

OPINION

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JEFFREY W. OWEN
PUBLISHER
E-mail address:
jowen@thejournalnet.com

SCARLETT SYSE
EDITOR
E-mail address:
syse@thejournalnet.com

"The Daily Journal is dedicated to community service, to defense of individual rights and to providing those checks upon government which no constitution can ensure."

SCOTT ALEXANDER
founding editor, 1963

AT ISSUE

Tony Dungy has undergone an intense personal crisis and major professional successes.

OUR POINT

The way the Indianapolis Colts head coach has carried himself is an inspiration to people inside and outside football.

Dungy stellar example of life's faith in action

The Daily Journal

After the Indianapolis Colts defeated the Arizona Cardinals on Sunday, defensive back Mike Doss gave the game ball to head coach Tony Dungy.

He was honored not just because his team had finished the regular season 14-2, the best in the NFL this season and the most wins for a Colts team.

Rather, it was an expression of love and support for Dungy the man, Dungy the father, Dungy the person.

Dungy's son James died Dec. 22 in Tampa, Fla., apparently the result of a suicide.

The coach immediately left for Florida. The entire team attended the funeral.

He returned to the sidelines last week and coached the team in its final regular-season game.

The death of a child is the worst nightmare for a parent. And to have that death result from a suicide only compounds the sorrow.

But Dungy did more than soldier on. The way he handled himself throughout the ordeal and the continuing period of grieving is an inspiration. It's a lesson everyone can learn from.

Dungy often speaks of his Christian faith. His words never rang hollow, but their tremendous depth became clear during his son's funeral.

He said afterward: "It's never going to be easy. It's never going to be quite the same. But you can't live in the past. You have to look forward to the future, and the Bible talks about that, looking ahead."

"If we say that's what we believe, we have to live it. So I think that's what our whole family's going to do."

He added, "It's a situation I wouldn't wish on anyone, and it's very, very tough. But I think our faith, and my faith in Christ, is what allowed me to carry on and move forward."

Then the coach offered words that every parent and grandparent ought to clip out and carry in their wallets or tape to the refrigerator door:

"Cherish those relationships, husband and wife, parents and children. Don't take them for granted. Just hug your kids every chance you get."

The Colts will play their first playoff game Jan. 15. Indianapolis fans are hoping that game will be the first stop on a road to the Super Bowl.

Win or lose, though, Dungy the life coach already has shown us all how to be a true champion.



AP PHOTO
Indianapolis Colts head coach Tony Dungy runs off the field with the game ball following a 17-13 win against the Arizona Cardinals at the RCA Dome in Indianapolis on Sunday.

Focus: Technology

Privacy, global economy among key issues

The Providence (R.I.) Journal

Technology will continue to accelerate in 2006. Maybe that's good.

Has the computer revolution given us better lives? Probably, all in all. But Americans work longer and longer, most wages are flat, and everything is frantically faster. There's ever more information on the Web, including more inaccurate information, as well as outright fabrication. And is the virtual reality of staring at screens all day as satisfying as having a real life — the sun on your head, the smell of wet earth, etc.?

Whatever happens, we remain animals, not machines. We will have more technology, whether we want it or not, but let's hope that we don't have less life as a result. Meanwhile, some techno-issues for 2006:

- Privacy. Internet security remains problematic, and the theft of personal data will probably get worse before it gets better. People should continue to be leery of providing certain information on the Web, especially such things as bank account and Social Security numbers. The states and the Feds will probably be asked to enact more privacy laws as more credit card and other security breaches make headlines.

- International competition. In countries such as China and India, whose global trade once almost entirely involved cheap manufactured goods, high technology and science of all types are booming. America must therefore step up spending in science and engineering education, and in basic and applied research.

- Biotechnology. Expect further breakthroughs. But also expect more hype about the efficacy of new medicines, medical equipment and medical procedures. The drug-makers and other parts of the health industry spend billions of dollars a year on marketing, but (amazingly!) not all of their assertions are true. And as the South Korean cloning scandal has shown, "breakthroughs" sometimes reflect only the intensifying impatience of a high-tech world — an impatience that could be the death of us.

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New Year's resolutions need detailed planning to succeed

YOUR VIEWS

Veterans named on plaque deserve better treatment

To the editor:

I'm a sister of James Lewis, a veteran whose name is on the memorial plaque in our old high school in Franklin, from which I graduated in 1957, as well as other brothers and sisters.

James volunteered at age 20. He and his brother, Owen, both had pretty good government jobs in California. James wanted to protect his family and country.

I wish Mr. Robert Weaver (soil and water conservation board chairman) could understand that.

I went to a soil and water conservation district meeting the final Thursday of September to ask them to move the memorial plaque to the museum, as did Lohman Atwood. Mr. Weaver said he lived in Greenwood, seldom read the Daily Journal and hadn't read any of the letters in the paper about it. I showed him two.

He didn't offer to take a vote on it. He muttered something about why he has a reservation about it, which I couldn't understand. I became so upset I hurried out of the meeting room. Since that time, people have told me that most members of the soil and water conservation board are in favor of moving the plaque.

I arrived at the meeting early so I had the chance to ask Mr. Weaver if he had any sons who could serve in Iraq. He said two, but they aren't serving. I don't believe he has served either. Perhaps that's why he doesn't want the plaque where many people will see it.

He said, "Well you and Lohman are the only two who have talked to us." A lot of people are saying the school board, county council and city council should talk to the board. I think so too.

Mr. Weaver installs sewer systems. I suppose that's why he wanted to be on the soil and water conservation board. I think his interest lies more in Greenwood than Franklin, but Franklin is the county seat.

I saw in the Daily Journal that they are having elections for soil and water conservation district leaders and, I think, board chairman. I didn't see an exact date but it said early this winter. Perhaps Franklin should try to improve things there. I was surprised at the young board members, except Mr. Weaver, who is chairman. One young man called him "Pop."

My brother Owen came from his job in California for James' funeral service. After graveside rites, he walked over to Dad and said to take us home. He went to the enlistment office and enlisted.

He was seriously wounded in France, so they wouldn't let him return. He passed away in July at age 85. I'm so proud of them both.

Surely there are other relatives around. I wish they would send in letters too.

I too walked down that old dark, quiet hall where the plaque is. How sad. They deserve better. Owen has children. They'd be so proud when viewing it in the museum. I've been touched reading all the many, many letters supporting the moving of the plaque to the museum. They would make my brothers smile, I'm sure. I'm also touched by Lohman Atwood's appreciation, compassion and much time and energy spent on this endeavor. He didn't have a relative involved, but a neighbor. What a guy. I remember him in high school. He was well-liked there too.

I think the only question that needs to be asked is: Why not?

Patty (Lewis) Dewar
Nashville

In a college class many years ago, the professor gave each of us a round coaster-sized paper disc labeled "TUIT." He told us to study it and try to decipher its meaning. We knew he was up to something, but we weren't sure what.

He then led us in a discussion which concerned the things we had been meaning to do but had not yet accomplished. We talked about friends and relatives we wanted to visit when we had time. We listed the little jobs around the house that were awaiting our attention. We tallied the numerous other things that we intended to do as soon as we could.

That's when he explained the paper disc.

"The time has come," he said. "Now you can do all of the things you said you would do when you got a round tuit."

It was pretty corny, I guess, but he made his point.

Most of us should receive an honorary degree in the ability to put things off. Of course, we feel a bit guilty about it. That's why we make New Year's resolutions.

Putting a new calendar up on the wall seems to be the perfect time to turn over a new leaf and make a new start. In fact, January is named for Janus, the Roman god of beginnings and the guardian of doors and entrances. Janus had two faces, one looking forward and the other looking back.



James H. Johnson

Roman gods don't have much sway in our lives today, but we do emulate Janus this time of the year. We sing "Auld Lang Syne" on New Year's Eve and look back on things past. Then we face the future by formulating resolutions for the coming year.

The dictionary defines a "resolution" as "a firm decision to do something." How firm they are might be in question, but one survey found that about half the adult population will make resolutions for the new year.

The top 10 are: 1) Spend more time with family and friends; 2) Become more fit; 3) Lose weight; 4) Quit smoking; 5) Enjoy life more; 6) Quit drinking; 7) Get out of debt; 8) Learn something new; 9) Help others; 10) Get organized.

Imagine the improvement in the general populace if half the country actually succeeded in meeting all of these goals. But, alas, most New Year's resolutions don't last much longer than the red stripe on a well-licked candy cane.

Some survive longer, past the taking down of the Christmas

Liberty should not become a victim of America's war against terrorism

"Give me liberty or give me death," Patrick Henry defiantly declared at the dawn of the American republic.

In the light of recent comments from some of America's present-day leaders, it appears that Henry was laboring under a misapprehension.

Sen. John Cornyn of Texas, responding to critics of President Bush's apparently illegal domestic spying program, has reminded us that "none of your civil liberties matter much after you're dead," while Sen. Trent Lott answered criticisms of the program from fellow Republicans by declaring, "I want my security first. I'll deal with all the details after that."

Updated for contemporary use, Henry's quote would read, "Give me liberty, or give me a slight theoretical decrease in the already microscopic risk I face from terrorism. On second thought, forget about liberty." While this revised version does not roll trippingly off the tongue, it captures the logic of the Bush administration's foreign policy.

This policy features a fundamental contradiction. On the one hand, hundreds of thousands of American soldiers are being ordered to risk their lives in Iraq, while their families shoulder enormous emotional and economic hardships. On the other, they're required to do this while the leaders of a nation made up of what our government seems to assume are hedonistic cowards emit squeaks of fear such as those that escaped Sens. Cornyn and Lott last week.



Paul Campos

In a democracy, this is an unsustainable policy. It's both politically impossible and morally disgusting to expect one group of Americans to exhibit stoic courage and extreme self-sacrifice, while the rest of us are encouraged to be fear-ridden compulsive shoppers who squeal with outrage when, for example, it's suggested that we might forgo a tax cut in order to pay to properly equip the soldiers who protect us.

Indeed, no truly democratic politics can thrive under such circumstances. If the cultural conditions that enabled the Iraq war were to last long enough, the American military would gradually be transformed into a warrior caste that would view the people they were ordered to protect with well-deserved contempt.

Why, after all, should the bravest among us continue to sacrifice for the sake of a culture in which open cowardice isn't considered shameful, and in which those who claim "we" are fighting for freedom are only too happy to trade much of their own freedom in exchange for making the already extraordinary safety in which they live even more cocoon-like?

Fortunately, the American people are not, in fact, a bunch of hysterical cowards who are willing to expose our soldiers to endless danger and hardship in the hope that doing so will make us slightly safer. Nor are we willing to sacrifice basic civil liberties every time some demagogue tries to frighten us into submission with lurid tales of a potential Islamofascist empire that supposedly threatens us with decapitation. (See James Wolcott's popular blog for an amusing if disturbing analysis of the extent to which various "warbloggers" indulge in sadomasochistic fantasies revolving around the horrible tortures that terrorists would inflict on opponents of the war.)

Thus a solid majority of Americans now oppose the Iraq war — not, as some would have it, because of an unwillingness to sacrifice, but precisely because we are revolted by the absurdity of expecting boundless courage and sacrifice from our soldiers so that none whatsoever should be required from ourselves.

"Courage," remarked Samuel Johnson, "is reckoned the greatest of all virtues; because, unless a man has that virtue, he has no security for preserving any other." It doesn't seem to occur to those who tremble before the threat of terrorism that terrorists only have power over the terrified.

Paul Campos is a law professor at the University of Colorado. Send comments to letters@thejournalnet.com.