gives the theoretical average temperature of the Earth's surface as low as -4°F (or -20°C) if there were no water vapor or clouds.

Finally, water is known as the "universal solvent" because it can dissolve more substances than any other liquid. As such, it releases elements and compounds from rocks and soils as weathering occurs. It also serves as the medium of transport within our bodies. This quality also makes water most useful to humans and therefore easily polluted. But, that is, as they say, another story.

In honor of "Clean Water Month," let us all think more carefully about the value of water. As the proclamation states, "it is a national responsibility to provide clean water as a legacy for future generations." Future articles will deal with specific ways in which individuals, corporations, and governments can contribute to the preservation of this legacy. Meanwhile, celebrate water!

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