

America's top brass break with Donald Trump

James Mattis, a **revered** former general, had largely kept his views to himself since resigning as President Donald Trump's secretary of defence in 2018. On June 3rd he ended his silence with a **blistering** attack on his former boss.

revere 尊敬; 敬畏

blister 猛烈的; 极热的

General Mattis recalled the **oath** he had taken to defend the constitution. "Never did I dream that troops taking that same oath would be ordered under any circumstance to violate the Constitutional rights of their fellow citizens," he said. He was hardly alone among generals — serving and retired — to distance themselves from Mr Trump's demand for an iron-fisted security response.

oath 誓言; 诅咒

quell 平息; 镇压

Mr Trump's call to use military force to **quell** the most widespread unrest in half a century — sparked by the killing by a white police officer of George Floyd — has caused unease and alarm up and down the chain of command.

On June 1st Mr Trump threatened to deploy active-duty troops under the **Insurrection** Act of 1807. He also decided to walk to a church near the White House to stage a photo-op, flanked by Mark Esper, the secretary of defence, and General Mark Milley, the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff.

insurrection 暴动; 叛乱

invoke 调用; 祈求

On June 3rd a chastened Mr Esper broke with the White House, saying that he did not support **invoking** the Insurrection Act. General Milley, for his part, wrote a letter to service chiefs promising that the armed forces would "operate consistent with national laws", implying a worry that he might be given illegal orders.

That the generals are willing to defend civic norms against a **wayward** president is **reassuring**. That it falls to them to do so is an indictment of the state of American politics.

wayward 任性的; 刚愎的

reassure 使安心; 安慰