



Straight Talk

by Muriel Sluyter

Our Choices - Positive or Negative

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Greetings, Gentle Reader,

Americans spend their time, energy, and freedoms in many ways. The possibilities are endless. A young man can help an old lady cross a street, or knock her down and steal her purse. He can wear a t-shirt that says "Jesus Loves You," guaranteeing a trip to the principal's office, courtesy of ACLU lawsuits. Or he can wear a shirt that says, "Bush Is A Terrorist," which the ACLU will vehemently defend as free speech.

He can go to the polls and vote his conscience, or plan to "shut this city down!" when other people gather to do the same. He can go to college and earn an honest degree, or binge drink, march in protests, and cheat his way through college.

He can marry, remain faithful to spouse and children, work hard, and put his children through college, or shack around, produce children he refuses to care for and become a useless drug addict and drag on society. He can join the Boy Scouts and do good, or sue the Scouts for discrimination and do harm.

He can follow the lead of two California boys: Each was born in Romania and would normally have been placed in an orphanage, become mindless, half-starved, and useless to themselves or anyone else.

That didn't happen. They were adopted as infants, before they could be put in a orphanage, by a couple who preferred positive choices to negative ones. They grew up in America, healthy, well fed, loved, and nurtured. Now, as Scouts, they are working on their Eagle, and have chosen as a project to give what they can to other Romanian orphans, those who were not as blessed as they were.

They not only collected supplies for orphans, they persuaded their father to take them to Romania to deliver them in person. Since it was their Eagle project, not his, he required them to put it together. They contacted various media, spoke to service clubs and worked like proverbial beavers to pull it off, not realizing that compassionate Americans—who couldn't do this on their own—would jump on their bandwagon with gusto.

People brought goods to their home, then more goods, then even more. Soon their house overflowed to the point that the trip to Romania came not a moment too soon.

In addition to goods, they collected thousands of dollars. Orphans Around The World, a service organization, and FedEx agreed to do the shipping. But best of all, they delivered much in person, to both hospitals and orphanages. Can you imagine how these boys reacted to seeing pathetic children whose fate they did not share, but only because they had been adopted and brought to America? America the good!

Yes, indeed. Americans have choices, and an astonishing percentage, whom we can only call the "negatives," see greater virtue in negative than positive ones. The declaration, "I hate Bush!" resonates more strongly with them than, "I want to help."

The abundance we enjoy is a direct result of the sacrifice of American soldiers' lives over our 300 plus years of history. The deprivations Romanians suffer come from many times that 300 years spent in war, very little peace, and absolutely no freedom. But these "negatives" have little global memory and even less understanding. Reality for them extends only to the 1940s, when their grandfathers bled and died to spare them Romania's fate.

For negatives petty politics trumps everything. Defaming national leaders and avidly embracing every derogatory story has become a blood sport with them, and that only because they want to believe them, not because they are likely stories.

May heaven send us fewer negatives and more Eagle Scouts!