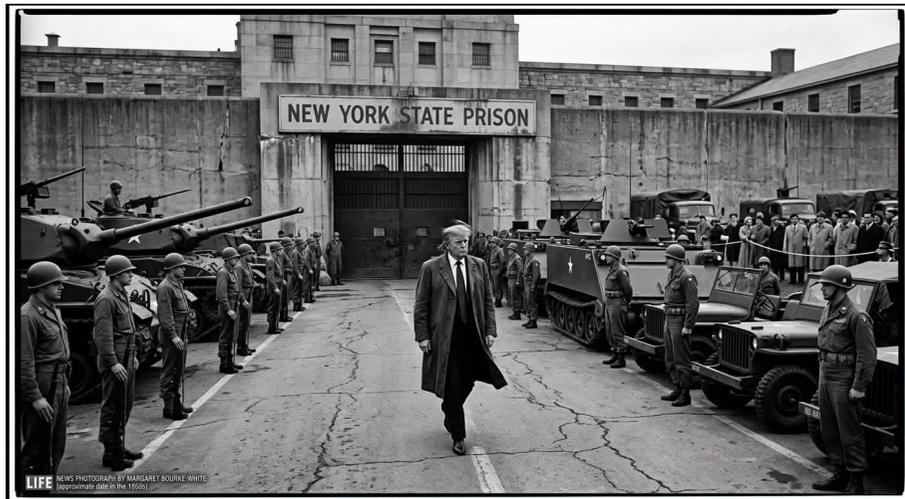


Enough is Enough



No one remembered how it began. Some say that it was over beers after a long day of mandatory DEI training. One of the lieutenant colonels was in favor of a new acronym: EIE for "Enough is enough." When a reporter tracked down the "Four Colonels" he denied ever inventing the acronym. He wasn't officially part of the Provisional Command, either. On the other hand, the Provisional Command wasn't really official.

One day the Provisional Command announced itself. Orders soon followed. There wasn't enough time to react. The word "Provisional" was important. They didn't expect to stick around. They wanted nothing more than to dissolve when they weren't needed. They were patriots, not mutineers.

If successful, the only crime for which there is no punishment is revolution. The four colonels, if four colonels were really behind it, watched as the president-elect watched the election from inside the prison.

"Enough is enough," one of them said. "How can the commander in chief command from prison?" That is when the plan started, the historians would say. They wrote it up as if only four guys over beers had made a fateful decision, a decision that turned out to be very popular in the ranks.

In view of what happened, no one dared call them a junta. None of them wanted that kind of power. All they wanted was to restore the order of things. That a president of the United States could be in jail was impossible, inconceivable.

The authors of the Constitution had never contemplated such a thing. It wasn't natural. It wasn't right. By putting the president in jail, New York had upset the natural order of things. Someone had to put it right. Enough is enough.

The United States Army, unlike the armies of many other countries, has no tradition of coups d'etat, *golpes de estado* or simply seizures of power. But at West Point and Annapolis the students studied military history; they studied how in one country after another a leader was thrown out when the winds of change were made to blow.

In modern times the seeds were sewn when Republican operatives banged on the windows at the Dade County elections office in November of 2000 and stopped the count. Twenty years later there was a demonstration that some called an insurrection on January 6. But if it was an insurrection it was completely disorganized. There were no plotters, no overall plan. Once the demonstrators got inside the Capitol there were no windows to bang on. They too wanted to stop the count, but instead they just roamed the halls, shouting slogans, lacking any kind of leadership.

Leadership is what the military is all about. There is no lack of leadership in the institution. When it comes down to it, isn't the military the ultimate guarantor of the Constitution? If the military couldn't make things right, who would?

And so the Provisional Command was formed. Whether it was the four colonels, the two generals who took over, no one really knew. "Think of us as an ad hoc committee," one of the generals later said. "These committees are formed all the time to solve problems. The Command was nothing institutional--it was a task force. Once the task force fixes the problem, it just fades away. There was no more need for anything else."

And that's pretty much what happened. There was no need for a junta, no need for a new government. The president-elect would take the office he had been elected to. By January 1, the Provisional Command wasn't giving any more orders.

They didn't have to.