

Instead of a Column, by a Man Too Burnt Out to Write One

In the normal course of things, I write my columns to a particular formula, that of the “op-ed.” I pick a subject that’s riding high in the news cycle (or, better yet, is ABOUT to be riding high in the news cycle, making me look prophetic) and make the most compelling — but concise! — argument I can come up with for my position on that subject.

These times are not the normal course of things. The news cycle right now is “COVID-19, 24/7.” Frankly I’m sick of writing about that — my last 12 columns, and 13 out of my last 15 columns, have been about the pandemic — but it’s not like there’s much else going on.

So, instead of a column, I’m going to share some random thoughts. Some of those thoughts relate to COVID-19, some don’t. They’re just things I’ve been thinking about.

Thought One: I often hear politicians complain that this or that person, corporation, organization, whatever, is “out of control” and needs to be “held accountable.” Out of WHOSE control? Accountable to WHOM? They never seem to say.

Thought Two: Regular people who don’t care very much about politics are often referred to as “sheep” by people who care deeply about politics. And we’re all encouraged to think of ourselves that way by supporters of militarism and “law enforcement.” That is, we’re the sheep, and they’re the sheep dogs guarding us from the wolves. But who are the politicians in this scenario? They’re the sheep FARMERS. They shear us continuously ... and feed some of us to their dogs.

Thought Three: I keep hearing about the need for a “plan” to “open the economy back up.” We don’t need a “plan” for that. If you take your boot off someone’s neck, he can get up on his own just fine, with no need for a “plan” from you. Ditto an entire population. But the politicians don’t want us to notice that. Their livelihoods depend on us believing that their “plans” are why things happen.

Thought Four: The Republican and Democratic Parties want us to believe that the upcoming election is THE MOST IMPORTANT ELECTION [insert something here — “of our lifetimes,” “in history,” etc.] But the quality of the candidates they’re putting up for us to choose between says they don’t think it’s important enough for them to bother taking seriously. If they don’t, why should we?

Next time, a real column. I promise.