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## *Are There (In Fact) No Fact Checkers Concerned With Facts?*

Unfortunately, the United States has become a fact-checking nation, which is problematic because the only real fact-checker is you, requiring that you be willing to question your own assumptions. Consequently, any worthwhile discussion (at a dinner party if that ever happens again), requires that a questioner, skeptical of big government, in response to an (across the table) recitation of the 'preferred narrative', speak up and make the reciter uncomfortable by questioning assumptions that they do not themselves question. Speaking up is imperative because, when, for the sake of keeping the peace, questions go unasked, in an environment where the Bill of Rights is under attack by a collective, socialism, unasked questions will fester until they erupt.

As this rift widens, to the point where some we could name, with trust in Biden and Harris, or a belief in Big Pharma, are willing to be the first to take an untested, made for profit, without liability, vaccine, while you instead worry that we may soon see civil war over the Supreme Court or the state legislators giving the election to Trump (a possibility unknown to the left, not even discussed under the heading of fiction on CNN), or, that Biden gets in and 100 million Americans do not accept the election as valid because they are convinced the democrats won this election fraudulently. Given those parameters, how do we chart a course of civil discussion at dinner, with what are best described as old friends?

The answer is, with great difficulty. First off, if you remain quiet until you need to defend yourself only when absolutely necessary, you have already lost. An understanding of combat sports identifies only a few who can fight off the back foot—success is more likely with an advance. If you find my fight simile too aggressive, think again—this republic is in a fight for its existential life, and if you don't accept collectivism, your chance of survival is under threat. But for now we are yet in the talking stage, though for how long is uncertain. So here are my thoughts on how to conduct oneself, when in the company of the uncurious and uniformed—who hold back not at all from expressing their opinions.

Require original sources. If the discussion is about what went on in Atlanta with the vote count after everyone had gone home for the night, accept no commen-

taries about it. There is direct video from the counting room, and anyone who has an opinion about what happened there but has not viewed the footage is concerned with proffering a 'preferred narrative' rather than getting into the weeds of what happened. Accepting only facts will, of course, bring accusations of 'know it all', but don't allow that. This is about not having enough concern or trust to look into something for yourself. Keeping the discussion to original sources and justifiable facts will likely cause some consternation between the salad and meat course, but it is imperative we talk facts, without commentary, no matter that the NYT says there was 'no' fraud in its headline (there is seldom an election with no fraud). The 'preferred narrators' want to access fact-checkers? Fine. But first—who funds the checkers, and with that funding can they be a disinterested party?

The only economic or political talks that matter are those in which we each are willing to question our own assumptions, and any accusation that those of us who question political and economical assumptions as our practice, go around 'thinking we know better than everyone', needs to be unmasked. Those who do the study and the research to better understand politics and economics, are to be complimented for—not accused of.

Attacking the person you are talking to, effectively ends discussion. So you can't let that happen to you and you don't do it to someone else (that doesn't mean you won't). But, unfortunately, through questioning assumptions, it will become evident that many you have known for decades are no longer your friends. They are someone you still care about, but they are not your friends—because, beyond anything else we are going to need friends who come at life with a healthy skepticism. And, sadly, in what we are getting ready to live through, those who go along unquestioningly, will be those who will give support to elite leaders (for the good of the nation), to cut-off the Bill of Rights as it pertains to you.

It can't happen here, right? I'm watching "A French Village", on Prime. The Germans have invaded France, and Jews are dismissed from jobs having to do with anything more than menial labor. What is the concern from the Jews? Without a job, *where will they live?* It does not enter their mind, '*if they will live*'.

Questioning political dictates, hopefully, in a way that those around the table can see something in what you ask, is our best hope. When, in dialogue, you insist on substantiated facts, it changes the discussion. Not at first, but over time. Once ground-rules are accepted: that a discussion cannot be had around *belief* because belief is always true and unquestioned. That a discussion can be around opinions because opinions are those things that can be tested by time or facts. Economic discussion needs to address actual cost-benefit analysis, while political discussion needs to find agreement on human rights, using accurate similes as our paths forward, that create analogies as our bridges to the future.

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