

## INTRODUCTION –PART ONE

As I begin writing this series of essays on the state of these United States it occurs to me that no one may actually buy this book and read it. After all, who has ever heard of Jim Plair? Why would anyone want to read my thoughts on what I believe to be wrong with the way our Nation has been misled since the turn of the 20th Century? Well, I hope there will be some good, God Fearing, Patriotic Americans who will read what I have to say.

This Introduction will be a brief history of “Three Score and Thirteen”. I trust that I will be able to establish some measure of credibility with those who read what follows. It is my belief that you do not have to be a famous person or politician to be able to analyze what has gone wrong with America, and to have some suggestions as to how we, as Americans, can turn our Nation back to its past glory and respectability.

But first, let me state that what follows is meant to be a “refresher course” for those who may have had a worthwhile civics course in high school or college. For those who did not have a course that discussed the Constitution or the Bill of Rights, this book may be used as a civics lesson. There is no doubt, that in the minds of many of my generation, very few of the “baby boomer” generation and thereafter had little or no exposure to the foundation of our Republic and its origin.

After living for 74 years (my age at the first printing) I knew that I had to prepare to leave this world by writing this book about the way this great nation has changed since my birth in 1928, in Moultrie, Georgia. This was a most difficult time in the history of the United States. In just over a year from my birth on June 30th, this nation would be plunged into the “great depression”. This actually happened on October 29th, 1929. It was called “Black Tuesday”! Of course, I was too young to know or understand what was happening. In fact, I suppose that I was better off than most. My father was in the wholesale food business. As far as I can remember, my family never went hungry.

I was also unique in that my mother, as a single parent, raised me. She separated from my father when I was six. My mother, Susann White Plair, was only 19 when I was born and 25 when she went out on her own. Somehow she was able to get a degree in nutrition and feed and clothe us both by working with hospital dietary departments in several Georgia cities and Charleston, South Carolina, Nashville, Tennessee and New York City. Again, due to my mother’s work, I never knew hunger. However, because of her occupation, we moved quite frequently, and in 1942 we ended up in Charleston, South Carolina. The next year, 1943, I entered Porter Military Academy in Charleston as a boarding student where I began my first exposure to military life. The Headmaster, Col. P.M. Thrasher, had quite an influence on my young life. This was, I am sure, because of my not being exposed up to this time with a “father figure”. Incidentally, Porter Military Academy merged with Guad School for Boys and later became known as Porter Gaud and is still located in Charleston.

After graduation from Porter in June of 1945, I entered The Military College of South Carolina, also known as The Citadel, in Charleston. This was a natural movement for many of the young men who graduated from Porter. The military influence while at Porter prepared us for military life at The Citadel. I graduated from The Citadel in June of 1950 with a BS degree in Civil Engineering. I also received a Reserve Commission in the Corps of Engineers, and was assigned to a Reserve Engineer Combat Battalion in Washington, DC, where my mother lived and I began my first year out of college. I applied for and received a position with the District Corps of Engineers - my first job out of college.

The Korean War (or Police Action) was in full force and in December of 1951 I was called out of my reserve battalion and sent to Fort Huachuca, Arizona. I was the only officer in my reserve unit who had not been on active duty. All of my fellow officers had seen duty in WWII. I joined an Army unit, Company C 366 Engineer Aviation Battalion, which was assigned to the U.S. Air Force that provided their engineering support as they had not created their own engineering unit. Our primary mission was to construct airfields and facilities

to support the Air Force in Korea. I arrived in Korea in June of 1952, and worked on the construction of three airfields while there. In June of 1953, I completed my tour of duty in Korea and was assigned to Fort Belvoir, outside of Washington, where I was an instructor in Military Airfield Construction. I was Honorably Discharged from the Corps in November of 1953. I was offered the opportunity to remain in the service and learn to fly the Army's light aircraft since I had applied for this duty just prior to going to Korea. However, after a year in Korea I did not want to take a chance that I might have to return to Korea.

Fortunately I was offered a job with one of the foremost Architect/Engineering firms in the world—Howard Needles Tammen & Bergandoff in Kansas City, Missouri. On my way to Kansas City, I stopped by Cincinnati, Ohio, to see my college sweetheart, Sally Thrower. We renewed our relationship and were later married on July 10th, 1954

In September of that year I was accepted a civil engineering position with Columbian Steel Tank Company, to redesign and oversee the construction of concrete foundations of sixty grain elevator sites being built throughout the Republic of Turkey. On December 4<sup>th</sup>, 1954, Sally and I were on our way to a new life style. We lived in Ankara, Turkey, for eight months. Because of a reduction in the size of our group by the government of Turkey, in August of 1955, I found another position in Nagoya, Japan with Adrian Wilson & Associates of Los Angeles, California. I was assigned by the company as a Civil Engineer “trouble-shooter” with the 5th Air Force for all civil construction projects throughout Japan. Once again, as when I was in Korea, I was attached to 5<sup>th</sup> Air Force but this time as a civilian.

These two overseas experiences were very influential in shaping our love and deep appreciation for the country of our birth. We knew first hand there was at that time, as today, no nation on earth with the freedom and opportunity that we enjoy in the United States of America.

We came home when our first child, Teresa, was expected. And in June of 1957, we began our family that grew two more times, with Lisa Ann in 1960 and James, Jr. in 1962. I went to work with Sally's father in Charleston, South Carolina. He owned The General Tire Distributorship in Charleston, and I became the Sales Manager. After fourteen years, I left the business and in the fall of 1969 became the Assistant Director of Charles Towne Landing, which was the main show place for the Tri-Centennial Celebration of the founding of South Carolina. My position as Assistant Director was actually as the overseer of all construction at the site.

In 1973 I joined The Equitable Life Assurance Society of the United States, now known as AKA Equitable. I retired as an active Registered Representative with The Equitable in 1999 even though I continued to be in business in Brevard, NC, until 2007.

During these years of work, Sally and I, besides raising three children, went through several growing pains, when I became what I call a “Jeffersonian Conservative”. My exposure to the military life, especially at The Citadel, had helped shape my deep patriotism and love of country. In the early 1960s we both became members of the John Birch Society, which exposed us to the Constitution as well as created a keen interest in what was taking place in our nation and the world. We began our conservative education in earnest. Even though we had been “church going” people most of our lives, it wasn't until we became members of St. Andrews Episcopal Church in Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina (just cross the Cooper River from Charleston) that we began our journey as Christians. Also in the early 1960's I joined the Republican Party in Charleston County and ran on the first full Republican slate for the State House of Representatives. Charleston County at that time was very much under the influence of Congressman Mendel Rivers and the Democratic Party. Out of eleven seats up for “grabs” the Republicans won (if my memory is correct) seven seats. I was not among the winners. However, I stayed very active in the local County Republican Party.

As a service to the community, several of my friends joined me in starting “The Freedom Forum”. The purpose was to bring to Charleston well known Conservatives to speak on the topics of the day.

In 1983 we purchased a “summer cottage” on Slick Rock Mountain just south of Brevard, NC. In 1966 we renovated our “cottage” into a three bedroom home, and moved permanently in 1988. After twenty years of happiness on “our mountain top”, we moved to Brevard and now live in a cottage in the College Walk Retirement Community.

So, there you have a brief background and where I am “coming from.”

I would like to give you, the reader, some idea as to the topics I will be addressing in the following chapters. First, I will offer my thoughts on the very foundation of our Nation - the Constitution of the United States. I will do this using the Federalist Papers written in 1787 by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and John Jay in New York City newspapers to explain what they and the other signers of the Constitution were giving to the American people. Without expressing my thoughts on this great document in Part I, you would be at a loss to understand some of my comments, as well as my opinions as written in Part II.

Next, and in no particular order of importance, I will discuss the following topics in Part II: Who and What We Are, Taxation and the Constitution, the Question of Health Care, Education for All, Welfare and Social Engineering, the Separation of Church and State, Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Assembly, the Right to Bear Arms, Term Limits and Campaign Reform, the Abortion Issue, Immigration and the English Language, and Foreign Policy.

In conclusion here is THE AMERICAN CREED, written by William Tyler Page, in 1917, who was Clerk of the House of Representatives:

*“I believe in the United States of America as a government of the people, by the people, for the people; whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed; **a democracy in a republic; a sovereign nation of many sovereign states;** a perfect union, and one inseparable; established upon those principals of freedom, equality, justice and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes.”*