

The Fate of Tyrants  
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Our news media have a short attention span. Otherwise savvy commentators talk about Trump's future run for president in 2024. A lot can happen in the next three years that they didn't see coming.

Former president Trump today wears a perpetual scowl, bitterly denying that he lost the 2020 election. His life-long practice of blaming his own failures on the cheating of his adversaries isn't working, despite lying about "thousands of fake ballots." But his gullible cult worshippers continue to predict dates when he will be restored to his presidency. As each prediction fizzles, they predict a new date.

Cult hucksters have long made predictions: the end of the world, the return of Jesus, or the arrival of space ships to take the believers to another planet, yet the events fail to materialize. These "prophets" then acknowledge that they got the date wrong, but then predict another date.

Remember the cult of young men who took poison on the date they expected that space aliens would come? They never had a chance to learn that they had been flimflammed.

Demagogues through history have rarely died of old age in bed. It is instructive to follow this pattern. We can start with Nero, Emperor of Rome who played his lute (not a violin) as he watched Rome burn.

As Nero's behavior became more erratic, he believed that he could sing Gaul into submission, his enemies became bolder. The Senate condemned him to death by crucifixion, and his household guard abandoned him. Nero was just 30 years old when he fled Rome and committed suicide.

Hitler, hiding in his bunker as the Red Army invaded, was another delusional monster who was increasingly dependent upon drugs. His "thousand-year reign" ended with a bullet to the head, the suicide he arranged for himself and mistress. Believing one's own lies is not a pattern for success.

Many tyrants through history met their ends when their mental instability became too dangerous even for their inner circles. Stalin was such an example. He was growing obviously more insane, and those in his inner circle feared that they might be next to be wiped out by their boss. They then poisoned him, which not only saved them, but saved Russia from even more horrors than they had already suffered.

Donald Trump has considerable mental problems. His father suffered from Alzheimer's disease and his inner circle feared Trump's increasing instability. He grew more panicked as his election loss materialized. His top general and his Chief of Staff feared that this unstable man might do something unthinkable, such as waging war using nuclear weapons. They were not expecting his attempted coup on January 6, which came close to succeeding.

Trump, no longer in the White House, is "doing a Napoleon," imagining his return in triumph. Napoleon, however, lost his final battle and was permanently exiled, dying soon afterwards.

Predicting that Trump will run for President again in 2024 is short on realism. He is obviously mentally deteriorating, as he continues to obsess that the election be reversed and he be restored to the White House.

At the moment, he appears to be the head of the Republican Party, thanks to the intimidation of his shrinking, but loud "base" that is ready to follow him off a cliff. The number of these deluded followers is shrinking, and at the rate that traditional Republicans are fleeing the party and resigning from office, there will be a weak party with no credible candidates for the 2024 election.

Despite Trump's delusions, his health is not such that he has a long future. In the next three years, some of those Republican stalwarts who are afraid of Trump's power will realize that this emperor is naked and not immortal.

Trump's damage to institutions and truth will take some time to remedy. Our real president (Biden) must repair these institutions and restore faith in facts, not fantasies. Believers in the "big lie" will eventually awaken and once more know they have been deceived. Trumpism cannot long survive Trump himself. Cults need a leader, but this leader is in meltdown.

686 words

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