

# Wickland at large...

On my scale, I gave the election of Bill Clinton my top rating of three Jesuses.

Jesus. Jesus! JESUS!

And later I went Jesus H. Christ! I think the "H" in that stands for "Holy."

I don't know from "Holy." There might be both 'good' and 'bad,' and 'good' might be that which promotes our continuing to exist; 'bad' might be that which works noticeably to promote our destruction.

Is there an afterlife? That is the central question of philosophy. Religions grow out of the acceptance that there indeed is an afterlife, and that things one does in this life can affect one's level of happiness in the next life.

The point is that afterlife doesn't matter until after this life. If there is nothing after we appear to be dead, then there is simply nothing. No thing. No pain, no joy.

If, after we die, we can still for some reason feel pain or joy, then we haven't really ended; we've just changed. We are either eternal or we aren't. I kind of think that we are eternal, but that there is no capital God.

It is what we make it. It is also the scene in which we look around and find ourselves. We change the scene in which we find ourselves. It is not that we *can* change the scene; it is simply that we *do* change the scene. We can't help it.

So, is there life after Republicans? Of course. What will it be like? Who knows, except that it will keep changing. It is good that more voters opted for the "change" concept on November Third than voted to keep the status quo, because change was already going on.

We don't really have "Republicans" and "Democrats" any more, anyway. We have Capitalists, who have won it all and are busy working at creating a "level playing field" on which global corporations can pay us about the same wages and sell us stuff at about the same prices everywhere on the planet. It is simply easier on the accounting staff that way.

For twelve years, we have been ruled by short-sighted Capitalists, who think they can take everything from us, and somehow we'll still be able to buy stuff from them. That had to change. I sense that Clinton's Capitalists understand better that "They, The People," must be kept reasonably healthy and happy, and that they must have a few pennies more than they really need. Then the Capitalists compete for those pennies. *They don't really care how much money they have*, as long as they have managed to gather more of those pennies than the next guy. It's all a percentages game to Ross.

That said, I propose three changes that might not happen if I don't get you thinking about them. But remember: it really doesn't matter. We are sometimes happy, sometimes sad; sometimes rich, sometimes poor; we make it or we don't under any economic pattern.

**First and biggest change: the calendar.** We've been operating under a white male Christian calendar for two centuries. We've been getting ready for the Year 2000, when things will be perfect. We blew it; we can tell already that things won't be perfect by the Year 2000.

So we don't have the Year 2000. We go ahead with New Year's Eve, 1999, because too many plans have been made for that already. But the next day will not be 1-1-2000. We pick a new starting date for our new world mail order calendar.

This is not new. Calendars change. Not everybody goes by our calendar anyway, except in business with us. When I was in the Persian Gulf in Christian 1990, it was 1451 or so in Saudi Arabia. I forgot what happened 500 years after J. H. Christ to make the few desert nomads who could read and write over there start their calendar on that date. Robert Sang, a Chinese, tells me the most accepted version of their calendar says it is 4836 this year, but some say it is later than 5000. A couple of months ago orthodox Jewry entered the year 5753.

Why should the business world run on a Christian calendar? Because it is simply convenient. I think we should be fair, and take time away from the Christians, and let them be equal to the other religions in having their own calendar.

When I first thought of this, I knew that the new starting date would have to be July 20, 1969 at 4:17.bip.bip.bip Eastern U.S. Standard Time, when

Neil Armstrong left Apollo 11 and set foot upon the moon. Why didn't Neil's parents name him Jack? But I figured the Russians would bitch about that, and the argument would not be over in time to avoid the Year 2000. Well, hey! We won the cold war. Things changed. Times changed, why not the calendar?

Who will argue against a demonstrably historic FACT, concurred upon by scientists from around the globe? Lon Mabon. Who else?

We can argue whether we are in the Space Age or the Peace Age or the Low-Fat Age, but I'd like us to agree that when we wake up after New Year's Eve 1999, it will be morning of Star Date 30.164.bip.bip.bip.

There would be an economic bonus to that: it would be less than 69.5 years to the next century celebration! I think people who live spiritually by non-Christian calendars would appreciate this change. So would computer freaks, for the hell of it; and accountants, who always appreciate a chance to start over. Besides, my dad messed around with the calendar until he died at age 86. He said only kings and popes got to mess with the calendar. So I want to provoke this for dear old crazy Dad.

I thought of this shortly after Dad died in 1988 Christian. I figured I'd get some sort of Institute going behind it, and get people to send me money. I needed a cause. Damned if a cause didn't surface out of the gumbo of my mind. I no longer care whether I get money out of it, but that cause is the basis of my next suggestion.

**Second and most important change: school curricula.** Hoo, boy! We know how difficult it is for actual teachers to go through all the course outline paperwork required by the bureaucrats who take up a third of education's payroll and never talk to an enquiring kid.

So we make it simple; right, Ross? In grades K-10, the first few hours of each day are spent studying the celebrations going on around the planet *on that day*. We use all those other calendars, because we are now living on a new one.

*Today in Timbuktu the Hindus are celebrating an event which occurred three thousand years ago. Timbuktu is over here. It rains 47 days a year there, so they dress like this. They make clothes from sheep's wool shed or shorn, and from local berries they make dyes like this and wear these colors. They do this dance. Can we do this dance? Let's try it!*

Easy lesson planning, no? Lon Mabon will carp about studying certain heathen observances, but that will involve more parents in the lesson plans, just like he got lots more folks involved in the election, so that's okay.

It will bring an explosion of opportunity for writers, illustrators, filmmakers, video talents and researchers, in bringing to light all the celebrations to study. And as a result of this study, kids will become more interested in this or that. So after studying the parties, students will spend the rest of the day in further pursuit of knowledge of something which has tweaked their interest.

If you really look for it, there is always an easy answer.

Rifford Ratchley once told me that the greatest resistance to a new idea comes from the people who are making money the old way. Also that it is easier to own a politician than to be one. Also that you don't have to throw the bums out if you can change their minds. Hey, PAC-wood, why not surprise everybody and get behind change?

**Third and most difficult change: finance.** This proposal is not mine. People thought of it before I did. President Nixon actually proposed it to a Democrat Congress, but because Democrats had thought of it first, they nixed it because they didn't want to give Nixon credit for it. He called it by some other name, but it was first called a Guaranteed Annual Wage. I like that name, GAW, and you'll see why.

GAW would give every citizen a certain number of credits for each annum. It would amount to enough for health, food, housing, clothes, (all of which goes right back into the local economy,) and a little bit of walking-around money. We could let ourselves earn as much again as the amount of GAW before taxation sets in, as more walking-around money. The Capitalists would have to deal with less crime, sickness and dissention, and could compete with each other for our walking-around money, which, as I pointed out earlier, is what they live for.

Face it. They won. We should treat them like landlords: "Okay, you own it all now; you fix it." I think Clinton understands that.

And it would be cheap. Very conservative Republicans know this, like Bill Buckley. They say it is right, but our people resist change. Now's the time. We just voted for change, and not spare change. We voted in some women. Think *they* won't change a few things?



Wickland looking knowledgeable

Right now we have 16 (wild guess) government tax-supported agencies getting into the act to "help" a citizen who runs out of luck for some reason or other, and most of the time the citizen has to lie to someone to get help. We can reduce all those agencies to one: Guaranteed Annual Wage Department.

How can we pay for that? Here is a way to start thinking about it: tell everybody in those other 15 agencies "Thank you very much for getting us to where we are now. Go home. You will receive GAW. Anything you report extra higher than the amount of GAW will be taxed like hell."

If we chose, we could pay those people full bore until they reach retirement age, to stay home. That's because when they go to work, they spend more of our money! We could send them home and save two-thirds of what they are costing us now. We could let the homeless live in the offices.

If you just wanted to study philosophy or play Pitch, you could live on GAW. Any other work you did would be because you want to do it. More smiley faces at work, because they like it.

Citizens would have time to study celebrations around the planet, and sell their results to the school system, or be there to teach kids about things which have tickled their curiosity.

Citizens could conceive, craft and sell doo-dads. And if my doo-dad business falls flat on Star Date 36.bip.bip.bip, I won't worry, because GAWD would take care of me.

In GAWD I trust.

Save. Quit. Shut down. You may now safely switch off your brain. — Bill Wickland.

The writer is a Psychedelic Ranger who has spent 45 of his 54 years trying to figure out stuff like this. He is currently washing dishes and cleaning toilets on a Navy-contracted merchant ship for less than \$5 an hour, and thinking about this stuff in his spare time. We'll forward his mail.

Urlah's St. Diablo Jellies

The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes.

- William James

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