

An Open Letter to Our Kakistocrat Elected Officials

Dear Mayors and Governors,

In his book [*The Best Words*](#), Robert Hartwell Fiske, once editor and publisher of the online [*Vocabula Review*](#), defined kakistocracy (kak-i-Stock-rah-see) as “government by the worst, most unscrupulous, or least qualified citizens.” As one of his examples of usage, he offered this excerpt written by James Russell Lowell in 1876:

“What fills me with doubt and dismay is the degradation of moral tone. Is it or is it not a result of Democracy? Is ours a ‘government of the people by the people for the people,’ or a Kakistocracy rather, for the benefit of knaves at the cost of fools?”

Some of you ladies and gentlemen elected to serve us – and if you don’t know this, many of your constituents do – are kakistocrats. Some of you even fit all three of Fiske’s definitions: “government by the worst, most unscrupulous, or least qualified citizens.”

The first and most fundamental job of elected officials is to protect and defend lives and property. You have failed miserably at this job. Some of you, for instance, ordered nursing homes to accept coronavirus patients, resulting in an enormous number of deaths. What kind of a lunkhead does such a thing? Here you qualify under Fiske’s definition as the “least qualified of citizens.” Pig farmers know you don’t board sick pigs with healthy ones. Why would you do that to human beings?

You devised arbitrary and often ridiculous laws in the face of this virus. You shut down businesses, schools, and churches, and recommended masks and social distancing of six feet, but then allowed and even applauded protests with thousands of

marchers breaking all the rules of quarantine.

You have also failed to protect property. You were elected not to represent a particular political party, but everyone in your state or city. Yet many of you have ordered the police to stand down while mobs rampaged through the streets, attacking innocent bystanders, looting and burning businesses, and leaving entire city blocks looking demolished and war-torn. Did you even verbally condemn the vandalism of these thugs and radicals? Did you offer sympathy to their victims?

In many cases, the answer to these questions is no.

In addition, you have allowed the desecration or toppling of statues, murals, and other public works of art. Some of these honored Confederate generals, politicians, and soldiers, but others that were smashed, spray painted, or ordered removed included memorials to fallen police officers, Christopher Columbus, a Catholic saint, Theodore Roosevelt, Ulysses S. Grant, several abolitionists, and even minor public figures.

The worst thing about your failure to protect *all* these statues? You permitted mob rule. You allowed criminals to destroy public property. You stood back and watched as again and again a statue was pulled down or damaged, and you said nothing. Should the statues of those who fought for the South in the Civil War be removed? Perhaps. But if that's the case, let's put that proposition to a vote, a referendum among the citizenry, instead of allowing this destruction by a mob or by one of you, a tin-pot politician currying favor and votes. Here for you to peruse is the most up-to-date [list](#) of these destroyed memorials I could find. Are you pleased with the results?

What is both ironic and amusing about your many boneheaded, and in some cases, deliberate, actions or neglect is that some of your policies have backfired on you. Because citizens see you as unable or unwilling to protect them, gun sales across

the country have soared in the last few months, rising [higher](#) than at any point since the FBI began its instant background check program in 1998. Here in [Virginia](#), for example, the state where the governor just this last January tried to clamp down on firearms purchases, the sale of guns is up 77 percent compared to last year.

Some of you mayors and governors oppose private academies, charter schools, and homeschooling. Better brace yourselves. Here in Front Royal, I write for the magazine of a large homeschooling company that provides curricula and lesson plans to students in the United States and around the globe. This school's enrollment is 35 percent higher this spring than the best year this institution has ever seen. Come the fall, we may see a tidal wave of students trying to escape your public schools.

Finally, your inept leadership in these crises has roused the ire of many voters. One young woman I know well, who by her own admission once rarely followed politics, is now an ardent reader and watcher of the news, and she is "woke," though not in the way you want. She will be taking your measure come November.

I am a man close to 70 years of age and have followed politics for five decades. Never in all that time have I witnessed so much bumbling, so much feckless and fat-witted leadership as today. All you kakistocrats need to fold up your tents and slink off as quietly as possible into the twilight.

With any luck, the voters will help you make that journey.

Jeff Minick

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