

So This Is What It Has Come To

For years after my wife died and I'd moved into an Asheville apartment with my youngest son, I'd rent a house for a week every summer at the North Carolina shore. My children, their spouses, and a growing platoon of grandchildren all came for a special time, a gathering of the clan. Although circumstances have precluded such a trip these last four years, we plan to resume our annual excursions in the summer of 2021.

Then came the last-minute thought of doing this trip in early November of this year. Nearly all my grandchildren either homeschool or are toddlers, and one of my sons assured us this was a fine time to be at the coast. We had begun making arrangements for the get-together when my daughter pulled out. She had to travel 10 hours from Pennsylvania, and because of school commitments, her husband and 15-year-old son couldn't get away.

Distance was not the problem.

Katharine is a stouthearted young woman who has singlehandedly hauled her tribe from Scranton to Milwaukee, but this time she said no. "I don't want to be that far from home in the middle of this presidential election," she said. "I won't have Mike or Michael with me, I'll have all the other kids, and I'm afraid of what might happen to us."

A wise choice, perhaps, and one the rest of us may follow as well.

Think hard about what my daughter's decision says about the state of our country. When we cancel vacations for fear of being unable to return home on account of violence and rioting due to a presidential election, we are rapidly becoming little more than a banana republic.

How did Americans descend to such an abysmal point?

We hear from pundits on the left and the right that we are now more divided from one another than any other time since the Civil War. That may well be the case.

But let's face facts.

Today's street battles and threats of a civil war come not from Republicans, conservatives, or moderate Democrats, but from fanatics and fools on the far left, aided and abetted by some in the media, our government, and our corporations. Several of our state and local governments have allowed these bullies and thugs to run wild in the streets of certain cities this summer, breaking laws and rioting with impunity, often being punished with mere slaps on the wrist.

Likely funded by corporate donations and possibly by foreigners – who else among us could afford to travel from place to place, stay in hotels, and bring along rental vans loaded with signs, brickbats, and Molotov cocktails? – these nihilists brazenly display contempt for our police, our Constitution, and our way of life. Lacing their mindless chants and verbal assaults with variations of the “F-bomb,” they call for the razing of the nation that gives them the right to protest in the first place.

But these aren't protests. Not any more. Nor are they simply riots.

These are threats.

These people have basically declared voters must elect their candidate or they'll burn the system to the ground.

And these lunatic threats come from a tiny minority of our citizens. Read Hannah Bleau's article about [protesters in Portland](#), a city that has witnessed over 100 days of riots, and note how small the numbers of those in the street are.

It's them I blame for the mess we're in.

They and their allies have killed whatever remained of public civility.

They have done their utmost to rip apart our country and apparently will continue to do so.

As a result, this weekend I intend to write an email to my children that has nothing to do with the beach. Instead, I will make the following recommendations:

Begin stocking up on foodstuffs, paper products, and water now. You'll lose nothing by collecting these items, but may find them in short supply come mid-November.

Put together a basic medical kit of over-the-counter painkillers, bandages, and the like. Buy a supply of vitamins for yourselves and your children.

Draw some cash out of the bank.

Have working weapons and ammunition to feed those weapons on hand. Know how to safely and effectively use your firearms.

Fill your vehicles with gasoline before November 3.

Sit down together before Election Day and come up with a plan as to how you will defend and feed yourselves if all hell breaks loose in this country.

On Election Day itself, vote in person for the candidates you have researched and found to be in favor of upholding civility and order.

Again, I never thought we'd come to such a point where an election in this wonderful country could act as a tinderbox to a bonfire. I hope I am dead wrong in my apprehension. I hope the election will take place peacefully, that we will accept the results if they are legitimate, and go on about our

business. I gladly welcome looking like a fool if the election comes off as tranquil, fair, and just.

Will Antifa, Black Lives Matter, and other groups associated with anarchism and Marxism help make it so?

I'm not holding my breath.

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