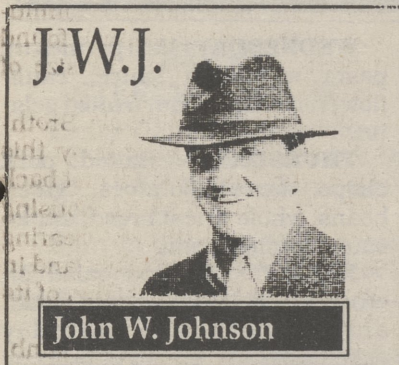




Pastoral outreach volunteers commissioned

The Pastoral Outreach Department at the Mercy Health System, Northeast Region, recently held a Commissioning Service for new volunteers, at which members of Trinity Presbyterian Church were commissioned to serve as pastoral outreach volunteers within their congregation. Volunteers complete a six week training, and are now working with the sick, elderly, homebound and disabled of Trinity Church. Attending were, row 1, Sr. Paulette Berang, regional service director, pastoral outreach; Rev. Bob Murdock, pastor, Trinity Presbyterian; Lynn Konicki, church leader volunteer; row 2, Joanne Hall, church volunteer, Lucy Stafford-Lewis, parish associates, Trinity Presbyterian; row 3, Kathy Beardsworth, Wilkes-Barre area coordinator, Pastoral Outreach; Carlene McCaffrey, church volunteer; Cathy Davis, church volunteer. Absent from photo: Catherine Bolinski, church volunteer.



J.W.J.

John W. Johnson

Some of you will remember China's Gang of Four, and its revamping of China's culture. Now that William Bennett, Ralph Reed and Newt Gingrich no longer have Communism as an organizing principle and focus, this U.S. Gang of Three has turned to music, art and America's bedrooms, becoming the gang who wants to tell you what to read, how to think, and what is appropriate for you to believe.

With a focus on Communist containment for the past 45 years now all but gone, our conservative Congress is seeking refocus, and finding it in the hot button issues of morality, lumping it under the umbrella of so-called "family values."

This comes at the neglect of the major economic issues facing the United States today: integration into a rapidly evolving world econ-

Beware the Gang of Three

omy. Speaker Gingrich mouths words about the information age and our role in that segment of the world's economy, but fails to seek support for this reality.

It used to be us and the rest of the world's democracies as the First World, Communism as the Second World, and the balance of nations being in the Third World. The struggle then was for influence and control over the Third World, either for raw materials or for ideological reasons, i.e., us as God-fearing Christians versus the goddess hordes.

With Communism on its death bed, and with emergence of the European Economic Community and the Pacific Rim countries, (Japan, Korea, Thailand, etc.) as economic forces, Third World nations are no longer pawns in this geo-political chess game because the chess board has been put away in favor of that favorite of capitalist games: Monopoly.

A lack of vision from President Clinton, and the now hollower-than-thou Congress, (notwithstanding the recent economic recognition of Vietnam) continued trade deficits, the aforementioned emergence of other economic forces, and a declining trust in our financial institutions, finds the United

States facing the real prospect of becoming a second rate, perhaps third rate economic entity, early in the next century.

Agreed...current U.S. per capita income is the highest in the world, exceeding \$19,000 per year. But that measurement is deceiving when we learn that more than 50 percent of our citizens get some form of government assistance; in short, with government establishing policies that filter economic activity through least-common-denominator sieves, i.e., quota systems for employment, government, not private industry, is the prime economic force in our nation today.

A major reason (the loss of ethical public servants, the growth of a legal system which encourages circumvention rather than respect for the law, and a corrupt labor union movement notwithstanding), we are losing the battle for increased productivity and market share to emerging Pacific Rim economic entities, and likely soon to the new European Economic Community, is also because we have forgotten one simple rule: Acquire new customers and then treat each of them as if they were the only customer we had, a great failing of corporate America.

As I was saying



Jack Hilshey

Not that I mean to beat a subject to shreds, but the thought came - several times - after writing that column on why we need not apologize to Japan for dropping two experimental atomic bombs on them, thus abruptly ending WWII, the thought, in this never-ending paragraph, was that I had casually name-dropped "Bataan" probably to many readers who weren't even on the planet at the time and hadn't the slightest idea of what I was referring to.

I doubt history books make very much of that period, for all these "revisionists" have suddenly popped up, all of them seemingly ignoring actual happenings of the period. So I will remedy that and set my younger readers straight right now.

Shortly after Japan's sneak attack on Pearl Harbor (surely the revisionist history includes that event!) in the Philippines both American and Filipino troops were bottled up on the Bataan peninsula. They ran out of food, ammo and medical supplies. They were outnumbered and exhausted. So they surrendered.

They were then herded like cattle by Jap soldiers in a massive move which became known as the

Bataan - why we should not apologize to Japan

"Death March." For an obvious reason...many never made the march's end.

At this point squeamish readers should consider stopping. Words will not be lauded. There will be accounts - truthful accounts - of torture and beheading. But if you read on you will see why we ex-G.I.'s still can get pretty worked up over suggesting that we should apologize to this strange nation.

Even before the Death March on Bataan, and only days after Pearl, the surrender of Wake Island was foretold what was to come. Captured troops were shoved aboard the Nina Maru, a Jap liner, and immediately lined up on deck for a speech by one Lt. Toshio, who said, "You have killed many Japanese soldiers in battle. For what you have done some are now going to be killed - for revenge."

Five chosen were blindfolded and one after another had their heads chopped off. The Japs applauded, even when the blow was botched and a second, or even third, try had also to be made. Other men took turns slashing to cut the corpses in two, like old samurais. The bodies were then propped against a sake barrel so they could be used for bayonet practice. Carcasses and heads were later thrown overboard.

On Bataan, days into the march, officers quickly learned to rip off any insignia because they

were being singled out for especially brutal treatment. Japanese soldiers would collect wrist watches in five-gallon cans, shouting that anyone who resisted would have their throats cut. Parker pens were prized and taken. Fingers were cut off so they could take gold wedding rings.

On the third day American officers were tied at their wrists with phone wire and lined up. Japanese officers began at one end of the line, privates at the other end. The officers with swords, the enlisted men with bayonets, systematically began butchering from behind. This took several hours. Between 300 and 400 men were killed. There was blood and screaming until nightfall. The senior officer who gave orders for this slaughter was Nara Akira, a general who had graduated before the war from Fort Benning's infantry school in the United States.

There is more. Much more. And some of it is worse. If you want more try "Prisoners of the Japanese" by Gavan Davis, a well-researched book where most of the above comes from.

Then, if you want to apologize to Japan, as some poor misguided persons do, go ahead. That is your privilege. That is your right. But you would be wrong.

The right course is pretty clear to me. It is they who should apologize to us, and not the other way around.

The Back Mountain's hometown paper ...from people who live here



"You'll like coming over to The Dallas Post. Jill Gruver is easygoing and helpful. You get the feeling she really cares that things go smoothly and well."

Jill just became Mrs. Ron Gruver in a June wedding. The Grubers live in a newly-purchased home in Shavertown, but she grew up in Dallas. There are no pets yet, but there is an empty fish tank which is soon to be filled with exotic goldfish. Both Grubers are active sports fans - any sport.

Jill's title of Office Manager covers

more than it implies. She handles the paper's accounts receivable, sends out ad billings and does the "Local Pros" page. Jill says, "I also fill in on the typesetting computer, and some days the phone keeps me going all day."

Jill Gruver is just one of the local people who help put out the Back Mountain's hometown paper, The Dallas Post.

The Back Mountain's Newspaper Since 1889

The Dallas Post

LIBRARY NEWS



By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The Back Mountain Memorial Library is always willing to accept good used books for the library shelves, the annual library auction or the on-going book sales in the library during the year.

However, the Reader's Digest books we do not accept, as they are really not good sellers. A very interested library person, Doris Carey, called and asked about donating some last week and she was told we could not accept them. She was in the library later in the day and asked me about them and I gave her our classic answer, we just cannot accept them as they don't sell, we have to pay to haul them away. I suggested maybe she could try some of the nursing homes, as maybe they would like to have them.

Used books can be useful

Coincidence: Everill Chadwick, formerly Country Farm Agent of Penn State University, was helping his grandson with his stamp collection for the display case and overheard the conversation; and Cy informed us that he would like to have them for use in the Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets that the Wilkes-Barre Kiwanis Club give to the needy. He would also be interested in more adult books and also some nice children's books for the baskets. Doris had these books in her car, Cy went out and put them in his car and everyone was happy. "Timing is Everything!"

New books at the library: "Brothers No More" by William F. Buckley, Jr. is a terrific novel of men and women caught between the force of history and the power of their own desires. Italy, 1944, Pfc. Henry Chafee and Pfc. Danny O'Hara are part of a regiment ordered to attack a German unit north of Rome. At the critical moment, one young man's courage fails him—court-martial and public shame are averted only by

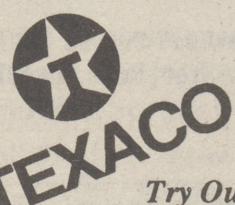
the other's valiant effort to cover for him.

"Silent Night" by Mary Higgins Clark has crafted a very special story about the power of love and of a child's courage and faith. When her husband was diagnosed with leukemia, Catherine Dornan and their two young sons accompanied him to New York, during the Christmas season, for a life-saving operation. Catherine takes the boys to see Rockefeller Center's famous Christmas tree on Christmas Eve. They are faced with courage in the face of adversity.

"Love in Another Town" by Barbara Taylor Bradford is the story of Jake Cantrell who feels that his life has completely stalled at age twenty-nine. Saddened and disappointed by the failure of his marriage to Amy, he moves to another town: Kent, Connecticut. He becomes involved with an amateur theatrical group in his spare time. He encounters Maggie, who is soon to be forty years old and Jake realizes he is about to start the journey of his life.

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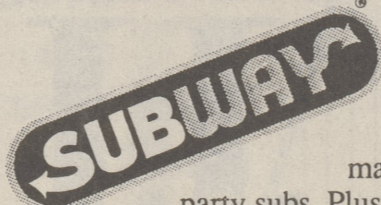
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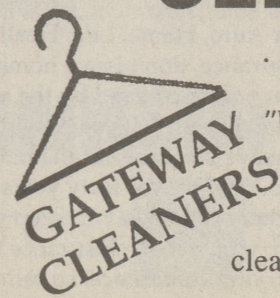


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