

A Word from Mack

We are the external force for renewal

There is real “danger” involved in driving around in our nation’s capital which I am now doing on CRI’s behalf on a regular basis. No, I am not talking about the stupefying traffic, but of the strange thoughts that can dominate your thinking on the gridlocked roadways. I drive past venerable buildings and monuments and all sorts of “headquarters” of all sorts of organizations. And I find myself thinking of their work and their ideas.

One of my well-driven routes takes me past the National Academy of Science. And I am blaming that constant exposure for the craziness of thinking of Sir Isaac Newton’s laws of motion and their relationship to renewing our cities and communities here in America. So in obedience to a creeping obsessiveness, I looked them up. Does the Law of Motion have any relevance to 21st Century American society for crying out loud? To you? To me?

Well here goes with just Newton’s first law. It has two parts. And they state: a) An object at rest will stay at rest unless an external force acts upon it. And b) An object that is in motion will not change its velocity unless an external force acts upon it. There it is. So what social significance could laws of mechanics possibly have?

Our country and its society are in motion. And we must ask and honestly face the reality of an answer, “What is our direction?” Now when I am on a trip, I have a few things that characterize that journey. I have a destination. If it is unfamiliar, then I have a map that guides me. I begin to move toward it. And I pass milestones and landmarks that show progress on the journey. My direction must face my goal if I want to “get to where I am going.”

I have taken the wrong way before. I could tell by the milestones and landmarks. So, of course, miles out of my way, I have made the corrections to change course. I became the external force acting on the motion of my car to change it. I have also been totally disoriented on a very short trip.

It happened when I tried to take out the trash in the smack dab middle of a blizzard in the Texas Panhandle. In a “white out” a person can become so disoriented that you can die just feet from your back door. A short trip to the backyard trash became a nightmare of disorientation because I had no landmark and no sense of direction. And without my wife, Judy, calling my name at the top of her voice from the back door...I shudder. Judy was the external force then.

Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukkah, New Year’s! I write this column in a wonderful season. And I genuinely hope that these are the best days yet for all of you and for all of our nation, and especially for every child. But, I remember that we are also moving. Where are we going? I know the destination we say we want. But, do the milestones and landmarks match the

map leading to our longed-for world filled with love and peace and equality and a genuinely human existence?

The evidence that is coming in demands a verdict. We are in motion. But we are moving toward a me-centered isolation and therefore a tragic end. Even more tragically, we are also at rest. Our nation's children, our own consciences, the alarm bells of our heritage, and the prophets of old are standing in the doorway to our national destiny and calling for us to return once again to the safety of "home."

Only acted upon by an external force can we awaken from our disoriented rest and be set in motion to become the external force that changes our direction. I believe that the external power of God's love awakens us, then we become the force to turn this car around. And it is with unutterable joy I thank God for Community Renewal and for each and all of you making it happen.

God bless you all. Come and join with us.