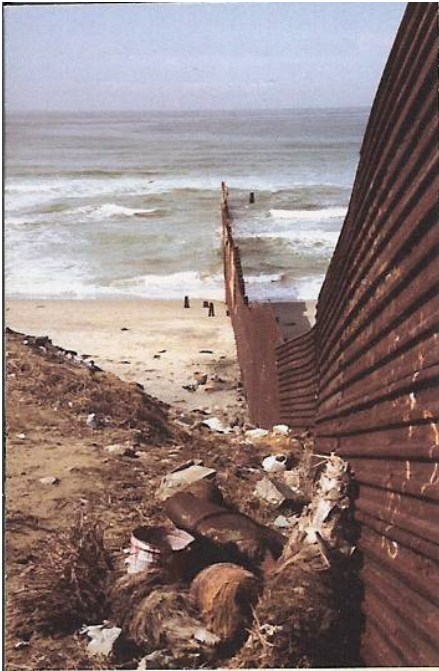


PASTOR'S PAGE – FEBRUARY 2006



There have been a number of fences (walls) in the history of the world. None of them have ever done any lasting good.

From space we can still see the Great Wall of China, 4,160 miles long. It was built to keep the enemies of China from crossing the border and became a complete structure under the Qin Dynasty (although what we see today is mostly from the Ming Dynasty). It stunted the growth of the country by isolating it and, in the end, the enemies simply went around the wall in order to conquer.

The Rabbit Fence was purportedly built in Australia to keep the rabbits under control, and that is what most history books will tell you. In actuality it was a good way of keeping the Aborigines in “one place” – until they could be bred out of existence under the guidance of Mr. Neville, the Chief Protector of the Aborigine Populace. It was supposed to take 8 generations, and didn’t work. The fence is still there, but the original purpose is long gone, and now it simply helps control the rabbits that are the scourge of Australia.

Israel is in the midst of building a fence between itself and the Palestinians. Isn’t it amazing that all of the water seems to be on the Israeli side of the fence. Wonder what the final outcome of that fence will be?

The Berlin Wall was built after World War II. It divided East Berlin from West Berlin. It lasted for almost 50 years – a magnificent sign of tyranny and of the division of people. One of my first girlfriends escaped from behind the wall, in spite of the fact she and her family would have been shot if they had been caught. Finally in 1987, President Reagan said: “Mr. Gorbachev, tear down that wall!” In 1989 it happened, with the passageway between the eastern and western parts of Berlin once again open.

Just 5 years later we began our own fence as part of “Operation Gatekeeper”. Extending from the Atlantic Ocean to the Gulf of Mexico, primarily in urban areas and areas adjacent to urban areas, this fence divides our country from Mexico. The intent is to keep Mexican citizens from crossing into the United States looking for employment. The result of this fence has been death – over 4,000 at last count. The fence has not stopped people from trying to cross into the United States. It has simply forced them to try to cross in less hospitable areas – in the middle of the desert. Hence the deaths that it has caused.

At present there is a law under consideration that would make it a felony to help anyone who attempts to enter the United States across our southern border. It will be punishable by time in jail for a church (the leaders will serve), a company (the leaders will serve) or an individual to give even water to those who are dehydrated.

This is our wall of self aggrandizement. It says that we are better than those who would come here looking for work and that we do not want our country sullied by them. It is time to echo President Reagan and say: MR. BUSH, TEAR DOWN THIS FENCE!

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Recommended Radio:

KQKE

960AM

Air America – Talk Radio from the Left

Recommended Movie/DVD Rental:

GOOD NIGHT, AND GOOD LUCK

In the early 1950's, the threat of Communism created an air of paranoia in the United States and exploiting those fears was Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin. However, CBS reporter Edward R. Murrow and his producer Fred Friendly decided to take a stand and challenge McCarthy and expose him for the fear monger he was. However, their actions took a great personal toll on both men, but they stood by their convictions and helped to bring down one of the most controversial senators in American history.

As you watch it you will easily see the connections to our day. Substitute the fear of terrorism for the fear of Communism and Senator McCarthy for a few of our modern politicians and you will see what I mean.

Good Night, and Good Luck stars David Strathairn, Patricia Clarkson, Robert Downey, Jr., George Clooney, Ray Wise, Frank Langella and more. Academy Award nominee.

Recommended Book

ACROSS THE WIRE

by
Luis Urrea

Urrea, a Mexican-born American, worked from 1978 to 1982 for a Protestant aid group in Tijuana, and he wrote these fragmentary, evocative tales of heartbreak and hope for the San Diego Reader after he returned to the region in 1990. "Poverty is personal: it smells and it shocks and it invades your space," Urrea declares, and he admits to being thrilled by both the goodness and the squalor he knew intimately. He visits the dumps where people live, their possessions a bed and a car-battery-powered television. He travels with a Tijuana cop, working "a city of famed vice," and learns how the cop extracts sexual favors from American women. In one arresting chapter he records his father's death in a car accident, the tragedy compounded by police and funeral costs and a battle with the father's insurance company. Urrea ends with a manic, magic "Christmas story," about a gift giveaway organized by a San Diego rock radio station and attended by a band called the Trash Can Sinatras. There Urrea reunites with Negra--who as a little girl made a shrine out of the doll he gave her, and who says, "I never forgot you, Luis."

Quote of the Month:

Ideologies separate us. Dreams and anguish bring us together.

Eugene Ionesco

French (Romanian-born) Absurdist dramatist (1909 - 1994)