

PERSPECTIVE

from
Prof. ARLESEE

The Satisfaction of Being Second Best

We're number one!!
—Pittsburgh Steeler football
enthusiasts, Jan. 12, 1975
ca. 6 p.m.

An unhealthy social philosophy is overtaking us. While it may not necessarily be new, its growing presence in our high pressure environment makes it more acute. We refer to the social attitude which is emerging that the real measure of success is superlative achievement.

It would be difficult to determine exactly the various sources of this idea and to what degree each has had an effect on molding the social concept. However, no doubt sharing a substantial portion of the responsibility is the ongoing American attitude toward competition.

To begin with, if there is a way to make a contest out of some element in our lives, we in this country seem to do so. We are a society of games. We even make games of situations when we are with others or even alone where we might otherwise be bored.

To create or participate in games as a form of recreation is not such a bad idea, but the situation tends to get perverted in such a myriad of ways. Centuries of endeavors in theories of aesthetics fail to set up dogmatic principles, yet we hold beauty contests. We have a culture which gives us art as a different form of recreation, yet we send musicians and artists into competitions. We know that our small children need to develop by building on their own youthful values, yet we pour our adult concept of competition onto them in their little league sports. And then, as a gross example of how the whole thing is out of hand, we have the sheer idiocy of commercial television game shows.

But even if we were to excuse the extent to which we have allowed the infusion of competition into our lives, there is still the attitude in which we go about playing our games. We seem to have developed the idea that the only real success is in winning, or emerging as the best at whatever the endeavor. If we are not vaudeictorians, top salesmen, or Super Bowl champions, we are failures.

The example of professional athletics, particularly football, is on our minds since the Super Bowl is such recent history. The talk leading up to this over-glamorized game is that the success of the entire season rests on its outcome. To lose means that the whole season was a failure. There is only one winner in the sport—the Super Bowl champion. Everyone else is a loser.

This is the philosophy we must discard. The Pittsburgh Steelers won Sunday, but the whole season for the Minnesota Vikings no more went down the drain than did the salutatorian's whole academic career. They emerged as second best which, after all, is an achievement—one to be highly respected; one which can evoke a real sense of pride.

In any contest involving three or more participants, there should be a great deal of satisfaction in being second best. While we would not wish to dilute the spirit of competition with complacency, neither should we perpetuate the very nearsighted view that "winning is the only thing."

We could do ourselves and our culture a great deal of good by moving more closely toward three healthier attitudes.

First, we should take the competition out of those areas where sport is contrary to their basic nature, such as the arts and the sciences.

Secondly, we need to restore the sense of achievement which deserves to accompany something less than the best. Contrary to what is apparently our current

social philosophy, it is not a win-or-lose, black-or-white world. Superlative achievement is not the only achievement.

And, we must respect and emphasize the true achievement of having done one's best at a given task. An irony is that ultimately, an individual who has done his best at something has achieved a personal superlative achievement no matter how he compares to others, since he has won the contest with the real foe—himself.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Appreciates Cine And Mr. Johnson

Dear Mr. Johnson,

I want to tell you how much I admire your efforts in combining Fulton activities with your theatre program. You and your family have added much that is good to a sometimes sagging optimism.

May you prosper and continue to be able to give your good help.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Joseph Proietto

Class of '65 Reunion

A 1965 Class Reunion meeting will be held Friday, Jan. 21, at 7:30 p.m. at the home of Tom Cooper. Anyone wishing to attend or needing information please call Yvonne (Hanshaw) McEwen 593-2901 or Mary Jane (Clavelli) McGraw at 592-6218.

Local Dealers Pushing Chrysler Rebate Plan

Fulton's two Chrysler products outlets are heralding the manufacturer's rebate plan and have joined in a massive advertising campaign to alert the car-buying public.

Representatives of Parkay Motors, Inc., which sells Chrysler and Plymouth automobiles, and Longley Bros., which sells Dodge cars and trucks, met with Chrysler officials last week to discuss the rebate plan.

Faced with a backlog of 320,000 new cars, Chrysler has announced it will give rebates of up to \$400 to purchasers of 1975 models until Feb. 16.

Under the plan, a potential customer would fill out a registration form upon walking into the dealership. It asks such information as the model he wants to buy and the car he is trading. The dealer would telephone Chrysler headquarters to get an ID number for the customer. The customer then has three days to complete the deal, which would include bargaining with the dealer over the purchase price and trade-in allowance he would receive.

When the new car is delivered the customer fills out the remainder of the form and the dealer validates it. The new Chrysler car owner then mails part of the form to Chrysler, keeping part as a receipt.

He would get his rebate check from Chrysler by return mail.

It was pointed out locally that the rebates will not have any effect on how much the buyer receives on a trade-in. It is a rebate direct to the consumer.

Tomorrow is another day if you'll drive the careful way.

Governor Carey's 'State of the State' Message A Long Series of Broken Campaign Promises

by John Zagame, Assemblyman

Governor Carey's State of the State Message on Wednesday was both a disappointment and a shock to me. From my seat in the New York Assembly, I listened as our Governor catalogued what amounts to a long series of broken campaign promises. As I listened, I began to understand more fully why people distrust their leaders.

In plain truth, as it appears to me, Governor Carey was elected on one set of lofty commitments, but will conduct his office on another set of opposite goals. This is an inexcusable about-face.

For months, we listened to Mr. Carey promise no new taxes. Now we hear talk of an increase of 10c per gallon on gas. And there are hints of state income and sales tax increases as well.

I also remember Mr. Carey pledging to continue state services at previous or higher levels. Now we hear that aid to localities will be cut through reductions in state-aid formulas for counties and school districts.

Let there be no mistake about it—what Governor Carey has outlined is a disaster aimed at Upstate New York. When he spoke of reducing state aid formulas, he failed to mention the increased property tax burden that will have to be carried by our

already property-tax poor upstate counties and school districts. When he talked of gas-tax increases, he failed to mention that in Upstate New York the automobile is the primary and often the only mode of transportation. Here, gas is no luxury; it is a necessity.

Furthermore, no mention whatsoever was made by the Governor of possible economies which would particularly effect his New York City power base.

Curiously absent from his list of economies was a pledge to lessen the state subsidy to New York City subways which allows New Yorkers to travel to work for a meager 35c. No mention was made of ending the state subsidies which allow State University of New York City students tuition free college education.

I will conclude by saying that if and when Governor Carey makes a good faith commitment to cut state spending equitably across New York State, and if and when he adopts a tax policy which is not destructive of the Upstate economy, then perhaps he will regain the respect he undoubtedly has lost among those who placed their trust in him on election day. Until that time I will continue to oppose these broken promises with all the vigor I can muster.

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