

from our viewpoint...

Community pride built on volunteers

Watching Goodland High’s Family Career and Community Leaders of America members walking along Center Avenue in the rain Thursday morning was an example of the community pride that comes from volunteering.

Another example of the pride of volunteering was watching a couple of crews from the home-owned carnival working to get the rides ready for the July 4 holiday celebration and the North-west Kansas District Free Fair at the end of July.

One of the goals of the Shine On Sherman County effort is to get young people involved, and the enthusiasm when that happens is exciting to watch as the skaters and skateboarders join to raise money for a concrete slab to begin developing a skating park.

True, washing cars at Wal-Mart is a drop in the bucket in raising \$20,000 for the first section of the park. Having the young people involved will make the project a success, though, even if it takes a while to achieve the goal.

Part of the volunteer learning process is working the many steps it takes to take an idea from conception to reality. Kids need to know the dedication it takes to get a project through the rocky points, and to learn to be flexible enough to adapt to changes along the way.

We believe learning to volunteer is something that needs to start at a young age. It is good to see the volunteer programs done through Grant Junior High and those at the high school. It would be good to have some volunteer education in the elementary grades, where lifelong concepts are developed.

Educating our young people about the value of volunteering and of making donations to community projects will benefit them through their lives and the community where they live. Developing the community involvement of our youths gives them a sense of ownership, and a sense of pride when the project becomes a reality.

It is those young people the community will depend on in the future to lead and give of their time to do the many tasks we depend on volunteers for, including upkeep and repair of the carnival rides.

Those same young people will be the ones we turn to in future years to help raise money for community projects and to be members of our fraternal and civic organizations, which provide much of the volunteer muscle today.

Living in a small town gives people more of a opportunity to make a difference in the pride of their community, and it is important for young people to feel like their efforts are wanted and welcome.

The rain this week was wonderful, and the joint Elks and FCCLA patriotism project of putting the flags out on Flag Day — in the rain — added another sense of pride as you drove down Center or Broadway to see the nearly 200 American flags the young people stuck in the yards.

When the next patriotic holiday — July 4 — comes around, it will be a real test of community patriotism and pride to see how many reappear in lawns and windows. — *Tom Betz*

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THE PERFECT ENDING* TO THE LAST 18 MONTHS OF THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION



The real Ronald Reagan



michael reagan

● making sense

Once again, the left-leaning mainstream media have egg all over their faces thanks to the voice of my Dad, Ronald Reagan, speaking from his eternal resting place.

Over the past week, since the Reagan Diaries were released, the media have focused on everything except what to me is the most the significant result of their publication: the self-portrayal that once again proves the lie in the false picture of him the media long sought to draw — that of a less-than-intelligent former actor scarcely smart enough to remember his lines much less govern America.

The Media Research Council’s Brent Bozell once accurately described the media’s attitude during the Reagan administration as “fiercely hostile and often indistinguishable from the Democratic talking points of the day.”

Much of that hostility expressed itself by suggesting that my dad was the “amiable dunce” a biographer inexcusably called him to the delight of the liberal media elite, which could never accept the idea that a former Hollywood actor was in the end a lot smarter and had far more common sense than any of them up there in their ivory towers.

In his diaries, however, my Dad revealed himself to be the man I knew, and anything but an “amiable dunce.” Open the pages of his diaries, brilliantly edited by the slightly liberal Douglas Brinkley — whose honesty and decency allowed him to see the real Ronald Reagan and not the parody created by the media — and you encounter the extraordinary human being divine providence gave this nation at a

time when such a man was needed at the helm.

The picture my Dad paints of himself as he muses upon the events of each of his days in the White House is that of a thoughtful man always willing to speak well of others (including his opponents), always reluctant to criticize his foes, and fiercely determined to crush the evil he recognized in the face of international Communism and to restore America to the greatness that had diminished since his youth.

The man we encounter, brilliant and keenly perceptive as he showed himself to be in the pages of his daily journal, was a simple uncomplicated human being armed with a rock-hard faith in God and an unshakable belief in the inherent goodness of his fellow man. And he spent a lifetime seeking to find the light of that goodness in everyone he encountered, including the very man who ruled the empire he called evil.

The allegedly sophisticated media elite scoffed at the notion that this simple man, the product of a simpler time, could grasp the intricacies of modern government or understand the complexities involved in forging relationships with other nations. They were shocked, shocked, therefore, when he dared to call the

Soviet Union the Evil Empire, mainly because in their secularized view there is no such thing as evil. In their jaundiced eyes, men don’t sin, they only make mistakes.

The media saw my dad as being airily disinterested in anything but the nostrums of Middle America — the “fly-over country” they despise. The diaries, however, reveal him as being fully engaged with the issues of his times, carefully mulling over the problems he faced and making his decisions as to how to handle them based on both his knowledge of the matters and his ability to put aside the current wisdom and cut right to the heart of any problem.

Because my Dad was a simple uncomplicated man, the media decided that he was not only simple, but therefore was also simple minded.

Ronald Reagan kept his diary so people in the future would have an understanding of his presidency from his point of view and the vantage point of history, and not that of the liberal media’s dishonest and biased standpoint.

It has to be galling to them to see their carefully constructed illusions shattered by the publication of his diaries and what they reveal about a giant who in their malice they insisted on describing as a pygmy.

Once again, the Gipper’s spirit has triumphed.

Mike Reagan, the eldest son of the late President Ronald Reagan, is heard on talk radio stations nationally. E-mail comments to Reagan-@caglecartoons.com.

Are the parallels too close for comfort?

“Those who do not remember the past are condemned to relive it.” — *George Santayana*

On May 9, with little attention from the snoozing media, George W. Bush issued a “presidential directive” that allows him to assume control of the federal government following a “catastrophic emergency.”

Although the directive doesn’t specifically identify the types of emergencies that would qualify as “catastrophic,” it is vague enough to encompass “any incident, regardless of location, that results in extraordinary levels of mass casualties, damage, or disruption severely affecting the U.S. population, infrastructure, environment, economy, or government function.” As Matthew Rothschild of The Progressive noted, it could include “another 9/11, or another Katrina, or a major earthquake in California.” In fact, the language is so broad that it could include almost anything the public is led to believe might have a major impact on the country.

Not surprisingly, the president’s order comes neatly packaged within the trappings of national security and safety.

This directive followed on the heels of a bill, which I have previously written about here, that was pushed through Congress and which gave the president the power to declare martial law and establish a dictatorship.

Under these provisions, the president can now use the military as a domestic police force in response to a natural disaster, disease outbreak, terrorist attack or any “other condition.”

In other words, the groundwork has been laid for the president of the United States to do away with our democracy, such as it is, and establish a dictatorship. The president, in effect, has become a power unto himself.

Having said that, I’m aware that I have opened myself up to accusations of paranoia and alarmist sentiment. However, if it is paranoid or alarmist to recognize the potential for abuse and urge Americans to guard against it, then so be it. It’s time to sound the alarm.



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If we continue down this road, there can be no surprise about what awaits us at the end. After all, it is a tale that has been told time and again throughout history.

For example, over 70 years ago, the citizens of another democratic world power elected a leader who promised to protect them from all dangers. In return for this protection, and under the auspice of fighting terrorism, he was given absolute power.

This leader went to great lengths to make his rise to power appear both legal and necessary, masterfully manipulating much of the citizenry and their government leaders.

Unnerved by threats of domestic terrorism and foreign invaders, the people had little idea that the domestic turmoil of the times—such as street rioting and the fear of Communism taking over the country—was staged by the leader in an effort to create fear and later capitalize on it. In the ensuing months, this charismatic leader ushered in a series of legislative measures that suspended civil liberties and habeas corpus rights and empowered him as a dictator.

On March 23, 1933, the nation’s legislative body passed the Enabling Act, formally referred to as the “Law to Remedy the Distress of the People and the Nation,” which appeared benign and allowed the leader to pass laws by decree in times of emergency.

What it succeeded in doing, however, was ensuring that the leader became a law unto himself. The leader’s name was Adolf Hitler. And the rest, as they say, is history.

Yet history has a way of repeating itself. Hitler’s rise to power should serve as a stark lesson to always be leery of granting any gov-

ernment leader sweeping powers. But we are clearly not heeding that lesson.

Americans are being lulled to sleep by the government’s constant warning that terror and destruction lurk around the corner. Color-coded terrorism threat levels and reports of alleged terrorism plots are constantly paraded before us.

Indeed, since the attack on Sept. 11, 2001, the American people have been kept in a state of constant fear and expectation of yet another terrorist attack or, more subtly, another Katrina. Thus, while the recent spate of directives giving the U.S. president broad powers to supposedly ensure America’s safety and security from terrorism and natural disaster should serve as a warning, they have caused barely a ripple among the media or the masses.

President Bush has assured us that he will do whatever it takes to keep America safe, and Americans have blindly trusted him. How did he reward that trust? First, he claimed the authority to permanently imprison American citizens alleged to be so-called “enemy combatants.” Then he asserted his right to order government intelligence agencies to not only spy on America’s enemies but also on Americans. Now he has quietly and unobtrusively granted himself the power to take control of the government in the event of a vaguely defined national emergency.

James Madison, the father of our Constitution, said that Americans should take alarm at the first experiment upon their liberties. But this latest “presidential directive” is not the first attack on our liberties, and I dare say it will not be the last. We’d better open our eyes soon, lest we wake up one morning and find that we live under a new regime. Only, this time, it will be one of our own making.

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