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## **Stay Silent and Stay Powerless Against Trump's Tyranny?**



Image by Edrece Stansberry.

*Check out Ralph Nader on the most recent episode of CounterPunch Radio.*

There are reasons why influential or knowledgeable Americans are staying silent as the worsening fascist dictatorship of the Trumpsters and Musketeers gets more entrenched by the day. Most of these reasons are simple cover for cowardice.

Start with the once-powerful Bush family dynasty. They despise Trump as he does them. Rich and comfortable George W. Bush is very proud of his Administration's funding of AIDS medicines saving lives in Africa and elsewhere. Trump, driven by vengeance and megalomania, moved immediately to dismantle this program. Immediate harm commenced to millions of victims in Africa and elsewhere who are reliant on this U.S. assistance (including programs to lessen the health toll on people afflicted by tuberculosis and malaria).

Not a peep from George W. Bush, preoccupied with his landscape painting and perhaps occasional pangs of guilt from his butchery in Iraq. His signal program is going down in

flames and he keeps his mouth shut, as he has largely done since the upstart loudmouth Trump ended the Bush family's power over the Republican Party.

Then there are the Clintons and Obama. They are very rich, and have no political aspirations. Yet, though horrified by what they see Trump doing to the government and its domestic social safety net services they once ruled, mum's the word.

What are these politicians afraid of as they watch the overthrow of our government and the oncoming police state? Trump, after all, was not elected to become a dictator—declaring war on the American people with his firings and smashing of critical “people's programs” that benefit liberals and conservatives, red state and blue state residents alike.

Do they fear being discomfited by Trump/Musk unleashing hate and threats against them, and getting tarred by Trump's tirades and violent incitations? No excuses. Regard for our country must take precedence to help galvanize their own constituencies to resist tyranny and fight for Democracy.

What about Kamala Harris — the hapless loser to Trump in November's presidential election? She must think she has something to say on behalf of the 75 million people who voted for her or against Trump. Silence! She is perfect bait for Trump's intimidation tactics. She is afraid to tangle with Trump despite his declining polls, rising inflation, the falling stock market and anti-people budget slashing which is harming her supporters and Trump voters' economic wellbeing, health and safety.

This phenomenon of going dark is widespread. Regulators and prosecutors who were either fired or quit in advance have not risen to defend their own agencies and departments, if only to elevate the morale of those civil servants remaining behind and under siege.

Why aren't we hearing from Gary Gensler, former head of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), now being dismantled, especially since the SEC is dropping his cases against alleged cryptocurrency crooks?

Why aren't we hearing much more (she wrote one op-ed) from Samantha Power, the former head of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) under Biden, whose life-saving agency is literally being illegally closed down, but for pending court challenges?

Why aren't we hearing from Michael Regan, head of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), under Biden about saboteur Lee Zeldin, Trump's head of EPA, who is now giving green lights to lethal polluters and other environmental destructions?

These and many other former government officials all have their own circles – in some cases, millions of people – who need to hear from them.

They can take some courage of the seven former I.R.S. Commissioners — from Republican and Democratic Administrations — who condemned slicing the I.R.S staff in half and aiding and abetting big time tax evasion by the undertaxed super-rich and giant corporations. I am told that they would be eager to testify, should the Democrats in Congress have the energy to hold *unofficial hearings* as ranking members of the Senate Finance and House Ways and Means Committees.

Banding together is one way of reducing the fear factor. After Trump purged the career military at the Pentagon to put his own “yes men” at the top, five former Secretaries of Defense, who served under both Democratic and Republican presidents, sent a letter to Congress denouncing Trump’s firing of senior military officers and requesting “immediate” House and Senate hearings to “assess the national security implications of Mr. Trump’s dismissals.” Not a chance by the GOP majority there. But they could ask the Democrats to hold UNOFFICIAL HEARINGS as ranking members of the Armed Services Committees!

Illinois Governor JB Pritzker can be one of the prime witnesses at these hearings – he has no fear of speaking his mind against the Trumpsters.

On March 6, 2025, the Washington Bureau Chief of the *New York Times*, Elisabeth Bumiller, put her rare byline on an urgent report titled, “‘People Are Going Silent’: Fearing Retribution, Trump Critics Muzzle Themselves.”

She writes: “The silence grows louder every day. Fired federal workers who are worried about losing their homes ask not to be quoted by name. University presidents [one exception is Wesleyan University President Michael Roth] fearing that millions of dollars in federal funding could disappear are holding their fire. Chief executives alarmed by tariffs that could hurt their businesses are on mute.”

To be sure, government employees and other unions are speaking out and suing in federal court. So are national citizen groups like Public Citizen and the Center for Constitutional Rights, though hampered in alerting large audiences by newspapers like the *Times* rarely reporting their initiatives.

Yes, Ms. Bumiller, pay attention to that aspect of your responsibility. Moreover, the *Times*’ editorial page (op-ed and editorials) are not adequately reflecting the urgency of her reporting. Nor are her reporters covering the informed outspokenness and actions of civic organizations.

Don’t self-censoring people know that they are helping the Trumpian dread, threat and fear machine get worse? Study Germany and Italy in the nineteen thirties.

The Trump/Musk lawless, cruel, arrogant, dictatorial regime is in our White House. Their police state infrastructure is in place. Silence is complicity!

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**Ralph Nader** is a consumer advocate, lawyer and author of *Only the Super-Rich Can Save Us!*