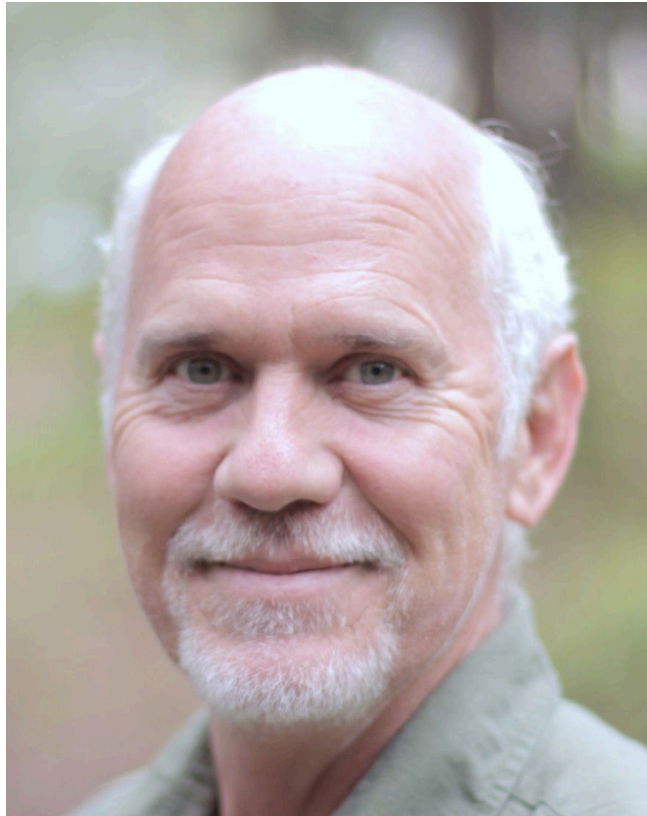


View from the Left: Should I Stay or Should I Go?

January 10, 2023



“If I go there will be trouble and if I stay it will be double.” These are the lyrics of a song by The Clash about deciding whether to leave a relationship.

I met a friend recently who asked me if I enjoyed writing my weekly column. Without hesitating I answered no I don’t enjoy it, but I feel like it is a community service to help inform people.

It takes a lot of effort for me to write a column and I have written 41 so far. Researching a topic, analyzing, writing, and editing all take time. And the production deadline must be met every Tuesday.

This is a lot to expect from a retired guy. It’s like work but I don’t get paid. That’s right I am a volunteer. Guess who volunteered me, Roger Gitlin. I am not sure why.

From the newspaper’s standpoint they are providing a balanced perspective by giving Gitlin and me the invitation to write a column. They truly have taken a hands-off approach to allowing me and my counter

columnist unbridled free speech.

We don't have a set topic assignment each week. We are both just freewheeling it. This explains the divergence of topics that are presented weekly for your consideration.

I have talked to a few people who have told me that they appreciate what I have written. Occasionally I get an email with kind words of support. But I am not sure how many people actually read my column. I do not need to talk to myself. I can do that at home.

I have gotten no negative feedback except from the one person who did not like the title of my column, "View from the Left". They argued that my ideas and opinions are not "leftist" but are mainstream. I guess that is debatable and that is the point.

I have a lot of respect for the people who toil every week to produce our local paper. This is a never-ending endeavor. I have been caught up in this repeating news cycle and as I head into the new year, I ask myself whether my contribution to this publication is useful or needed.

As much as I enjoy occasionally poking fun at Gitlin, I could easily give up this weekly chore and settle into a full-time commitment to retirement. Then I remember that this is a privilege that has been given to me.

I was talking to my daughter over Christmas break and explained to her that I try to write columns that will advise and inspire action. I want to have a positive impact.

Over the last forty-one weeks, I have written columns highlighting the progress being made by government agencies like the Harbor District, Crescent City, and the Tri-Agency Economic Development Authority.

I have advocated for the development of more affordable housing and assistance to the unhoused. I have spoken up on environmental issues like nuclear power, wind power and redwood forest preservation.

There are many ongoing issues that I think need to remain in the limelight, but...

I would like to hear back from more of you. Do you think that I should continue to write this column? What topic areas would you be interested in reading about? Should I stay focused on state and local issues or wade into the mire of national and international politics?

As always, my email address is listed on the bottom of the page.

Like Elon Musk, I will conduct an informal, unscientific, non-binding poll of my readers. Now it is time for you to write.

"Come on and let me know. Should I stay or should I go?"

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