

Mastering See Saw Politics

By Bob Banov and Roger Ohlsen
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That cat is already long out of the bag! In recent years, the misuse of political power in our nation interferes with our government's ability to generate effective policies, and we need to find more moral and effective ways to engage this wonderful thing we call the U.S. Constitution, or we may find the U.S. in serious decline as a world power in another ten years.

When some of us were kids, we referred to today's teeter-totters as see saws. At an early age, we were not thinking about politics, because it had to do with *the adults* and not us. We were thinking more along the lines of the poem...

See Saw Margery Daw,
Jacky shall have a new master;
Jacky shall earn but a penny a day,
Because he can't work any faster.

Strangely, as actual adults in this new millennium—even since the seventies, we are forced to witness actions performed by an awful lot of people who believe they are full-blown adults, but fail to present as such, even some who are extremely successful and wealthy. And whatever their income, their pursuit of happiness includes costing “Jacky” a penny a day and encourages him or Jane to own and pack heat.

In other words, it is our misfortune that very wealthy people who are so disposed can get away with playing politics with our private and collective futures in ways that only dangerously spoiled, grabby and unappreciative children do when adults allow them to “get away with murder.” We are also at the nadir where it comes to any honest understanding among leading conservatives as to the fact that real racial equality can and should be seen as a goal that can and must finally be achieved in this country.

The misfortune not only affects us as we teeter-totter back and forth as victims of the never to be handled socio-economic struggle between the extremist far right and

intelligent humanitarian adults. It affects every single person on the planet that we might otherwise help, and those who are in sore need of that help; help that we could give quite generously if the circumstances in this country were different and the wars we are engaged in were over.

Since we are making a case here: if you are fundamentally conservative, this is what the father of our country said about this case:

The name of American, which belongs to you, in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of Patriotism.... It should be the highest ambition of every American to extend his views beyond himself, and to bear in mind that his conduct will not only affect himself, his country, and his immediate posterity; but that its influence may be co-extensive with the world, and stamp political happiness or misery on ages yet unborn.

- George Washington

Of course, watching or reading the news in 2012, it is difficult to decide whether the spoiled and repressed among our public servants and media organizations such as FOX News, Conservative PACs, lobbyists and personalities with whom they are associated as so-called Conservatives, see themselves as displaying the intolerable "small" qualities we see them display or not, and whether they like appearing that way, reveling as they do in their actions, asking us to take them seriously while they proclaim their privately crafted forms of crazy propoganda, framing every political issue their wrong way.

Since the seventies, political correctness has blocked us from telling it like it is without taking them seriously at the same time, which is indeed a shame.

In fact, in recent years, there have been microbiologists who have tied serious conservatism, as such, to specific strands of DNA in people's make-up. That would mean far right conservatives haven't a clue about themselves and we do not know to what degree they might change after socialization, even if more properly educated. But establishing the fact might have a tremendously beneficial effect on society as a whole. For whatever reason, the less mature and more driven and greedy conservative, as opposed to the average intelligent conservative thinker, very clearly believes it is okay or smart, even positively brilliant to establish life-limiting forms of Dominion over those less fortunate in this multi-faceted less than color blind world.

Strict Social Darwinism, at its worst, serves to justify the enslavement of the gentlest, most vulnerable and caring among us; those who sense that life is a kind of sharing which can lead to open-hearted happiness; that back and forth and give and take bring a lively see saw effect into the way society can function, and happiness to the majority of our planet's inhabitants.

It is to some degree a media matter. The overgrown kids on FOX News and the Limbaugh types and their followers have the audacity to gloat about their own self-centeredness, and it may be because they aren't bright enough or aware enough or endowed with enough life-positive DNA to see themselves as they really are.

On the one hand, smart, progressive and sometimes even fair-minded conservative news commentators see all this in much the same way as we do at home. However, a news commentator's livelihood depends on his or her presenting urgent dramatic issues that appear to merit comment every day.

The one function TV news performs very well is that when there is no news, we give it to you with the same emphasis as if there were.

- David Brinkley

The New York Times now refers to news commentators as "Opinionators," ostensibly because they are always "opinionating." It's what they do. And that's okay. But where does it all lead?

The hard to swallow fact is that even when a bright, caring, grown-up opinionator is committed to always serving a life-positive purpose, he or she has got to find new issues all the time on which to "opinionate." We could probably safely say that they are "fated" to do that.

It goes without saying that humane men and women in the world of public service are willing to fight for what they believe, as are many opinionators. They will also do their damndest to seek out intelligent solutions to socio-economic problems of every stripe. But at a certain point, the teeter-tottering has to get to everyone.

Bound by the “tight white collar” of politically correct speech, all of us are running a deficit where it comes to finding a serious way to describe the real world. But maybe what those who do not run a DNA deficit would find more acceptable than the current stream of American public discourse is this . . .

If we are to remain a “nation under God,” we need to decide what we mean when we use the word adult in the broadest sense, what social maturity really means and what can be asked of a fully socialized grown-up; and maybe we need to ask the Supreme Court in its sometimes effective wisdom to put together an intelligent, non-partisan opinion on the words life, liberty, happiness and compassion as they relate to the guarantees in our Constitution and Bill of Rights.

Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.

- John Adams

It is always easy to say something that purports to be honest and profound. But is there a simple solution to the present state of affairs we are describing here? Because without compassion and morality from at least the majority of American citizens, the teeter totter effect will continue, and sometimes the people who are least equipped to weather it will get tossed into the air by the heavyweights at the other end of the board, with no kind of landing in sight.

Let us have a go at it...

Many if not most of those on the far right need to take the time to grasp the basics of this amazingly upfront Constitution of ours before they comment on what it states and what is and just what isn't constitutional, and answer the following questions for themselves as well as for moderates and progressives.

1. You can buy a car to go someplace, or a gun to hunt. But how, as NRA pronents allege, does owning a firearm place you and your community in a position where you could, push comes to shove, protect yourselves and your community from against tyranny in today's world, as opposed to 1776? It is, after all, a given that there are no more militias (which are now the National Guard) in this country except those made up of terrorists who would just as soon menace your community as ours—and the potential need for protection is clearly the reason our founders wrote the Second Amendment.

2. Government can make no laws with respect to particular religions. So, why should religions have the right to shape the government to accord with their secularized belief systems, follies, foibles and fables?
3. If your right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness is strategically conceived and implemented in ways that seriously interferes with my right to the same guarantees, what do we do about that? Isn't what you are doing unconstitutional?

You can look at it this way. Whether you call your playground delight a teeter totter or a see saw, it takes two to use it. The "Great American See Saw" relies on a balance between Republicans and Democrats, and remains promising and providential just to the degree that it does not cause you or me or our cousin or poor Aunt Sarah to land on her backside or leave the playground with a fiscal, physical or psychic concussion, which can cause permanent damage!

P.S. In the 50 states, there are more than 5,400 licensed firearms manufacturers in the U.S., with gross sales of at least \$11.7 billion; since last week's Sandy Hook Elementary School Shooting, sales of AR-15 style Bushmasters have skyrocketed, leaving few on retailers' shelves.