

How Fragile is Civilization and How Thoughtless is Anarchy!
Posted On:December 31, 1969

We in the developed world live in a civilization that would make our ancestors giddy. We have rule of law, participatory government, literacy, property rights and contracts, and live with possessions never dreamed of by the most lavish emperors of the past. But the most important thing that characterizes our civilization is a culture of trust. We trust that we do not have to fear our neighbors, that the market always has food, that there is a system of law enforcement that works quite well, and that rules of the road govern driving. It is no small matter to me that I can smile at strangers and that they smile back. What most Americans don't know is how precious and rare--that heritage is!

I trust my sources: that the daily newspapers will arrive on time, that news magazines and some Television news will provide me with relatively accurate accounts of events, and that this entire system of trust has been our heritage after centuries of struggle to have just this sort of civilization. We have gotten used to it and don't realize how fragile it is.

Not every country in the world is our friend. In dealing with others, from the beginning of our country's history, we have needed diplomats to be stationed in other countries, as others have diplomats stationed here. We depend upon these eyes and ears to provide our government with insights not available at a distance. This is one important leg of intelligence. We all gather it and our enemies (and sometimes our friends) try to pierce each others' communications. This is called spying, but it usually does not involve publishing the information, until now.

When English Queen Elizabeth I sent an ambassador to France the 16th century, he witnessed a nation-wide pogrom launched by the Catholic king against his Protestant Huguenot subjects. It was a massacre. He knew that this anti-Protestant campaign would next be focused on his queen. Knowing that he could not trust to a messenger to alert her, he had to wait until he could tell her about it privately.

Now we have been put in this position again, thanks to the work of a devout anarchist, the Australian Julian Assange, who believes that nobody should have secrets, except for himself and his clandestine cult. Assange trusts nobody and nothing and as an anarchist, only knows how to destroy, not build. He has single-handedly assaulted that very trust at the core of our civilization: that we can talk to each other confidentially without having those confidences not only violated, but published.

The Anarchists really believe that there can be no brave new world of their imaginations until the civilizations of today are taken down. Assange is one kind of anarchist but this movement takes other forms as well, most noteworthy Al Qaeda and other militant Islamists, with their murderous destruction and belief that they will have a perfect (imaginary) Muslim world in the future after destroying this one.

If you want to see what really comes with anarchy, we need only look at Yemen and the Horn of Africa/Somalia being one of the best examples in which anarchists have or are in the process of destroying all semblance of government, law, and order. As once noted, life amidst anarchy is nasty, brutish, and short. Read Philip Kaputo's novel, The Horn of Africa, for a brilliant picture of what life is like without the civilization of trust.

Some futurists have predicted that by mid-century a major cyber war will break out possibly between the United States and China a war fought in space. But nobody thought that the first volley of that war had already been fired and we are going to have to confront the consequences and come up with defenses and remedies. This is not a blow for freedom of the press. It is a blow for destroying that freedom and all the other freedoms.

We can start by extraditing Mr. Assange and locking him up for good.

670 words

Dr. Laina Farhat-Holzman is a historian, lecturer, and writer. You may contact her at Lfarhat102@aol.com or www.globalthink.net