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EDELMAN TO CUT 390 PEOPLE

Edelman is cutting 390 people, which represents seven percent of its global staff, and ordering pay cuts from five to 20 percent to deal with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, Richard Edelman told a virtual town hall.



Richard Edelman

He called the decision to cut staff “gut wrenching,” especially in the light of his March statement that there would be no job losses due to the pandemic.

That pledge was based on Edelman’s willingness to take the business down to zero profit, but he did not want to get into the red ink column.

Since the firm is now “beyond the threshold of loss-making,” it must shed staff to ensure the long-term health of the business.

The CEO said the firm was on track in February to register two percent growth despite COVID-19 outbreaks in key Asian markets. It was operating on an 11 percent margin in March.

Currently, Edelman is operating at a slight net loss and is using cash reserves to offset slower receivables.

As COVID-19 spread in March, Edelman’s travel, hospitality, automotive and auto business took hits. The ensuing collapse of the global energy business resulted in blows to the rest of the firm.

The firm must now part ways with talented and wonderful colleagues across the network, according to Edelman. “This is not a reflection on them, they are our partners and friends, and parting ways with them has been the most difficult decision in my 23 years leading this firm,” he said.

In addition to severance, the firm will offer career transition services; employee assistance programming for six months including emotional support, financial guidance and counseling; LinkedIn Learning and the firm’s own learning curriculum for six months; and a \$1000 credit for purchase of personal technology.

“For those of you leaving, I am profoundly and deeply sorry,” said Edelman. “The thought of how this affects you and your loved ones has given me many sleepless nights.”

As for the future, Edelman continues to have deep confidence in a strategy premised on earned reimagination and trust.

Given the profound challenges the world faces, Edelman believes there has never been a more important time for a PR firm that can help business fulfill its role in healing our society.

BALLARD PARTNERS DROPS DC

Trump-tied Ballard Partners cut ties with its Government of the District of Columbia client due to the escalating feud between Washington Mayor Muriel Bowser and the president.

That tension rose following the deployment of active-duty US troops to the DC area in the wake of the Black Lives Matter protest.

Bowser, who has marched with the demonstrators, on June 7 called the deployment an “invasion” and demanded the withdrawal of the troops.

Trump attacked the mayor on Twitter May 30, saying she is “always looking for money and help” and falsely charged that Bowser withheld DC police from demonstration.



Muriel Bowser

The president on June 7 said he ordered the National Guard to withdraw from DC now that “everything is under perfect control.”

There are about 5,000 National Guard soldiers in Washington. About 1,200 are members of the DC National Guard.

Brian Ballard, who chaired the Trump Victory fundraising organization in Florida during the 2016 campaign, headed the three-person lobbying team for Washington.

RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION RELEASES PR RFP

The Los Angeles County Employees Retirement Association is seeking proposals from agencies that can provide media and public relations services.

Scope of the work includes analyzing and evaluating existing and anticipated PR issues facing LACERA and its boards; developing proactive messaging that promotes an understanding and appreciation of LACERA’s achievements and furthers the agency’s standing and visibility in the media and among stakeholders; outreach to media and stakeholder groups; preparing media releases, statements, communications and presentations; media monitoring; and providing advice on media and public relations issues.



Proposals are due by July 24 and should be delivered in PDF format via email to srice@lacera.com.

Bidding agencies must also deliver three hard copies of their submissions by July 24 to: LACERA; Attention: Steven P. Rice; Chief Counsel; 300 North Lake Avenue, Suite 620; Pasadena, CA 91101

Questions concerning this RFP should be directed to chief counsel Steven P. Rice, at srice@lacera.com, by July 10.

[Download the RFP \(PDF\)](#)

EDISON PROPERTIES PARKS AT BERLINROSEN

Edison Properties, which provides parking, storage and office space in New York and New Jersey, has hired BerlinRosen to handle PR as the states begin to reopen their economies.

The agency will work to amplify Edison as an industry leader across all areas of its portfolio, including Edison Park-Fast, Manhattan Mini Storage, Ironside Newark, Hippodrome NYC, Workspace Offices, ElevatedNY and The Ludlow.



In addition to supporting communications for the company's businesses as they plan for COVID-19 recovery, BerlinRosen will help Edison launch campaigns, announce lease signings, share development activity and create events.

"BerlinRosen will be a strong addition to our team as we seek to consolidate public relations activities with one partner to help us reach both consumer and business audiences," said Edison Properties VP, marketing Jason Morros.

BerlinRosen's roster of real estate clients also includes SL Green, Silverstein Properties, Brookfield Properties, Boston Seaport and the Wythe Hotel.

REEVEMARK REPS GULFPORT ENERGY

Reevemark advised Gulfport Energy during its 18-month tussle with activist investor Firefly Value Partners, owner of a 13.1 percent stake in the oil and natural gas company.

The firm communicated Gulfport's move to revamp its board of directors, bring in a new management team, align production, operations and cost structure to the current macroeconomic environment and to cut debt.

Reevemark partners Hugh Burns and Paul Caminiti led the Gulfport team that included senior VP, Nicholas Leasure, senior associate Jacqueline Zuhse and associate Justin New.

Firefly on June 2 withdrew its slate of director nominees to Gulfport's board, saying the company has made "significant and positive" changes, including replacing five directors after the 2020 annual meeting, since it launched its campaign.

Sloane & Co's Dan Zacchei and Joe Germani handled Firefly.

SKDKnickerbocker, which is part of Mark Penn's Stagwell Group, acquired Sloane in February.

G&S ALUM ALTHEIDE TAKES TOP PROI SPOT

Jeff Altheide, who recently stepped down as COO of G&S Business Communications, is now global managing director of PROI, the network of independent PR firms. He succeeds Allard van Veen, who led PROI for more than 25 years.

Lansons chair Clare Parsons, who headed PROI's search committee, said Altheide's "proven leadership of a successful partner agency relationship for 10 years at G&S made him an ideal candidate for the role." London-based Parsons is PROI's global chairperson.



Jeff Altheide

PROI, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary, is an organization of 78 PR and communications businesses in 165 cities and 50 countries. They combine for nearly \$1B in annual revenues and employ 7,300 people.

Altheide, who is based in Chicago, worked for nearly 40 years at G&S, which ranks as *O'Dwyer's* No. 19 independent firm with fees last year of \$30.8M

ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT

Red Lorry Yellow Lorry is now global agency of record for **Bynder**, which develops digital asset management technology. The agency will implement a media and influencer relations campaign, as well as organic social media initiatives, to increase awareness of the brand in the U.S., U.K. and France in 2020, planning to add Germany in 2021.

It will support Bynder in the Netherlands through the agency's Convoy network partner MCS PR for region-specific campaigns.

The global PR program will be based in RLYL's Boston office, with its U.K. and Berlin offices also contributing. It will target creative and marketing professionals, positioning the company as the natural choice to bring creative assets to market quickly and facilitate easier team collaboration.

AKA Asia is now managing PR duties for **Facebook** in the Singapore market. The business was previously handled by Weber Shandwick. Details regarding AKA Asia's duties for Facebook have not been released. AKA Asia works with such clients as Bayer, Electrolux, British Council Singapore and Impossible Foods. Facebook has recently introduced shopping platform Facebook Shops and a "Messenger Rooms" feature meant to compete with such platforms as Zoom.

J. Wade Public Relations has been named public relations agency of record for the **Turks and Caicos Islands Tourist Board**. The agency will develop and execute a strategic public relations campaign that will focus on Providenciales, which garners most of the destination's tourism, along with its sister islands, including Grand Turk, North Caicos, Middle Caicos and South Caicos. As part of the campaign, it will invite press and celebrities to visit the destination.

Jenerate PR has been selected as agency of record for both **Code Ninjas** Las Vegas locations—Summerlin and Centennial Hills. Jenerate PR will provide strategic communication services and messaging development to increase awareness of Code Ninjas, its curriculum, summer camp programs and philanthropic partnerships. Code Ninjas teaches kids ages 7-14 to code by building their own video games and robotics in a fun, safe and inspiring environment.

Synergy Hill+Knowlton Strategies has been appointed as the agency of record for the **Singapore Tourism Board's** office in Seoul, South Korea for the seventh consecutive year. Synergy H+K will work with STB Korea on initiatives including media strategy, external communications, content creation and PR event coordination, as well as reinforcing online and social media communications.

Affect has been selected by **The Russell Berrie Foundation** to highlight the organization and its recent emergency grants of more than \$4.48 million to support COVID-19 response efforts in New Jersey and Israel. Affect will work with the foundation to bring attention to the work of its grant recipients and encourage other individuals and charitable foundations to give during the crisis. The Russell Berrie Foundation is a philanthropic organization dedicated to making social investments and supporting innovative ideas to promote continuity and enrichment of Jewish life, advances in medicine, foster religious understanding and pluralism, and supporting vulnerable populations.



The Russell Berrie Foundation
Making A Difference

THE DEATH OF NUANCE

There are many hard lessons for the public relations business coming out of the Covid-19 pandemic and its devastating effects on employment and the economy. But with the death of George Floyd under the boot of a police officer and the public reaction to it, there is even more for us to know.



John Berard

Each lesson will affect our work and the way it is done, but the most significant lesson is the death of nuance.

People working from home will test the limits of a company's culture, but there will be fewer people working at all. Their commitment to finding and doing good work will depend on a balanced partnership with companies.

The economy can revive if consumer spending rebounds, but people are saving money at a rate not seen in more than 40 years. Our willingness to re-engage will depend not just on product, but on company behavior.

Trust will remain an essential element of business success, even though Edelman's Trust Barometer Spring 2020 update puts CEOs at the bottom of pandemic performance. The task will be to give consumers a reason to reassess.

As people have taken to the streets to demand an end to racial injustice, being out there with them or not isn't an intellectual choice driven by a list of pros-and-cons, but a requirement. This is what I mean by the end of nuance.

Corporate communications often gets drawn into battles not of its choosing, but this time is more urgent. It is not enough to balance the need to say something with the danger of diminishing market demand because product value now includes company values.

As the country battles a dug-in virus, a teetering economy and its own historic racial demons, communications professionals should want to actively engage beyond the product specs and performance.

The end of nuance will mean taking a side.

The dark days of union-busting 90 years ago have given us a lyric for the day. They were written in response to the dangers faced by mineworkers in Kentucky, hounded by Sheriff Blair for their efforts to unionize. The title of the song is a question for us now: "Which Side Are You On?"

Which side are you on boys?
Which side are you on?

They say in Harlan County
There are no neutrals there.
You'll either be a union man
Or a thug for J. H. Blair.

"There were no neutrals there," there can be none here.

For an economy based on consumer spending, individual confidence is essential. Right now, consumers are not confident, and we won't be for at least for the next two years. The fear of the pandemic, paired with anger over racial injustice, is feeding an uneasy political election season. What follows will be an anxious start of a new (or continuing) Presidential term that will lead to social progress, or not.

We are and will be focused on life, not lifestyle. We won't aspire as much, and instead, seek to regain our footing. And we won't see (or be moved) by the many shades of gray that are the nuanced palette of public relations as much as we will demand the clarity of black-and-white.

Trust and purpose won't disappear from the playing field, but they will be recast as elements or outcomes of business success, not its raw material.

Neither is authenticity going away. What a company is will remain an essential question, but the value of what a company makes, even as the measure of value extends beyond performance of the product to the behavior of the company—toward customers, employees and partners—will become the point of the spear.

What comes next will diminish fad and celebrity. It will put a premium on consistency and kept promises. It will grant market success to companies whose products meet the needs of anxious customers, eager for value now and the values that will drive what comes next.

John Berard, founder of Credible Context, is a public relations consultant and privacy advocate based in Oregon.

TRUMP BROKE ALL PR RULES AT ST. JOHN'S

There is little doubt that President Trump's June 1 publicity stunt at St. John's Church will go down in the PR record books as one of the most ill-advised, dangerous and troubling moments in modern presidential history.

Negative reaction was swift:

- "Trump may have broken international law with 'unjustified' use of a chemical weapon on protesters," according to Salon.com;
- An MSNBC story claimed, "It was quite possibly the most ridiculous presidential photo-op in the history of presidential photo-ops;"
- A senior defense official resigned;
- Church leaders lambasted the president;
- Tom Friedman stated in the *New York Times* that the bible (a prop) was held upside down;
- John Filo, my former CBS colleague and witness to the Kent State shootings, wondered, wryly, on Facebook whether the president retrieved the Bible from a motel room.

These are not reactions one wants from a publicity stunt.

It reminded me of what I, and many of you, have learned over the years. "Don't do anything stupid." "Don't get anyone hurt." "And never make your client look foolish."

The White House seemed to have botched all of those things in one fell swoop.

Jim Mendenhall, an African-American friend since college, noted that another troubling layer involved the participants, notably the ones missing.

"As I watched that horrible walk Trump made from The White House to the church, I saw no person of color, other than the female Secret Service officer. Where are the voices of black leadership in the administration...total silence!"

Many of us have worked on spectacular stunts. And we've certainly worked on some "doozies," too. The good ones you remember and cherish; the bad ones you want to forget.

Publicity stunts are inherently complicated, with so many "moving parts" and so much that could go wrong. What went wrong with Trump's publicity stunt will be studied by industry observers and in college PR classes for years to come.

The course headline? "If In Doubt, Don't Do It."

Tom Goodman is founder and CEO of Goodman Media International, Inc.



Tom Goodman

NJ POLICE, FIREMEN RETIREMENT SEEKS PR

The Police and Firemen's Retirement System of New Jersey, the public retirement system that handles all administrative functions of the retirement system serving approximately 80,000 active and retired police and firemen in the State of



New Jersey, has issued a Request for Qualifications for agencies specializing in marketing and communications services.

PFRSNJ is seeking a communications specialty firm to assist its Board with public outreach and community involvement as well as assistance on developing its website.

Scope of work calls for professional advertising, public relations, media planning and placement, website development and maintenance work and overall communications strategy for the PFRSNJ program.

Contract terms run for a period of two years.

Proposals are due by 5:00 p.m. (EST) on June 12, and should be delivered to:

Police and Firemen's Retirement System of New Jersey
State of New Jersey
50 West State Street, 9th Floor
Trenton, NJ 08625-0297

Proposals can also be mailed to:

Police and Firemen's Retirement System of New Jersey
State of New Jersey
P.O. Box 297
Trenton, NJ 08625-0297

Bidding agencies should submit one original copy of the proposal (signed in ink), as well as an electronic version (in PDF format) on a USB drive. Proposal envelopes should be marked with "Marketing/Communication Services RFP" on the front.

Questions should be directed to board secretary Lisa Pointer, Lisa.Pointer@treas.nj.gov.

[Download the RFQ \(PDF\)](#)

ROHRBACHER GETS BACK INTO DC GAME

Former California Congressman Dana Rohrabacher has signed on to represent the DC interests of Linear Therapies, a Virginia-based biotech company that is working on a cure for COVID-19.



Dana Rohrabacher

The conservative Republican and avid surfer represented Orange County, CA, for 15 terms until the 2018 Democratic Blue Wave swept him from Congress.

The *Washington Post* profiled Rohrabacher as the "voice of foreign autocrats" and Vladimir Putin's best friend in Congress.

Famously, Rohrabacher arm-wrestled Putin, while he was deputy mayor of St. Petersburg, at a DC bar during the 1990s.

The ex-Congressman, who began his career as a speechwriter for Ronald Reagan, moved to York, ME, earlier this year to focus on screenwriting.

He selected the Pine Tree State as his home due to its "much more traditional lifestyle with its colonial/patriot culture," according to the *Portland Press Herald*.

TRAVEL JOURNOS READY FOR PRESS TRIPS

Travel journalists are ready to get back on their beat, and are surprisingly optimistic about the prospects of a comeback for the travel industry, according to a new survey conducted by Finn Partners.

Almost all (95 percent) of the 300 travel journalists from such international outlets as *Forbes*, *The Telegraph* and *Lonely Planet* polled by Finn said that they are willing to head out on press trips once travel restrictions are lifted.

That willingness has its roots in what those journalists see as demand for travel-related content. While much of that interest is centered on close-to-home travel, that is not the whole story. More than eight out of 10 respondents (83 percent) said they are still looking for international travel content.

Journalists from Asia showed the most interest in international travel destinations, with US and UK-based reporters showing a greater interest in domestic and regional travel.

Overall, destination-centric content ranked high for nearly three-quarters (73 percent) of respondents, and well over half (60 percent) said they would like to stay updated on hotel openings.

Travel to low-density locations is expected to make the quickest rebound, but several other factors are also in high demand. Slightly more than half of respondents (51 percent) said they are looking for information about health and wellness-oriented travel destinations, and 49 percent said that ecotourism and environmentally friendly design were important selling points.

Finn's survey was done in conjunction with its "Future of Travel Journalism" webinar, which featured top international travel media.

Some of the webinar's key takeaways: luxury travel will experience a resurgence (since it is "naturally socially distancing"), stricter standards for cruise lines could restore customer confidence, and strong content will have a greater effect on consumers than deals or discounts.



95%

of journalists are ready for press trips once travel bans are lifted

UN WANTS ENVIRONMENTAL PR SUPPORT

The United Nations Development Programme is seeking an environmental PR consultant to position it as the leading voice in the nature, climate and energy space.

Its nature, climate and energy (NCE) team promotes critical links between environmental sustainability, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and broader efforts to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda and Paris Agreement.

The UNDP's RFP calls for an environment partner to develop and implement targeted, purpose-driven global communications and lobbying campaigns; help guide NCE communications on messaging and best practices; create compelling content; draft press releases, videos, blogs and multimedia stories; and participate in special events.

The consultant will also develop an advocacy program for UNDP's plan to reduce the amount of plastics in the environment.

The UNDP is offering a three-year contract with the work set to begin Sept. 1.

Responses are due June 15 and go to the UN portal at <https://etendering.partneragencies.org>.

[Download RFP \(PDF\)](#)

DONEGAL WANTS TOURISM PR HELP

Donegal Tourism wants to hire a firm to develop an integrated marketing communications campaign to enhance the “Go Visit Donegal brand” for the northwestern county of the Republic of Ireland. The marketing push will pitch Donegal as the perfect “staycation” destination for people in Ireland and Northern Ireland who fall into the categories of “connected families,” “footloose socializers” and “indulgent romantics.”



The RFP notes that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a “huge negative impact on tourism” in Donegal, as well as on the rest of Ireland.

Plans though are underway to reopen the tourism sector in July and August.

Donegal Tourism “is relying on a vibrant and creative marketing campaign that will allow it to push out the season,” according to the RFP.

The one-year contract will start on July 1. There is an option to renew for another six months.

Responses are due June 15 and go to Ireland’s procurement portal at <http://www.etenders.gov.ie>.

[Download RFP \(PDF\)](#)

EX- REP. SWEENEY DRIVES GM’S LOBBYING

John Sweeney, former New York Republican Congressman, is representing General Motors on legislative and regulatory matters in DC.

Elected to Congress in 1998, Sweeney was defeated in 2006 by now-Senator Kirsten Gillibrand in 2006.

Sweeney, a conservative who enjoyed strong support from labor, has close ties to president Trump. He organized the 2016 New York GOP primary for Trump and then went on to lead on-the-ground efforts in Michigan and Wisconsin and serve on the transition team.

Sweeney also represents the interest of Russia’s Vnesheconombank, which is a state-controlled investment bank.

His firm received \$187,500 from VEB during the six-month period ended Feb. 29, 2020. President Obama sanctioned VEB in 2014 following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and its annexation of Crimea.

EDELMAN ALUM KRAHE JOINS CROSBY

Crosby Marketing Communications has brought on Julia Krahe as a senior vice president in its Washington, D.C., office. Krahe joins Crosby from Edelman, where she was also a senior vice president, leading teams to create awareness campaigns, outreach programs and digital destinations for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Department of Energy and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. She previously served as communications director for Sen. Amy Klobuchar, Congressman David Wu, and the U.S. House Committee on Education and Labor.



Julia Krahe

At Crosby, Krahe will lead integrated marketing teams to develop national campaigns for the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality and other prominent federal agencies and nonprofit organizations.

SNYDER RETURNS TO TARGET

Shipt, a grocery delivery service owned by Target, has hired Molly Snyder as its first chief communications officer. Snyder was with Target from 2011 to 2016, serving in several senior communications positions. She comes to Shipt from U.S. Bank, where she was senior vice president, public affairs & communications.



Molly Snyder

Before that Snyder was vice president, communications at hospital and health care company Optum.

At Shipt, she has responsibility for external and internal communications for the company, including media relations, executive communications and internal communications across the enterprise.

ARIZONA SEEKS PR FOR DIGITAL LEARNING

Arizona State University is creating a pool of PR firms to provide media relations, social media work and international outreach for its EdPlus program.

EdPlus is a digital and learning model designed to increase student success and reduce the barriers to higher education faced by underserved and underrepresented communities throughout the world.

ASU wants firms that will work on an “as-needed basis” to help position EdPlus as the global leader in the digital space and a differentiator in the online education market.

The school wants to receive proposals by June 15. Angelica.M.Lopez@asu.edu is the contact.

[Download RFP \(PDF\)](#)



JOELE FRANK HANDLES LIBBEY INC. REORG

Joele Frank is handling the Chapter 11 filing of Libbey Inc., one of the world’s largest glass tableware manufacturers, which is blaming COVID-19 for the need to restructure.

The Toledo-based company posted a two percent dip in 2019 sales to \$782M and a \$69M loss vs. an \$8M year-earlier deficit.

CEO Mike Bauer claimed the glass-maker was getting back on track in 2020 before the COVID-19 pandemic delivered a “truly unprecedented” negative and prolonged impact on Libbey, which traces its roots to 1818.

He called bankruptcy “a necessary step to address our liquidity, strengthen our balance sheet and better position Libbey for the future.”

There’s been some improvement in Libbey’s end markets with the gradual lifting of stay-at-home restrictions, according to Bauer. It has restarted production lines in Toledo and Shreveport and reopened US distribution centers.

Libbey brands include Libbey Signature, Master’s Reserve, Crisa, Royal Leerdam, World Tableware, Syracuse China, and Crisal Glass.

Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher has Michael Freitag, Ed Trissel and Tim Ragonese are working media for Libbey.



LIBBEY

COMMENTARY

What White House PR genius thought it is a good idea to mock the religious traditions of the Episcopal and Catholic Church?

Would Jesus support firing tear gas and rubber bullets at peaceful protesters outside the White House to create a path for Donald Trump's stroll to St. John's Episcopal Church on June 1 so he could brandish a Bible high over his head for a photo-op?



Was Team Trump updating Moses' parting of the Red Sea to enable the Israelites to escape captivity in Egypt? Did Trump relish the idea of playing the role of a Bible-waving old-time preacher?

Trump took his little celebratory walk after his fire and brimstone Rose Garden rant in which he declared: "I am your president of law and order, an ally of all peaceful protestors."

That's a huge stretch. The president wasn't much of an ally to the Americans peacefully assembled outside the gates of the White House to protest the killing of George Floyd by a Minneapolis cop. Trump consigliere attorney general Bill Barr ordered the tear gas attack.

The president ended his militaristic speech, saying, "And now I'm going to pay my respects to a very, very special place."

That was news to Mariann Budde, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington, who said the president showed disrespect to her faith and of one of its sacred spaces.

She is "outraged" at Trump for clearing the area with tear gas so he could use St. John's as a prop, and for "holding a Bible, which declares that God is love, while everything he has said and done is to enflame violence."

Trump continued his tour of the city's holy spots on June 2.

With the First Lady, he dropped by the shrine honoring Saint John Paul II, which drew a sharp rebuke from Washington's Archbishop William Gregory.

"I find it baffling and reprehensible that any Catholic facility would allow itself to be so egregiously misused and manipulated in a fashion that violates our religious principles, which call us to defend the rights of all people, even those with whom we might disagree," Gregory said in a statement.

Gregory noted that Pope John Paul II was an ardent defender of the rights and dignity of human beings. "He certainly would not condone the use of tear gas and other deterrents to silence, scatter or intimidate them for a photo opportunity in front of a place of worship and peace," added the Archbishop.

There may be a method to Trump's madness of making religious pilgrimages in a city that is seething with rage over the murder of Floyd and other black men by police officers.

On May 30, following a night of protest outside the White House, Trump tweeted how he personally watched every move by the Secret Service as they controlled the crowd.

The president talked about the Secret Service clamoring to engage the protesters and ready to sic "vicious dogs" and use

"ominous weapons" upon them.

In reality, tough guy Trump was escorted to the White House bunker, which housed Dick Cheney on 9/11.

That's a sign of weakness to Trump's nationalistic base of supporters. Trump's political survival depends on overcoming that scaredy-cat image, even if it means walking the streets of Washington.

New York Times editorial page editor **James Bennet** resigned June 7 following the staff revolt over the publication of Senator Tom Cotton's "Send in the Military" op-ed that advocated for the use of US troops to put down the Black Lives Matter protests. Bennet made the right move.

The Times initially tried to ride out the storm, saying the piece by the Arkansas Republican was published due to a "rushed editorial process."

Echoing Donald Trump's call to "dominate" the protests that have rocked the US in the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd, Cotton called for an "overwhelming show of force to disperse, detain and ultimately deter lawbreakers."

Cotton accused unnamed elites for creating a revolting moral equivalence of rioters and looters to peaceful, law-abiding protesters. Please Senator; tell us who is speaking in defense of "rioters and looters?"

And then he trotted out the tried and true conservative talking point of "Antifa infiltrating protest marches to exploit Floyd for their own anarchic purposes."

The Times' opinion department operates separately from the news division but it shouldn't operate in its own world.

The opinion staff should have been aware that on June 1 their own paper reported that "conservative commentators are asserting with little evidence that Antifa, the far-left antifascism activist movement, coordinated the riots and looting that sprang from the protests."

Bennet, on June 4, defended the decision to go with Cotton's op-ed.

He wrote:

"We published Cotton's argument in part because we've committed to Times readers to provide a debate on important questions like this. It would undermine the integrity and independence of The New York Times if we only published views that editors like me agreed with, and it would betray what I think of as our fundamental purpose — not to tell you what to think, but to help you think for yourself."

That's a very noble and high-minded sentiment. There is one little problem. Bennet hadn't read Cotton's piece before it was published.

One would think that in our explosive times, in which 10K protesting Americans have been arrested for exercising their First Amendment rights, Bennet could have found the time to fact-check Cotton.

The Times' self-inflicted wound provides much grist for Donald Trump and his allies who are desperate for distractions from his mishandling of the COVID-19 pandemic and the outrage in the aftermath of the latest killing of a black person by the police.

—Kevin McCauley