

The Passy Press[®]

Letters to the Editor

From: William Jastromb <bjastromb@undisclosed.com>
To: Nick Gardiner <enpg@thepassypress.com>
Sent: 20 October 2017 at 14:54:00 CEST
Subject: Peter Barnet Essay, October 2017

Dear Sir,

Thank you for sharing this article by Peter Barnet about fake news and its impact on our democracy. I agree with you and Peter that there is no more important issue facing us today. Social media have made it possible for anyone and everyone to voice an opinion about any subject and to distribute it to everyone without verification. The most pervasive and insidious point-of-view is how broken and dysfunctional our government institutions are.

My main takeaway is that this issue about fake news is at the heart of what we think is the role of our government in a resilient democracy. I believe that those who create and distribute fake news are those people who hate government in any shape or form. They are part of Reagan's team when he said that government cannot fix the problem because government is the problem.

Reagan is the principal culprit in this discussion because he gave voice to all those people who live in America because they like the freedom of choice and they believe that they are entitled to that freedom regardless of the impact on the freedom of other Americans.

I believe that Peter's major point in his article is his comment about the lack of government regulations to cope with the impact of social media. Without government regulations a certain portion of the American population will distort the meaning of freedom. They must be regulated, and the only universal regulation authority is the government. My interpretation of Peter's remarks is that he believes, as I do, that government is not the problem but is the solution to protect the majority of the population from the misdemeanors of the few, something that America's founding fathers were very familiar with.

Donald Trump's presidency is the most recent manifestation of Reagan's belief that government is the problem. Since Trump has no basic beliefs of his own other than the drive for self-gratification, he will say and do whatever it takes to push people, institutions, and the government out of his way so that he can satisfy his narcissistic impulses, even to the point of contradicting himself on almost every issue. When he accuses the news media of fake news, he is behaving like the spoiled brat who cannot have his own way.

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From my point of view, the worst implication of his contempt for the news media is that he does not care. He has no long-term vision for his presidency and will say and do whatever will get him through the moment at hand.

President Trump is a vicious threat to our democracy and must be impeached as soon as possible.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on Peter Barnet's article and to voice my support for his point of view.

Sincerely,

Bill Jastromb

Bill Jastromb graduated from Western Reserve Academy in Hudson, Ohio, in 1957 and graduated from Yale University in 1961 with a BA in English Literature. After a brief career teaching high school English, Bill received a MBA from Harvard Business School in 1969 and began his second career in marketing and sales in the software industry. In retirement Bill has begun a third career as a volunteer for non-profit Organizations that share his interests in education and environmental justice.