

Extremism is born of fear

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“The Department of Homeland Security started an effort a year ago this month to address domestic terrorism, white nationalist threats and other acts of homegrown violence,” The New York Times announced in its Sept. 1 edition.

“Today the plan to carry out that new mission remains stalled in a bureaucratic morass.”

Shocker.

The FBI defines extremism as “encouraging, condoning, justifying, or supporting the commission of a violent act to achieve political, ideological, religious, social, or economic goals.”

Pay attention.

“Extremes to the right and to the left of any political dispute are always wrong.” — Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Extremism is born of fear. Fear is based on ignorance. Ignorance is the result of laziness. Laziness derives from complacency.

“Americans will put up with anything provided it doesn't block traffic.” — Dan Rather.

Complacency is the offspring of inertia. Inertia arises from narrow-mindedness. Narrow-mindedness stems from conformity. Conformity springs from comfort.

“The comfort zone is a psychological state in which one feels familiar, safe, at ease, and secure.” — Roy T. Bennett.

Comfort is the enemy of growth. Growth is spurred by necessity. Necessity is the genesis of creativity. Creativity is motivated by boredom.

“Life swings like a pendulum backward and forward between pain and boredom.” — Arthur Schopenhauer. Boredom is the consequence of consistency. Consistency leads to order. Order breeds contempt. Contempt spawns intolerance.

“Intolerance is a greater offense against God than holding a strange or even inconsistent belief.” — Anne Perry.

Intolerance fuels prejudice. Prejudice precipitates polarization. Polarization enhances conflict. Conflict provokes anger.

“Anger is an acid that can do more harm to the vessel in which it is stored than to anything on which it is poured.” — Mark Twain

Anger inflames passion. Passion foments irrationality. Irrationality propels insanity. And insanity gives rise to extremism.

Any questions?

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