

Earning Their Spurs
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At the annual Al Smith fundraising dinner in New York in October 2019, former secretary of defense, Jim Mattis, joked about his experience in the Trump administration:

"I'm not just an overrated general. I am the greatest, the world's most overrated. I would just tell you too that I'm honored to be considered that by Donald Trump because he also called Meryl Streep an overrated actress. So I guess I'm the Meryl Streep of generals. And frankly that sounds pretty good to me. And you do have to admit that between me and Meryl, at least we've had some victories. I earned my spurs on the battlefield and Donald Trump earned his spurs in a letter from a doctor. I think the only person in the military that Mr. Trump doesn't think is overrated is Colonel Sanders." (Trumpocalypse, page 100)

General Mattis and most of his military counterparts have held their tongues until now, following the norm that the military are not political and take their oath to the Constitution. Trump has assumed that "my generals" (as he called them) and American police in general would support and admire his "tough" rhetoric and opinions.

He actually believed that he could use "his" military as he pleased: to build his ridiculous wall on the Mexican border, carry out actions abroad with no consultation with Congress, and recently, use them to attack peaceful demonstrators in Washington so that he could secure a photo-op showing him before a church, which he does not attend, hoisting a bible, which he does not open to read.

That action was the final straw for a flood of present and former military, diplomats, and defense officials to come out and condemn this unfit, ignorant president.

Former Defense Secretary James Mattis:

"Donald Trump is the first president in my lifetime who does not try to unite the American People---does not even pretend to try. Instead, he tries to divide us. We are witnessing the consequences of three years of this deliberate effort. We are witnessing the consequences of three years without mature leadership."

Retired Admiral Mike Mullen, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

"I have to date been reticent to speak out on issues surrounding President Trump's leadership, but we are at an inflection point, and events of the past few weeks have made it impossible to remain silent. The slide of the United States in illiberalism may well have begun on June 1, 2020. Remember the date. It may well signal the beginning of the end of the American experiment."

Retired four-star Marine General, John Allen: "To even the casual observer, Monday was awful for the United States and its democracy. The president's speech was calculated to project his abject and arbitrary power, but he failed to project any of the higher emotions or leadership desperately needed in every quarter of this nation during this dire moment."

Gail Helt, former CIA analyst: This is what autocrats do. This is what happens in countries before a collapse."

Four former U.S. presidents: All decried systemic racism and injustice. Former president Obama urged mayors to enact policing reforms developed during his administration (cancelled by Trump) and spoke directly to young people of color, telling them "Your lives matter."

Former President Jimmy Carter said: "People of power, privilege, and moral conscience must stand up and say 'no more' to historic and systemic racial inequalities in society."

Former Secretary of State General Colin Powell: "He (Trump) lies all the time." Powell urged voters not to reelect him this fall---saying it's time to make America better for all people, not just a few.

I am so happy that all of these distinguished men have finally found the courage to

call out this lawless, unfit president. But I also note that thousands of women in this country and every other liberal democracy around the world flooded the streets the day after Trump was elected to express outrage and concern about what they expected as a consequence of this election. They knew he would treat the country as he already treated women. They were right.

681 words

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