

The Insurrectionists Are Themselves Victims — Of Donald Trump's Big Lies

I have no doubt that the men and women who stormed the Capitol on January 6th — which is Epiphany on the Christian calendar — consider themselves patriots who would die for their country.

What would *you* do, dear reader, if you truly believed what they believe — namely, that your candidate actually won in a landslide election but was defrauded of his victory by a vast conspiracy to destroy America, democracy, freedom and everything you hold dear?

Whether or not Donald Trump himself is delusional, he has succeeded, with great help from right-wing radio hosts and Fox News television hosts — not to mention Q-Anon, New America News, Newsmax and the rest of Trump World — in deluding 75 million Americans as well. I don't doubt the intentions of the insurrectionists, given what they believe to be true. It's just sad and disturbing that so many have clung to those lies, and the bravest of them have gone to war "for their country," only to have died, been injured, lost their jobs, and may be going to prison, when their real crime was that they believed what the worst president in American history was telling them.

For deluding millions of his fellow citizens, Donald Trump is the one who should be punished, and should certainly not be allowed to run for president in 2024, which is why we should hope that he will be convicted by the Senate after he is impeached by the House of Representatives.

Hopefully, January 6th was an epiphany of another sort for many Trump supporters, but they have shown themselves to have that essential characteristic of cult members — that is, the inability to be swayed by facts, reason and logic, or to have the experience of an epiphany.

When capitalized, Epiphany refers to

Talking Turkey



By Jim Smith

the date when the three wisemen (or Magi) arrived to celebrate the birth of Jesus. When not capitalized, epiphany is defined by Webster as "an intuitive grasp of reality through something (such as an event) usually simple or striking; an illuminating discovery, realization, or disclosure; a revealing scene or moment."

From what we hear on the news, the insurrectionists think they lost the battle but not the war on January 6th, and are ready to do battle again in the coming days and weeks and actually believe that with enough bloodshed they can rescue America from Joe Biden, Kamala Harris and the radical leftists who fraudulently tried to steal the presidency from the best president America has ever had — Donald J. Trump.

We should not underestimate the will- ingness of these "true believers" to go to war for Donald Trump again and again until they achieve victory. Indeed, one of the hand-made signs seen on January 6th said, "I'll Die for Trump."

How does one contain such a movement? The de-platforming of Trump by Twitter, Facebook, et. al., and the silencing of Parler by Amazon Web Services, only plays into the narrative that Big Tech is biased against conservatives. That could serve simply to reinforce the need for military-style action against the government. This could get really bad.

It has been reported that Walmart and other big donors have announced they will no longer contribute to the Congressmen and Senators who challenged the Electoral College votes on January 6th. That may influence politicians, but we need to balance that against the death threats which Mike Pence, Lindsay Graham and other long-time sycophants of Trump got when they turned against him or failed to do his

bidding. I'm sure there are many Republicans who no longer fear being "primaried" by Donald Trump as much as they fear being killed (along with their wives and children) by Trump supporters.

We can be comforted but only a little by the fact that President Trump's job approval sank this week to its historic low of 33%, but we should be more concerned that after recent events one-third of Americans still believe he's doing a fine job.

In other words, January 6th was an epiphany to some, but not to enough, Americans.

There are going to be many more revelations in the coming months. For starters, there will be hundreds of arrests, trials, convictions and prison sentences for the insurrectionists, including those who organized and incited them. (I find it amusing that Trump would choose Rudy Giuliani to represent him in a Senate trial, given that Giuliani himself incited violence at the same rally on January 6th. Consider it further evidence of how Trump believes his own delusion about his innocence.)

I'm glad that Dominion Voting Systems has filed a \$1.3 billion defamation suit against former Trump campaign lawyer Sidney Powell, because the legal process will give the lie to the claim that the ballot -counting machines were rigged to change Trump votes to Biden votes. (Remember again, however, that cult members are not swayed by facts or logic. To them it will be "fake news.")

In February or March we can expect indictments of Donald Trump and the Trump Organization by the Manhattan D.A. and the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York. Also, Trump's biggest creditor, Deutsche Bank, well known for laundering Russian money, has closed Trump's banking accounts in response to the January 6th insurrection, suggesting that they will not be particularly agreeable with Trump when his millions

of dollars of loans come due in the coming months and years. Done right, these developments will do a lot to disprove Trump's original deception—that he is a successful and brilliant businessman. Of course, Trump's remaining sycophants will spin a conspiracy theory to explain how he is being wrongly portrayed and victimized by whoever, and most of Trump supporters will believe it, because they'll believe anything that he and his sycophants say.

In other words, we can't expect the spell cast by Donald Trump over a third of Americans to unravel anytime soon. Wish the Republic well, and let's hope that the intelligence services and law enforcement agencies work together better in the future than they did leading up to January 6th's rally and insurrection.

That's the macro problem. There's also a micro problem — how do you and I reconcile with our friends and family who, to put it honestly, lost their minds under the spell of a self-obsessed, psychopathic president who probably sucked them in by his shared racist mentality? I don't have an easy answer for that, but I wish I did, because Rita and I have a few of them.

Although it makes perfect sense that Trump does not want to attend Joe Biden's inauguration and that Biden is happy with that, it does raise a concern for me — and likely for the Secret Service — that this makes the inaugural setting a possible target for those Trump supporters who remain intent on completing their mission to kill off Trump's enemies, including his newest enemy, Mike Pence, who will be on that stage.

One scenario I painted now seems less likely — that Trump would resign early enough for president Pence to pardon him.

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