

Mea Culpa

*Dr. Arthur Solomon**

A few months ago, when discussing the political scene with friends and family members, I was accused of being devoid of principles. One comment hit me like a blow to the solar plexus delivered by a heavyweight boxing champion.

The stinging comment, made by a lawyer, no less, was that that I was principled-less because I am a PR practitioner, whose assignments included working for some of the most notorious entities and individuals in our society, and worse, on political campaigns.

Prior to my jumping the fence to the PR business, which is known far and wide to only represent clients that have no ulterior motive, unlike the lawyer who attacked me, I was a reporter and editor on several New York City newspapers. Thus, I was also accused of fostering slanted reporting and editing. "Fake news creator," I was often called.

Over the years, I have been accused of being pro-Republican and anti-Republican; pro- Democrat and anti-Democrat; pro-civil rights and anti-civil rights; pro- Obama and anti-Obama and pro-Trump and anti-Trump.

Unfortunately, since Trump commenced his campaign for president, every discussion invariably turns to politics. And my beliefs are often the target.

So, I apologize to those who find fault in my not being a down the line Republican or Democrat or socialist Democrat, who does not agree with every comment made by pressure groups that others agree with.

In order to clarify my views, I am writing a column (which I'll hand out at every subsequent family and friends

gathering) to clarify my political, social, business and other positions that might arise). I'll do it in a unique way, using news stories which everyone in our business and allied communications fields should know, and then adding, in italics, my own opinions.

- **Trump keeps saying that the media is the enemy of the people.** (*I've always believed that the media was the enemy of PR people.*)
- **Fox News dropped its "Fair & Balanced" slogan.** (*By doing so, Fox News is now the most straight forward disseminator of news, (unlike MSNBC, which would have been my favorite if it existed during my college socialist-like days.)*)
- **Trump's claim of "fake news."** (For years, the socialist media have been accusing the president of doing things he denies. (*Everyone knows that the media has a leftist agenda. Why should I believe them over the president, who unlike the media that attacks him, said he has no financial motive.*).
- **The National Enquirer has been slammed by the leftist press for killing stories critical of Trump.** (Not exactly breaking news: Every day, at every news organization, editors routinely kill stories that they think has no news value, even though PR people disagree.)
- **President Trump denies allegations in "A Higher Loyalty: Truth, Lies, and Leadership," former FBI director James Comey's book.** (*I stand with Trump. Why should I believe the allegations against a president of the U.S made by a disgruntled fired employee?*)
- **In a surprising reversal of his earlier position, Trump said he is considering rejoining the Trans-Pacific Partnership.** (*Reversing a formerly held position is a necessary aspect of prudent leadership.*)
- **Trump has been criticized for pardoning Scooter Libby, the former Cheney aide, who was convicted of lying to**

the F.B.I. (No matter what the president does, the deck is stacked against him. Civil libertarians criticize him for watching the cable TV shows of his choice. Now, he's being criticized by the haters for showing compassion.)

- **Trump changes his mind about why he fired FBI director James Comey.** (Flexibility is necessary for good leadership. As Niccolò Machiavelli said in "The Prince:" "The promise given was a necessity of the past: the word broken is a necessity of the present.")
- **Former Fed prosecutor and NYC Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, who joined the Trump lawyer's team, first gained fame for prosecuting prominent mob leaders in the 1980s. Former FBI director James Comey, in his book "A Higher Loyalty: Truth, Lies, and Leadership," said some of his interactions with Trump reminded him of his earlier career as a prosecutor against the mob. (My choice to play Trump in the film – Vladimir Putin, who also plays Trump's love interest.)**
- **News reports said that Trump yells while watching TV. (To me, that's a sign of intelligent sanity from a stable genius.)**
- **During the 2016 election one of Trumps talking points was that if Clinton was elected there would be four years of Congressional investigations. (I'm glad Trump was elected. The way things are going we might only have three years of investigations.)**
- **On her May 3 "Deadline: White House" TV program, Nicolle Wallace thanked a guest for dumbing down the facts of a story. (Proving she certainly knows her audience.)**
- **NBC News broke a story that Chief of Staff John Kelly called Trump an idiot. (When Rex Tillerson was Secretary of State it was reported that he called Trump a moron. The big unknown is what Melania called the president when the Stormy Daniels story broke.) If you want to know if being called an idiot is worse than being called a moron, ask my wife. She uses both words**

interchangeable when speaking to me.

- **President Trump said he didn't attend the White House Correspondents Dinner because he didn't enjoy being a target of jokes by those who oppose him.** (From personal experience, I know that men's hair gets thinner as they age, but I never knew that their skin also gets thinner.)
- **Former White House press secretary Sean Spicer said Michelle Wolf's comic routine was "a disgrace."** (Perhaps he thought it wasn't as funny as his routine when he insisted that the crowd at Trump's inauguration was the greatest ever.)
- **During the days when I worked with political columnists, one publication invited me as their guest to the White House Correspondents Dinner.** (That was in the days when the comic's routine was so clean that ordering a dirty martini was off limits.)
- **Some members of the White House staff walked out during Michelle Wolf's routine.** (Perhaps they were upset that someone could write material that's funnier than Trump's serious comments.)
- **White House staffer Mercedes Schlapp walked out during Michelle Wolf's performance and tweeted, "Completely appalled by the so called and twisted comedian at the #WHCA dinner."** Her husband, Matt Schlapp chairman of the American Conservative Union, tweeted, "My wife @mercedeschlapp and I walked out early from the White House Correspondent's Dinner. Enough of elites mocking all of us." (Calling a stand-up comic an elite was the funniest joke of the night.)
- **The New York Mets are allowing hard liquor commercials on their telecasts.** (The way the Mets have played the last few seasons, their fans don't need any encouragement to drink.)
- **The New York Times ran a lengthy article about "A.I. Reporters."** (That's not new to P.R. people. Many feel that human reporters have had artificial intelligence

for years.)

- **Major coverage resulted after it was discovered that Melania Trump sponsored her parents for U.S. citizenship under the same program that the president denounced as “chain migration.”** (A source at the White House told me that the only reason Trump tried to stop the “chain migration” program was because he thought it could solve his in-law problem.)
- **Rudy Giuliani made headlines by saying “the truth isn’t truth.”** (Try using that logic with your wife when being caught having an affair.)
- **Headlines said that Trump paid hush money to kill negative stories.** (And I always thought money talks.)
- **USA TODAY headlined a story, “Trump had ‘Informal’ chat with Putin at summit dinner’.** (To discuss political asylum plans?)
- **A Wall Street Journal page one blurb read, “The Senate approved a bill changing sentencing guidelines for federal prisons.** (The legislating was pushed by Jared Kushner. For the benefit of him and family members?)
- **On January 30, one day after his intelligence chiefs publicly contradicted him on national security matters, Trump tweeted, “Perhaps Intelligence should go back to school.”** (But Not to Trump University, I suggest.)
- **2018 Proved that the TV pundits were correct in saying that now that Roger Ailes is gone, Fox News would be more balanced and less inflammatory in its programming.** (If you believe that you’ve been April Fooled.)

Given the current political situation, I’d feel remiss not to mention what Will Rogers said: “The trouble with practical jokes is that very often they get elected.”

And let’s give credit where credit is due. To Ivanka and Jared for their moderating influence on the first dad and dad-in-law.

Of course, the biggest April Fool’s Day joke of this year or

past years has nothing to do with my mea culpa. It's when members of Congress who squeaked by to win an election than egotistically speak for all Americans by saying, "Americans want."

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(Writer's Note: Those of you who have read my essays before might notice that my byline on this column is "Dr. Arthur Solomon." That's because I have decided to add the PhD I earned from Trump University on April Fool's Day.)





About the Author: Arthur Solomon, a former journalist, was a senior VP/senior counselor at Burson-Marsteller, and was responsible for restructuring, managing and playing key roles in some of the most significant national and international sports and non-sports programs. He also traveled internationally as a media adviser to high-ranking government officials. He now is a frequent contributor to public relations publications, consults on public relations projects and is on the Seoul Peace Prize nominating committee. He can be reached at [arthursolomon4pr \(at\) juno.com](mailto:arthursolomon4pr@juno.com)