

The dog that didn't bark in the night

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In the Sherlock Holmes mystery, "Silver Blaze," a horse was stolen and its trainer murdered. Holmes noted the curious fact that the guard dog never barked and concluded it was an inside job. The dog didn't bark because it was familiar with the perpetrator and knew it had nothing to fear.

When the Supreme Court ruled that presidents have absolute criminal immunity for official acts, legal scholars and three dissenting Supreme Court justices barked loudly. Retired conservative judge J. Michael Luttig said, "It can never again be said that in America 'no man is above the law.'"

In her dissent, Justice Sonia Sotomayor wrote that the decision "makes a mockery of the principle...that no man is above the law." She concluded, "In every use of official power, the President is now a king above the law."

The immediate beneficiary of the immunity decision is, of course, incumbent President Biden. Donald Trump has been yelling for months that Biden, not Trump, is the real threat to Democracy. Trump's likely VP pick, Gov. Doug Burgum (R-ND) accused Biden of acting like a "dictator" by issuing executive orders, although Biden has signed just 139 executive orders, while Trump signed 220 in the same time span.

If Republicans really feared that Biden, or any Democrat, would abuse presidential power, they'd be barking nonstop. But, like Sherlock Holmes' docile dog, they've raised no warnings.

Instead, Trump celebrates! His supporters, like Mark Paoletta of the Center for Renewing America, said, "It's a great day for President Trump... it's an even better day for the U.S. Constitution."

That's an admission that their complaints about Biden weaponizing the justice system and posing a threat to democracy were nothing but projection. They're giddy with excitement because they know that Biden and future Democratic presidents will do as they've always done: obey the law. And that future Republican presidents will be free to violate it with impunity.

Laura McGann
Leland