

Partly Cloudy

S. LaRue – 12/2013

“Ignorance is bliss” isn't an insult from where I stand. There's something to be said for a mind that's developed a filter which diverts unwanted information into the trash folder and periodically empties it. Hyper-Vigilance has it's drawbacks.

IIB allows a person to see a Barcalounger, recognize it as a comfy spot, and plop down in it. An HV person sees it as a symbol of low IQ and bad taste — not GOOD bad taste, just plain old bad taste. The HV person actually sees the unshaven, overweight, television-watcher sitting there in a filthy Dallas Cowboys Logo emblazoned t-shirt, drinking Budweiser from a can and eating Cheetos out of an enormous bag; sees him reach for the Playboy magazine in the little pocket on the side when a commercial comes on, if the commercial isn't about booze, cars or another sporting event to watch.

IIB types will intentionally purchase a Windows operating system computer — they're usually hundreds of dollars less expensive than an Apple system, but they're hard to navigate for those without extensive education in the computing arts, they don't last as long, and if you need support when something goes South, 100 people will each tell you something different when asked what you should do to fix your problem. My mother owns a Windows based system, spent an untold amount of tech support money and still had her initial issues. I suggested she unplug it while it was on, plug it back in, and start it up. Problem solved. It needed to be internally shaken, like a bottle of Snapple. Beverages with sediment and computers ought not to share operational instructions.

HV people live their lives as if they're on a mission. There are goals to be achieved, places to be and not to be, timetables to be adhered to. Basic truths / facts cause them to take a certain path, as opposed to others which were available to them and simpler to traverse. Simple often equals “bad idea” in the mind of the HV, whereas the IIB person seeks simplicity, accepts it regardless of its origin.

Your IIB people shop at Walmart. The reasons for not shopping there, *ever*; vast and bold as they may be, have been filtered by the IIB mind and thrown away as meaningless data. Waltzing into Walmart is something they do with great anticipation, knowing they're about to “*Save BIG*” by spending their “voting dollars” at a business that has the downfall of the country as its secondary mission, the primary mission being that the Waltons who own the chain (90 people, give or take) continue to reap more profit than any corporation that has ever existed on the planet through abhorrent employee policies combined with dangerous and demeaning overseas operations in which children are abused and hundreds / thousands die every year toiling in unsafe workplaces for pennies a day. People have told the IIBers these facts, they've heard them, pondered them for a moment, *maybe*, before their minds told them, “*It's just too much for you to handle. We'll take it from here...*”, and promptly discarded them all.

When HV people travel past a Walmart, they avert their eyes so as not to see it. If they were to take full notice of it being close enough for them to see, their brains may liquify. The HVites have learned not to remind the IIBers that it's morally questionable to shop at Walmart — for reasons unknown, IIBers hold Walmart, in particular, as their beacon of pride and should an HVite express displeasure with an IIBer for helping the Waltons to conquer the globe, there may very well be fisticuffs with little-to-no provocation. Walmart is a haven of sanity for them where they can get what they *need* for half what it used to cost at the local shop Neighbor Bob ran until Walmart arrived.

How the Waltons went about acquiring it, is none of their concern. All they know, all they've chosen to

store in their minds, is that they're able to feed their family huge portions of poorly processed food-like items, clothe their children and keep their entertainment systems up to the modern standard of living they see on television every day, and still have money leftover to keep the fridge stocked with Bud. If you dare to question that, be so bold as to speak a single fact pointing to a flaw in their “church of savings” business practices, you'd better be ready for a tussle, 'cuz there's gonna be one.

I use the Walmart scenario as the apex example of the differences between the two mind-sets. If a person has what's often referred to as a value system, a moral code as it were and sticks to the facts this code is based on, spending a single penny at Walmart is completely out of the question. There are thousands of glaring examples of the owners being, for all intents and purposes, High Commanders in the Nazi SS, at the helm of what they hope will soon be a country of concentration camps filled with Walmart shoppers who've willingly reported for their housing assignment when promised a year's supply of frozen TV Dinners for a dollar.

The HVites wouldn't eat a TV Dinner in the first place, but the IIBers see a bounty of nourishment before them, where, in reality, there is none. Doesn't matter — it's food of some kind or another, you can chew it, it goes through you, you shit it out and live to repeat the process. That your kidneys or liver may fail in a year, or your stomach lining will lose the ability to keep up with all the toxins you're cramming into it, makes no difference. IIBers live in the “now” and that's something to be very proud of. HVites could learn a lesson or two in that arena, should they slow-the-fuck-down and *listen to reason*. Doing so would require both camps of thought, or lack thereof, to agree on the definition of “reasonable.” I stand before you a doubtful man.

The bent of this missive has assuredly revealed which camp I consider myself to be an occupant of. I've owned a Barcalounger, watched hundreds of thousands of hours of television. I used to drink Miller (bottles) but still, it was shitty American beer. And when Sam started Walmart, it seemed it was the incidental / happenstance answer to our nation's pray-a-thon, demanding Sky-daddy's intervention in the area of *'big savings'*. Newer and better Jet Skis were needed, bigger stereo speakers, affordable lingerie, patio furnishings, Disney films, Britney Spears CDs and brother I'm here to tell ya, that new Lincoln Navigator was looking like it would never be parked outside the trailer. Our long national nightmare was officially OVER! Who knew Sky-daddy had the time for such frivolity with so many naked people to monitor? “That dude *Rawks!*”

I'd been raised not to question the actions of the masses, to go along with the unspoken game plan, to fall in line and do what was expected of me. I was a model consumer, owned a pair of brown wingtip shoes, drove a Chevrolet, scrimped and saved for a giant-screen TV and tended my lawn like it was going to be inspected by a government official at any moment (one pass North to South, a second East to West).

Then one day, one overcast, fateful day, my core values, which I'd compiled under strict guidance sans inquiry, the very foundation I was standing on, dissolved. And I'll be damned if I can point to a single event causing it. It just turned to mist and dissipated, was burned away by the power of the Sun.

I've heard of alcoholics having what they call “a moment of clarity” just before they adopt the moniker “*recovering*” alcoholic, and set about fixing the broken lives they'd created by their own hands. I might as well have been a junkie going cold turkey. MY so called “moment of clarity” looked like up was down, left was right, cats were chasing dogs, my children were obedient and courteous, my wife's cooking became edible — my footing was gone and I was adrift in a sea that needed redefining.

Here it is, several thousand years later, my definitions have been updated, adjustments have been made, and I often find myself longing for ignorance. I'd like to just go buy a god damn coffee maker without scrutinizing the package for the words "MADE IN CHINA". *Mr. Coffee*, a long established leader in the coffee maker industry, an American based company that sells more coffee makers than anyone in the world, now has operations in China. In fact, my year-long search for a coffee maker has yet to turn one up that doesn't cost more than an automobile without the words "MADE IN CHINA" somewhere on the box. If those words are there, it might as well be emitting neon-green radioactive light, because I ain't buyin' it. Oppressed persons made it, got paid little to nothing for the pleasure, and have probably lost a family member or three due to hazardous working conditions.

The political process in America has been proven to be an inside job — makes no difference who you vote for — the fucking Waltons and their Nazi forces are driving the bus whether you believe it or not. Belief has little to do with real life — facts are what matter, not faith. **The fact is**, the only way I get to vote in favor of the human race evolving is with my dollars. That's the voice, the ONLY voice people have with which to state their preferences because its the only language the Waltons of Planet Earth understand. If everyone stopped telling them their shenanigans are hunky-dory by PAYING THEM for their complete lack of morals, they'd stop being Nazi shitheads. Shoot them in the bank account, and you'll get their attention. Shooting one of them in the head will have no effect — the one you kill will have a successor and the game will continue uninterrupted.

See what I mean? Seriously, read those two paragraphs again. Its all true, factual, real, tangible, proven over and over and over again. So why is there still one single Barcalounger, in one single house, holding one single fat sports fan, drinking one single piss-flavored beer?

Easy...

Because ignorance is bliss, Barcaloungers are comfy, being overweight is normal, focusing your attention on sporting events instead of what the world is up to takes very little effort; it's even fun when the guys you claim as your own are winning — you may be sitting in a big, ugly plastic chair getting soused on piss-water, but that doesn't mean you're willing to hitch your wagon to a bunch of hapless losers — "your" team is the shit, end of story. Anxiety is not a part of your existence. Angst may appear momentarily when Walmart is out of Cheetos, or your team is behind when they break for a commercial, but tomorrow will be smooth sailing. All will be forgotten and it'll be business as usual down at the plant.

This little yarn was inspired by a simple trip to a local drug store. I drove there, purchased some medication I currently require for a temporary physical malady, put a quart of oil in my foreign car, dropped by an acquaintance's home to say hello, and made my way back here. Took about an hour. During that time, the people and situations I encountered, all of which were normal, everyday activities undertaken by those in the IIB camp, gave me the distinct impression, by the time I walked back through my door, that my hair was on fire and my hands were tied behind my back, making it impossible for me to address the inferno atop my wee noggin.

As in most instances of this sort, I try to relax; sit in my Ray Eames designed, mid-century-modern molded plywood chair, next to my Heywood Wakefield occasional table, under my Herman Miller lamp, a hand-etched pilsner rose-colored depression glass, filled with room temperature S. Pelligrino mineral water in hand and in a few minutes I was able to type.

Compare the Barcalounger scene with what I just described and please explain to me, slowly and in

small words, like I was a 5 year old child, just how the fuck we're ALL going to come to an agreement concerning the definition of “reasonable.” I'd distract myself with television while you prepare your outline but I don't have one.

Doom. Can you smell it too? Reminds me of burned bacon.