

# *Thomas Paine - "Common Sense"*

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## *Common Sense - 2021*

*"Society is everything constructive and good that people join together to accomplish. Government, on the other hand, is an institution whose sole purpose is to protect us from our own vices."*

*(All quotes from Thomas Paine Common Sense-January 9, 1776)*

There comes a time in history when common sense must supersede idealism, optimism, belief in the good will of man and that institutions created by man in the hope they will produce a more perfect union in America.

*"Resolution is our inherent character, and courage hath never yet forsaken us. Wherefore, what is it that we want? Why is it that we hesitate?"*

The Revolutionary War and the loss of thousands of patriots, the Civil War and again the loss of thousands of American lives, and World War II and the sacrifice of hundreds of thousands of soldiers world wide represent times when extraordinary and decisive action were necessary to protect freedom and liberty from the forces of evil, autocrats, and corrupt leaders who would destroy democracy and freedom to achieve their own selfish ends. This is one of those times.

*"A long habit of not thinking a thing wrong, gives it a superficial appearance of being right, and raises at first a formidable outcry in defense of custom. But the tumult soon subsides. Time makes more converts than reason."*

Efforts at appeasement, traditional good faith negotiations and fair minded diplomacy only were taken advantage of by the corrupt forces that threatened America exemplified by Chamberlin's good faith effort to get concessions from Hitler. That well intended action resulted in a strengthening of the evil of the Nazis and made it necessary for those who love freedom to fight a costly war and the loss of thousands of lives to protect freedom.

*"Men who look upon themselves born to reign, and others to obey, soon grow insolent; selected from the rest of mankind their minds are early poisoned by importance; and the world they act in differs so materially from the world at large, that they have but little opportunity of knowing its true interests, and when they succeed to the government are frequently the most ignorant and unfit of any throughout the dominions."*

Had the Founding Fathers, Abraham Lincoln and Franklin Roosevelt followed the appeasement approach to counter the challenges that faced them history might have been dramatically worse for the world. These extraordinary leaders knew that the challenges they faced could not be resolved based on an assumption that those that opposed freedom would ever give up their evil intentions.

COVID-19 has shed a bright light on the consequences of autocratic, tyrannical and hateful leadership and the dysfunction of American institutions incapable of taking the actions required to address the social injustice, racism, unfair distribution of wealth and other problems needed to achieve a more perfect union. Many of our elected representatives have abdicated their Oath of Office and refuse to engage in the common sense bipartisan actions required to address the long overdue problems facing our country. Evidence documents that there is no likely change in their obstructionist behavior. Their self serving partisan interests and ambitions have resulted in the loss of more than a half a million American lives to COVID-19.

*“long habit of not thinking a thing wrong, gives it a superficial appearance of being right,”*

A common sense look at the lies, abuses, obstructionist behavior, and acts of insurrection against America by elected leaders and their followers at the State and Federal level are frightening proof that these people will engage in any activity to prevent the achievement of a more perfect union.

This reality offers undisputable proof that any attempt to get cooperation from these obstructionists will be greeted by glee knowing that they are stalling progress. The leadership of the obstructionists in the Senate has made it clear in the past and for the future that he and his followers will use the weakness of the Administration and majority to prevent these overdue and essential reforms from ever being achieved.

*“Society in every state is a blessing, but government even in its best state is but a necessary evil; in its worst state an intolerable one;”*

Common sense dictates that if the obstructionists who have openly stated they will oppose all actions to achieve a more perfect union believe them. It should be abundantly clear that there will be no Racial Justice, Climate Change, Gun controls, Voting Rights legislation and other essential reforms if time is wasted on trying to gain their support.

*“It is not in numbers, but in unity, that our great strength lies; yet our present numbers are sufficient to repel the force of all the world”*

The false and unrealistic dream in being able to build bi-partisan support is a potential nightmare of lost opportunity and promise. History and the overt behavior of the obstructionists should lead to the common sense conclusion that the campaign promises made by the Administration and supported by the vast majority of Americans will never come true today or for the foreseeable future unless the opposition is neutralized and they see that their only hope for survival is to become a supporter of reforms that will benefit voters. Success in passing reforms into law will be the key to defeating the opposition, will increase the credibility of the Administration as being capable of draining the swamp of unethical politicians and result in the enactment into law reforms that will make lives better for Americans.

*“And as a man, who is attached to a prostitute, is unfitted to choose or judge of a wife, so any prepossession in favor of a rotten constitution of government will disable us from discerning a good one.”*

Common sense evidenced by the obstructionists not providing a single vote of support for The American Rescue Plan Act which was supported by a vast majority of Americans should make it clear that time spent trying to gain their support of the opposition will be valuable time wasted. Delay caused by this effort will only work in the favor of the obstructionists, delay real action to adopt reforms and result in a likely failure which will have a lasting impact on voters who were promised reforms.

Common sense dictates taking what ever lawful action is necessary and must be taken to achieve the goals that most Americans are demanding. It is time to declare war on the opposition as did the Founding Fathers, Abraham Lincoln and Franklin Roosevelt to address and overcome the crisis they faced.

*“When we are planning for posterity, we ought to remember, that virtue is not hereditary.”*

To ignore the reality of our time based on belief that past relationships and a false assessment that a lost Senate culture can be revived to achieve bi-partisan support is a dream that will turn into a nightmare and is destined to fail. The present opposition has proven they are willing to take the most extreme steps to prevent progress.

*“never can true reconciliation grow where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep.”*

The consequence of believing this can change is to give up the unique opportunity defined by control of both houses of Congress and the Presidency.

*“The laying of a Country desolate with Fire and Sword, declaring War against the natural rights of all Mankind, and extirpating the Defenders thereof from the Face of the Earth, is the Concern of every Man to whom Nature hath given the Power of feeling; of which Class, regardless of Party Censure, is”*

Failure now will result in a loss of confidence in the ability of this Administration and majority to govern on behalf of the voters that elected them, campaign promises broken and the likely loss of future elections.

*“There are injuries which nature cannot forgive; she would cease to be nature if she did.”*

Common sense also must credit the minority voters who turned out in record numbers based on the belief that real reforms can be achieved. It was this group that produced the win in the last Presidential election. Without their support and vote the next four years would have been tragic for America.

*“It is easy to see that when Republican virtues fail, slavery ensues.”*

An unbiased and objective review of the 2020 election will document that the election of the President should not be credited to Campaign strategists. Their efforts were a failure measured by the losses in the House of Representatives and the marginal gains in in the Senate at a time when the worst President in the history of the United States with the worst ratings of an incumbent gave the Campaign enough ammunition to achieve dramatic gains in both houses of Congress.

*“Immediate necessity makes many things convenient, which if continued would grow into oppressions. Expedience and right are different things.”*

The undeniable evidence proves that when given the task of designing a campaign against the most unpopular President in American history and the opportunity to leverage anti-Trump sentiment into significant gains in both houses of Congress, they failed. Had it not been for Black leaders who engaged in one of the most focused and successful efforts to get out the minority vote the Presidential election would have been lost too.

*“Oppression is often the consequence, but seldom or never the means of riches; and though avarice will preserve a man from being necessitously poor, it generally makes him too timorous to be wealthy.”*

Instead of a campaign targeting the unmet needs of disenfranchised voters the campaign concentrated on raising money, preaching to the choir and issues of less importance than the consequences and hardships being suffered by Americans due to the lack of leadership and corruption of the past Administration.

This while millions of Americans were suffering due to social injustice and racism, the unfair distribution of wealth and the lack of control of access to guns, and the half a million American deaths caused by the neglect of the past Administration and their supporters to take decisive action to combat COVID-19.

*“Hath your house been burnt? Hath your property been destroyed before your face? Are your wife and children destitute of a bed to lie on, or bread to live on? Have you lost a parent or a child by their hands, and yourself the ruined and wretched survivor? If you have not, then are you not a judge of those who have. But if you have, and still can shake hands with the murderers, then you are unworthy of the name of husband, father, friend, or lover, and whatever may be your rank or title in life, you have the heart of a coward, and the spirit of a sycophant.”*

The efforts of the minorities must be credited for the singular success of electing the President and again for the election of two Senators from Georgia that make it possible to bring about real reform if the Administration has the courage, insight and common sense to take the aggressive steps required to counter and overcome the barriers the opposition will put in place to obstruct progress and prevent the enactment of laws that will lead to real reform.

*“Men do not change from enemies to friends by the alteration of a name”*

Common sense should dictate that the steps required to achieve social justice and other laws passed is not trying to negotiate with politicians who have proven themselves to be committed to opposing progress at all costs, but to honor the efforts of the minorities whose efforts must be credited for creating the opportunity for real change and who are most damaged by present policies.

*“...and a race of men, perhaps as numerous as all Europe contains, are to receive their portion of freedom from the event of a few months.”*

A commitment to the minorities who will be most influential in achieving a more perfect union to take the unorthodox and necessary actions to deliver on campaign promises.

*“Every quiet method for peace hath been ineffectual. Our prayers have been rejected with disdain; and only tended to convince us, that nothing flatters vanity, or confirms obstinacy in Kings more than repeated petitioning—and noting hath contributed more than that very measure to make the Kings of Europe absolute”*

This should begin with an ultimatum to the obstructionists that they should either live up to their Oath of Office and join forces to achieve a more perfect union or have their opposition routinely and loudly publicized to their constituents to ensure the voters know that they opposed the progress being made and the benefits voters achieved without their support.

*“Resolution is our inherent character, and courage hath never yet forsaken us. Wherefore, what is it that we want? Why is it that we hesitate?”*

Common sense leads to one conclusion. If a more perfect union cannot be achieved with the cooperation and support of the opposition then the same kind of decisive and extraordinary action must be taken as was taken by the Founding Fathers, Lincoln and Roosevelt to overcome the crisis they faced.

*“...that the nicest construction that words are capable of, when applied to the description of some thing which either cannot exist, or is too incomprehensible to be within the compass of description, will be words of sound only, and though they may amuse the ear, they cannot inform the mind”*

If the filibuster as it presently exists can be used as a weapon by the opposition to prevent progress, it must be eliminated. If the argument not to eliminate the filibuster is based on fear that it may create problems in the future is to throw away the present opportunity to achieve real change. Such an argument assumes that the changes proposed will be sufficiently unpopular that voters that they will vote for those who opposed the changes. Such an argument is neither rational or based on common sense. The opposite argument makes more sense. Draining the swamp of the self serving political obstructionists and getting reforms passed that will benefit the voters is likely to solidify the voter support and gains in future elections not losses.

*“in order that nothing may pass into a law but what is satisfactorily just, not less than three fifths of the Congress to be called a majority. He that will promote discord, under a government so equally formed as this, would have joined Lucifer in his revolt.”*

If the Senate Rules are preventing progress change them. If the only fear is of what might be some unknown future consequence, make taking action now the top priority and let history and the voters determine if the decisions were correct. It is likely that the people of the country will reward the leadership that has provided real improvements in their lives by voting for them in future elections.

Common sense says now is not the time to allow those who have proven their intent to prevent any progress in achieving social justice, other needed reforms and a more perfect union. Now is the time to tell the opposition to either get on board with the social changes that America needs and overwhelming wants or suffer the consequences.

*“The more men have to lose, the less willing are they to venture. The rich are in general slaves to fear, and submit to courtly power with the trembling duplicity of a Spaniel.”*

Now is the time to immediately take the revolutionary actions that were required of the Founding Fathers, Lincoln and Roosevelt to overcome the crisis they faced, and prevent those who are the obstructionists from keeping long overdue reforms from becoming a reality.

*“The least fracture now will be like a name engraved with the point of a pin on the tender rind of a young oak; the wound will enlarge with the tree, and posterity read it in full grown characters.”*

The time is now to use common sense to guide decision making, take decisive action and live up to the promises made to work toward and achieve a more perfect union.

*“Let the names of Whig (Democratic) and Tory (Republican) be extinct; and let none other be heard among us, than those of a good citizen, an open and resolute friend, and a virtuous supporter of the rights of mankind and of the free and independent states of America”*

Thomas Paine II, An American Patriot  
thomas.paine@vernonadvocate.com