

WHITE PAPER AND PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

A PLAN OF ACTION

(Where do we go now??)

‘Success is everybody’s child, but failure is an orphan.’ And when you contributed to the discovery and use of the transistor, the PC, the World Wide Web, and utility of the Internet, we won the undisputed equivalent of the ‘Nobel Prize in leadership and humanitarianism’ on this planet – hands down. Whatever problems America has with its allies and adversaries in Washington, YOU are the citadel of Freedom in the eyes of the world, as this planet currently understands it.

Everybody knows where Silicon Valley is, and they ALL want to become ‘ San Jose ’s’ -within their home territory. We must know that, and recognize that, and accept the responsibility that comes with that – preparing the path for those that follow, as surely as the whole planet at present is eager to join us, if they can but know how. And that is part of the vision I share with you today – something all of you in this Valley may want to seriously think about.

Look about us. Is it possible we can all enjoy the freedom and virtual luxury shared in the Bay Area and California? I circumnavigated the globe once since last here ten years ago, for one month. And had only at a glance witnessed the struggle to achieve democracy in places like Thailand and the Near East; the disappointment of finding deeply rooted poverty in developing nations like India; the sheer necessity of armed guards with automatic rifles guarding the airport when we changed planes in Saudi Arabia. By contrast, the orderly pastoral setting found riding through Western Europe for five days on a Euro-rail pass – from Rome , to Zurich , to Paris , to London .

Only then to come home to the drab backwaters of New York , Philadelphia , and Washington DC – none of which I had ever seen before. Concluding though, that certainly the course of the nation may well have been for more than a century to become a mighty empire, as all the while it declared it only sought to share a place in global leadership. And here, as Samuel Adams, a founding Revolutionary said once of the handiwork of the Constitutional Convention when it created the present Federal Charter: “I pause at the threshold.”

Now let me explain why, and perhaps what I see from my perspective in what Bill Gates challenged us all to look toward in ‘The Road Ahead.’ Socrates admonished his followers in Athens ‘The unexamined life is not worth living.’ When faced with that very possibility – he chose death. Rene Descartes outlined in the 16th century in his ‘Discourse on Method’ the scientific practice to which those leading this Valley subscribe; and for which the resulting Revolution in thought has brought mankind to the brink of his salvation and destiny.

Today we must be guardians – as Plato says in ‘The Republic’ – not of men, but of the wisdom of the Age. The many cultures and tongues must be cherished as a birth right of posterity. A loss of which may discredit our faith in diversity, limit our prospects for hope and prosperity in the future, and dim the light of life on the planet to a permanent dull, alienated routine of boredom and monotony.

1) My first criticism of America as it is presently taught in practically every classroom in the country – not just here – although I have taught in secondary school classrooms, so I know from whence I speak – is my observation of our failure to keep economic principles and goals separate from our political views ...coupled with our confusion of cultural values. All of which we take for granted as harmonious and homogeneous in the American educational system.

The resulting chaos is becoming deafening. In point of fact, given my studied opinion most teachers are not even aware of how seriously they are contributing to the confusion. Furthermore, just because an author has written and published a book, does not mean he actually has made a useful or valuable contribution to society and its bank of knowledge. Many long reputed and established works are, to my satisfaction, incapable from their vantage of time and distance, still to suggest ideas that further the needs and future of a world community hurdling at almost light speed measured in nanoseconds toward the 21st and 22nd centuries.

There are certainly long respected and accepted concepts which may lead us toward thoughts and events that, upon the reflection and hindsight of history, may make life less painful and regrettable. The almost one hundred years of world conflict in the last century is an outstanding example of allowing thinking originating five hundred or a thousand years before to go unchallenged and uncritically accepted.

Karl Marx was at least correct when he first predicted, that the contradictions leading to a crisis - the after effects not to be fully comprehended for another fifty or one hundred years from now (or more), to come. And I am not kidding. Culture Wars are not just an idiom in classroom pedagogy, but a reality we must accept and mitigate if the country is not to be torn apart in the next generation from contradictory and conflicting views – PASSED DOWN UNQUESTIONALLY BY MOST CLASSROOM INSTRUCTORS TODAY.

MAKING MY CASE: BACKGROUND FOR A REVOLUTION

(Something you might not know)

But I say this guardedly, America is the ‘Flower Child’ and Poster Person of democracy as we now know it. It succeeded or certainly appears to have succeeded where a few prior cultures – Athens in 2,500 BC; the Roman Republic before it was torn to shreds after the assassination of Jules Caesar; Great Britain prior to World War I – all tried and all failed. I happen to be a qualified historian with a Graduate degree in the subject, and several unpublished tomes

examining the consequences for man, and just such future of the planet in the decades that lie ahead.

I have taught my message in rural community colleges, at one point designing a course explicitly on 'Society and the Future,' and I know from whence I speak. Indeed for the last 40 years, I have thought and studied practically nothing else. So please accept the possibility that though you had not quite considered what I am about to say - accept it in the spirit of good will it is given. Consider perhaps as a student of World Development and of history, I may have something new to offer on the subject that has not come to light lately in most circles –even be they learned ones.

2) ...'Who knows where the time goes,' as singer Judy Collins has said. Perhaps we are best left ignorant for a bit on where our instincts, intuition, and insight take us in the discovery of a new idea, or a first glimmer of thought. Mankind having created a problem every time it discovered a solution to an old dilemma. But the words of German Philosophers Immanuel Kant and Professor Hegel, are probably a good place to start...Was it not Isaac Newton that established – or was it even further back in the time of Galileo – that for every action there is an opposite and equal reaction. Not long after the appearance of Newton's Calculus offered an explanation, by world time a century or so at most later, Hegel advocated ideas and thought occurred in a kind of 'dialogue' or dialectic. In the form of a Thesis, contradicted by an Antithesis, and resolved by a Synthesis – which became the new and accepted thesis.

Viewed in this disinterested way, the ideas that emerged out of the feudal past in Europe , beginning with the Renaissance seem to fall in an uncertain way into this pattern, first described by Hegel. Thomas Hobbes' badly conceived 'Leviathan' was soon challenged by John Locke, another Englishman, and corrected by Jean Jacques Rousseau a century later. The wildly speculative work of Adam Smith in his visionary and unstable acclaimed 'Wealth of Nations,' soon became apparent in need of radical revision as was first suggested by the life time work at the thankless task by Philosopher Karl Marx, and his collaborator Frederick Engels.

The self seeking egoist who by some accounts suggests he were the Devil incarnate, N. Machiavelli. His largely irresponsible argument was not countered successfully for almost five hundred years - while wreaking havoc on international relations and the mind of man, were first challenged - not by a European as was often the case in Western thought, but by a Hindu, Mahatma Gandhi - with his theory of Satagrahah and Non-violent Direct Action tentatively first advanced by a young American during the slavery issue in this country, at the height of the Abolitionist Movement - Henry David Thoreau.

So if elected, this is one idea I am going to suggest be brought into the classroom and teaching methods of the District – starting at a very early age.

That we are in a Revolution based on ideas and our students MUST learn well and soundly the thrust and Parry of major concepts that have led mankind to 'take up arms at outrageous fortune.' Much as was argued by Shakespeare in his tragedy 'Hamlet,' and in the motives in Helen, whose face 'launched a thousand ships - moving Homer to write - possibly the first epic in Western Thought.

3)... Correspondingly, I will if elected strongly urge at every turn the state texts burying the rich heritage of the West and whole world of thought in second and third hand cheap formats presently used to introduce the great events, ideas and people, be abandon – or set aside and substituted by the original documents and classics as they were first set down

And furthermore, I think every teacher in the District should be capable and willing to teach at that higher standard, or find a way to do so. The world is in a 'sea change' of differences, I am part of that Revolution...and this is my 'Revolution.' Nothing short of the BEST is good enough for our students, especially if the responsibility of the world which they must shoulder, will be decided when they graduate

There is no substitute for Michelangelo's 'David,' or Leonardo DiVinci's 'Mono Lisa,' or the recent epic 'One Hundred Years of Solitude' – which received the Noble Prize, as I understand it. This State, when it conceived its Master Plan for Higher Education in 1960 intended to make available to the most promising the very best the University of California could assemble on the campus of Berkeley and its many branches.

But do we really know? Or have we largely governed our views on hearsay, rumor, and innuendo. Is Marx wrong...and if so, why? If Adam Smith offered hope, how and at what price? Thomas Hobbes and John Locke differed in critical and vital points over the concept of self-government. Where and when is that important over three hundred years later, today. Christ, Buddha, and Muhammad founded spiritual paths for mankind...Why? Are they, as many we have heard claim, at odds – incapable of a saving grace and as valueless in Madonna's 'Material World.'

The Community College concept was expanded and enlarged throughout the state to permit any aspiring and eager student - regardless of any circumstances or background – of availing themselves eventually to attain, likewise, the best teaching and knowledge available. And we must prepare our next generation for the promise and opportunity available in this state – at one time as no where else – and give the families in this county every chance, every possible assistance to help their children attain the rare possibilities in this state and region.

RELATED PROPOSALS

(It takes a Village...

...Hillary Rodham Clinton)

There remain many flaws in the concept of American education – reflected in this state which must be addressed as a united community. For long it has been a priority for every community to enjoy the luxury of their own local school Board. But we know, from experience this has not proved workable at the Community College Level, and quite possibly it is long overdue to consider much larger geographical organization of our K-12 Districts. I am in fact suggesting as many as possibly a 1,000 school districts which clog the bureaucratic machinery from top to bottom in our states educational system, with red tape and redundancy, be replaced by one general governing Board for each county.

Thereby consolidating the huge Administrative overhead at the local level, and bringing considerable relief to our annual state budgetary crisis, by almost increasing the money going directly into the classroom at the local level by as much as 50%. There may, in addition be changes that are long overdue in other phases of our students contact hours in the community as follows.

I seriously think consideration is long over due for the adoption of the Montessori system in K-3 grades. And this may do much to encourage young minds, often shut off by their first contact with traditional teaching in our multi-cultural society, to explore and inquire in a creative way essential to the genius found in the 'life of the mind.'

It may also be necessary to adopt a program of after school care and pre-school nurture as necessary right to ALL families in the community – in conjunction with non-profit and public agencies. Admittedly saddling our school system, given the massive social degradation already, have prevented providing essential, but yet to be established programs within the community.

Certainly asking the city to provide alternatives to school recreation, filling the gap in traditional extra-curricular activities – first abandon as much as 40 years ago due to budgetary limitations brought on by Prop 13. The parks exist but lack funding from the City. Perhaps a means can be brought to bear, through volunteers and teaching aides to augment the intent, if not the reality of our cities' Parks and Recreation Program, and there by take up the slack created by the deficit within our public schools.