**Tyranny**

**“America’s leadership has switched sides in the war, said The Kyiv Independent (Ukraine) in an editorial. The warning signs were there for weeks, with President Donald Trump and Vice President JD Vance echoing propaganda straight from the mouth of Vladimir Putin, claiming that Ukraine was to blame for Russia’s 2022 invasion. *(The Week magazine, March 14, 2025)***

**Truth has a despotic character. It is therefore hated by tyrants, who rightly fear the competition of a coercive force they cannot monopolize. *(Hannah Arendt)***

**There are many who do not know they are fascists but will find out when the time comes. *(Ernest Hemingway)***

**How tyranny can coexist with normalcy: “We are witnessing the birth of a dual state,” said Aziz Huq. Through its radical reinterpretation of federal law and appointment of officials more loyal to MAGA than the Constitution, the Trump administration is cleaving off “a domain in which the law does not apply.” Migrants are deprived of due process and shipped to foreign prisons, while Jan. 6 rioters are given pardons and praise. Ordinary spending responsibilities become tools to punish foes, while allies are rewarded with generous government contracts. It’s worth remembering that the Nazis began with a two-track system: a “capitalist economy governed by stable laws” for most Germans, and a “domain of lawlessness and state violence” for Jews and other supposed internal enemies. Of course, a dual state need not end in genocide – look at Vladimir Putin’s Russia. And it need not spark mass opposition, since the lawless domain may not touch the lives of most citizens, who can “turn away while dissidents and scapegoats lose their political liberty.” That doesn’t mean favored citizens are safe. History shows that once the lawless state is built, “it can swallow anyone.” *(The Week magazine, April 11, 2025)***

**Keepsakes, after White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt rejected a suggestion by French lawmaker Raphael Glucksmann that the U.S. mark its slide into autocracy by returning the Statue of Liberty to France. “Absolutely not,” said Leavitt. “It’s only because of the United States of America that the French are not speaking German right now.” *(The Week magazine, March 28, 2025)***

**Of all tyrannies, a tyranny sincerely exercised for the good of the victims may be the most oppressive. *(C. S. Lewis)***

**The man dies in all who keep silent in the face of tyranny. *(Wole Soylinka, Nobel laureate)***

***\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\**Russian President Vladimir Putin claimed victory this week in a predetermined election that will grant the country’s longest standing leader since Stalin another six years in power. The election board said he took 87 percent of the vote. Outside observers, though, estimated that millions of votes may have been faked, and Moscow-based election monitor Golos recorded more than 1,400 instances of ballot stuffing and other violations. Putin’s name appeared on the ballot alongside three others, all relative unknowns handpicked by the Kremlin. The few true opposition candidates were barred from running, and Alexei Navalny, Putin’s most powerfoe foe, died in a Siberian prison last month. Still, thousands of people went to the polls to vote against Putin in a noontime flash protest. In power either as a prime minister or president since 1999, Putin changed the constitution so he can run again after his new term expires in 2030. *(The Week magazine, March 29, 2024)***

**There is no such thing as a former KGB agent. *(Vladimir Putin)***

***\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\**Totalitarianism in power invariably replaces all first-rate talents, regardless of their sympathies, with those crackpots and fools whose lack of intelligence and creativity is still the best guarantee of their loyalty. *(Hannah Arendt)***

**We’re seeing the tyranny of the minority in action, said Jessica Winter in The New Yorker. Four of the five justices ready to overturn Roe were appointed by presidents who lost the popular vote, and confirmed by a Senate constructed to give disproportionate power to sparsely populated, rural red-states. *(The Week magazine, May 13, 2022)***

**Last November, during a symposium at Mount Vernon on democracy, John Kelly, the retired Marine Corps general who served as Donald’s Trump’s second chief of staff, spoke about George Washington’s historic accomplishments – his leadership and victory in the Revolutionary War, his vision of what an American president should be. And then Kelly offered a simple, three-word summary of Washington’s contribution to the nation he liberated. “He went home,” Kelly said. At Mount Vernon, he was making a clear point: People who are mad for power are a mortal threat to democracy. They may hold different titles – even President – but at heart they are tyrants, and all tyrants share the same trait: They never voluntarily cede power. *(Tom Nichols, in The Atlantic magazine, November, 2024 issue, on page 19)***

**The distrust of wit is the beginning of tyranny. *(Edward Abbey, author)***

**Welome to the Putinization of America, comrade!” said Garry Kasparov in The Atlantic. Just a month into his presidency, Donald Trump began “openly embracing Vladimir Putin’s wish list for Ukraine and beyond,” and upending 80 years of foreign policy by aligning the U.S. with Russia and against NATO. Trump’s “personal affinity” for the Russian president has been long apparent, particularly since Putin’s intelligence services “worked full-time to promote Trump” in the 2016 election, with the grateful cooperation of Trump and his campaign. Now Trump’s admiration for Putin has escalated into “full-blown imitation”; threatening to annex Canada and Greenland; punishing disfavored news outlets; and unleashing his own oligarch, Elon Musk, to undertake a Stalinist purge of the federal government so MAGA loyalists have free rein. This all evokes chilling memories of how Putin seized dictatorial authority in early-2000s Russia. Beware, America, your democracy is in danger. *(The Week magazine, March 14, 2025)***

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