

New York's top law-enforcement officer

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By Darrell Castle

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Hello, this is Darrell Castle with today's Castle Report. This is Friday the 26th day of August in the year of our Lord 2022. I will be talking about the Attorney General of the State of New York, Letitia James. And more specifically about a recent letter she sent to the [Cornerstone Church](#) in Batavia, New York in which she warned and threatened that church regarding an event the church planned to have and did have on August 12-13 of this year called The Re-Awaken America Tour.

The Attorney General and another enemy

The Attorney general's letter concerns me for several reasons, but it is especially concerning because it demonstrates the growing belief that government is all powerful and without restraint. It cannot be restrained by anything especially the bill of rights. She campaigned for office on a plan to use all prosecutorial resources of her office to investigate and prosecute Donald Trump. She has been true to her promise, targeting Trump and his business interests relentlessly until finally Trump invoked his fifth amendment rights and refused to answer any more of her questions.

Her predecessor, Eric Schneiderman, had the same anti Trump attitude taking Trump before the courts of New York and the courts of public opinion. Deciding someone's guilt before that person even takes office might be a little inappropriate but who cares any more about guilt or innocence. The target is either on your side of the political spectrum or he isn't, and if he isn't then he is fair game. Mr. Schneiderman eventually resigned in disgrace amid a multitude of sexual charges.

A New York tradition

Using the office of the Attorney General to prosecute or "get" political enemies seems to be a tradition in New York. Schneiderman's interim continued the same pattern by issuing a press release threatening to take down the entire Trump family. In fact, all the candidates for New York Attorney General in 2018 pledged to use the office to get Trump. Ms. James was particularly aggressive saying that "The president of the United States has to worry about three things: Muller, Cohen, and Tish James."

She won the Democrat primary which in New York is the same as winning the general which she won anyway. She again pledged the immense power of the New York AG's office to the task of getting Trump. Was he guilty of anything? It doesn't matter because he was a political opponent which she disagreed with. Currently, the real law isn't nearly as important as the political position of the prosecutor. If the prosecutor is unable to convict, she can at least make the target's life miserable and that is a victory.

Civil rights violation

Investigating a person without a reasonable suspicion that a crime is being, or has been committed, without any probable cause is a federal civil rights violation. It can serve as the basis for harassment and civil rights lawsuits. Governments and their agencies are tasked with investigating crimes and suspicious activities which may reasonably lead to the conclusion that crimes are being committed, but legally they cannot simply set out to investigate a person without cause. It is necessary to also point out that New York is currently swamped by real crime, including murder and other violent felonies.

The Attorney General and the church

With that background on Ms. James and her office we come to the subject of this report. There have been a series of conferences perhaps 15 or 20 over the last couple of years billed as the Reawaken America Tour. They are apparently the brainchild of Clay Clark who scheduled the first one in Tulsa in April 2021. He had 50,000 requests for tickets but a venue that could only accommodate 4000. The event featured speakers such as General Michael Flynn, Mike Lindell of My Pillow fame, Judy Mikovits, Sherry Tenpenny, and many others. The conference, at first was a combination faith, freedom, and health type of thing.

In August of this year one of the conferences was scheduled in Western New York but the venue gave in to political pressure and canceled. Cornerstone Church in Batavia, New York stepped in and said we will be happy to have it here. This conference was scheduled to include a speech by Eric Trump, the President's son, and that is all it took for Ms. James to act. She sent a threatening letter addressed to General Flynn, Clay Clark, the event's organizer, and the church itself.



Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/PNQfgmmYOW4>

Details of her letter

In her letter she began by pointing out that she is New York's top law enforcement officer and she said she had significant concerns. I wonder if she saw any irony in the fact that the top law enforcement officer of New York was in the very act of breaking the law. I wish I could set out her entire letter, but it is a little long for that so I will do my best to summarize the relevant parts.

She said she had significant concerns that the conference could spur extremist or racially motivated violence. She pointed out that the event was on the anniversary date of the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia held five years previously. My guess is that no one connected with the conference knew anything about the connection of dates and it was simple coincidence. She could have checked to see that 15 or 20 other conferences came off without any violence at all. Except for a few demonstrators they were uneventful.

Crossing the First Amendment line

She then went into the content of the speakers and the theories they supposedly espoused. She crossed the line there, 1st Amendment wise because she found herself insisting that she could control, at the risk of punishment, the content of the church's message. She tried to tie them in to racially motivated mass killings without any evidence of that at all. What all this means is that the self-identified top law enforcement officer of the state of New York was engaging by written letter in an effort to chill the free speech and religious speech rights of a church. When such intimidation is conducted before the speech occurs that is called prior restraint and is strictly forbidden by US Supreme Court precedence.

A lawyer and a State Attorney General should be aware of such things, but perhaps she just didn't care. If so, that would fit a common pattern of government officials today. I don't care what is written in that book because what I say, my opinion, will constitute the law in this instance. The arrogance, the brute force intimidation of her words illustrates the adage that government represents brute force and not persuasion. She went on to remind the church that New York law prohibits racially motivated violence, harassment, or interference with another person in the exercise of their civil rights. Once again ironic because she was doing the very thing, she was warning the church about.

The Attorney General closes...

Now I am going to quote from her closing paragraph.

The Office of the Attorney General has a duty to protect New Yorkers from extremist and racially motivated violence. We stand ready to investigate any violation of the laws above and, if necessary, to enforce them to the fullest extent available. You are therefore instructed to take all necessary steps to ensure that the event complies fully with the requirements of New York's civil rights laws and all other applicable state and federal statutes.

She goes on to close with this at least partially redeeming line:

Your cooperation in ensuring a peaceful and law-abiding event will be greatly appreciated.

The pastor responds

Pastor Paul Doyle of Cornerstone Church said that when he read the letter, he felt like they were trying to bully us. He went on to say that "She's insinuating that we're involved in racist activity" and that it bordered on defamation. When asked for a comment by the blog site Legal Insurrection, he sent the following email:

This letter is a deliberate and arrogant act of government intimidation and harassment. This letter is filled with inaccurate and irresponsible language. The past events that the Attorney General indicates had absolutely nothing to do with this event. It clearly has a politically partisan agenda to it by calling the views of some of the speakers as “extreme”.

By carelessly using the terms “racist” and “violence” it attempts to skew people’s perspective of the agenda of the event. I feel it is defamation of the event, its speakers, Cornerstone Church, and me personally as pastor of the church.

No significant incident

If I were the pastor of the church the letter would have made me even more determined to go forward with the event. Her phrase “you are therefore instructed” is all it would take for me, to be even more determined. The event drew a crowd of 3,500 people and came off without incident. There was no violence whatsoever at the event, although there were plenty of protesters on the outside.



Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/05T4yWvmjwE>

Eric Trump spoke mostly about the Raid on Mar a Lago and the other FBI campaigns against his father. General Flynn said that a wall of fear is being built around our individual lives. He also talked about harassment from the FBI and DOJ.

The Attorney General’s letter indicates something that I have repeatedly tried to emphasize and that is political power. The problem is not so much Democrats and Republicans as it is political power which, like an addictive drug, corrupts the mind and the morals. It cannot be

resisted even by the best of us and that is why the founders gave us the Constitution to control the addiction of political power. That document tells each branch of government what its powers are and what its powers are not. With each passing administration it becomes more and more irrelevant, and the out-of-control government gets more and more overbearing and intrusive. Government officials are no longer bound by law as much as their opinion.

The Attorney General is drunk with power

To illustrate this point, I quote Mike LaChance at Legal Insurrection:

Attorney General James' pre-emptive attempt to chill free and lawful speech is extremely troubling and has nothing to do with support for or opposition to Trump. The Attorney General, with her immense prosecutorial power, should be protecting freedom of speech and association, not taking substantive sides, and attempting to intimidate churches or other forums from hosting lawful events.

Well amen Mike, that's exactly right, but this Attorney General is so drunk with power and so full of herself that the Constitution and the law no longer matter to her. She ran for office on a ticket that amounts to prosecutorial abuse and the people of New York elected her. Very sad but also very true.

Finally, folks, this incident was caused by an elected official with the power to destroy who doesn't mind using that power as a blunt instrument regardless of the law, but it is not what I at first thought it was. When I first heard the news reports coming out about the letter, I thought this is it the Fort Sumter moment I've been waiting for. Will this be the French Revolution or the American Revolution? But this is not the Fort Sumter moment although it is coming.

At least that's the way I see it.

Until next time folks,

This is Darrell Castle.

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