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QUOTES FOR THE DAY

“What went wrong is stupid wokeness. Don’t just look at Virginia and New Jersey. Look at Long Island, Buffalo; look at Minneapolis, even look at Seattle. I mean this defund the police lunacy, this take Abraham Lincoln’s name off of schools, people see that and it really has a suppressive effect all across the country on Democrats. Some of these people need to go to a woke detox center or something.” James Carville, long time top Democratic strategist.

“In the long run, Americans have always gotten behind protest movements that make the country more open, more decent, less divided. What today is called Woke does none of those things. It has no future in the home of the free.” Bret Stephens, conservative Pulitzer Prize winning journalist.

“The Woke-Jacobin progressive reign of terror’s (WJPs) everlasting campaign of coercion, persecution and punishment – after sixty years of civil rights policy and legislation a sizeable cohort of African-Americans are not making it in this society and white WJPs (aka Liberals) are stricken with guilt and shame at the failure of their efforts to uplift this group and heal the world. So, they’ve teamed up with the nation’s race hustlers to construct a scaffold of excuses for why this is so.” James Howard Kunstler, author and harsh social critic of both the Republican and Democratic parties.

SO THAT’S QUITE A START

Must give our conservative readers a nice warm feeling, and obviously puts Messrs Carville, Stephens and Kunstler in the cross hairs of Liberals who will say these quotes are, “proof positive” that all three, if not your scribe, as well (for putting those quotes on paper) are racist, white supremacists.

What follows is what the WJPs will not permit- an opposing point of view, witness MIT and

other colleges and universities caving to arch liberals protesting speakers who don't conform to their world views. In a word, Hermit Herald welcomes input from both sides. We have many Democrats in our readership, but, to my knowledge, few who are arch liberals.

As James Carville points out, the arch liberals do not speak for the Democratic party, but the general electorate is branding the Democratic party with the actions of this minority fringe and it is deeply troublesome to the party as they try to divine the outcomes of next year's mid term elections.

HEAR THIS FROM WOKE SUPPORTERS:

Going way back to 1948, the Trinidadian scholar, Cromwell Cox, wrote that, "Racial antagonism is part and parcel of this class struggle, because it developed within the capitalist system as one of its fundamental traits." Cox argued, "It is capitalist exploitation- and not some inborn tribalism- that drives racial prejudice and conflict."

In a 2021 article, the author, Jamelle Bouie, writes. “ Racism does not survive in the main because of personal belief and prejudice. It survives because it is inscribed by the relationships and dynamics that structure our society, from segregation and exclusion to inequality and degradation of labor.”

Bouie continues, quoting the Rev. Martin Luther King’s thoughts that the solution must involve, “a revolution of values that will look uneasily on the glaring contrast of poverty and wealth and see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring. If democracy is to have breadth of meaning, it is necessary to address this inequity. It is not only moral, but it is also intelligent. We are wasting and degrading life by clinging to archaic thinking.”

All of these thoughts coalesce in the multiple issues that become pieces in the wokeness quilt. That which seems to attract the most attention today is Critical Race Theory (CRT). Jay Kang, a newsletter writer, opines in the NY Times on November 14th. “CRT’s relevance to the education system should be clear enough. You don’t even have to open a history book;

you just have to walk around NY City when kids get out of school, witness the deep segregation in the student body and guess what happened. It makes sense then that CRT does, in fact, have some influence on the ways curriculums get written across the country in an effort to address inequality. Anti-CRT activists argue that the country's schools have been invaded by a destructive virus of an idea that will turn children into hateful, identity-obsessed Bolsheviks..."

Kang admits that there have been some excesses in the application/interpretation of CRT, but he lauds the fact that California has decreed that ethics studies be a graduation requirement for every high school student, that all middle school students should be placed at the same level in math (lowest common denominator- my phrase) with, "social justice" themes included in course materials.

An out take of CRT in Los Angeles and San Diego has been the recommendation that grading policies be changed, "including doing away with penalties for missed deadlines.

District officials contend that, ‘traditional grading’ has been used to justify and to provide unequal opportunities based on a student’s race or class.”

SO THERE YOU HAVE IT FOLKS

There are many more dimensions to the entire wokeness universe, and I welcome thoughts from our readers. My takeaway, and perhaps reflective of a need for further self education, I just don’t understand how a watered down education and a system where only 17 percent of blacks graduate high school (per Dr Shelby Steele) sets any one on a career path higher than flipping burgers at McDonald’s, regardless of how much each and every student may have been imbued with the history and sensitivities of blacks and whites in America.

COVID 19

In much of the country it seems life is close to normal, except in our area of Connecticut everyone still wears masks going into retail establishments and most, but not all,

restaurants. It's hard to believe how fast this transition has occurred. But, as we have sat here feeling much more secure, the world figure for Covid 19 deaths has topped five million, and many say those numbers are vastly understated.

The biggest issue in the U.S. continues to be the reluctance of many millions to get vaccinated. Due to what appears to be a wonderful development, the unvaccinated may make it even harder to keep Covid 19 at bay.

How so? Well, Pfizer and Merck have developed Covid 19 anti viral pills (in the process of getting final FDA approval) Pfizer's pill, if taken within three days of experiencing Covid 19 symptoms, is said to be 89% effective in keeping people from 1) dying and 2) having to be hospitalized. This is just fabulous news, EXCEPT, what is now going to be the position of the unvaccinated? "You've got to be kidding. Why even think about getting vaccinated? I start getting sick, I just take the pill." All of this means the virus will still be very much with us and we will see more and more "break through" cases (infections of people who have

already had the vaccine) as well as facing the potential of new and more deadly variants evolving among the unvaccinated.

BLACK LIVES MATTER (BLM)

BLM has maintained a rather high level of support from the American public. At 9/27/21 55% of the public had a favorable opinion.

NY Mayor elect, Eric Adams, has announced, he is going to clamp down on crime in NYC. Black on black crime is at an all time high and the shootings and gang violence are of epidemic proportions. In response to Adams saying he is going to bring crime levels way down, Hawk Newsome, who is head of the NY branch of BLM decreed that, "There will be riots, there will be bloodshed and there will be fire if they think they are going back to their old way of policing." What an unfortunate comment. The backlash against BLM was immediate, with the national organization disavowing his comments. Newsome essentially handed out permission slips to burn, riot and attack to any blacks who don't want to see better protection for their own people.

This outrageous behavior brings me back to my recommendation for the Rev. Ernest Hunt's new book, "Cling and Wait" which serves as an American wake up call on race relations, embodying the peaceful tactics of Martin Luther King, Jr and the sensible (non-Newsome) side of BLM.

**Global Summit House has just put out an excellent short Doodle Video touting "Cling and Wait" which I highly recommend. The internet sign on is a little crazy so, please, close attention to the address:
youtu.be/ixYyGi8Vh0Q.**

MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

We all probably remember this from high school, also known as Maslow's Pyramid. At the base of the pyramid was the, " need", "Physiological" - think food, water, warmth, etc. As those needs are fulfilled we move up the pyramid to, "Safety" and then to, "Love-belonging." Ascending to the next level we achieve, "Esteem" and finally, at the apex, "self actualization."

This all has a lot to do with where America is today. The societal infrastructure bill seems to have been pared back to \$1.85 Trillion. Not so folks. That's all smoke and mirrors. The way you pare it down is by budgeting the social help portions for only four or five years instead of the ten years in the original budget. Oh, and this isn't just a Democratic gimmick, the Republicans have employed it themselves in earlier years. Being aware of history, the Democrats know that social programs, once enacted, are virtually impossible to cancel. Once given, you can't take away those hundreds of dollars each month for children. You can't take away those money saving tax credits - no such thing as a five -year life for these type programs.

I had been, and still am, advocating for harder infrastructure issues like better low income housing, better hospitals, better schools, and construction of Boy's and Girl's clubs.

When you stop to reflect on Maslow's pyramid, however, it becomes obvious that there are millions of Americans who can't rise above the

, "Physiological" and for many, the "Safety" levels of the pyramid. This is where the, "Safety net" concept comes into the \$1.85 Trillion (call it, almost \$4 trillion) package.

Here's the problem, as a society we can't have people going to bed hungry every night or freezing to death on the street, or in run down unheated buildings. That, however, is at the very neediest level. Are you aware that the United States has the highest poverty level in the developed world? That's 37.2 million people, or 11.4% of our population. Other ways to look at it; 21% of all children, 46% of black children and 40% of latino children live in poverty. Poverty today is defined as being a family of four making \$26,500 a year or less.

18.8 % of blacks are in this category, 15.7% of Hispanics, 8.1 % of Asians and 8.2% of whites. All of these folks need a financial, "safety net" but, at what point does a safety net become a financial sinecure? At what point are enough aid benefits coming in that it's a disincentive to work more than a few hours a week. At what point do we become a socialist country? Can we afford it, is that what we want? From my

perspective, these safety net programs should be, “need based”. That doesn’t mean that it can’t apply to people at some determined level above the poverty level, but the Democrats, at least at this point, are making it a very broad based program. The more people who get the aid translates to more votes for the Democrats.

Our country’s poverty population statistics are alarming. I’m highly skeptical of big government drawing the proper boundaries as to which families will benefit from these “safety net” programs in a 2,000 page document, which, from history and the reality of politics, will include massive amounts of pet – read- “pork” projects, but something must be done for those truly in need.

Your faithful scribe,

PB