

All.Net Analyst Report and Newsletter

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Cyberspace vs. COVID-19 - Re-education

Assuming Trump is removed from office, Cyberspace will be the place where tens of millions of US persons will have to be re-educated in order to come back from the near-revolution of the people who don't believe the facts. This is the inevitable side effect of disinformation and propaganda spread in large amounts and supported by many in power.

Why is that?

Because when you look at the interviews of and talk to the Trump supporters, they actually believe that COVID-19 is a left wing plot, that the country was shut down by democrats to harm the economy, that it is China interfering for Biden and not Russia interfering for Trump, and on and on. When you look at the independents and Biden supporters and public figures and ex-government employees from the Trump cabinet, and and and, you find exactly the opposite. So the winner takes it all, and the loser has tens of millions in revolt because they believe the Left has rigged the election when of course most people believe the Right is trying to do just that.

Without a common set of facts and belief system you don't have a country

Or in the alternative

Assuming Trump stays in office, Cyberspace will be the place where tens of millions of US persons will have to be re-educated in order to come back from the near-revolution of the people who don't believe the alternative facts. This is also the inevitable side effect of disinformation and propaganda spread in large amounts and supported by many in power.

What a horrible concept

In the US when we hear about Chinese re-education camps, we think of torture and brainwashing. And yet, it will be necessary to prove to tens of millions of people that such insane theories as those spread by QAnon and the ridiculous and sickening inconsistent claims of Trump and the Republicans who for so long supported him are false. It will be like post-WW2 Germany, only worse. OR, in the alternative, hundreds of millions of people will have to be re-educated (or killed) to meet the viewpoints of our fearless leader who will not tolerate dissent once power is consolidated. If you don't believe me, look at the World around you. How many countries have ended in genocide or similar outcomes during such changes?

Be afraid... be very afraid!

Many Trump voters say that they disdain everything about Trump, but are so afraid of Democratic rule, that they will vote for Trump anyway. And many Republicans who disagree with almost all Democratic policies are so afraid of Trump rule they will vote for Biden. This fear on each side has driven voters who hate to vote for things they hate less. The people of the US are in realistic fear for their lives. It's not paranoia if they really are out to get you.

Or not!

The land of the free and the home of the brave. **If you are not brave, you will not be free.**

Cyberspace is the way?

What has to happen to over come this travesty (either way)? Regardless of which way it goes, millions of people will need to come to grips with the outcome. And that means very public, very widespread re-education. And that will either take a very very long time, perhaps generations, or it will involve widespread Internet-based delivery, likely in some sort of all source push.

In other words, massive use of propaganda techniques!

Now the term “propaganda” is generally associated with lies. For example, according to Oxford Languages, propaganda: “(1) information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote or publicize a particular political cause or point of view.”

In this case, whether or not “misleading”, the information presented will necessarily be “of a biased ... nature, used to promote [and] publicize a particular ... point of view.” And history will be written by the winners.

Here's a sampling

...of what we might see:

- **A “reconciliation commission”:**
 - There is already talk of a multi-year slow-churn bipartisan government process to “learn lessons” and inform the public. This is another way of saying, in effect, let the cancer become permanent but claim to have done something about it, and try to make some changes over the long run. Great for politicians and law makers, but we the people have to live with the disease all the longer.
- **Many very public (high profile) trials:**
 - In the US, almost all trials are “public”, but these will be widely covered by the media and very high profile. Trump in court under oath in trial after trial in state and Federal courts, for civil and criminal violations, along with his children and Barr and members of Congress and Rudy and Lev and all the gang. Or Biden and Obama and Hillary and all the Generals and public health officials. They will be called “show trials” by some, and the losers will claim it’s a political hit job.
- **Some media outlets put under (covert) government controls:**
 - Freedom of speech has suffered before, and depending on the outcome, might even go away entirely for a time. But a more likely scenario is that some media outlets will be put under limited government control for a time. That control might be subtle or direct, of course. Remember, after 9-11 people in corporations were compelled to remain silent and not disclose, even to their management, government mandated massive surveillance programs that were otherwise widely considered illegal prior to the disclosure of these changes. You can readily imagine that meeting room where someone points out that the corporations are global and will never willingly go along (I personally delivered such a message to such a room after 9-11, and we got the covert “National Security Letter” approach). The same thing might happen today, and we might get covert programs to control media outlets in various ways that even many participants are unaware of.

- **Government sourced (Hollywood produced?) movies:**
 - These were really awesome during and after WW2. Some of my favorites are the ones that showed how foreign influence was being used to subvert the national will of the US and its citizens. Hollywood stars played great roles as foreign operatives, and the whole “Untouchables” TV series (which is now replaying on some cable channel) came out. Nothing really helps fix the national will and creates a common view of history better than a whole series of great movies... except of course...
- **Internet come to heal (and heel):**
 - Does anyone doubt that, in the massive sense of the media, government cannot control the messaging in the Internet? Look at (to) China! The national healing can happen if members of each of the millions of small groups come to realize, in a public (within the group) way, that they were fooled by the other side, and recognize based on the new evidence that they were denied by the other side, that they were wrong. Look at Germany post WW2. Millions of Germans came to see that they had, in many cases unknowingly, and in other cases not cognitively understanding, participated in mass murder and genocide. Clearly in the US we can reconcile that we had a different opinion, or perhaps that we were fooled, and that now that we know the (real/new) truth, we understand we were right to think as we did but now think differently. For this to happen, of course, we will need some bad actors to blame it on, and ... oh yeah... Hollywood can help us demonstrate the path forward.
 - Watched by millions and spread over the Internet unadulterated, repeated millions of times, with people arrested or opinions suppressed, who/when they alter or subvert the process or the allowable views. This can only be done in cyberspace, and likely only with Draconian controls that combine mass surveillance with the same sorts of methods of persuasion we see used in other media, but of course, customized to the particulars because... we can.

And the aftermath?

The “unintended” (but clearly now herein anticipated) consequences of these and other methods will ultimately be the continued expansion of the technology of deception and infiltration, and mass psychological warfare / cognitive security / influence operations we see emerging today. And we will likely think it was a good thing after a few generations of it being done to us. But we will be happy with the new leader, whoever they may be, once we come to understand what is really happening and what we didn’t understand until we were informed.

The need for a proper delusion

If we are free of all pretense and delusion, we will come to realize that everything is meaningless, there is no good and evil, no future is assured, and that live for today, forget tomorrow and yesterday, are the only things to understand. Pleasure vs. pain here and now. And the result will be the massive destruction of all society. Anarchy, and ultimately, the destruction of the things humans have built up over the last 5,000 years will go away.

We need our delusions to keep us moving in a way that brings health, happiness, long life, freedom from fear, hopeful, cooperative, supportive, and so forth... in other words...

The Equation of Life

Smiles - Frowns

In my view of things, the ultimate goal of life is to optimize (maximize) the equation of life. Not just more smiles than frowns, but making the total number (and duration and intensity) of smiles minus those of frowns as high as possible.

While this may be applied to each individual (and should be), we should also realize that, optimization across all of humanity means that some of us may frown a bit here and there so that overall, humanity has more smiles relative to frowns. It gets complicated a bit here and there. If I live longer, I can smile more (assuming I am smiling more than frowning across my life, this will increase the net positive). But living better longer means a few more frowns along the way (I may have to work at something I don't really like all that much to make enough money to retire better, etc.).

I don't want to get into the mathematics of optimization here. And measuring the quantitative value of a really great drug-induced smile for a defined time frame that I don't remember very well compared to the resulting frown as I cannot get more of the drugs later on vs. the amazing smile produced by a small child giggling with joy followed by the frown associated with the diaper change when I realize the cause of the smile... we can forgo that for the present.

Or the alternative...

Having now flown quite a distance from the origin of the discussion, it is getting close to the time we must land, and as such, I should point out that there are alternatives to the path of mass governmental intervention producing the long term global delusion of happiness. So...

Buckle your seat belts...

There are some radical alternatives that are worth noting, but I think not worth doing:

- **Let them die:** This is the “herd immunity” approach we keep hearing about. The thing about letting lots of folks die is that, if properly framed, everyone else was lucky to live, “we are the champions” that survived, we are worth, and therefore we are right. Take it a step further, and the living kill off the weaker, take advantage wherever they might, the new point of view becomes popular (among the survivors) and we become a less caring society. Re-education comes naturally, the survivors must have learned.
- **Internment camps:** Don’t worry about re-education, just put them all in camps. We did it to the Japanese in WW2, we did it to the Indians (we called them reservations, booked for life), and we are doing it to children today, if their parents tried to bring them here from elsewhere. They will be educated in hate, loneliness, and the horrors of separation from parents when a child. We could even do this across the whole society and turn the state into the new parents.
- **Forgive them:** This is the viewpoint that it hurts us to punish them and they won’t be helped. My personal point of view is that if you break the law and are not punished, and if everyone knows this is how it is, then the law abiding citizens will stop following the law, especially when it disadvantages them over the law breakers. Look what happened after the financial collapse of ‘08, when the people who caused the collapse were pretty much just let go. That was the start of the current lawlessness.

Truth, Justice, and the American way?

When I was young, Superman (the TV show) had a deep voice talking about “Truth, Justice, and the American Way”, which I thought I understood:

- There were laws and you followed them.
- If you didn’t follow them, you were arrested, tried, convicted, and paid the price.
 - American justice provided a fair trial, so if you were wrongly accused, it’d be OK.
- Otherwise, you do as you please as long as it doesn’t impinge on someone else.

Of course Superman doesn’t exist, but we had Elliot Ness and the Untouchables to fight for us, and all those heroes of the screen, and all the other folks working for justice. We even had a whole government Department of Justice. I was young and naive. And yet that is still what I think we are aiming toward.

My experience with the courts has been that they are designed to bring facts to the trier of fact. They are imperfect, and in some ways a game. But they bring out facts.

Facts matter?

Yes they do. And discerning fact from fiction from neither is a non-trivial exercise. Since a lie will circle the wold before the truth gets its pants on,¹ the lies will be coming fast and furious, while getting at the truth will take too long for the short run. So be prepared to not believe anything you hear till after the election, and then prepare for the sires to tell us what they want us to think.

So the slow legal process, if not subverted, will bring out the truth. But of course it is being subverted at the national level as we see these political hacks using law enforcement and investigative and intelligence agencies to do their will, and as we see the leaders of some of these entities going along with it.

So I guess it will take a very long time to get to any sense of agreed upon facts – a multi-generation split personality induced by politicians to divide the country and the Russians and now Iranians to weaken it and destroy the Western alliance. Not a conspiracy theory – a well supported and probably well documented fact pattern – the documentation for which you and I don’t have access. Without transparency here, we are all screwed.

Competence matters?

Indeed it does. And that is the big problem we face as a country today. Inept leadership, sure, but it goes down through increasing levels as the inept put inept in place to support them, the corrupt put corrupt in place to corrupt the overall system, and fools trust fools who trust liars and frauds.

As an older person, I am supposed to say and think that the youth are fools and then act the fool in accusing them of incompetence. Of course that’s baloney. Plenty of old and young people are as or more smart and dumb as their predecessors. There are plenty of competent people of all ages, but they are being overshadowed by everybody else, and the destruction of the education system over many years has brought us to ignorance for the masses.

¹ I am not bothering to cite all the pseudo quotes in this article, but I have references to them in many prior articles, so apologies for trying to get my pants on faster by playing it a bit fast and loose.

Honesty counts?

Yes it does. Honesty with and about ourselves and others. But you can honestly believe a lie and truthfully tell it to others as if it were the truth. Because almost none of us ever have access to the actual facts, which are guarded as secrets. And if we have such access, we also have the problem of competency in understanding and presenting those facts to others.

Hence the need for re-education.

- We need to re-educate to understand and detect the obvious lies and frauds.
- We need to re-educate to get facts back in the hands of the people.
- We need to re-educate to get people to be able to analyze the facts and draw conclusions that are consistent with the facts.
- We need to re-educate to compensate for the decades of bad education.
- We need to re-educate all the people who have been wrongly educated in the past.

But since it has been a generation or two of bad education, bad information, false information portrayed as fact, lack of education in analysis to get at inconsistencies that reveal false facts, and massive progress in many scientific and technical fields that obsoletes many of the true facts the older folks (like me) learned when we were educated (well or poorly), we have a long way to go.

A fractured future

COVID-19 has already left hundreds of thousands dead, millions with scarred lungs or other lifelong lingering health effects. Disinformation has left hundreds of millions of people disagreeing about even the simplest things, like that wearing a mask can save you from an airborne disease, as opposed to causing you to get sick, which the President of the US has recently stated publicly. Distrust of science and scientists who should be trusted and scientists who claim expertise they don't have to push positions they are ignorant of, combine to make ignorance widespread and fracture the future of fact and fact finding. Distrust of a legal system, which we all suspected as corrupt along the way, and which has been intentionally corrupted to political ends recently more than before, leaves us in a situation where we cannot trust the courts at any level, even to be consistent with what they decided only a few years ago, much less the "stare decisis"² of long past and highly depended upon rulings.

We will live for some time in a fractured future. And until we get the re-education (or the losers) done well, this will not change. It may be generations, and thus ends the American century, which really started in WW1 and with the last global pandemic, when the US was decisive in the outcome, almost exactly 100 years ago.

Conclusions

It's going to be a while, and re-education is going to be critical to closing the breach in our fractured body politic. Just as Covid-19 is fought off by the body, either surviving with scars from the battle or succumbing to the disease, so the body politic of the US is currently fighting against the infection of disinformation, and will either reject and defeat the disease with scars for a long time to come, or succumb to it and thus sound the end of the American experiment.

² "to stand by that which is decided"