

Desperate Times, Measures

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Desperate times call up desperate politicians who demand desperate measures which require desperate counter-measures.

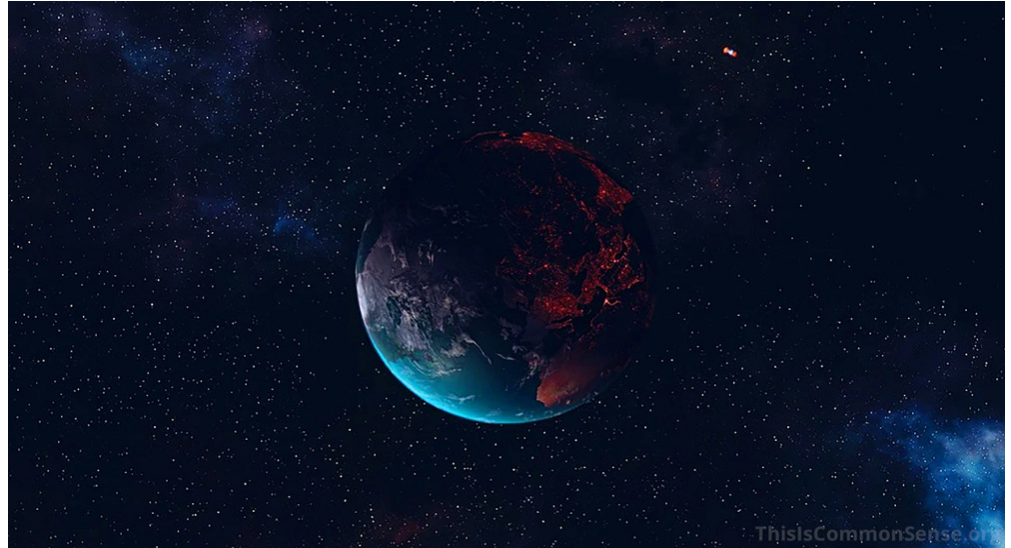
But while you might be thinking of Donald Trump, COVID, riots, and Biden-Harris, desperation isn't just an American problem.

"Italy Government on Verge of Collapse as Renzi Party Quits," *Bloomberg* informed us last week. What precipitated Renzi's exit from the coalition government? The persistence in that government of an anti-immigrant party. Sounds familiar.

In Estonia, "Prime Minister Juri Ratas resigned over an inquiry into a property development," according to *U.S. News & World Report*. In the 2019 elections,

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the Reform Party had won a plurality of seats, but Ratas had to put together a coalition with other parties to form a government. Now Reform will lead a coalition, but, we are told the new coalition will not likely "include the far-right EKRE party, whose leaders denounced the U.S. election result as rigged



and called President-elect Joe Biden 'corrupt.'"

In the Netherlands, the whole government resigned because of a scandal involving government-provided child-care funds. Bureaucrats had "wrongly accused thousands of working families of fraud and ordered them to repay childcare benefits between 2013 and 2019." But the resignation is somewhat hollow, since officials still hold a "caretaker status" while the country goes through another lockdown.

To cause even more chaos, here's a fourth example: Belarus. The International Ice Hockey Federation just stripped the nation from hosting its world championship because, as *Politico* reports, "Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko has used the country's security forces to violently oppress protesters since his disputed election victory in August last year."*

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This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.

* In a leaked audio tape to Radio Free Europe, a senior government official can be heard discussing "plans to build an internment camp — complete with barbed wire — for political prisoners."