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THE PURPLE FOG OF JOE PATERNO

In his last ten years as head football coach of Penn State, Joe Paterno strutted around Happy Valley enveloped in the royal purple fog of absolute power.

He could intimidate the judicial authority of the University into covering its eyes and ears when his players committed major violations.

King Joe could reduce major crimes like assault, battery, and assault with the intent to kill to mere slap-on-the-wrist misdemeanors.

He could intimidate the President of the University into disobeying laws requiring the reporting of crimes against children to the authorities.



He could intimidate the athletic director into closing his eyes and mouth when football players committed serious transgressions on and off the campus.

He could protect an assistant coach who committed serial sexual assaults against children and who is alleged to have committed child rape as well.

King Joe could seemingly get away with anything.

For he had the biggest pockets in the history of American athletics. Into those pockets he stuffed all of Penn State University, including students, officials and trustees. He also had remarkable sway with government officials ranging from police to district attorneys to judges.

King Joe was secure in his own mind. The football program made \$18 million in profit and its championship record brought in huge contributions from football-happy alumni.

But King Joe finally exceeded the bounds which compel good men to stand aside and do nothing in the face of evil. He tolerated – and allegedly covered up – the activities of assistant coach who is an accused serial child molester.

It became clear to the people that timely action on the part of King Joe could have saved children from being molested during the past decade.

The people rose up in righteous anger and forced Penn State to dethrone its King.

The people forced the University to fire its President and athletic director.

The people refused to believe that University trustees would conduct a proper investigation, so they demanded an outsider do it.

The University is now being humiliated by an investigation being conducted by a former head of the FBI.

All because Penn State officials forgot two of history's most important lessons.

1. Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.
2. Evil occurs when good people stand aside and do nothing.

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