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QUOTE FOR THE DAY:

“He who only knows his own side of the case knows little of that....” John Stuart Mill

LET’S REFLECT ON THAT FOR A MOMENT:

Here we are at a unique juncture – a pandemic and a presidential election year and it seems that everyone is, not only unshakeable in his/her opinions, but, on top of that they KNOW they are right, whether they be in congress or the man/woman on the street.

I’m reminded of the cute emojis, see no evil, speak no evil and hear no evil. The latter emoji is a monkey with his hands tightly clasped around his ears. Well, unfortunately, that’s a good description of most of us. Figuratively, I have seen people put their hands to their ears when they don’t like what they are hearing, but, astonishingly, Literally, I have seen people

put their hands to their ears, and, more incredibly, I've seen people get up and march out of the room when they don't like what they are hearing.

My point is that I think we all need to listen a bit more. In my own case, I don't think I have changed my mind very often regarding issues I have felt strongly about, but I have valued the opposing views and have an appreciation for where other people are coming from. If nothing else, hearing the other person out keeps and/or enriches the relationship.

I either look up, or have sent to me columns from people on both sides of the political aisle and can actually say I enjoy reading them. On that score I believe I am in a small minority.

A while back I read an article by Jeanne Safer, a psychotherapist and the author of, "I love you, but hate your politics." Wherein she contends that the crisis illustrates an essential fact about political differences, "It is essentially impossible to change someone else's mind by presenting them with alternative arguments."

And here she goes on to use a term that will bring a smile to everyone's face because we've all experienced it, "Article thrusting, where you take an article you think is important and stick it into another person's face is 100% guaranteed to fail."

I've written previously about the Blame Game which the media loves because it keeps us all at each others' throats. I call for more civility and a politeness in hearing what others have to say.

CRUNCH TIME:

So, after more than a month of the Hermit Herald, going back to when Covid 19 was just a little tyke, we're coming down to a point we all knew we would - keep the lid on and squash the virus, or, get the economy going again to avoid a true nation wide depression.

Two recent articles brought this into focus and the options they present are both dire. Aaron Carroll is a professor of pediatrics at Indiana University School of Medicine and Stephen

Moore is an economist and member of the president's task force.

Mr. Carroll points out that it is much too soon to reopen states pointing out that, " In order to contain a future outbreak we need to be able to identify and isolate enough cases to prevent the 'effective -R'- the number of secondary cases per infectious case - from getting above 1. This means that every infected person has to infect no more than one other. Achieving that goal would keep the number of cases showing up every day from increasing." He goes on to point that only with continued social distancing is that possible. He is also very skeptical of these nice model bell curves that show fast increases in infection and equally fast decreases. He views the down slope of the curve to be much more shallow. In short, he echos what Mr. Pueyo, author of "The Hammer and the Dance" predicted. If we get out of lock down too soon, we will be in for another round of sharply rising infections.

Mr. Moore is candid in saying that he brings no medical credentials to the conversation, but from an economist's perspective he says, "If we

keep the economy shut down for another month, we will have a kind of second depression, one that involves untold human misery that we don't even want to contemplate."

Even if we get back to work fairly soon and, by the way, he is calling for a gradual roll out – best regions first, worst, last, he states, "People aren't just going to go right back to their jobs. It's going to be really, really rough. We're going to have effects that affect our society for a decade from this shutdown. If you don't have an economy that's functioning you don't have a society..."

Added to these views, what do Mrs. And Mr. America have to say? 8 in 10 Americans favor stay at home orders. What happens if the bowling alleys and the restaurants reopen and no one comes?

Bottom line from both Mr. Carroll and Mr. Moore is that if you reopen too soon we will see many more deaths. If we don't open the economy soon we will see many more deaths-

a choice that has to be made that, understandably, no one wants to make.

NOT THE PROPER FORUM:

Richard Grennell, acting director of national intelligence is thought to be the first openly gay cabinet member. He is pushing the idea that the U.S. should consider cutting back on sharing intelligence with countries that criminalize homosexuality. The concept of trying to convince other countries to follow our lead on social/ humanitarian issues is good and proper, but not coming in the form of a carrot and stick with regard to what intelligence we will or won't share with our allies.

About 69 countries criminalize homosexuality, mostly in the middle east, Africa and Southeast Asia, and include some critical American intelligence partners such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Kenya. From my perspective this is not a good idea. Our partners have to know that we can be trusted to provide full information on issues of mutual concern. To

effectively say, “We could give you more intel on that topic, but first we need you to do this on the L.G.B.T. issue.” –Just a non starter. Mr. Grennel’s good intentions could be of value by making him a Department of State Deputy and giving him that portfolio to pursue on a global basis.

The State Department is the proper venue – lots of carrots, lots of sticks.

PERSERVERANCE DOESN’T ALWAYS PAY OFF:

We turn to the fascinating case of South Korean, Kim Yong-Hee, a sixty year old man who has a very long standing grudge against Samsung. He began organizing workers shortly after he joined Samsung in 1982. He claims that as part of the discouragement program (Samsung hates unions) he was beaten by thugs. Somehow, he was able to retain his job and then in 1991 pushed again for unionization, a right, by the way that the South Korean Constitution guarantees. That same year a 20 year old female Samsung employee told Kim she had been raped by another employee. Kim helped expose the culprit. His reward was that the company, instead, accused

him of sexually assaulting the woman and fired him even though the woman stood by Kim, saying Samsung was hiding the guilty party.

Due to a confusing chain of events, Samsung rehired Kim in 1995, but only if he promised to cease all activism. He refused. Since then his life has been one of sit ins and hunger strikes near Samsung's headquarters.

On June 10th last year with the help of some friends and a crane he had himself hoisted to the top of an 80 foot TV tower and appears to be seated on a 4x4 foot platform. His allies send up food, books and cell phone batteries by rope and his wife collects his waste once a week. He has threatened to jump if the authorities attempt to remove him, causing them to place inflated bags at the base. Other than shouting about how evil Samsung is, there appears to be no objective or end game.

**I'm just relating this story so you can put "staying in place" in perspective. I have a suspicion his cell is a Samsung.
Your faithful scribe, PB**

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