

"Instead of *e pluribus unum*, America has become 'a house divided,' with its citizens defined on the basis of gender, ethnicity, race, and sexual orientation."

— Howard Phillips, Founder, The Constitution Party

VICTORY REPORT

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An Issues & Strategy Bulletin

Howard Phillips, founder and three-time presidential candidate of the Constitution Party, was a prolific writer and a savvy political activist. Among his many activities, he penned an insightful newsletter called the *Issues & Strategy Bulletin*. Each issue highlighted current events and under-reported news. The VICTORY REPORT is following his lead by occasionally providing information and motivation for patriots in the original *I&S* format.

What happens when Truth vanishes?

In this month's issue of the Victory Report I am going to take on a subject that has been considered by famous philosophers throughout history. I feel it is one of the most important things we can discuss in our troubled times

The topic is **truth**. Now, to start us off on the right foot, there are three types of truth, and we should be careful to differentiate among them:

1. Empirical truth and historical truth. "Just the facts, ma'am," as Sergeant Friday used to say on *Dragnet*. Truth is found in science and mathematics developed and tested through appropriate means, along with the "*who, what, when and where*" of newspaper fame. Note that **why** is omitted because we never fully understand others' motivations and can only speculate about them.
2. The type of truth that we hold to be self-evident, such as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.
3. The truth of God, the plan of salvation, and the purpose of life. This type of truth is voluntarily subscribed to, and is ignored by many.

In case you haven't read them at all, or not for a long time, I suggest as backdrop for this month's *Victory Report* that you brush up on these famous novels. Ordinarily, I am no fan of fiction, but these books are prophetic masterpieces:

Animal Farm and *1984* by George Orwell

Darkness at Noon, by Arthur Koestler

Lord of the Flies, by William Golding

One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich, by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

As you might imagine, these are all dark tales of oppression, servitude, and all-powerful government. Some are dystopian, others are based upon history. All give us powerful insights into the direction our world is going. All are frightening and not suited for reading while laying on a beach—if the government would allow you to do such a thing these days.

I'm going to pose some questions I would like you to consider as you read what follows.

1. Do you believe the things that are being spoken or tweeted by President Trump?
2. Do you believe the mainstream media in their reporting?
3. Do you believe you have sufficient facts regarding the important events of the day that you can consider yourself well informed?

Now the important questions:

1. Do you observe a strong media bias in journalism today, particularly when compared to when you were in your twenties?
2. Do you believe that truth exists?
3. Do you believe that truth is important?

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4. Who do you believe would like to twist, distort, ignore, or trample truth?
5. Do you believe you have become in any way desensitized over the past few years by the focus on violence, sex, drugs, and “alternate lifestyles” so that issues that were once black or white now occupy gray areas in your understanding?

Animal Farm is a wonderful metaphor of those who seek power to satisfy their own lusts. Its key point is the declaration that “All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others.” This perfectly describes our day, when many in power or seeking for power wish to exercise unrighteous dominion, feel themselves above the law, and believe that only they are fit to rule.

1984 portrays the world ours is becoming, where truth changes daily in order to demonstrate that “Big Brother” is always right. “Long live Big Brother” is the slogan for millions in one part of the world perpetually at war with one or the other parts of the world. Truth is not permitted to exist. Human emotions and passions are violently suppressed and treated as psychological disorders. We are here to serve the State; nothing else matters.

Darkness at Noon is a thinly disguised account of the Stalin terror. Stalin was so mad for power and so paranoid that he destroyed his presumed enemies one by one in psychological torture, show trials, and midnight executions.

Lord of the Flies is the story of a group of schoolboys from a prestigious private school marooned on an island after their parents sent them off to supposed safety just prior to a global nuclear holocaust or some other catastrophe. Despite the strict discipline of their upbringing and schooling the boys quickly descend into savagery and violence. Golding uses this format to show that the veneer of civilization is very thin in all of us, and that given the opportunity Man might easily descend into chaos.

One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich is a fictional account of a very real existence in the Soviet gulags. It is a tale of life in a place where men and women have no rights and have been deemed disposable by the State. The fact that this is a true picture makes the book that much more frightening.

Back to our subject

When I was attending Sunday School as a child perhaps sixty years ago I vividly remember a discussion on Pilate’s famous question “What is truth?” Being shy and reserved as I was in those days, all I did was listen, and I didn’t understand the

teacher’s answer.

In our day, in the face of massive Progressive gains in the distortion of language and the undermining of our institutions we need to examine not only Jesus’ response, but the concept of truth itself.

Truth implies that there is a basis, a moving force, a purpose to our lives. It implies that our mortal existence is not all there is. Many people experience the feeling that we are “strangers in a strange land,” wondering whence we came and where we are going.

There are certain types of truth that are readily available to us, such as what we may learn in the empirical sciences as we record the results of experiments that may be duplicated by others with identical outcomes. Other types of truth may be found in our consciences, which whisper to us the correct path to pursue. We have personal standards of what is beautiful, what is worthy of admiration, and what we want to emulate because we believe it is good.

Pontius Pilate was responding to Jesus’ statement that His mission was to bear witness of the truth. That truth was of His gospel and the plan He fulfilled to make it possible for us to overcome physical and spiritual death.

Pilate’s understanding was different, for in all likelihood he subscribed to the notion that there was a pantheon of gods, including the Emperor whose servant Pilate was.

All religions claim to seek truth; some claim to be its possessor. Each of us must decide for ourselves what of everything we learn in this life is truth, the kind of truth that will give us hope for the world to come. In Christians this hope is paramount and life-changing; it motivates us to be better people and to develop Christlike attributes of compassion, charity, love, and complete obedience to God’s commandments.

What happens when our belief in God is challenged?

It is said that one of the great human needs is someone or something in which to believe. We hope that there is something beyond mortal life; otherwise life can appear as it did to Thomas Hobbes:

“The life of man [is] solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.”

If you recall Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, the highest need - that which appeared when all the others had been met — was **self-actualization**. That term, as Carl Rogers put it, means

“to express and activate all the capacities of the organism.” To someone who believes in God, self-actualization falls short.

I think it is safe to say that psychology attempts to straighten people out without bringing God into the prescription. Let me go further out on a limb by stating that this is the way Progressives want us to view things, that man is independent in and of himself. He has a mortal body and, according to Progressive philosophy, is free to express him— or herself as he or she sees fit, free of restraints such as social mores or God’s commandments. (To get from here to Libertarianism you merely add the phrase “as long as no other person is harmed.”)

This is a recipe for anarchy. As social beings we need to have a foundation for our lives and our interactions with others. If we are led to believe that God does not exist we must surrender all hope for any life beyond mortality. If we then live solely for today you might think that we would value human life all the more, but history and Progressivism say just the opposite.

Without a belief in God human life becomes valueless. If there is no God—or if we refuse to believe in Him—we can the more easily entertain notions of abortion, euthanasia, and a personal focus on drugs, sex, alcohol, abuse, or some combination of them. We lose our respect for our own lives and the lives for others. We literally have nothing to live for.

This is the heart of Progressivism. Listen to Nancy Pelosi as she rampages on about how we must bail out everyone. There was a time when Nancy had sufficient intelligence to recognize that that was the path to slavery and destruction; now she seems to think it is her mantra, her purpose in life to destroy capitalism and the Constitution and usher in the Marxist Utopia.

Listen to Adam Schiff as he goes about badgering witnesses, grandstanding in committee hearings, and telling one whopper of a lie after another to coerce his hearers into one dangerous and false plan of action after another.

Or look at the actions of “the Deep State,” people who inhabit the unaccountable side of government, those who are free to invent crimes and determine appropriate sentences against those who would challenge their power. The Democrats/Progressives have become masters of deception, misdirection, propaganda, and the double standard. In their world, Republicans are all racists who oppose everything that will make this a better country. They are guilty of every crime under the sun and need to be driven out of office and out of

the public square.

Democrats/Progressives, on the other hand, walk on water, tell no lies, are only fit to rule, and never break the law. At least, that’s what they claim in their press releases. Former President Obama recently reiterated the enormous lie that he was proud that all eight years of his administration saw no scandals of any significance. As we should all know, the Obama administration was more scandal-laden than any, including that of President Ulysses S. Grant..

Look at the concept of the permanent welfare state, in which half the population must support a) itself, b) an enormous series of bureaucracies, and c) the other half of the population, all at the same time.

Now look at the reverse. If we are not to be Progressives, but rather will believe in God and therefore in truth, life has a purpose. Under Progressivism we are mere cogs in the collective wheel; we need have no initiative, no humility, no compassion, for there is no God to judge us. When we believe in God we accept our “owner’s manual” called the Bible, and our day to day adherence to the teachings of that book determine the way we live our life today and the quality of our life in the next.

Without God there is no need for truth. We can live in the world of **1984**, knowing that everything we learn about history is subject to change at the whim of Big Brother. We can live in the world of **Animal Farm** in which some of us are more equal than others, because those who consider themselves more equal are happy to take on the burden of leadership—and tell us how we ought to live.

Worlds like these inevitably focus on the sociopaths among us who, like Number One in **Darkness at Noon**, must wield absolute power of life and death over all their subjects. They must gain control over ever-widening swaths of the human population and the world’s geography so that their lust for power may be at least momentarily satisfied. Of course, in such individuals the hunger for power often leads to paranoia, in which even their closest confidants and family members become potential betrayers and plotters against them and must be liquidated.

In such a Progressive world it would be expected that people would run wild if we were to loosen their restraints even for a moment. **Lord of the Flies** offers a perfect example of this, for the boys are suddenly and, as they believe, permanently freed of any and all restraints of civilization.

Finally, as *Ivan Denisovich* informs us, when all exercise of free will is prohibited and violently restrained, men can come to abandon all hope except to minimize their day-to-day suffering.

The antidote

Just as I hope for good things to come out of this pandemic—and as I hoped might come out of the Vietnam War—I believe that World War II accomplished some very worthwhile things. While many lost their faith and hope, others gained salvation of a sort as they found in themselves something of great value they might otherwise never have found.

I refer, of course, to Viktor Frankl, whose 1946 classic *Man's Search for Meaning* is one of the most famous books of the 20th Century. Frankl summed up his discovery in these words: "Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way."

After being released from a Nazi concentration camp Frankl spent the rest of his life teaching what he had learned during the worst of times: that people can, and must, find meaning in their lives, even if all they know is tremendous suffering.

"This we'll defend"

That happens to be the official motto of the United States Army. "This" refers to the United States, our Constitution, and our liberty. The Army is pledged to be a defender of our nation, rather than an aggressor against others.

You and I have something to defend as well. Let's sum it up this way:

Defend the facts

In our day facts have become heavily politicized, and are often promoted or obscured by those who are pushing an agenda. We ought to search for true facts when they are to be found. Unfortunately, such a search can be frustrating, especially when we rely on biased "fact checkers" or the Internet in general, not to mention the mainstream media.

Defend the truths we believe to be self-evident

Fortunately, our nation and our Constitution are founded on principles. We can apply those principles as a test of the information that is represented to us as facts.

A thorough understanding of the meaning of character, integrity, morality, tact, compassion, and loyalty will help us to "read between the lines" and identify the bias of the speaker

or writer. If someone speaks against something or someone, we can test the truth of their attack by viewing it in light of what we already know about the speaker. There are all too many around us who are willing to lie, distort, and manipulate because, as I have explained previously, to them the end justifies the means.

As we develop our ability to identify truth and sift it out of the noise and deceptions we are able to come to a better understanding of the issues we face. With that understanding comes wisdom and experience. As we tuck away key facts in our memory for instant recall when we encounter additional factually-challenged material, we will be able to discern the truth and gain wisdom.

I believe that there is a spirit that testifies of truth. I feel that spirit frequently when I read the writings of Jefferson, or Locke, Madison, Montesquieu, and many others. I believe that if we were to exercise our own creativity as we build our foundation of knowledge and wisdom that we could begin to identify solutions, things we could do to help ourselves and others make our way back to a world that enshrines truth and shuns deceit.

All of this comes from our principles. Paul talked about putting on the whole armor of God. As we embrace and live the basic principles that are the foundation of civilization we gain the strength and courage to stand up against falsehoods and call it out for what it is.

Defend the truth of God

I mentioned earlier that religious truth is accepted voluntarily. I suggested that because someone denies the truth about God he or she chooses to live a life without God and without a purpose in life that gives us hope for what comes next.

There is a downside to such thinking. There are many reasons why a person might choose to ignore the truth that billions find in their religious beliefs, but in doing so we must effectively shut off what we call the conscience, that little voice we hear that teaches us to do good and to bless the lives of others.

I believe the most important thing we can teach our children is that they need to embark upon a lifelong search for truth, and to impress upon them that such a quest is not optional. That search, if practiced with integrity and diligence, will lead us to what comes next—and it will give our lives purpose and meaning.

Charles W. Kraut