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THE PENTAGON'S CULTURE OF (IN)JUSTICE: ECHOES OF THE USSR





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“Show Me the Man, and I’ll Show You the Crime”: How the Pentagon’s Culture of (In)Justice Mirrors the Darkness of the Soviet Union

In [The Master and Margarita](#), written by [Mikhail Bulgakov](#) the devil descends upon Moscow not with fire and brimstone—but with a bureaucracy of theater, illusion, and state paranoia. Truth becomes fluid. Power rewrites reality. And those who dare speak plainly are driven insane, disappeared, or destroyed. Bulgakov's satire was meant for Stalin's Russia.

But its echoes ring in the halls of the Pentagon today.

"Show me the man, and I'll show you the crime." Attributed to [Lavrenti Beria](#), a man whom Stalin reportedly affectionally referred to as “my Himmler,” the phrase captured the spirit of a regime where guilt was predetermined and evidence a mere formality. The man was chosen first—then the investigation began.

Sound familiar?

Across the Department of Defense, a new crop of whistleblowers, reformers, and rule-followers—yes, rule-followers—are finding themselves caught in the modern American version of Beria’s logic. Service members who report fraud, abuse, or discrimination are not protected. They are targeted. Their records combed. Their reputations smeared. And often, despite the absence of any real misconduct, investigations are opened with the clear goal of uncovering *something*—anything—that can justify punishment.

Not for justice.

For silence.



Reverse Due Process: Guilty Until the System Says Otherwise

In case after case, commanders initiate administrative actions not because misconduct occurred, but because a service member embarrassed them by daring to file a complaint. “He’s disgruntled.” “She’s unstable.” “They’re not a team player.” These are the modern equivalents of Bulgakov’s “mental hospital” diagnosis—coded language meant to discredit the accuser before a word is heard.

In this climate, a Performance Evaluation becomes a political weapon. A baseless Command Investigation morphs into a permanent career stain. Legal protections like the Military Whistleblower Protection Act (10 U.S.C. § 1034) exist on paper—but in practice, the chain of command often functions as both accuser and judge, inverting justice before it begins.

The Master wrote a novel so dangerous that he had to burn it. In today’s military, truth-tellers aren’t just burned—they’re erased.

Power Without Consequence: The New Bureaucratic Inquisition

This inversion is not accidental. Like Beria’s NKVD, today’s military bureaucracy is designed to protect the institution first and its members second. The same IG offices that receive complaints may later investigate them—or the whistleblower. The same commanders accused of abuse are often given full discretion over administrative punishments. And Public Affairs Offices routinely leak cherry-picked facts to press outlets in order to bias jury pools, frame narratives, and destroy reputations before a service member ever sees the inside of a courtroom.

And when the investigation clears the accused? When a court martial finds no wrongdoing? When Congress or the courts later reveal massive procedural failures?

No apology. No correction. No redress.

Just silence.

The Devil's Game

At one point in *The Master and Margarita*, the character Woland—Satan—asks:



“What would your good do if evil didn’t exist, and what would the earth look like if all the shadows disappeared?”

In the Department of Defense, evil does not arrive as horns and pitchforks. It wears rank. It speaks in regulation. It wraps itself in the language of “good order and discipline.”

And in this theater of shadows, the crime is not misconduct.

It is speaking the truth.

It is asking questions.

It is believing that justice will be served.

The Pentagon has become a place where the devil no longer needs to make deals. He simply watches as the system eats its own.

Want to push back?

Support the Walk the Talk Foundation. Help shine a light on the invisible machinery of retaliation, abuse, and bureaucratic self-preservation. Because in the absence of truth, power writes its own gospel—and makes martyrs of those who dare resist it.

The Master is institutional integrity. Margarita is every service member who still believes in it. And the devil, we regret to report, is on payroll.



If you would like to help us fight these issues, please consider donating to the Walk the Talk Foundation [HERE](#). We greatly appreciate your support. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, your donation is 100% tax deductible.



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Feel free to reach out privately at francescagraham@walkthetalkfoundation.org or in the comments.

PETITIONS: [SIGN THIS PETITION](#) demanding that our leaders in Congress change the DoD's unjust administrative investigatory system.

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Graphics: [Lavrenti Beria Executed | History Today](#);
[Joseph Stalin in World War 2: Supreme Commander of the Soviet](#);
[Amazon.com: The Master and Margarita: 50th-Anniversary Edition \(Penguin Classics Deluxe Edition\): 9780143108276: Bulgakov, Mikhail, Askew, Christopher Conn, Pevear, Richard, Volokhonsky, Larissa, Fishman, Boris: Books \(the book graphic\)](#);
[Remembering the Holodomor, 85 years after the start of the Ukrainian genocide | Globalnews.ca](#)