

CHAPTER 3

In The Crosshairs

“When one side only of a story is heard and often repeated, the human mind becomes impressed with it insensibly.”¹

Freedom and liberty, life and God-given rights, free markets and ownership, religious freedom, and a free press — these things have always been the ideals of America, and these things have always been in the crosshairs. The Barbary Pirates, radical Islam, King George III, communism, socialism, fascism — the list could go on. As they say, “Freedom is not free,” and complete “safety” means no liberty. Those who seek power and control could never reach their ambitious goal so long as these things are in place, and when they all exist in one nation, their goal becomes no more than a pipe dream. A nation like that would be a blessing for the world.

America: “Whatever America hopes to bring to pass in the world must first come to pass in the heart of America.”²

There is such a great divide in America; then again, it seems as though there has always been a divide, even if just a slight divide in our ideas and opinions and beliefs, since America’s inception. If not, then all men would have been treated equally from the start of America’s founding. In fact, the very concept of race is non-existent in the U.S. Constitution. Our Declaration of Independence does, however, claim “that all men are created equal.” As I’ve correctly heard it stated, “our founding principles are colorblind”³ — they are religiously blind too in the sense that America allows the freedom of worship no matter your religion.

Even so, there is such a great divide in America. I mean, as Sun Tzu states, “The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting.”⁴ And the best way to accomplish this is to get your enemy to fight themselves. Turn your enemy against each other through economic, social, and class systems; through gender, race, and political ideologies; through comparison; and by redefining social and universal concepts like tolerance, charity, and love. Make your enemy see themselves not as unified in their heritage, not as unified in self-evident values, not as unified in rights, but so far as materialistic possessions and skin-deep.

Former American President Dwight D. Eisenhower might have been on to something astute when, in 1955, when speaking at the Annual Washington Conference of the Advertising Council, he said, “Today there is a great ideological struggle going on in the world. One side upholds what it calls the materialistic dialectic. Denying the existence of spiritual values, it maintains that man responds only to materialistic influences and consequently he is nothing. He is an educated animal and is useful only as he serves the ambitions — desires — of a ruling clique; though they try to make this finer-sounding than that, because they say their dictatorship is that of

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the proletariat, meaning that they rule in the people's name — for the people. Now, on our side, we recognize right away that man is not merely an animal, that his life and his ambitions have at the bottom a foundation of spiritual values.”⁵

America has always been in the crosshairs of certain ideologies and belief systems that, from the beginning, knew we were inspired by the Bible and a nation whose stance would be for life, liberty, individual freedom, and prosperity — a very abstract concept of the world, in that time, which most were against, and strangely many, even in America, still are against today.

America's history is a convoluted one, especially if one only bases their understanding and gained knowledge on what has been redacted and altered by the very powers in charge of the land's government and dictated as the common and only source of proper

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and standard educational learning and news as the “be all and end all” and the only need-to-know truth of history's past. But what about if we looked at the very lives of our ancestors, those who lived before, during, and briefly after that most challenging and sacrificial time that birthed this great nation? And what

about if we read their very writings for ourselves? If we took the time to research what they said, what they

wrote, how they lived, and if we set aside our own bias, closed-minded opinions, and “enlightened” judgmental attitudes, could we, maybe, open any blackout curtains behind our eyes and see a light, make an attempt to understand a reality of the past, and see things from a new perspective? It is never an easy thing to do, but I think that we can. I think that we must. I think that Eisenhower was correct when he said, “For history does not long entrust the care of freedom to the weak or the timid.”⁶ And our ancestors did not fight a major war, sacrificing everything — their homes, land, wealth, families, and very lives — as weak or timid men; and, to me, it was their strength and boldness that helped in their noble fight for liberty and freedom. “Hard times create strong men. Strong men create good times. Good times create weak men. And, weak men create hard times.”⁷ So, let us not remain weak or timid; let us not be the weak who create the hard times for the next generation; let us not remain ignorant of our past. As Martin Luther King, Jr. said, “Nothing in all the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity.”⁸

Wait? That sounds harsh. But is it, really? We all fall into those categories of sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity in some areas throughout life. We could never fully know or understand everything in all areas. But we also, if we feel it is important to us, do not have to remain in ignorance either. That means

we are all in the same boat, just feeling the impact of different waves of information. “It takes considerable knowledge just to realize the extent of your own ignorance.”⁹ I think it takes courage, too, to set aside pride, selfish ambitions, and judgmental opinions to admit a lack of knowledge (which is all ignorance means — a lack of knowledge or information) and to seek further truth.

I believe you and I are courageous, strong, and bold. And with that, let us continue this journey of gathering much-needed and important information together.