

Our City

I found myself in a dark place last week. As I saw the ticker tape news reports come across my phone I found myself thinking of John Emerich Edward Dalberg, Lord Acton, and his writings of the Inquisition and his famous quote from those writings, "Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely." I found myself thinking of places like Purgatory and things like pride, envy and wrath. I was in a dark mood when Leona, my oldest daughter, saved me from the darkness as she invited me on a walk. "Sunshine and fresh air will make you feel better," she said. It's true. It always has. Sunshine is the best purifier after all.

As the checks and balances of our republic seemed to hang tenuously on history's door step I found myself engaged in two highly productive and informative meetings last week. While the national news bothered me what is going on in our community has me filled with optimism, no small degree of hope and a promise of a better tomorrow for each of us. Those I met and worked with last week helped keep at bay the darker things in the back of my mind.

Last Tuesday night about 20 representatives of different taxing districts in Power County and a few private citizens met to learn about Urban Renewal Agencies; how they are formed, what they can and cannot do and who gives them the authority to act. Across the country in Washington D.C. Republicans and Democrats debated the Constitutional checks and balances of our republic. The dichotomy: 20 common hard-working people are working together to find a better way forward for a community in need of alternatives; simply because they believe it is the right thing to do. One hundred (Senators) elected representatives of the common hard-working people doing everything in their power to oppose the contrasting argument; some seeming to not even listen to the other further perverting pride, envy and in some cases even wrath. It is a dark and treacherous place where we find many in absolute power. I hope that they sometime soon find the glorious sunlight of cooperation and remember that it is through cooperation and compromise that truly great things are done.

Last Thursday I attended a meeting in Pocatello on the Open Public Meeting Laws and their ramifications. Others in attendance included attorneys, judges and elected officials. To a person I believe the common goal of all the elected officials in attendance was to always remain above reproach and constantly err on the side of full public disclosure and openness when it comes to the handling of an organization's business; avoiding the temptation and perversion of pride, envy and wrath. As I watched the news when I got home I couldn't help but contrast it to what I had just experienced; elected officials continually doing everything in their power to be fully transparent. Perhaps, like me, they have no sense of power but merely wish to serve; their moral fabric still intact, their sense of right and truth zeroed in. For that they have my admiration as they try and do for their communities what the 20 people of Power County who met last Tuesday are trying to do.

In the irony of these times I also continually find myself humbled and often in awe of those I am fortunate enough to work with every day; those who continually put the needs of others before pride, devotion to the greater good above envy and their love of their fellow man above even a thought of wrath. It is the example of our community members and other regionally local leaders that continues to guide me. It is my hope that right and truth will always be the light that guides all of us in a united effort to serve our communities as best we can. There is

little if anything better than a long walk in the sunshine with a good dog and someone you love to make sense of what is truly important. Thank you, Leona.

Until next week...