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# Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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Issue: # 112

January 31, 2016

## Greetings!

It is raining here in Southern California as I write this, and I am delighted to bring you my latest thinking, right as the month comes to a close.

In this issue, you'll read some musings of mine about the devolution of some otherwise nice neighborhoods in the **Ara' Journal** column.

And in the **Elephant in the Room** column, I continue my observations with evidence and analysis on why I believe the Democratic Party has unhitched itself from its traditional moorings.

But I begin with a short commentary about when it's time to vacate your current place of employment. See if any of that rings true for you.

OK, let's get started.

Ara Norwood



## Self-Development

### Exit Strategies

A colleague approached me with a question recently. The question revolved around the issue that he was unhappy in his current place of employment. A talented,

competent, and highly skilled professional, he wanted to know my thoughts about when the right time is to leave one's current place of employment. Here are my thoughts:



- If you find you are no longer effective, and you are not making valuable contributions to the organization, you either find a way to turn that around and resume bringing value, or, if that seems implausible, you plan your exit strategy.
- If you find your boss stifles your ability to contribute, keeping a proverbial straight-jacket on you so that you cannot produce the results you otherwise could produce, then you plan your exit strategy, knowing your boss isn't likely to change.
- If you find that you no longer have the respect of your team or your colleagues, you need to take a hard look in the mirror and ask yourself what you contributed to that unfortunate outcome. If you can do things to change such dim views, make the necessary changes. If the damage is done and cannot be undone, learn from your mistakes, plan your exit strategy, and move on. Land a new job, and do not repeat the same mistakes.
- If the nature of the work no longer interests you, and you feel bored and burned-out, figure out what kind of work would interest you, and go get a job doing that.

As always, timing is everything. It is much better to secure new employment when you are currently employed than when you are unemployed. So use that leverage while still employed. Once unemployed, even if you were "laid off" through no fault of your own, the people that interview you for your next job will be mindful of the fact that if you were a valuable contributor, your former employer would not have likely let you go, which means you will be seen as something less than a valuable contributor.

## The Elephant in the Room There is no Democratic Party, Part 2 of 3

I'll say it again: there is no Democratic Party.

When you look at the main contenders for the nomination for president within the party that goes by the name "Democratic Party," you realize instinctively that they are not *Democrats* in any sense of the word.

One of the candidates, a grandfatherly-like figure named Bernie Sanders, is very straight-forward and almost accurate when he states, unabashedly, that he is a "Democratic-Socialist." The term is misleading. It would be more precise if he simply said he is a "Socialist." But I suspect Mr. Sanders intuitively that were he to say something so starkly radical, he would alienate even the masses of naive, ill-informed college students that flock to his camp (and thankfully, not *all* college students are so hoodwinked.) So he goes with a term that is less shocking, a hybrid of a traditional American political party and a system of government that is antithetical to American values. And remember -- he is a serious candidate on the Democratic platform!



The other candidate, Hillary Clinton, is less straight-forward. She is a career politician, having served as First Lady, as a state senator, and as Secretary of State. She is a calculating figure. She is seen by many as a fundamentally dishonest individual, going so far as to lie straight to the faces of the families of those Americans who were murdered by Islamic terrorists in Benghazi on September 11th, 2012, telling them, in effect, that we were going to get the makers of an anti-Islamic video, when she already had told members of her immediate family that she knew the attacks had no relationship to any anti-Islamic video. But while Mrs. Clinton does not seem to have a track record suggesting she is anywhere near as Extreme Left as is Mr. Sanders, lately (as of this writing) she does seem to be trying to "out-Left" Bernie Sanders. She is, in a word, not clearly differentiating herself from the Socialist world-view that Mr. Sanders is steeped in.



Add to all of that the following insanity heaped on the American people during the year 2015 by the Leftist-Socialist movement, and you begin to see why I maintain the traditional Democratic Party no longer exists. It has been transmogrified into what should only be called the Leftist-Socialist Party. Read these examples and see if you get my drift:

**Leftist Impact on our Schools:**

- An immigrant student at the University of California, Irvine, Matthew Guevara, claimed the American Flag represents "hate speech" and causes himself and other students to feel "unsafe." (A "flag" makes him feel unsafe? I need to let that sink in a for moment. . . ) At the same campus, a group of Leftist professors claimed the U.S. flag symbolized "racism" and should not be displayed on campus.
- The Assistant Dean of Students at Cornell University, Joseph Scaffido, said he would welcome terrorist groups such as ISIS and Hamas on campus, or to allow students to send such murderous terrorists care packages, simply because it's not for us to judge. (Remember, it was found by Amnesty International that Hamas was guilty of a horrific missile attack that killed 11 children in Gaza in the summer of 2014, and then the perpetrators tried to blame Israel for what they themselves did.)
- Ricardo Dominguez, a Leftist UC San Diego professor forces his visual arts students to be naked -- you heard me right -- for the final exam.
- The University of California application for all campuses now uses an Admissions Application that allows *six* gender varieties in addition to the traditional "Male" and "Female." They include "Trans male/trans man," "Trans female/trans woman," "Gender queer/gender non-conforming," (is being "queer" a gender?) and, "different identity." That latter label can be used for those students who are so thoroughly confused that they do not know if they are male, female, part of both, straight, gay, bisexual, or any other label known to humankind. It's really quite distinctive.
- And of course, Leftist commencement speakers outnumber conservative commencement speakers 6 to 1, with conservative speakers often having their invitations rescinded by the histrionics of the Left who routinely protest and disrupt, with campus security apparently under orders not to interfere.
- But it's not limited to madness at our universities; A Leftist principal at a San Francisco middle school, Lena Van Haren, decided to circumvent and invalidate student elections because too many white students were, fair and square, voted into office. So the principal simply put non-white students into office who had lost the election, all in the name of *inclusiveness* -- a favorite word of the Left.
- Ms. Starri Hedges, a Minnesota sex ed teacher, took about a dozen middle school and high school students on a field trip to an adult novelty shop. Ms. Hedges insists she has no idea what might be wrong with such a decision. Truly, a broken moral compass at work there.
- Fairfax County School District, one of the nation's largest, decided to include what they call "sexual fluidity and spectrum" to their curriculum for Grades 7 through 12. This is the notion that there is no such thing as 100% male or 100% female.
- Yet the Left may rue the day they have foisted Leftism on our school



systems. At Yale, Oberlin, and many other institutions of higher learning, students who were indoctrinated into becoming Leftists eventually turned on their Leftist mentors in disturbing and vicious ways, causing some Leftist Professors to resign their posts, or various administrators (including University Presidents) to step down.

### Leftist War on Christianity:

- Navy Chaplain Wesley Modder was ordered by his Leftists superiors that, even as a chaplain, he is forbidden to pray in the name of Jesus.
- The Oklahoma Supreme Court ruled that a Ten Commandments monument on the Oklahoma Capital grounds must be removed. It was.
- Football coach Joe Kenedy of Bremerton High School in Washington state was fired for praying on the football field after games.
- Kelvin Cochran, the award-winning fire chief of Atlanta, was fired from his job by Leftists for simply being a Christian, as was Boston urologist Paul Church for pointing out both the medical reasons and the scriptural reasons for discouraging homosexual behavior.
- A federal judge (Jon DeGuilio, an Obama appointee) banned a live nativity scene from Concord High School's Christmas Spectacular because it was "religious" in nature.
- In Nebraska, during the Christmas season, a Leftist-Atheist group used legal means to have a nativity scene removed from the state capital and replaced with an atheist display.
- A Kentucky grade school, W. R. Castle Elementary School, had to remove the main message of the Charlie Brown Christmas play being performed, where Linus recites 7 verses from the Gospel of Luke in describing the meaning of Christmas. Why? Because Leftist principal Jeff Cochran refused to allow anything relating to Christianity to be a part of the play, even though it is the main part of the play.
- The Human Rights Campaign, the largest LGBT activist group in the country, is trying to get the United States Department of Education to legally force religious schools to abandon their beliefs and embrace homosexuality as normal.

### Leftist "Patriotism":

- The Democratic Chairman of Connecticut, Nicholas Balleto, decided to change the name of its annual fundraising dinner and strip the names of Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson from the name of that event. Why? Because Jefferson and Jackson owned slaves. Is George Washington the next to be

expunged from, say, the one dollar bill? (By the way, I wrote directly to Mr. Balleto and respectfully challenged him to a public debate on this matter, with me paying all expenses, and allowing him to name the place, time, and moderator of his own choosing. Predictably, he did not respond because he knows he would be eviscerated.)

- And as for the U.S. Constitution, it was Leftists, led by Senator Dick Durbin, who voted to repeal the First Amendment with respect to Free Speech. Astonishing.

\* \* \* \* \*

As I said in Issue #111, if you are happy with developments such as those articulated above, you want to vote Socialist, not Republican. If you are still unsure where you stand, stay tuned: Part Three of this discussion will appear in the next issue of *Uncommon Sense*.

For the rest of you, thank you for embracing American values. You are patriots.

And that, my friends, is the latest elephant in the room.

## Shameless Plug

### Norwood to Offer Management Course

I had a former student reach to me this past week asking for a referral to a panelist who served as part of a panel discussion I included in my management class last semester. After making her request, she closed with these words: "Professor, it was by far my favorite class throughout all my years at College of the Canyons."

Such words are very encouraging to me. They suggest I am bringing value to my college students.

Thus, I soon begin a new semester of offering a new management class. I will actually be offering two sections of this class at College of the Canyons. One will be held on Monday evenings at their Valencia campus, and the other on Thursday evenings at their satellite campus out in Canyon Country. The semester begins



February 8th. Both classes begin at 6:30 PM and end at 9:35 PM.

Students will learn valuable content on the McKinsey 7S model (modified by Stephen R. Covey into what is called the 9S model) on the following topics:

- Shared Values
- Strategy
- Structure
- Systems
- Staff
- Skills
- Style
- Stream (i.e., the environment)
- Self

Those who wish to enroll should go to the College of the Canyons [website](#).

## From Ara's Journal

### When Little Problems Mask Big Problems

Yesterday I was out for a run. My goal (and my actual accomplishment) was to run 6 miles. Having dropped my car off at a shop to get an oil change, I was running along a route I normally didn't traverse. But I had mapped out the distance in advance, so I knew what it would take to run 6 miles.



I was running in a residential neighborhood not far from my own. Known as Double "C" Ranch, this neighborhood has always struck me as a nice, family-friendly locale. Yet while I was running, I noticed things that concerned me. I saw a number of beer cans littering the gutters of this otherwise attractive street. Then I saw about 6 different empty beer bottles, standing upright, in the gutter. These beer bottles were not clustered in front of one or two houses, but lined the street for a distance of about 8 homes. It made me wonder whether a block party had taken place the night before. There was other debris littering the landscape: plastic water bottles, a used flossette (which is a dental product with a preloaded length of floss on a gripper), a crushed box that contained a 12-pack of beer, a pencil, an empty container of hand-sanitizer, an empty CD case, a half-smoked cigarette, a dirty hand towel.

On my way back, while running on the same street, I noticed that one of the beer bottles was now smashed with pieces of glass in the street itself.

I wonder what has happened to the pride of these home-owners. Are they just a bunch of slobs, derelict in their obligations of taking care of their own property? Are they simply too drunk and too hung-over to clean up after themselves.

And I wonder how such sloppiness plays out in other aspects of their lives. Are they habitually late to meetings or events? Are they crass and coarse in how they conduct themselves with others?

I wonder if the trashy, ill-kept street I was running on was symbolic of a degradation of society at large. I wonder if we are in the early stages of the unraveling of civilization.

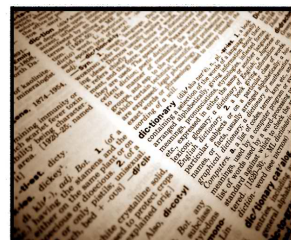
## The World of Words

### Cadre

#### Building Your Power of Expression

Cadre, n.

**Pronunciations:** 'kadrē,'kădrē,'kad,rā,'kăd,rā



**Meaning:** A cadre is a small group of people that are set apart for a specific task or purpose.

#### Usage:

- *We solved that problem by gathering together a small cadre of chemists to analyze this strange compound and determine its make up.*
- *Like a small cadre of like-minded citizens of Pebble Beach, she was enthusiastically active on a dozen boards and charities.*
- *David, with the help of his faithful cadre of lady friends, was the one person who had the best shot of providing further informatoin on the family and its history.*

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New subscribers, the Special Report "11 Ways to Beat the Odds" should have been sent out to you already. If you have not received it, please communicate that to me via email (ara@aranorwood.com).

For more information on my work, follow me on Twitter ("Ara Norwood"), or on Facebook (keyword "Leadership Development Systems") or via my website: [www.aranorwood.com](http://www.aranorwood.com)

**Sincerely,**

Ara Norwood  
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