

Common, like it is

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Said the Commander in Chief upon enthronization: "... *we will begin the ... revolution of **common sense**. It's all about **common sense**.*"

Yet, it would appear that in the common rhetoric the idiom "*common sense*" is used exclusively as a convenient substitute whenever logical, factual, irrefutable explanations cannot be produced by those who believe that, like Adam, Science was in Them Infused.

For instance, both the Big-Endians (who abode by the Decree of the Emperor of Blefuscu that all boiled eggs must be broken on the larger end), and the Small-Endians (who abode by the Decree of the Emperor of Lilliput that all boiled eggs must be broken on the smaller end), would have invoked "*common sense*" as their principal, if not sole, piece of justification.

They would have added that the chief reason for their undivided trust in the Wisdom of their respective Sovereign was that "*he tells it like it is*".

The above propositions being quite contradictory would thus indicate that "*common sense*" cannot be a synonym for universal sound judgment, insight, or judiciousness, and that the idiom "*he tells it like it is*" would be rendered better by "*he tells it like I think it is*".

In his Philosophical Dictionary of 1765, Voltaire wrote that:

"Common sense ... signifies only good sense - plain, straightforward reasoning - the first notion of ordinary things - a medium between dullness and intellect. To say "that man has no common sense" is a grave insult; while the expression "that man has common sense" is also an insult; it would imply that he

was not quite stupid, but that he wanted intellect. But what is the meaning of common sense, if it be not sense? Men, when they invented this term, supposed that nothing entered the mind except by the senses; otherwise would they have used the word "sense" to signify the result of the common faculty of reason?"

Thus, "*common sense*" can only mean common unsophisticated feeling, as opposed to noble understanding.

In modern parlance, not only is the phrase "*common sense*" invoked exclusively as a cheap substitute for facts and logic, but also it appears to be an exact antonym for "*outstanding intellect*".

Men of outstanding intellect, such as Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, Ptolemy, Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, Newton, Tycho Brahe, Archimedes, Roger Bacon, Darwin, or Einstein were exhibiting anything but "*common sense*".

"*Common sense*" was however the standard of their legions of censors and of the commonly nonsensical majority of those who did all they could to silence them.