

Do lies belie the truth?

"One size fits all. This will hurt me more than it hurts you. That dress makes you look thinner. I'm from the government and I'm here to help you." Take your pick from these and hundreds of other fictitious statements masquerading as facts. They're everywhere - in great abundance - and usually packaged together with actual truths to make the phony ones within sound believable.

Nearly 20 years ago, former Senator from Minnesota, Al Franken, wrote a satirical book about politicians entitled, "Lies and the lying liars who tell them." While Franken has always self-identified as a *comedian*, his comedy can best be described as 'an acquired taste' for the perennially angry ideologue. And while he has never been confused with his former colleagues who possess significant political insight and intellect he was prescient about a problem that would come to rear its ugly head two decades later. I'm speaking of course of the prevalence of prevarication promulgated largely by his fellow Progressives and even by moderate Democrats. Though his book was brutally critical of the Right and of George W. Bush in particular, he did stumble (perhaps by accident) on one of the more destructive developments of the new millennium: the wholesale embrace and liberal use of lying to the public by DC and Blue state politicians.

Lying, of course, is nothing new. Those of us who abide by the Ten Commandments will recognize it as number nine - "Though shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor" - which has come to mean all forms of lying. The relativists among us naturally disagree with the premise. They will say that, "It all depends on the lie itself, the motivation of the liar that tells it and the consequences or fall-out resulting from the lie." In short, it can be rationalized given the context of the situation in which it was told. Governments have always lied to its citizens and citizens have occasionally done the same, albeit on a smaller scale. And that's the argument: have the intensity, size and frequency of the lies now being told to us by our leaders somehow tipped the scales away from truth-telling as the preferred method of governance?

Big lies of the Left -- We needn't go too far back in time to uncover some real whoppers from our liberal friends: "I did not have sex with that woman, Ms. Lewinsky," "You can keep your doctor and your health plan if you like them," "The Build Back Better bill will pay for itself and won't cost anything," "We need to get everyone vaccinated in order to protect us from the virus," "America is a systemically racist country" and "The January 6th insurrection was the greatest attack on democracy since the Civil War, Pearl Harbor or 9/11." The list goes on and on, and backed up by the efforts of the mainstream media and social media to *cancel*, censor or censure anyone who dares call them out for the lies they are, they are slowly becoming part of the country's accepted national narrative and conventional wisdom.

The big lie of the Right -- Those on the Right have also been co-opted to stray from the truth, largely by viewing the successes the Left has enjoyed in their quest to lie to the rest of us. The most recent example is that the 2020 Presidential Election was *stolen* by the Left, that many states either conspired with each other or acted alone to stuff the ballot boxes or rig the vote in Joe Biden's favor. While it may be true that some votes in some states were manipulated or double-counted or not counted at all, it stretches credulity to think that they would number enough to have swung the election towards Donald Trump. After all, the margin of popular vote victory for the Democrats was 7 million votes. We Conservatives must own up to the fact that many millions of our fellow Americans literally despised Donald Trump and were willing to fall on their swords and vote for a weak, unqualified and possibly cognitively-challenged man to manage the affairs of our country. It's this shocking fact that has supported the Republicans' narrative about the stolen election, and it will probably continue to be '*the lie that would be the truth*' for the next three years until we once again choose our President.

That leaves us with a dilemma. Must we accept that lying is now endemic to our political culture and are we willing to allow the liars who perpetrate them to go scot-free? In order for a lie to become the conventional wisdom it must have three things on its side: a tiny kernel of truth;

powerful people willing to peddle it; and a weak-kneed public that's ready to believe it. Absent any one of those three, lies have little chance of success which is why we must fight back against those who would control us through their lies. "When truth is replaced by silence, the silence becomes the lie."

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