

Springboard for a Better Future

When my daughter was very young and taking a beginner's gymnastics class I got to see the older girls on the competitive gymnastics team. I watched in amazement one day as a girl sprinted across the gym floor. Where was she going? I was puzzled until I saw her jump onto a springboard that sent her flying through the air to land on a vault horse with her hands and do an amazing flip in the air. Wow! That springboard sent her flying.

We need a springboard for a better future. Alertness and ethics will be our springboard.

For years we have seen jobs sent out of the country by thoughtless management and companies driven bankrupt by corrupt management. We have experienced a steady decline in jobs, making us worry about our future. Middle-class parents cannot be certain their children will be able to stay in the middle-class because the middle-class is being squeezed hard. This is the future we can expect.

If we want to reject a future full of worries, we need to envision a better future and begin working towards that future.

Our constitution was written to protect us from our government, not from corporations. To preserve what we have left of a middle-class, our government must restrain the large corporations. We need a government responsive to voters, not corporations. We need to take back our government.

We have the power of the vote, not the corporations. So why does our government favor corporations over voters? It is because college professors, pollsters, and political operatives have studied manipulating us with television. Some voters in New Hampshire and Texas, not persuaded by reason, allowed themselves to be manipulated by deceptive television the night before the election [1]. We must be on the alert for manipulation.

Newspapers and television networks are controlled by the same business interests who have purchased influence in Washington. Television news shows and newspaper editors try to manipulate us. They pay attention mostly to the candidates selected by special interests and they ignore candidates who are truly independent. Ron Paul got essentially zero coverage in the Texas primary. The Dallas Morning News said Hillary Clinton won Texas because she won the popular vote. Der Spiegel told the Germans that Barack Obama won Texas because he won the delegate count. You are truly free to vote if you are sure you have not been tricked out of your vote.

Turn off the television the night before the election. Ignore deceptive political advertisements. Ignore newspaper endorsements. Be an alert reader of newspapers during the elections. You might need to read the foreign press to get an honest report.

Politicians take corporate money and serve the corporations because they believe they can buy the election if they spend enough money. But, that only works if you let them manipulate you.

We need better leaders in government and big business. We need leaders who care about America and the American people. We need better leaders for a better future. Where will these leaders come from? Tomorrow's leaders are today's youth. The young must become ethical adults with the intent to serve America, not the corporations, and not themselves. This is called "civic virtue."

Education is the key to preparing our young for leadership. They must be able to recognize contradictions so they are not misled. They must be able to envision alternatives so they can find better ways to govern and grow wealth.

The young need a strong liberal arts education so they can think for themselves, set their own direction, and eventually set direction for the country.

Our children need more history. One of our presidents in his farewell address to the nation said, *"...freedom is special and rare. It's fragile; it needs protection. So, we've got to teach history based not on what's in fashion but what's important: Why the Pilgrims came here, who Jimmy Doolittle was, and what those 30 seconds over Tokyo meant."*

This president pictured America as a shining city upon a hill, with people living in harmony and peace. He pictured America teeming with commerce and creativity. He wanted us to become more prosperous, more secure, and happier.

Let's make America that shining city upon a hill. Let's be smart, alert voters. Let's develop ethical leaders, better leaders for a better future.

Footnotes

[1] Democratic primaries, 2008.

[2] President Ronald Reagan

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