

# **HERMIT HERALD**

## **VOL 1 ISSUE 54**

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### **QUOTE FOR THE DAY:**

**“Rioters are a prop for Donald Trump’s re-election.” Ted Wheeler, Mayor of Portland, Oregon.**

### **SEVENTY DAYS AND COUNTING:**

**Our readers may recall from issue 52 that the protestors in Portland refer to Wheeler as, “Tear Gas Teddy”, as he ordered the Portland police to use tear gas against violent protestors. In fairness to the mayor, the question of whether or not to deploy tear gas is not like the difficult to answer question, “Which came first, the chicken or the egg?” The answer is based on the facts that have played out in city after city- the protestor violence starts and then the tear gas is deployed- not the reverse. When the police couldn’t**

**adequately defend the Mark Hatfield Federal Building and Federal troops were sent in, the cry coming from the protestors was, “They’re using tear gas and taking people away in unmarked cars.”**

**The most recent I have read is that Wheeler has now brought in the State Police, but in seventy days nothing has improved. Note also that most of the violent protestors in Portland are white males. I have seen no statistics, but have to wonder how many of these protestors are out of work and how many of them have been collecting state unemployment plus \$600 a week from the Federal Government. You know, pick up your checks by early afternoon so you can make it over to tonight’s action site.**

**From everything I am reading, seeing on television and hearing in conversations, Americans are fed up with these violent protests around the country and, as Wheeler says, “Serving as a prop for Donald Trump’s re-election.” The larger issue in my mind is that these actions are turning people against legitimate BLM objectives. The issues that are**

**brought into our living rooms are a combination of violence and statue smashing – All to what end? A big fat zero. So, BLM leaders, I don't have the answer, but you're losing a lot of goodwill and support.**

**While we're at it let's travel 175 miles north and have a look see at what's happening in Seattle. There, they have also been on the violence march for at least seventy days, including taking over a whole section of the city for several weeks. The violent protestors have a loyal, but probably unintended, friend in the body of the city council, which first, voted to disband the police department and then, in late July, mandated that the police should respond to riots through, "Adjusted Deployment Methods." Just gotta love these gussied up phrases – I prefer ADM. So, what does ADM entail? It bans the use of less lethal tools, including tear gas and pepper spray. Chief of police, Carmen Best, says, "These constraints give officers no ability to safely intercede to preserve property in the midst of violent crime." Yesterday, after another violent Night, Chief Best said, "Enough is enough." Go, Chief!! I feel genuinely sorry for her- what a**

**weak line in the sand, thanks to a city council which has no concept of how to maintain law and order.**

### **RACE FOR THE CURE:**

**Continuing good news about previously reported on, Novavax. 56 volunteers produced a high level of antibodies against the virus with almost negligible side effects. Their vaccine is now in a massive stage three trial. If shown to be effective, the company can produce 100 million doses by the start of 2021.**

**Doctor John Moore, a virologist at Weill-Cornell said the results were the most impressive he had seen to date. Quote, “This is the first one I’m looking at and saying, ‘Yeah, I’d take that.’” Keep that statement in mind a bit further on.**

**Plasma – something we have probably all read about. One of several components everyone’s blood, it can be separated from the blood of recovered CV patients and transfused to very sick patients. Anecdotally, it has been very successful, but the proper protocols call for**

**this to be properly tested, meaning that to have medically approved results you must have a control group who get a placebo and an experimental group that get the plasma. This has become quite a problem because the anecdotal results have been so favorable that very few patients will agree to participate in the official protocols outlined above. They don't want to take the chance that, with a "properly" done study, they might receive the placebo. They just want the plasma - now!**

#### **AN ETHICAL DILEMMA:**

**Recall the above words of Virologist, Dr. John Moore, "This is the first one I'm looking at and, yeah, I'd take that."**

**There is a term, which may have been around for a long time, but I am only recently familiar with it - "Human Challenge Trials." Above, I noted the usual protocol required by the medical community - experimental and control groups. That which has generated so much excitement over the Novavax vaccine is the fact that there was nothing other than an experimental group. 56 monkeys were given**

**the vaccine. Then, all were infected with the live virus and all survived very well. The concept behind the “Human Challenge Trials” is exactly the same.**

**With the normal placebo and experimental group testing, all the volunteers keep up with their normal schedules and they get infected (or not) in the course of their daily lives – a very time consuming process. With the “Human Challenge Trials” (HCT), the results are known in a very short time (around one month). So, on the one hand, pure experimentation, vaccinating human subjects and then infecting them with Covid-19 is viewed as an ethical dilemma of the highest order. HCT is, however, being given more thought. As Dr. Moore says, “Yeah I’d take that.”**

**On the one hand, you have a vaccine that a large number of epidemiologists believe to be very safe. If you have a sufficient number of volunteers, why not proceed? If successful, the time for a vaccine roll out is greatly shortened, saving thousands of lives. If volunteers are sickened, they will have been watched over in the minutest detail and would have the benefit**

**of the latest and fastest care. If I were younger, I'd raise my hand.**

## **UNITED STATES, WE HAVE A PROBLEM:**

**Sort of like the astronauts calling in, "Houston, we have a problem." Remember that one? Scary statistic in today's paper: "Over the past month about 1.9 million Americans have tested positive for the virus. That's more than five times as many in all of Europe, Canada, Japan, South Korea and Australia combined, areas that have more than twice the population of America.**

**Based on interviews with health experts around the world, the NY Times offers a broad based explanation. "First the United States faced longstanding challenges in confronting a major pandemic. It is a large country at the nexus of the global economy, with a tradition of prioritizing individualism over government restrictions..." The article goes on to note that the U.S. has worse medical outcomes in a variety of areas than other developed countries, seeming to bemoan the fact that we don't have medical plans like Denmark and**

**Canada. An equal amount of criticism is levied at the mishandling of the crisis by the Administration, in seeming forgetfulness of the NY Times' eager involvement in the debate back in April about who should have the lead responsibility for countering the virus, Washington, or the Governors of each state. The NY Times was in favor of the Governors and that's who won. Now we're back playing the blame game again. I refer the reader to the Teddy Roosevelt quote in issue 53.**

**IF THE SHOE FITS---:**

**With so many problems in the world, isn't it wonderful that some people can be so insulated and out of touch. Word reaches us that a pair of Michael Jordan's 1985 basketball sneakers just auctioned for \$560,000. It was competitive, 10 bidders from 4 continents. As Sotheby's noted, "Sneaker collecting is truly a global and growing market." Geez!!!**

**Your faithful scribe,**

**PB**

