

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Re: "Law Enforcement" in Lane County (1/29), every citizen must acknowledge that the police, etc. are not responsible for law enforcement. Every citizen is responsible equally. In a dictatorship the police, etc. are responsible for law enforcement. In a free society "we the people" are responsible.

Every citizen must firmly establish that the police, etc. and their unions are entitled to their opinion but outside of that have absolutely nothing to say about how law enforcement is managed in Lane County. We the people will determine that.

Every citizen must recognize that all aspects of life begin in the neighborhood — especially law enforcement — and not in any legislative body. All citizens are responsible for every aspect of their neighborhood. And this responsibility cannot be delegated to anybody at any time. Authority can be delegated but responsibility cannot.

The solution to all of society's problems is public participation. The politician and bureaucrats are never going to solve society's problems. If any member of the public does not step forward they should be drafted. A free society is not cheap or easy.



The public should be brought into every aspect of law enforcement. First, as observers 24/7. These observers would be required to write reports to be sent to elected officials and the media. After the observers were firmly established, citizens would be called upon (by volunteering or selected using the same procedure as jury selection) to become an employee of every aspect of law enforcement. These positions could be part-time or full-time but they would replace career bureaucrats. These people would serve a maximum of five years before returning to the private sector. Eventually a substantial percentage of all positions in law-enforcement would be held by these non-career bureaucrats. We must do everything possible to get away from the "paid mercenary" mentality of law enforcement.

And finally — the more public participation we have the better and more credible law enforcement will be.

Frank Skipton
Springfield

LIVING PEACEFULLY

This letter is in response to Bob Kholos' disturbing letter (2/19) accusing me of inciting "riot against the Jews in the Eugene area." I am neither Jewish nor Arab. But when my son and his wife worked as volunteers on the West Bank,

TOO MUCH COFFEE MAN BY SHANNON WHEELER



I learned how important it is for many people, not only Jews and Arabs, to work together to resolve the troubles in Israel and Palestine, a source of great international tension.

I have always opposed all forms of anti-Semitism. I support Jews and Arabs, Israelis and Palestinians, in their efforts to live peacefully together. However, I am concerned about many policies of Sharon's government.

I would like EW readers to know more about these policies than what is published in major U.S. media, and especially, about peaceful work of Palestinians, Israelis and internationals to bring change. My intent is not to incite riots but to share information.

It is wrong for Palestinian suicide bombers to kill Israeli civilians, wrong for Israeli soldiers to kill Palestinian civilians.

Kumbaya Dammit BY DAN CAROL

Ralph Version 3.0

Nader's third try not very charming.

Ralph Nader is in and running. The only good thing I can see about this is that it makes my life easy today—I was a little short of good ideas for the column this time. So I appreciate an easy 750 words.

The bottom line is that this whole affair is straight up *Groundhog's Day*. As in, we've seen this movie before. As in, I can summarize how I feel in five letters: zzzzz.

Unfortunately, not everyone is feeling so serene — many Democrats are angry (again). For how to handle this strategically (not emotionally), I'd offer some excellent advice from Paul McCartney and the Beatles: Let it be. Find your "inner Zen" and take a deep breath before you speak, act or primal scream.

Otherwise, our progressive political dialogue will look just like the recent (and unpleasant) Sybil-Blair exchange in EW's letters to the editor section. (Two good people who I'd wager support the same *big goals and dreams* — but have a lot of un-vented anger about which *tactical strategies* are best applied to win).

So please folks, let's stop eating our own. Let's stop trying to win *past* tactical arguments (about who was *really right* in elections we all lost) that get in the way of what's smart *now*. And that's the goal, right? We want to win back power from monied interests who are selling out our democracy. We need to do this intelligently. We all know it won't happen with just a new president, anyhow. But we sure need to start with one of those.

Some Democrats will want to re-direct their current anger against George Bush and their leftover Nader 2000 anger toward Ralph Version 3.0. To which I say: Don't bother. Please! Because trying to shame Nader will only strengthen him. If you are angry at Ralph, the best way to "hurt" him is simply to ignore him.

Enough about group therapy and collective anger management — let's take a hard look at this candidacy. How does it measure up first tactically and secondly, in terms of ideas?

To be as fair as I could, I watched Nader on "Meet The Press" to understand what his motivation really is this time. I get that he thinks the system is broken and the corporate power dominates Washington. (I think we all get that point). What I don't get is



the strategic thinking that drives him to label *The Nation* magazine and other progressive critics of this third Nader candidacy to be "contemptuous" (his words).

The fact is that Nader failed to get the critical 5 percent of the vote last time to qualify for major party status and federal funding (as Ross Perot did for the Reform Party in 1992) and *that was* the campaign's stated goal. Ralph and all Nader supporters, please don't tell me you can get more votes this time. All odds are that this independent and late-starting effort will get fewer votes and qualify on fewer state ballots. So what's the tactical goal that this candidacy achieves for breaking the third party duopoly?

Even the Green Party is torn up about this. Some Greens wanted him to run again as a Green; some wanted no part of another Nader candidacy after he failed to achieve the magic 5 percent.

I'm down with the Greens and anyone else who say that we should build new grassroots parties ground up, not top-down, by winning school board races, state legislative seats, populist electoral reforms and building from where the party is strong (the Greens almost won the mayor of San Francisco a few weeks ago and that performance has perhaps inspired the current mayor to be more courageous).

That's tactics. As for big ideas, which Nader claims is the other reason he is running, I am unmoved. Ralph promised to run an ideas campaign in 2000; instead he spent months goring Gore.

The fact is that there are plenty of ways to get progressive ideas in play without splitting our vote. Dennis Kucinich's positive campaign ("Fear Ends, Hope Begins") and Howard Dean's recent efforts in the Democratic primary are undeniable examples of how powerful stances can move the debate in progressive directions. Top-selling books by Michael Moore, Al Franken and others are opening up important channels for changing minds. Some have even encouraged Ralph to "run" for president on the upcoming Showtime reality show *American Candidate* (www.americancandidate.com) where 12 contestants will duke it out this fall in a blend of presidential politics and "The Hollywood Squares." (Who's to say now that Paul Lynde is gone, the center square slot isn't the best platform for change out there?)

So that's my take on this mess. I am for sweeping it under the emotional rug. (As of this writing, even Dennis Kucinich seems to be taking this advice — there's not a word about it on his website). If that still makes ya mad, how about ya take it out on Dub-ya.

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