

REFLECTIONS, 2022

***A Sequel to Reflections, 2016-2021, the Sequel to
An Odyssey of Reform Initiatives, 1986-2015***

Frank G. Splitt

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DEDICATION

This sequel to the Odyssey book is dedicated to the memory of General Andrew Jackson Goodpaster, 1915-2005, a soldier, engineer, and scholar who fought with uncommon valor in World War II, advised several presidents, and came out of retirement to serve as the superintendent of West Point.

He is an example of a truly enlightened military intellectual who used his considerable talents in the service of his country. His life story now serves as an inspiration to others who are challenged with the task of resolving complex domestic and foreign policy issues.

He is also one of my heroes as well as a second cousin—sharing our Polish great grandmother, Katarzyna Pytlic, the mother of Anna Pytlic Splitt, my paternal grandmother.



General Andrew Jackson Goodpaster

A *Daily Herald* letter about General Goodpaster was read into the Congressional Record on March 21, 2019, by Illinois Congresswoman Janet Schakowsky, see Part 1, page 39 of *Reflections, 2016-2021*. Also, see page 56 for a review of C. Richard Nelsons' biography *The Life and Work of Andrew J. Goodpaster: Best Practices in National Security Affairs* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2016).

Note: The Splitt Polish family history is by virtue of Goodpaster's granddaughter, Sarah Nesnow.

IN FOND REMEMBRANCE

*George Aschenbrenner
Robert Beam, Paul Bechtold, Shel Berman,
James Booth, Joe Bordogna, Bill Brown, Morris Brodwin,
Jack Bridges, Richard Carsello, Robert Carsello, Justin Cloe,
Orrie Colby, Jerome Cohen, Stanton Cook, Steve Crowell, Robert Day,
Joseph DeMarco, Wayne Duke, Harvey Duncan, Max Epstein, Edward Ernst,
Jim Errington, Edmund Franzak, Rea Frisbie, John Ferm, Tom Frost, Mike Gorman,
Gerry Gurney, Joe Hafenschler, Carl Heitz, Ted Hesburgh, Bill Hines, Wally Homerding,
Rudy Hornacek, Ed Hughes, John Jacobs, Robert Janowiak, Don Jaycox, Raymond Jenks,
Arnold Kaplan, William Kashul, Donald Kayser, John Klemenz, Tom Kummerer, Ed Laramie,
Grant Leslie, Bob Loftus, Gerry McCullough, Bob McKelvey, Jim McKelvey, Emmett McMahan,
Anthony Michel, Art Moeller, Bill Muhr, John Nowicki, Jack O'Mara, Vernon Oie, Jim Ostler,
John Pappas, Edson Peck, John Pope, Harold Raemer, Andy Reddy, Wilm Reddy, David Richter,
Dwight Sandman, Raymond Schaff, Arthur Schmitt, George Schott, Paul Shylo, Arnold Siegert,
Bernie Smedley, Dave Solomon, Eugene Splitt, Duane Stewart, Theodore Sunko, Allen Taflove,
Jack Terry, Harry Thill, Bob Tucker, Jim Vaughan, Larry von Tersch, Bill Viviano,
Earl Washburn, Chris Wise, Max Wilzius, Peter Wrenn, Robert Young,
Thomas Zamzow, Henry Zucker*

**Cherished friends, classmates, colleagues, mentors, and teammates who played
a significant role in my life as did the following mentors who I never met:**

*Edward Birge, Thomas Berry, Joseph Campbell, Lou Gehrig,
Andrew Goodpaster, Aldo Leopold, Carl Sagan,
Jonas Salk, Claude Shannon, Fulton Sheen,
Edward O. Wilson*

Stat rosa pristina nomine, nomina nuda tenemus

This Latin phrase comes from the last line of Umberto Eco's book, *The Name of the Rose*. The words are those of Eco's narrator, Adso of Melk; in English: yesterday's rose endures in its name, we hold empty names. I don't believe the people's names we hold are empty as the names conjure up images and memories that endure in our minds long after the named person has passed.

Table of Contents

Dedication	iii
In Fond Remembrance	iv
Comments Re: An Odyssey of Reform Initiatives, 1986-2015	v
On Reducing Falls by High-Falling Risk Patients	1
Woke extremism counterproductive to the goals it promotes	4
Reflections on the 1992 Indiana University Graduate Business Conference	7
Reflections on War	9
1949: A Pivotal Year for the George H. Hagen Family	12
The Mar-a-Lago Search: Much Ado About Something	15
The Mar-a-Lago Search: An Afterword	18
On the Devotion of Trump Supporters	21
Fear for the Future of American democracy	23
Daily Herald: Letter to the Editor <i>A Wakeup Call for the Biden Administration</i>	26
The Wall Street Journal: Letters to the Editor <i>Resisting atonement declarations</i> <i>Time to Call a Spade a Spade</i> <i>Pope Should Call a Spade a Spade</i> <i>Pope Francis and Realpolitik?</i> <i>More on "Trump Derangement Syndrome"</i> <i>College Debt Forgiveness Is a Distraction</i> <i>The Mar-a-Lago Search Affidavit: Much Ado About Something?</i> <i>College Debt Forgiveness Distracts from the Real Problem</i> <i>Another counterproductive woke measure</i> <i>A Loud Wakeup Call for</i> <i>A Red Wave Could Undo American Democracy</i> <i>The key to a good education: Discipline enforced by dedicated teachers and parents</i> <i>Fear for the future of American democracy</i>	26
The National Catholic Reporter Letter <i>Time to Call a Spade a Spade</i>	30
Book Review <i>The Divider: Trump in the White House, 2017-2021</i>	30
An Afterword	31
A Word of Gratitude	34
The Author	35

Comments Re: *An Odyssey of Reform Initiatives, 1986-2015*

Intercollegiate athletics, as currently practiced by many universities, compromise admissions standards, weaken the curriculum, and threaten other essential academic values. Neither coaches nor athletic directors, nor presidents, nor trustees can bring about real reform without help. Faculty members have the most at stake in upholding academic values; they represent the best hope of achieving genuine progress in making the kinds of changes required. As a result, I warmly endorse the arguments contained in this brief for involving faculty in a campaign for integrity in college sports. (From his commentary on the 2003 brief, "Reclaiming Academic Primacy in Higher Education.")

—**Derek C. Bok**, the 300th Anniversary University Professor and former President, Harvard University

A Great Brief! I'm staggered at the complexity of the total problem. Frank Splitt does an excellent job of organization and explanation. After reading the entire document, I believe that achieving the stated goals would not only be a boon to colleges and universities in the long run, but would also provide a tremendous, and needed, national challenge to primary and secondary education. The challenge would be to improve the quality of their graduates, and in the process, enable many school districts to emerge from a morass of continued mediocrity. This is a must read for university trustees. (From his commentary on the 2003 brief, "Reclaiming Academic Primacy in Higher Education.")

—**Stanton R. Cook**, Retired Chairman, Tribune Company, Life Trustee, Northwestern University

As Splitt concludes, reform will only occur when concerned faculty demand that college sports be mainstreamed into the university and realigned with academic values, and when citizens demand that public bodies such as governing boards, state government, and federal government cease the special treatment that shields intercollegiate athletics from the rules that govern the rest of higher education. This sequel joins Splitt's first paper as a must-read for those concerned about the future of higher education in America. {From the foreword to the 2004 sequel to the brief, "The Faculty-Driven Movement to Reform College Sports"}

—**James J. Duderstadt**, President Emeritus, University of Michigan

How can one begin anywhere except to compliment the author in the strongest and most sincere terms for the time, effort, and insight he brought to the issues in education. As one who shares his interest in the subject, I much appreciate his entry into the arena. Anyone serious about reform should refrain from using the term "student-athlete." Reform will come only when faculty apply to themselves what they so freely demand of others. In other words, reform must begin with truth-telling disclosure. No disclosure; no reform.

—**Jon L. Ericson**, Ellis & Nelle Levitt Professor emeritus and former Provost at Drake University, and author of *While Faculty Sleep: A Little Book About Big Corruption* (Lulu, 2015).

I concur with Frank Splitt's views as expressed in this book, specifically, that we need to get priorities right at our nation's schools and that America's education enterprise should be focused on academics not athletics. The only way America will be able to maintain its place as the world's premier economic power is to fully develop the potential of its people. Meeting this challenge will require an education system in which the primacy of achievement and excellence in all spheres of life is absolutely clear. Funding priorities for our extracurricular programs as well as for core academics must be scrutinized, particularly our tendency to fund large sports programs that serve a small number of elite athletes at the expense of broad-based programs in music and the arts.

—**John R. Gerdy**, former associate commissioner of the Southeastern Conference and author of *Ball or Bands: Football vs. Music as an Educational and Community Investment* (Archway Publishing, 2014).

I have become acquainted with efforts to propose a seemingly minor but important and timely change to "ABET Engineering Criteria 2000" that would upgrade knowledge of environmental implications of engineering designs. I believe that such a move to foster and integrate environmental considerations BROADLY across engineering education is sorely needed. Essentially all engineering disciplines now play a role in the move toward "dematerialization" of net resource flows (lifecycle design) in providing goods and services. (From his commentary on the 2002 trilogy "Engineering Education Reform")

—**John H. (Jack) Gibbons**, (former) Assistant to the President for Science and Technology and Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology

The perspectives in this brief should prove to be of value as "grounding" material for all those taking on the formidable task of driving serious and comprehensive reform in, intercollegiate athletics requisite to preserving its role in the academic enterprise. It is a valuable contribution to the ongoing debate on reform efforts in higher education ... most worthy of widespread distribution, as well as serious attention and discussion by all those involved, or, that ought to be involved in higher education reform movements. (From his foreword to the 2003 brief "Reclaiming Academic Primacy in Higher Education")

—**Theodore M. Hesburgh**, C.S.C., President Emeritus, University of Notre Dame

*In my 12 years as editor of a subscription-based news organization with a mission to provide all sides of every issue related to college athletics, I have interacted with hundreds of people who cover a wide spectrum of opinions on the subject. If asked to describe Frank Splitt in two words, I would say “Renaissance Man.” As reflected in his *Odyssey of Reform Initiatives*, Frank is an idealist in the sense that he advocates for optimum resolution of complex issues. His odyssey reveals a passionate champion of academic and integrity and primacy, as well as transparency and accountability in all of the areas he addresses. Some might disagree with his opinions, but none can deny his perseverance, consistency and the compelling nature of his arguments.*

—**Nick Infante**, Editor College Athletics Clips

I feel indebted to Frank Splitt for his years of responsible criticism of the impact of commercialism on American higher education. Frank has brought the insights of a thoughtful and highly skilled engineer to bear not only on the problems of engineering education, but on the educational role of athletics. His dogged and perceptive critique has alerted us both to what it is that we need to defend, and who it is that we need to beware. It is hard for me to believe that it is not too late to save intercollegiate athletics as a genuinely academic enterprise, but if we can, it will be because of the efforts of Frank and his allies. I am proud to be among that number.

—**Stanley N. Katz**, Professor, Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University

In 1985, the Institute for Educational Leadership published a very influential report authored by Harold L. Hodgkinson, “All One System: Demographics of Education, Kindergarten through Graduate School.” The report had the broad effect of modifying the perception of American education as a set of discrete institutions serving students at each age level and working in isolation from each other. Hodgkinson argued that, “if people can begin to SEE the educational system as a single entity through which people move, they may begin to behave as if all (levels) of education were related.” This is a vision that clearly informs the work of Frank Splitt in these collected papers. His passionate interest in reforming college athletics and restoring the priority of the academic mission of higher education led him inevitably to a thoughtful and well-informed consideration of related problems currently affecting K-12 education. Students at every level will benefit if his voice is heard.

—**Michael Mangan**, Education Consultant (retired), Illinois State Board of Education

The author of these three papers, the trilogy on engineering education reform, offers specific suggestions. In a true missionary spirit, he draws on extensive industrial experience, his participation in the early development of ABET EC 2000, and a substantial immersion in academe to provide his own noteworthy insights and a number of provocative ideas. Whether or not you agree with them, this interesting set of papers should be viewed as a valuable contribution to the literature on engineering education reform. It is worthy of serious attention and discussion by all stakeholders in engineering education. (From her foreword to the 2002 trilogy “Engineering Education Reform”)

—**Irene Peden**, Professor Emerita, University of Washington

Changing the ABET engineering criteria to include environmental responsibilities should be enacted immediately. Environmental responsibility should become a core part of all engineering classes. New classes are not needed but current professors need to be educated on how to integrate environmental impact into their classes. Design projects can be geared to this as well, when applicable, which will get students thinking creatively about these issues outside of class. I endorse Frank Splitt's initiative as a positive step towards environmental literacy. (From her commentary on the 2002 trilogy “Engineering Education Reform”)

—**Manijeh Razeghi**, Walter P Murphy Professor, Director Center for Quantum Devices, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science, Northwestern University.

Frank Splitt provides the public and academics with a straight-speaking, well-referenced book describing the ways in which universities are compromising their basic academic mission when they fail to adequately monitor sport and its place in their institutions. More important, he sets forth an agenda for faculty, telling them what they can do. Members of the academy should take the time to read the brief to discover what is happening all around them, become engaged, and go on to contribute to the restoration of academics to its rightful primacy in higher education. (From her commentary on the 2003 brief “Reclaiming Academic Primacy in Higher Education”)

—**Carol Simpson Stern**, Professor and former Dean of the Graduate School, Northwestern University, and Past President of the American Association of University Professors

Frank Splitt set the table for the college reform conversation. I showed up late but intend to add to what he started with my formation of Paper Class, Inc., paperclassinc.com, an organization dedicated to fighting on behalf of student-athletes for a fair and proper education.

—**Mary Willingham**, Co-author (with Jay M. Smith) of *Cheated: The UNC Scandal, the Education of Athletes, and the Future of Big-time College Sports* (Potomac Books, 2015).



The author with his wife Judy after the April 19, 2017, *Odyssey* book presentation ceremony at Northwestern University. *Photo by Anne Rassas.*

On Reducing Falls by High-Falling-Risk Patients

By Frank G. Splitt
January 29, 2022

This note was originally prompted by a review of MEDCOM 's approach to fall prevention.¹ It is my understanding that, contrary to recommendations in this report, many nursing homes and long-term care facilities are opting to go "alarm-free"—phasing out resident alarm systems.² This action is counterintuitive since falls remain one of the most frequent and harmful health events among the inpatient population.³ Based on subsequent conversations with professional and family-member caregivers, falling is a primary concern as it should be with all elderly Americans and their family members.

The rationale for phasing out resident alarm systems appears to be dubious at best. For example, it is claimed that alarms can frighten the resident or distract the nursing staff with false alarms. Sad to say, the alarm-free tactic could very well be driven by the potential for legal liabilities since such systems can provide hard evidence of inadequate response times related to understaffing of the responsible care-giving unit. This is a particularly sensitive issue in view of the COVID-19 pandemic with its related staff burnouts and outages.

Recent access to a fairly exhaustive study report from the National Institutes of Health on the effectiveness of alarms and alerting devices has been illuminating. The report's detailed abstract is well worth the read and is included for ease of reference. An overarching conclusion of the NIH report follows:

Bed alarms alone are relatively useless as an intervention. For alarms to be effective, they must be part of a much more comprehensive care plan put into place for residents who are at risk for falling. In fact, there is no single thing that can be done which reduces fall rates. Fall rates which are reduced in any facility are reduced by a multi-pronged approach to resident safety and by a clear focus by staff on keeping residents safe.

Generally speaking, these alarm systems are not considered as restraints under Illinois law, but rather as a method to help understaffed nursing-care units cope with the threat of patient falling. However, bed and chair alarms are currently considered restraints if an audible alarm can be heard by the patient.⁵ Nonetheless, such alarms can be utilized via a doctor's order and the patient's (or a POA's) approval.

Alarm systems are especially applicable to patients with various forms of dementia and/or one or more physical disabilities that preclude use of the nurse-call button at their bedside or in their bathroom when responding to an innate urge to toilet. It also applies to attempts by these patients to exit their wheelchairs without supervision.

What is needed in the latter situations is an alarm system that functions just like the bedside nurse-call button that is activated by the patient's body movement rather than by the patient remembering to push the button by hand. As a matter of fact, the development of such systems has given rise to a growth industry.

Existing systems are based on wireless pagers with an alarm signal triggered by bodily pressure, or lack thereof, on the bed or wheelchair seat, see for instance Notes 6-8. Some of these companies offer wireless systems with an anticipatory response, triggered when the patient stirs from a sleeping to an upright position in bed or attempts to move out of a wheel chair

Absent any of these alarm systems, falling events can still be reduced, possibly minimized, for high-risk patients at nursing homes and long-term care facilities. This can be done via a three-part, patient-specific regimen that begins with careful control of the patient's hydration and evening liquid intake.⁹ The second and third parts of the regimen would include bed checks every hour or every other hour coupled with routine nighttime toileting tailored to the patient's nighttime toileting history with requisite adjustments over time. Although the latter tactic disrupts sleep, it is considered a relatively small price to pay for a reduction in falls with related potential for serious injury or even death.

Finally, a clear competitive advantage can be gained by nursing homes and long-term care facilities that can not only provide demonstrable evidence of relatively low fall rates, but also are able to highlight the facilities use of a multi-pronged approach to resident safety with a clear focus by staff on keeping residents safe. However, no matter how well conceived the approach and its related protocols may be, low fall rates ultimately depend on day-to-day implementation and how well the various elements of the facility deliver what is required without fail.

Notes

1. Medcom, Inc., "PREVENTING FALLS IN LONG-TERM CARE: A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH," MedCom, Nov. 18, 2016, <https://www.medcominc.com/long-term-care/preventing-patient-falls-in-long-term-care/>

2. Pintas & Mullins Law Firm, "Nursing Homes Phase Out Resident Alarms Pintas.com," <https://www.pintas.com/blog/nursing-homes-phase-out-resident-alarms/>

3. Quigley, Patricia, "Building Clinical Capacity and Competency: Fall Injury Prevention," MedBridge, www.medbridgeeducation.com/h/white-paper

4. Mileski, et al, "Alarming and/or Alerting Device Effectiveness in Reducing Falls in Long-Term Care (LTC) Facilities? A Systematic Review," National Institutes of Health, March 25, 2019, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6473316/>

Abstract: Perceptions against the use of alarming devices persist in long-term care environments as they are seen as annoying, costly, and a waste of time to the staff involved. Ascertaining whether these perceptions are true or false via the literature was a focus of this study. Proper information to educate staff and to work past these perceptions can be a positive effector for resident safety. Many facilitators for the use of alarming devices were found, as well as many barriers to their use as well. New technology is changing the perceptions regarding these types of devices as time passes. Education is a key component for staff, residents, and families. There are "traditional" issues with the use of alarms such as alarm fatigue by caregivers, high costs of implementation, and issues with proper implementation of alarms. Alarms are perceived as intrusive and the noise from them can be a potential cause of falls. However, alarming devices can be a key intervention in the safety of those residents who are prone to falls. This requires proper implementation and education for all parties involved, and proper oversight surrounding use of the devices.

5. RCare Administration, "CMS Issues Large Restrictions on Bed and Chair Alarms in Senior Housing," RCare, Nov 27, 2020, <https://rcareinc.com/2020/11/27/restrictions-on-bed-and-chair-alarms>

6. Lunderg Early-Alert Alarm System, <https://www.amazon.com/Lunderg-Early-Alert-Alarm-System/dp/B08WJ7ZWQ7>

7. RCare, Inc., <https://rcareinc.com/>, RCare claims better nurse call systems to improve the lives of seniors.

8. Posey Alarms, A Posey Sitter Elite Alarm System is used at the Riverside Miller Rehabilitation Center in Kankakee, Illinois, https://www.amazon.com/Posey-8345AC-Sitter-EliteAdaptor/dp/B00GNR3A4C/ref=sr_1_21?adgrpid=1340305244514745&hvadid=83769149813208&hvbmt=be&hvdev=c&hvlocphy=97110&hvnetw=o&hvqmt=e&hvtargid=kwd-83769435432890%3Aloc-190&hydadcr=21851_10465524&keywords=posey+bed+alarm&qid=1642891660&sr=

9. "Dehydration in Elderly People - How much should they be Drinking?" agespace, <https://www.agespace.org/health/keeping-healthy-in-old-age/dehydration>

Guest columnist Frank Splitt: Woke extremism counter productive to the goals it promotes

Frank G. Splitt
Guest Columnist
Updated 3/28/2022

Extremists in both the Democratic and Republican parties divide America, as evidenced by the divisive behavior of the anti-fascist groups in the antifa movement on the far left and that of hate groups such as QAnon and the Proud Boys on the far right.

The following narrative focuses on divisive far left woke behavior -- the extreme measures seen in woke cancel culture that are characterized by overly zealous actions to resolve contentious issues surrounding social and racial justice such as aspirational ideals of inclusion, diversity and equity. These actions fuel resentment and not only contribute to the widening of political divisions, but can also lead to lost elections.

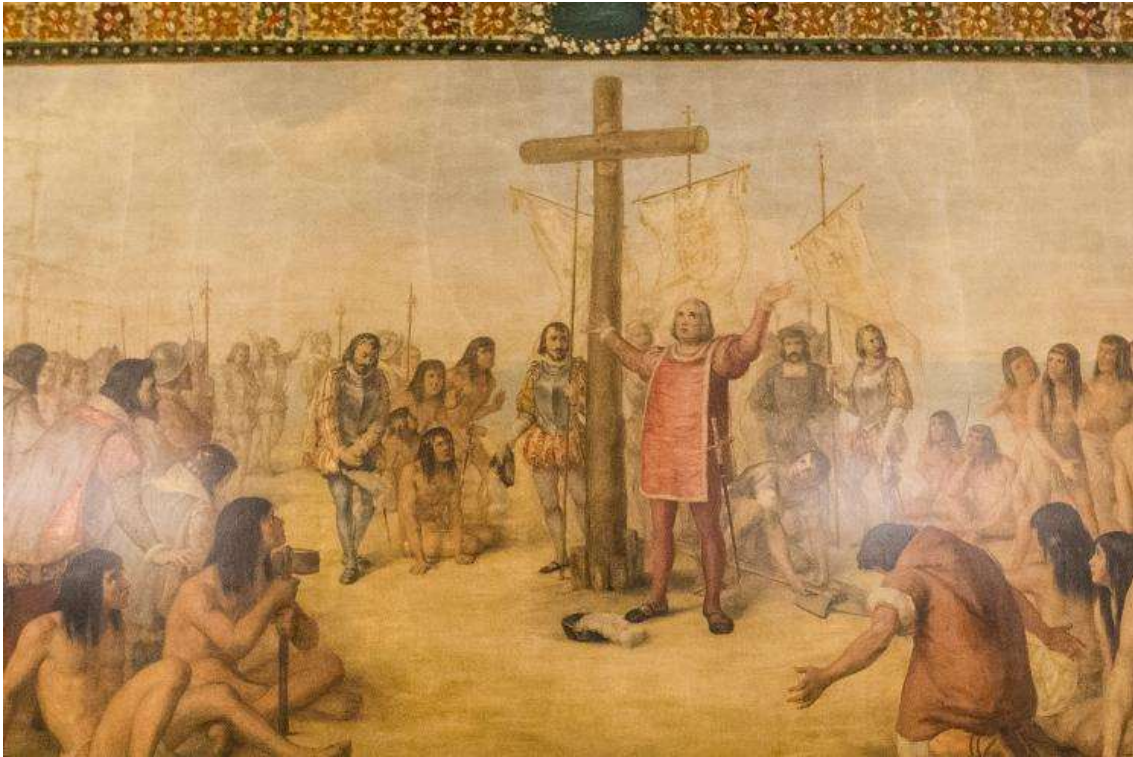
To begin, the subtitle to the *Daily Herald's* Feb. 20 editorial, "The Father of the Nation," took the form of a penetrating question: "How should Washington's slave ownership affect our reverence for his role in the birth of our country?" The same question could be asked writ large over previously respectable people such as Christopher Columbus, Junipero Serra, Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison.

In today's woke cancel culture, the names of Washington and all these other notables are considered inappropriate, not worthy of naming opportunities for memorials, because their lives and actions could be related to charges of racism, sexism and /or colonialism. So say reassessments by extremists who tell a horror-like story of our nation's complicated development with emphasis on its sometimes sordid behavior. This unbalanced telling of American history is undoubtedly deeply resented by many if not most Americans.

In that light, a true and balanced history of America would reflect the good and the bad while still providing very good reasons to honor the significant roles played by Washington and all the others in the complex birth of our nation

In line with the above, there are related questions that should also be asked, such as: What is the objective end to this woke business, this sometimes hypersensitivity

to issues surrounding social and racial justice? What long-term good can come of overbearing measures that build a solid foundation for long-lasting resentment that can, in turn, foment bitter hatred?



One of Notre Dame's controversial covered murals depicting Christopher Columbus and Native Americans Associated Press Photo

A good example of resentment was that felt by Americans of Italian and/or Catholic heritage with the January 2019 cave of Notre Dame University to the extreme left by covering 1880s murals that portray Columbus bringing the Catholic faith to this hemisphere. Another example is the resentment felt by past graduates of Madison, Wisconsin's James Madison Memorial High School when the school board approved a name change to that of a notable Black graduate of the school, thus Vel Phillips Memorial High School. The change was based on the fact that Madison once owned slaves, a common practice in Virginia in his time.

Also, consider the following two non-memorial-related woke measures: First, the 2005 elimination of (Indian) Chief Illiniwek as the symbol of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and the Warrior Chief at Maine West High School eliminations that are still deeply resented by Illini and Maine West alumni and second, the fairly recent history of non-faculty administrators at our nation's colleges and universities placing ever outsized emphasis on diversity, inclusion and equity -- diminishing faculty hiring based on disciplinary merit.

Are all such measures steps on a slippery slope which, if followed to the end, will make us always see things far worse than they really are? C.S. Lewis proffers an answer in his 1952 book, *Mere Christianity*: "Finally, we shall insist on seeing everything – God and our friends and ourselves included – as bad and not be able to stop doing it: we shall be fixed forever in a universe of pure hatred

In her Feb. 19 Wall Street Journal op-ed, "San Francisco Schools the Left," Peggy Noonan opined on parental countermeasures against the far left's woke atonement measures:

"The landslide recall of three Board of Education members will have major national repercussions. Overreach via atonement measures by the left-wing of the Democratic Party foment resentments and will likely fragment the Party as well as repulse Independents."

As Noonan stated: "A cultural rebellion within the Democratic Party has begun" -- all but assuring a return to power of the Republican Party that has been crusading against 'woke' as, for example, with its 2022 CPAC theme of "AWAKE NOT WOKE."

Finally, one must ask: When will the politicians in both political parties ever learn that extremism is not only a surefire recipe for ineffective government, but extremism in any form tears the fabric of American Democracy as well?

- Frank G. Splitt, author of the book "An Odyssey of Reform Initiatives: 1986-2015" and its sequel "Reflections: 2016-2021," is a former McCormick Faculty Fellow at Northwestern University's McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science and a Vice President Emeritus of Nortel Networks.

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Reflections on the 1992 Indiana University Graduate Business Conference

By Frank G. Splitt
July 14, 2022

Significant events in my professional life are recalled from time to time, events that did not come to mind during an ‘in-depth’ interview by the Arthur J. Schmitt Foundation’s Carla Slawson.¹ This is just such a time and the April 3, 1992, Graduate Business Conference at Indiana University was one such event. Here's the story:

It was my good fortune to be invited to serve as a panelist at the conference. The first public announcement of my newly created position as Northern Telecom Inc.'s VP of Educational and Environmental Initiatives took place at the conference as did the initial distribution of my National Engineering Consortium (NEC) monograph "Creating Our Common Future"²—making it a truly significant event. The monograph was not only used as a handout, but was included in the conference proceedings as well.

The conference program's panel segment was moderated by renowned Harvard Law Professor Charles Ogletree, a former moderator in Fred Friendly’s late 1980s CBS series “Ethics in America” that served as a model for the segment. Frank Popoff, president and CEO of the Dow Chemical Company, led the panel. Other panel members played a wide variety of roles in accordance with their professional lives---ranging from news reporters to medical doctors and educators. Based on the publication of the NEC monograph, I was cast in the role of an advocate for the environment.

Ogletree initiated the segment by outlining a hypothetical situation involving environmental, ethical, and business issues stemming from the use of a weed-treatment product that apparently caused the death of a farm worker. The product was manufactured by a fictitious company with Popoff playing the role as its CEO. Each of the panel members was asked for their comments as Ogletree orchestrated an escalation of the situation to an extreme level of seriousness. The exercise clearly illuminated the wide range of decision dilemmas faced by business executives when confronted with the incremental expenses related to ethical and environmental factors.

In no small way, the panel discussions were a harbinger of the ensuing 30 years where corrective actions to mitigate against pending climate disaster have been

countered by arguments such as no need to rush, there is still plenty of time, or maybe it's a hoax and just won't happen—arguments aptly captured in a recent Monte Wolverton cartoon.³

After the conference, Popoff asked me for copies of the NEC monograph. His stated purpose was to distribute these monographs at an upcoming April 21, 1992, White House conference with President H. W. Bush and other U. S. business executives who were to address the topic of the American business response to environmental challenges.

There is a poignant end to the story. In July 2016, Charles Olgletree announced that he was diagnosed with early-stage Alzheimer disease. Three years later, after an extensive missing persons search, he was found safe by Boston police—providing further evidence that this cruel disease does not discriminate among those it attacks. Persons are not immune no matter how brilliant their minds or how powerful their offices. Claude Shannon, the father of the Information Age, U.K. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and U.S. President Ronald Regan provide salient examples of this circumstance.

Web Links

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2. Splitt, Frank G., "Creating Our Common Future, Reflections on the Four Es: Environment, Education, Energy, and Economics, National Engineering Consortium, April 1992, subsequently published as an adapted paper, in the Fall 1992 issue of *THE BENT* of Tau Beta Pi, <http://www.futurevectors.com/Odyssey/Splitt%20%20Common%20Future.pdf>
3. Wolverton, Monte, "Climate Disaster Cartoon," *Daily Herald*, Opinion, June 12. 2022, www.wolvertoon.com/wolv1906.gif

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Reflections on War

Many required to prevent a nuclear war that needs only one to start.

By Frank G. Splitt

July 15, 2022

The book *Breakthrough: Emerging New Thinking* was published in 1988 at the behest of the Beyond War Foundation.¹ In the book, Soviet and Western scholars issued a challenge to build a world beyond war. Many admired the Foundation's efforts to address the challenge, but warned that no matter how many converts were made to the cause of enduring peace in the world, it could take only one person to trigger a war. How right they were. In August 1990, Iraqi Dictator Saddam Hussein was the "one" who led an invasion of Kuwait.

Years later came related commentary from the late Samuel Hynes, a WWII Marine fighter pilot, who went on to become a world renowned professor of English literature. He resonated with Plato's circa 370 BC admonition: *Only the dead have seen the end of war* with his anti-thematic comments introducing Episode Seven, "A World Without War," in Ken Burns' 2006 film *The War*. The essence of Hynes' comments: The world contains evil, no evil no war; there will always be plenty of evil and there will always be wars because humans are aggressive beings.

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing" is a popular phrase warning against complacency in the face of evil: Today's "one" is Russian President Vladimir Putin who is waging an aggressive, asymmetric, and immoral war against the people of Ukraine. On the other hand, Pope Francis is a good man, but he seems reluctant to call Putin an aggressor—claiming NATO's barking at the door of Russia may have led to the invasion of Ukraine.²

A negotiated peace that results in Russia gaining Ukraine's entire eastern region could be seen as payoff for Russia's aggression, coerced by Putin's repeated threats of nuclear war. That would surely upend post-WWII world order—the price to be paid by the West for its cavalier, often times provocative if not condescending, post-cold war relationship with Russia.³ A practical view would see this as an opportunity for a do-over based on the Ukraine learning experience. More importantly, it would also provide motivation to avert the chance of widespread nuclear devastation. What to do? ^{4,5}

If Putin does not accept mediated peace negotiations, the Pope can then speak clearly about Putin's nuclear blackmail and his murderous war against Ukraine and

its civilian population—countering Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill’s claim that God is on Russia’s side.⁶ The Pope’s statement could also provide an incentive for the U.N.’s General Assembly to do whatever it takes to either remove the veto power from members of its Security Council or reorganize with its original purpose of maintaining international peace and security, but structured in way to prevent deadlock by a member state armed with a nuclear arsenal.

Apparently, Putin is determined to annex Ukraine’s entire Donbas region as he did its Crimean region while Ukraine’s government insists that it will cede no part of its pre-2014 territory to Russia—leading to a seemingly unresolvable impasse. Letting emotion govern the West’s actions would be a recipe for disaster. Rather, a practical approach based on logic and reality should be the West’s order of the day if its best efforts to constrain Russia’s aggression are limited to an impasse. A negotiated settlement should not only ensure Ukraine’s survival as a sovereign nation, but should also avoid the flaws of the 2014-2015 Minsk agreements with its related weak Western leadership.^{7,9} Both provided Putin with a clear pathway and motivation for further aggression.

Reasonable actions could possibly persuade Ukraine to accept a negotiated settlement without complete restoration of its pre-2014 territory. Here are a few such actions that can be expanded if need be: A fast track for entering the European Union, a binding security guarantee from willing nations of all its borders including that of a substantial un-ceded land bridge to the Black Sea, and a reconstruction program similar to the post-WW II Marshall plan with major contributions from America.

Finally, consideration should be given to the possibility that Putin may out of desperation break the nuclear taboo.⁷ In anticipation of this potential reality, the U.S. National Security Council should bolster its competence by taking full advantage of the deep experience, strategic thinking, and different perspectives of former Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates⁹ and former Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger.¹⁰ Their wisdom, coupled with that of still others, could be representative of the “many” required to stop the war in Ukraine—leading to deterrence of a potential nuclear holocaust

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Margaret Mangan, a former high-school forensics coach advised that it takes a lot of hard work and talent to be a finalist let alone take first place in a state-wide forensics competition. The Hagen sisters, Louise and my wife Judy, highlighted the forensics component of the following story

1949: A Pivotal Year for the George H. Hagen Family

By Frank G. Splitt
August 10, 2022

The spring of 1949 was a joyful time at the 605 Blaine Street home of George and Emilie Hagen in Edgerton, Wisconsin. Their daughter Helen Louise was named the valedictorian of Edgerton high school's June graduating class as well as a finalist in Wisconsin's state-wide Forensics competition in Madison. Their daughter Judith Anne was also named a finalist in that competition.

Louise's speech was concerned with the banning of sales of oleomargarine in the state of Wisconsin while Judy's recitation was based on Ring Lardner's 1920's short story "I Can't Breathe." The story was about a young lady who was staying at an inn with her "old" uncle and aunt while having on-again-off-again infatuations with several young men—deciding to keep a diary so she would have a record of her two weeks stay at the inn. The diary provided Judy with all the lines she needed.

To the absolute delight of their parents, both Louise and Judy took first place in their respective categories—Original Five-Minute Speech for Louise and Humorous Declamation for Judy. Judy's first place was considered to be a relatively rare accomplishment for a 14-year-old freshman. She was subsequently invited to perform at various venues in central Wisconsin.

That August Judy turned 15. Sad news came shortly thereafter. The Highway Trailer Company, George's employer, was shutting down and he was to be out of a job. It was decided that the family should return to Madison where there were better employment opportunities for George. Indeed there were, as he became the chief procurement officer for the U.S. Airforce at Truax field located near Madison at the Dane County Regional Airport. A few years later, George gained official recognition as one of the top civilian procurement officers in the Strategic Air Command. Judy joined her parents for the train trip to Colorado Springs to attend the award ceremony at the Air Force Academy.

Back to the moving situation: In some ways it was a difficult move for Louise but posed no really serious problem as she was going to Madison anyway to begin her freshman year as a Home Economics major at the University of Wisconsin. She graduated while pregnant in 1953, married to Tom Gitter, a gifted and highly motivated board-certified pharmacist.

On the other hand, Judy was devastated with the moving situation. There was to be no more oboe playing in the marching band and repeated kudos for her art work, not to mention the painful loss of friends—including Roger Gilbertson, but that was good news as far as her mother was concerned.

Judy entered Edgewood High School's class of 1952 as a sophomore. There she would flourish—making friends beyond measure as she began to lay the foundation for a transition to Edgewood College. Her Uncle Ray and Aunt Florence Dvorak provided a warm and welcoming place to live at their Madison home at 2001 Jefferson. Louise and Judy were united with their parents after they purchased and took residence at 1826 Rowley Avenue.

Judy graduated from Edgewood College in 1956—working that summer as a counselor and archery instructor at a Catholic Girls Camp at Loon Lake near Shawno, Wisconsin. Thereafter, she embarked to Milwaukee to begin a career in teaching that reflected her love of music and art.*

As fate would have it, the Rowley Avenue residence was to become the Hagen family home for close to 40 more years.

* See “Judith Hagen Splitt: Music and Life,” Part 2, page 34 of *Reflections, 2016-2021* at <http://www.futurevectors.com/Odyssey/Splitt-OdysseyTheSequel.pdf>



Courtesy of Anne Rassas

Taking part in the July 20, 2021, *Reflections, 2016-2021* book presentation at the Town of Plum Lake Public Library (TPLPL) in Sayner, WI, were from left: Ida Nemec; TPLPL Librarian (1981-2017) volunteer, Splitt grandson Adrian White, daughter Anne Splitt White, author Frank Splitt, son Frank Splitt III, TPLPL Librarian Emilie Braunel, and library volunteer Jennifer Heitz.

The Mar-a-Lago search: Much ado about something

By Frank G. Splitt

The Daily Herald
Opinion, Guest View
August 29, 2022

Headlines concerning the search of former President Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago residence can be found here, there, and everywhere. It seems that not a day goes by without a media story on the subject with some discounting the serious nature of the quest to retrieve highly classified documents that involve potential crimes — including mishandling national defense information and destroying records related to an investigation of this mishandling.



The FBI seized documents of various serious security classifications in the raid of former President Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate earlier this month. ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE PHOTO.

These stories have boosted support for the former president among Republicans, most of whom believe he has been unfairly targeted by politically motivated Democrats. But, the stories are also troubling — portraying a somewhat cavalier attitude with regard to the lack of care and respect for security classifications covering documents containing sensitive information. More will be said about the stories after a brief digression.

Speaking as someone with some experience in these matters, I find cavalier attitudes and approaches to security classifications to be absolutely appalling.

It would have been anathema to me, my colleagues, and to the government officials to whom we reported during the 1956-1964 time period when we were actively engaged in very highly classified research and development on a variety of military systems that were critical to national security.

This was also the time when America was in the midst of a Cold War with Russia and, as so-called scientific Cold Warriors, we felt a patriotic duty to handle work-related classified research documents with the utmost care and respect. So sensitive was the nature of the R & D that security clearances, with levels ranging up to Top Secret/ Cryptographic “Eyes only,” were necessitated with each step up on the security ladder demanding ever more arduous scrutiny of my personal, financial, academic and professional life.

How tight can security be? Consider the following: The security officer who was responsible for oversight of our Tech Center could not enter my crypto-secure office because he did not have the required “need to know,” notwithstanding the fact that he was a former FBI agent with a Top Secret clearance.

Also, my family and friends really did not know what I actually did at work for many years. A sharp contrast can be seen in today’s world where, for some, it is more important to gain and maintain political and personal power than it is to protect our national interests.

The foregoing background begs the question: What about the media stories related to the Mar-a-Lago document search that either cast doubt on the importance of the search or trivialize security classifications?

Representative of these types of stories was a column in *The Wall Street Journal* by Kimberly Strassel that attributed political motivation for the search on the part of Democrats and an op-ed in *The Daily Herald* by Michael Barone that claimed the citing of the Espionage Act of 1917 in the FBI’s search warrant would lead to an exercise in futility.

“Trump derangement syndrome has a curious way of scrambling coherent thought,” said Strassel.

Two letters in response to her column were noteworthy. The first letter used the former president’s words, “I could stand in the middle of Fifth Avenue and shoot somebody, and wouldn’t lose any voters,” to illustrate the derangement of these voters. The second letter minimized the potential national security risk related to the retrieved documents by asking: “How many of the classified items in Merrick

Garland’s treasure trove of seized documents are already in the public domain? ” On the other hand, Barone used a quote from the Espionage Act as a vehicle to posit this message: “and the government notoriously over classifies material, including editions of *The New York Times*” — discounting security classifications.

Barone’s message could be true with respect to the application of “Confidential” classifications, the very lowest level of security classification, but not for “Secret” and “Top Secret” levels that are used to protect highly sensitive information, the revelation of which could pose grave danger to national security.

To the best of my knowledge, neither Strassel nor Barone know exactly what was contained in the documents that were retrieved from Mar-a-Lago.

However, they both know that some of the documents were classified with Secret, Top Secret, and Top Secret/SCI (Sensitive Compartmentalized Information) designations. These designations demand extreme care regarding the handling, storage, and “need-to-know” viewing of the documents. The demand for extreme care is based on the national security implications of the material contained therein.

These stories reflect a cavalier attitude and approach to security classifications and attempts to minimize the importance of these classifications.

This cavalier attitude and approach was also reflected in the former president’s claim that he issued a “standing order” stipulating that classified documents automatically became declassified when he took them from the Oval Office to his White House residence; a claim refuted by more than a dozen of his former top administration officials.

In contrast with politically motivated partisan rhetoric, the capacity to accept delay in the findings of the DOJ’s analysis of the retrieved documents is essential since the retrieval was much ado about something.

As a sign of our times, no one should be surprised if supporters of the former president still vote for him no matter how fair the DOJ’s analysis of the retrieved documents and how damning the evidence resulting from the search of his Mar-a-Lago estate may be.

Writ large, the American people must be better than that — more discerning if you will. Their democracy depends on it.

- Frank G. Splitt, author of the book “An Odyssey of Reform Initiatives: 1986-2015” and its sequel “Reflections: 2016-2021,” is a former McCormick Faculty Fellow at Northwestern University’s McCormick School of Engineering and a Vice President Emeritus of Nortel Networks.

The Mar-a-Lago search: An Afterword

By Frank G. Splitt
September 12, 2022

Once you have the courts you can pretty much do whatever you want.

—Jason Stanley

The aim of both the *Daily Herald* Guest View, “The Mar-a-Lago search: Much ado about something,”¹ and its Afterword, is to not only stress the significance of the search and related events, but also to help serve as a countermeasure to the recent *Wall Street Journal* editorials and op-eds as well as reports on FOX News that are hypercritical of the search and anything related to it.

For the most part, criticisms of the search attempt to diminish its seriousness by casting it as a document storage issue—ignoring the fact that it was a means to expose potential threats to America’s national security. The criticisms also provide good examples of both whataboutism and confirmation bias. Representative examples are ‘what about Hunter Biden?’ and the *Wall Street Journal* Editorial Board's bias to see injustice in the search affidavit—overlooking all evidence to the effect that the Mar-a-Lago search affidavit revealed something that could be new or nefarious in nature.

This afterword was triggered by the *Washington Post* report that material on a foreign nation’s nuclear capabilities has been seized at Mar-a-Lago.²

The *Post* report prompted a question: Will this breaking news matter? As I wrote in the *Daily Herald* Guest View:

As a sign of our times, no one should be surprised if supporters of the former president still vote for him no matter how fair the DOJ’s analysis of the retrieved documents and how damning the evidence resulting from the search of his Mar-a-Lago estate may be.

Writ large, the American people must be better than that — more discerning if you will. Their democracy depends on it.

It is my contention that no matter what comes of the Mar-a-Lago search, or the findings of the House January 6 Committee and the revelatory September 6 PBS Documentary, “Lies, Politics, and Democracy,”³ supporters of former president Trump will act as if all of this is of no consequence. They will continue to stand by him—casting a blind eye to damning evidence.

These supporters may be white nationalists, anti-government entities such as the Proud Boys and Oath Keepers, politically ambitious members of the U.S. Congress who seek power at any cost, or citizens aggrieved for one reason or another. All are tightly bound to Trump for their own personal reasons. Apparently, they do not discern or care about the existential threat he poses to America’s democratic republic.

Good examples of people with a strongly held personal reason would be James Baker, a former U.S Secretary of State under President H.W. Bush, and William Barr, Trump's U.S. Attorney

General. When commenting on his 2016 vote for Trump, Baker said: “I’m a conservative; better to have a conservative in the oval office than a liberal, even if he’s crazy.” In a similar fashion, after bashing Trump, Barr said he would still vote for him in 2024 if he were the Republican candidate. The reason: He believes that the greatest threat to the country is the progressive agenda being pushed by the Democratic Party.⁴ Barr was likely referring to the progressive agenda of woke extremists.⁵



Most Trump supporters seem to be confident in their positions based on the fact that the courts have been stacked in his favor. Witness the recent judgement, *Trump vs. The United States*, rendered by Trump appointed Judge Aileen Cannon of the Southern District Court of Florida. Her judgement to appoint a Special Master to review the retrieved documents and other unprecedented special treatments for the former president will cause an indeterminate delay in the DOJ’s investigative process.⁶ Adam Zito’s insightful cartoon gets to the very heart of the Trump-appointed-judges’ situation.⁷

This outcome was much to the delight of Trump’s legal team whose total focus is to obfuscate issues surrounding the search so as to undermine a potential DOJ indictment of the former president. Their aim would be to complicate the investigation to the maximum extent possible, a well-honed tactic developed by Trump’s legal teams over some 3,500 of his lawsuits.

Therefore, it should come as no surprise that on September 8, the DOJ announced that it would appeal Judge Cannon’s ruling to circumvent months or even years of delay in its investigations. The DOJ appeal will be made to the Atlanta-based 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, a court dominated by Trump appointees. The DOJ will argue that it would be “injured” beyond repair if the judge’s order were allowed to stand. We will see what we will see, possibly elevation of the case to the U.S. Supreme Court that, with the addition of three Trump appointees, is now dominated by conservative judges.

Finally, with reference to the epigraph, it is telling that Yale Philosopher Jason Stanley is best known for his 2018 book *How Fascism Works: The Politics of Us and Them*, (Random House, 2018). Also, to gain a better understanding of why people believe what they believe and vote as they do, see NOTE 8.

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On the devotion of Trump supporters

The experience is shattering. How much stupidity! What delusion among such cultured and actually clever people! Just unconditional belief in the Führer.

—Erich Ebermayer,¹ September 3, 1939

By Frank G. Splitt
September 29, 2022

The *PBS NewsHour*'s Lisa Desjardins was in Wilmington, North Carolina, to cover a recent rally by former President Donald Trump. There follows an excerpt from her report:²

A very spirited crowd waiting under this Carolina blue sky for Mr. Trump. And I will tell you, this crowd, when you ask them why they're here, one of the first things they will tell you is because they love this country. The next thing they will tell you, of course, is that they are devoted to former President Trump and, in fact, more devoted to him than to the Republican Party that he represents and leads.

We asked the people here why they support President Trump, what they make of the investigations under way.

Trump Supporter: "How many times have they investigated the poor guy? I mean, for all that HE accomplished while he was president, despite all the investigations and the headwinds against him, I mean, it's all — it's all ridiculous. If the guy did anything wrong, IT would have come out by now."

It has been troubling to see the unconditional devotion and die-hard nature of the former president's supporters. They seem unable to admit of having made a mistake in their support of the demagogic person that they elected and are now anxious to elect again despite his incitement of the January 6, 2021, assault on the U.S. Capitol in a last desperate attempt to halt verification of the results of the Electoral College.

This behavior prompts a question: What is the rationale behind the unmitigated, messianic-like, devotion of the former president's supporters and their ability to overlook his multiple past and present nefarious conduct in business and government affairs, as well as the Artful-Dodger delay, deny, and deflect tactics he has employed over many years to avoid criminal prosecution?

Apparently, in a quest for a strong, charismatic leader, Trump's loyal supporters accept life in his alternate universe with its lies, rampant deceptions, and multiple grievances —believing his persistent falsehoods about hoaxes, fake-news, election fraud, socialist takeover, virulent antifa activity, and the stolen 2020 election, as well as his embrace of the QAnon movement.

It is no secret that white conservative Christians hold the former president in high esteem with many, especially white evangelicals, believing he is God's chosen one. For example, in a *FoxNews* interview with Ed Henry, former energy secretary Rick Perry, an evangelical Christian, shared his conviction that Trump and his authority come from God, saying: "God uses imperfect people through history." No matter what he says or does, some 80% of white evangelicals have consistently approved of Trump's actions.

A good part of the answer as to why Trump supporters are so devoted to him can also be found in the following excerpt from “Confirmation Bias and Today’s Politics.”³

Psychologists tell us mistakes can be very hard to digest, so we tend to double down rather than face the fact that we may have made a bad choice. They call this distress cognitive dissonance *wherein* stress is experienced when we hold two contradictory thoughts, beliefs, opinions or attitudes. This is precisely where confirmation bias comes into play—causing us to seek out evidence to prove what we already believe or want to believe. It’s the “My mind’s made up, don’t bother me with facts” syndrome.

On the other hand, there is no need to seek out psychologists to understand Trump supporters in both houses of the U.S. Congress who are not really devoted to him in the same sense; rather, they are devoted to themselves. In effect they are guided by former President Franklin Roosevelt’s 1945 post-Yalta-Conference quip: “It is permitted in time of grave danger, to walk with the devil until you have crossed the bridge.” Here the bridge is to maintain their own power and prestige—putting their political career above what is morally and ethically right. Political expediency rules the day for most and radical conspiracy theories claim the rest.

Reference to the epigraph and Erich Ebermayer’s eighty-three year old comment about unrelenting devotion to a strong, charismatic leader is enough to make your head spin with thoughts of *déjà vu*.

Devotees of former President Trump and other elemental Trump-aligned factions are an existential threat to democracy in a nation divided by the former president, see Ravitch⁴ and Baker & Glasser.⁵ Moderates from both parties must work together to find common ground to unite America. A divided America cannot stand.⁶

NOTES

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Fear for the future of American democracy

By Frank G. Splitt

November 3, 2022

A fascist is someone who claims to speak for a whole nation or group, is utterly unconcerned with the rights of others, and is willing to use violence and whatever other means are necessary achieve the goals he or she might have.—Madeline Albright

The attention-getting concluding remarks of the October 28 *NCR* editorial “Vote as if the country’s existence depended on it” read as follows:

While many Americans agree that democracy is under attack, recent polling says they still prioritize economic issues. Nearly 40% of registered voters were either somewhat or very comfortable voting for a candidate that said the 2020 election was stolen.

We Catholics bring our Catholic values to the public square when we vote and participate in civic life, especially around moral issues. This year, democracy itself is a moral issue. We must vote with that above all in mind.

No doubt, single-issue, anti-abortion Catholics will still vote Republican. So too will short-term-thinking pocketbook voters who harbor the false belief that Republicans can quickly reduce inflation, notwithstanding the fact that it is a complex global-economic problem. Many of these voters will claim that they fear the consequence of the Democrats’ sharp move to the left: socialism. They also claim to fear the negative impact of woke extremism with its critical race theory and overemphasis on other social justice issues in business, societal and educational venues.

Arien Gould, a life-long Republican who has chaired many notable GOP campaigns in Illinois, wrote a related Guest View for *The Daily Herald* wherein he states the following:

I am troubled by my party’s move to become an anti-democracy party on a national level. The election deniers and those who propagate the big lie that Donald Trump won the presidential election are a real threat to our democratic republic. A democracy cannot survive if individuals and parties don’t accept defeat. A democracy cannot survive if it endorses efforts to overturn a legitimate election. We can certainly debate policies, but we cannot sacrifice the core tenets of democracy.

Gould is joining Congressman Adam Kinzinger in endorsing Democrats for the first time in his political career—concluding with an appeal to his fellow Republicans:

I hope that my fellow Republicans in elections facing similar conflicts will also vote to support our democratic process. Not only will it help save our country, it may also help save the Republican Party.

My personal fear is that voters will overlook the fact that economic issues as well as inflation are temporary and can be resolved over a relatively short period of time. Worst yet is the fact that restoration of American democracy would be a difficult, if not impossible, problem to solve once an autocratic government takes a strong hold.

A good sense of the difficulty associated with the restoration of American democracy can be obtained via reference to any one of the many recently published books on the functioning of the Trump White House. For example see: *The Divider: Trump in the White House, 2017-2021*, by Peter Baker & Susan Glasser (Doubleday, 2022), *Confidence Man: The Making of Donald Trump and the Breaking of America*, by Maggie Haberman (Penguin Press, 2022), and *Betrayal: The Final Act of the Trump Show*, by Johnathan Karl (Dutton, 2021).

When reading these books, it important to keep in mind a vital question: What disastrous impulse-driven presidential decisions might have been made at crucial times without the presence of Chief of Staff John Kelly, Department of Defense Secretaries Jim Mattis and Mark Esper, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Mark Millie, to name but a few. These officials were not yes-men as they exhibited a high degree personal integrity and strength of character when opposing dangerously ill-advised actions by the president. To be sure, men and women of this caliber will certainly not be found in a future anti-democracy administration.

A deeper personal fear is that citizens who intend to vote Republican are not aware of the Trump Party's drift toward autocracy and will not have either the time or inclination to read Madeline Albright's book *Fascism: A Warning* (HarperCollins) or any of the aforementioned books—discounting all of the authors as biased anti-Trumpers intent on boosting book sales.

As a consequence of casting a blind eye to the bizarre and erratic behavior of Donald Trump during his term in the White House, these voters remain victims of a great American con orchestrated by the former president. They were not only conned with his 'big lie' about the stolen 2020 election, but also by his exploitation of right-wing fears and grievances—harnessing the worst elements in politics to threaten American democracy.

It follows that the former president's cult-like supporters are anxious to cast their precious votes for the election-denying party of Trump and his sycophantic

followers such as House Minority Leader Congressman Kevin McCarthy and the alt-right, conspiracy promoter Congresswoman Margery Taylor Green, Senators Lindsey Graham, Ted Cruz, Josh Hawley, and former Congressman Mark Meadows, a loyal Trump yes-man who served as his last chief of staff.

In sum, that is why I and many others fear for the future of American democracy.

For more on the subject, see the October 1, 2020, Diane Ravitch Blog “Frank G. Splitt: Existential Threats to American Democracy,” and the following *Daily Herald* Guest Views: “A divided America cannot stand.” August 24, 2020 and “Woke Extremism: Counterproductive to the goals it promotes,” March. 28, 2022. To access this material, search Frank G. Splitt at <https://www.dailyherald.com/>

Acknowledgements -- My deep appreciation goes to Margaret Mangan my editor and unwavering supporter, as well as to Judy Hughes Janowiak and Johanna Swiontek who, together, not only inspired the writing of this commentary, but also provided valuable insights along the way.

LETTERS

The Daily Herald

A Wakeup Call for the Biden Administration

October 17, 2022-The APs Joe McDonald reported that Xi Jinping has called for faster military development, ("China's leader calls for military growth as congress opens," World & Nation, Oct. 17). To what end might this military growth be aimed if not the United States? Regrettably, a war with China would be a catastrophe given that the U.S. is woefully unprepared to face China on the battlefield. Why so?

Simply stated, the U.S. has not only been torn asunder by extreme alt-left woke and extreme alt-right provoke politics, but by other important factors as well. For example, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has not only illuminated critical deficiencies in America's defense industrial base, but the Biden administration has also been effectively asleep at the switch with inadequate defense spending and its misguided focus on woke politics in the military as well as in scientific research.

It's time for the Biden administration to wake up and read the handwriting on the wall.

Frank G. Splitt
Mount Prospect

The Wall Street Journal

Note: All letters signed

Frank G. Splitt
Mount Prospect, Ill.

Resisting atonement declarations

Feb 20, 2022-These woke measures are certainly not new with harbingers to be found in: The 2005 elimination of (Indian) Chief Illinwek as the symbol of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Notre Dame's disappointing Jan. 2019 cave to the extreme left by covering murals that portray Columbus bringing the faith to this hemisphere, and the recent history of non-faculty administrators at our nation's colleges and universities placing ever outsized emphasis on diversity, inclusion, and equity.

Are such measures steps on a slippery slope which, if followed to the end, will make us into devils where we wish to always see things worse than they really are?

In his 1952 book, *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis concludes by saying: "Finally, we shall insist on seeing everything—God and our friends and ourselves included—as bad, and not be able to stop doing it: we shall be fixed for ever in a universe of pure hatred."

Time to Call a Spade a Spade

March 27, 2022-The Catholic Church still carries the stain of Pope Pius XII's neutrality stance with regard to Hitler's aggression in World War II, ("Pope Francis Laments War in Ukraine Without Taking Sides," Mar. 26). Whatever Pope Francis' rationale for neutrality with regard to Russian President Vladimir Putin's aggression against his sovereign neighbor Ukraine, it is sure to ring hollow in the annals of history.

World War II was successfully fought to end the imperial ambitions of despotic leaders—Hitler, Mussolini, and Tojo then and Putin now. It is time for Pope Francis call a spade a spade, to speak clearly about Putin’s murderous war against Ukraine and its civilian population. If not now, when?

Pope Should Call a Spade a Spade

April 18, 2022-Whatever Pope Francis’ rationale for framing Russian President Vladimir Putin’s aggression against his sovereign neighbor Ukraine as Cain-and-Abel-like fratricidal, it is sure to ring hollow in the annals of history. (“Pope Warns Conflict Could Lead to Nuclear War,” The Ukraine Crisis, April 18).

World War II was successfully fought to end the imperial ambitions of despotic leaders—Hitler, Mussolini, and Tojo then and Putin now. It is time for Pope Francis call a spade a spade, to speak clearly about Putin’s murderous war against Ukraine and it’s civilian population.

Pope Francis and Realpolitik?

May 7, 2022-Jack Kaczorowski reflected my original disappointment with regards to Pope Francis' blaming NATO for Vladimir Putin's war in Ukraine ("MIA in Rome: Moral Clarity," Letters, May 7). However, blaming NATO could very well be Realpolitik at work—doing what is required to position the Pope as an acceptable mediator in potential negotiations for peace in Ukraine.

More on "Trump Derangement Syndrome"

Aug 19, 2022-Kudos to Andy Fox for his thoughtful response to Kimberly Strassel’s Aug. 12 Potomac Watch column, “The Payback Will Be Brutal,” (Trump Derangement Syndrome Spares None, Opinion, Aug. 17).

Fox reminded readers of former president Donald Trump’s statement that even if he shot somebody on Fifth Avenue his supporters would still vote for him.

Worse yet for our nation, I believe Trump supporters would still vote for him no matter how damning the evidence found in the search of his Mar-a-Lago estate. For preemptive evidence look no further than the second response by Elizabeth Morgan that seemingly attempts to minimize the potential national security risk related to classified documents seized in the search.

College Debt Forgiveness Is a Distraction

Aug. 26, 2022-Colleges also love debt forgiveness because it distracts families and voters from the root cause of the indebtedness: It’s the high cost of a college education, (Colleges Love Loan Forgiveness," Review & Outlook, Aug. 26).

The blame for this high cost lies with the higher education establishment. Spending to cover administration costs has ballooned with the addition of staffing to oversee inclusion, diversity, and equity initiatives. Also, adding to costs is profligate spending to support the school's big-time football and men's basketball programs. Expanded student services and spending on frivolous projects such as rock climbing walls and lazy rivers, have added still more to costs.

This spending has been paid for by continuously raising tuition. It is my understanding that since 1990, the average in-state tuition and fees at a four-year institution nearly tripled on an inflation-adjusted basis—increasing at a faster rate than the cost of health care.

The Mar-a-Lago Search Affidavit: Much Ado About Something?

Aug 28, 2022-It has been said that: Justice, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder. A good example is that of the 'eye' in the members of the Wall Street Journal's Editorial board. They claimed that "the Mar-a-Lago search affidavit reveals nothing new or nefarious" and that it appears to be no more than "a dispute over documents," ("Is that all there is?" Opinion, Review & Outlook, Aug. 27).

So too, it has been said that: Where there's smoke there's fire. An open-minded person could very well see that the search for information shows the search was much more than a dispute about documents.

Hopefully, time will reveal the real story behind the search and possibly answer the question as to why former President Trump removed such sensitive and very highly classified documents from the White House.

College Debt Forgiveness Distracts from the Real Problem

Sept. 5, 2022-Kudos to Mitch Daniels for his insights on college-student debt ("Student Loans and the National Debt," Opinion, Sept. 2). Debt forgiveness distracts families and voters from the real problem: The root cause of the indebtedness is the high cost of a college education.

The blame for this high cost lies with the higher education establishment. Spending to cover administration costs has ballooned with the addition of staffing to oversee inclusion, diversity, and equity initiatives. Also, adding to costs is profligate spending to support many school's big-time football and men's basketball programs. Expanded student services and spending on frivolous projects such as rock climbing walls and lazy rivers, have added still more to costs.

This spending has been paid for by continuously raising tuition. It is my understanding that since 1990, the average in-state tuition and fees at a four-year institution nearly tripled on an inflation-adjusted basis—increasing at a faster rate than the cost of health care.

Another counterproductive woke measure

Oct 13, 2022-Kudos to Lawrence Krauss for calling attention to woke extremism in the sciences, ("Even Science Grants Bow to "Equity and Inclusion," Opinion, Oct 13).

Also consider a woke measure that was used as an example in this author's *Daily Herald* Guest View, "Woke extremism: Counterproductive to the goals it promotes." It's the fairly recent history of non-faculty administrators at our nation's colleges and universities placing ever outsized emphasis on diversity, inclusion and equity—diminishing faculty hiring based on disciplinary merit.

All such measures are steps on a slippery slope which, if followed to the end, will reveal a critical point: Extreme woke politics have a debilitating impact on our K-12 education system that forms the pipeline for colleges and universities—catalyzing mediocrity that will lead to the end of American leadership in all of the STEM disciplines.

A Loud Wakeup Call for America

Oct 17, 2022-The Journal's Editorial Board sent a loud and clear wakeup call to America, ("The Thoughts of Chairman Xi", Review & Outlook, Oct. 17). Xi Jinping has called for faster military development by China. To what end might this military growth be aimed if not the United States? Regrettably, a war with China would be a catastrophe given that the U.S. is woefully unprepared for such a war. Why so?

The U.S. has not only been torn asunder by the extreme politics of the alt-left and the alt-right, but by other important factors as well. Notably, in the same issue of the Journal, Seth Jones opined "The

U.S. Isn't ready to Face China on the Battlefield,"—arguing that the Russian invasion of Ukraine has exposed critical deficiencies in America's defense industrial base.

Also, the Biden administration has been effectively asleep at the switch with inadequate defense spending and its misguided focus on woke politics in the military as well as in scientific research.

It's time for the U.S. to wake up and read the handwriting on the wall: A divided and unprepared America cannot stand.

A Red Wave Could Undo American Democracy

Oct 20, 2022—Clearly, Henninger has not read or chooses to overlook what he did read in the acclaimed 2022 book, *The Divider: Trump in the White House, 2017-2021*, by Peter Baker and Susan Glasser, ("The Biggest Midterm Issue: Chaos," *Wonderland*, Oct. 20).

Baker and Glasser write about four years of really serious chaos with erratic and bizarre behavior that goes far beyond his biased political questions: "What's happening to the stock market? Will Vladimir Putin go nuclear? What personal pronoun am I?"

So what does Henninger really mean by his answer to his own question, "Who's going to win the midterm elections?" – "The Republicans. It's going to be a red wave."

Does he mean a red wave of the divisive Republican party of former President Donald Trump with House Minority Leader Congressman Kevin McCarthy and other election-denying members of Congress such as alt-right Congresswoman Margery Taylor Green?

If so, that will bring chaos beyond measure and undo American democracy. Voting for hypothetical short-term pocketbook gains can render devastating long-term pain.

The key to a good education: Discipline enforced by dedicated teachers and parents

Oct 27, 2022—Jim Thompson was spot on with his question and answer about Catholic schools: "Why did I get such a good education? Discipline and dedication," ("*Tweaks Won't Be Enough to Save Our Schools*," *Letters*, Oct. 27).

In 1939, at the urging of an aunt who offered to help my financially challenged parents pay the one-dollar-a-month tuition, I began attending the 4th grade at a Chicago Catholic school. I was in a class of 57 students who were taught each year by dedicated B.V.M. Sisters of Charity. There were no teachers aides, but there was strict discipline and learning.

After graduation in 1944, I attended a Catholic boy's high school where I was taught by dedicated Servite and Viatorian priests and brothers. Here again, strict discipline was the order of the day. As with Mr. Thompson, disruption and disrespect were not tolerated during the whole of my Catholic education.

Needless to say, my parents placed a high value on education and instilled a love of learning.

Fear for the future of American democracy

Dec. 3, 2022—The letter responses by Dennis Offerman and Rick Miller to the plight of Robin Keller, the lawyer fired for a dissenting opinion on the Dobbs abortion case, discussed in her Nov. 30 op-ed "No Dissent Allowed at Hogan Lovells," provide still another wakeup call for Democrats ("Free Speech Is Not Welcome in a 'Safe Space'", *Letters*, Dec. 2).

Woke extremism is counterproductive to the goals it promotes. There is no surer way of turning off Independent and moderate Democratic voters than the continued sharp leftward shift of the Democratic Party. Hallmarks of this shift are overbearing emphasis on diversity, inclusion, and equity manifested as cancel culture, critical race theory, and safe spaces.

As a consequence, extremists in the Republican Party can rightfully counterclaim that it is the Democrats that pose a threat to our nation's democracy.

In fact, extremists in both political parties cause fear for the future of American democracy.

The National Catholic Reporter

Time to Call a Spade a Spade

Print edition, April 29-May 12, 2022-Re: Editorial, Mar. 18-31, 2022, "Francis needs to speak up about Russian invasion" – The Catholic Church still carries the stain of Pope Pius XII's neutrality stance with regard to Hitler's aggression in World War II. Whatever Pope Francis' rationale for neutrality with regard to Russian President Vladimir Putin's aggression against his sovereign neighbor Ukraine, it is sure to ring hollow in the annals of history.

World War II was successfully fought to end the imperial ambitions of despotic leaders—Hitler, Mussolini, and Tojo then and Putin now. It is time for Pope Francis call a spade a spade, to speak clearly about Putin's murderous war against Ukraine and its civilian population. If not now, when?

Frank G. Splitt
Mount Prospect,

Book Review

The Divider: Trump in the White House, 2017-2021

by Peter Baker and Susan Glasser

[5.0 out of 5 stars](#) Reviewed in the United States us on September 29, 2022 for Amazon

Destined to become a valuable historical reference

If you want to better understand what really went on in the White House during Trump's term in office, I heartily recommend Peter Baker's and Susan Glasser's well-researched book, *The Divider* that is based on their White House reporting and some 300 exclusive interviews.

The authors describe Trump's erratic and bizarre behavior in consummate detail. As a consequence, the book will invite criticism by his supporters and the right-wing establishment. No doubt, the authors will be cast as biased left-wingers.

Therefore, it should come as no surprise that the book, like writings such as "Frank G. Splitt: Existential threats to American Democracy," will have little if any impact in terms of changing the minds of Trump supporters. Nonetheless, this book is destined to become a valuable historical reference.

AN AFTERWORD

For all intents and purposes, I was finished with writing after the publication and distribution of *Reflections, 2016-2021*. However, personal circumstances and national politics served to trigger additional writing. The trigger was night-time falling by the elderly, a hot topic, with expressed concern ranging from family members to friends, professional caregivers, and a former board member at a prestigious, long-term healthcare facility who asked me to write on the subject because of the educational need. As a consequence “On Reducing Falls by High-Falling Risk Patients” became the first of the 2022 commentaries that concluded as follows:

Absent alarm systems, falling events can still be reduced, possibly minimized, for high-falling-risk patients at nursing homes and long-term care facilities. This can be done via a three-part, patient-specific regimen that begins with careful control of the patient’s hydration and evening liquid intake.⁹ The second and third parts of the regimen would include bed checks every hour or every other hour coupled with routine nighttime toileting tailored to the patient’s nighttime toileting history with requisite adjustments over time. Although the latter tactic disrupts sleep, it is considered a relatively small price to pay for a reduction in falls with related potentials for serious injury or even death.

A clear competitive advantage can be gained by nursing homes and long-term care facilities that can not only provide demonstrable evidence of relatively low fall rates, but also are able to highlight the facilities use of a multi-pronged approach to resident safety with a clear focus by staff on keeping residents safe. However, no matter how well conceived the approach and its related protocols may be, low fall rates ultimately depend on day-to-day implementation and how well the various elements of the facility deliver what is required without fail.

The March 28 *Daily Herald* Guest view, “Woke Extremism,” was followed by commentaries titled “1992 Indiana University Graduate Business Conference,” “Reflections on War” and “1949: A Pivotal Year for the George H. Hagen Family.” The remaining pieces focused on political extremism and the travails of former President Trump and the Republican Party, to wit:

Re: Political Extremism – Though both political parties exhibit extremism, the alt-left element of Democratic Party went overboard with initiatives to correct issues relating to social justice and racism via tactics that embraced cancel culture, critical race theory, and safe spaces. Such tactics would be found not only unacceptable by most voters, but counterproductive to goals of empathy, diversity, inclusion, and equity they were promoting.

There is no surer way of turning off moderate centrist voters of both political parties as well as Independent voters than a sharp leftward shift of the Democratic Party. As a consequence of such a shift, the alt-right element of the Republican Party could rightfully counterclaim that it is the Democrats that pose a threat to democracy. In fact, extremists in both political parties cause fear for the future of American democracy.

Re: The Travails of Former President Trump and the Republican Party – Throughout 2022, the former president was consistent in demonstrating his ignorance of The First Law of Holes; when you are in a hole, stop digging. His response to the January 6, 2021, insurrection and the Mar-a-Lao search were prime examples of this ignorance. Nonetheless, he kept digging. Trump called

for overthrowing parts of the Constitution on December 3—repeating his claim that there was fraud in the 2020 election, a claim for which there is no evidence, posting:

“A Massive Fraud of this type and magnitude allows for the termination of all rules, regulations, and articles, even those found in the Constitution. Our great “Founders” did not want, and would not condone, False & Fraudulent Elections!” and “UNPRECEDENTED FRAUD REQUIRES UNPRECEDENTED CURE!”

Republican lawmakers have disavowed Trump’s rhetorical flouting of the U.S. Constitution but stop short of saying it disqualifies him as a 2024 GOP presidential candidate. Then came Trump’s December 2 Mar-a-Lago dinner meeting with two prominent white supremacists that showed his willingness to garner and accept supporters who embrace bigotry, racism and antisemitism.

Trump’s aiding and abetting of hatred has defamed the Republican Party—boding a grim future for the GOP as it is caught between a rock and a hard place: Nominate a politically-damaged Trump as its 2024 presidential candidate and retain his base or not nominate him and risk losing the base to a Trump Party of his own making.

As a consequence of his hubris and related political missteps, Trump’s 2024 presidential campaign is off to a rough start as he attempts to convince voters he should return to the White House. His decline in support among GOP voters that began when he left the White House after the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection, has only increased since the GOP midterm losses of many of his candidates.

To make things even worse, the former president has also faced a series of legal losses and challenges, including the Trump Organization’s conviction on tax fraud charges and the appointment of Jack Smith as a special prosecutor to oversee the DOJ’s probes into his removal of classified material from the White House and his role in the failed January 6, 2021, effort to overturn his 2020 election defeat. Smith, a veteran career prosecutor, was appointed by Attorney General Merrick Garland after Trump declared his candidacy for the 2024 presidential election.

The DOJ is pressing forward with its investigations into the events surrounding Trump’s attempt to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election, as well as into his removal of documents with classified markings when he left the White House. It has been reported that at least two more documents with classified markings have been found by Trump lawyers at a remote storage facility. The lawyer’s spokesperson stated that Trump and his lawyers “continue to be cooperative and transparent, despite the unprecedented, illegal and unwarranted attack against President Trump and his family by the weaponized Department of Justice.”

Nonetheless, DOJ lawyers asked U.S. District Judge Beryl A. Howell to hold Trump’s office in contempt of court since he and his lawyers have not complied with a subpoena from May requiring them to return all documents with classified markings in his possession. Howell held the requested hearing on December 9 in a closed-door session. She did not grant the DOJ’s request to hold the office of former President Donald Trump in contempt for failing to comply with the grand jury subpoena, a perplexing decision in view of known circumstances. Perhaps the judge was swayed by the “cooperative and transparent” preemptive document recovery tactic of Trump’s lawyers.

Judge Howell's hearing came just after Trump's civil action demanding a court-appointed special master review the documents recovered by the FBI in August was officially dismissed by the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals —allowing DOJ investigators to finally review the 11,000 documents recovered in August that didn't have classified markings. The same court allowed the DOJ to review the over 100 documents that did have classified markings in October, overturning an earlier ruling by Judge Aileen Cannon of the District Court for the Southern District of Florida.

On December 19 the House select committee investigating the January 6, 2021, U.S. Capitol attack described it as an “attempted coup” that warrants criminal prosecution. The committee reported that it is making referrals to the DOJ for former President Trump and a number of his closest allies. These include: four criminal referrals for Trump: Obstruction of an Official Proceeding; Defraud the United States; Conspiracy to Make a False Statement and "Incite," "Assist" or "Aid and Comfort" an Insurrection. The DOJ is not bound to act on these referrals.

The committee released its final report on December 21. Committee chair Bennie Thompson's introduction to the report put Trump's effort to overturn the 2020 election in a historical context, as follows:

Our country has come too far to allow a defeated President to turn himself into a successful tyrant by upending our democratic institutions, fomenting violence, and...opening the door to those in our country whose hatred and bigotry threaten equality and justice for all Americans.

We can never surrender to democracy's enemies. We can never allow America to be defined by forces of division and hatred. We can never go backward in the progress we have made through the sacrifice and dedication of true patriots. We can never and will never relent in our pursuit of a more perfect union with liberty and justice for all Americans.

Finally, all signs indicate that the Trump show, aided and abetted by the former president's devoted supporters, his \$100-million Save America PAC, and his lifelong Teflon-like ability to shed criminal charges, is bound to go on well beyond 2022 no matter the apparently abundant evidence aligned against him. No less can be expected from the best client and student the nefarious New York lawyer Roy Cohn ever had. We will see what we will see.

A WORD OF GRATITUDE

Vision with action can change the world.

—Joel A. Barker

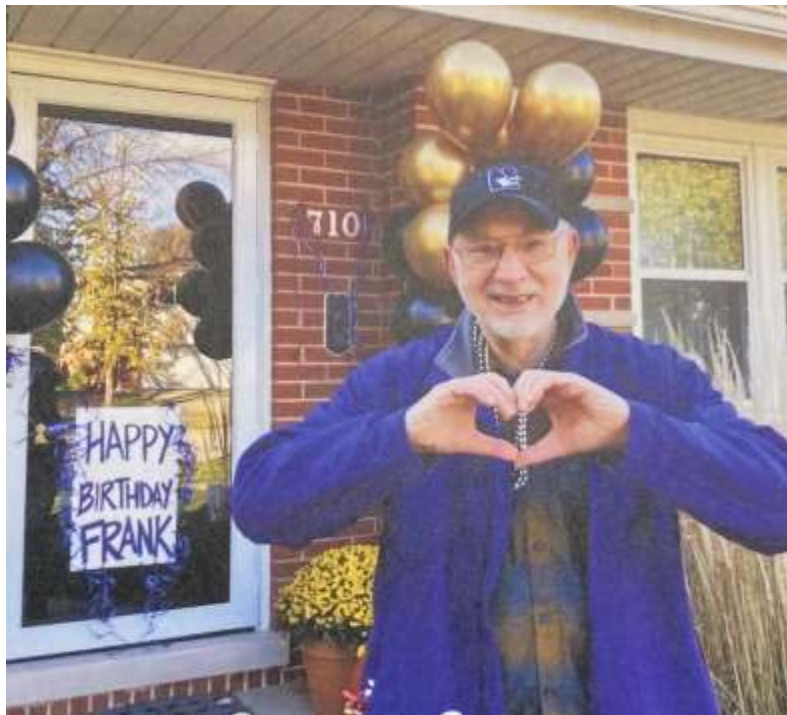
Lou Gehrig was my hero as I was growing up with dreams of becoming a professional baseball player. Gehrig, a baseball legend had a tragically brief life, just short of 38 years. He began his July 4, 1939 farewell speech in Yankee Stadium by saying “I’m the luckiest man on the face of the earth.” And so say I.

I’ve been truly blessed with wonderful family, friends, mentors, teammates, and colleagues who have had a profound positive influence on my life journey. I am now well into the winter of this journey following my bliss while striving to persevere in vision with action.

I am grateful to all who have been part of what has been a wonderful life—92 years and counting.

Frank

December 26, 2022



90th birthday photo by Anne Rassas, 2020

THE AUTHOR

Frank G. Splitt was born in Chicago Illinois where he graduated from Annunciation Grammar School in 1944 and from Saint Philip High School in 1948. After attending the city's Wilbur Wright Junior College for two years, he was awarded an Arthur J. Schmitt academic scholarship to the Fournier Institute of Technology in Lemont Illinois, graduating with a BSEE in 1952.

He holds an MSEE (1957) and a Ph.D. in Electrical and Computer Engineering (1963) from Northwestern University where he served (1993-2005) as the McCormick Faculty Fellow of Telecommunications at the McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science.



He is a member of The Drake Group; a member of the College Sport Research Institute's Advisory Committee, University of South Carolina; a member of the American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE); and was the Vice President Emeritus of Educational and Environmental Initiatives for NTI, the U.S. subsidiary of Nortel Networks, formerly known as Northern Telecom Limited.

As a Director of the International Engineering Consortium, he chaired the Consortium's Committee on the Future and its Fellow Awards Committee.

Photo by Jennifer Heitz

Dr. Splitt was a member of the Advisory Board for the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign College of Engineering, and chaired its Electrical and Computer Engineering Department Committee. He was also a member of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) inaugural Industry Advisory Council, the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE) Educational Activities Board, and the IEEE's Corporate Recognition's Committee.

His professional career covered research and development, marketing, administration, teaching, and public service. He has authored numerous technical papers, as well as articles on public affairs. He is a Fellow of the International Engineering Consortium, a Life Fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers, an Eminent Engineer of Tau Beta Pi, the recipient of The Drake Group's 2006 *Robert Maynard Hutchins Award* "for his courageous defense of academic integrity in collegiate sports," and a lifetime achievement award from SPIE, the International Society for Optics and Photonics, as well as the Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award from Marquis Who's Who. He has also been recognized by the state of Wisconsin for Outstanding Lake Stewardship.

His interests involved research and planning for the future of engineering education, environmental protection and conservation, and college sports reform. He and his wife Judy reside in Mt. Prospect, Illinois.

A Bio & CV along with links to his essays and commentaries on college sports reform can be found at <http://www.futurevectors.com>

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