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# COMMON SENSE II

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*Capitalizing on the familiarity and influence of Thomas Paine's "Common Sense" pamphlets that provided American colonists with exposure to the conversation of great thinkers in the pre-Revolutionary period, this paper assumes the name COMMON SENSE II. Similarly, today's series of pamphlets strives to give a direct response to great political events and ideas of our time.*

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April 2020

Good Government Issue

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## The Virus and Our Intergenerational Responsibilities

By Eric Grimsrud

As the coronavirus spreads throughout the world, I suspect that the elderly among us (say those over 60; I am 76) are feeling a bit more threatened than the younger segments of society who we have learned are less vulnerable to its worst effects. While I am not suggesting that this is a beneficial aspect of the epidemic, it does carry with it an appropriate and useful message for us elderly. That message is how do we like being subjected to a human-facilitated phenomenon that specifically targets our older portion of the population? Our collective response to that question, I suspect, is that we do not like it at all, thank you very much, and furthermore, are totally in favor of all international efforts that can be made to solve this problem, no matter how much the required solutions make life inconvenient for the rest of the human population. For example, while the infection rates of children by this virus are very low, we are substantially disrupting the educations of those children so that their viruses are not passed on to the total population and especially to us elderly.

When their time came, I understand that the elderly of some Eskimo communities used to be put out



on the ice for whatever fate awaited them there—preferably a return to the food chain via their consumption by a passing scavenger. The prevailing belief was that this provided a net benefit to the viability of their

community. In our culture we tend to do the opposite—prolonging the lives of our elderly as long as possible. At my age, I happen to like that attitude, of course.

There is, however, something that bothers me a

great deal about the collective attitudes of our elderly generations. That is, our elderly have not shown sufficient understanding and commitment to the future of those children I mentioned and to



all non-elderly human beings. What I am talking about now, of course, is the “virus” of global warming. For the last 30 years, we had the capability and knowledge required for the prevention

of this menace but lacked the will and determination to bring that action to fruition. As a result of my generation's preference for a cheap but poisonous source of energy, we have created a carbon-overdosed world that will prove to be far more difficult to cure than that created by biological viruses. We can only hope that we elderly will learn from the upcoming battle against the corona epidemic what it will feel like for today's non-elderly to be facing a climate change calamity that is tuned to the destruction of their generation.

My generation was fortunate to live during a “Goldilocks” period of the USA in which almost everything was “just right.” The Great Depression and WWII were over by the mid-40s and carpets of opportunities were then laid out for us in all directions. We are now also



being well taken care of during our senior years by a myriad of benefits including an extensive government-subsidized medical program. In return, we now owe it to all people younger than we to do much better than we have on the preservation of our planet's assets for our descendants' use in the coming decades. This will have to be both an international and intergenerational effort that will require considerable sacrifice and support by all of us.

## Important Choices, Clear Solutions

By Bob Passi

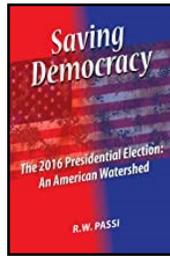
In the book, *Saving Democracy: The 2016 Presidential Election*, I used the analogy of a train called the Dystopian Express taking us toward disaster. It had been built by the economic aristocracy to take back power and control over the nation. It switched the society away from the tracks taking us toward an expanding democracy and laid a new set of rails after the 1968 Presidential election. It switched the nation toward goals creating an oligarchy of the rich and powerful to firmly establish their control and dominance for the future, later to be fueled by the ideology of neoliberal economics. It was to be the final undoing of the New Deal, which had revived the democratic impulses of the American Dream.

We have been on that fateful train ever since as it travels through our nation producing private wealth by having workers ravage our natural and human resources in the pursuit of corporate profits and personal wealth. That wealth has been used to consolidate, protect, and institutionalize the oligarchy providing us with a government built to service an economic elite. Everything else was open to the ravages of the free market—no limits, no restriction, no accountability.

Wall Street and a huge financial industry determined policy and direction. The public sphere was gutted and sold off to private interests, leaving most citizens without a voice in anything of significance.

That oligarchy also provided a massive entertainment industry—some legal and some not so much—to distract the citizens and provide escape. All of which became immensely profitable.

The economic aristocracy provided the illusion of democracy by allowing popular elections to choose the engineer (the President) for that train and to choose the maintenance crew (the Congress and other elected official). This looked like democracy unless you realized that the tracks had already been laid to take us toward a dystopian future. The engineer could only adjust the speed and perhaps candy-coat the realities to make it seem more palatable. The crew was there to make sure the train ran efficiently, produced the necessary wealth to satisfy the oligarchy, and continued to be fueled by the labor of the populace.



The result was to turn the countryside along those tracks into wealth at all costs, leaving scorched earth behind and moving on. In addition, that oligarchy found more and more ways to cut the costs of workers and the cost of maintaining the societies along the way, often stripping away all protections and leaving a populace unprotected and vulnerable to the manipulations of the economic environment and to the vicissitudes of life.

Well, the economic manipulations of that oligarchy have been destroying the futures of most citizens. The income inequality has grown to enormous proportions and is no longer able to sustain even the illusion of a democracy. Once public services were privatized, they were out of reach of public necessity. Higher education became prohibitively expensive; any hope of a retirement with dignity rapidly disappeared; healthcare was on a pay-to-play basis.

All of this was becoming more and more apparent to the populace—the illusion was losing some of its luster, so the servile media had to step up its work to keep the illusion serviceable. They were busy institutionalizing the system and creating a new normal.

And it worked. We accepted the corruption of a series of Republican administrations as somehow normal and acceptable. We watched economic bubbles grow and burst and accepted them even though the ordinary people bore the brunt of the destruction. We bailed out failing companies like Chrysler and the savings and loan industry. We accepted insider trading and the Enron debacle. Finally, we watched the wheels come off the economy under the Wild West environment of the financial industry and Wall Street in 2008 and were told—and somehow accepted—that we needed to bail them all out with our money so they could continue their trek toward the dystopian future.



Finally, by 2016, the system was so controlled that only those vetted by that oligarchy were allowed to

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run for the Presidency, and we ended up with a political earthquake as a businessman was given control of the nation. This was the final destination of those fateful tracks. The populace was not even allowed the option of a candidate who wanted to change direction and take us back to those nearly forgotten tracks leading toward democracy.

We seem to have been willing to accept all these changes as normal and not worthy of giving up our individual issues to produce a unified force to take back democracy.

Well, the coronavirus entered the picture and clarified things with its stark realities. We have been forced to see the devastating results of the neoliberal economic system with its oligarchic leadership. The economic system has collapsed. There is not a public health system left that can begin to cope with the virus, nor are there many of the public services and programs that had been a part of our lives for years.



A health system has had to be cobbled together on the fly; an entire emergency system for the society has had to begin to be reconstructed. We were left to deal with it from the bottom up. Individuals have taken on the responsibility to begin to combat the spread of the disease and help one another. Democracy has broken out once again after lying dormant in the American breast since the founding of this nation.

Cities have begun to respond as have some states and some smaller businesses. But on the federal level they are still trying to hang onto the ideology of the old neoliberal system, insisting on once again bailing out corporation and industries and financial institutions first, as a requirement, before considering how to meet the needs of the ordinary citizens.

We have a federal government creating a bottleneck in a system that is required to fight the virus in a life and death battle to save lives. So people are left to find ways around that system and try to prevent much needed funding from going to the top when the real need is clearly at the bottom.

This is an experiential and existential lesson we are all clearly learning. An oligarchic system based on economics rather than human concerns is disastrous on every level. We need to get back to the balance of a democracy. We need to be sure that our next President will move this nation off the Dystopian Express and take us back to those

tracks leading to democracy. We need to refurbish those older engines and build new engines to pull that train to a democracy and a survivable future. We need to elect people who will service and maintain those trains. We need to be sure that there is room for everyone on those trains. We need to rebuild a government that will be directly involved in the health and welfare of all of its citizens. We need that government to be willing to step in with funding and public programs in emergencies. We need to rebuild the public sector in the society, and we need to have a private sector which is regulated and has public oversight.

Bernie Sanders, who has been supporting all of these things for many years and who has been the voice for the ordinary people, appears to be willing to step aside to unify the party to stop this dreadful run of our current President and his supportive cohorts in Congress and across the nation.

Now that Bernie Sanders has suspended his campaign, the obligation to take the people of this nation back to a balanced democracy falls squarely on the shoulders of the Democratic Party and its presumptive candidate, Joe Biden. Everyone can now rally to support the Democratic alternative to the incredible ineptness and destructiveness of the Republican



domination on the national level. They must, however, not just replace Trump and the Republican Senate domination, but they must say no

to the oligarchic rule that has been so dominant in the last several decades and reestablish a balanced democracy. They must reaffirm what the Democratic Party really should be: a voice for the people of this nation and no longer for an economic elite. They must reaffirm that a democracy takes seriously the health and welfare of the society and is about building effective communities and public structures. It must also regulate the extreme forms of neoliberal economics and restore a balanced form of capitalism that supports the necessary structures of a healthy democracy and takes the current income inequality back to some semblance of sanity.

This virus and the impending global changes make this Presidential election a defining moment, not only for this nation but also for the world. We must make this choice now so we can put our energy into pursuing the clear human solutions required for our survival.



It's time to get off the Dystopian Express which has been stopped in its tracks and to board the Democratic Local leaving soon on the tracks that will take us back to our democratic heritage.

# The Other Side of the Opioid Crisis

By Nancy Rudd

Daily we become aware of unintended consequences. The attempt to address this country's opioid crisis is a case in point.

Imagine not living a full life because there isn't



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any way to get the medication that I need. It's available and legal, but because I am in the 65 and older group I can't have a Schedule II opioid. My body metabolizes it more slowly,

or so they say.

What does not living a full life mean for me? I can't work in my flower beds anymore. Going out to lunch (in a time before stay-at-home orders) is limited to using three pain patches that deliver an ibuprofen-like medication, making sure that I have taken my second set of medications, limiting the time period to not more than an hour and a half, and making sure the seats are padded or having to bring a cushion to sit on; of course I always bring my back cushion for support. Travel is limited and if I go, I can't drive the full time. Again, I have the cushions, and upon my arrival at the destination, I have to have a bed to rest on. During the day, I have to lie down for one to two hours. I limit trips up and down stairs. As for vacations, I can't fly, nor could I take a cruise. It wasn't always this way prior to the new laws regarding opioids.

I'm a chronic pain patient. The medication many chronic pain patients need are opioids. In 2018, Congress passed a bipartisan bill that required the DEA to make sure that physicians reduced their prescriptions for opioids. Even the DEA said that it might lead to legitimate chronic pain patients' not getting the medication that they need. In 2019 the Minnesota legislature passed a bipartisan bill prohibiting patients from filling Schedule II and III opioid prescriptions more than 30 days after the prescribing date, although they can fill prescriptions less than 30 days old. This can lead to stockpiling, something I'm sure was not intended by the legislature.

To be prescribed opioids, a patient must go to a clinic every three months. The opioid agreement the patient signs requires a yearly monitoring. That involves being walked into the lab, feeling like an addict, where another lab person escorts you to the restroom, hands you a sealed container



Reading Workshop

for you to collect your urine. The lab person, waiting outside the restroom, marks the container as "hazardous," and sends it to the lab where it is screened for every possible medication and amount that you are taking. If you pass, you can continue taking your medication, but if you don't pass, you can't. There is no taking into account lab errors or mixing up patient samples. So you had better have enough of your opioid on hand, or you will be in for cold turkey withdrawal according to that contract you signed. (Maybe the legislature knew what it was doing, after all.) Withdrawal symptoms include shaking, sweating, vomiting, and an inability to sleep or eat. One of my medications even includes hallucinations, seizures, and possibly death. Addicts committed to rehab facilities don't go through this; they are brought down slowly. Legitimate opioid users should have the same withdrawal treatment.

While well-intentioned, these laws fail to take into account the situations of legitimate opioid users. The opioid crisis is concerned with illegitimate use and abuse of opioids. Because of a series of accidents and subsequent surgeries



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over the years, I have been taking some kind of opioid for over 30 years. After a serious accident and not totally successful surgeries and the inability of over the counter pain medications and non

-opioid pain relievers to address my pain, my only option for relief was opioids. At first, I was able to continue working. Then another accident caused even more problems and increased medications including more opioids and others. Eventually, despite prescriptions costing over \$1,000 a month allowing me just to function, I was unable to work and went on Social Security Disability.

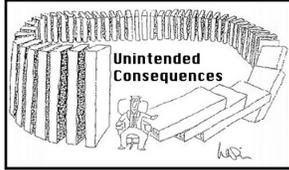
For approximately 12 years, I took two strong opioids. I took them at the same dosage and at the same time every day. Over these years, I tried every other modality: I had physical therapy, aquatic therapy, biofeedback, body mechanics, trigger point massage, and acupuncture. I consulted a psychologist. They all gave me back part of my life. I worked hard enough so that I didn't need the wheelchair or cane. The opioids didn't make me feel euphoric, a symptom of addiction. I could do some things but not others, and I considered myself as having a life. I could travel on an airplane and take a cruise. Some things were limited, but I could enjoy myself.

After the 12 years, my body became acclimated to the dosages. Many people ask me the difference between acclimation and addiction. Addiction is a craving for the medication, leading to abuse of it.

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Acclimation means the body becomes used to the same dosage. Just as everyone who drinks is not an alcoholic, everyone who takes opioids is not an addict. When a body becomes acclimated, a pain clinic gradually reduces the dosages of what is being taken and adds different opioids.

That brings us back to the government's attempt to curb the abuse of opioids. In doing so, they forgot those who need those medications for a reasonable life. Legalization of marijuana, for example, might relieve the use of illegal opioids.



Encouraging physicians not to overprescribe opioids is a reasonable idea, but restricting them from prescribing them to patients who need them is not the answer. To address the unintended consequences, more input from legitimate patients is needed to solve the problem.

### I, Too Have a Dream

*Emily Imbrogna*

I have a dream that one day this nation will make a law against everything that causes global warming.

I have a dream that one day we will change to electric cars.

I have a dream today that one day no one will litter anymore.

I have a dream to make the world a better environment for all the animals and for us.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day our earth will be so clean we'll see colors we've never seen before.

I have a dream today.

This is my hope and faith. With this faith we will be able to stay on Earth for many centuries to come.

This will be the day when animals, humans, and the rest of the world will live in peace.

In this time of crisis, both health-wise and financial, many of us are paying close attention to what Congress is doing (or not doing) to help. Many people are suffering, some with health issues and many more with the financial fallout caused by the great disruption in our routine lives.

What will Congress do and who will be made whole? We simply don't know yet, but there will be one winner for sure. That one is Donald Trump. Here's why: To address the financial side of this, Congress is granting unspecified financial bailouts for industries affected by the epidemic; airlines, hotels, and more, industries many of which already pay little or no taxes. The President owns hotels.

Some of us older folks remember back when President Jimmy Carter had to sell his family-owned peanut farm business in order to avoid the appearance of any conflict of interest.

If I were a hotel employee cleaning rooms, doing laundry, providing food service or any other hotel job which pays very low on the labor scale, I would be concerned about a reduction in my hours or even losing my job. How could I afford to eat, pay my rent or cover any of my other survival expenses?

Some of the proposed economic bailout is likely hundreds of millions of dollars directly to the hotel industry. If I were a hotel employee not made whole by the federal government, I doubt very much that I would trust the President with his newly acquired wealth to share it with me.

This is the second time the Republican controlled Senate would be directly enriching the President. The first was the huge tax cut for wealthy folks and businesses at the expense of working folks. This benefited the President and his businesses personally at the rate of tens if not hundreds of millions of dollars.

But contrary to what some believe, not all politicians are corrupt. It's up to each of us individually to do the work to sort out which of our elected representatives will represent only the wealthy and powerful and which will work for the 99%, the rest of us.

Do vote in the coming elections this year because your vote is the most important vote there is. Let's vote for the common good, yours, mine, and all of ours.

## Libertarianism, Really?

By Brian Vroman

I have a number of younger friends, many of them students and former students who fancy themselves as libertarians. This is intended primarily for them, though of course anyone else is welcome to read and comment if they so choose.

Libertarianism is sleek and shiny, like a bright new car. It has an initial appeal. It is easy on the eye. But when you look under the hood, all sorts of problems are apparent, and it is best to leave this jalopy on the lot.

But let's start with an indirect approach. Let's start with a myth. I'll call it the Horatio Alger myth. Horatio Alger was a popular 19<sup>th</sup> Century fiction writer. All of his stories followed the same pattern: a down-and-out hero works hard, perseveres, and ends up being economically successful. Most Americans believe this motif reflects reality, but it does not, or at least not for the vast majority of individuals. Sure, there are exceptions, but they are exceptions that prove the rule.



The biggest predictor of where you end up in life is where you started. Don't believe me? Fine, message me and I'll show you the numbers. This is indeed the typical pattern of American life. If you are poor, no matter how hard you work, you are likely to stay poor. We have mitigated this a bit by making higher education more accessible through the system of our state universities and community colleges, through grants, scholarships, and so forth, but the pattern still remains.

Here's something to think about. If you are a thirty year old single male making \$40,000 a year (I say male because females usually come to a different perspective early on, because they have to bear the children and typically still do the lion's share—isn't that an interesting phrase—of child care), it would take you 10 years to earn \$400,000, 20 years to earn \$800,000, and 30 years to earn \$1.2 million. Oh sure, you say, but wages don't stay stagnant. During the course of a career, there are pay raises. Yes, but it is also the obvious case that no one can save 100% of what they make. People need to eat; they need to pay rent or have a mortgage; they have heating and other utility bills to pay; at some point they will have to access the healthcare system.

Ok, you say, but what if I get married? Then there

will be two incomes.

All right. For many, marriage is in fact a way out of poverty but not a pathway to wealth. Now there are the needs of two people to meet, and, for most, with marriage comes children. Kids need to eat. They grow and need new clothes; they get sick and have to go to the doctor; they might need braces, which are not cheap; and on and on, to say nothing of sending them to college or a trade school when they are older.

But there's the stock market....

Yes, and how much are you really going to be able to invest if you have a modest income? What if the market crashes, as it just did, right when you need your money?



So here's the point of this digression: with rare exceptions, hard work is not going to make you wealthy. It isn't. It won't. Wrap your head around that. Hard work is good. A strong work ethic does make you more employable, but it is not going to make you rich.

So when there are proposals to raise taxes on the top 1%, those proposals do not apply to you. They never will. They apply to people who have more money than you can even imagine.

Ok, but I believe in fair play. Those people worked hard, and they deserve to be wealthy. It isn't fair to take their hard-earned cash.

What? Have you been listening? If hard work does not make you rich, what does that mean about those who are rich? With very few exceptions, it means they did not get rich by hard work... How, then, did they become wealthy? Now, we are getting to the heart of the matter.

So libertarianism has a superficial appeal, but here's what is wrong with it: It's about power. I'll say it again. IT'S ABOUT POWER.

We live in a society that values individual freedom. That's a good thing. We have a Constitution that places all sorts of limitations on the power of government. So we have federalism that divides power between the national government and the states. At both the state and national level, we have division of power between the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. We have a Bill of Rights, further restricting government power and protecting individual liberty.

We have learned that concentrated power is dangerous. This is why we have gone to great lengths to

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prevent the concentration of power by government. I don't think there is a libertarian out there who would disagree with that.

But here's what libertarians miss. It is not only concentrated power in the hands of government that poses a danger to the freedom of the individual. All forms of concentrated power are inherently dangerous. Government is not the only center of power.

Let's talk a bit about economic power. Economic power is very real. Those who wield economic power control how much you are paid. This means they control what kind of house or car you can afford, the quality of the school your kids attend, and so many other things about the details of your life. Unchecked power is dangerous, and unchecked economic power can be just as dangerous as unchecked political power.

So, libertarians, you say you want government to have a very small role. National defense, the enforcement of contracts, and not much else, you say.

Well, think about this. The only thing that can check power is power! The only power that can effectively place a check on the power of great wealth is government power! Even labor unions cannot do this without assurances of their safety and of the right to organize from the government. The power of wealth would crush labor unions—violently if necessary. We know this, because they have done it in the past. Ever read about the Pullman strike? If you haven't, you should.



America was a libertarian society in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries. We have been down this road. We know what's there. The lives of workers—people like you—were often, to borrow a phrase, nasty, brutish, and short. Andrew Carnegie was a philanthropist. He funded the building of libraries, and so forth. But read about what life was like for the workers in his steel mills. Then, of course, there was the Triangle Fire, where over 100 women in a garment factory were burned to death or jumped from a sixth story window to their deaths because the bosses had locked the doors.

Concentrated, unchecked economic power. That's what it leads to.

But...freedom!

What freedom are you talking about? The free-

dom to slave away for your entire life? That's what libertarianism leads to, and that's not freedom. So let's be philosophical for a minute. There is more



than one kind of freedom. We could talk about “freedom from” and “freedom to.”

“Freedom from” involves the sorts of liberties protected by the Bill of Rights: freedom from censorship, freedom from religious tyranny, freedom from unreasonable searches and seizures, freedom from cruel and unusual punishment, and so forth. These are important freedoms, and only a tyrant or a fool would oppose them.

But there is also “freedom to.” What is this about? “Freedom to” involves having some agency in the direction of your life. It is the freedom to self-actualize, to realize your potential. This might sound a bit abstract. Let's try to put it in concrete terms.

Let's say you would like to start a business, but you are poor, because you work at a non-union job, and your employer pays low wages. You can't save enough money to start your business, and you can't even get a loan. So you are stuck. If you do scrape together enough savings to get your business off the ground, you may have to compete with a large corporation that has a lock on that sector of the economy. You lose everything and are broke. It's back to square one; only now you don't even have a job.

This is a restriction on your freedom.

So here is the point: Libertarianism does not make you free. It makes you a wage slave. It puts immense, unchecked power in the hands of a wealthy elite. People that have power guard it jealously. They don't give it up willingly. They must be forced by another power—the power of government—to do so.



Teddy Roosevelt came to this realization during his political career. A system that promised perfect liberty to everyone in theory, in reality led to the perfect freedom of the rich to abuse everyone else.

Libertarianism is snake oil. Don't swallow it.

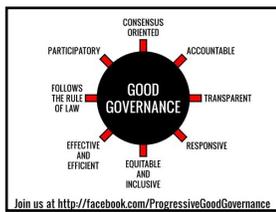


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## Problems and Solutions

By Valerie Conner

It's taken nigh onto 40 years, but Reagan's assertion is finally proving true: "Government isn't the solution; it's the problem." Good government serves its people, protects them from foreign enemies, protects them from economic disaster not of their doing, provides a social safety net, supports public health, and in general promotes the general welfare. Bad government serves few or none of its citizens, denies potential threats—foreign and domestic—such as climate change and impending pandemics, manipulates programs meant to address the economical-



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ly vulnerable, and willfully indulges in incompetence and poor or nonexistent planning. In addition, it undermines institutions critical to the well-being of the society: media, law enforcement, courts, foreign alliances, education, loyal opposition politics, and faith in government itself. Sound familiar?

Our current situation is not the result of the existence of government but the result of poor—even incompetent, manipulative, self-serving, evil-minded—government. From the beginning, we have witnessed nothing from the Trump attempt at anarchy but gross negligence and incompetence. Inadvertent errors of judgement is one thing; refusal to admit and attempt to correct mistakes is something else again. Trump, who consistently exhibits his ignorance of government's functions, workings, and protocols, seeks only to aggrandize himself as the omniscient father figure to us poor victims of the vagaries of the world.

In this time of international crisis, Trump had the opportunity to rise to the occasion of true leadership and guide us to a healthier existence. I recall my folks talking about how in WWII the "home fires" burned just as vigorously for the goal of victory as the military. People were asked to sacrifice foodstuffs and other commodities for the war effort. That united sacrifice instilled a sense of purpose, belonging, and pride of helping. We as a nation have not really been asked to make similar sacrifices since. Part of the reason is that until now we really haven't needed to. That's too bad. Overcoming adversity builds strength of character. We've become soft and self-indulgent. We need to follow a plan together through this. That includes obeying the stay at home orders and protecting

ourselves and others from contamination.

Such an effort requires inspiration and true leadership. Instead of providing that positive leadership, Trump has weakened us as a nation: first by undermining government itself as described earlier, and second by casting us in the role of helpless victims. We are better than this, and we deserve better than this. If Trump is incapable of leading us, as he has proven to be, we need to step up to the plate on our own, follow intelligent guidance from our governors—if we're lucky enough to live in a state with a realistic, capable governor—and make the necessary sacrifices, and follow science-based steps to keeping healthy and alive.

To prevent a prolonged crisis and a recurrence of this or another crisis, in the fall we need to vote and vote for competency, realistic assessment of situations, and true positive leadership up and down the ballot. We need to reestablish a functioning government for the people. So far, it looks as though that means voting Democratic.

## Unfriending and Mental Health

By Michaela Raymond

I just posted this on my Facebook page: I just unfriended a person I have known socially for several years. I had just friended that person a day ago. After reading that person's recent posts that show blind loyalty to Trump with references, *i.e.*, God-given, unselfish, loyal, *etc.*, I figured it's best to immediately cut Facebook ties rather than the obvious way this would eventually end. I post my political ideologies in various ways but am thoroughly BLUE. If any of my current Facebook friends think they will be offended by that, please save yourself the anger and delete me now rather than when you are twisted in knots. By the way, until 1996, I always voted Republican. The current Republican Party has been hijacked by an element you really should scrutinize closely. The Republican label has changed a wee bit since 1996. For both our mental well-beings, I'm just being up front with folks.



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# Earth Day Live!!!

**April 22, 23, & 24**

## Strike, Divest, and Vote for the Future

On April 22 -24, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Earth Day, millions of people around the world are going online for a three-day mobilization to stop the climate disaster. Even if we're stuck at home, we can still change the world. Let's join together for three days of action – from teach-ins, musical performances, divestment, and more. All you need is an internet connection!

“Young people around the world have been rising up to defend our future, and have been going on strike – every week, all over the planet – for months.

“Now, we're preparing to take the youth-led climate movement into the digital era due to the coronavirus pandemic. Launching on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Earth Day, April 22, and ending on April 24, youth activists and adult allies are leading Earth Day Live, a 72 hour livestream that aims to engage people across the country and the world in collective action to protect our communities.” (from strikewithus.org)

For Further Information go to: [www.earthdaylive2020.org](http://www.earthdaylive2020.org)

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS: GET INVOLVED AND GET IT DONE!

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date /Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
DFL Headquarters Open (326-6296)	Closed	DFL Headquarters
Itasca Progressive Caucus (259-4490)	Suspended	DFL Headquarters
DFL Central Committee Meets	Suspended	DFL Headquarters
DFL Social Club & Lunch	Suspended	DFL Headquarters
DFL Pot Luck (Open to the Public)	Suspended	DFL Headquarters
Working Families Alliance	Suspended	Dutchroom
Earth Circle	Suspended	GR Public Library
Circles of Support	Suspended	811 NE 4th St. GR
Haven: A Place for All	Suspended	Kiesler Center
Deadline for <i>Common Sense II</i>	May 8, 2020	conray@arvig.net