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Half Brained Slogans

In the land of the brainless the half brained will rule.

In the land of the brainless the half brained will rule. If this arrangement seems straightforward, that's because it is. It is also an arrangement that comes with a notable quality. The half brained know their reign will be short in a land where most are intelligent. This is why the half brained among us: the politicians, press, and professors—many of whom personify the qualities of used car salesmen—communicate by way of slogans.

Two of today's most popular slogans are: (1) The earth is too hot; (2) Russia hacked the United States 2016 presidential election. Neither slogan provides a shred of viable information. And if we accept either of them uncritically, the half brained will glean confirmation of what they already suspect: *It may be impossible to fool all of the people all of the time, but when armed with a few good slogans, you can fool all of the brainless forever.*

Let's consider each slogan in turn.

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The earth is too hot.

What is the correct temperature of the earth? How old is the earth? Has the earth been hotter than it is today? Has the earth been colder than it is today? Has the temperature of the earth ever been considered too cold? What are the advantages, if any, if the earth cools? What are the advantages, if any, if the earth warms? Is it possible to accurately predict the temperature of the earth?

Russia hacked the United States 2016 presidential election.

What *exactly* does “hacked” mean? Were any of the votes cast in the United States 2016 presidential election changed? Was any information about the United States 2016 presidential candidates changed? If you voted in the United States 2016 presidential election, what, if any, information about the candidates you *did not* vote for should have been unknown?

Which do you suppose the half brained among us would rather face, those with or without the ability to ask and accurately answer questions like the ones listed above? What kind of future can we expect when the success of our politicians, press, and professors is best served by those without the ability to ask and accurately answer questions like the ones listed above?

And what is there to say about those who do not ask and accurately answer questions like the ones listed above, even though they are capable of doing so? Are these folks too busy to pay attention, too wealthy to care, or too complicit to change? Perhaps these folks regard sloganeering as a necessary evil, something like Brussels sprouts are to good health. So what if they leave an off taste and foul odor behind. Politicians, the press, and professors are members of our ingrained institutions, and our nation would not be viable were it not for its ingrained institutions. Right? Wrong.

If, for instance, you believe the titled functionaries of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, or the public editor of your preferred paper, or the Dean of Leisure Studies at your nearby university, exist and labor for the good of the people they serve, then the half brained are pleased, for you have embraced an unfounded and dangerous proposition.

America is in a transitional state, growing closer, bit by bit, to the behavior of a well trained dog. We know enough to respond to a number of keywords, (and what is a slogan really, but a series of keywords designed to trigger an automatic adherence to this or that cause.) We speak on command. We sit, play fetch, and roll over. And if we get a whiff of some trouble, we look with hopeful eyes to our politicians, press, and professors who show us our own tails, which we chase with enthusiasm.

This document available at:

<http://www.mcmanna.com/halfbrainedslogans/>

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