

COMMON SENSE II

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.

October 2019 Responsible Governing Issue Vol. 14 Issue 10

Most Transparent President?

By Gary Burt

It wasn't that long ago Trump proclaimed on national TV that he was the "most transparent President" in the history of the country. How much evidence do people need to understand that this was just another of the more than 12,000 lies he's told since he took office? His refusal to share his tax returns or allow his appointees to testify are just the latest examples of how non-transparent he is.

What is most telling is he lies when he could just as easily tell the truth.



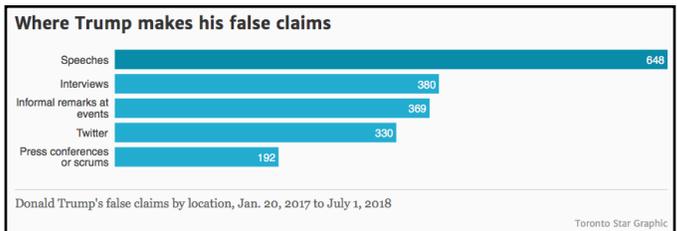
In needing to control how people respond to him, in needing people to adore him, and in needing them to be loyal to him, Trump will tell people the part of the truth that makes him look good, or at least doesn't

make him look bad. He does this because as Gertrude Atherton said long ago, "He loves the lie that saves his pride, but never the unflattering truth."

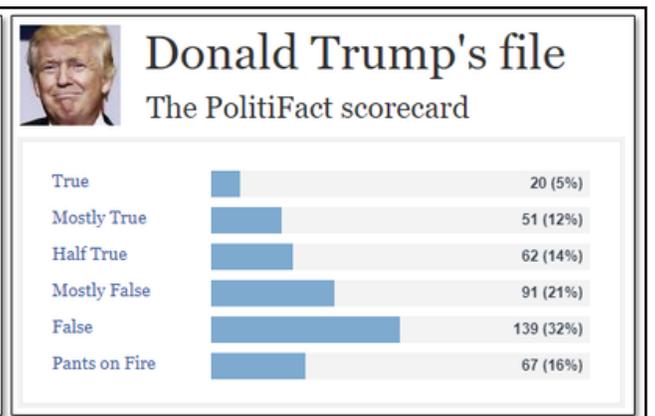
Why does his base continue to support someone

who needs to lie as he does? My guess is they subconsciously recognize how vulnerable he is under his rough, tough, neat and cool exterior, because they see that side of themselves in his behavior. My guess is that Trump and his base are co-dependent on each other. He strokes their egos by telling them how great they are to believe everything he says, and they stroke his ego by believing everything he says.

It's another notorious dysfunctional bubble, where the whole truth never gets in. That truth would, in essence, not only change how they view the Presi-



dent, but also how they view themselves as well. His base wants a Messiah to believe in rather than a good leader. That's dangerous because to see him as he really is, they'd have to admit they're wrong, which is what would damage their egos the most—and what they're most afraid of. Just like Trump.



Self-Determination: The Heart of a Democratic Society

By Bob Passi

The entire argument for democracy is about self-determination. What makes it so unique is the idea that a group of people can make their own decisions about what is the best direction and process to keep their society healthy and thriving for everyone.

This process of a social group making democratic and participatory decisions has worked historically in small groups, but the idea that a larger group of people could chart a wise course for their own future was quite radical when it was suggested as a workable form of governance for the newborn United States of America at the end of the 18th Century.

The 18th Century had been a time of intellectual ideas and idealism in Europe, focusing on the innate ability of humans to make wise decisions for themselves without having a paternalistic leader to guide them. It was also a time when the newly independent American Colonies wanted nothing

more to do with the hierarchical system of monarchy with its innate abuses of individuals and human rights in general.



However, the millennia of top-down leadership and decision making were so entrenched with its many justifications as well as its arguments about why ordinary people were not capable of self-governance—lack of education, lack of intelligence, lack of self-control, lack of social consciousness/self-centeredness, as well as the old standbys of wrong religion, wrong race, wrong ethnicity—that change looked incredibly difficult. In other words, only those who were already making the top-down decisions were capable of such enormous responsibility.

After centuries and millennia of hierarchical domination by rules with any number of justifications for their power, it looked to many people like it was simply meant to be. But those who lived their lives outside of that inner group of power saw the exploitation and abuse that went with that power. They also saw that those in power did not appreciate life and the realities of ordinary people and often made inappropriate decisions due to lack of

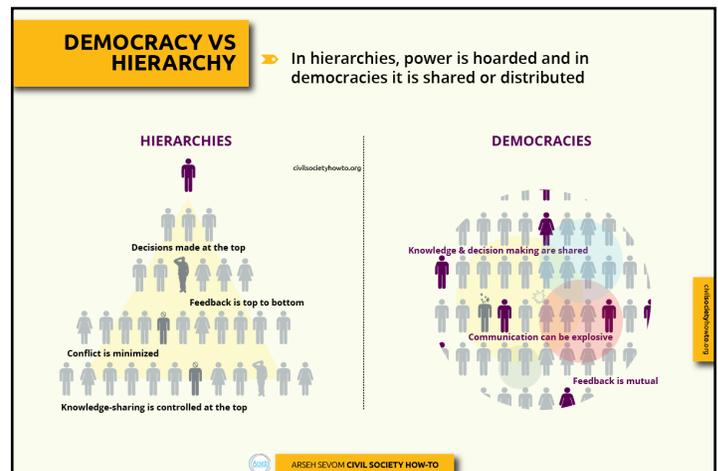
first-hand information. Common people saw that they were capable of making everyday decisions to survive and that they knew they formed their own effective communities and organizations all the time and that they had learned to cooperate to survive.

Another element was that the ruling elites were very afraid of what might happen if those people whom they had exploited for so long were given power to make decisions. They could easily imagine what might happen



with the release of the pent-up frustration of years of abuse and the threat it may create to their wealth, property, status, and their very lives. (Remember the French Revolution and the ensuing Reign of Terror.) Reasonably, they were very afraid of the transition of power and so wanted to avoid anything that even suggested such a thing.

The value of people having a voice in the direction and quality of their own lives became so apparent to so many that the eventual rise of self-determination



and democracy became inevitable unless those in power could prevent that power from rising. Thus, we have the development of authoritarian power structures. Those democratic urges would simply be suppressed and exterminated by force and with fear and repressive institutions. If the authoritarian leadership controlled all the levers of power, democracy became almost impossible.

However, the human spirit cannot be quenched even by such methods, since it lives within the heart of every ordinary human being and continues to burn to light the way to the incredible human energy that is now being wasted. Score one for responsive governance.

Strike On!

By Michaela Raymond

I was In Grand Rapids for an appointment on Friday, September 20th. While in town I learned of an event that was planned for that day, a climate change strike, taking place at the Old Central School adjacent to Hwy 2.

When I was finished with my business, I attended the event with the intent of supporting the cause. Upon arrival, I picked a sign from a stack of homemade signs, one that clearly expressed my concerns regarding our rapidly changing climate and also grabbed a couple of Rice Krispy treats for sustenance and added my presence to the line of "strikers."

I quickly developed my own style of protest or striking or whatever I was doing. The main elements of my style were holding my sign with one hand and waving cheerfully with my other and having a broad smile—most of the time.

Over a two hour period, I think maybe a thousand cars passed by me. My style evolved constantly as after some time cramps began in my shoulders and then to other muscles as I held my sign high. I took an unofficial poll of the public's attitudes regarding concerns of climate change and their degree of support for our efforts.

In two hours I witnessed essentially primarily



visible support. My "poll" clearly and conclusively determined this to be the largest number of opinions expressed without a doubt. The third opinion expressed was one of displeasure with our efforts to warn of negative effects of climate change. Their reactions were varied but clear in ways such as displaying a single finger toward us or hollering a cuss word at us. Other types of expression from Group Three included rapidly accelerating their vehicles to record their vote. The least creative people used the "thumbs down" method.

After tallying the poll I determined that a grand total of 40 votes that appeared to be negative. I also estimated 980 "no opinion" votes and, coincidentally, 980 votes supporting our strike. In this highly unscientific poll, I applied the scientific method of averaging two voters per vehicle to arrive at my conclusion.

Before I left the strike because my muscles had cramped, a group of young people showed up at our site, picked up signs, and began "striking." They were cheered and applauded by the others present. Ultimately, these young people are going to be the solution. Hoping that chocolate chip cookies relieve cramps, I ate a couple before leaving.

I'll pull my tongue out of my cheek now and say that without exaggeration, there were so few dissenters to the cause and so much support given, the politicians had better take heed!



three types of opinions being expressed. The first one involved "I don't see any of you 40 people standing alongside the highway with signs having writing on them." The second type of opinion expressed was one of audible and/or

COMMON SENSE II is published by the Itasca Progressive Caucus in Grand Rapids, Minnesota

Editor: Valerie Conner conray@arvig.net

ITASCA PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS

Chair: Jeanne Newstrom itascaprogressive@gmail.com

Assoc. Chair: Valerie Conner conray@arvig.net

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Selling Responsible Government

By Jack Pick

All political phone calls, conversations, door knocks, and rallying speeches are sales presentations. Selling is convincing your subject or audience to see your way regarding ideology, support, money, or votes. Would you like having total confidence in your ability to persuade others regarding political support, the voting booth, and so much more?



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Of course! Sales success is mandatory in our political climate, so here are a few basic ground rules as you encounter potential voters:

- ◆ From the start exude confidence, conviction, and **pleasantness**.
- ◆ Your subject or audience must like you immediately, so start out with a pleasant greeting as you introduce yourself and your purpose very briefly.
- ◆ Solicit a minor close (yes response) to an obvious minor question right away. This will help connect you and pave the way to a yes response later to your primary purpose after you have made your case.
- ◆ Ask questions of your audience and listen. If they ask or say it, it's true. If you say it, it's suspect. Ask because they will want to tell you. Listen agreeably and build your case on what you hear. Never debate!
- ◆ When discussing any issue, always follow a feature with a benefit, because your audience will never consciously connect them. You must state the connection. People buy benefits, not features. For example, the term "universal healthcare" is a feature. An accompanying benefit might be worded, "What this means for you is that you will always get the healthcare you need and want and within your financial means." You might follow with a minor close like, "Would this suit you?"
- ◆ You may need to make several minor closes before closing your primary objective. A successful close (sale) is asking for what you want and receiving a yes.
- ◆ Always say "thank you" after a presentation, even when the answer is no.

How will your product change the buyer's life?

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- ◆ Prepare your presentation well ahead of time and constantly rehearse, revise, and improve your presentation as your confidence and success continue to rise.
- ◆ Success as in a football game is not measured by a single play but by the final score, reflecting the total number of winning plays. "Getting to yes" takes preparedness and work.

To get responsible government, we must convince people to vote for it. That means we have to campaign. In today's political climate, people are wary of "being sold" someone else's ideas. Campaigns are about selling a candidate, about convincing others to support our candidate. So we must brush up our selling skills.



Thebluegallery.com

Happy campaigning!

Our Responsibility

By Valerie Conner

Responsible governing is also responsive governing. To be responsible, those granted the privilege to lead must consider those being governed. On the national level we are now being subjected to banana republic levels of corruption.

Trump is corroding the federal government by his self-absorption and desire for self-aggrandizement. He and his henchmen—many of whom were decent enough in prior administrations—blatantly disregard policies that help the general public or those who need an honest, considerate government to survive. Instead they promote policies of destruction for destruction's sake. For example, why would they:

- ◆ Cruelly plan to deport people who are in this country legally and can only get life-saving treatment here?
- ◆ Put asylum-seekers in draconian, medieval prison conditions?
- ◆ Roll back environmental protections industry has gotten used to and are working?
- ◆ Destroy 70+ years of world peace keeping alliances to destabilize the world?
- ◆ Remove the insurance safety net for those with pre-existing conditions?

We are perilously close to losing our centuries old republic. Under an autocratic replacement we will no longer have the freedoms and responsive government we've struggled to gain and maintain. This upcoming election will be the tipping point. To have a responsive government, we must be responsible citizens and insist on it.

The Urgent Need for Moral Leadership in Government

By Vicki Andrews

Last month we considered the difficulties our country is facing because of a President without a moral compass and a Congress unable/unwilling to stand up to him. Issues include inadequate healthcare and incomes leading to medical difficulties/illnesses as well as hungry children and elders, untreated mental illness and addiction, racism, sexism, abysmal treatment of immigrants, *etc.* These are all serious issues, but in my opinion failure to protect our planet for future generations is the greatest crime of all and can lead to the destruction of humanity.

There was a brief period of hope as the major media outlets agreed to focus on the climate issue, and around the world millions of people took to the streets to protest government inaction to the problem and call for an effort to restore and protect our planet.

Now our news outlets are filled with the impeachment story; the climate crisis seems to have fallen to the wayside. Trump continues to ignore the looming crisis and seems to do all he can to bring disaster. A *New York Times* analysis, based on the research of Harvard and Columbia Law Schools and other sources, counts more than 80 environmental rules and regulations on the way out under Trump. Many are seen to benefit the fossil fuel industry and big business; the Trump administration has released an aggressive schedule to try to finalize many of these rollbacks this year.

Meanwhile the U. N. Climate Action Summit states that rising temperatures and sea levels have failed to generate enough urgency around climate change. There are disagreements among scientists as to how many people are likely to perish in the coming climate disaster: Millions? Billions? How many species of creatures (birds, insects, fish, mammals) will face extinction? We're not sure, but the prospects are extremely daunting; the term "existential threat" is being tossed around.

Meanwhile, our President and his followers are comfortable to ignore and even ridicule the climate issue. Moral leadership from the White House is not forthcoming. Without moral leadership, there cannot be responsible governing, that is, governing responsible to and for the people. The House—and soon the Senate—is grappling with the impeachment issue, which is also filling up the news reports on all forms of media. While the world continues to heat up, ice continues to melt, disaster continues to loom over us and is being ignored. Nero is said to have fiddled while Rome burned. Now we have

Donald Trump fiddling around while the planet faces extreme danger from a rapidly warming environment, endangering our life on Earth.

This is a blatant example of the damage that can be caused by a lack of moral leadership at the top levels of our government. Will impeachment cause an early end of Trump's disastrous Presidency?

Maybe, maybe not. Whatever happens with that, we have a chance to turn things around in the upcoming Presidential election. Of all of the Democrats running, I think any of them can do a much better job of governing and protecting our planet than Trump has done and believe they all have a much higher moral standard than the current President. It's up to the people of our country to stand up and speak out for change in government. It's not too early to support your favorite candidate, but whoever is nominated will need our support also. This may be the most important Presidential election of our time. The future of our planet is definitely at stake. For the sake of our children and grandchildren and all future generations, let's not blow it.



Kizoshi

Caring for Creation



A Christian's Perspective on Climate Change

Saturday, 10/26/19 noon - 1:30 p.m.

St. Andrew's Lutheran Church

501 NW 16th Street, Grand Rapids MN

Join us for a presentation by one of Minnesota's best-known and respected meteorologists, Paul Douglas, who believes that it is our personal responsibility to protect God's creation for today as well as for future generations.

Visit with Paul Douglas after his talk in the Fireside Room and purchase a copy of his recent book, *Caring for Creation*.

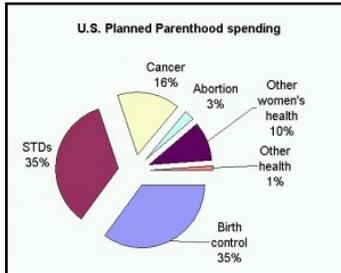
Sponsored by Grand Rapids Area Earth Circle, St. Andrews Lutheran Church, Zion Lutheran Church and Community Presbyterian Church

Responsible Governing Means Overturning the Title X Gag Rule

By BreAnna Bemboom

The Trump-Pence Administration implemented a Title X (Ten) gag rule in June, making it harder for low-income patients to get reproductive healthcare.

Title X, the only federal program for affordable birth control, provides a range of essential preventive health services including contraception, STD testing and treatment, HIV testing, and breast and cervical cancer screenings. In Minnesota, 53,000 patients across 31 locations, including 51,000 Planned Parenthood patients, relied on Title X funded health centers for their care.



Since the beginning of Title X funding in 1971, health centers that provide abortions, like Planned Parenthood, were able to get funding but were prohibited from using those funds to subsidize or pay for abortions. **No Title X funds have ever been used for abortion services.** The Trump-Pence administration's gag rule bans doctors in the Title X program across the country from telling patients how they can safely and legally access abortion. The gag rule prohibits doctors from giving patients full information about all of their sexual and reproductive healthcare options.

Because of Planned Parenthood's commitment to ethical patient care, this gag rule forced them

out of the Title X program in June. They refused to withhold critical information from patients, because everyone deserves access to the best medical care and information possible.

Everyone—regardless of their race, income, or where they live—deserves the best medical care and information available. Under the gag rule, they don't get it. This is especially important for the communities in Itasca County. The need for Planned Parenthood services is particularly acute in rural areas. Fifty-five percent of Planned Parenthood health centers in Minnesota are in rural or medically underserved areas, meaning that often without Planned Parenthood, patients may have nowhere else to turn for reproductive healthcare. Women in greater Minnesota have a 30% higher risk of being diagnosed with invasive disease like cervical cancer or breast cancer compared with those in the Twin Cities area. These women are less likely to receive preventive gynecological care, including breast exams and pap tests. This rule will make access to these essential healthcare services even more difficult in areas where people already face significant challenges to accessing care.

Forty percent of all pregnancies in Minnesota are unintended, indicating an ongoing and urgent need for accessible family planning and reproductive health services. Responsible governing means investing in family planning, not jeopardizing it.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS—GET INVOLVED AND GET IT DONE!

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date /Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
DFL Headquarters Open (326-6296)	Tues & Thurs 2-5 pm	DFL Headquarters
Itasca Progressive Caucus (259-4490)	3rd Tuesday 6:30 pm	DFL Headquarters
DFL Central Committee Meets	4th Monday 6:30 pm	DFL Headquarters
DFL Social Club & Lunch	1st Wednesday Noon	DFL Headquarters
DFL Pot Luck (Open to the Public)	3rd Wednesday 5:30 pm	DFL Headquarters
Working Families Alliance	1st Monday 6:30 pm	Dutchroom
Earth Circle	3rd Saturday 2:00 pm	GR Public Library
Circles of Support	Thursdays 6:00 pm	811 NE 4th St. GR
Haven: A Place for All	Mondays 5:30	Kiesler Center
Deadline for <i>Common Sense II</i>	November 8, 2019	conray@arvig.net