

The naughty king



A Political Parable

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THE NAUGHTY KING

BY B.T. FESTER

ONCE

upon a time, there was a land that stretched from shore to shore, and was built on the idea that all people had a voice in how prosperity and peace were distributed among the people. The blood of people who died to preserve it won this “right.” The land thrived on this metaphor and in its struggles to establish its authenticity, made the idea rise into the sky like a proud, giant bird.

In the center of this magical land, there was a castle. In the early days, the people could come and go. They were welcome there, because it was their hard efforts that made the house of

the King what it was. People from all over the world marveled at the prosperity and goodness that rose in golden rivers from the blowing wheat fields and burgeoning industry of this great land. Everyone considered this Kingdom the best Kingdom on the globe. Then comes the Naughty King.

It was the custom of the Kingdom that a new King was delivered up to rule the land in cycles. This was because the people believed that their Kings needed to bring to government fresh insights in order for all to flourish. So the people chose who would rule the land, by voting.

In order to fool the people into thinking they were making real choices, the idea of two ideological factions with divergent ideals came

into being. This gave the people the impression that their vote would put in place the “best” philosophies for running their Kingdom. But in the end, all it accomplished was distracting people from the truth...a fact that the Naughty King took full advantage of one day.

The land was prosperous, and the people were happy. The Kingdom flourished. But along with all the other things the people insisted on, was the right to comment about how the land was being governed, and express their dissent when appropriate. This ability to question the rules of the King began to reveal that the industry the land was enjoying was also eroding the safety and prosperity of their freedom. The businesses that were providing the good things the people enjoyed were also exacting a terrible price for their generosity. The

people ignored this for the most part while the target was foreigners. Friends of the Naughty King ruined the foreigner's governments, enslaving them and inserting despotic lackeys to the Naughty King to rule their land. But slowly, the providers of the good things in life began to turn their insatiable hunger on the people of the Kingdom, enslaving them. Their freedoms would have to be sacrificed; among those freedoms the right to complain about the work place and the right to dissent.

INDISPUTABLE RIGHTS

Now when the Kingdom was young it was created from contracts that gave its people indisputable rights. These rights were in effect because the citizens weren't interested in being ruled, they wanted to be self-governing.

So rights were established to make that a fact, supported by checks and balances to keep everyone honest. The sovereignty of the King was managed in checks and balances against the sovereignty of the person.

Built around those founding sentiments was an industrial movement that seemed to take over the Kingdom after a while. The voice of industry became louder than the people, and began to shout them down when they tried to express their will. In order for industry to serve the common folks it said, it would have to be given rights that exceeded the rights of the people. It was unable to do this without help from the King.

The King knew that when people were happy, no one really cared if he was naughty. Industry

said it could keep the people happy but it would need permission to do that, sometimes at the expense of freedom. The King knew that he could only stay in power if the people were happy. He had to make them ignore the naughty things he was doing. So he worked along with the people providing prosperity to the Kingdom to give them room to create more playthings, to placate the people of the Kingdom so much they forgot all about the rights they fought so hard to wrestle into their lives in the early days when the Kingdom was founded.

DIVERSIONARY TOYS

As the Kingdom's industrial giants began to provide diversionary toys for the people they were actually preparing to enslave...they used their trinkets in exchange for people's

freedoms. They made a “Kingdom Within a Kingdom” where the people who worked there had no rights.

The freedom to exchange information was diluted. The freedom to express dissent was diluted. The “Kingdom Within a Kingdom” eventually swallowed up the country and soon the King was one more boss. Only this boss had the people’s tax money that bought him an army with which he could control the world.

The thing that kept the wealth of the Kingdom flowing was a magical stone that allowed commerce to be transported for many miles, and powered the huge engines of industry as well as enveloping the lives of the people with false security. This meant that the toys the “Kingdom Within the Kingdom” created as

diversions could be dispersed to all the people everywhere, buying them off from all walks of life. That stone resource was very important to the people who ran the “Kingdom Within the Kingdom”. The problem was that the stone was already mined out from the Naughty King’s land, so in order to keep the buying and selling of freedom going, new sources of the stone had to be found.

In lands far away, some of the Kings men found those sources. But they belonged to other nations that for years this Kingdom had manipulated and abused. They had to devise a way to acquire these stones, or the power their “Kingdom Within a Kingdom” held over the people would diminish.

Now the Naughty King knew for years that he

didn't really run the Kingdom even though he had an army. He knew that he could be replaced if the real rulers of the "Kingdom Within the Kingdom" thought the Naughty King wasn't naughty enough for their purposes. So he decided that as long as most people were determined to not recognize that their Kingdom had been taken over by the "Kingdom Within a Kingdom", he would collaborate with the real rulers and use his army and the money given to him by his subjects, and conquer those countries for the stones needed to continue his fleecing of his own people.

GOT TO HAVE THE STONES

In order to do that he would have to come up with a reason why he was taking over those countries that had the stones. So he used

the ploy of painting them as the enemy. The voice of the “Kingdom Within the Kingdom” bombarded the people with pictures and slogans painting the outsiders as a threat. This went on for years. Had the people realized that their right to seek their own answers and question the Naughty King had been completely subverted by the “Kingdom Within the Kingdom”, they would have also realized the real agenda of their two governments in one...one somewhat governed by the original contract that established the Kingdom, the other creating its own ruling document restoring slavery to the land. But the people were focused on their diversions, not waking out of their opulence trance unless those diversions began to dwindle and subside.

They didn't see the Naughty King gathering his

army and preparing to conquer “the evil ones” that happened to be in the way of his stones. Both Kingdoms in unison began waving the Kings banner madly, and pointing to the despot Kings of other lands regaling the people with stories of their evil. But the people weren’t stirred. They had their diversions to attend to. So the Naughty King, frustrated by an unresponsive Kingdom, (slaves don’t usually have the stomach for war) went to the rulers of the subKingdom wondering what to do.

At that gathering the rulers of the “Kingdom Within a Kingdom” said the solution was clear. The world was afraid of attacking this powerful King with unlimited money and an army whose power no one could match. So an attack would have to be staged. But how to do that? The answer was simple. You badger, anger,

oppress, threaten and insult the Kings of the lands where the stones lay, until they want to strike back. Then one day you let them.

The people will break out of their self-preoccupation and call for revenge. It won't matter what the real intent of the invasion would be, nothing else would be important but retaliation for this assault on the Kingdom. This was how the Naughty King would retain the favor of the rulers of the "Kingdom Within a Kingdom", and coincidentally, keep his own Kingdom strong but still under his thumb. If the people knew a bunch of them were to be sacrificed in order for the Naughty King to be in control of those stones they would surely balk. So the Naughty King would not tell them, and suppress any inquiry into the question with the admonishment that "we're at war."

Just keep the toys coming and there will be no meaningful dissent, and no one will complain until it's too late.

WHO WILL BE THE TARGET?

But who would we choose to be this target of the evil foreigners. The rulers of the subKingdom said “why not some of us?” The drudges who work in our slave operations get plenty from us; they live off the energy from the stones too. Let's make them pay for the affluence they enjoy.

But the Naughty King disagreed. We need to let it be seen that our army was attacked too. That way no one will blame us for rising up and destroying those who attacked us. Everyone agreed that both should be sacrificed. But let's also make sure none of our chiefs are

lost. None of the leadership should die; eventually they might revolt if they think they're expendable too. But the little people are used to being slaves and used to being expendable, trading their humanity for a pay check every day. We can afford to lose some of them. They all agreed.

Days passed and the war talk mounted. Sabers rattled, plans were drawn up. Threats were hurled across the ocean at the "enemy"; stories were dispersed about the evil things the enemy perpetrated against innocent people. All the while spies of the Naughty King were tracking the movements of the "attackers," even as they landed on the shores of the Kingdom ready to preempt the advertised assault of the Naughty King. Every day the Naughty King's spies not involved in the deal told him about the

advancements of the enemy and were troubled when the King merely walked about his gardens apparently unconcerned. The King's spies became more adamant, they could almost predict where the enemy would strike. But still the Naughty King seemed distant...readying for a vacation...not a war.

THE ENEMY MAKES THEIR MOVE

Then one day the enemy made its move. The market place was attacked and thousands died. The fortress around the castle was breeched and soldiers brutally murdered. No one knew what hit them, but neither did the enemy...all were killed. When the king was told of the massacre he merely continued petting his puppies and drinking his evening wine. Finally he rose up and went to his study to prepare his

war speech. It had been accomplished.

The next morning the Naughty King spoke to the people. He said this dishonorable act would be avenged. He said that the spirit of the people of this great kingdom had been struck a terrible blow that his army would personally revenge. The army was dispatched in record time having been prepared to conquer the enemy months before they attacked. The retribution was swift and terrible. But what was even swifter, was the establishment of the army in places strategic to the securing of the stones preparing a safe corridor from which the “Kingdom within the Kingdom” could provide energy for its industrial needs for many years to come. In the mean time, the people of the conquered countries were courted for awhile, and then abandoned to their own suffering.

The people of the kingdom went through a cycle. At first they were angry, then afraid. The once proud land they lived in was reduced to a mass of paranoia and hatred. People were encouraged to spy on their neighbors. One by one the laws created to protect the rights of the subjects were perverted to subvert them in the name of protecting the kingdom. The Naughty King didn't care. By now he was able to control everything with fear stirring up the population at will, reporting convenient threats to the common safety whenever dissent began to blossom. While it was too soon to stage another attack, he was able to milk the terror of the first one to such a degree that the people were basically caught helplessly entangled in their own fading sense of safety and security. While the Naughty King tried to create the illusion that what he was doing was making them

safe, those who were watching could see little holes being left in the king's hastily shored up protection systems...for the next time he could use the enemy to shape his own rape of the kingdom.

But the rulers of the "Kingdom within a Kingdom" weren't satisfied. The countries they'd taken were not the ones best suited to get the largest amount of stones. So they badgered the king to attack these other countries now. The Naughty King said he'd do that, but there needed to be a diversion that could maybe just cost people their retirement money, not their lives. The rulers of the "Kingdom within a Kingdom" said "no problem". We'll offer up rogue leaders of our own kingdom, divert attention away from the war and get people thinking about their money. As you admonish

the bad men in our kingdom who have robbed the people, they will think you are actually intent on punishing those leaders...which of course you will not...remember where your power comes from. They will not see the army taking over yet another country...in their name...or be concerned about the rights we will take from them to support this war too.

GOOD IDEA

“Good idea” said the Naughty King, and immediately set about to find his victims. The effect was perfect. The people were angry about the way their money had been mismanaged, so angry they didn’t see the army slip off and take over the Kingdoms that gave them total, undisputed access to all the magic stones. All was accomplished as planned.

The Kingdom of the Naughty King was the most powerful Kingdom in the world. But while the people tacitly approved of these conquests, here and there as their affluence dried up to support the “Kingdom within the Kingdom”, the rights they’d given up to capture enemy reserves of the stones, came back to haunt them.

The Naughty King and the rulers of the “Kingdom Within the Kingdom” liked being able to do things without meaningful opposition. Even as the war was declared over, they kept these laws that limited the powers of the people. Protests about a selective distribution of wealth were suppressed; dissent about the escalating violence was quashed. The Naughty King didn’t have to provide the people a comfortable

affluent life style any more, he had the money, he had the army...all was well.

Without the diversions to distract them from their fate, the people grew angry. They wanted to speak now, and become involved in their future. But it was too late. They had become slaves to their own complacency. One day the Naughty King announced that he was declaring a new document by which he would govern. This new document would replace the original one. It was an agreement between the Naughty Kings' Kingdom and the "Kingdom Within a Kingdom." At that moment, all people of either Kingdom virtually became slaves.

SLAVES DON T INNOVATE

Slaves don't innovate, don't challenge the status quo. So both Kingdoms became static

and began to deteriorate into despotism. There came an internal war where the Naughty King was overthrown by the rulers of the “Kingdom Within a Kingdom.” industry now taking what it felt its rightful place had always been...the seat of the sovereign. Sensing a weakness in the armor of the imperialist country all the people who had owned the stones in other countries that were now occupied by the army of the Naughty King (ruled by the “Kingdom Within a Kingdom”) revolted.

Soon, the Kingdom itself was under siege and eventually vanquished by a foreign power exacting its revenge on a bewildered people. The people who had allowed their King to dish out pain and terror indiscriminately, now felt the backlash of the things they had no idea they'd done, and their country and the freedoms

it once held, were lost to them for a while.

But then a small band of patriots, while digging through the debris of their once great fortress castle, found the papers of the original document that formed the early days of their great Kingdom. Slowly they began to teach each other the principles of that document and at the cost of many lives once again reinstated those principles in their ruling body.

The busts and portraits of the Naughty King were defaced and destroyed, all but one. This was erected in a schoolyard to teach the children there, how to identify real enemies of their freedom.

