

"LIAR - LIAR - PANTS ON FIRE!!!"

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If that old children's rhyme were to come true, and every liar's pants caught fire; then Washington D.C. and all of America's 50 state capitals, would be consumed in gigantic conflagrations!

There's a wonderful quotation, usually ascribed to either Mark Twain or Will Rogers, that goes something like: "The Government lies all the time, even when they don't have to. They do it then to keep their hand in". Now I can't actually find the citation to prove either of them said it. BUT, whoever said it was 100% correct!

Now, there is one thing that Mark Twain DID say: " It could probably be shown by facts and figures that there is no distinctly American criminal class except Congress" (vol. 1; Puddinhead Wilson's New Calendar, ch.2). Will Rogers, as everyone knows, had a great deal to say about politics in America, very little of it complimentary.

This attitude, so typified by these two great American humorists is, while always amusing, nonetheless symptomatic of a really fatal flaw in the American political system. That flaw is that the American people DO NOT TRUST THEIR POLITICIANS They have good reason not to do so.

In the same work cited above, Mark Twain did say: "Truth is the most valuable thing we have. Let us economize it." He clearly did NOT mean economize it by using it as little as possible! But here he was just slightly off-base. Truth is immensely valuable, but it is not nearly as valuable as trust! If a people doesn't trust their government, and if that trust is continuously abused, then whatever "truth" that government chooses to disburse is viewed as probably lies.

Based upon both my extensive reading, and my wide public contact, I have come to the conclusion that: The greatest percentage by far of the American public firmly believes, no, they are absolutely certain that they know, that their Government; in the person of it's elected and appointed officials, and it's civil servants, ranging all the way down from the President of the United States to the lowliest Town clerk....LIES to them, conscientiously and consciously LIES to them; even when the lie is disadvantageous and the truth would not be!

This is not simply a bad situation, it is a terminal situation.

A people which doesn't trust its government, and the people connected with it, are a people who, in time, become ungovernable.

A perfect example of where Governmental lies produce disadvantageous results where truth would not have done so, has to do with the recent flap over "Area 51" near Roswell New Mexico. Now, it is clear to me that it does NOT really matter at all WHAT a person believes happened (or is happening) at Roswell, or rather in Area 51. The fact of the matter is that no one, no one at all, believes any of the conflicting fables arising from various Government branches.

The London Times described the latest fables, those given out by the Air Force and the CIA; as "Twaddle". And that's an important part of the problem too, you'd really think that any group of people who lie "just to keep their hands in" would be better at it. But they're aren't very good liars at all. Now I, for one, have neither any idea of what is going on in Area 51, or what may or may not have gone on in Roswell, but I do know that the Governmental version of those things tends to make one try to find a plausible story among the multitude of conflicting myths. It's perfectly clear that a really large number of people who formerly dismissed all the stories out of Roswell regarding "crashed flying saucers" etc. are now looking more seriously at those stories because the Governments pathetic attempts at "cover-ups" are so blatant that they begin to feel there must be some truth in the myths to make the government come up with such bald faced nonsense.

The public feels justified in their attitude of distrust because time after time, the Government, or various individuals in it and its various branches have been clearly shown to spout the most egregious lies.

Of course there's always that ghastly affair that erupted over the Nixon government's hideously amateurish attempts to cover up the Watergate Break in, which just proved to everyone how intent the public officials are in lying to the public. In fact, I think it's clear to everyone that if Richard Nixon had simply gone to the nation, a day or so after the break-in and said that he hadn't known it was planned, but that he had just fired everyone connected with it in any way, and then acknowledging that "The Buck Stops Here" had admitted it happened "on his watch" as was therefore his responsibility and then apologized to the American Public and asked their forgiveness. If he had done this instead of what he did do, he would have served out his second term in honor and gone down in history a completely different figure than he has.

But "Watergate" wasn't the first instance, America's Government Officials have a long and dishonorable history of lying to the public, It's just that today, with our vastly improved new methods for the dissemination of information, the public finds out about things more quickly and far more completely. There's been a whole dishonorable series of events since Watergate that have further made the public distrustful. There's the entire Iran-Contra scandal, there's the Gulf storm scandal in which military officials lied about the exposure of American troops to deadly chemical agents. The news media are filled every single day with various instances of the Government lying about this or that thing, and also about the almost universal turpitude of the people that serve in Government.

One would rationally be motivated to ask WHY the Government and its employees feel impelled to engage in such totally counter-productive behavior. It appears to me that the Government officials and employees of the Government must be aware of the totally negative results of lying to the public and the inevitable result of the distrust such lying engenders. We are given so many spurious excuses when they get caught at their lies. "We are told it is in the interest of "National Security" that they lied. We are told that it is to avoid undue upset among the public that they lied. There are almost as many excuses as there are lies. But none of this tells us WHY "they" lie to "us". Most of "us" believe that they lie to protect their jobs and preferment and privileges and most of all PROFITS. They seem to think they can "get away" with their lies because as we were foolish enough to elect them in the first place we are only worthy of their contempt.

As an American Citizen, one moreover, whose ancestors helped to found this nation, I am ashamed to say, that an honest person is in a position today, where they would be frightened to serve in the Government for fear of being besmirched by that service.

The entire process by which people are "vetted" for serving in the government has become a total farce. Only a perfunctory over-view is made of talents and capabilities, the approval process has become a political circus in which each political party tries to "make points" on the other party rather than choose the best possible person for the job. We are also subjected to situations such as the current shameful business involving William Weld who is serving as a convenient way for Jesse Helms megalomaniacal ego to further puff itself up. It is also possibly a very intelligent ploy by Mr. Weld to set himself up as a "brave and courageous moderate" and position himself for a much better job than Ambassador to Mexico.

But all of this is common knowledge. All Americans, no matter what spectrum of political life they may see themselves as belonging to, feel the same way. So the

fact that Americans by and large distrust their Government comes as no surprise.

The important questions are these: Where will this situation lead? And, Secondly, can anything be done about it speaking realistically? The first question is far more easily answered than the second. The answer to the first question is that Democracy cannot survive in a milieu in which the people do not trust or believe to be truthful the people they elect to represent them in Government. That is why the number of people turning out to vote in American elections is so shameful. People are disgusted with government and eschew their responsibilities as electors, they have let themselves be bewitched by the media and by 30 second "sound bites" and so they have ceased to be the interested, knowledgeable, and participatory electorate which is the basic premise for establishing a Democratic form of Government. When Democracy degenerates into demagoguery that democracy is doomed. And 30 second "sound bites" are demagoguery in its absolutely worst form.

Socrates is said to have said (by Plato) " Each form of Government perishes from an excess of its own best principle" and as it stands right now, America is going to perish (at least as a true Democracy) from both an excess of Democracy and from a complete misunderstanding of what a Democracy really is, and what is the most important factor in Democracy and that is individual responsibility.