

In Terrible Times, An Urgent Call for Calm!



By Steven Yates

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Now we go nuclear. IC war going to new levels. Just got an EM fm senior IC friend, it began: "He will die in jail." —[John Schindler, Former NSA](#)

We're in terrible times, and they're likely to get worse before they get better.

It's true: lawfare against Donald Trump has gone to the federal level. Last Friday the 37-count felony indictment in the Mar-a-Lago classified documents situation was unsealed. He will appear in a Miami federal courtroom at 3 pm on Tuesday. He stands accused of mishandling classified documents and then obstructing efforts by federal officials to obtain them. The best spin on the situation is that Trump got extremely careless with materials powerful people care about (one of them involving plans for an attack on Iran!).

He forgot one of the most basic rules of political realism, that *outsiders* have to live by a different set of rules than *insiders*. Unlike insiders, outsiders will pay for every mistake they make, or ever made. That's not "fair," but that's probably how *all* governmental systems work. *Outsiders must keep their noses clean at all times*. Trump has not done that. This, by the way, explains the double-standard: both Hillary Clinton and even Joe Biden, when he was Senator, mishandled classified documents without consequence. This was not even

Trump's greatest error: [underestimating what he was up against when he ran for the presidency in 2015-16](#) and told us during his inauguration: "*Americanism, not globalism!*"

Now I'm reading of calls for violence coming from Trump supporters on social media and online forums. Many use screennames so they can say things that would likely be actionable if they used their real names in public. Commenters on a site called The Donald (no, I'm not linking to it) have called for mass executions. A poster calling him(her?) self Belac186 said, "The only way this country ever becomes anything like the Constitution says this country should be is if thousands of traitorous rats are publicly executed." Another commenter, "DogFaceKilla," concurred: "I got some rope somewhere in the garage..." "Heavy_Metal_Patriot" added: "Hans says we can borrow the *flammenwerfer*." This refers to a special flamethrower used on the battlefield by German soldiers in the Second World War.

Visible figures seem to be encouraging revolt. Andy Biggs (R-Ariz.) stated, "Eye for an eye!" Kimberly Guilfoyle, Eric Trump's fiancée, warned, "Retribution is coming!" in all caps.

Kari Lake elaborated:

"I have a message tonight for Merrick Garland and Jack Smith and Joe Biden – and the guys back there in the fake news media, you should listen up as well, this one is for you. If you want to get to President Trump, you are going to have go through me, and you are going to have to go through 75 million Americans just like me. And I'm going to tell you, most of us are card-carrying members of the NRA.... That's not a threat, that's a public service announcement."

For that speech she received a standing ovation.

I sincerely deplore this, must repudiate it, and urge readers not to participate in this sort of thing!

Yes, we're in terrible times. For the first time in U.S. history, a former president is being prosecuted at the federal level. He has already been tried and convicted in controlled corporate media. The U.S. is becoming more of a banana republic with each passing day.

Protesting is one thing. Protests can be conducted peacefully. The vast majority of Trump supporters have done this up until now. Of the thousands of people who went to Washington on January

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only a handful of those became violent. [Dan Bongino: [They Are Putting Trump's Life in Danger](#)]

So how else can I say it? Allowing ourselves, especially those on the scene, to give in to the temptation to become violent, is the absolute *last* thing we should do!

Yes, yes, I know... Leftist groups became violent and destructive during the George Floyd riots the year before. They did hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of damage in over a dozen American cities. Most got a pass, while a teenage kid who used deadly force to defend himself from leftist thugs – Kyle Rittenhouse – found himself facing murder charges. Reportage happens as it does because the globalist-leftist alliance controlled corporate media and much of government even when Trump was in the White House. Now, with the Bidenistas in charge, they control that much more.

We need to find ways of fighting them without becoming them!

Some in corporate media will claim that Trump has said nothing to discourage the present mood.

That is absolutely false!

On June 11, Trump stated, **“We need strength at this point, and everyone’s afraid to do anything, they’re afraid to talk, and they have to go out and they have to protest peacefully.”**

My prediction is that *not a single corporate media outlet will repeat that*. I found it on [an “independent” site](#).

Trump elaborated: **“Look, our country has to protest. We have plenty to protest, we’ve lost everything. We’ve lost our borders, we’ve lost our election integrity, we’ve lost respect all over the world.”**

He could not have been clearer.

Is the Establishment *hoping* for violence? Are leftists in corporate media quietly waiting for some hothead to fire off a weapon so they can further demonize the entire population of Trump supporters as violent “right-wing extremists”?

I don’t know. I’m not inside their heads. But it wouldn’t surprise me any. So let me just say it:

There’s a fair chance that Trump supporters becoming violent is exactly what the Establishment wants!

If just a handful lose it and are filmed (leftists do have smartphones), corporate media will descend on them like a pack of wolves, and a massive Bidenista crackdown in the name of “protecting the rule of law” may well ensue.

This will be ongoing. It is not limited to Trump’s arraignment. This will continue, since a trial will come *and especially if Trump is convicted*.

The 75 million Kari Lake warned about aren't going to become violent, of course. Not even a small fraction of them are probably violence-prone. But just one tenth of one percent of that figure amounts to 75,000 people.

That's a small army! It's not a nothing!

But unless they are *really well organized* and *really well trained*, then unless they want to fight in guerrilla fashion, they would not be able to stand up against the U.S. Army, which would definitely be called up to fight what would be branded another "insurrection against democracy," Posse Comitatus be damned.

To think those in power wouldn't do this is naïve, and so to revolt openly at this point is just plain crazy!

Those who have not figured this out, need to do so and issue calls for calm of their own, on the scene. Because otherwise their leaders' most likely fate is being convicted of seditious conspiracy and handed lengthy prison sentences, like Stewart Rhodes, founder of Oath Keepers.

Right now, the "illiberal" right is being portrayed as primed for the next dictatorship, the next Adolf Hitler, when given our present circumstances and actual money-and-power arrangements, tyranny is far more likely to come from the hard left.

So what should we do instead, in the face of those who now incarcerates political prisoners, go after the opposing party's leading candidate in an upcoming election, and are increasingly intolerant of criticism?

Isn't that the question?

The first thing is *just breathe*. Get outside and get some sun, if you can. Go for a walk. Get away from current events long enough to clear out your head.

We're all having to do it. (I turned off the news this entire past weekend.)

Then come back and assess the situation with a cooler demeanor, without angry posts on social media, and in its full context, historically.

The first thing to note is that [Trump's favorability rating has actually gone up, not down, since last Thursday.](#)

That is because millions of people have figured out what is really going on.

That is driving the Establishment nuts. Their biggest fear, after all, is another Trump presidency. Has been since 2020.

As much as they are into thought control, *they cannot control our thoughts unless we let them.*

So what I would do next is take my cue from the ancient Stoic philosophers, who also lived in and suffered tumultuous times – and it might be worth noting that the Romans were far more brutal with their opponents than the Bidenistas are likely to be.

What did the Stoic philosopher Epictetus counsel?

Paraphrasing him: ***focus on what you can control; set aside what you cannot control.*** He also said, *"No man is free who is not a master of himself."*

None of us has any control over this indictment, what corporate media says or does not say about it, and what ensues on the inside. But we can control our thoughts, we can control our emotions, and we can refuse to fall into traps.

Seneca, another Stoic philosopher who had one of the worst jobs I can imagine – advisor-counselor to the psychopathic Nero – once stated:

“Most powerful is he who has himself in his own power.”

He also counseled at length:

“I wish to instruct you in how passions get started, develop, and reach the point of exasperation. The first movement is involuntary, and it is like a preparation, or a threat, by the passion; the second movement is voluntary and controllable, and it consists in thinking that vengeance is necessary, because I have been offended, or that someone has to be punished, because he has offended; the third movement is arrogant, it does not want vengeance because it is necessary, but because it wants it, it has already annihilated reason. We cannot avoid the first impulse by reason, in the same way as we cannot avoid ... physical reactions ... [like] yawning when others yawn, or closing our eyes when someone suddenly points a finger at them: these things cannot be overcome by reason; perhaps they may be attenuated by habit, or a constant attention. But the second movement, the one that springs from deliberation, is also countered by deliberation.”

I recommend reading that at least three times this morning. Seneca could be speaking to us today, right now.

Finally, there's Marcus Aurelius, the Stoic Emperor who well understood his enormous responsibility and became one of the few rulers in all of history not to be completely drunk on the power rulership over an Empire affords. He observed:

“You have power over your mind – not over outside events.”

As eloquent as it gets. (And I bet you thought philosophy was difficult at best and unintelligible at worse. No, only its academic permutation, which is mostly *anti*-philosophy but that's another article.)

Marcus asked further:

“Does what's happened keep you from acting with justice,

generosity, self-control, sanity, prudence, honesty, humility, straightforwardness, and all other qualities that allow a person's nature to fulfill itself?"

No? In that case:

"If you are distressed by anything external, the pain is not due to the thing itself, but to your estimate of it; and this you have the power to revoke at any moment."

Applying to our present moment:

We who supported Trump over Hillary in 2016 and again over the Bidenistas in 2020 both can and must continue to exercise the control we normally maintain, even if some among us have become keyboard commandos and visible figures have gotten unnervingly hotheaded.

What is the *worst* that can happen?

The worst thing I can think of is what Paul Craig Roberts quoted in the article I linked to near the outset: coming from John Schindler of the NSA who *stated openly* that the deep state had declared "nuclear war" against Trump, that he would be imprisoned, that he would "[die in jail](#)." (See lead quote).

Now for the broader perspective.

The system that will have put him there has also doomed itself.

History testifies abundantly that *Empires rise, and Empires fall*.

The most common comparison between what is happening to the U.S. is, of course, to Rome. Rome fell for a combination of reasons: it overextended itself, it debauched its currency, it allowed the sexuality genie out of the bottle, and it sunk into internal corruption, driving its best minds either elsewhere, outside its reach, or into the quietude or

seclusion of what amounted to an internal exile of nonparticipation.

But Rome is hardly the only Empire this fate has befallen. If we study history and learn something from it, we see that some variant on this theme has happened to all of them.

It is unfortunate that the serious study of history, like philosophy, has been largely destroyed by academic pretenders. But there's nothing to be done about that now except rebuild from the outside (some are doing this!). A lesson to be learned, and is usually learned the hard way:

Centralization does not work! That one sentence should be tattooed inside the eyelids of every aspirant to political authority everywhere!

Work here means: *brings benefits to the people*. For obviously centralization brings great power and wealth to those who rise to the top and become its elites, and in our time have contributed to the seamless integration of corporate (Wall Street, Silicon Valley, Big Pharma, etc.) and governmental (CIA, FBI, DOJ, the military-security-surveillance complex) power that constitutes the deep state.

Those of us who want benefits for the people are arguing for radical decentralization: a radical *devolution* of power from the center, and for what Catholic social philosophers call *subsidiarity*: social problems should be tackled at the most local level possible, and only addressed by powers higher up if they've been shown to be intractable at the local level.

The U.S. is an Empire in decline. Recognition of the U.S.'s status as an Empire that became such after the Second World War, via agreements such as Bretton Woods, the Petrodollar to come, around 750 military bases in dozens of foreign countries, etc., is increasingly gaining traction among real scholars.

Decline, however, has become palpable among everyone who is paying attention. We have a man with progressive dementia in the White House, whose cannot speak extemporaneously without lapsing into word salad.

Each Congress is more dysfunctional than its predecessor.

The military's top brass sponsors drag shows and its top commander bemoans not understanding "white rage."

Professors are arguing over how many "genders" there are, and you can be fired from your job for stating that there are two and only two biological sexes. Those who protest the participation of biological men in women's sports risk being physically assaulted in public.

All these, and more, are signs of decline.

The military's capacity to respond to, e.g., secession efforts by individual states or regions might well be living on borrowed time. My point has been: at present, it could do so, in spades!

The survival of the government emanating from the Asylum on the Potomac is not the end-all, be-all of the future. What might matter is how we prepare for whatever is to come, which may include *opportunities at responsible self-governance we've yet to see*.

This is the reason I have advocated various forms of separation: psychological and spiritual, economic, and political to the greatest extent possible. ([1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#), [6](#).)

Separate quietly, in other words. Don't do it on social media.

If Trump either cannot run, or runs and does not win (is not (s)elected) – or what would be worse, mounts a third-party run that throws the election to the Democrats hands down, this would not be the end of the known universe.

It would not even be the end of Trumpism, understand that as larger than one man.

Trump has been a hero to many, but he has not been and will not be our savior. There is in fact *no salvation in politics, or in political economy*. There is but *one* Savior of this world. His Kingdom is not of this world. His name is Jesus Christ.

Christ spoke from the wooden cross to which He had been cruelly nailed, both hands and feet, after having been beaten and scourged to within an inch of His life by the Romans (after being betrayed by some of His own):

“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!”

The powers we are up against today know not what they do either, however well they seem to be doing it. Let us do more to think and act under these realizations, and realize the calm they will bring about, the more we meditate on them.

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Steven Yates's latest book ***What Should Philosophy Do? A Theory*** (2021) is available [here](#) and [here](#). His earlier ***Four Cardinal Errors: Reasons for the Decline of the American***

Republic (2011) is available [here](#).

While admittedly the real world can be scary enough, he has also written a novel of cosmic horror. ***The Shadow Over Sarnath*** will be published on October 31, 2023. To learn more, shoot me an email.