

If It Ain't Broke...

What is it with mankind that people ALWAYS seem to want to change something that works? How many times have you bought your favorite product, only to find that the manufacturer “improved” it? Great. The only problem is, it isn't as good anymore. Isn't that frustrating? I suppose the urge comes from wanting to create something new to titillate people's interest, but sometimes you have to go with what works.

Take the humble fork. Now, there's a design that's timeless. Why change it? I used to have a running dialogue with a waiter at a Chinese restaurant over which is better—a fork, or chopsticks. To my mind, there's no contest. Armed with a fork, you can stab, scoop, slice and carefully select your food. Aside from stabbing and carefully selecting, try scooping or slicing with chopsticks. Why would anyone want to change a fork's configuration? I'm sure many have tried but, go to any restaurant in the West and you'll find basically the same instrument beside your plate.

So, on a larger scale, why are the people we send to Washington to enact legislation trying to take everything that works about America and reduce it to an indecipherable mess? Let's look at a few of the more egregious examples.

Take cars. There are few devices of man that have been more beneficial. From the beginning, the automobile has proved a boon. First, it literally enabled us to drive out from under a pile of manure. Before the “horseless carriage” took over, cities were struggling to deal with all the manure that horses created. Unlike a car, which you can just store in a garage until you need it again; you don't have to feed it or clean up after it. A horse, on the other hand, produces manure even if you never take it from its stall. Cars provide an essential to a free society—mobility. Today, you can “hit the road” and go all over our great land. You can do the same in Europe, or Asia. If that road is less than satisfactory, say like in Mexico, South America, or Africa, you can use an off-road version of a car and still go. Okay, I'll concede that, in Afghanistan, a pack mule is king.

So why are we so intent on ruining all that benefit? Oh yes, cars are evil because they use (GASP!) petroleum. To some eco-freaks, petroleum is the Devil's foremost tool of destruction, never mind the fact that cars run so much cleaner now and most probably will continue to do so in the future. In spite of the mantra that petroleum is a “non-renewable” resource, we continually seem to be finding new, even larger reserves all over the planet. The infrastructure is in place to drill, refine and distribute the stuff. Then, why are so many crying for “alternative energy” sources? My favorite among the idiotic statements politicians use is this gem: “We need to reduce our dependency on foreign oil.” This one seems to me to be a no-brainer. To reduce said dependency, let's just use what we have *at home*. Sound simple? Not to the brainiacs in Washington. Don't even get me started on the whole “global warming” fiasco.

How about those trees, huh? To listen to the “tree-huggers,” you'd think trees had become an endangered species! Let's not get into the eco-loon, who strips naked, names himself/herself after his/her favorite plant, or animal, and camps out in the branches of some old tree that stands in the way of construction—for that's another issue for another time. If some people would just

pull their heads away from the trunk and spit out the bark they've collected, they'd see how useful wood is. From it, you can make paper products, build houses and furniture, or a priceless violin. I think wood is undoubtedly the most useful product, you should pardon the expression, God gave mankind. Why do some people act as though trees are immortal? How many times have you heard this phrase, "first growth forest?" There IS no such thing. Yes, there are trees that have lived literally for thousands of years, but even *they* die. I doubt that there's a first growth forest anywhere in the world. Are we supposed to believe that there are trees somewhere that grew from seedlings when the Earth came to be? As the kids used to say, "Shuh, as if."

Then there's this aversion to technology. What's up with that? Don't people realize how technology has improved our lives? Far from being the source of all evil, as some of these snots assert, technology is making our lives more comfortable, curing our diseases, and fixing the problems it has caused in the past, mostly due to our own hubris and unconcern while utilizing it. To listen to these crazies, we should go back to a pre-wheel civilization, live in grass huts, and wipe our butts, not with Charmin, but with leaves. Who are they kidding? If you notice, most of the folks peddling this Luddite crap seem to be rolling in dough, and all the comforts it supplies. And we thought the day of the snake-oil hucksters was over. Take Al Gore (please!). Nobel Peace prize, indeed! He's just found a way to scam the public and get rich on "carbon credits." (Hey Al! What happened to the guy who was, with Tipper, so pro-life years ago—not enough money in it?) If it weren't so serious, I'd laugh. It all proves P. T. Barnum's dictum, "There's a sucker born every minute."

Let's get off the "eco-freako" bandwagon and look at an age-old institution—marriage. Why do we try to improve on it or, worse yet, do away with it altogether? In the 19th Century they peddled free-thinking and free-love. In the 20th Century they renamed it "the New Morality." But it all boils down to the same old immorality. We labor under the delusion that sex is indeed free. Well, I have news for you: it ain't. There's this problem with babies who, despite all our precautions, seem to come along anyway. And then there are venereal diseases. Do HIV and AIDS ring a bell?

Marriage, in some form or other, has been around since near the beginning of human history. Why? Because it takes into consideration a few realities. One, despite male fantasies to the contrary, man is essentially a monogamous creature. "Me Tarzan, you Jane," is still valid—a guy wants to know that "his woman," and a woman wants to know that "her man," is exclusive to him or her. Be it a patriarchal, or matriarchal society, the marriage contract takes care of the problem of raising babies, because it's a mechanism for providing for their care and feeding by putting the responsibility on the parents, where it belongs. Why do you think it's been around for so long and still persists?

Take a look at the inner cities of our country, and in some cities in Europe, where socialist meddling has reduced the family to a pale shadow of its former glory. Dad's out raising hell; Mom can't manage to get off her duff to raise the kids and, even if she tries, sees them cut down by gang violence, or rotting in jail. How's that Welfare State workin' out fer ya Bunkie? Again, nothing's free. Period.

For a long time now, it has seemed to me to be a really bad idea to put 500+ people in Washington, DC with nothing better to do than spend their time thinking of ways to screw around with the American social fabric, the military, the medical establishment and the economy. It used to be America was the standard the rest of the world looked up to, hate us or not. In our relatively short history, we became the Big Dog of Big Dogs, and all without wars of conquest. What are we trying for *these* days—Third World status? God help us all!

How about we stop trying to fix things that aren't broken, and maintain what works instead?