

Subject: RE: Responsible Use

Date: Tue, 27 Jan 2004 22:39:28 +0000 (GMT)

From: Elizabeth James <cagebc@yahoo.com>

To: Ernie Crist <ernie_crist@dnv.org>, Corrie Kost <corrie@kost.ca>, James Ridge <James_Ridge@dnv.org>

CC: FONVCA <fonvca@fonvca.org>, Cagebc@yahoo.com, Mayor and Council - DNV <Council@dnv.org>, Senior Management Committee <managecomm@dnv.org>

27 January 2004

Dear Clr. Crist:

Being "nice" is not incompatible with speaking the truth on important matters. Nor should it be construed as a weakness, or an unwillingness to tackle injustice, or mismanagement or lack of ethics wherever they may occur. Rather, it is common courtesy and a consideration of others - which is an uncommon strength.

As for freedom of speech....I believe one should have the widest possible freedom to say exactly what one pleases, in whatever manner one pleases - and to be judged accordingly.

In this regard, however, Democracy herself has decided - in law - that the right to freedom of speech carries with it two boundaries: (a) the *responsibility* to be judicious in its use; and, (b) the requirement to accept the *legal consequences* when one oversteps or abuses the generally accepted principles which govern such a freedom.

Personally, I would prefer that what I have said be remembered for the value of its content, not for the discourteous or "un-nice" manner in which I spoke it. In part, this is in my own self-interest, since I want what I say to carry weight with the listener - not turn him/her off.

Last but not least, I believe that an elected person who is using equipment which belongs to the taxpayer, has a responsibility to be circumspect in the use of that equipment. In no way is that any impediment to the telling of a truth or the righting of a wrong - nor does the telling need to be discourteous.

It is a simple case of setting one's own limits on one's behaviour.

Sincerely,
Liz James

Dear Dr. Kost:

Thank you for your contribution to this debate - I appreciate your insight. What I appreciate even more is that you have responded to this challenge on the side of what is right. Instead of pontificating about "being nice"....

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