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Seeking the Truth

It is really vital for all human beings to search for truth. All human beings are equipped with thinking minds when they are born, but all of them do not reach to the truths in their lives. It is not mind alone that decides that a person would ultimately be able to reach to the ultimate truth; rather, it to a large extent depends on iron will and determination to do so. The path that leads to the truth is not always easy to pursue and human beings have to face myriads of challenges before they can reach to their destination. However, in the search for truth the most important factor is to realize the fact that a person does not already know it. Unfortunately, there are many people who believe that they have already found the truth and they are alone to have done so.

As a matter of fact, those, who claim to have found the truth, have the tendency to stick to it and keep on insisting upon it. They, thus, give up seeking for it and fall into the imagination that the ultimate reality has been discovered and there is no need of further exploration.

The matter of fact is that the human beings understand the world through their knowledge and human knowledge is not perfect and complete enough to understand the entire universe and different phenomena in it. Thus what they understand at a particular time may be true as per their knowledge at that time but as they further advance in their knowledge and understanding of the universe the situation may change. Their previous truth may seem insufficient and may require further elaboration or the facts may point towards a truth that is totally against the accepted truth and may, thus, reject it completely.

Heraclitus of Ephesus, observing the changing nature of the world around, had said, "You cannot step twice in the same water." What he meant to say is that by the time you step for the second time in the water, the water under your foot already changes because it flows. Considering such frequent changes in nature, it is difficult to find permanent truths very often.

History would also prove the fact that the truths keep on changing. For example, it was believed as a fact during the Dark Era in Europe and even supported by Christianity that earth is the center of the universe and sun moves around it; however, it was only later discovered through development in scientific thinking and scientific technology that actually sun is the center of the solar system and the earth revolves around the sun.

There are myriads of other examples in history that prove that with the evolution in human knowledge there were changes in the understanding of phenomena that human beings considered as universal truths. For example, once it was considered a widely accepted truth that earth was flat; however, the later developments proved that it was round.

Knowing the universe as a changing reality is really very important. Those who have this outlook get nearer to the truth, while those who consider the universe as a static phenomenon are at a great loss. The biggest disadvantage for them is that they distant themselves from knowing the truth.

Those who believe that they know the ultimate truth are dangerous as well. They are dangerous in a sense that they consider others as not knowing the actual truths. Then, they become even more dangerous when they want to spread their perceived truths to others and even coerce them. They, sometimes, become violent and cannot tolerate that others should have opinion other than what they know; all because they know the ultimate truth.

People who have the misunderstanding that they know the truth, halt searching for more. They, as a matter of fact, reach to an intellectual death. Their understanding becomes full and there is no space for knowing more. The thirst for knowledge is quenched in them. Though they wear the crown of a king over their heads but in reality they are destitute.

Different extremist movements in the world, which have even killed thousands of people without any crime, have basically originated from the thinking that they are right and true, while the rest are wrong and must be amended. Taliban, for instance, consider their way of thinking and their beliefs as true and believe that all others are infidel. Thus it is their moral and the most sacred duty to make others follow the truth as well.

Resultantly, we have to doubt those who find truth. We don't have to believe them but challenge them. Reconsider their conclusions and must strive to keep on searching for truer.

Therefore, the search for better must always continue. For the people who live in the societies like Afghanistan, the need to realize the facts that govern their lives and their livings must be searched thoroughly so that they are able to find better solutions for the actual problems, not just their misunderstandings.

A Proven Dose of Solution to Rescue the Nation

By: Mohammad Zahir Akbari

It is noted in our society, that even educated people do not like reading books. They try to spend their leisure time with T.V, social media networks, mobile games or hanging around without any reason, thus wasting it in unhealthy and frivolous activities. This way, a great part of our human capital energies are evaporated with the passage of every second without deeming it as a problem! Wasting the time of 35 million people is never less important than devastating its economic resources as there is no more valuable capital than time. If we encounter a man or nation of rare intellect, there must be something wrong with their educational systems and quality of foods their minds receive. Therefore, people from all walks of life should read books but the politicians, instructors, teachers and researchers need more. When we read books, we gain the knowledge and experience of someone. It can hasten our success towards a goal, as we don't need to repeat the same mistake while focusing on the right path in achieving one thing. It's like a mountain of gems for one to discover in books, which contain people's successes, failures and advice. Life is too short to keep repeating the mistakes that had been done by other people in the past, in order to reach the results that someone might already reached. There are many successful nations, more than four thousand billionaires and 12 million millionaires today. To become one of them, the first thing is to learn and get to know their past, what they did in the past that makes them where they are today.

Unfortunately, we just try to prevent from ignition of important books but in advanced countries they try to prevent from being unread or unwritten of important books. In our countries there are hospitals only for physical treatment but in advanced countries there are also hospitals for mind treatment. Many of mental diseases are communicable and its evil viruses can rapidly spread through new media among the society. More than ever, there are seriously needs for hospitals of mind but there is no better hospital for mind than library. Whatever the cost of libraries is, the price is cheap compared to that of an ignorant and ill nation.

In fact, Library is the delivery room for the birth of new ideas, a place where history comes to life and there is nothing more wonderful than a book! We may sit in our library or pick up a book and yet are in all corners of the earth and history. A message to us from the dead, — from human souls whom we never saw, who lived perhaps thousands of miles away; and yet these, on those little sheets of paper, speak to us, teach us, comfort us, open their hearts to us as brothers. Only libraries and educational organiza-

tion can build a nation, as no nation built on the surface of earth it must be built in mind and in heart of people.

However, we should note that libraries are not confined to traditional libraries; rather it can be consist of vast sources to non-stop learning opportunities including old traditional library, electrical, visual and so on. A purposeful learner use new technology devices as a learning tool; for example, he can switch on a good T.V channel to read books during the meal or when waiting for his paperwork at a government office; thus he can reach Google resources through his handy mobile provided that he is not addicted with face-book. Undoubtedly, nothing can replace book, and so it is better to go into study room when the T.V is turned on.

According to experts, we need to make a rule that never gives a book to a child unless we would not read it ourselves; for the reason that books can be dangerous. Some books leave us free and some books make us free. Hence, the best ones should be labeled to prevent the danger of poisonous mental food also refrain from wastage of time. So, when a person intends to read, he should try to pick good books because life is busy and time is scarce. We cannot afford to spend time in reading all sorts of books. A thinker says, "Life is short...too short to everything. Choose you must, Choose only the best friends and in books!" therefore, the success of reading books largely depends on the proper selection of books, journals and periodicals, and nationally, there is a strong need to establish a committee of experts for selecting right books for public libraries. The guiding criteria for book selection should be based on psychological and national interests of the country.

In general, there are no more powerful tools to change the fate of an individual or a nation than books. The more we read, the power of our imagination and decision making will be strengthened, and we will find a better and deeper understanding of the things we encounter in our life. Accordingly, our problem solving power will increase. Einstein says, "Thoughts and brain of men are codified in a way that is changeable through reading a book, and perhaps a single book may change the fate of millions of people in a special way. To increase the book readership we need to cultivate the culture of reading in our country; the ministry of culture is more responsible to promote book reading culture in the country. Our society, will not reach sustainable peace and prosperity unless study becomes our everyday habit.

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How Europe's Populists Can Win by Losing

By: Mark Leonard

Will the European Parliament elections this May result in a political revolution? Populist and nationalist parties certainly hope so. They are promising not just to overturn the Brussels establishment, but also to end the free movement of people, lift sanctions against Russia, abandon NATO, eschew future trade deals, reverse policies to combat climate change, and abolish gay marriage.

Many of these ideas have long been included in Euroskeptical fringe parties' election programs. But a major survey of the EU's 27 national political theaters, led by Susi Dennison and Pawel Zerka of the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR), that will be published next week, shows that voters could be more responsive to such proposals this year than in the past.

In the past, European elections have been predominantly national, low-turnout, and low-stakes affairs. But those days are over. The campaign season has already become a transnational, pan-European event. While the American populist agitator Steve Bannon is attempting to build a coalition of right-wing nationalist governments, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and Italian Deputy Prime Minister Matteo Salvini have forged a populist alliance that marries the anti-austerity left with the anti-migration right. Orbán and Salvini's goal is to capture EU institutions and reverse European integration from within. They envision nothing less than a re-founding of the West on illiberal values.

Moreover, voter turnout this year will most likely be far higher than the usual 20-40%. Just as the Brexiters managed to mobilize three million Britons who generally abstain from voting, continental populists could attract Europeans who feel as though mainstream parties have forgotten about them. If these voters turn out while supporters of moderate leaders like German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron stay home, populist parties could significantly outperform current polls.

Moreover, the ECFR study finds that even with a parliamentary minority, a Euroskeptical party grouping could severely curtail the EU's ability to address voters' concerns, as well as threats to its fundamental governing principles. For example, with just one-third of parliamentary seats, populists could block sanctions against member states that violate EU rules and the rule of law. The EU is currently pursuing such measures against both the Law and Justice (PiS) party's government in Poland and Orbán's government in Hungary. Populist insurgents could also derail EU budget negotiations, and even precipitate an EU "government shutdown," by preventing the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework if they garner an absolute majority. With a blocking minority or control of certain parliamentary committees, Euroskeptics might also be able to stand in the way of international trade deals and appointments to the European Commission.

Populists who win parliamentary seats will also be eager to weaken EU foreign policy, either through the power of the purse or amendments to policy resolutions. Given that many European populist parties have financial ties to the Kremlin, the goal will be to wa-

ter down sanctions against Russia. Beyond that, populists also seek to frustrate environmental-policy efforts such as the Paris climate agreement.

The risk, then, is not so much that populists will capture a parliamentary majority and overturn everything on day one, but that they have some representation in the European Commission and secure a large enough minority to bring EU policymaking to a crawl. That, in turn, will prevent the enforcement of EU rules, strengthen nationalist governments, and further undermine European voters' confidence in EU governing institutions. The illiberal governments in Budapest, Warsaw, and Rome would be free to violate EU rules with impunity.

Moreover, the European Parliament elections coincide with a widespread political realignment within EU member states. Thus, for populists and moderates alike, electoral success in May could translate into success at the national level. Estonia and Slovakia will hold general elections before the European Parliament elections, and Belgium and Denmark will hold elections later in the year. In each case, populist parties could ascend to power as coalition partners.

Making matters worse, pro-European parties appear to be falling into the trap laid by these anti-European parties. Across Europe, liberals, Greens, and many left-wing parties are approaching the election as a fight between cosmopolitans and communitarians — between globalism and patriotism. This political framing is more likely to help the insurgent Euroskeptics than anyone else.

Nothing is lost yet. But to avoid a rout, pro-Europeans must stop behaving in ways that confirm the populists' stereotypes of them as supporters of the status quo in Brussels. That means offering an upfront, honest critique of the EU's shortcomings while avoiding the wrong kind of polarization, particularly on issues where they do not have the support of a clear majority.

At the same time, pro-Europeans need to start deploying "wedge" issues of their own. For example, on the crucial question of migration, it is clear that Orbán and Salvini's interests are not even particularly aligned. While Orbán wants to keep all migrants out, Salvini has called for asylum seekers arriving in Italy to be distributed throughout the EU. Pro-Europeans should be pointing out these contradictions to voters in Hungary and Italy.

Putting aside his other current difficulties, Macron at least is aware of the populist trap. In his speech last November commemorating Armistice Day, he described patriotism as the opposite of nationalism, thus repudiating the narrative that true patriots oppose "globalists." But he has done little to show how his politics can make "left-behind voters" feel safe from globalization and European integration.

In theory, at least, Macronism still represents the best pro-European alternative to atavistic nationalism. But to avert a populist revolution this May, Macron and other leaders will have to reach beyond their own close circle of cosmopolitan elites. Otherwise, they will have fallen into the Euroskeptics' trap.

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