

innocent 'Poor but honest' lad flops bystander after persevering to top slot

By Arthur Hoppe

You like heartwarming Horatio Alger stories? Me, too. Okay, so once upon a time there was a poor but honest little lad who was determined to persevere.

"I shall never be ruthless or devious or crafty," he vowed. "I shall always be kind and generous and open. And in this manner, virtue shall be rewarded and I shall achieve success."

Oh, it wasn't easy. But our hero persevered. Though times were hard, he found a job.

Now, whenever a promotion came up, one faction would back this man, another that. They would quarrel and wrangle and in the end, when everybody was exhausted, they would compromise on our hero—he being the only one nobody was mad at. Besides, he was honest.

Of course, not everybody was honest. In fact, the vice-president of the place was caught with his hand in the till and was forced to resign in disgrace, which served him right.

But who would get his job? One faction backed this man, another that. In the end, the president, who was as

ruthless, devious and crafty as they come, chose our hero.

Hardly had our hero taken his new job when—would you believe it?—the president, himself, was caught lying and cheating and was forced to resign in disgrace, which served him right, too. For dishonesty never pays.

Thus did our hero, through kindness, generosity, openness and honesty, reach the very tip top.

And, oh, how happy everybody was. "At last," they cried, "we have a poor but honest president!"

A year passed. By now, oddly enough, most people were grumbling. "Don't they still think I'm kind, generous and open?" our puzzled hero asked his wife.

"That's one problem," she agreed. "They say you're not ruthless enough to deal with your colleagues, devious enough to bargain with our enemies nor crafty enough to make everybody prosperous."

"But surely," he said, "they still think me a poor but honest president."

"Actually, dear," she said, "it's more the other way around."

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ralph by ron wheeler



guest
opinion

Some issues ignored in abortion debate

By Roxanne C. Raymond

In the wake of protest by advocates of compulsory pregnancy (i.e., the "Right to Life" movement), I would like to point out several ignored issues:

1) Discrimination against the poor. In the days before the U.S. Supreme Court's decision the rich often could manage to have medically safe abortions. The poor, however, were forced either to risk an illegal and hazardous abortion or to bear an unwanted child.

2) Illegal abortion was (prior to 1973) the leading cause of maternal death. Over 100,000 women died each year as a result of botched back-street or self-induced abortions. Since legalization this figure has declined by over 50 per cent.

3) The unwanted child. It is estimated that there roughly are 10,000 cases of child abuse every year in this country. More than half of these children are under four years of age. One-fourth of these battered children die.

Most of these deaths are among children under the age of two.

4) A familiar anti-abortion argument is that with the contraceptive methods available there shouldn't be any need for abortion. While we of the "Right to Choose" movement would certainly agree that contraception in the birth control method preferred over abortion, the current situation fails to meet three important criteria: a) Birth control information and devices are not freely available to all fertile women regardless of age, economic or marital status (b) Present day methods of contraception are not without hazard. Unfortunately, those methods with the highest rates of effectiveness also are the methods with the highest number of side-effects. (c) There is no method of birth control (abstinence aside) that is 100 per cent effective. Even the "pill", with the highest effectiveness rate medical technology has to offer, fails 1 to 2 per cent of the time.

Now, a 1 per cent failure rate may not sound like much

to fuss about—until you consider that there are at least several million women on the "pill" and that a 1 per cent failure rate means hundreds of thousands of unwanted pregnancies.

Finally, I would like to take exception to Darrel Voegler's statement of Jan. 23rd, "Abortion on demand reduces the value of life to somebody's whim." I do not believe a woman's decision to abort an unwanted or undesirable pregnancy is a "whimsical" one but rather, if anything, one of desperation when faced with the rigors of pregnancy and childbirth while lacking adequate emotional, physical, and/or financial resources.

As Mark Twain once said, "It is easy to bear adversity—another (person's), I mean." Especially, it would seem, when the other person is a woman.

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