

Ferguson Tragedy Marked by Media Manipulators

Against the backdrop of a controversial killing of a black man in St. Louis and seething rage across the United States, a young lawyer stood before a small group of men and delivered a speech that would make him famous.

“If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of freemen, we must live through all time, or die by suicide,” the young man said.

The young man was Abraham Lincoln in the year 1838. The black man was Francis McIntosh, a freedman who had been chained to a tree and burned to death by a white mob. The Civil War wouldn't begin for over two decades, but the 28-year-old Lincoln already recognized one of the warning signs of an unraveling society: disregard for the rule of law.

“I hope I am over wary; but if I am not, there is, even now, something of ill-omen, amongst us,” he continued. “I mean the increasing disregard for law which pervades the country; the growing disposition to substitute the wild and furious passions, in lieu of the sober judgment of Courts; and the worse than savage mobs, for the executive ministers of justice. This disposition is awfully fearful in any community; and that it now exists in ours, though grating to our feelings to admit, it would be a violation of truth, and an insult to our intelligence, to deny. Accounts of outrages committed by mobs, form the every-day news of the times.”

Lincoln was not “over wary.” His concerns would be played out repeatedly until the entire nation exploded into bloody war. Unfortunately, we are again witnessing “something of an ill omen amongst us” as mobs assemble in the St. Louis suburb of Ferguson in successive nights of violence, theft and swelling

unrest.

We are experiencing the attempted destruction of life and liberty in our own heartland. It is all-out rebellion against the rule of law. For years we have seen blatant disregard of laws, from our borders to our very halls of governance. The root of it all is, as Proverbs tells us, "setting aside God's Word, His Law and disregarding His counsel."

At this moment there are evil men who intend to set this nation on fire, burning up forever the greatest national expression of freedom's beauty ever witnessed by mortal man. America with all of its ills, failures and need for correction from time to time is still the greatest example of a nation established on the rule of law as revealed in sacred scriptures.

Right now in Ferguson, Missouri, some foolishly zealous people, including preachers and so-called reverends, are encouraging a revolt against the rule of law and accusing those who risk their lives seeking to protect our citizens as though they were targets to be attacked, discredited and destroyed. Many are simply ignorant of the facts, as all of us still are to some degree. But others are intentional provocateurs, manipulating the media and the crowd for their own selfish gain. Still others are agents of evil, stirring up passions to provoke violence, as exemplified by the death chants against Officer Wilson. This is worse than nonsense. It is terrorism at home!

Again, Lincoln recognized this destructive spirit:

"When men take it in their heads today, to hang gamblers, or burn murderers, they should recollect, that, in the confusion usually attending such transactions, they will be as likely to hang or burn someone who is neither a gambler nor a murderer as one who is; and that, acting upon the example they set, the mob of tomorrow, may, and probably will, hang or burn some of

them by the very same mistake," he continued. "And not only so; the innocent, those who have ever set their faces against violations of law in every shape, alike with the guilty, fall victims to the ravages of mob law; and thus it goes on, step by step, till all the walls erected for the defense of the persons and property of individuals, are trodden down, and disregarded.

"But all this even, is not the full extent of the evil. By such examples, by instances of the perpetrators of such acts going unpunished, the lawless in spirit, are encouraged to become lawless in practice; and having been used to no restraint, but dread of punishment, they thus become, absolutely unrestrained. Having ever regarded Government as their deadliest bane, they make a jubilee of the suspension of its operations; and pray for nothing so much, as its total annihilation."

The governor of Missouri has already called for a "vigorous prosecution" of the officer. Not a "vigorous investigation," but a "prosecution." To the man who served 16 years as the state's attorney general, this is a significant distinction. He may be playing to the mob, but he is undermining the very constitution he is entrusted to protect. Politicians towing this line will win friends in the mob, but alienate an even greater number of honest citizens, as Lincoln noted:

"Good men, men who love tranquility, who desire to abide by the laws, and enjoy their benefits, who would gladly spill their blood in the defense of their country; seeing their property destroyed; their families insulted, and their lives endangered; their persons injured; and seeing nothing in prospect that forebodes a change for the better; become tired of, and disgusted with, a Government that offers them no protection; and are not much averse to a change in which they imagine they have nothing to lose.

"Thus, then, by the operation of this mobocratic spirit,

which all must admit, is now abroad in the land, the strongest bulwark of any government, and particularly of those constituted like ours, may effectually be broken down and destroyed."

Lincoln took on, as we must, the enemy within. By our own disregard of the Word, wisdom and counsel of God, we have allowed the enemy of life and freedom to set in motion a tsunami of moral and economic collapse destroying personal responsibility and true freedom. Good men—godly men—must stand up and speak the truth. Pure passion can be misguided and dangerous. We need, as Lincoln pointed out, "general intelligence, sound morality, and in particular, a reverence for the constitution and laws."

I plead with all Christians, all who love God and their neighbors, to come together in peace, calm and unwavering strength to face the enemy for Christ's sake and all who long for and love freedom, or we will watch it vanish from this once great nation and the world. Our nation was founded on biblical principles. To these, we must hold. It is our only hope for, as Lincoln concluded, "upon these let the proud fabric of freedom rest, as the rock of its basis; and as truly as has been said of the only greater institution, 'the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.'"

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