

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1585 It's Long Past the Time to Kick Hate to the Curb

1968 was a long time ago, but not too long for some of us to remember a divided America, where people openly expressed scorn for those who didn't agree with them. It was a time when citizens displayed their mistrust in leadership and government. It was a time when youthful dreams died, along with iconic leaders whose words sparked those dreams, but met their end with bullets. There are surely differences between the Americas of 1968 and 2024, but many similarities as well. I'm Jerry Roberts, and today, a few words on the events of yesterday, where we're headed, and perhaps how we should arrive there. That's next on The Extra Point.

On the night of April 4th, 1968, Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, a candidate for the presidency, was scheduled to give a speech in Indianapolis, Indiana. Upon hearing the news of Dr. Martin Luther King's murder, Kennedy immediately cancelled his campaign talk and instead addressed an impromptu gathering in the city's black community.

While 125 cities in America suffered riots and major unrest after King's death, with dozens of people dying and property damage in the billions of dollars, Kennedy's words of empathy were credited with preventing a major flareup from breaking out there. Two months later, to the day, an assassin's bullet ended his life.

The key issue of the day was the Vietnam War. America's troop numbers and fatalities had greatly increased during Lyndon Johnson's presidency, and eventually the prolonging of the conflict tore the country apart.

Baby Boomers clashed with their parents and grandparents, and then took to the streets to protest across the country. After Kennedy's death and a disastrous Democratic convention, voters had seen enough and elected Richard Nixon to the White House. The war would stretch on for six more years.

I grew up believing that my government told the truth. JFK's assassination shook those

beliefs, and Johnson's handling of the war changed my views on government. I started out in support of winning the war, and ended up knowing I'd been lied to.

To this day, I'm grateful that America then had an independent news media, not the agenda-based journalistic frauds we mostly see today.

I'm also grateful that the Internet and social media did not exist in the 1960s and 1970s. If we disagreed with someone's views then, our outlets were to actually talk with them, or write a strongly worded letter to the newspaper.

Those of us who are old enough to remember those times, also remember what it was like to live in a kinder and gentler America. If we did disagree with someone, we could generally do so without hating them.

Today, hatred is rampant. Yes, it's less so in Guam than back in the mainland. That being said, there are people right here on our island who spew venom on a daily basis through their social media channels.

I'm not talking about fact-based posts that bear a legitimate opinion. Those are valid for the most part. The danger is in presenting a torrent of lies, half-truths, associations, and general hate. The majority of that is aimed at Donald Trump.

It starts with the liberal media, and filters down to individuals on social channels. People in positions of great influence are saying that a Trump presidency will usher in a dictatorship, permanently ending elections in the U.S.

This would require that the Congress and the Supreme Court just sit idly by, twiddling their thumbs. Do you really see that happening?

These same people accuse him of being a fascist, and the second coming of Adolf Hitler. Yet, they refuse to even consider that certain actions of President Joe Biden open him up to the same criticism. (Con't.)

The misinformation being tossed around regarding Project 2025 is sad. Don't repost what others say about it if you haven't taken the time to read it. I'm reading the document, and can't find the threats to benefits and rights some people are claiming. If I did, I'd say so.

I'm not a political party kind of person. I've long been on record that I line up with the majority of Americans, in that I'd prefer a third option for president.

More than that, I want a southern border that prevents illegal aliens from coming in. We'll be paying a monstrous price for that from now on.

In addition, I want a system of justice where nobody is above — or below — the law. And that justice has nothing to do with one's political beliefs.

If that's the new fascism, then you should know that the vast majority of Americans will qualify.

I believe America has been creeping towards our present condition for 30 years, and that lays blame at the doorsteps of names like Clinton, Bush, Obama, Trump, and Biden. All have fanned the flames of discontent.

Still, we can criticize former presidents and those in powerful media positions, but throwing rocks at other people, and indeed hating others is our sole responsibility.

I'd like to think that nobody I know secretly wishes that the would-be assassin's bullet had found its mark, and ended Trump's life.

I'd like to think that Trump and Biden both will now drop the unnecessary name-calling from their campaigns.

I'd like to think that those in positions of media influence will stick to the issues, and stop with the inflammatory nonsense. Their bosses should demand it.

I'd like to think that we can use this horrible event to hit the reset button on our behavior to others who disagree with us, especially during this election season.

Maybe this is all wishful thinking, but let me ask you...

Do you think they wake up each morning and their first thought is to ruin your day?

Do you think they value personal freedom less than you do?

Do you think they love their kids less than you love yours?

Do you really think you have nothing in common with them that's worth anything?

I don't think any of those things, and I hope you don't either.

The next time somebody challenges you on your politics, say, "Thanks, I always appreciate a different point of view. Let's talk again."

Kick hate to the curb, and strike a blow for understanding. You never know, you both might like how that feels.

That's the Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3FM, the Ray Gibson Show, and First Hawaiian Bank, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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