

My Friend Caruso

by Earl P. Holt III

When I was a Fifth Grader in 1963, the public school system I attended introduced an experimental reading program, probably intended to remedy the damage previously inflicted in earlier grades by the "Look-Say" method of instruction. Students would read a series of short stories and following each one, were tested on how much we retained.

The substance of many of those stories were delightful and memorable, with nary a word about how evil or racist America was. The communists and idiots staffing the Education Departments at our "*institutions of higher learning*" had yet to fabricate *Critical Race Theory*, so the stories were often patriotic and inspiring.

One I clearly recall was titled "***My Friend Caruso.***" It was a loving memoir written by a son or daughter of an Italian immigrant who owned a small barbershop in New York City and became personal friends with the *World's Greatest Tenor*, Enrico Caruso. One day out of the blue, Caruso walked into his barbershop needing a haircut before a performance that night.

Their professional relationship quickly blossomed into a close and personal friendship when they discovered with delight that they both hailed from Naples. "*The Great Caruso*" -- as the barber referred to him -- always made it a habit to drop in and see his old friend whenever he was in New York City. Caruso would relate anecdotes of "*the old country*" and -- being the sentimental guy he was -- the barber hungrily devoured all such news.

By the time they became close friends, Caruso's visits often ended with the barber closing his shop early to accompany Caruso to dinner. After

trimming Caruso's hair on one particular visit, they agreed to dine together that evening and arranged to meet at a recording studio near their intended restaurant.

When the barber arrived at the studio, he could see Caruso within the glass sound-booth and watched with admiration and pride as the Tenor finished a recording of "*La Donna E Mobile*" from the Verdi opera "*Rigoletto*." Afterwards, seeing the barber and assuming the recording equipment was turned off, Caruso exuberantly greeted his friend in Italian and by name.

Caruso was then informed by the studio's engineers that the recording equipment was still running and that it had not been turned off, so the song would have to be recorded a second time. Like the pro he was, Caruso shrugged it off and dutifully re-recorded the song.

When Caruso was finished with the second version and emerged from the recording booth, the barber asked him what was to be done with the first take of the song containing Caruso's greeting? In reply, Caruso pantomimed snapping the record over his knee. The barber reflexively asked if he might be allowed to keep it, a request that Caruso happily granted.

That recording became the most treasured possession of the barber and his entire family for the rest of his life. On holidays it was carefully removed from its sleeve and played for family and friends on their phonograph. After Caruso's untimely death in 1921, the barber would ceremoniously play the record and swell up with tears upon hearing the voice of "*my friend Caruso*," the greatest and most celebrated Tenor of all time and a man who called him "*paisan*."

My purpose in recalling this short story is simply to contrast the rich and inspirational curricula public school students enjoyed in the early 1960s,

with the vacuous and poisonous curricula to which our kids are now subjected by n*ggers, communist Jews and other traitorous imbeciles who call themselves "*educators*." Hanging would be too good for any of them.