



# Look to the past as we move forward

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As 2020 grinds to a close, I thought it would be worthwhile to review the past year and see what lessons we can glean from the collective experience most of us – by the grace of God – managed to survive.

Hopefully, we have not simply confirmed Aaron B. Powell’s lament that “it’s quite evident that human beings don’t learn from the mistakes of past generations.”

So as we move forward, let’s look to the past.

First, a quick reminder:

“We must not confuse dissent with disloyalty,” Edward R. Murrow cautioned. “We must remember always that accusation is not proof, and that conviction depends upon evidence and due process of law.”

Remember that the next time someone asks you to believe their allegations even though they refuse to provide any supportive corroboration.

Ditto:

“If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it,” Joseph Goebbels proclaimed, “people will eventually come to believe it.”

Remember that the next time someone makes an outrageous claim that seems to defy reality.

And consider what Richie Norton reminded us: “I know who you are by how and where you spend your time.”

Remember that the next time you encounter someone who ignores the plight of others to focus on their own self-interest.

Then there’s this:

“One does not establish a dictatorship in order to safeguard a revolution,” George Orwell explained. “One makes the revolution in order to establish the dictatorship.”

Remember that the next time you hear someone calling for violent demonstrations or protests in support of a person instead of an idea.

And finally:

“The important thing is the presidency,” Richard Nixon noted. “If need be, save the presidency from the president.”

Never in the history of our nation has this observation been more spot on.

Let’s hope 2021 is a better year.

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