



959 Words 5575 Characters

Life, Flight and Liberty Part XIII

An essay by Henry Nicolle

Empower Authoritative Opinion - Exercise Power

Now that I have lived in Rawlins for a couple of years, I am very pleased with my decision to move myself and my business here. Immediately upon getting settled, I joined the Chamber of Commerce and became an investing member of the Carbon County Economic Development Corporation's Moving Forward Together organization. The members of these organizations mentored my entry into the Carbon County community and business environment.

Their collegial friendship has been valuable and I am grateful for their willingness to shepherd my introduction to the many organizations, services, resources, and events that comprise the official life of our communities. As my understanding of our community grows, I am more able to assess our future.

Like Janus, I exist in the Present with a view of both the Past and Future. Unlike Janus, I am no god with perfect vision. I see dimly through an unfocused glass. My views are not unique. However, I learn every day that many, if not most, of my associates and neighbors are in full agreement with my assessments. Where we usually agree is in what is necessary to escape our stagnant economic fait accompli and consequent stultifying community attitudes. For example, how do we break out of our conventional "Boom or Bust" business cycle and mental acceptance of its consequences? I will write on these intertwined subjects in full, in the future.

Your vote is an expression of your authority and status as one of the Sovereignty of the People, the Source, Authority and Power of free people in our self-governing society.

Public duty in a representative republic is not for the meek or timid. You need an armored personality and quick wit to present your more serious intentions and opinions. Unfortunately, the vast majority of people have absolutely no intention to disrupt their lives to directly engage the body politic.

Today, I am one of those. I once exercised the candidate option and I had my ego returned to me in a tin cup with a soldered lid. Now, I do a little better if I simply visit, talk and write as much as my time will allow.

Is there a practical and effective remedy for the obvious problems this situation predicts? I cannot tell you. That answer is yours alone to decide. I cannot make your decisions for you. You need to speak up long before any item hits the ballot. If you are silent, you are submitting to unpredictable and unreliable decisions on how you are allowed to live your life.

Your silence indicates that you either do not care how your life is managed or who does the managing. If you do care, what is silent opinion or opposition worth? It is worth nothing at all. Nothing is a most dangerous condition.

We need to talk. We need to communicate our opinions and concerns among ourselves and especially to the people we elect and employ. If we are indeed the authority and power of self-government, we need to find the power to exercise our authority. Until we talk, we offer only the individual ineptness of

an ignorant ballot. Start somewhere. One way is to "engage and write"!

It may sound silly, but faces in attendance at City Council and Board of Supervisors meetings and study sessions are very influential. The face count displays the intensity of our interest. If we attend and take all or part of our five minutes of public input to address the issues that concern our well being, those minutes are worth more than our votes, because they are face-to-face verification that we are still in charge of our issues and policies.

Phone calls and emails can be ignored or noted, but too easily forgotten. Attendance at the meetings, especially when we are numerous enough to expand the forum to accommodate a hundred or more, demands respect in government for the community's opinions.

Backing up your presence at meetings and hearings with written letters is powerful. No one in a government bureaucracy can ignore a letter. It is the nature and necessity of bureaucracy that physical letters demand attention and a similar, written response. Letters are physical evidence of expressions and cannot be accidentally discarded as easily as an email or phone message. Paper trails are your path out of the forest. Make them happen. Use them. Your voice counts, but you have to speak out, write out, join the meetings and follow up!

If you cannot care enough to make at least a symbolic effort to control and guide our government, YOUR representatives and employees, there is no help for you or your family and friends except voluntary peonage. Yes, I am critical. I have no desire to be ruled, but if that is the mind of my neighbors, I am disappointed.

Quoting Samuel Adams, (yes, the beer guy) speaking in the moments prior to the live-fire revolt against the government of his time: "Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death!"

In Carbon County, we have three active newspapers in Rawlins and Saratoga, plus a monthly press published in Snake River. Collectively, they are a vital resource for community opinion, development, and cohesion. If you want to see something that you find interesting in a newspaper, subscribe and write! All of these papers beg in every issue, "**Please Write!**" A "Silent Majority" is no majority at all.

Henry Nicolle
henry@henrynicolle.org
POB 1194
Rawlins, Wyoming 82301
Tel: 307-321-6432