

# The Dallas Post

## EDITORIALS

### Public deserves more honesty in wartime

Monday will be the 50th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day, VE Day for short, when the war in Europe came to an end. We say "the war" because in horror, casualties and the stakes nothing compares to World War II. And, as dreadful as American losses were, nearly every other nation's were worse, led by an astonishing 20 million or more Russian deaths. For perspective, think of one out of seven of your adult neighbors dying in a war.

But even this war, the "just war," had its detractors as any reading of history shows. There was an active and widespread isolationist movement in the United States in the 1930's and 40's, led by respected and thoughtful patriots. *The Dallas Post*, while supporting the soldiers and the principles of the war, contained substantial criticism of bureaucrats, war profiteers and "racketeering labor leaders." Why were ordinary Americans indifferent to the war, *The Post* asked on February 26, 1943, the same issue which contained a story about the new Kingston Township honor roll. "The answer is so simple it's startling," the writer went on to say. "This isn't a people's war. It belongs to the bureaucrats...to the same men who told us there would be no war. To the same men who told us our boys would never fight on foreign soil." But in the end, the editorial is not about ducking the fight, but about trusting the American people enough to tell them the truth; that this would be a horrible, difficult, costly, but absolutely necessary war that, if lost, would mean the end of our way of life.

That rhetoric sounds so familiar now, brought back perhaps by the recent release of Robert McNamara's memoirs of the Vietnam war. The bureaucrats tried to mislead the people then, too, but in an entirely different direction. They knew early on that Vietnam was not WWII, it wasn't going the way we wanted, and it would never do so. And they lied to us, just as they had 30 years before, warning again that failure to stand up to Communists in Asia would mean the end of Western civilization.

So that is one similarity between World War II and Vietnam. But it's not the only one. In both wars, brave men and women served their country to their dying breath, leaving corpses and body parts scattered across strange parts of the world. They are all heroes; the outcome has nothing to do with the bravery and sacrifice of those who fight.

There's another kind of courage present on all winning sides, the political courage to tell people the truth, and act accordingly. America's leaders should know by now that ordinary citizens are remarkably capable of making the right decision when they are given all the facts. Let's hope they have learned that lesson, and will level with us the next time our interests are on the line, or are not.

### Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek

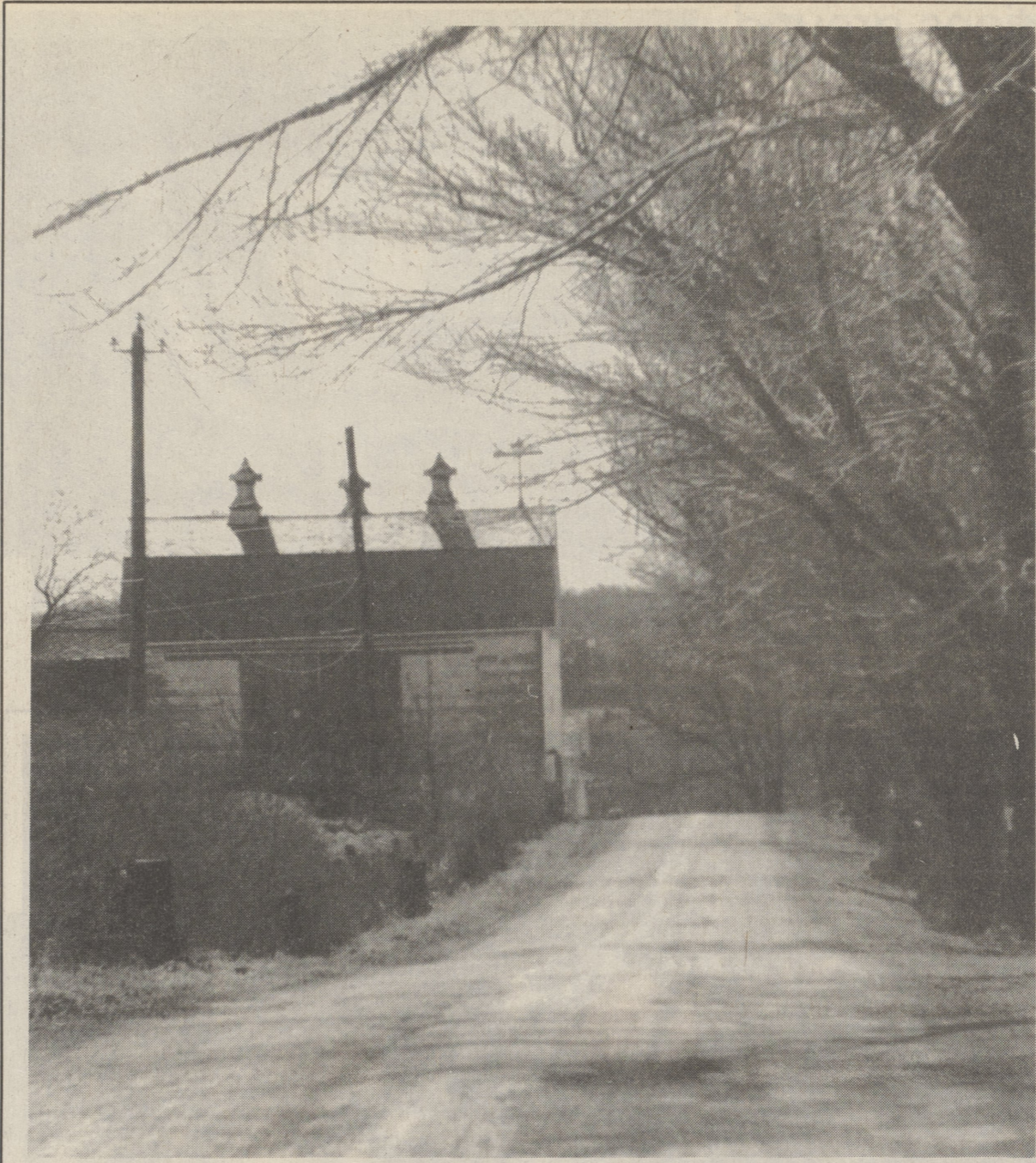


All sides are pointing fingers in the wake of the Oklahoma City bombing, trying to place blame or take credit for that horrendous act. It has been enlightening to hear that radio talkers have reacted with outrage to President Clinton's call for open repudiation of the peddlers of hate on the airwaves and in our communities. Perhaps they think freedom of speech doesn't apply to the President. Clinton never referred to any specific group or individuals, yet many on the far right took his admonition personally. The reaction looks like self indictment to me.

Let's get one thing straight, though; the people who set off that bomb are criminals, pure and simple, and should not be allowed to hide under the cloak of political or religious belief. There were plenty of violent acts committed by people claiming liberal principles during the 1960's, and those were equally wrong. Criminal activity, whether done by paranoids of the left or right, has no place in our society and must be condemned. "Movements" have attracted wackos since the dawn of time. We should remove their false claim to legitimacy at every opportunity.

### Do you agree? Disagree?

Editorials are the opinion of the management of *The Dallas Post*. We welcome your opinion on contemporary issues in the form of letters to the editor. If you don't write, the community may never hear a contrasting point of view. Send letters to: *The Dallas Post*, P.O. Box 366, Dallas, PA 18612. Please include your name, address and a daytime phone number so that we may verify authenticity. We do not publish anonymous letters, but will consider withholding the name in exceptional circumstances. We reserve the right to edit for length and grammar.



Country lane. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

### The economic viewpoint



Howard Grossman

There is an overarching issue which is generally neglected when consideration is given to revolutionary changes at the federal level as a result of the Congressional elections of November 8, 1994. While the focus is on the federal budget deficit, program cutbacks, program elimination and a general downsizing of federal support for many types of discretionary and perhaps mandated programs, little attention is placed upon the impact this could have on other levels of government including the state and municipalities.

When tax structures are examined at the federal level, at the state level, at the local level, it is often difficult to integrate the impact that changes at one level of government may have on other levels of government. This is a common failing which has great implications for Pennsylvania and the myriad levels of governments which exist in the Commonwealth.

There has been some talk about the feasibility of using block grants to the states to enable the federal government to eliminate programs and the expenditures which are necessary to administer these programs and to allow the states to use the program dollars which have been traditionally provided by the federal government.

There is a great danger in the block grant process. This danger is the long-term uncertainty that the federal government would continue to provide funds to the states to carry out programs, even if the block grant system were substantially increased for a variety of purposes including, but not limited to, human services, economic development and other functions.

The tragedy is that the federal government created the problem in the first place and enabled deficits to roll through the 1980s as if there were no alternatives. It should not be forgotten that in the early 1980s as substantial tax cuts were applied; substantial increases in defense expenditures occurred, and while substantial programs were seriously cut back or eliminated, the unfortunate consequence was a serious increase in federal deficits. It was easily predicted even by stalwarts of the administration in those days (Budget Secretary David Stockman) that the result of this type of economic posture would balance budgets, but would, in fact, increase budget deficits.

In Pennsylvania, the difficulties which arose in dealing with economic needs were heavily weighed by the inability to rely on a federal support system which

### Federal budget cuts have domino effect on PA, region

traditionally had enabled distressed areas to receive federal economic development support of a magnitude large enough to enable economic competitiveness to become a viable option in various distressed regions of the state. These are issues which may not be of paramount consequence to growth areas of Northeastern Pennsylvania such as the Back Mountain, the Abington area in Lackawanna County and the Mountaintop area in Luzerne County.

They do impact, however, many of the distressed communities throughout Northeastern Pennsylvania, the majority of which are located in Lackawanna, Luzerne, and Schuylkill Counties.

Furthermore, when talk occurs of a rising tide of economic improvement as a result of tax cuts, it does not necessarily mean equal opportunity across the nation. The urban communities of the country face stark problems which have not been overcome even during so called good economic times. The rural areas of the nation have been unfairly treated for many decades with the possible exception of a price support system and farm subsidies which may help certain rural farming practices but have not made positive impacts on rural economic development.

Pennsylvania has a unique characteristic. It is the largest of the 50 states in the number of rural people. But Pennsylvania's image is of an urban state. There is a need to interpret carefully any actions which are taken or proposed to be taken by the new Congress to determine the impact on a state such as Pennsylvania and on the various substate regions and communities of the Commonwealth. For example, a so-called middle class tax cut indeed may provide several hundred dollars of extra monies to be spent and to be circulated through the economic system of the nation. With the parallel proposal to increase defense expenditures, there is a great danger that the nation and states which still are trying to be economically competitive with a worldwide economy may fall into the same trap which occurred as a result of the actions taken in the early 1980s.

There is also a great danger that in the haste to interpret the results of the Congressional elections, federal support programs which have proven to be effective will be abandoned or eliminated along with programs which have not proven to be effective.

For example, two major federal assistance programs which have traditionally aided the economic vitality of Northeastern Pennsylvania have been the Appalachian Regional Development program and the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965.

These two mid-1960 programs have created, in fact, a partnership between and among govern-

ments and the private sector unlike any seen in the history of the nation. They have enabled Northeastern Pennsylvania, along with other program activities at the state level and contributions by the private sector and by the public sector at the local levels to enjoy the most startling regional economic comeback in the history of the United States. While this statement should not be interpreted to mean that there are no more economic problems to be solved in the region, the real fact is that problems remain, resources are limited, and the economic development support system at the federal level is minimal compared to the broad scope and breadth of federal assistance programs such as those associated with mandated functions; for example, social security, medicare, and others.

No one disputes the need to reform or continuously evaluate and provide appropriate changes to help improve programs. In fact, the two examples noted above have changed over the years based upon the needs identified as being critical and important to the nation and the individual states and communities served. A true comprehensive analysis would include an evaluation of not only federal assistance programs but how these programs are related to state initiatives as well as those being implemented through local governments at the county and municipal levels and the not-for-profit community. Even the role of foundations as they help to stimulate new ways to enhance economic growth or the quality of life of a service area should be integrated into a comprehensive approach to economic improvement.

As the search for an appropriate level of activity on the part of the federal government continues, the strategy to help improve the economy of the various levels of governmental service units should be integrated into the entire process. Therefore, the startling results of November 8, 1994 should not be interpreted to mean that every single proposal, every single program, every single function of government is unworthy or unsatisfactory. If anything, the interpretation should be that evaluation and reform are important ingredients at all times, regardless of an electoral process. It should mean that whatever conclusions are reached, they are blended into an evaluation process which includes all impacts on other levels of government.

This is especially so in regions such as Northeastern Pennsylvania, still undergoing the transformation from what its image and real life was decades ago to what it is and what it is likely to be in the decades and new century ahead.

Howard Grossman is Executive Director of the Economic Development Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania. He lives in Dallas.

### Only yesterday

#### 60 Years Ago - May 10, 1935 SCHOOL SUPER'S DISMISSAL DECRIED

Highlights of an editorial in this issue: "We believe that the Dallas Borough School Board has had unmistakable evidence by this time that its appointment of Roland Doll as supervising principal of the borough high school to succeed Calvin McHose was an unfortunate error. If the board is to act in accordance with the wishes of the great majority of people it has no alternative but to rescind its action."

"Without any declared reason and in complete disregard to public interest, the board has dismissed a man who must be given credit for two years of conscientious and unique work in improving the borough's schools. Just as regrettable is the fact that the local young man has been subjected to embarrassment and made the innocent storm center of a raging community controversy. Undoubtedly politics played its part in maneuvers which must have preceded the appointment. In every case where control of the schools is made a political prize, the schools suffer. Politicians always win, the community always loses."

#### 50 Years Ago - May 5, 1945 CELEBRATIONS OF VICTORY LOUD, SHORT

V-E Day in the Back Mountain started with sirens, bells, and horns shortly after the official announcement that the war in Europe had ended. Excitement died in 15 minutes. The biggest reason for not celebrating was the knowledge that in the Pacific fighting continues.

More than 175 women attended the annual Mother and Daughter Tea of the Dallas Woman's Club Wednesday, held at the Shaverstown Hose House. Mothers of club members and members of the Junior Woman's Club and their mothers were guests.

William Phillips, 21, S. 1/C, a survivor of a destroyer sunk off Normandy and a veteran of invasions of Italy and France, has been killed in action in the Far Pacific Theatre of Operations according to a Naval Dispatch received the morning following V-E Day by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Phillips, Dallas Star Route.

#### 40 Years Ago - May 5, 1955 AIR FORCE HOUSING MAY COME TO BORO

The U.S. Government as represented by the Air Force, has selected Dallas Borough as an ideal location for the erection of nine housing units at a cost of \$16,000 each for its officer personnel of Red Rock Air Force Base. Total cost of the project might run as high as \$150,000.

Building permits in the amount of \$66,900 for new construction were issued Tuesday by Dallas Borough Council. Included were permits for two new business establishments on Memorial Highway, one a restaurant near Quality Motel and the other a Gulf Service Station on the Kunkle Plot.

Now playing at the Himmler Theatre, "Young At Heart" with Doris Day and Frank Sinatra.

#### 30 Years Ago - May 6, 1965 LAKE TWP NAMES LEINTHAL CHIEF

Assistant Police Chief Walbridge Leinthal was named to replace Edgar Hughes as Police Chief of Lake Township, at the Board of Supervisors meeting Saturday. Hughes' resignation, announced last month, was to be effective May 15, but he told *The Dallas Post* he would stay to the end of the month.

Dallas Junior Woman's Club is beginning a campaign to bring about removal of billboards from the new highway. The local service group, which has launched many worthwhile community projects, feels that the signs are unsightly, detract from natural beauty and serve no real purpose.

You could get - Round steak, 83¢ lb.; watermelons, \$1.19 ea.; sharp cheese, 59¢ lb.; Heinz ketchup, 4-14 oz. bottles 85¢.

#### 20 Years Ago - May 8, 1975 DELAYS IN CROSS-VALLEY EXPRESSWAY

Jacob G. Kassab, transportation secretary for Pennsylvania, promised last week to "find a way to place the project for completion of the Cross Valley Expressway under construction this year." In a letter to Rep. Frank J. O'Connell, he termed the expressway completion a badly needed facility that has been plagued by numerous delays over the years.

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