

4-22-11 Mis-speaks, Mistakes & Missions

My much loved NPR recently made a rare but amusing mis-speak. The woman announced that coming up next would be the monthly “Unimportant Report”. She heard herself and quickly added, “the...ah..unemployment report”. After chuckling, I started thinking about all the unimportant news now included in the category; especially on TV and in “journalism”. For instance, why is celebrity gossip about their fashions and their faux pas categorized as news? It wasn’t always that way. I try my best to participate in reducing the demand for that, in hopes, it will shrink the supply of it. Please join me!

I was also reminded, while listening to the radio recently, why I have always found it difficult to listen to or watch the news of the world. There is so much ugly, horrid and cruel business happening around the earth. Thus, I stay uninformed in order to stay sane. I am not defending that; just explaining my choice. I’d rather have reason for hope.

Sometimes, I don’t have the opportunity to turn the station and end up hearing about something that is so atrocious that it is unimaginable but very real, just the same. Mass murders of non-military families, mass rapes and child trafficking are among the worst. Such was the news while showering the other day and I could not get to the radio to shut it off. Then, through, the splatter of water running, right after hearing about how many people were murdered, the reporter was saying that President Obama was considering raising the limit of allowed deaths and I thought, “What?!! He can’t! That’s not acceptable!

Then I realized that I had mis-heard the message, probably due to the general context of bad and unbelievable topics. The reporter had announced the possibility of raising the limit of allowed debt; not deaths.

Debt and deaths are related, though. Poverty leads to illness, lack of education and continuation of the vicious circle of unemployment and dependence and another generation of ill health. This is why it is better to teach someone how to farm, fish, fix things and create than it is to hand out the food and the tools. That lesson hasn’t changed since biblical times.

But children? What to do with the children? We have to take care of them. We have to teach them. We must feed them. We have to give them hope, also, so that they have reason to believe there are choices, as organizations such as Street Child Africa does “to support children in street situations who are often uncounted and unheard”. (<http://www.streetchildafrica.org.uk/>) My daughter’s friend, Ashley, has been working for this organization in London, with frequent trips to Africa. On April 12, they joined other organizations such as Angels without Wings and Consortium for Street Children, in an international day for street children, called “Louder Together”.

There are lost, stolen and trafficked children right here in the U.S.A. also. We need to be louder together for them all, no matter where we are. Here's hoping for more Ashleys.

And so it is that this year for Earth Day on April 22, 2011, I am hoping that we can all include the people on this earth, especially the children, when we consider working to save the earth. Yes, we will continue to Reduce, Reuse & Recycle. Yes, we will work to save energy and use cleaner sources of energy. Yes, we try to prevent oils spills. Yes, we will stop building nuclear power plants on our earth's faults. Yes, we will work to feed our children and keep them healthy. Yes, we will teach our children well. Yes, we will be good role models for our children by spending responsibly and saving thriftily. Yes, we will be louder together in saving the earth and her children.

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