

A Visit with the END

Written by Alex Baer

Thursday, 09 August 2012 22:15 - Last Updated Thursday, 09 August 2012 22:22

Note: Full disclosure, and for the record, I continue to be impressed with the reporting from the Evver-Luven News Division. Their staff always manages to ferret out the most unusual stories, somehow beating all other news agencies to the punch.

The following account by their reporter, Royal Shambles, is one such example.

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As press conferences go, it was an un-shocking, non-breakthrough announcement from the Regional Integrated Group-Household Television Network Association of Associations and Amalgamated Organizations, Unlimited, sporting specific advice for television viewers this political season: "Hit the 'off' button and turn on your mind!"

Spokesperson Stan Bie said, "You know, television viewers who are tired of being spin-dizzied into psychosis, and weary of being carpet-bombed into oblivion by political ads this election season would do well to just turn the damn thing off."

Bie explained, "It's what that little red button on the remote is for, to give it -- *and you* -- a much-needed rest."

RIGHTNAAOU (pronounced "RIGHT-NOW") is a privately held, mental health advocacy group. Its motto and message is: "Take Back Your Eyes -- Right Now!"

The non-profit association issues public service messages year-round, and in every media format, all of them urging television viewers to cut back on time spent glaring into the "Big Eye," as they call broadcast and cable television.

"Make no mistake -- these corporations are there not to entertain you, but to make an enormous

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profit, to divert attention from urgent matters, to make people forget, to sell you a bill of goods," says Bie.

While the agency strengthens warnings to viewers during political season, they admit this election cycle is very different from all previous years, and have started sounding their alarm bells much earlier, and much louder, than usual.

The group says a number of events have combined into a perfect storm that will continue to further harm the public: Entrenched and extreme political divides and fractures from extremists; increasing public ignorance of and disinterest in the political system that rules their lives; and, adds Bie, a continuing explosion of "nitwit, know-it-all candidates without life experience of any kind, except for eating and breathing."

Bie explains, "We're just short of full-blown trench warfare in this country; the public is clueless, preoccupied, and out to lunch; and the gates of the asylums have been beaten upon, battered, and broken down from coast to coast -- providing an almost endless supply of Teabagger and Libertarian candidates who will run on, and for, anything."

Bie volunteered, "We try to not get involved in politics, per se, instead being advocates of limiting exposure to the lies, deceit, mistruths, spin, and infuriations of campaign blitzkriegs, from any side."

Privately, he conceded, his best understanding to date is that Teabaggers want no government at all, despite their usually-deep, personal immersion into multiple government programs, while Libertarians take an ala carte approach to parts of government that should be kept, so long as some group of 'someones' other than themselves actually foot the bills.

"All those individual effects pose significant mental health hazards to the population as a whole, but are dwarfed in significance by the astronomical amounts of cash raging through the political system this year," brought on by SCOTUS rulings regarding Citizens United, and decrees that corporations are people and money is speech.

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Random J. Harvest agrees. He is a Senior Fellow, and holder of the Jolly-Goode Chair, at the Institute of Astonishingly Brilliant and Really Quite Quick People, a sister organization of RIGHTNAAAOU.

"The Citizens United case had absolutely nothing to do with the subject and elements with which it has become associated and came to represent, thanks to the actions of an activist court largely comprised of insanely right-wing leaning radicals -- leaning so far to the right as to have fallen over, and nearly off the face of the Earth."

Harvest compared key members of the court to "reptilian-brained ignoramuses fond of serving up sloppy slumgullions of legalese sprinkled with childish prattlings-on."

Harvest continued, "Four members of the current court are of the sort President Roosevelt and General Butler had to fight off in the 30s to keep legitimate control of the country, putting down a coup attempt by bankers and fascist financiers."

He paused thoughtfully for a moment and added, "And others of which I am not yet completely sure."

Harvest points out that the amount of money awash in the U.S. political system this year is unprecedented in all of human history.

"The sky's the limit, all the stops have been pulled out. There are no longer any controls on who spends what -- not how much, or for what purpose. There are currently hundreds of trillions of dollars in unregulated and untracked derivatives and credit default swaps circling the globe, the GDP of the entire planet for the next twelve hundred years. As berserk and terrifying as that is, the amount of money loosed past sluice gates into political slush funds makes even that towering number seem downright tame."

Harvest explains, "Even ancient Rome could mine jewels and form gold bars just so fast. Not so in today's world. We just add digits onto computer screen displays and call it money. If you are not petrified of the prospects of elections purchased outright, and in complete secrecy, you

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are simply not paying sufficient attention."

RIGHTNAAAOU's Bie says their group will spend up to ten million dollars in opening salvos aimed at reminding television viewers to "use the off switch and switch to doing something else." He adds, "We're trying to remove people from the pathways of propaganda and confusion, urge them to get the facts and think for themselves, and take responsible action. It's the only way Democracy can work."

Bie says the message is simple: Use the sets as monitors for movies or documentaries or, "better yet, read a book, go for a walk, clear your head, break the spell of noise, quiet your mind and think."

"The effort might be wasted, but we have to try," he adds. This year, RIGHTNAAAOU will be using a slightly different approach. "In previous years, we've urged people to get out of the house, go shopping, go on vacations, go for a bite out with friend and family every night. But, that was before the banks flamed the entire world into a molten mass."

Bie paused, swallowing hard. "Now, we're reminding people about free ways they can try to save their minds, taking short escapes in which we've all already invested -- parks and libraries, for example."

He maintains, "Almost anything that helps pry people's butts from the grasp of their sofas and recliners -- escaping the gravitational field of their television sets -- is helpful. People just need to remind themselves to stop being a captive audience, that they are free to move about their homes," and need not remain hypnotized by their teevees.

The trick, he says, is to practice interrupting the teevee-mind connection, and not develop the look he calls, "five thousand millimeter glare, trying to see through the teevee screen, to the back of the set, and laser a hole through the wall."

"Moving around periodically is helpful, for those who are first learning. Blinking is helpful, too."

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Here's hoping the END survives this era of ongoing media consolidation, homogenization, and roboticized production and acceptance of human experiences we lump into and call The News. If so, periodic visits with their staff is a goal. With a little luck, there may yet be time left to puzzle out and form a useful response to a society and culture gone far, far around the bend -- almost out of sight.