

# What readers are saying about us:

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## Dear John letters

**Brian McLaughlin** I normally read John Risley's commentaries with great appreciation for his diverse business perspective. I'm surprised that he could reveal such initial hope and appreciation for a minimalist simpleton like Donald J. Trump. In the book *Voices of Democracy*, Bernard Muchland's conversation with Elmer Johnson, a former head executive at General Motors (who oversaw the legal, operating and public affairs staffs between 1983 and 1988) reveals some discerning things about a corporate mentality guided on the principal that only "the almighty dollar makes the world go around." Their conversation centered on the prevailing question: Is democracy compatible with capitalism? Johnson pointed out that when a society depends primarily on either the market, or legal authoritarianism (or any amalgamation of both) for creating and sustaining a passable ethic, then that society is in a serious state of reckless decline.

So I'd like to (respectfully) present a compounded devil's advocacy to Risley's corporate devil's advocate perspective. I advocate the merits of including political philosophy and a broader historiographic perspective into any policy debate or post-modern market precepts of evaluating the faltering Trump presidency. A liability with the tunnel vision (mathematical profit and loss pragmatism) with which too many a CEO too narrowly monitors the democratic dialectic is that it short-changes our evolution towards greater societal progression of a sustainable (organic) deliberative democracy. Let's not be blindsided about the dangers of Donald Trump's populist appeal and neglect to see the hazards inherent in Trump's vision of "sovereign states" of substandard 21st Century 'fragile democracies' polluted with the same entropic Zeitgeist of early 20th Century European experiments with corporate statism (fascism). To offer an acute historical example

with Trump's "drain the swamp" appeal to past minimalistic popular idols: Adolf Hitler's Third Reich was the embodiment of the 'failed corporate state.' We should all hope Trump's administration never achieves that catastrophic level of democratic and free-market failure!

## Did you know... We post calls for award nominations, story ideas and interview subjects on social media. Join the conversation: follow us on Twitter; like us on Facebook.

**Jim Taggart** What you misread, John, was Donald Trump's lack of suitability for being President of the United States. He doesn't possess the character, maturity, and integrity to inhabit the White House. His lack of understanding of geo-political issues is shocking. And he's a flunky businessman to boot. His only true competency is hosting reality TV shows. Knowing that Trump would be a disaster as a president from the start was a no-brainer.

[facebook]

### Risley has it wrong

**Sally Anne** Trump is terrific. He uses social media and works around the corrupted mainstream media to get his message out. It's fairly astute of him. He's also pro-oil and gas. Canada would benefit from a Trump style leader who puts his nation first, not the global village that Justin lives in.

[twitter]

### #BigThink buzz

**@LynnHammondNL** Great conversations about #Innovation #Growth & #Prosperity in NL

**@SpinningDoc** honoured to represent @TeamBrokenEarth at @AtlanticBus #BigThink this morning

**@Terry\_Hussey** Great ideas from @LisaBrowneNL at @AtlanticBus on how innovation is about more than technology. Social innovations needed badly in NL

**@DonMillsCRA** Enjoyed the opportunity to present @AtlanticBus #BigThink session today. We need to address the structural problem in the economy to prosper.

**@UWHalifax** This morning, @sara\_napier participated in #BigThink discussion about growth/prosperity and how we can achieve it.

**@MandyRennehan** Spending the morning exploring ways to grow the Atlantic economy #BigThink

**@Ufredericton** Glad to be a part of the Big Think forum designed to create discussion about growth & prosperity in Atlantic provinces #NBProud

**@Innovation\_PEI** Pleased to help sponsor Atlantic Business Big Think roundtable discussions at @Confed-Centre #PEI #BigThink



**@ConfederationMA** It was a pleasure attending 1st #BigThink @ConfedCentre this morning hosted by @AtlanticBus @ABM\_Editor

### We ♥ U!

**@bbbsc** Thank you to @AtlanticBus for your support of our #ImagineBBBS campaign as a media sponsor! imaginebbbs.ca

**@CPAnewbrunswick** GREAT article in @AtlanticBus featuring @KPMG\_Canada's @Candace\_Sears, CPA, CA #CPAprod

### About that #SmallBiz edition...

**@Fton\_Chamber** Hey @Fton\_Chamber members—great reminders from @AtlanticBus for SMEs on growing your business!

**@pryan2112** Article in @AtlanticBus highlighting the work @CUAbanking is doing with businesses like our friends at @NorthBrewing

**@cfibns** Check out @AtlanticBus mag's #smallbiz edition. Insightful

commentary on region's #entrepreneurs and true champions

**@KBRSAtlantic** "You don't need to know all the answers learn the right questions to ask" Ask a Director via @AtlanticBus #Governance

[email]

**Editor's column blows**

**An educated user** You need to do your homework about marijuana. Alcohol is far more debilitating—even with one drink you feel the effects. And people who abuse alcohol often go to work the next day. They may not be intoxicated, but they can still be very sick and hungover. There are no lingering side effects from marijuana and it's non-addictive.

There are more positive medicinal effects from using marijuana than any other natural substance. You can actually use it and not get high. CBD (a concentrated marijuana extract with powerful medicinal properties without the typical "high" associated with marijuana) is amazing for pain, inflammation and seizures. I suffer from severe migraines. There is no cure and none of the conventional drugs work for me. Until now. I have very few migraines now that I use marijuana. It's a real relief. I sleep better. I'm happier. I'm fit and I eat well. What's wrong with that?

Using marijuana has never killed anyone. It's actually impossible to overdose on it. As for the risk about possible intoxication from second-hand marijuana smoke inhalation, that's not likely. Ever been to a concert where people are smoking? Did you get high? I never have.

One thing people should know about cannabis is that it stays in your system for months. So you can test positive but not be high at all. All of those companies that have mandatory drug testing in the workplace have actually pushed people to used cocaine because it flushes out of your system more quickly—and you can see how that's

working out. People should be free to use when not working. Going to work the next day you will test positive but you're not intoxicated or high. So why should people lose their jobs for smoking marijuana when not working?

A final word of advice for the government: Don't over-tax marijuana like you've done with cigarettes and everything else, or you'll see the continuation of the black market.

**The Devil's Advocate strikes again**

**R. David Boles** First of all, I must say how much I've enjoyed previous editions of *Atlantic Business Magazine*. I was pleasantly surprised by the progressive nature of the articles with its focus on entrepreneurs and their positive impact on their communities and the people they employ. The articles were not all about profit margins, wealth and shareholder success. However, I was extremely disappointed by John Risley's support for the regressive economic "reforms" proposed by the Trump administration that would only benefit the "one-percenters" in the United States. The fact that Mr. Risley was "encouraged" by the installation of reactionary and elitist figures such as Betsy DeVos, and is in favour of "Trumpcare" that would leave millions of Americans without health insurance, is troubling. Mr. Risley's unbridled support for the corporatist agenda of power, mega profits and privilege is particularly ironic considering this issue of *Atlantic Business* focuses on small businesses, many of which value community and average working people. I, for one, don't share Risley's vision of "tremendous opportunity" for the very rich. It leaves the rest of us far behind.

FEEDBACK

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